

# CHANGES NEEDED - CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

going dramatic changes as the participation and influence of organized faculty, student, and non-academic groups has increased, as new outside coordinating groups have been formed, and as politicians and the public have taken a new interest in higher education.

One set of criticisms concerns the staff available for undergraduate instruction in the Arts and Sciences. Most faculty members are highly specialized professionals who are strongly oriented toward their disciplines. Many are interested in the teaching of their subjects rather than in the broad intellectual and moral growth of students as persons. In the case of U.P.E.I. we do have these people, but we have another type which insists they are the experts in what is to be taught, how it's to be taught etc., and students are little more than guinea pigs for their "expert" masterminds. These people constitute much that is bad within the university and indeed prescribe more of the same in the future — a future not hampered by student feelings, etc.

But there is one aspect of academic life that has not changed very much. That is, the education of undergraduates. While much lip service is given to innovation, new technology, and the like, most teaching still centers around the textbook, banal lectures, close supervision of the students credits, and grades. Whatever gain has been made in effectiveness of instruction has occurred through increased rigor of standards, improved motivation of students, better secondary preparation, and improved qualifications of faculty, not through improvement of instructional methods.

The University, though it gives lip service to undergraduate teaching, actually gives much higher priority to professional and public recognition of its faculty through research, scholarships, and public service. (Although it is doubtful if U.P.E.I. is as guilty as other institutions). The influence of the professional guilds, is also towards research. At U.P.E.I. some departments continually ignore establishing a healthy rapport with undergraduates, but seek to keep the student "down on the farm"; this statement is supported by faculty reps to Senate who shout down students having a larger say in University government. However let's rise above this activity of a small, insignificant band of "intellectual(?) George Wallace's ("The Student as Nigger") bent on downgrading a cooperative effort of students-faculty - administration to create a better university and eventually a better world.

Another set of criticisms concerns the intellectual content and curricula of liberal education. It is said that the curriculum, despite the rhetoric in the calendars, is overwhelmingly professional or pre-professional in its emphasis. Even the general education movement that became popular after World War II

appears to have about petered out largely because of faculty preoccupation with disciplines and professions. The goal of most courses and curricula is simply to convey the essential elements of a discipline, rather than to develop students as persons. The curriculum has little impact on the life, values, goals, feelings and deeds of a student. By concentrating on conventional disciplines, it fails to come to grips with the universal problems of human life and with the great issues of our time, which do not fall neatly into line. From the point of view of the student, the curriculum often seems sterile and irrelevant, fails to motivate him, or even repels him.

The curriculum emphasizes the rational and scientific to the virtual exclusion of intuitive, or any other approach to "truth", to the neglect of the moral and spiritual dimension of education.

Even the Humanities and Social Studies have become technical and pseudo-scientific fields to the near exclusion of the great moral and policy issues at hand. The curriculum is spiritually impoverished at a time when young people are grasping for meaning, and at a time when colleges and universities are the principle centers surviving in our society for moral and spiritual inquiry.

The essential form of the curriculum tends to be standardized for all students—not only in one institution but also throughout the nation! Except for certain honors programs and selective sectioning of courses involving only a few students, and a handful of experimental colleges, the possibility of diversification for students of differing talents and temperaments is woefully limited.

Curriculum reform is usually carried on in a psychological vacuum because it does not consider students, their motives, aspirations, mode of learning, personality, and character development; it considers only discipline and bodies of knowledge.

I ask my conservative acquaintances, "What about Parity on Curriculum Planning Committees? why not? why are you afraid? is it because the Emperor really doesn't have clothes on???"

I feel these statements must be spoken to by faculty and administration—students must also speak out for their future; after all who does have a larger stake in this university — faculty or students????

The urgency to answer this question arises from the fundamental changes occurring in the temper or spirit of our society. Among these

changes are the widespread concern about the pressing social problems of war, race, poverty, pollution, etc: The determine drive of many groups in our society (especially the young) for greater freedom and rights and for participation in decisions affecting them; the rise of philosophies alien to the rational and scientific approach to knowledge and to life; the increased yearning for reliable values, relevant to life in an affluent, automated economy. These changes add up to a clear demand for liberal education, they also call unmistakably for reform of the content and method of that education as it has been practiced for the past fifty years.

