

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

While reading Jon Smith's article "Personal safety while at the bar a concern for all", I was appalled to find the Student Union president stating that date rape drug test coasters should not be distributed in *The Wave* because: "We don't want students to have to feel afraid." Is Ms Henderson actually advocating *not* taking safety measures to prevent sexual assault on campus? According to her logic, I suppose we shouldn't bother spreading information about safe walks, or date rape, or self defense, or drinking responsibly, or for that matter, wear our seatbelts or get flu shots and vaccinations. Heaven knows, we wouldn't want to frighten anyone with preventative measures. Her statement might well be construed by some UPEI students as a blatant insult to their intelligence, or lead others to wonder if Ms Henderson is more concerned about the profit margin of the Student Union-owned *Wave*, than for the safety of the students who elected her to represent them. Sexual assault is a reality on campus, in Charlottetown, and worldwide. I, for one, would be much more likely to frequent an establishment that took my safety and protection seriously.

Lauren Warbeck

I'd like to comment on a recent article published in the *Cadre* entitled, "Debate over Student Union's Withdrawal from CFS Continues." This article, while it presented new quotes from the various people involved in the discussion surrounding the Canadian Federation Students' (CFS) at UPEI, is strikingly similar to an article in the *Cadre* in the March 22, 2004 issue. The article read very much like the March 22 article as it made the same arguments in a similar order and failed to elaborate on the issues presented. I would like to raise my concern that a

publication that is charged with the responsibility of relaying accurate media information to the students at UPEI would twice now print an article with inaccurate, vague, and unsubstantiated information.

The concerns that I have are three. First, I find it very concerning that a news reporter like Mr. Stewart would make comments about student council questioning its relationship with the CFS yet not mention that the UPEI SU has operated as local 31 in the CFS since 1984 and that the very first CFS General Meeting ever was held in Charlottetown in 1981. Also, Mr. Stewart reports that Student Union President Clare Henderson argues that the CFS 'Day of Action' has not been well attended and then offered no explanation as to what that day was, and whether this claim is in fact true. The reality is Mr. Stewart that the "Day of Action," which is up to the individual student organization members to plan, implement, and focus, in the past has had an impressive turn out. In 2002 there was a turn out that filled the legislature, filled a room next to the legislature and still left people standing outside, all in protest of the same ideals the CFS represents. This has also been the case at several events including 1997, and 2000 most notably.

My second question to Mr. Stewart regards his comments on the situation in 1996 at UPEI and more recently at Acadia University. Here Mr. Stewart referred to a contact with Acadia that assisted his argument that other universities have had a problem with leaving the CFS, however, I am concerned that there is no mention of contact with the CFS national office or CFS members. Why was only one side, in clearly a two sided situation, contacted? The situation at Acadia has been brought up in formal and informal discussion several times at UPEI and

students need to be informed on this argument. The Acadia Student Union (ASU) did not pay its membership fees to the CFS for the 1994-1995 or the 1995-1996 years, despite collecting them from students. It then held a referendum in 1996 to leave the CFS that was defeated, with students choosing instead to remain affiliated with other CFS members. CFS by-laws say that you must wait two years after a referendum before holding another, yet they held another referendum the next year. This one was successful but CFS could not accept it as it did not follow by-laws. CFS members gave the ASU several more years to rectify this situation, both on the referendum and the collected, but not remitted, membership fees, yet decided just before the statute of limitations that action should be taken. The CFS then began the legal process on a simple principle. It was not fair to Acadia students for the ASU to collect fees in the name of the CFS and not use them for the intended purpose.

The 1996 referendum held at UPEI was a similar situation. The referendum was held not only outside CFS by-laws on fair elections, but outside UPEI by-laws on elections recognized by UPEI's own CRO when she admitted to using voter lists that were not lists of students in attendance in 1996, and had names scratched off of those that had graduated.

My last concern is an important one as arguments in this debate have been centered on a report by then SU President Brandon MacKenzie. Mr. Stewart did not mention several concerning elements of Mr. MacKenzie's report that would question the bias and validity of the report including the mention of the UPEI Graduate Students' Association as "merely a sub-organization" of the UPEI SU, when it is in fact one of only

two organizations recognized as Associate Members, "as distinct from a sub-organization" with that exact wording in the UPEI SU Constitution. As well the report does not provide an explanation as to why the by-laws of the CFS are written as they are and why members, UPEI SU included, choose this method as a requirement of membership application, which clearly state that there must be a referendum to end relations with the CFS. Nor did it include any detailed explanation to substantiate the choice eventually made by the UPEI SU Council of that year, to simply end relations, and choose not to recognize their membership.

I would certainly hope that Mr. Stewart would take more care when writing future news articles to ensure that the information presented is accurate and well balanced. The article that appeared in the November 19, 2004 edition of the *Cadre* is an injustice to the issue at hand and provides students with inaccurate and vague information that inhibits their ability to become actively involved in this important debate at our Student Union.

Joy Elliott

In a Canadian just society lawmakers and statesmen act as trustees for the public at large. In this we place our trust and expect our views to be reflected at the very least, within the process of making administrative decisions. Throughout our island's political and historical landscape we've seen the miscarriage of politics and the negative events driven from lack of thought. I draw attention to a serious and very controversial decision, for lack of a better word, on what the newspapers have coined Charlottetown's new

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