

Real communication is needed

by Jonathan Smith

As anyone who reads the Cadre with any regularity has probably noticed, there has been much talk of discontent throughout the staff and contributors. The problems have been stated before - the Cadre is disorganized, undemocratic, and without any real sense of direction or purpose. There has been a lot of talk from both sides regarding these issues, and attempts at solutions are being put in place. However, the reality is clear. To quote the Editor-In-Chief, meeting attendance "has dropped from an average of 20 people down to six at our last two meetings. Two paid staff have left, and our contributors have all but vanished". These statements would suggest that despite any efforts at correcting the issues, there is still an uncomfortable vibe that permeates the office and the paper produced in it.

As one who has been involved with the troubles that plague the paper since they first began to appear, I can only say that the one thing missing from all the proceedings has been communication. Oh yes, there have been several opportunities at airing out complaints, and many have taken them. Yet despite this, there is something that still feels "off". So obviously something is still missing. I believe that real communication, not simply a moderated meeting every once in awhile, is not happening on a large scale. As a start I've taken my concerns to the Editor-in-Chief personally, and at least now the issues are being dis-

cussed professionally, openly and frequently whereas before they were not.

I have my own personal issues with some things that are Cadre related, but they are just that - personal issues. They shall not be aired out in the pages of the paper, nor within the walls of the

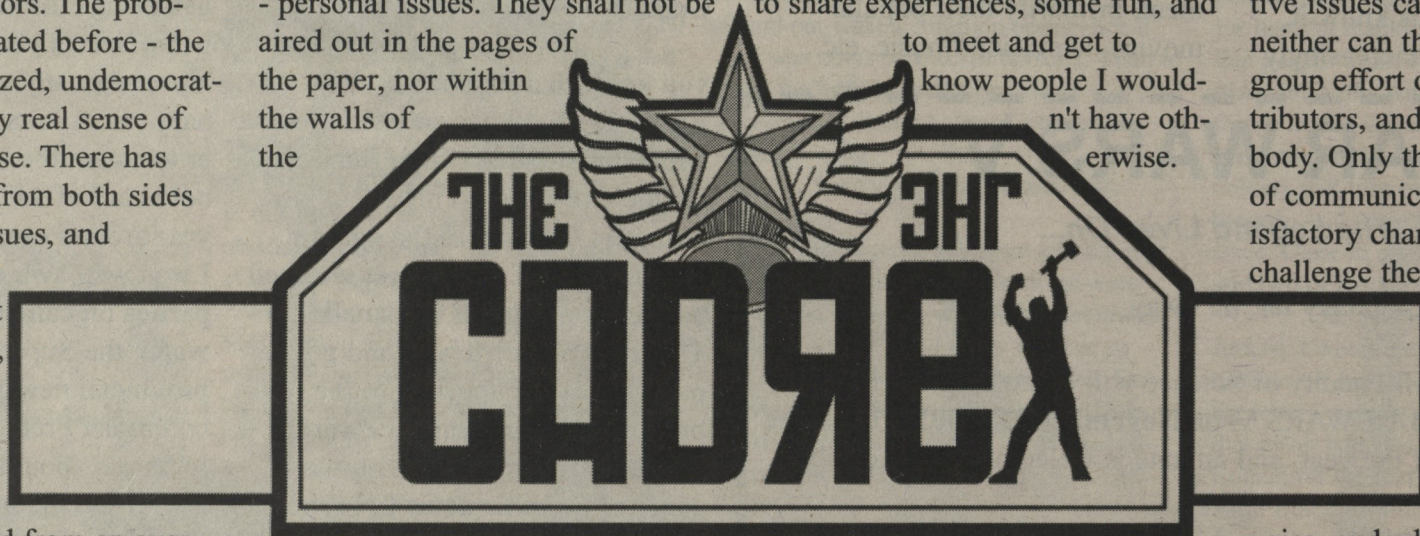
office. They are completely separate from the main task at hand - producing a quality student newspaper that communicates with the student body and union and still leaves room for fun. In talking with the student body, I've learned that many have various complaints with the paper, which are everything from the use of language and slang terms to the lack of order of the material. Yet the editorial staff never hears of these problems right from the source, so how can they be expected to address them?

Everyone is busy and has little time to pay attention to a student newspaper. However, the cost of producing the Cadre is included in the stiff fees we students pay to attend this institution. That makes it ours - not the editor's, not the Cadre staff's, but the entire student body's as a whole. Just because the office is located upstairs in the student centre doesn't mean that anybody can't drop in and express their

opinion, or better yet, write an editorial to share their thoughts. I spent a year as a regular volunteer for the Cadre and then joined the staff because it was a chance to share ideas with the student body, to share experiences, some fun, and to meet and get to know people I wouldn't have otherwise.

I would certainly like to think that we as a student body can make the Cadre one of the best damned student newspapers there

is. Not just a piece of mildly entertaining waste or an overly serious and uptight newsletter, but a forum for shared ideas, experiences, entertainment, and education. Those of us who have our respective issues cannot do it alone, and neither can the editor. It has to be a group effort of editors, staff, contributors, and the whole student body. Only through such open lines of communication will any real satisfactory change be made. So I challenge the entire student body, not as a reporter who gets paid a pathetic amount per issue, but as a fellow student to speak up and be heard. Be a loud voice, and whatever you do, ensure that you don't just become another whisper of discontent in the shadows.



UPEI STUDENT NEWSPAPER

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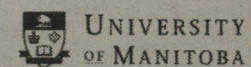
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