The price of failing to correct past deficiencies and to adapt to new needs and conditions will be apathy, rebellion, or both, on the part of student, frustration on the part of faculty, and failure of the university to serve society in our primary function

How will we meet the challenges of educational reform, I cannot answer this question fully, but I do have a few suggestions, they are:

1. Give greater recognition to teaching and educational innovations as tried by individual professors.
2. Play down the over dominant role of Professors' prestige due to research versus creative innovation.
3. Expose the folly of university prestige! Professional prestige is the motive force of a University. Prestige for a university corresponds to profit for a corporation. The vanity of the academic world is hardly surpassed by that of any other field with the possible exceptions of show business and politics. Students are the victims of this vanity.
4. The concern of educators must be shifted to the growth of young men and women as emotional and moral as well as intellectual persons. The curriculum should be nudged towards less emphasis on the scientific-rational and more on the pursuit of true knowledge and a development of values necessary for a successful response to our generational challenges.
5. Students should be given greater responsibility for their learning and the rigid "Do-as-you-are-told" system characterized by the course-grade-credit-prerequisites for students to follow their interest and curiosity, and to assume increasing responsibility for their own learning.
6. Divise a system that makes independent learning a higher goal, preferably the highest. Make higher education more exploratory and experimental in its approach.

7. Involve students to a much higher degree than present in all decision-making processes. Seek to build a feeling among students that our university (in this case) knows where it is going and has a perspective.

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## LETTERS

was a forced showdown between the opposing supporters of the two names in which those upholding the "Cadre" eked out a shoddy victory over their opponents.

And why should we concern ourselves with such trivialities? Such procedure exhibited by the manner in which the selection goes even deeper than being a personal insult to each student at this university. A practice like this delves into the very bowels of principal. If our football team cannot choose its own name why can our newspaper choose its name? U.P.E.I.S.U. money runs the football team and seven thousand five hundred dollars of our money runs the newspaper. We also supply it with its offices and are responsible in the long run for any debts it may incur. So why don't we have some say as to what title it will masquerade under? Are we going to allow our democratic rights as students of this university to be eroded from under our feet or do we do something about it? Do we let this so-called "staff democracy" stuff this issue down our throat without first examining and/or accepting or rejecting it.

It is not the name itself that leaves itself open to criticism but the manner in which it was chosen. Since nothing is official until it is accepted until a majority decision is reached it is up to we the students to accept, reject, or suggest new alternatives. Do we petition for a referendum on this subject or do we allow a smug minority to force their personal decisions on an unsuspecting majority? The answer rests on the individual responsibility of each and every one of us.

If these proposals are considered as part of an attempt to analyze our present system then I feel the obvious answer is student participation on a fifty-fifty basis with faculty and administration.

## Woman Power!

The position of most people in North American society today is basically one of oppression i.e. he is not able for one reason or another the type of environment he wishes to live in. The position of women is one of double jeopardy in that she is oppressed again because of her sex. Women are treated as objects to be possessed, mindless bodies to be looked at. Beauty contests are a good example of this. They are very similar to a cattle auction. What is sad is that girls like to take part in this type of competition. It seems that they wish to prove that they can sell themselves better than the next girl. I realize that this is a little crude of me. I don't want to suggest that the girls actually consider that they are selling themselves, but this is what makes the scene all the sadder. Women do not even question the role they play in society. They never ask if there is more to life than being a baby factory and a house wife.

In considering the position of women and why they so readily accept their position, I would like to look at the role education plays in the process. My thoughts on the matter are fairly summed up in the following quote from a policy statement made at the last C.U.S. congress regarding the status of women: "From her entry into primary school until her graduation from high school or university, a woman is instructed that the only reality for her, and the fulfilment of that reality, is as a wife and mother.

I hope that the girls at this campus will take a close look at the role they play now and the role that will be expected of them in the future. If you find that you agree with the analysis that you found in this editorial, than you should do something about it.

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For further information contact Terry Ross, Room 41, Main Building, Malpeque or call 2-1419.