

All's fair ...

The Gateway

... in the office.

Thursday, April 10, 1986

Energy plug pulled on engineers

by Bill Doskoch

Sean Thornton is getting severance pay — before he ever gets a chance to start work.

The fourth year chemical engineering student had signed a contract with Gulf Oil Ltd. but has found himself — along with other graduating students in the energy-related fields — victimized by the dramatic decline in oil prices of the past few months.

"It looked good, oil and gas was coming back again," he said, and compared it to the 1980-81 year when most graduating engineers had job offers will before the end of the year.

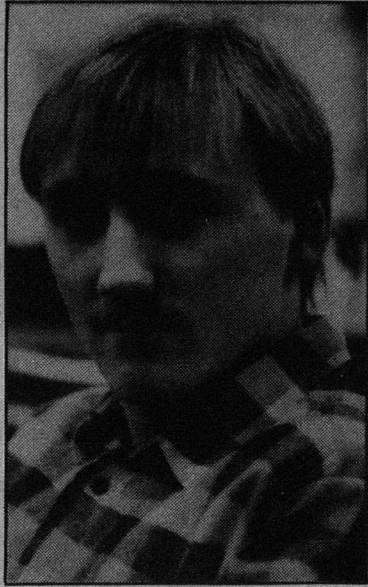
However, he said, "the bottom dropped out."

Thornton was to be employed in Gulf's projects division, which he wryly noted, is the first to go in an economic turnaround.

However, he considered himself lucky as many people who only received verbal offers received no compensation.

Others were luckier, and were merely being assigned to different divisions or getting operator positions instead of being laid off.

One person in mechanical engineering was lucky enough to have his tuition and books for four



Thornton: eyes on the price of oil.

had companies beating down our doors," he said.

One geophysics professor said he "hadn't seen it this bad at this university in fifteen years.

"Geophysics depends on exploration, so we're particularly in trouble because exploration, where most young people start, varies directly with the price of oil," said Dr. E. Nyland.

"My advice is people should either crawl into a foxhole, go back to school or find some way to survive for the next two years."

Unfortunately, actual statistics on the number of people affected were not available. The chairpersons of the various departments surveyed were unable to comment and individuals connected with the students clubs also could not give accurate estimates.

Spokespersons for the Association of Professional Engineers, Geologists and Geophysicists of Alberta and various oil companies either could not be reached or refused to comment.

As Thornton said, "The whole fourth year class is just sitting around waiting with our eyes anxiously on the price of oil. If things are this way next year, it might get even more drastic."

courses paid by a well-logging company if he returned to school until January 1987, he said.

Other parts of the industry — such as petrochemicals — would benefit from decreased oil prices, said chemical engineering chairperson Dr. S.E. Wanke, but didn't think that would necessarily translate into job opportunities.

"Since 1982 we haven't exactly

(drum roll please!)

It's hilarious!

It's thought-provoking!

It's the...

