

National Notes

Fir trees that glow at night

VANCOUVER (CUP) — Students at the University of B.C. are keeping an eye out for any fir trees that glow at night.

According to radiation protection officer Bill Rachuk, there have been unsubstantiated reports that someone from UBC has injected 17 fir trees with radioactive Carbon-14.

The provincial health ministry has been unable to verify the claim, which was passed on to the government anonymously, says Dr. Wayne Greene, director of the ministry's radiation protection service.

But if the case is authentic, it would constitute an unauthorized use of radioactive materials, he said.

Greene said the Carbon-14 was unlikely to be in sufficient quantities to be harmful, but added that the person who made the report has legitimate cause for concern.

"I think the person was worried because his wife is pregnant," Greene said. "Maybe Carbon-14 isn't particularly hazardous, but it could be something else."

Rachuk said the person using the radioactive material was likely conducting a research project, and probably believes the action is perfectly acceptable.

"But this is not the right way to do it," Rachuk said.

U of W cancels courses

WINNIPEG (CUP) — Declining enrolment and budgetary cutbacks have combined to cause numerous course cancellations this year at the University of Winnipeg.

Arts and science dean Donald Kydon attributes course cancellations to a 6.5 per cent drop in enrolment at U of W this year. Kydon said that although courses have been cancelled as a "last resort," he believes no programs have been affected by this move.

English professor Walter Swayze says a combination of compatible courses is one solution, "perhaps at some sacrifice." Boty Swayze and Kydon say students and faculty are going to have to become more flexible in dealing with the situation.

Swayze said he foresees professors who have expertise in a particular field or who have taught a particular course for many years being forced to teach unfamiliar courses in response to cutbacks of staff.

Me-oui urges yes vote in Quebec

MONTREAL (CUP) — A committee to coordinate campus campaigns to urge a yes vote in the upcoming Quebec referendum has been formed by post-secondary students in Quebec.

The committee, called Me-Oui, was formed last week by both francophone and anglophone students.

Movement organizer Pierre Paquin said, "The committee is only a functional tool. Its sole goal is to inform students about the importance of voting yes in the Quebec referendum next spring."

"Our aim is to get things going before the committee for a no vote can undertake its campaign," he said.

"The movement is removing itself from any organizational political unit," said Paquin.

The committee hopes to reach all young people, not just students, says Paquin.

"Though we want to mobilize all students and young people across the province, for the movement we are focusing our attentions on CEGEP (community college) and university students," he said.

Gays print boycotted ad

OTTAWA (CUP) — In what staff call a "terribly embarrassing" mistake, the national gay magazine *Body Politic* has published a CBC radio ad, breaking a three-year ad boycott established by gay groups.

The boycott was established by the Canadian Lesbian and Gay Rights Coalition because CBC radio has for several years maintained a policy of refusing all public service announcements from gay organizations. Canadian University Press has voted for the past three years to support the boycott, with most member papers refusing to print CBC ads until the network changes its policy.

Ironically, the CBC ad published in the October issue of *Body Politic* was about a CBC-FM series titled "Being Gay," with six hours of coverage of gay issues.

"We had been boycotting the ads but it's terribly embarrassing because we had forgot (sic) about it," said *Body Politic* collective member Gerald Hannon.

Hannon said an apology and a letter from the Nova Scotia Gay Alliance for Equality will be run in the next issue.

"Carrying this ad serves the interests of CBC."

UBC tragedy - silverfish murdered

VANCOUVER (CUP) — A buggy University of B.C. student has failed in a campaign, which drew on tactics used in Greenpeace's Save the Seals fight, to stop the extermination of insect pests in residence.

Ken Koebke launched a "Save Our Silverfish" campaign aimed at stopping plans to spray the insects out of existence in residence apartments at UBC.

"Now a UBC tragedy — will you stand by and let the silverfish be slaughtered?" asked one sign Koebke posted in the residence lobby. The poster also urged students to "smash the state ... not the silverfish."

Concerned residents were asked to submit protest letter to Koebke's mailbox but the campaign failed when exterminators came in, spraying closets, garbage area and washrooms.

