

All for the sake of some sick animals?

"Evaluation and more effective use of education resources are at the top of our priority list."

Nova Scotia Minister of Education Terence Donahoe said that last week at the low-profile Education Ministers conference in Charlottetown.

I don't know about you, but he's got me scared.

UPEI is a very small school in this region, and one that few outside of this region have heard of. No matter what our personal feelings for the place, we have to admit that there are more prestigious and better-recognized universities around and in intimidating numbers.

That's why phrases like 'evaluation' and 'increasing specialization at the post-secondary level' are, or should be, alarming.

Okay, so we have the standard Arts and Science programs, and our own Education and Engineering Faculties, as well as a reasonable School of Business Administration and a noble Music Faculty.

We will also soon have a vet college.

If the esteemed Ministers carry through with their ambiguous talk of specialization, guess what UPEI will specialize in?

You got it, Kiddo; something that isn't even built yet.

A lot of influential people around here are worried, too, with a worry that pervades the ranks of the UPEI Senate and the Student Union Council.

They're picturing UPEI with — get this — a Faculty of Arts, a Faculty of Science, and a Faculty of Veterinary Medicine. That's all.

Now some might say the *Netted Gem* doesn't like the engineers. That's not true. Nor do we wish to see Business eradicated from the face of the campus. And some of our best friends are Educators and Musicians.

The fact is, a large part of receiving a good education is being exposed to a variety of other fields of study, and having the chance to experiment with them at random, getting the feet of our minds wet (that with an apology to every English professor who has ever preached the sin of mixed metaphors).

And who can deny that the abolition, the execution, the beheading, the garrotting of four distinct disciplines will make this a much less interesting place to study and live?

The Business-Engineer rivalry is one of the few things that students here get excited over (although even that has been suffering of late). Without the 'brash 'practicality' of those two groups of students, UPEI would sink into the depths of blahdom.

The comparing of a university community to one big family has been used so often that it isn't original anymore.

Since I'm not trying to be original, I intend to use it once more.

What we have here are six siblings who sometimes get along well, but often degenerate into fierce squabbling or, worse, a state of self-absorption where they see nothing but themselves and their own concerns.

Now we see an interloper coming along, wanting to be adopted. We don't know a lot about him, so we cautiously agree.

In Act III, will Mommy and Daddy decide they like their new child better than the rest, and foist them off on relatives in other strange and distant lands, keeping only the ones that have been around so long that they're old enough to demand some rights of their own, and the corresponding status?

There's an alternative. We can band together to find out all we can about this usurper, and what effect he's going to have on our family structure. The Student Union Council has set up a committee to do just that, but it can't get anywhere without your support.

