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## The high cost of leaving—\$100 an hr.

### "I'm sure an intelligent person can prepare his own divorce"—lawyer

By GATEWAY STAFF

Edmonton lawyers are charging up to \$100 an hour for handling certain divorce cases.

City lawyer Neil Crawford says \$450 to \$500 is the price that "most lawyers say to each other that they're charging" for most divorces.

Mr. Crawford said Thursday that on a very simple, uncontested divorce, he would spend perhaps five hours of his time.

This figure would consist of one hour for the first interview with the client, one hour to prepare the client for the court appearance, two hours in court (including waiting), and one hour filling out

and filing the necessary forms at the Supreme Court.

About one in 10 cases would be this simple.

The other nine would be complicated by attempting to prove adultery, collusion, or domicile, and, while perhaps raising the final cost of the divorce, would certainly lower the figure of \$100 per hour.

Lou Friedman, another Edmonton lawyer, estimates the cost of the simplest divorce case at \$300 to \$500, plus disbursements. An individual's cost if he sued for divorce himself would be only the disbursements—\$22 to \$40. This includes sheriff's and filing fees, and court costs.

"I'm sure a reasonably intelligent

person with a simple case could sit down for a Thursday afternoon (the day Supreme Court hears the uncontested divorce cases), see 15 or so cases settled, and then prepare his own case," Mr. Friedman said Thursday.

However, he came out against persons attempting to pursue complex court litigations by themselves.

In these cases "the judge must help both sides to present their cases." Mr. Friedman was afraid that if judges began helping one side against the other, you could no longer be as certain of an unbiased hearing.

"I have no objections to people fighting their own case. I object

to the judge helping them," said Mr. Friedman.

Mr. Crawford was of the same opinion. "It's up to the individual if he wants to fight in court," he said, "but I can understand Judge Greschuk's attitude. Two lawyers can settle a simple divorce in 15 minutes in court. A private individual could take 45 minutes."

Mr. Justice Peter Greschuk has twice adjourned one Edmonton do-it-yourself divorce.

Two other Edmontonians have recently obtained divorces costing under \$30.

Mr. Friedman said he has handled 10 or 12 divorces this year.

He estimated that a lawyer specializing in divorce work might

handle 20 to 25 cases each month.

Mr. Crawford said lawyers' average incomes had climbed from \$16,000 per year to \$20,000 per year during the last few years. He disagreed with Health and Welfare Minister and former lawyer John Munro's recent comment about unduly high legal fees.

"I suggest that Mr. Munro is not that familiar with the present practice of law," he said.

Mr. Crawford added that "some lawyers go into public life because, among other factors, they were not overly successful at the practice of law." He also said, "45,000-dollar-a-year public servants often have little difficulty in criticizing the fees charged by their former profession."

Mrs. Adlynn Hewitt, another practising city lawyer, said "the most I have ever charged for a divorce is \$600." She spoke in reference to a case lasting 11 months.

"I've never said 'go away,'" she added, "and I've never demanded money on the table when faced with a person's needs." Both Mr. Crawford and Mr. Friedman said they receive some payments by installments.

Mrs. Hewitt regretted she was perhaps "an unfair lawyer to quote" because she has a husband who also earns a living. She added that at a recent Bar Association convention it was suggested that her practice operates the way it does mainly due to the fact that her husband also has a source of income.

Finally she said, "I never started to practise with financial gain in mind. I hope I never change."

The Alberta Bar Association sets no schedule of rates for divorce cases, as it does with some other common types of legal action.



—George Drohomirecki photo

**SUB COMES OF AGE**—Whether they called it cabaret night or a "social function," Thursday was SUB's first wet bust-out for students. Upwards of 600 chuggers and sippers danced to the Winnipeg Carpetbaggers or Polka Kings or something. Take your pick. Whoever it was, we hope they were 21 or there's gonna be trouble.

## SUB Sunday Student Cinema faces difficulties

By JUDY SAMOIL  
of The Gateway

The students' union could face charges of violating the Lord's Day Act by showing its Sunday film series.

Until this year, the union had a special agreement with the Attorney General's Department whereby it could show movies on Sunday provided they were foreign films, were by subscription (advance

sale), and were restricted to campus with no advertising.

In May jurisdiction over movies was handed to the city. The Attorney General's Department now has control only of the class the film is to be run under—restricted, adult or family.

"Now the provincial government can't give us this agreement," SUB Theatre manager Cecil Pretty said Thursday night. "It has been turned over to the city and is now suspended by the proposed plebiscite."

Another difficulty facing the students' union films occurs because of the inclusion of 35mm movies with the usual 16mm ones. "Law requires that 35mm projectors be run by a licensed projectionist and it turns out the only licensed ones belong to the union," said Mr. Pretty.

The union, however, wants a contract for all the movies to be

shown in SUB Theatre, whether 35 or 16mm in order that one projectionist can run the films in the series.

"There are 20 or so students working part time as theatre crew for \$1.50 an hour. It would be taking it away from the students, and at double cost," said Mr. Pretty. This would be defeating the purpose of the SUB Theatre, he said.

The first movie of the series is slated to be shown this Sunday, and Mr. Pretty says there will probably be no admission charged. Because the film is already here, it will be shown, he said. If the union is unable to obtain permission to show films regularly on Sundays, the series will probably be cancelled.

"I'm not concerned with breaking the law," said Mr. Pretty. "I'm concerned with a good theatre program and I think these films are part of it."

### Official SU Notice

The expansion of the students' council has resulted in the creation of vacancies on the council, to be filled by the election of new members. One representative will sit on council for every 750 students enrolled in his or her faculty.

Therefore, a students' union by-election will be held on Friday, October 10, 1969, to contest the following positions:

Faculty of Arts: 3 additional representatives; Faculty of Commerce: 1 additional representative; Faculty of Education: 5 additional representatives; Faculty of Medical Lab. Science: 1 representative; School of Nursing (B.Sc. Pattern): 1 representative; Faculty of Science: 3 representatives.

Nominations opened September 18 at 9 a.m. and close September 25, at 5 p.m. Nominations must be on the proper forms, which may be procured from the students' union receptionist's desk after 9 a.m.

Nomination forms must be signed by the nominee, the nominator, and 24 other full members of the students' union, and must be deposited in an unmarked envelope in a sealed container in the possession of the Returning Officer. Further information is available from the students' union office.

### Correction

A headline on the front page of The Gateway Thursday should have read "Sci, UAB reps expelled for absence."

The Gateway apologizes for any embarrassment or inconvenience the story may have caused to students' union law representative Frank MacInnis who has no connection whatsoever with the reported event.

## Community Casserole

Gateway hit the street today for the first time as did Casserole, its Friday supplement.

In order to bring you the news while it is still news, campus Casseroles are being distributed separately from The Gateway. That means a saving of four hours at our printers, U of A Printing Services.

The Friday-only street edition is free for this first issue with subsequent copies costing 15 cents.