

Lubicon protest justified

Last Saturday, the Indians of Southern Alberta galloped into McMahon Stadium to the cheers of thousands of spectators during the Opening Ceremonies of the Olympic Games.

In the usual disjointed manner, the ABC broadcaster commented: "Canada (is) particularly proud (of) having dealt with the Indians... no Indian wars in Western Canada in the 1900's of any significance....Appropriate (that) the Games would begin with Native Americans in the stadium."

Appropriate indeed. The role of the Native Americans in the Olympics only emphasizes one of the worst, but most prominent aspects of the Games: the disgusting self-glorification of the host country.

Throughout the Games, Canada — specifically the city of Calgary — will try to evoke national pride among its inhabitants and promote itself to foreigners.

But proud as Canadians may be of our free, democratic system, we should be aware of its failings. One test of democracy is the country's treatment of its minorities, and Canada is failing this test. The Lubicon Indians can offer proof of this.

The Lubicons are calling for a boycott of the Olympics in particular, the Glenbow Museum exhibit of native culture: *The Spirit Sings*.

Their complaint stems from nearly 50 years of government bureaucracy failing to come to terms with the problem of the Lubicons' land claim. The band's lifestyle of hunting is threatened by the oil companies which have considered it their right to develop the land indiscriminately. The Lubicons, due to their geographic isolation, were excluded from the treaties signed at the turn of the century, and therefore have no formal right to their ancestral lands.

They are focusing their boycott on the Glenbow Museum exhibit because it is sponsored by the Alberta Government, which has hindered the Lubicons from agreement and Shell Oil which drills on their land.

Not even the censure of the United Nations human rights committee brought any change in the government's attitude; so the Lubicons' use of the Olympics as a forum is justified.

All the band wants is to protect its disappearing lifestyle. Here's a shocking statistic: in 1979, a trapper, received on average, an income of \$5,000 per year; now it has dropped to less than \$400. In 1979, roughly 3 percent of the people lived on welfare; now, 95 percent of the people do. Even with this degeneration, the band does not demand that the oil companies clear out — all they ask is for the companies to protect the ecology of the land, which would allow them to live independently.

That's not much to ask. In a full-page statement in *The Journal* on Canada's position in the dispute, the Indian Affairs department proudly recounted that the federal government gave the band 1.3 million dollars worth of housing and other social services last year. (Note that the government always mentions what it gives, not what it takes away.)

Do you know how much the Olympics cost? **\$128 million.** There is something sick about a society that can spend so much money, time and effort on a two week sporting event, and so little of these resources answering the small demands of a group of desperate people.

Prestige is certainly expensive, and the Olympic Games will bring Canada prestige. But we must rethink our priorities in a more humane manner, in order to honestly feel we deserve this prestige, much less feel free to demand it.

The message of the Lubicon Indians to the whole of Canada during the Games is clear: set your own house in order before you praise it to the skies.

Baine Ostry

The Gateway

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Advertising: TOM WRIGHT

CONTRIBUTORS: ERIC BAICH, CARA KOROPCHUK, DON TREMBATH, LANISE HAYES, PAUL MENZIES, ALEX MILLER, RANDA SWATHERS, SHAHID TAHJA, AJAY BHARDWAL, P.J. GREENVELDT, CHRIS WILSON, TRACY ROWAN, MOREEN MURRAY, KEVIN LAW, MARTY PYFF, ROSE GRAY, CHRIS BOYD.

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PRESSURE IS...



LETTERS

Religious high horse

Re: Bible a Valuable Collection (Gateway, Feb. 9/88)

Get off your high religious horse, lady! (Before I shoot the damn thing). You entirely missed my point.

Let me reword the statement about the Bible. Of course it's not just any piece of literature. I'm not comparing it to *Pride and Prejudice* or *Nancy Drew*. My point is that the Bible is there for us to read and interpret. Everyone who reads it has a completely different interpretation of it. Mine may be completely different from yours.

So, you read the Bible, enjoy it, get satisfaction from it. That is your right and privilege. As for us pagans, if we want it, we know where to get it. If we don't want it, LAY OFF!! Have a little respect for our decisions.