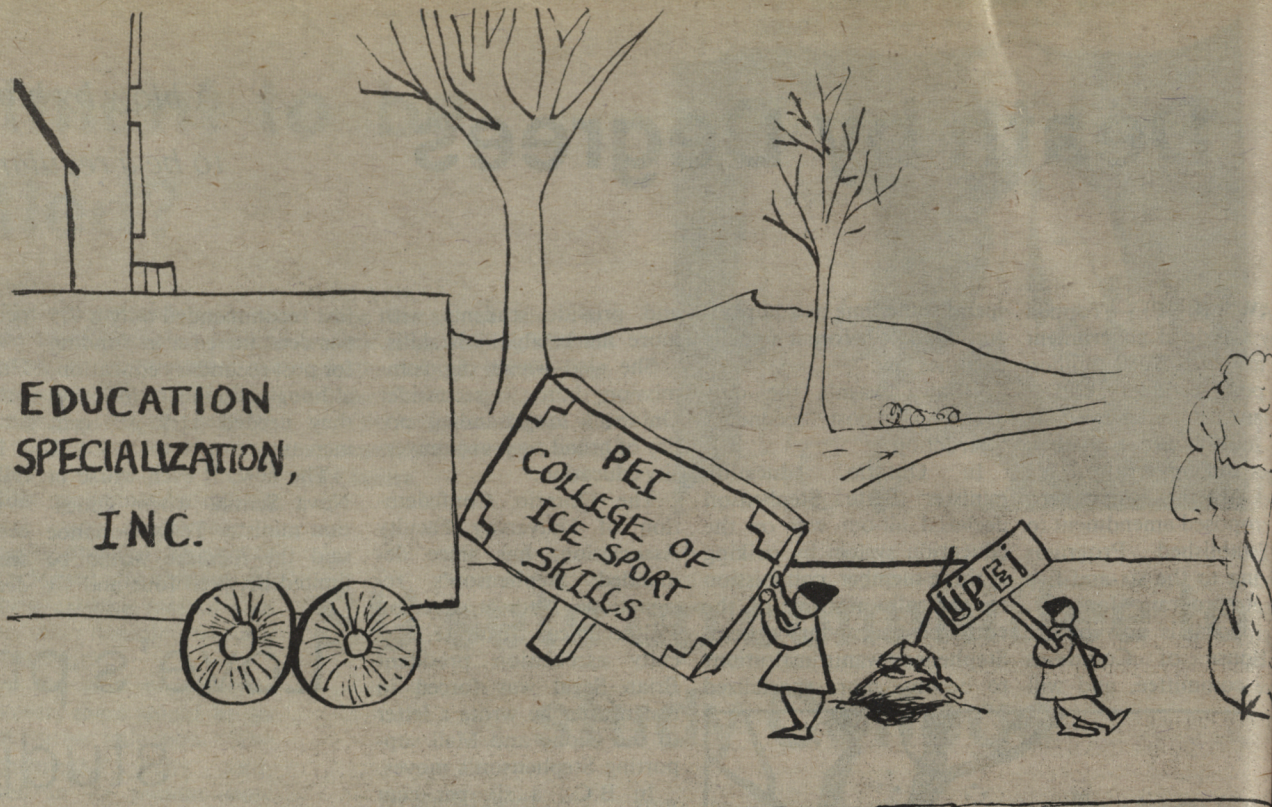
You think the family metaphor is slightly ridiculous and childish?

Government doesn't think so.

One of Donahoe's comments after the meetings last week: "If the universities will not share and co-operate voluntarily governments will have to do it for them."

Sorry, Daddy, we'll try to get along better. Please don't beat us!

Carolyn Ryan



Someone must have told the Education Ministers how well the Panthers have been doing...

LETTERS

Red scare at UPEI

Should a university student council remain apolitical? Should the council at this university do everything possible to prevent politically-

oriented organizations on campus?

These were the two main themes of discussion concerning the matter of recognition of a Liberal Campus Club with official sub-organizational status at Sunday's Student Union

Council meeting.

Student Union president Jack Keefe expressed the opinion that a student council could not claim apolitical status, since it is itself a political body.

Further discussion also took place on what seemed to be the fear of condoning certain political philosophies. A number of councillors pointed out that this viewpoint was not targeted toward the Liberal Club, but toward any political organization.

Further emphasis was placed on setting a precedent of allowing possible undesirable organizations such as the Communists, the radical Waffles, or the Marxist-Leninist party on campus.

This stand was countered by Bob Hanf, Liberal Club president and spokesperson, with an invitation for all political ideologies to express themselves in official avenues to counteract student apathy and create an atmosphere of political awareness.

Apparently, the "apolitical" side of the debate won, as the Council defeated the

motion, for the second time in the last two Council meetings.

Clearly, the essence of the motion's defeat was to avoid political partisanship and the entry of radical political elements into the university community.

However, the facts remain that most modern university campuses in Canada all have evolved intellectually to the point where radical political units such as Communism or the Waffles are no longer synonymous with sin and evil.

Unfortunately, the majority of the Student Council failed to come to grips with the modern viewpoint.

Aside from the issue of maintaining an apolitical atmosphere on campus, the fear of being called radicals, onlookers at the meeting got the impression that the "no" vote was directly related to the fear of many councillors of another major political party other than the Liberal party.

Sincerely,
Gordon Cobb

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And now for the next spine-tickling episode of the never-constant, always ephemeral, but undoubtedly perfect staff of the UPEI *Netted Gem*! These *pomme de terre* connoisseurs include John Dougan, Sharon Leighton, Karen McLenithan, Joanne MacKinnon, Jonathan Orlowski, Parker Grimmer, Gus Hillstrom, Howard Beattie, Leah Parker, Ruth Edgett, Mickey Place, John Pendergast, David Doiron, and editor Carolyn Ryan.

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