Koebke said that although the campaign was a joke, he was disappointed that no one replied to his plea. He added that he thought the spraying was really a plot to enable the RCMP to get into the rooms of students.

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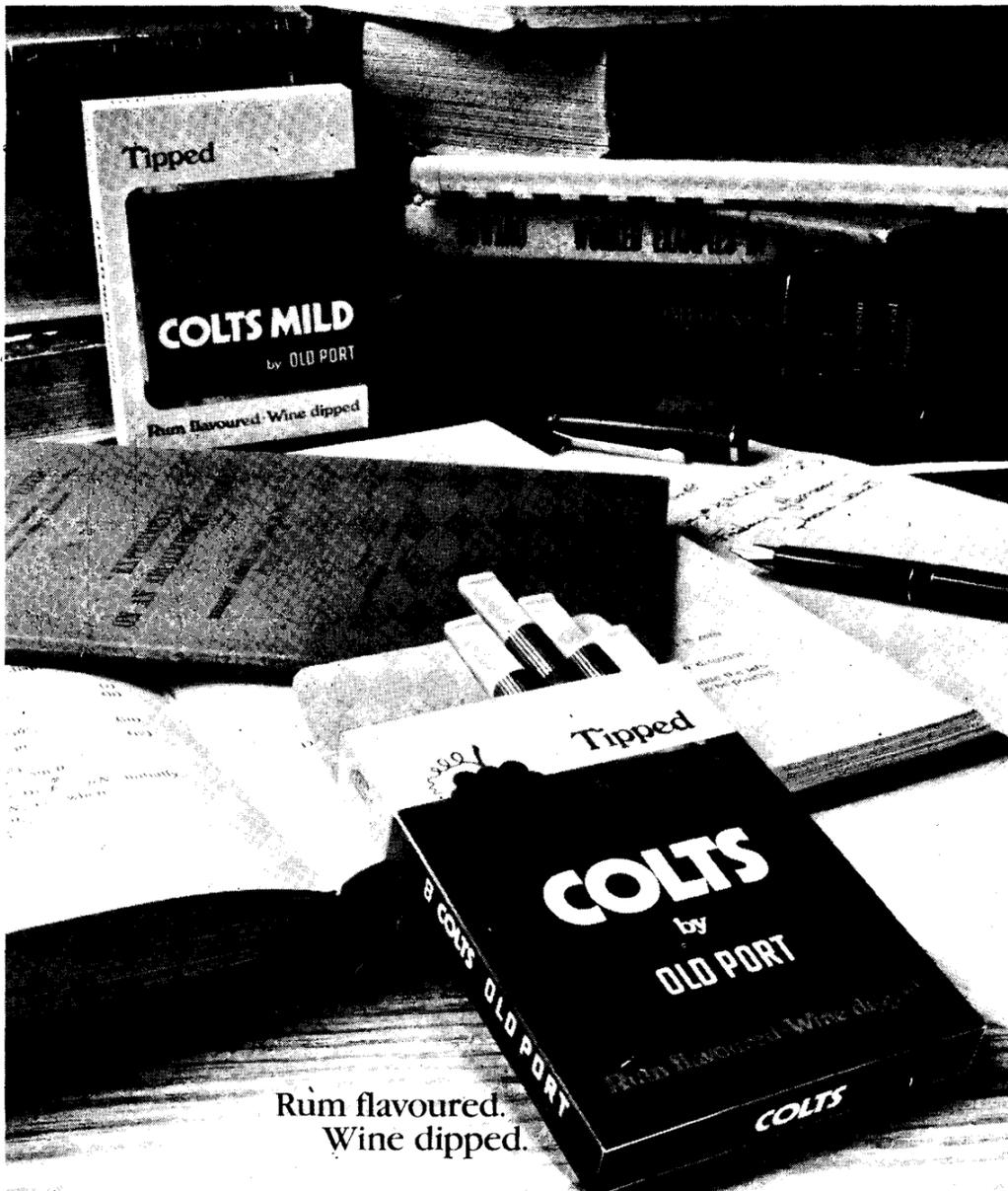
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