

gateway

Thursday, March 1, 1984

Nuclear energy may be the final proof...

...that all men are cremated equal.
Alfred E. Neuman

Coalition launches major education campaign

Tories under pressure

by Tom Hayward

The U of A Students' Union launched a counter-attack against the provincial government's planned cuts in the field of advanced education yesterday.

Inadequate funding has forced the University of Alberta to impose quotas for all new admissions to the first year in the 1984-85 winter session.

In addition, the University will be forced to reduce further its academic and non-academic staff.

With the outlook for the 1985 budget year appearing grimmer, a group of concerned students met Wednesday evening to form the Education Coalition.

SU President Robert Greenhill spoke to a group of thirty students, including members of the newly elected SU executive, to outline the goals for the new coalition.

Outlining the Students' Unions' attempts to communicate with the provincial Department of Advanced Education and Manpower over the past several years, Greenhill noted that both confrontation and low-key lobbying have failed to move the government from its restraint position.

Under former SU President Phil Soper, the U of A students marched on the legislature - a move that gained publicity for the problem of reduced funding but produced few results.

This year's executive adopted a low-key lobbying approach, submitting briefs to ministerial committees and meeting informally with members of the government.

The meetings have not had a positive effect on the funding problem.

As a result, the SU is coordinating a public campaign that will involve U of A students, high school seniors, and their parents.

The response of high school students during the recent Orientation Day visits was noted by Greenhill and VP Internal Peter Block.

"A lot of them (high school students) were very concerned. Several students were overheard to say that they only had a sixty-five per cent average, and they weren't sure that their marks would be high enough," said Block.

A visit by several local guidance councillors was also of interest to the members of the committee.

Many councillors were upset that the University would not provide an indication of how high a students' marks must be to ensure his or her admission next year. There was also some concern about the fact that the announcement was made when there are only three months remaining in the current school year.

The Coalition is planning a major campaign to attack the government's funding proposals, which are expected to become facts after the presentation of the provincial budget on March 27.

As a first step, the coalition is planning to produce an infor-

mational packet for distribution to the rural and urban media.

This is to be followed by a series of visits to local high schools, where U of A students will be able to explain the problems potential new students face in getting accepted this year.

A series of evening meetings with the parents of the students are also planned.

Additional suggestions by members included a telephone campaign, petitions (currently available from members of the SU executive), and appearances on local radio open-line show.

The coalition agreed to meet again on Friday afternoon at 3:00 PM to assemble press kits and hand out fact sheets for volunteers visiting the high schools.

Persons interested in volunteering to help the coalition (even an hour or two would be appreciated) should contact members of the SU Executive at 432-4236, or drop into Room 259 SUB.



The multi-purpose Butterdome caused a bit of an environmental fervour because of its bright yellow panels. The complaints have died down though and students are slowly starting to use the \$23 million facility.

photo by Angela Wheelock

SUB Theatre faces \$100,000 shortfall

by Gilbert Bouchard

Record losses on SUB Theatre's presentation of the musical *Rock n Roll* may drive the theatre deficit up to \$100,000 for the 1983-83 season.

"Rock and Roll accounts for \$53,000 of the deficit," said SU VP Internal Peter Block.

"January alone was \$53,000 of budget because of a revenue shortfall of \$64,500 due to extremely poor attendance at *Rock n Roll* and *La La La Human Steps*. The expenses of the theatre are only slightly above budget (about 5 per cent) but revenues are \$85,000 short, adding up to \$93,000," said Block.

By the end of the term the deficit should total \$100,000.

Theatre Manager Peter Feldman adds that "we've taken a beating this year, and I accept my share of the responsibility for that, but four out of the last five years have done well at the box office and the theatre has operated at a break even level. The biggest loss we occurred was \$7000," said Feldman. "My track record speaks for itself."

Feldman sees the \$100,000 in light of his performance in the last four years. "It gives me a 80 per cent success rate, which is higher than a lot of professional promoters," said Feldman.

