

Monday's Speech By President-Elect Woozy

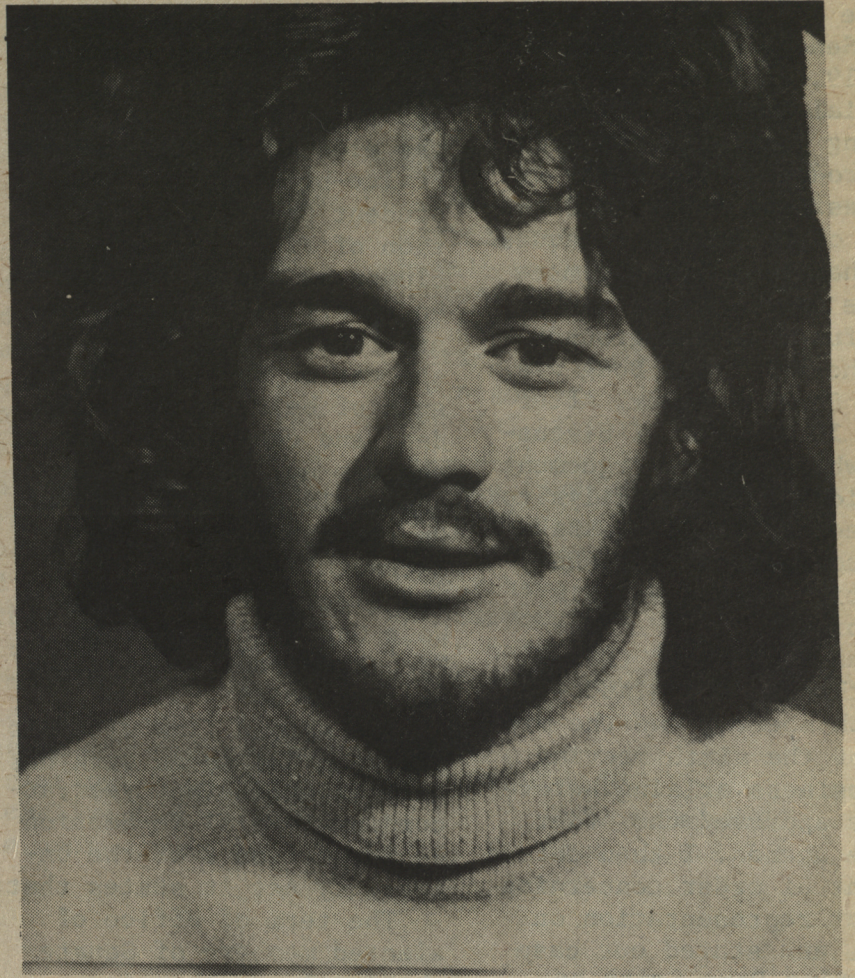
Over the past few years, students at UPEI have tended to elect student councils which they felt were sufficiently strong in a leadership capacity, that they could carry the load for the entire campus. These people were elected and from that point on, they were, in essence, caretakers for a campus of supposedly mature, searching adults. If student spirit began to fail, it was the fault of the student council. If students were ripping off the student union, it was the councils fault, not the individuals. We, as students, generally know who is robbing us blind but we never rise in protest. In essence, the members of the UPEI student union have chosen to pay a forty dollar fee in September as a sort of "entertainment fee." We then toss the responsibility for the operations of our entire union into the hands of a few people who, for one reason or another, have chosen to put themselves in the position of helping others. However, I think there is a difference between helping others and doing others work for them. I am willing to put myself at the disposal of the student union and help in anyway I can. However, when I feel that the cooperation I receive is below the level which students as members of this community should put out, then I think I would consider quite true the statement that council is nothing more than a glorified social committee. As well, I would then seriously consider the proposal I heard earlier; that all UPEI needs is a social committee and a student rights committee.

A union is formed because the members feel there is some truth in the statement "Might is right." However how many times in the past has the student union acted like anything but a social

committee. The entire focus of the student union has been on money, social events the Cadre and the radio station. I am not downgrading the importance of these various components of our university life but I do believe that a student union must concern itself with other matters in order to justify its existence.

As a union, we should be able to say that we feel that the present system of tenure is ineffective and be heard. The tenure system was designed to give professors what we might call "poetic license" so that they are free to say or write whatever their personal convictions say is right. However, it is now abused to the point where it is nothing more than job security for professors who don't have confidence in their own teaching ability. What we are doing in fact is subsidizing inefficient teachers and preventing the stimulation of new ideas through the influx of new professors. Therefore, as a union, we should stand up and say that we feel that the present tenure board with light faculty and one student is unfair, ineffective, and impractical.

The University Committee on Aims and Objectives is another example of our union getting the short end of the stick. Originally, it was to be composed of three faculty; it was then amended to include one student and two faculty. They have held meetings with students and will receive a brief from a student committee on Aims and Objectives. Barb has assured me that students are being listened to but I have much more cynical view of this committee, its response to student needs, and its final effectiveness. However, only the committees report will confirm or deny my cynical attitude. I believe that as a union, its time



we stood up and were counted. This university is operated at the convenience of the faculty and administration. Students rank a distant third. Courses are offered when professors want to hold them to enable many to hold second jobs. The courses offered are often not what students want but what our tenured professors have the ability to teach or have notes on. This is not entirely the fault of faculty-students are to blame for sitting idly by, content to complain but not to professors for fear it will affect their mark.

These are a few of the issues which I think a student union should concern itself with. There is also a definite need for some means to promote student spirit and a sense of community at UPEI, a need for a more extensive and varied social life on campus which will hopefully receive a shot in the arm when we receive our permanent liquor license. I strongly support the idea of an anti-calendar to better inform students about courses they will be taking and I feel that some method must be found to make skimming from the Student Union Funds not only unpopular but highly impossible.

These are a few of the things which I feel a student union should be concerned with in 1975-76. However, without the cooperation of the student body as a whole, the best we can look for is a glamorized social committee and token student involvement in administration decisions. If we hope to initiate change, we must do so as a united body and not as a committee of interested students.

I hope my view of the future of student union encourages more people to become involved in the operations of the union and offer advice on matters which affect us as students. A union is only as good as its members make it. If we are to continue with the present stream of destructive criticism such as was leveled at all councils in the past, we will complete the job of destroying student union which has so recently surfaced. However, by realizing that it is a union of all students for all students, I'm sure we can raise student union to a level of respectability and usefulness.

Thank - You

Woozy Macdonald

