

editorial

By John Cairns

Our academic semester has been shortened by a week. A proposal adopted at a February 29th university Senate meeting moved the end of classes from April 18th to April 11th.

The change came largely because of pressure from the Business Department. Business professor J. J. Revell, also a Senate member, was supported by his department in insisting that the reduction in class time was necessary to equate UPEI with the closing dates of other universities and to make our students more competitive in the summer job market. At first Senate hesitated, but eventually the measure was pushed through.

When I say "pushed through", I mean exactly that. A shorter semester was discussed and dismissed in January. Then on February 21 a request for reconsideration was also turned down. Those advocating the early vacation next called an emergency meeting of Senate, but once again they were refused reconsideration. As a result, a tactic emerged which was at best sneaky and at worst unethical. A new motion was introduced to achieve the same end that Senate had already three times rejected. Based on the precedent of class cancellation from last semester's Symposium '79, it was proposed that the final week of classes simply be abolished. This Senate approved by a narrow two vote margin.

Professor Revell and his backers, among them our own student senators, refused to accept no for an answer. Their new motion was, it seems to me, against the intention if not the word of democratic law. By crackity, it all reminds me of the Quebec Referendum. Like UPEI's term cutters, Premier

WEEK CANCELLED - BOO, BOO!

Rene Levesque intends to ask his question until the answer pleases him.



Business Professor J. J. Revell - it was he who proposed the change in class time to Senate and then worked to have the change adopted.

What creditable university can justify lopping a week off an academic year already 75% completed? By late February both professors and students should have their schedules tightly planned. Every week, nay even every day, can be precious if deadlines are to be met and courses completed. UPEI's lost week will mean extra year end headaches for us all. There may be some truth in the arguments that other Maritime universities finish before us and that our students need extra time to find jobs, but scheduling adjustments should have been made for next year at the soonest.

The UPEI community expected classes to continue until April 18th. By adjusting this date the university has violated a contract, and legally we probably should receive compensation. Would students, for example, not be justified in demanding partial refunds on tuition and residence fees? After all, we are getting a week less than what we paid for in January. Well administration, how about it?

The Senate acted with the best interests of our students at heart. I doubt, however, that the majority of students agree either with their decision or with their reasons for making it. I do know that some students are violently opposed to the shorter term, and that their grumbling may grow loud enough to be heard. Thus, while the Senate may think that what is done is done, such may not necessarily be the case.

UPEI SUN

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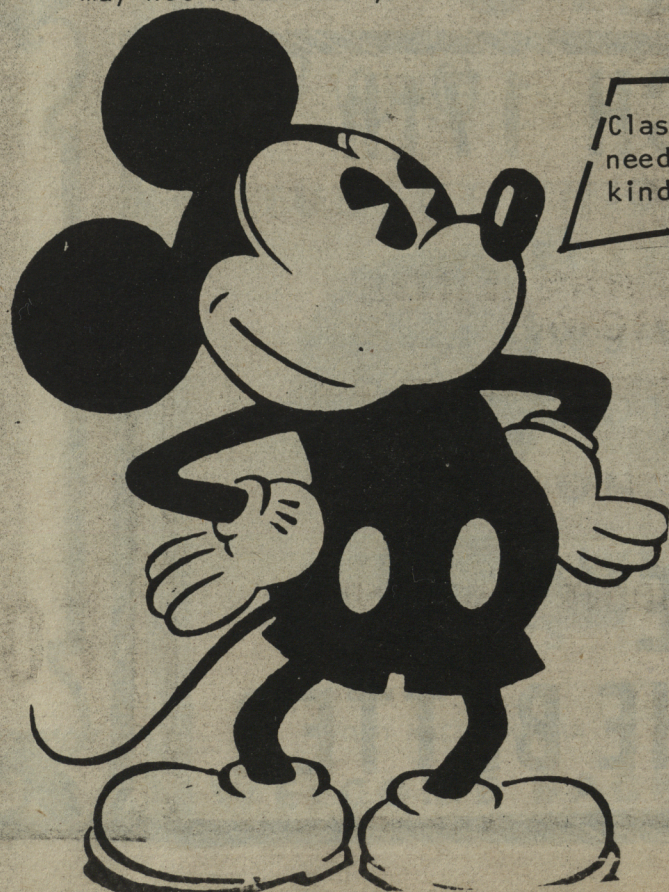
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Classes off whenever I need them - Now that is my kind of school.