

OUR COMMENT

By Robert Godfrey and Alan Smith

We have all heard talk, over the past few years, concerning student apathy, indifference, and/or disregard for campus community affairs. However, I suspect a more worthy topic might have received greater appreciation and consideration if presented for my fellow students reflection.

Perhaps a concise, yet fervent, exposition regarding the increase of constipation among the native people of Siberia amidst the infamous 1922 Siberian Rhubarb shortage might have proved more adequate. I suppose there was always "hope," though!

At the risk, then, of regurgitating the many remarkable versions, we have all encountered, of "WHAT'S WRONG?" allow me to speak out, once again, on the subject of student apathy, in regard to student affairs.

Besides, if my views are not to be appreciated here, one could always present them to an equally worthy authority elsewhere; say, The Gong Show!

However, in whatever manner it is stated, there is an obvious "lack" within the student body in regard for student affairs. In fact, my own generous service to the cause of indifference might, possibly, be recognized publically, at some later date, if, Dr. Bolger should ever decide to write about this area, within "U.P.E.I.'s" History!

Yet, one could ask, 'is student apathy not the order of the day? The sixties were an age of student organization, student involvement, student protest, student identity. The seventies generally are lacking the fervour and thrust displayed, in these areas, within the "high" sixties. Many might say it is a basis sociological reaction to this state of affairs, that allows such uncommittedness to run rampant in our Island University now. I prefer an alternative explanation. I would suggest that such a setting will be present to the exact degree one allows it to be.

O.K., someone will say (presuming someone still happens to be reading this). But what aid does this analysis give US towards remedying the situation?

They could argue that the student body, generally, just doesn't give a damn! In concrete facts, they might add that we have tried our damndest to do something for them, to make things available to them, to make our groups, organizations, meetings, etc. open for them to join and participate in; but they WON'T. They might argue, further, what the hell good is this analysis as an aid to such a morbid situation?

I will immediately admit that it gives no aid. Yet, it is within this very fact, that my stand is based.

It is futile for the Student Council to promote any external solutions to this problem of apathy in regard for student affairs. It is just as futile for this writer, or any others, to seriously entertain such "solutions".

The only answer, or solution, which will be of any use, must be founded, I feel, by each of us, separately, as individuals. Each of us, separately, as individual students of UPEI with concerns and drives NEEDING expression and regard from our fellow students.

What, then, are we now talking about? Well, its a dirty word to many of us, chiefly because its task never ends but goes on and on. We call it responsibility. It includes responsibility to ourself, responsibility to others, and, in this particular situation, responsibility to our campus. It challenges us to meet the obligations which are best expressive of our character, interests, and concerns while we are students at UPEI.

Mr. President. I would suggest to you that the onus of responsibility, in endeavoring to reduce the level of apathy in student affairs, lies not within the ranks of the Student Council, nor any other group or organization on Campus. It lies rather, with each and every individual member of the student body.

Out of regard for our fellow students and to the university community, in general, we must own up to this challenge. We must take the risk of acting individually and responsibly towards each other before we can ever think of working



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together again, collectively. It is not therefore a question of what the Student Council, or any other organization, can do for us but, rather, what we can do for them.

I hope that many shall not only identify these views with their own personal thought, but shall strive, with me, to see our obligations in a fuller and more

responsible manner as we each seek, and share, together within UPEI, this year, the future.

Mr. President, I hope you and your administration will see your responsibility to the student body, in the coming year, as one of guidance and leadership - not power and control. I am confident you shall work with this conviction.

And, I await all comments.