



# Kampus Koncern

by Joel Hansen

## ARMCHAIR HYSTERIA

At the January 10th meeting of Senate a proposal concerning a document to adequately express the philosophy, purpose and priorities of UPEI was debated. Since then I have heard of no attempt to form a symposium on the proposal. What is happening with the committee responsible for producing the document?

When I heard the proposal before Senate I was gratified to see work on this very important question of philosophy, priorities, etc. at UPEI, about to commence. I agreed with Senator MacIntyre's expression of unlimited support for the people willing to work on the proposed document.

I agreed with the motion by Senate on another point as well; the instruction to the committee to seek a wide range of views from university students, professors, administrators and professionals of all types. Although there isn't a direct link between popular opinions and views, and the true role of a university, I still remain confident of the necessity to involve the broad base of opinion from the people of P.E.I. as well as from the expert university definers, (sic).

The challenge of finding the true role of a university in an island community such as ours is magnimionious indeed! And as UPEI is to have its role defined in reasonable time, the work involved in succeeding the challenge should and must begin immediately.

Perhaps the worst thing that can happen to a proposal like the one approved by Senate is to underestimate its complexities and importance. Only a narrow mind would suggest any obvious or simplistic approach to the problem involved here.

Usually, men and women, directly benefitting from existing institutions balk at any review of that institutions role. When roles are being redefined and changed positions are also under a process of redefi-



"As I have repeatedly stated, reason is the means by which changes will be made within this university."

nition and change. Happily, Senate's motion on the proposal dispells any notions of professional fear of

such a process of redefinition and change at this university. (???)

However, the problem of an individuals inability to comprehend the totalities of problems makes me suspect of an attempt to produce a document not washed with the hands of Islanders from all walks of life. I am saying that a secure and comfortable committee member cannot expect to gain inadequate insights into complex problems from the armchair. Unfortunately for committee members, they must face the concrete situation and shed the vestiges of this idealism which allows men and women to philosophise from armchairs. They must embark on a journey that will take them into the light of true understanding, for it is only from true understanding that

truths can be gained.

True understanding in the 1970's can be possessed only after great dialogue. There are no heros anymore! Electronic media has exposed the high and mightiest as common, cheap crooks. This means that there is no obvious source, no bible, that can be used in gaining insights into that which is true. "The great dialogue" must commence before truth can be gained.

But when will this dialogue begin at UPEI. At present I have found no evidence of such an occurence. I implore the committee concerned with the production of the document to make plans for a public symposium to air and debate the issues involved.

UPEI does not need to be given its role; it must find it for itself. Since only people make institutions, only people can direct institutions, when does the committee expect to listen to the people??