The theatre's deficit is complicated by the lack of a mandate for the SUB Theatre.

"There is no mandate for the theatre. Right now we're the biggest dance presenter west of Toronto. But it's questionable if that's the purpose of SUB Theatre," said Block.

Questions arise whether the SU should present its own shows of simply rent out the theatre. However, Feldman states that the "shows make or break us, and that even if we were only to rent out

SUB Theatre we would still lose \$35,000 to \$50,000 a year."

"You can't cover your overhead in rentals. We would have to double our rentals to even come close," said Feldman.

Feldman's choice of shows has also been questioned. For example, *Rock and Roll* "seemed like a safe show, but it sure in hell wasn't," says Peter Block. "The show needed only 50 per cent attendance to break even, but played to virtually empty houses for its two week run."

An entertainment committee was struck after the failure of *Rock n Roll*. As of the first sitting of the committee in January, Feldman has presented twelve shows, three of which were recommended for Executive approval.

"The main problem with this committee is that Feldman brings us these shows and the rest of the committee, who aren't in the business, don't know if the shows are equitable or not," says Block.

As for future seasons, Block sees three possible methods to avoid huge deficits.

"The first is to put a ceiling on losses, the second is to stop presenting shows and just do rentals, and the third is to provide low cost entertainment such as cheap movies or lunch box theatre," says Block.

"I'm not adverse to spending money if students go to it," added Block. "I can defend spending money on student services but I can't defend spending money on shows no one goes to."

Block has also proposed student Rush Tickets.

These tickets would be 60 per cent of the normal ticket prices, but only available a half hour before the show begins. "If there's an empty seat, we might as well fill them cheap," says Block.

Block is also sending a

proposal to the long range planning committee to develop a mandate for their theatre.

Feldman on the other hand defends his choice of show and feels that these concerns over a theatre mandate have only been brought up because of the deficit.

"People only get concerned when we lose money," he said.

As for the service aspect of the theatre, Feldman says that various past SU Executives have pronounced the theatre a business one year and a service the

next.

Feldman adds "25 to 30 per cent of total attendance of live shows are students. Our film program is directed exclusively towards students, and everytime a student group rents the theatre we lose money. I don't think the theatre is being irresponsible with its share of student fees."

Feldman also feels that any proposed mandate would be "vague and arbitrary," and that "they (the SU) should leave the theatre as it is."

Return of Moncton 17

Moncton (CUP) - The last of the Moncton 17 are coming home.

In a terse statement de Moncton administration said the last five of the 17 students expelled two years ago for their part in a week-long occupation would be readmitted unconditionally May 1.

The five students - Brenda Cote, Rachel Roy, Mario Theriault, Gille Vienney and Robert Lemoignan - were leaders of the 200 students who occupied the administration building in April, 1982.

They were protesting tuition fee increases and lack of student representation on the Board of Governors.

Of the original 17 not readmitted, four had graduated that year and did not return, eight were later readmitted but with strict limitations placed on their participation on campus, and the remaining five, according to university president Gilberte Finn, would never be readmitted.

But Finn and the university's Board of Governors had a change of heart this spring after an intensive campaign to get the five

reinstated by students and the faculty union.

Not only were the five reinstated, but limitations on the others who had been earlier readmitted were removed.

"I think it's great," said Aubrey Cormier, editor of the student newspaper, *Le Front*. "It's a great victory. We've been leading this battle for the last year and a half. We're glad."

Cormier said the reinstatement is just one victory in what he sees as a war with administration president Finn. *Le Front* has already called for Finn's resignation over this affair and others.

Cote, then student union president and last year's chair of the Canadian Federation of Students, said she was relieved when she heard the news.

"When we first heard of it we were willing to go down there and party," she said.

Cote intends to return next fall, and finish her B.A. and "get out of there."

"I am going to keep a low profile, that's for sure," she said.