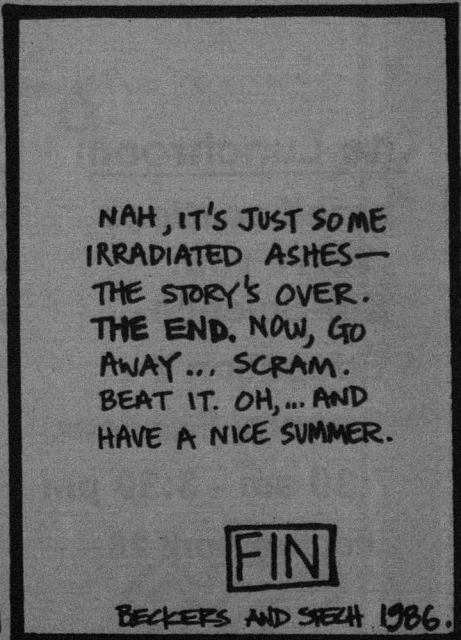
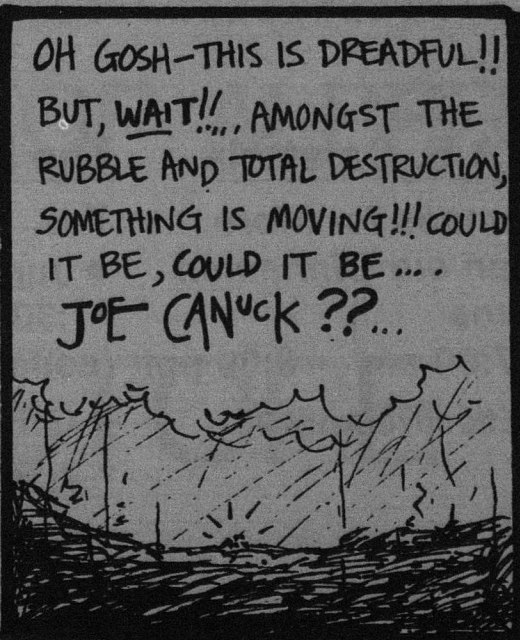
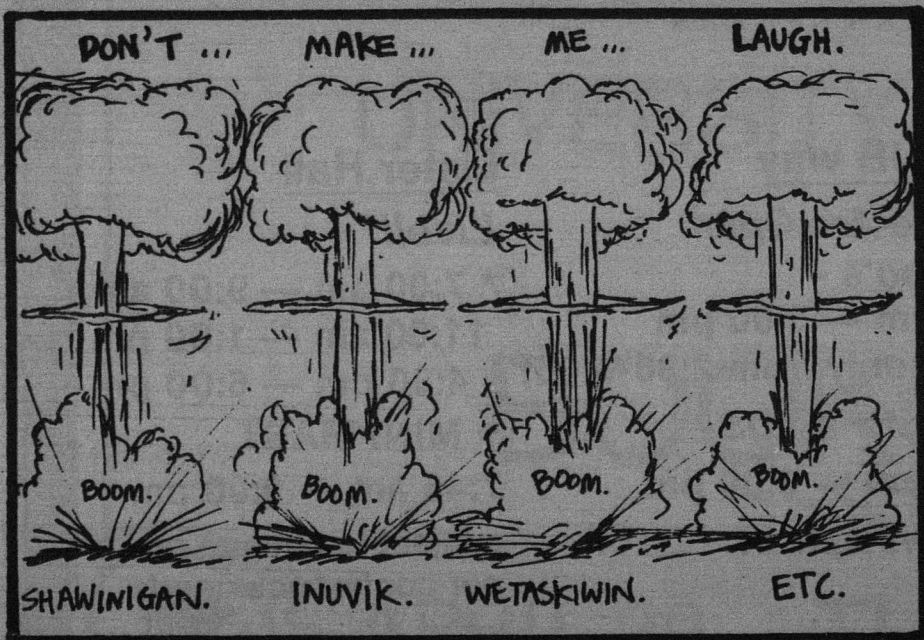
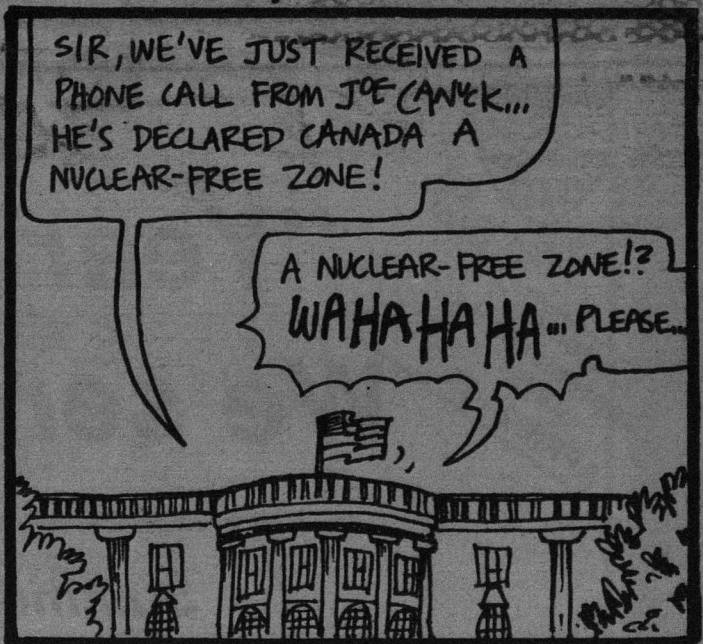
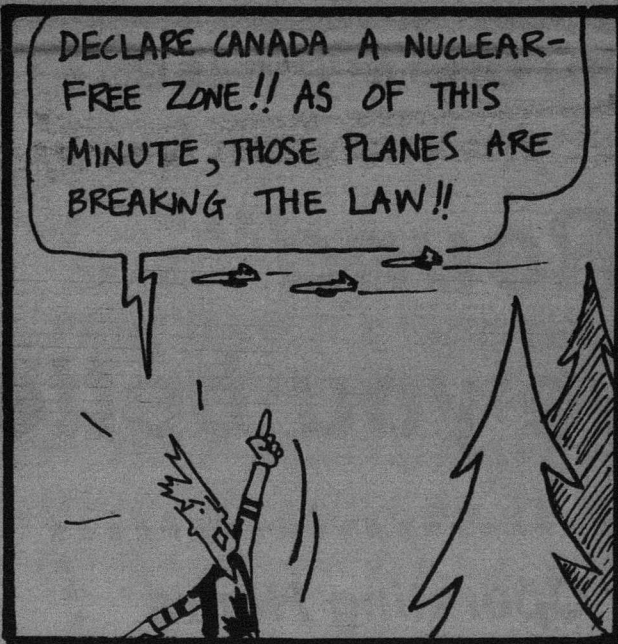
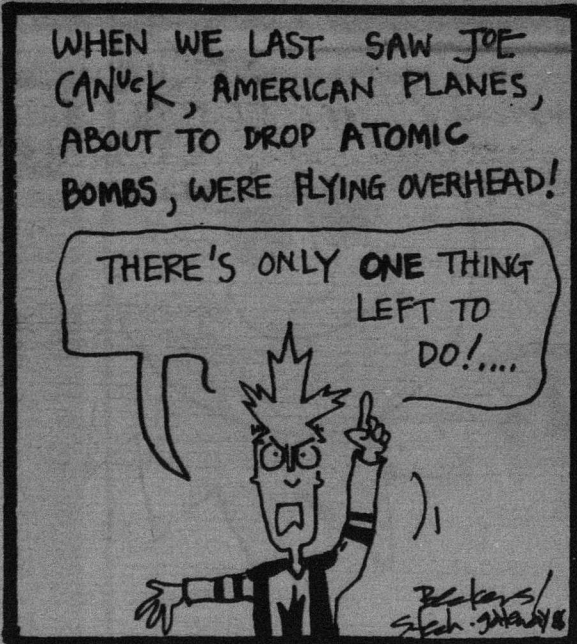
Edmonton Scum

(the little paper that grew)

Coming Wednesday, April 16

two cactii and three nines

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Good luck on your exams!