

Natives protest funding cutbacks

by Shelby Cook

"We gave up a lot for the promise of education, and 90 years later, they are trying to deny it," said Cora Voyager, a third year sociology student. "The government is taking away our rights."

Native students are rallying downtown this Wednesday for fairer education funding.

In exchange for land rights, the government granted treaty Indians a subsidized education — an allowance for their books, tuition, and partial living expenses. Under the original agreement, the government was committed to paying for 96 months of a native student's post-secondary education.

Two years ago, a process was begun by the government to update the 1978 guidelines, called E-12, which had governed student assistance.

The result was a newer guideline where the government would cutback its native education funding to 48 months. E-12 governs treaty students, and the new guideline reduces the cost of living increment.

"It is a great injustice: educa-



Jeff Cowley

Native students will be protesting funding cuts Wednesday. Demonstration organizer Albert Crier helps prepare placards to be used in the protest that will begin in Churchill Square at 10:00 am and continue on to Canada Place.

tion is the right of every student in this country," said Voyager, adding that there is a lot of frustration surrounding the issue.

Early Monday, in response to discontent over the issue, Pierre Cadieux, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, announced changes in the Post-Secondary Student Assistance Program.

He acknowledged the sugges-

tions from Indian students, educators, and governments. "This new policy is generous, fair, and can be administered by Indian authorities in ways which can best meet the needs of their students."

"These changes were required to permit greater fairness and consistency in the administration of the program, more focus on

NATIVE — p 7

Competence exam officially discarded

by Lisa Hall

As of 3:54 Monday afternoon, students are truly free of the WCT. The General Faculties Council met yesterday and passed the proposal to discontinue the U of A's writing competence test.

Previously, all students had to pass the WCT to get their undergraduate degrees. Since the test's inception in 1983, noted vp academic Dr. Peter Meekison, it has undergone annual revisions. "We'd change one concern and we'd get another problem," he said.

The test is considered a good diagnostic, pointing out individuals' writing weaknesses, but the accuracy of the exam has been in question. Many students complained that they did well in high school English, and then went on to fail the WCT.

The proposal to discontinue was the result of a joint committee between the U of A and Alberta Education. The committee came up with a number of ways which writing competence could be further stressed at the secondary and post-secondary levels of education, making it possible to discontinue the WCT.

Dr. Larry McKill is an English professor who sat on both the joint committee and the committee that set up the original writing competence test. "The test was originally proposed in 1979 with the idea in mind that in 8 to 10 years, measures would have been taken in the high schools to improve their programs, so we could extricate the exam."

It has now been ten years. Alberta Education reinstated the diploma exams in 1984, and they have already started to implement some of the proposed changes from the joint committee, and

many more changes will be made. One major idea is the one of "writing across curriculum." Writing clearly and concisely will be given more emphasis in many subjects, and not just in English.

"Writing across curriculum" will also be emphasized at the University level. "Experts will be coming to help us see how writing aspects could be implemented in various courses," said associate vp academic Dr. Dianne Kieren, who was also on the joint committee.

This idea was subject to some debate during discussion at the GFC meeting. "If something is everybody's job, it's nobody's job," said Engineering professor Dr. Reg Eadie. He felt that the emphasis on writing competence would not be upheld if the University discontinued the WCT.

Another part of the proposal which was discussed was how to help students who were accepted to the University with less than 65 percent in English 30.

The development of an effective writing centre, where students and staff could go to improve their writing skills, is proposed. Students who had less than 65 percent in English 30 would be encouraged to go there for help. It was questioned, however, if students would actually use the centre, if it was not mandatory to do so. According to Registrar Brian Silzer, almost one-quarter of the students accepted last year had less than 65 percent in English 30.

Much debate occurred before the proposal was passed 57 votes to 24. Dr. Meekison assured members that if issues involving writing competence were not followed up, the GFC would be hearing about it again. If all else fails, the WCT could be reinstated.

Boat races washed out by Campus Security

by Kevin Law

A campus club drinking contest that was to be held as part of Science Week was washed out by Campus Security.

The Undergraduate Science Society (USS) had planned the event, commonly called "boat races," for Thursday afternoon in L'Express overflow and had advertised the fact in *The Gateway*. But the ad caught the eye of Campus Security officials, who then phoned the USS office and told them they would have to cancel because it was illegal.

"Things like boat races are considered illegal by the Alberta Liquor Control Board," said Dennis Dahlstedt of Campus Security. "They (the USS) probably didn't think it was illegal, but it is undesirable for the University to be involved in such activities."

"It is illegal to do anything to promote alcohol consumption," said Jim Ollivy, spokesman for the Liquor Control Board. Ollivy noted liquor company ads are not part of the law. "It's a question of quantity consumption," he said.

