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Council turns inward

continued from p. 1

Vice-president says council's role is internal

In an interview after the meeting council vice-president Jeff Champion said it was council's responsibility to deal with students and the inside university community.

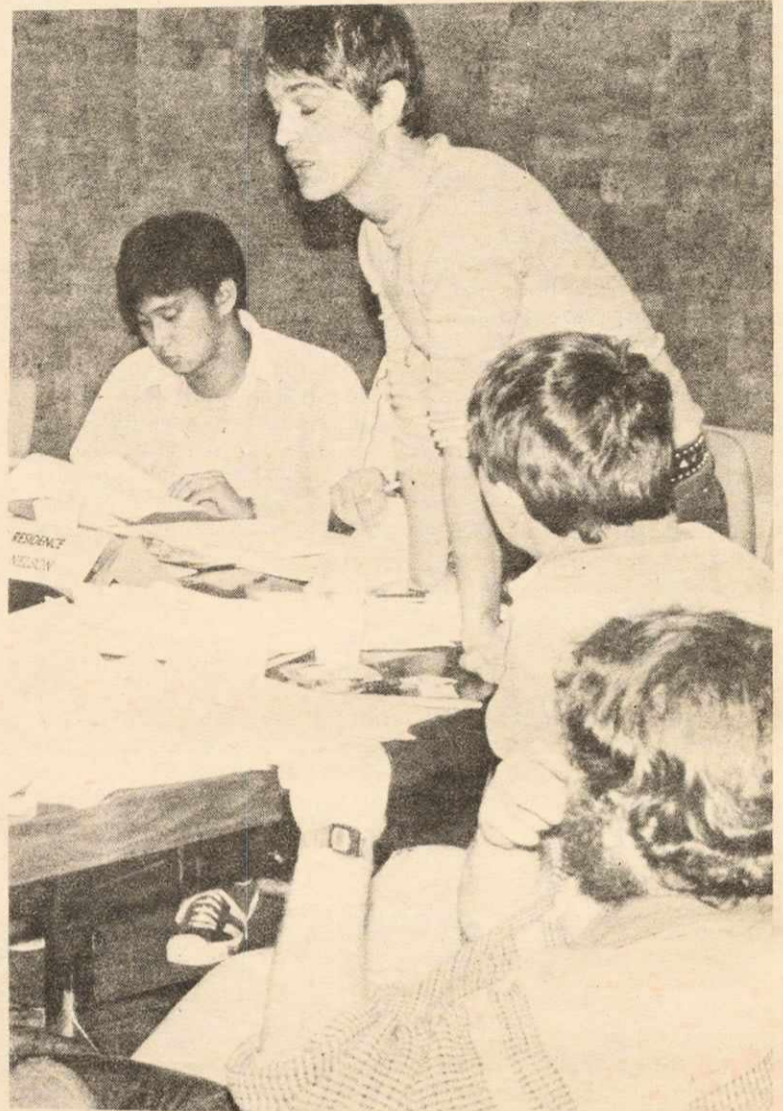
Respecting issues like the Capitol Stores boycott he said council should only step in where an obvious case of injustice has been committed.

"I hesitate to speak on behalf of 8,000 students when I feel they are divided on that issue."

Asked if it wasn't true he was elected to take a stand for students on these issues, he denied this was the case.

"Otherwise we would have a line item in our budget for these things. Sometimes I think student councils get carried away representing their students and leap into things where they shouldn't."

Asked if council's attitude toward external affairs reflected a growing narcissism among the student body, Champion was undecided: "I don't know whether it is a reflection of people's views on social issues or a matter of the student union taking a restrained view of its responsibilities."



Peter Rans, outspoken graduate rep

No committee to investigate SUB general manager's position

Elsewhere at last Sunday's meeting, council narrowly defeated a motion to investigate the various roles of student union manager John Graham.

When Rans gave notice of the motion the previous council meeting he had cited Graham's recent appointment as manager of university services, together with his position as director of student housing, as creating a potential conflict of interest between Graham's responsibilities to the student union and the administration.

"The recent appointment of John Graham clearly indicated a process that has been developing unchecked for a number of years. Mr. Graham has been able to gather and exercise inordinate control over student interests and has effectively replaced the students council as the major decision making body on a number of crucial concerns which effect students," he had said.

The four member committee Rans proposed was to "gather all relevant information, and to analyze whether there is a potential conflict of interest in his (Graham's) multiple roles."

"In proposing the motion I do so because there are at large a number of people who don't know what he does or have their own ideas and don't like it. If the committee is objective we can see what he does and we won't have to carry on conversations at the back of the SUB anymore."

President Owen responded he took offence to many parts of the wording of Rans' motion, implying Graham was guilty of something there is no evidence for.

He said it was council's right to set up a committee to see what Graham does and if there is any potential conflict of interest between the student union and the administration in his position, but he said he had satisfied himself as to these questions long before taking office as president.

"These topics have come up before and I have assured myself there was no conflict of interest," he said.

Respond to claims that the committee wasn't intended to insult Graham he said he agreed with vice-president Champion that the whole motion was an insult. "As president of the student union one of my responsibilities is to sit on every committee John Graham is sitting on. I'm satisfied that whenever he is sitting on a committee as our general manager that the interests of the student union come first. If you are concerned, establish a committee and satisfy yourselves."

Health Professions representative Gilkinson said she had no feelings for or against Graham, but said considering his influence and the uncertainty about his roles it would be

good for council to become more aware of what he does.

"Possibly we will learn a better way to use him. I'm sure he can be a very valuable resource person."

Treasurer MacLeod said Graham needed no defense because he can defend himself. He suggested Graham could come in front of council and explain to members the nature of his job.

Others suggested a committee could be established to understand John Graham's roles, one which did not contain any presumption that he was guilty of something.

Nine councillors supported and ten opposed Rans' motion.

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