



THE "RED RAG" AT ITS LATEST STAFF MEETING.

ABOUT the cadre

Did you know that last year, the Cadre was one of a small handful of university student papers that operated on the principle of complete staff democracy? By that we mean that, in theory, anyone who was a member of the UPEI Student Union could become a staff member of the Cadre, with the same privileges and voting rights as anyone else who worked on the paper. There was supposed to be no editor, no boss, and no elitist structure whatsoever- every detail from "determining editorial policy" on down to "what articles should go where" was based on the expressed wishes of the majority of Student Union members working on the specific edition of the newspaper.

We say "supposed to be" because, unfortunately, it didn't always turn out that way!

The democratic process, whether it is in the operation of a newspaper or of a nation, must constitute more than the freedom to express a dissenting opinion. If a democratic system is to fulfil its intended function, than everyone connected with it must accept the responsibility to voice a dissenting opinion. It is only through this method that the democratic system can encourage the growth of internal criticism- that is, the pruning of extremism. In other words, those staff members who were, by nature, creative and who were aggressive in their actions, came to dominate the group while those who were hesitant in expressing their opinions suffered much frustration- not because their ideas were any less suitable, but only because they failed to express themselves or failed to oppose ideas which were contrary to their own. Usually, since one faction dominated the internal decisions of the paper, by default, they al-

so inherited the majority of the work. But somehow, even though the democratic experiment must be deemed a failure, the Cadre did succeed in making it through the year without any major civil war.

It would seem then that the Cadre staff and others involved with the paper have learned something from last year's experience. With the election of three former key members of the Cadre staff to positions on the Student Union Executive, relations between the newspaper and the executive (which were not always healthy in previous years) should at least stabilize. With an understanding on each groups part that we are not each other's natural enemies, we should be able to get down to doing something concrete.

As for the Cadre staff, it seems to be the general consensus of the old staffers that some sort of structure will be needed, if only to improve the efficiency of the day-to-day operations. We have not, however, thrown the democratic concept into the ash heap! On the contrary, it is hoped that everyone will realize that they are more than welcome to join the Cadre staff and to participate in the decision-making process. Hopefully, this democratization will grow to the extent where the staff will vote "no confidence" in the editor, business manager, or any other executive of the paper- if the need arises. As you can probably see, there is room for improvement in the Cadre but, believe me, we're doing our best!

If you don't like what we're doing or if you think you can do better, please come over and join our staff in the dungeons of Memorial Hall- and exercise your democratic rights. They can probably use it!