Shannon Cowan

Art is emotional

My painting class, Art 313, has been working on painting the human figure since October, 1987. Our final project was an "epic" at least 6 feet in one dimension, composing of a picture containing at least six figures. The final paintings are presently being displayed on the second and third floors of the Fine Arts Building.

My classmates and I felt rather proud as we hung our framed paintings on the walls for all the world to see. My painting was hung at the end of a hallway near the Department of Music's general office. The following day, my instructor informed me that the music department objected to the location of the painting, and asked that it be removed. I was shocked, hurt, and angry! However, this is not the first time that I have experienced those feelings. Two years ago this month, my father put a gun to his head and ended his life. The hurt and anger that have haunted me since his death was my reason for painting the picture which I have titled, "The Burial". It is not a pretty picture. It is about death and dying. It is also about living. It is about living with and dealing with the spectres of anger, hatred, frustration, guilt, and loss that are ever present in all of our lives at some time or other. Painting obviously has evoked some strong emotions in the eyes of

some of the people in the music department. I can only assume from this reaction that my painting is a success. I can now take my place in a long line of artists throughout history whose work has been censored. In my naivete, I actually believed that the university was the one place in society where there was freedom of expression.

I am re-hanging the painting in a different location as a reminder to all that none of us is immune from these spectres, and that none of us is immortal.

Mina Jewett

Fees division retarded

Just what is a university for? Correct me if I'm wrong, but I thought it is an institution provided for students that attend. It appears that the administration thinks it is just for them. Without the students there would be no administration. Why are we being jerked around?

I received a little note in the mail informing me that I had to pay an additional twenty one dollars. I had a student loan and all of the financial matters were handled between the administration office and the bank. My fees were the standard \$1132. The bank was sent an initial notice for payment of \$566 and a second one for \$550. When added together this equals \$1116. \$1116 subtracted from \$1132 equals \$16, not \$21. Why didn't administration ask for the correct amount?

When I went to pay the \$21 (I'm usually a nice guy) the damn office was closed for lunch. What is this crap? Any other institution, with the exception of a few slack-ass government agencies, would be open during the lunch hour. What's wrong with a policy of one third of the staff going at 1:00, another third at 12:00, and the last group at 1:00. This would allow the office to remain open and serve the people it is intended to serve, i.e. the students.

One of my friends had a dollar left on his fees. He also received a note telling him that if he did not pay up he would receive an additional \$15 charge. They must have added this \$15 charge into my \$16 balance owing without informing me. This is a great policy. Ask for the incorrect amount from the bank and then slap a \$15 late charge on to the poor student.

Calculating the interest charges on my friend's balance owing results in a figure of 1500% a month or 18,000% a year. This is worse than racketeering.

Assuming that 40 percent of the 25,000 students attending university have student loans, this is 10,000 students. And assuming 50 percent of these students are being ripped off similar to myself (conservative estimate) this leaves 5,000 students paying an additional \$15. This results in \$75,000 extra revenue into the administration office's purse.

I wonder what they do with the extra bucks, possibly throw a year end pizza and beer party? I don't know about you, but I never got my invitation.

Rob Emerson

Feminine protection missing

A small matter has been bothering me for the past year and a half. The main women's washroom in SUB, although supplied with a condom dispenser, lacks the usual tampon and/or napkin dispensers. Why? Can the Students' Union not afford to install them or is it supposed that in a washroom used exclusively by women, no one would use them?

Wanda Sabourin

Highest level of satire

Re: Abortion Issue Editorial (Gateway, Feb. 9/88)

Its marvelous satire reminds one of Swift's once famous *A Modest Proposal*.

D. Kilgannon

Letters to the Editor are encouraged and always welcome. If you have a comment which would be of interest to the students of the University, please do not hesitate to send it in. All we require is your name, address, and phone number, and student ID number if you are a student. We will not print letters missing any of these. Letters should be no longer than three hundred words. Mail or deliver your letters to Room 282 SUB, or drop them at any SU information booth.