

To lose one parent may be regarded as a misfortune...

# The Gateway

Tuesday, February 24, 1987

...to lose both looks like carelessness.

— Oscar Wilde,  
*The Importance of Being Earnest*

## Communists protest *Amerika*

by Jeff Cowley

A handful of Young Communists gathered at CFRN-TV last Wednesday to protest the broadcasting of the mini-series *Amerika*.

Members of the Canadian Communist Party, the Unitarian Church, and the Young Communist League attacked *Amerika* as being "McCarthyism", "Rambo mania" and "blatant propaganda".

CFRN Program Director Bob Gibson estimated the number of demonstrators to be a total of eight people, but said "it was hard to get an accurate count because there were more media people than protesters."

"Because of the short notice we haven't had a chance to organize people," said Robin Boodle, a self-described Marxist-Leninist, and a member of the Young Communist League on the U of A campus.

Demonstrators presented the station management with a petition of 300 names requesting CFRN to allow the group equal air time to discuss the 14-hour series.

Demonstration organizer Gilbert Bouchard explained that station management "weren't very communicative" to the group's demand. CFRN refused to allow the group any broadcast time until the station

had a chance to review the content of the program.

The Young Communist League has publicly condemned Canada's involvement in the production of *Amerika*. ("It is) a flagrant violation of the spirit of Toronto being a nuclear weapons free zone," said Boodle, due to the fact that a large amount of the series was filmed in the Toronto area.

The Young Communist League is calling for the censorship of Canadian television in response to CTV's alleged failure to review *Amerika* before the program was televised. The organization would like to see the "establishment of a regulatory body to censor films that promote hatred against any race, sex, or nationality", said Boodle, who believes *Amerika* to be "a channel to promote hate against the Soviet Union."

In spite of their strong opposition to *Amerika*, when the *Gateway* asked various members of the communist community what they actually thought of the series, many said that they had not actually seen *Amerika*, preferring, instead, to trust the reviews which had been released weeks before the program was televised.

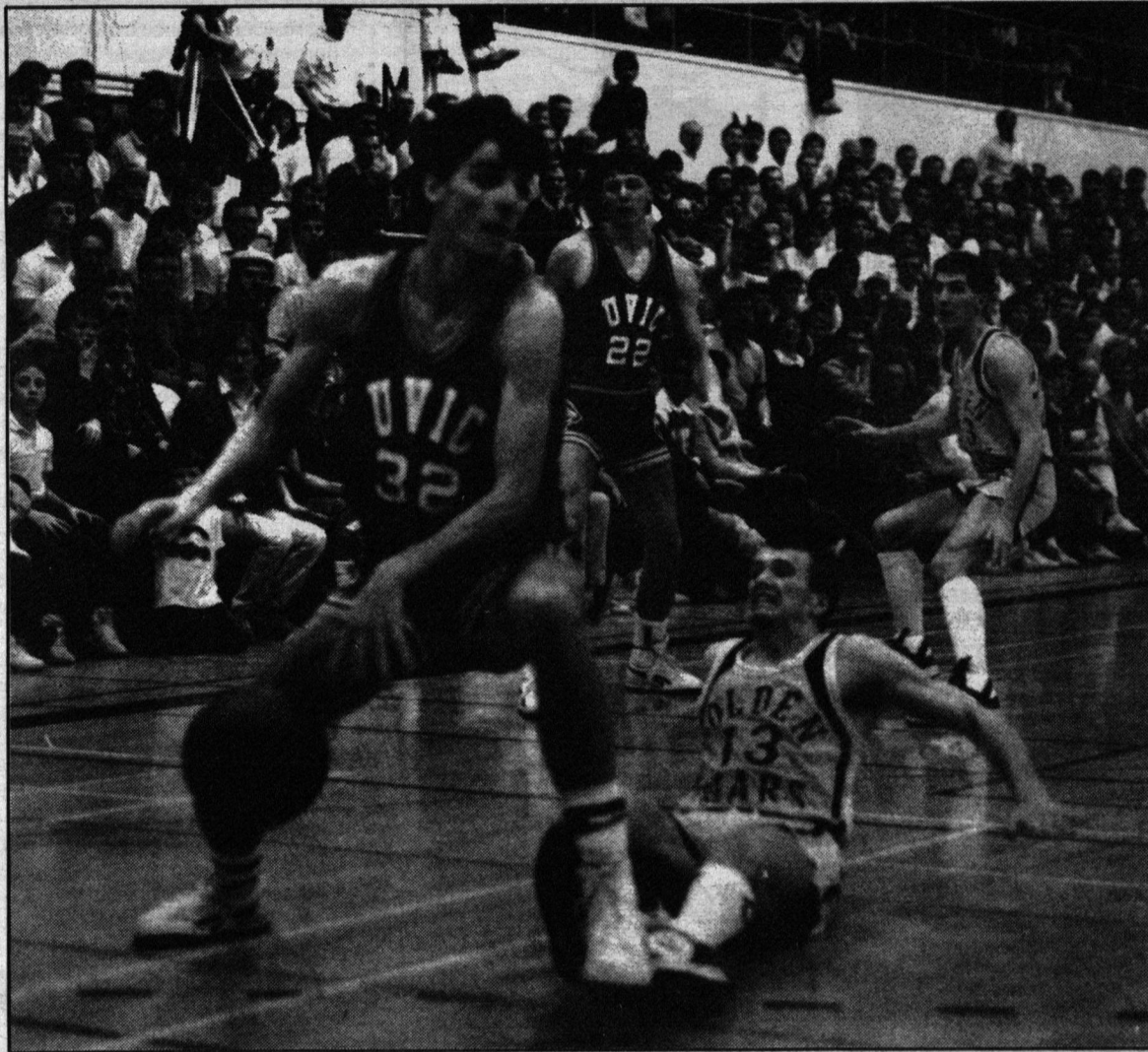


photo Leif Stout

It was a sad ending to a spectacular series Sunday, as Victoria defeated the Golden Bears 81-79 in overtime to win the Canada West semi-final series. Full game coverage in Sports, p. 15.

