

Who stole the cork...

# The Gateway

Tuesday, January 20, 1987

from my lunch

W.C. Fields



Massive crowd of students rally at Legislature last Friday.

photo by Randal Smathers

## Remission funds are cut

by Rod Campbell and Suzanne Lundrigan

The Provincial Government announced last Thursday that it would implement reforms to the Loan Remission Program.

Under the new program eligible students will be awarded a 40 per cent flat rate remission on all loans in excess of \$1,000 per year. This replaces the old schedule of 50 per cent remission on all loans received in the first year; 40 per cent the second year and 25 per cent for each following year.

Amendments to the LRP will save the government \$15 million a year by 1991.

Student officials originally hoped the government would return the \$15 million surplus in the form of grants. There are now growing fears amongst students that the government might hold onto the money generated by the remission program reforms.

Advanced Education Minister Dave Russell gave no indication last week where the savings would be spent.

Fred Hemingway, chief executive officer of the Student Finance Office said, "We look at the program every year and try to make judgements in light of the likely funds available."

U of A Students Vice President External Michael Hunter is concerned, "My main fear is that they (the government) will take this \$15 million and it will be gone," he said.

Martin Levenson, External Commissioner and Anti-Cutbacks Team (ACT) Chair said, "The intent of this remission program wasn't carried out. The money saved was to be kept within the Students Finance Board and would go out as grants for the people that really needed it. I get the distinct impression that this was not carried through."

Cheryl Dick, chairperson of the Alberta Colleges and Technical Institutes Students Executive Council expressed similar views. But also added that reforms were also implemented to help the government control the \$3 billion deficit.

Hunter is currently trying to establish a six member provincial student committee, which will lobby government for the surplus created by the remission reforms.

Under the new program students attending colleges and technical institutes will have to pay back approximately \$11 million in extra remission funds. University students will pay about \$3.9 million.

The average extra cost to students will be in the neighbourhood of \$325 a year.

According to SFB stats, current student loans total \$172 million, ranging from \$70 per person to \$30,000. Government grants total \$54 million.

The new program becomes effective May 1, 1987; however, remission awarded prior to May 1, will not be affected by the new rate.

### Students protest cuts

## Ministers miss at Leg.

by Randal Smathers

About 75 students turned out at the legislature last Friday for the Anti-Cutbacks Team (ACT) sponsored study-in.

Only half that number were in the march from CAB quad to the north shore of the river. The rest arrived at the cafeteria independently.

Five New Democrat MLAs were present, including Advanced Education critic Gerry Gibeault and Education critic Marie Laing as well as Treasury critic Alex McEachern.

Between 6,000 and 8,000 postcards were delivered to the premi-

er's and various government ministers' offices.

None of the intended recipients were available to receive the cards.

It was hoped that some government members or ministers would be available in the cafeteria during lunch, to talk to the students present, however, this did not occur.

The speeches focussed on ACT's continuing campaign to stop the government's proposed funding cutbacks.

"The main issue that we want to say here, is that the cutbacks are going to represent a serious degradation, or erosion of educational

quality in this province," said Gibeault, "(Students) are going to be asked now, the government says, to pay more in tuition fees, and we feel that this is really unfair."

He received a strong round of applause for saying the government, being democratic, should listen to the students protest, and respond favorably.

Laing said that this is "Part of a groundswell of opposition to the cutbacks in education both at Advanced Education, and from Alberta Education... (we have to) challenge government to find other ways to deal with its deficits."

"You should not cut back education just because your economy sneezes," said McEachern, adding that he felt that education gave "good value for the dollar."

SU VP External Michael Hunter stressed "That we're committed to education at every level, that this isn't just a U of A thing."

ACT Chairman Martin Levenson while expressing satisfaction with the turnout, also said, "Perhaps they don't realize how important and how dramatic the effect the cutbacks are going to have on their education."

Levenson said that the level of commitment of the students that are turning out is more important than the number of students. He indicated as well that it might also be possible for the university to reduce its inflation rate of 2 per cent.

Christensen. This is one instance where men's rights groups have conflicted with women's groups who demand the mother have custody.

Christensen says about half of MERGE's current membership of 10 is made up of women. "We want to focus on equal rights," he said.

Christensen says issues like equal pay for equal work are on MERGE's agenda. "We're not basing ourselves on men's rights groups," he said.

Christensen thinks MERGE is getting a much better start than SPERM did. He said people did not take the group seriously due to its name, and SPERM's founding members graduated from university in its second year.

Speaker Fred Hayward has received much media attention. He won an anti-discrimination suit against insurance companies that charge higher rates for men, and is also fighting against the all-male military draft in the U.S.

## A new men's group eMERGEs from SPERM

by Greg Halinda

A new group on campus concerned with equal rights for men and women is meeting this Wednesday. MERGE (Movement for the Establishment of Real Gender Equality) will sponsor men's equality activist Fred Hayward to speak at 2 and 7:30 p.m. in Humanities lecture hall 1.

MERGE rose from the ashes of SPERM, a men's rights group that formed in 1984 and generated some backlash from women's groups.

Philosophy professor Ferrel Christensen is one of the founders of MERGE. He thinks a group like MERGE is needed to "take a more balanced view of interests of both men and women."

Christensen says that MERGE, while trying to push for greater men's rights, is not out to bash women's rights groups. It is trying to make up for lost ground.

"One thing men's rights groups are working for is joint child custody in a divorce situation," said

## FSJ beer bus

by John Watson

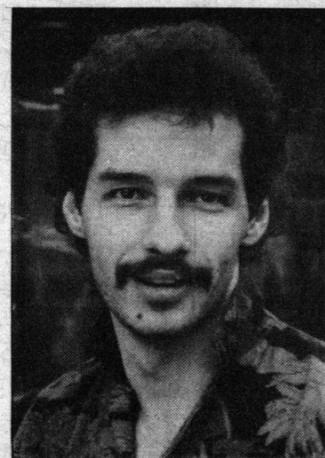
For those who are regularly afflicted with the nasty and recurring red-nose syndrome, Association des Universitaires de la Faculte St. Jean (AUFJS) is able to help.

The red-nose express runs after all AUFJS parties. The express, a rented minivan, ensures party patrons arrive home safely after spending an evening imbibing at the Faculte.

According to Dwayne Seal, Faculte rep. on Students' Council, people know they "will have a ride home if they get too drunk."

The bus goes anywhere in the city or into the suburbs if necessary, said Seal. "We'll drive to Sherwood Park if we have to."

The bus is rented for about \$50 for one day and is used to pick up liquor and accessories as well as to return bottles the next day.



FSJ rep. Dwayne Seal

"They (the administration) really want us to downplay alcohol consumption," said Seal.

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