

Warrian . . . "just a humble farmer"

By AL SCARTH

"I'm just a humble farmer looking for a peasant group to join . . ."

With those words, Canadian Union of Students president, Peter Warrian, proceeded to throw devastatingly quiet fire and brimstone at members of his union.

I don't think we have grappled with the political realities, he said, and when you condemn a person like Martin Loney as an individual for the speech he made, you are perpetuating a great injustice.

The man who left a seminary in Baltimore four years ago to become the Marxist-oriented leader of Canadian students that he is today, castigated the infantilism of parts of the left.

His quiet blast left listeners at the midnight caucus stunned.

Yet to say stunned is in no way really indicative of the awed silence that those on the left who were pseudo-politicians or jargon-minded rhetoricians fell into.

It started as a bantering blast at everyone and anything, one of the lighter gatherings among the scores of meetings here.

Then, the impromptu speaker from the hard left of the Waterloo students' council began his jabs at the president-elect, Martin Loney.

He told his laughing-turned-serious audience Loney had sold out.

And Peter Warrian, poked and pushed to comment on his successor's "lousy" speech, didn't say anything for a while.

But they poked and pushed some more. They wanted his reaction.

So, finally, in a premeditated way some said, he raised his black Hutterite hat with the wide brim.

His eyes remained in sockets as black as if the hat still shaded them. He said "I'm just a humble farmer . . ."

He said it slow. He said it quiet. And what he said next shamed and inspired those around with the feeling that, while he disliked their

infantilism, he had a faith.

The man who didn't look like a revolutionary, a football player maybe, had a faith stronger than the one he had lost.

He had a faith in humanism. He believed that the hope for that humanism rested in those listening and that it was damned well nigh time they took hold of that responsibility.

There should be no factions, no splits. They become ludicrous when there are poor people without hope, bad people or unconscious people without feeling and good people with a vision.

Yet they knew it was no prophet speaking. They fell silent not be-

cause a new Mohammed or Christ had risen in their midst.

They just had that love of the group for a man who has followed his vision and told them they were a-failing in theirs.

So they were silent because there was little left to say. There was nothing to do but adjourn, which they did.

There was nothing to do but think, question, re-evaluate.

But particularly, to commune with their own inadequacies, to appreciate the moral man who spent the year fighting for them and who understood and stood for Martin Loney better than any of them could or would.

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This is page five.

This page is for opinion—YOUR opinion. The Gateway welcomes letters, columns, cartoons and any other pieces which are of interest.

All submissions should be brought to room 282 of the students' union building and, if mailed, addressed to The Editor, The Gateway, etc.

Correspondents are asked to be brief, otherwise the letters are subject to abridgement. Note that we do not censor submissions unless there is a danger of libel, but we will edit.

All material must bear the name, faculty and year of the writer. Pseudonyms will not be published. If you won't sign your name, we believe the opinion is not worth publishing.

If a letter is a direct reply to a letter printed in a previous issue, the writer should give the date the previous letter was printed.

Letters should not be more than 300 words in length. Short letters are more likely to be published promptly—and read.

Crippled CUS staggers on

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they sustain the structures which have led to failure in the past."

"That choice may mean staying on their students councils, or getting the hell off. And when the real crunch comes, they're going to stay on council.

"The choice lies not in keeping the structures," McPeake said. "We have to destroy them or tear them apart so they will serve the people."

CHARGES DENOUNCED

But McPeake's charges met bitter denunciation from John Gallagher, a member of the incoming CUS secretariat, who labelled the radicals "opportunistic" and supported the position taken by incoming CUS president Martin Loney—that the union must concentrate on organizing students around issues such as housing and unemployment rather than a radical analysis of society.

"You're not dealing with these problems in a historical way," Gallagher said. "You have failed to come up with an alternative program."

The previous evening, delegates from the University of Waterloo had also tried to force a discussion of CUS structure, stunning the congress by proposing the national union become an affiliate of the Industrial Workers of the World, a revolutionary syndicalist organization smashed by police in the 1920's.

The Waterloo proposal went down to defeat by a vote of 17 to 3, after the congress refused to allow Waterloo to withdraw its motion.

The right as well as the left was unsuccessful in forcing debate on the structure of CUS: a motion put forward by the University of Calgary, calling for the creation of a new national organization, the Canadian Students' Federation, died for lack of a seconder.

FINANCES

But the hard logic of finances may prove to be more of a deciding factor in the direction of CUS than either radical or moderate arguments. At the end of the congress, only eight student councils had committed themselves to the union for the coming year, although several other delegations

committed themselves to fight for CUS in referendums.

With only 39,500 students in the union, CUS finance commissions predicted the organization would go "belly-up by Christmas" if critical referendums at Carleton University and the University of Toronto did not favor CUS.

Students at Carleton will vote October 13; Toronto students October 23. As many as 10 other referendums may be called during the forthcoming year.

The precarious state of the union's finances led to one change in CUS operations: selection of a president-elect, traditionally one of the duties of the fall congress, was postponed until Christmas, when the union will hold another legislative meeting.

CHRISTMAS ELECTION

The decision to elect Martin Loney's successor at mid-year will also allow CUS members to evaluate the actions of the secretariat in view of events during the next four months.

While many programs were left undebated in the hands of the CUS national council, delegates from 33 schools who attended the conference managed to pass resolutions on some aspects of education and on the nature of the student's role in society.

Delegates stated their opposition to the Americanization of Canadian universities, but also condemned any attempts to regulate the number of American professors by means of a quota system.

"A professor's ability to deal with the Canadian reality is not always based on his nationality," they noted.

The delegates also called for an end to authoritarianism in education, and presented demands which would lead to the development of a "critical university"—one which would do more than act as an apologist for the status quo.

The present educational system, delegates said, "prepares the student to fit uncritically into the corporate capitalist structure," without questioning the social and moral effects of the system.

"The students in the classroom should be in control in the classroom and should be actively participating in the classroom," one delegate said.

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