## Ions in water related to diseases

by Dan Cass  
reprinted from  
*Canadian Science*

A recent study, funded by Health and Welfare Canada, has shown that the incidence of heart disease, colon cancer and other diseases differs in areas having different amounts of certain ions and minerals in their water.

The study on the health effects of hard and soft water has raised a great deal of controversy among scientists and the general public.

The study involved data collected from 66 Canadian cities from 1973 to 1979. Death rates from various causes were examined, and related to the water quality of the cities.

The controversy relates to how the results are to be interpreted. The study does not attempt to prove a cause-effect relationship between the water content and

disease; it merely makes some "interesting observations", says Dr. Donald Wigle of Health and Welfare Canada's Laboratory Centre for Disease Control.

In general, "the Canadian water supply is undoubtedly much safer than it was a few years ago," Dr. Wigle says.

"We have some findings which we can say add to a fairly large body of information on the subject," says Dr. Wigle. "First of all, we have shown that there is no causal link between fluoridation of water and an increased risk of cancer."

A second observation, which is not necessarily cause and effect, is that people in areas with supplies of hard water (that is, with a high content of minerals such as calcium and magnesium) seem to have a lesser risk of death from heart disease. A review of this and previous

studies gives an estimate of the decrease in risk as about 15 per cent.

Third, there is a higher incidence of colon cancer in men (but for some reason not in women) who drank water with a large amount of organic carbon. Such water supplies come from reservoirs or swamps with a high content of algae and other organic carbon sources. The cancer risk seems to be related to the chlorine added to these water supplies.

"It is known that, when chlorine is added to organic carbon molecules, some of the products of chlorination are carcinogenic," says Dr. Wigle. The important feature would seem to be the amount of organic carbon in the water, he adds.

"In somewhere like Vancouver, where the water supply is from glacial and snow melts, there is relatively little organic carbon, and therefore few chlorinated products. Surface water supplies, such as the Ottawa River, have a higher organic carbon content, and thus have more molecules available to react with chlorine," he says.

While this finding might seem

cause for great concern, one must take into account the fact that very few of the compounds created by chlorine are carcinogenic.

"If there is an increased risk with chlorination, it is definitely offset by a greatly decreased risk of communicable diseases," says Dr. Wigle. Chlorine kills, or renders non-infective, many micro-organisms.

In addition, the study showed that users of chlorinated water, both male and female, had a decreased incidence of stomach cancer.

Dr. Wigle says the current trend in water treatment is to decrease chlorine use by pre-treating the water to remove organic compounds.

"Enough chlorine must be added to water to kill the organisms in it. Organic carbon 'soaks up' chlorine, so by removing organic material first, we can reduce the amount of chlorine we have to add," he says.

One of the best ways to do this is to control the amount of organic material which gets into the water in the first place, for example by controlling fertilizer runoff into ponds and reservoirs that act as water supplies.

## SU Elections coming up

by Roberta Franchuk  
Warning.

Another student election is rapidly approaching.

In one week the campus will be inundated with propaganda, as eager younger hacks try to convince an unconvinced student body that they are capable of handling Student Union funds, services and responsibilities.

Once again we will hear the cries of "More beer!" "Cheap beer!" "Lower fees!" and other perennially popular promises.

On February 24 the candidates will be announced, putting to rest rumors of who's running with whom or for what. *The Gateway* will cover the election with a series of articles on the candidates and the positions they are after.

Remember, these people want to get their hands on over 5 million dollars of Students' Union money. It's up to you to decide who is going to be allowed to spend this money and how.

## Horowitz improving

by Rod Campbell

Popular U of A president Dr. Myer Horowitz underwent open heart surgery last Thursday at the University Hospital after complaining of chest pains.

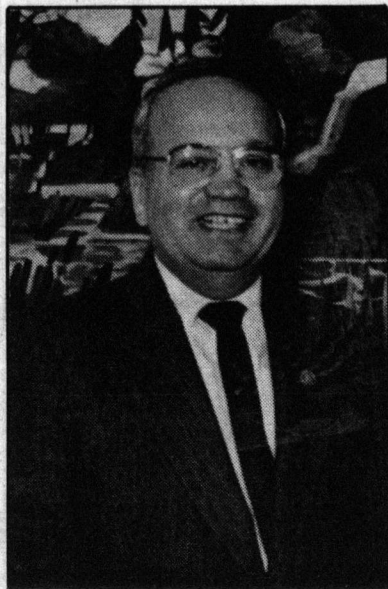
Hospital spokesperson Peter Portlock said yesterday that Dr. Horowitz was "doing fine. He is progressing from serious to stable, a slight upgrading."

According to Portlock, Dr. Horowitz is alert and in good spirits, and if all goes well should be released in ten to twelve days.

Dr. Horowitz arrived at the U of A in 1969 from McGill in order to take over as chair of the department of elementary education.

He was appointed University president in 1979.

Dr. Horowitz also suffered a heart attack in 1976.



U of A pres. Horowitz (file photo)

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