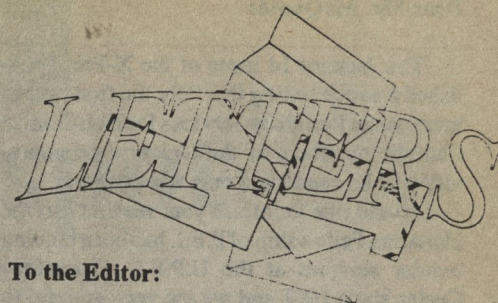


# I am person... hear me roar



To the Editor:

Over the Christmas vacation, I had a very good experience, which I would like to share with the campus. I volunteer with CIMN Radio, and must frequently deal with Campus Security if I am working there outside of normal office hours. One evening quite close to Christmas, I needed to go into the station. The Student Union office, and therefore the Barn itself, were not open, and had not been open for a few days. No CIMN volunteers had been in that day either, and it was within a few days of the series of brazen attacks on women which occurred in the Charlottetown area over the holidays.

I went to Security to get the keys to the Barn and the radio station. I requested that someone then call up to the station in about ten minutes or so, just to make sure that I had made it there safely. After all, in case the locks were seized up on me, the burglar alarm didn't work, I slipped on a patch of ice, or anything else, it seemed safer to have some follow-up made, rather than me just walking off and having no one know where I was.

I made my request to the secretary, and the security officer on duty said he'd go one better and walk me over to the Barn. This officer walked over with me, waited while I got in through the front door, walked up to the station with me, turned on the safety lighting around the building (which was useful, as I didn't know the location of the switches for them), and then came in and checked all the studios and offices around the station for anything out of the ordinary. Then he put in a good word for the Safe Walk program, and left with a reminder to me that I could call Security if I had any problems through the evening. I have had bad experiences with Security in the past, as well as neutral and good ones. This incident was important to me because it seemed to be a possible indication that Security had heard the complaints about them during this fall's turmoil on campus, and were making steps in the right direction. What's the point of even having a Security department if the people who live and work on campus can't work with them? If all the security officers at UPEI behaved this way all the time, this campus would be a much safer place.

I'd like to publicly thank that particular officer for his courtesy, and thank the rest of the department for the strides which I have personally observed them making in their treatment of UPEI students. Believe me, it is very much appreciated!

Signed,  
A CIMN Volunteer

Sean McQuaid  
Editor-in-Chief

Catherine Callbeck become top dog in the penny-ante provincial legislature of Canada's smallest province is, in light of other women's political accomplishments, not enough to make the feminist pulse quicken.

More significantly, it's rather shallow and condescending to regard any politician primarily as a woman politician rather than considering the individual's unique personal qualities and merit. Catherine Callbeck's role as a female politician doesn't mean that we can or should expect to see "female politics" from her. In fact, Callbeck does not describe herself as a feminist. When asked about her stance on "women's issues" Callbeck has refused to acknowledge them as such, saying that she prefers to deal with people issues. Similarly, Conservative leader Pat Mella could hardly be considered the poster girl for mainstream feminism in that she is steadfastly opposed to abortion, which is seen by many feminists as an essential right of all women. Politicians cannot and should not be neatly typecast according to gender, since, as Callbeck and Mella show, we can't expect them to act the roles we envision.

Most importantly, we should not let such politically correct ponderings as gender ramifications distract us from actual political issues. Rather than buzzing about women premiers, the media can (and in some cases they have) address more relevant questions: for instance, how valid is a nomination process that favors an outsider like Callbeck over government members, how is it that Callbeck faced virtually no resistance to her rise, and what does she intend to do now that she's in power? She has expressed her concern with such vague issues as education and economic development, but has yet to map out any convincing or detailed plans (and given the fact that she's working with a cabinet that is basically inherited from the former administration, we probably shouldn't be expecting any truly shocking changes in the way things are run). With an election in the offing, now is the time to evaluate our politicians by their policies and actions, not their sex. We should vote not as men or women but as people, if we want politicians who will serve us as such.

The key word in "news" is "new". The public are suckers for novelty, always eager to lap up the strange and original.

That's why the popular tabloids perpetrate such enlightening exposes as Elvis sightings on Mars rather than bore us with such everyday, pedestrian fare as political events and economic reports. If you want people's attention you have to be startlingly different, and things have become startlingly different on P.E.I. with the departure of popular Premier Joe Ghiz, a fixture of Island politics for years. That in itself is startling, but it got better. Not only was Joe giving his swansong, but his replacement wasn't even drawn from his still-popular Liberal government. Stranger still, this federal MP and would-be premier faced virtually no opposition in the race for Ghiz's job, and won by a staggering but unsurprising landslide in an extravagant "race" that served virtually no purpose beyond stroking the new premier's ego...and the surprises didn't stop there. Even before the conclusion of the leadership race, the media were excitedly buzzing about the strangest twist of all, our new premier's deep, dark secret...Catherine Callbeck was a woman!

While the gravel-voiced Callbeck could hardly be considered the archetype of feminine allure, the discovery by the media of her gender is still something less than the investigative reporting coup of the century. Nevertheless, as Callbeck's victory began to look certain, national and local reporters alike began commenting incredulously on how Callbeck would become Prince Edward Island's first woman premier; moreover, the leader of the only potentially significant opposition party on the Island is also a woman: Progressive Conservative leader Pat Mella. With a provincial election looming on the horizon, newshounds have been panting at the possibility that P.E.I. could be the first province in Canada to elect a woman premier. The mind boggles.

Before we get carried away, though, just what are our minds boggling at? Callbeck's rise to power is not necessarily all that amazing. England, our merry olde mother country and cradle of all things conservative, spent a good long while with a female by the name of Margaret Thatcher holding the national reins of power. Here in Canada, women like Kim Campbell and Barbara MacDougall have become major players in the federal political arena. Seeing