

No chem,
no math,
no music,
no
university

CHARLOTTETOWN (CUP)—No chemistry, no political studies, no mathematics, no music.

It was recommendations like that in a report calling for a total restructuring of the University of Prince Edward Island that shocked students and faculty into action.

The report was prepared this summer by a four-member committee appointed by UPEI president Peter Meincke to study how the university should cope with looming cutbacks. It was presented to Senate Oct. 14, and urged the university to:

*eliminate 11 arts and science majors, such as chemistry, political science and math

*eliminate the degree program in music, which it dubbed a "noble experiment that failed"

*move away from the liberal arts tradition towards professional programs in business administration, engineering and computer science

The Senate overwhelmingly rejected the report and appointed a new committee to study the matter.

"If this goes through, in ten years we will have no university," said classics professor John Quincy.

"The authors of this report haven't a clue what a university is supposed to stand for," said political studies professor David Milne.

Three days after the report's release, 250 of the university's 1600

students gathered in an assembly to protest it.

"We won't be studying here next year if it goes through," said a first-year student. "We want UPEI to be what we chose it to be."

Faculty and students were angry at the lack of consultation by the committee.

Economics professor Gary Webster said most students and faculty were away when the committee was formed in May: "The administration chose the deadwater time of year."

No faculty members sat on it, and most of those who attended the public meetings this summer were non-academic staff.

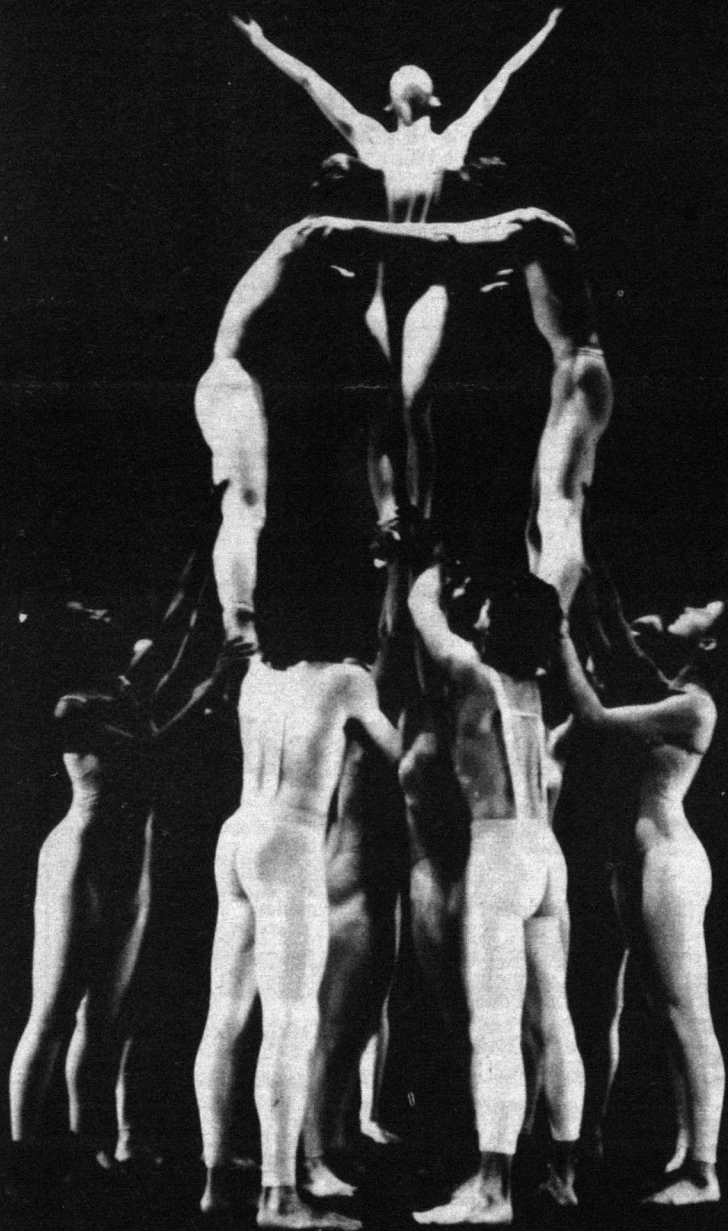
The committee only met with six student representatives for one two-hour session. Neither students nor faculty in the music department were told of the committee's existence.

Meanwhile, Meincke said the university lost valuable time by rejecting the report out of hand. He said UPEI did not face a major funding cut this year, but future federal transfer payments are so uncertain it must plan for future cuts.

Meincke said he was not surprised at the reaction to the report.

"It is a very emotional thing to even consider phasing out a program."

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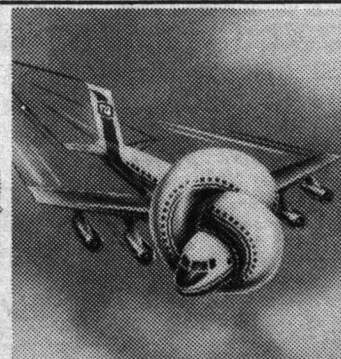
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