

This is the first of a semi-regular
column of legal advice

by the people at

Student Legal Services

One of the foundations of the law is the concept that it is universal. In order to apply this to practice, it became necessary to establish the first Great Myth of Law--"Ignorance is no excuse". This maxim implies that everyone be aware of all the statutes, regulations and

common-law principles that have kept little clerks busy in big offices for centuries. Of course we all know this is an impossible dream. The Court knows it as well. But the courts feel the realities of evidence and the potential harm to innocent third parties do not allow them to waiver from the hard line drawn.

DOUG TOMLINSON

... who's he

The following is an interview with Doug Tomlinson, a labour candidate for alderman in Ward 4.

Q: Doug, your reputation as an active labour spokesman is well known but what I want to know is what you are going to do for students! I don't see how a city alderman can do much when the federal and provincial governments control the University purse strings.

A: Actually, there are quite a number of things that an alderman can do to help students. Many students have difficulty finding reasonable accommodation. High rents are a real barrier to getting a good education.

Q: What can an alderman do to lower rents?

A: One cause of high rents and high costs for homeowners is the present system of taxation. Property taxes finance education. Our recently elected provincial government has promised to look into changing the source of financing of education. As an alderman I would put pressure on this new provincial government to eliminate property taxes for education.

Q: That sounds encouraging, but isn't there something the city council could do directly?

A: Yes, the city council should press for rent control. Landlords must be made to justify rent increases on the basis of documented expense increases and not on the desire for more profit. There are Canadian cities with effective rent control and I will work to see such a plan established here. Rents for University students can also be lowered indirectly by the introduction of rapid transit systems serving the U of A campus. If students can get to the university quite this as a move to allow the hiring of students in the summer for reduced wages.

Q: A recent issue in City Council has been the City's Fair Wage Bylaw which demands that all contractors who deal with the city must pay union rates. The City has attempted to withdraw this practice. I see this as a move to allow the hiring of students in the summer for reduced wages.

A: I agree. This is definitely a move to exploit students but there is another motive in mind as well. Contractors who pay non-union rates are more competitive and will inevitably be able to under-bid union rate contractors. This will mean reduced living standards for many Edmontonians as well as shoddy and non-professional performance. The many students who are regularly employed either directly or indirectly by the city will get significantly lower wages for the work they do.

Q: Can you make any comments on the present structure of the university?

A: Well, I welcome the recent student representation on the composition board of General Faculty Council. However, I am deeply concerned about the composition of the Board of Governors. It has been brought to my attention that the working man has little or no voice in the affairs of this major institution despite the fact that his taxes help to pay for it. I would use my position on council to press for equal representation on the Board of Governors for Labour and Business. Labour is very concerned that a large number of people not be trained for non-existent jobs. We see their potential and not simply as a way to keep a large number of people off the labour market for a while.

Q: Thank you

Thus, though you may be able to plead in a court of law that you didn't know what you were doing, you can't plead that you didn't know what you were doing was unlawful.

But unfortunately, while the law demands a high degree of knowledge on the part of its citizens, it has been very slow in accepting its responsibility as educator. In our small way we hope to bridge that gap in this column. Over the course of the year we will be writing on various topics of special concern to students, telling you what the law is, and how to make it work for you instead of against you. Included will be a look at landlord and tenant law, domestic relations and family

law, arrest and detention, drug offences, the vagrancy laws, what to look for in a sales contract, what a guarantee really means, and other subjects as the demand and inspiration arise.

The scope is as wide as the need. Hopefully, we will receive and answer letters about special problems, accounts of personal hassles, suggestions for discussion, and anything else that might be of general interest to students.

The column is being prepared by members of the Student Legal Services, a group of law students who are also willing to help with individual problems. From Monday thru Thursday, 6:30-9:00, we have offices in SUB 272 (432-5329), Boyle

Street (429-1197), and Jasper Place (489-1027). We are law students not lawyers, but all the advice we give is thoroughly checked out by supervising lawyers, and it is completely free. If we can't handle your particular problem, we'll find someone who can.

The major inspiration for this column came from the files we have maintained since our inception in 1968. It soon became apparent that many people do not know what their rights are, and even fewer know how to enforce them. We believe that one more enlightened soul will justify this effort.

*Please feel free to write letters, submissions, or recommendations to the Preventive Law Dept., Student Legal Services, c/O Faculty of Law, or c/O The Gateway.



by David Schleich

In Ontario Trent and Laurentian Universities are offering courses in 'Indian' or 'Native' culture. Native or white students can study the language, history and culture of the native people of Canada. 'Experts' in the subject matter guarantee the quality and comprehensiveness of their courses. Of course, degrees in Indian and Native Culture are now approved by the respective Senates etc.

