

Letters to the Editor



'What's in it for me?'
When it comes to UPEISU Inc.,
the answer is: Nothing.

Editor,

I agree with the thoughts expressed (re: 'Panther Pride') by Peter Gillis in the January 14th issue of your publication. I, too, was insulted by the letter that was sent to me by UPEISU Inc. in December and wanted to object to such wasteful arrogance.

When I first enrolled at UPEI five years ago I discovered that I was required to pay 'union dues' to UPEISU Inc. and was told that my money would be used to: maintain and operate the Barn, the Student Union (which, in turn, would provide several students with 'valuable' part-time jobs), CIMN, the student newspaper, and to ("soon") build a nice, new student centre.

Five years (and several hundred dollars in 'union dues') later, UPEISU Inc. asked me to "reevaluate the 'what's in it for me?' attitude". So I have. And I now find myself wishing I had spent my five years here displaying *more* of a 'what's in it for me?' attitude. If my classmates and I had asked 'what's in it for us?', UPEI students might not still be coerced into abetting the maintenance of: a decrepit Barn that hardly anyone visits regularly, a radio station that hardly anyone can hear, and jobs that often cause students to neglect their studies (but at least some of them get to go on nice trips!). Worst of all, we give money to a whining, creatively-constipated, hypocritical, practically self-acclaimed body that sees it within its mandate to sneak up behind us, screw us, and then try to bribe us and make us feel selfish when we make even the smallest effort to protest.

The only 'oversight' of Mr. Gillis was his use of satire. I fear his point may have been lost on many. Sometimes things must be spelled out:

- The cost of our maintaining UPEISU Inc. is much greater than the benefits it provides us with.
- Last year our unnecessary student council failed us by not asking our opinion re: 'voluntary' donations.
- This year's council is now scrambling to cover its ass by applying the age-old 'talk is cheap' trick.
- The student council is more a 'pet' of the UPEI administration (how else could you explain the appearance of the President of UPEI at UPEISU Inc.'s ass-covering meeting held at AVC in late November? or the wearing of 'Panther Pride' propagandist stickers by representatives of both the registrar's and the business offices on registration day at the sport centre?) than it is an advocate-body for students' concerns.

If students here could begin to display Mr. Gillis' ability to state the obvious, then perhaps they may, one day, be well-represented and well-served. For those of us who will soon be leaving UPEI, it is too late to change the exploitation and misrepresentation of students by UPEISU Inc. The best thing we can do now is to warn others of the twin dangers of silence and inaction.

Sincerely,
J. Rodney Baglole

Cynical Cows

Dear Sacred Cows,

It has become increasingly apparent that Peter Gillis, in his article *Sacred Cows*, has fallen into a cynical pit. This is a pit that contains people who have lost their faith in the democratic system. From his articles, Gillis has made his lack of faith quite clear. He has constantly denounced the democratic system and the people who have been elected to power in it. The latest target of Peter Gillis' attacks has been Chris Gray, Vice-President External and acting President of the UPEI Student Union. Gray, spelled G-R-A-Y and not G-R-E-Y, had taken the reins of the Student Union for little more than a week when the attack on his presidential ability started. Personally, I find it difficult to comprehend how a man can be condemned a week into office. Perhaps the root of the problem is Gillis' disdain of anyone in politics. For a man who believes the best use of his vote is to simply walk out of the election office with his ballot, I fail to see why he cares. He has not offered any solutions to any situation, political or otherwise. In fact, Gillis has painted himself as nothing but a complainer. Mr. Gillis, if you are not part of the solution, you are part of the problem. People such as Chris Gray at least have the initiative to put themselves in harm's way and try to attain the goals of UPEI students. I guess everyone is not as fortunate as Mr. Gillis who obviously watches too many Mr. Dressup reruns and looks to Casey to solve all of his problems. In the real world, society's problems are solved by the people in politics. These people deserve, at the very least, the chance to succeed or fail. That is all I ask for our acting President. A little respect for someone who is trying to do a difficult job under difficult circumstances that have not been made any easier by Mr. Peter Gillis.

Jason Shreenan, 4th Year Science

Ed. Note: I am responsible for the misspelling of Gray's name and not Mr. Gillis.

Building Fund

Dear Editor,

I am aware of the controversy surrounding the building fund. It seems a bandwagon effect has occurred in the instance of large numbers of students requesting a refund. Who can account for this? The dynamics of bureaucracy and student politics, to name only a few factors, are so fluid and unaccountable as to make a definitive answer almost impossible to determine. I know you have to try to figure out why this has happened and wish you luck in finding one, but it will be quite the project.

The fact is, notwithstanding all the rhetoric about rights to education, government

obligations, and so on, the continued development of the university's facilities is in our hands. That is not entirely a bad thing, for I think that we should demonstrate our commitment to higher education in a meaningful way. Twenty dollars is not an excessively burdensome way to do that. I reel at the realization of how far in debt I am -- the banks must be crazy to have loaned me so much! Yet I still give monthly to my undergraduate university and faculty, Queen's (Arts), by monthly automatic debit. I feel I owe it that help...and that gesture. The same goes for UPEI, though I have only been here a few

months. So I won't request a refund and, in fact, have enclosed a cheque for \$20.00 to demonstrate my belief in this little university, its future, and the role of its own students in promoting that future, even if it is only by giving little amounts of money that add up to a big gesture. If a system of automatic debit exists for UPEI as it does for Queen's, I will also undertake now to make a monthly donation commencing September, 1997.

Thank you for taking up this matter with us all.

Sincerely,
Robert D. Bradford