

Cocaine is ...

... nature's way of saying "earn more money".

## Danger in Alta. homes for aged

by Michael Skeet

A fiery disaster may have to occur in an Alberta nursing home before the provincial government will take official notice of the serious deficiencies in Alberta's Nursing Homes Act.

This warning was issued by one of the nurses striking against the privately owned Hardisty Nursing Home in Edmonton.

But the strike itself does not concern her; she believes a settlement is close at hand. Instead, the nurse, who asked that her name be withheld, is attempting to use the strike to call attention to a far more serious problem — the discrepancy between district-operated and privately-run nursing homes.

A major problem (and one that can exist in public as well as private homes) exists with care and supervision. The Nursing Homes Act as it stands, she says, does not allow for safe care or adequate supervision.

She alleges nurses have often sedated residents for no sound reason other than to prevent them from injuring themselves.

Lack of supervisory staff means there is no other way to keep people away from potentially dangerous stairwells, or to prevent residents from wandering into busy streets.

"These people are frightened and resistive," she says. "They need time spent on them — you tell me how you can spend time on them when you've got over a hundred people to look after."

But an administrator at one of the local homes disagrees.

"In general, everyone is happy here," she says. "We want to keep people happy here."

There is, according to the nurse, a simple reason for the lack of staff. In order to ensure the smooth, economic management of a home, most operators keep their staffs at the minimum level required by the government.

The Alberta Nursing Homes Act requires only that "one registered or graduate nurse be on duty for each 75 patients or major fraction thereof". What's worse, during the afternoon and night shifts, only one nurse is required to be on duty for an entire home, whether it contains 75 or 750 residents.

In practical terms, nurses are often made responsible for 100 patients or more. The nurse claims to have been responsible at times for 150 patients — twice the legal limit.

But the administrator disagrees with this assessment, saying that all the other work, feeding, bathing and such, is done by assistants, not the nurses themselves.

The nurse, however, accuses many private home operators of abuses beyond this. Private owners cut down on recreational and social programs, she charges, and then rely on volunteer agencies to staff the programs they do provide for.

Furthermore, she adds, many private owners cut down or scrimp on maintenance by buying cheap equipment, which is often difficult to repair. One home she worked for went without heat in the dead of winter for three days while a repairman struggled with a balky, unfit furnace.

There are even, suggests the nurse, some private owners who cut back on meals, or who scrimp

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Photo Bill Ingler

"Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow creeps on this weary pace from day to day..." As term draws to a close, students prepare for exams and term papers, and studious peace settles on the campus.

## Protest works: SU rehires

by Mike Walker

The Students' Union has run into problems with its employees over its attempts to curtail spending and bring the SU financial situation under control.

The SU tried this month to replace casual paid workers in the Art Gallery in the Students' Union Building (SUB) with volunteers.

However, this was in direct contravention of the SU's collective agreement with Local 1368 of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE). CUPE filed a grievance, and last week the SU reversed its decision.

"The contract says you cannot replace any CUPE employee with anyone who is not a member of CUPE," said SU General Manager Bert Best last week.

"I have the authority to reduce staff for economic reasons," he said. However, this allows him only to eliminate positions, not to replace paid employees with volunteers.

"There is no way they can replace a paid employee with a volunteer, in the agreement," said CUPE 1368 executive office Govind Sundram. "But if there's no work you lay someone off... we can't argue with that."

Best said the SU won't try the same thing again: "I made a verbal commitment to them that if we were considering any other things, we would discuss it with them first."

He said he had hoped the union would allow the SU to make the change in the art gallery. "We need their help," he said. "I'd rather work with the union."

Sundram seemed unimpressed with that kind of plan.

"We can't sit back and say, 'It's for the good of the Students' Union, and therefore we have to

close an eye,'" he said.

"There's nothing preventing the employer from laying people off. But they must do it according to the seniority list." This means the least senior of all SU employees must be laid off first.

"They have to work within the collective agreement," Sundram said.

## No Bowl ... no oil

The season finale. Jim Donlevy's Golden Bears are up against the Ottawa Gee Gees in the College Bowl Saturday.

The Bears advanced to the CIAU championship game by defeating the Calgary Dinos in the league final 22-14, and the University of Western Ontario Mustangs 14-4 in the Western Bowl ten days ago.

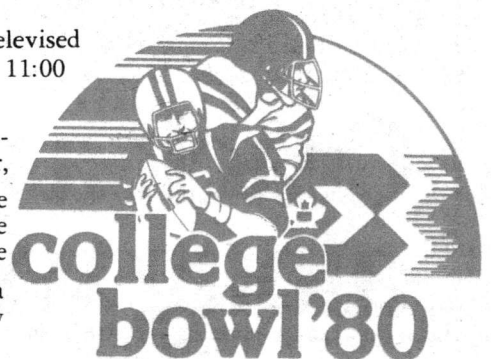
The game will be televised locally by CTV starting at 11:00

a.m. Edmonton time.

With the Bears ranked number one all year,

Gateway oddsmakers have installed them as three point favorites. It will be

Alberta 24, Ottawa 21 on a last minute scoring play by the Bears.



## New password

CALGARY (CUP) Students may soon need higher English marks than they now do to be admitted to the University of Calgary.

Presently, a mark of fifty per cent in grade 12 English is sufficient for admission, as long as an overall average of 60 per cent is reached in four grade twelve academic subjects.

According to a proposal from the Administrative Admissions Committee, the English requirement may be raised to 60 per cent in grade twelve English.

Committee Chairman Dr. Fred Terentiuk said there is a general "concern about English standards" among U of Calgary educators. He said it "did not seem unreasonable to get the students

to keep English up to the 60 per cent level".

The committee proposal was trying to reinforce the University's attempts to improve English, now handled through the university's 'effective writing program'. Terentiuk said nearly 40 per cent of the students writing the effective writing test last year failed.

The committee will use "every opportunity at our disposal to demonstrate our concern about the English skills" of students, he added.

Foreign students would "not be affected in any way by the proposed changes," Terentiuk said. They already have to meet stiff English requirements before admission, he said.