Responses from the media has been great with praise and the expected pepsodent approval. The courses, they say, mark a new era of understanding and co-operation with the native peoples. We must, they drone on, study the culture etc. of our ethnic peoples to more fully appreciate their problems and interests. And so on, in similar bubbled, double-talk.

The point is that the institution of these courses marks the absolute and final success of the European steam-rolling of native North American cultures. The courses shout loudly and clearly that, once again (God bless those contemptible experts) the technocrats have advanced a little further in their absolute assimilation of everything. Not only do native persons (and whites who are interested --- curious types, those interested whites) now have to be documented, processed and evaluated in order to be acknowledged as knowing anything about their own cultures, but they have to be so processed by, in the main, non-native instructors.

It's a Mad Hatter tea party and everybody's drinking mercury! Native young people will attend, believe it or not. Their attendance will bring smiles to knowing experts' faces. It's the resonating, reverberating song --explore, analyze, and explain away all there is and get the assimilated to agree with you.

And how, then, will the new Native Studies experts reasonably explain away the power of the native shaman? How will the new expert in Native Culture interpret (in words, in his professional journals) the native man's insistent defence of his lands against the technologically superior whites? Oh yes, the compassionate, understanding technocrat will say that we Europeans were unjust (at least our ancestors were) in our rape of the native peoples. But, they will go on to say, what's done is done. We must begin anew! But, in fact, what's done is being redone. Re-done by the technocrat, in his courses, in his new programmes.

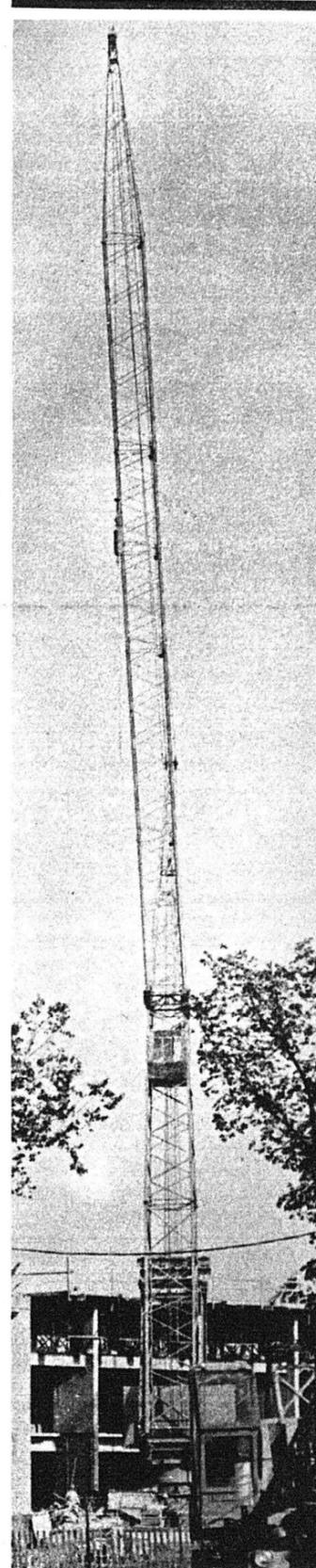
There are no reconciliations possible. No money, no slick documentation, no government appeasement programme, no glossy apology can give the native Canadian back his life, his home, his culture. The native Canadian remains a conquered man.

It is done. What can we do, though, if we wish to be graceful, to be civilized; if we wish to demonstrate that we have learned from our wretched past, is to ban our inquiring, amoral technocrats from such subject matter. Zounds! No! And thereby limit the kingdom of knowledge? Aren't we content with having subdued one continent so finally?

No, the imperative to steam-roll proceeds. Look, for example, at the number of Oriental students at the University of Alberta. They're not only allowing themselves to be delightfully steam-rolled, they're going to be documented, credential-bearing agents for the steam roller manufacturers.

Lost tribes in New Guinea are NOT lost. But they are fair game for the anthropologist in the present order of things. Filipino young people learn to admire the Beatles. Their own culture becomes some sort of absent-minded mixture of mostly West and stubborn smatterings of the East.

D. H. Lawrence was right! Dissolution of our civilization is inevitable -- dissolution in a solution of Amchitka island bomb shafts,, Chinese ambassadors (can you possibly imagine an ambassador from the Central Kingdom?) and power steering.



Is this Julian Kinisky's secret weapon to rid Edmonton of airplanes? Or is it just another otter trap?