USS vp academic Bill Ross remained unimpressed with the situation in light of the fact the club obtained a liquor licence from Student Services and per-

mission from SU vp internal Wendy Olson.

"Why didn't the SU stop us before?" asked Ross. "At the very latest, they should have called foul when we put our ad in," he said, adding, "There seems to be a strange communication breakdown between SU executive and university policy."

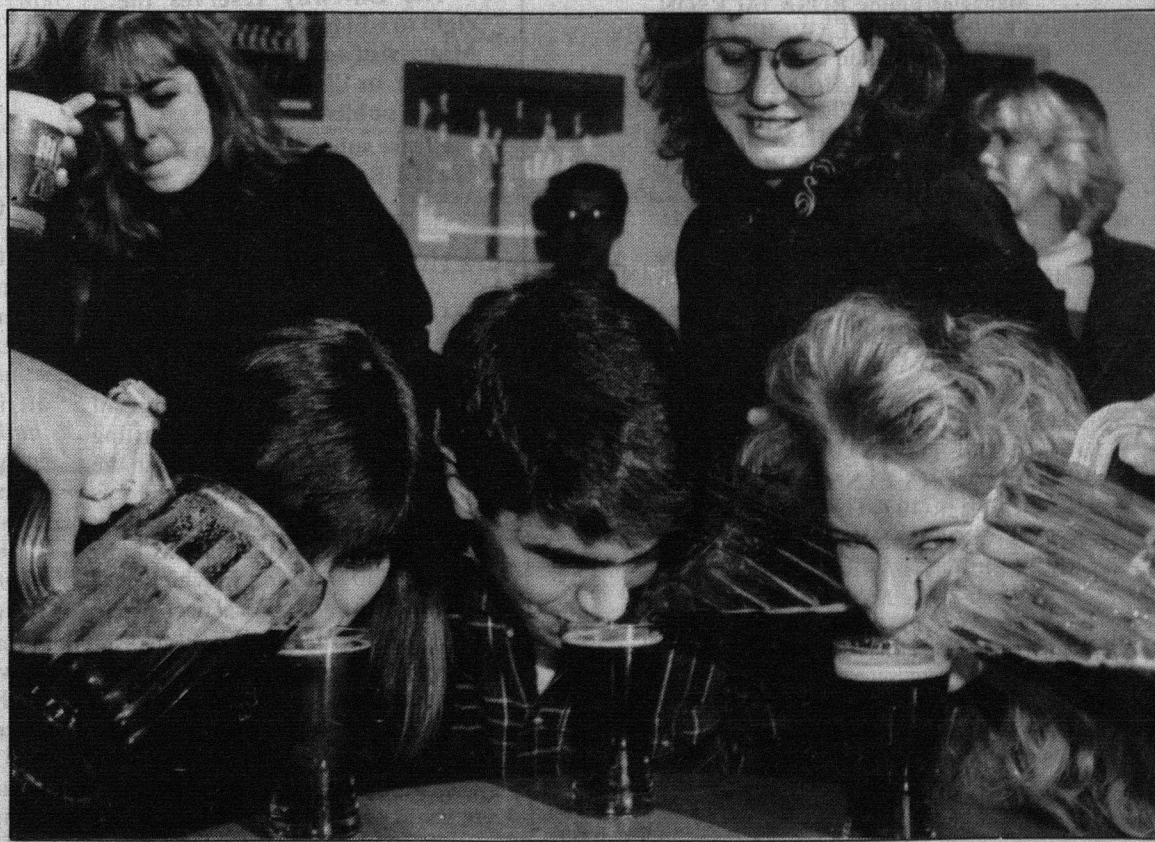
Wendy Olson, SU vp internal, said several members of the USS approached her about the contest but they seemed unorganized. "They said the drinking contest was to involve Science Week but they didn't know when, where or how they were going to do it," she said, admitting that there was "a communication breakdown" between both parties.

As for the illegality of a drinking contest, Olson said clubs running events should check into the rules, but she added she "never actually told anyone that it's not allowed, perhaps it's something we should publicize."

"We're sanctioned by the Alberta Liquor Control Board," said Marilyn McKinley of university relations about campus liquor licences. "We follow their regulations, but it seems not everyone knows them."

McKinley noted that the university will be taking a more proactive stance on the matter. "We're

planning a letter to all university groups through Student Services to point out the regulations more clearly."



Clive Osby

Look Ma, no hands!

Drinking contests are apparently illegal according to the Alberta Liquor Board. No one told these students about it as they "got hammered" on green beer during St. Patrick's Day.