

Debating Female Frailty

"Frailty - thy name is Woman" was the topic of a demonstration parliamentary debate in the Robertson Student Lounge on Friday, September 25.

The debate, sponsored by the UPEI Debating Club (which is in turn is financed by the University Theatre Society), featured three "parliamentarians" from McGill University joined by a UPEI debater, Jacinta Gallant. The McGill team is currently on a tour of the Maritime universities on behalf of the Canadian Debating Society, in an attempt to raise participation in the parliamentary style of debate, as well as debating in general.

In the parliamentary style, there is a speaker, a government headed by the Prime Minister, and an

opposition headed by its leader, Heckling from each side and from the floor is encouraged. The object of the exercise is to defeat the opponents not so much by a marshalling of facts, but by an ability to hold the floor, to counter the opposition arguments as they arise, and to win the sympathy of the audience by good humour, well turned impromptu phrases, and steadiness under the fire of heckling.

After the speakers had finished, two on each side, the members at large (the audience) were invited as is the convention, to speak for either side. However, this part of the exercise failed, as there were no speeches from the floor, only questions. (The question of what part of

Shakespeare the quotation, "Frailty - thy name is woman" comes from did serve to flummox one of the speakers.)

As is customary in parliamentary debating, "the house divided", that is the audience voted to determine the winners. There was some uncertainty as to whether people should vote according to inner conviction or to who spoke best, and so there were many absentions. It was explained afterward that conviction has little to do with this kind of debate, and that the speakers themselves could easily have switched sides. The point is to have one's skills as a ready speaker, so that when the occasion comes to speak about something one does believe in, he or she will never be in the incredibly frustrating position of "I know what

I have to say, but I don't know how to say it." Surely no intelligent person these days would bother to support seriously either side of "Frailty - thy name is woman."

The debate was competently handled by the speaker, Heather MacDougall, who deserves much credit for her revivalist efforts in this field. The room was crowded, and the crowd, although new to this style of entertainment, was obviously much pleased by what they say. One of the McGill speakers was gracious in reminding us that St. Dunstan's University had at least once been national champions in debating. As a result of the experience last Friday, the hope is now here that we may scale these heights again.

Maritime Magnate

"I Like to See Wheels Turn", a film portrait of K.C. Irving, the New Brunswick industrialist, will be aired for the first time on the CBC Network on Sunday, October 4 at 10:00 p.m. A co-production of the National Film Board and the CBC, this one hour documentary marks the first time a filmmaker has gained access to the reclusive Irving.

With the purchase of an oil truck in 1924, Kenneth Colin Irving expanded his interests until now he is probably the richest self-made man in Canada. He heads a family-owned industrial empire the size of which few people are able to imagine. The documentary examines both the history and present-day operations of some Irving businesses which have grown to include oil, transportation, lumber, shipbuilding, the media, and much more. Since the Irving companies have no public shareholders, they only release the minimum of information that Canadian law makes mandatory. In other words, next to nothing is known of the extent of Irving's control. However,



it is rumoured that the Irvings have over 200 holdings. Irving companies run the Provincial bus lines and own all five of New Brunswick's daily newspapers. Irving also owns or leases 2.3 million acres of forest land in the province. The family will continue to be successful because they own the entire production line: each business is a link in a chain of interlocking corporations that K.C. created to support one another with goods and services, provide jobs, and above all, make

money in a province where industries have been failing since Confederation.

The documentary portrays K.C. Irving quite favourably. It tells of a not yet teenaged Irving who bought his first car for \$8. and sold it a few days later for \$11. The film also shows the very congenial octegenarian at his home in Bermuda. In one conversation with NFB director Giles Walker, Irving explains that all his wealth and power were merely by-products of his real motivation,

which was that "I like to see wheels turn".

Despite controlling nearly 40% of the private sector economy in New Brunswick, present operations are as nothing when compared with Irving's dreams. Irving wants the pre-Confederation promise of a canal linking the Bay of Fundy with the Gulf of St. Lawrence to be fulfilled so that better access can be gained to Central Canada.

Although many New Brunswickers see K.C. Irving as a near demi-god some condemn him as a dictator. Since Irving owns all five new Brunswick dailies, one lawyer commented that he has never seen criticism of any Irving business in the papers. One particularly vocal critic described Irving as suffering from the General Bull Moose Syndrome -- "what's good for General Bull Moose is good for the rest of the country". "I Like to See Wheels Turn" was written and produced by Barry Cowling (NFB - Atlantic Region), directed by Giles Walker (NFB - Atlantic Region). Executive Producers are Rex Tasker (NFB - Atlantic Region) and Paul Wright (CBC).