

Letters to the Editor

Field House Controversy

Readers of your issue last Thursday will have noted a letter by Mr. Charles Cavanagh of Cornwall in which he strongly criticised the decision to use the University of Prince Edward Island as the location of the Athletes' Village in February 1991. He is of course right in recognizing that during the period of the Canada Winter Games, and for a week before and a week after most of the students in the residence will have to find other quarters. Moreover, during that same period most lectures will be cancelled. In order to make up for this extended break, Convocation will be held two weeks later than usual, a one-time solution for a set of circumstances that is unique.

I do not contest Mr. Cavanagh's right to his view that the concerns of education should be placed before those of entertainment, and normally I would be derelict in the exercise of my office as President if I did not make education my abiding priority. But under the special circumstances of the Province hosting the Winter Games - the last province to do so in the current cycle -, I think it reasonable for the University to offer what help it can, even to the extent that

it has. But this is not an opinion I want to belabour in this letter. Rather, I want to make it clear to your readers, particularly those who may agree with Mr. Cavanagh, that the decision to provide housing for the athletes at the University had nothing to do with the Hon. Paul Connolly, Minister of Education. It was an offer made to the Canada Winter Games Host Society by the Senate and Board of Governors of the University almost 4 years ago. If there is public criticism of the University's action, it should be directed to me, not Mr. Connolly.

One last point - I am very much aware, more so today than when we made the offer, that our decision will indeed lead to inconveniences to students, faculty and staff, some of a major nature which we will try to minimize, others we will have to accept. In my ledger, however, I count many more advantages coming to the Island than disadvantages through the hosting of the Winter Games, and I am proud that the University was one of the first to choose to be a partner in support of the Province's initiative.

Your sincerely,
C.W.J. Eliot
President

Sports as Important as Education

I would like to respond to the letter published last issue by Charles Cavanagh. He makes the winter games sound trivial in comparison to education and a nuisance to students. The Canada games is a preparation for the athletes who will compete internationally. These young people are the future of Canada's success in international sports and they must have inter-provincial competitions and experience.

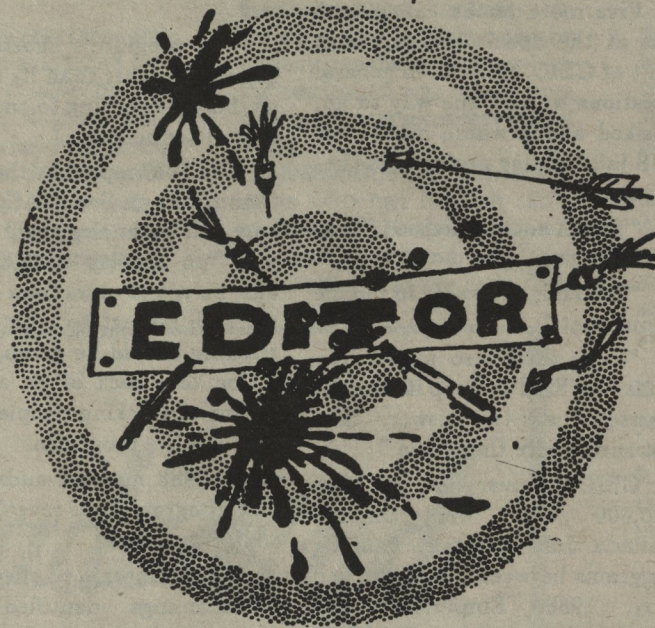
The athletes must be housed on the UPEI campus because the field house is here. Imagine trying to bus all the athletes to UPEI from all over Charlottetown everyday! Students from UPEI are working on their careers, but is it not true that these young athletes are working on their careers as international competitors as well?

As to the issue of tacking on 2-3 weeks of school at the end of the year: think of it, 2-3 weeks is not a long time compared to the rest of their lives to work on their careers and I for one do not mind staying a couple of weeks to watch the games.

I do, however, share Mr. Cavanagh's concern about paying for moving to and from residence. School is very expensive and some arrangements must be made with the provincial governments to help finance moving the students back home, or to suitable accommodations in Charlottetown.

Let's give these young athletes a chance to grow and experience real competition. The Canada Games is a once in a life time opportunity for these athletes, and sports is just as important as a University education.

Yours,
Allan Scott



UPEI Education Improving

I regret that I missed the Gem of February 15, and so did not see your Editorial on professors as teachers until recently. I agree with the thrust of your argument, that more emphasis should be placed on good teaching in the academic profession. I want to point out that the UPEI Senate has established a committee consisting of both professors and students, precisely to address this question. The Senate Committee on the Enhancement of Teaching is still in its infancy, but it is engaged in a multitude of activities: workshops, discussion groups, sponsoring professors to conferences on teaching, putting out a newsletter, buying books, cooperating with Audio-Visual Services on an instruction book joining comparable networks, setting up an orientation program for new faculty, and more. We

even have a part-time employee, Mr. Reginald Porter, an experienced teacher and lecturer, who looks after most of the above, and who is also available to visit classrooms and to counsel faculty. (He has already visited mine and given me some good tips.) Mr Porter is establishing a "Teaching Centre" on the third floor of Dalton, from which these and other activities will be coordinated in future.

Given this activity, and also the high level of interest shown by the faculty so far, I think I can say that UPEI is going some distance towards meeting the "reasonable concern" that your editorial raised.

T.K. Pratt
Associate Professor of English
Chair, Scent

...continued from page 1

"My mother is white," he said. "She grew up in Stellarton... They gave her a hard time."

Another resident of Pictou County, Toni Goree, has had to take her two elementary school children off the school bus and drive them to school herself because of racist slurs against them.

"She had her eight-year-old brother in for a day... on the school bus," Toni said. "She said she has been living with racist slurs all the time... one day."

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Any member of the university community can make a contribution to The GEM, but the editor also reserves the right to print submissions from outside the university community.

The staff of the GEM can be seen in their natural habitat in their basement office in Main Building, room B06. We can also be contacted by voice by calling 566-0629, or leaving a message with our secretary at 566-0530.

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