

Winter Carnival

Fun for some — others rooked



Stompin' Tom Connors at the Lumberjack brawl. (Photo by Dal Photography)

by the Gazette writing collective

Winter carnival, where everyone relaxed and a good time was had by all...almost.

It came to our greedy little ears that many events were oversold, some by as much as 400 tickets. It's a pretty raw deal for those who were turned away.

And speaking of raw deals, how about those people who were under 21 and wanted to see Stompin' Tom Connors. Those who bought tickets probably didn't do too badly, because brawl tickets were worth \$5.00 on the black market.

This ticket scalping, another sign of galloping americanism,

is apparently quite acceptable to the authorities. As the SUB Director of operations, Clem Norwood put it, "Well, if people will pay that much, there's no reason why we should stop it."

This means, apparently, that either the prices are high enough for it to be acceptable, or that the high prices make it too profitable to stop.

BUT THERE WAS A BRIGHTER SIDE TO CARNIVAL. Peter Law and the Pacifics, now known as the Dublin Connection, were a resounding success; so much so, that another concert was added for all the fans. And, of course, Stompin' Tom wowed all the boozers at the Lumberjack

Brawl.

The Canadian Folk-rock Festival was excellent, except for Jesse Winchester, who was so stoned he could hardly see the piano. The rest of the entertainers easily made up for this, however, and showed that Canadian talent is good talent.

During the entire carnival, the sound and lighting were excellent, causing Peter Law to comment that "It's one of the best systems we've ever worked with." The balance was struck between excellent shows and poor planning.

Some people had a great time, some made a good profit, and some were screwed in the back. All round, an average winter carnival.

Them — us fight to control dope

SAN FRANCISCO — Marijuana is now as American as Spiro Agnew's daughter — or so say forward-thinking executives of U.S. tobacco firms who have been covertly eyeing the underground market in "grass", officially valued at \$1,250 million a year.

The real figure, say Western entrepreneurs, is nearer three times that sum, and now that the possibilities of legal manufacture are being discussed in the boardrooms, bootleg suppliers are organizing to safeguard their interests.

Business sources predict the end of the marijuana ban will follow the close of the Nixon era, for the soundly all-american reason that the swollen costs of the "new prohibition" exceed any good it may do. Enforcement costs in California alone are now running at \$32 million a year and courts are clogged with untried cases. Already 23 states have eased penalties, with more to follow.

Former U.S. Attorney, John Kaplan, a Stanford University Law professor and an authority on the subject, said this week that marijuana "could and should" be legalized. He inclines to a government monopoly which would rule out advertising. Packets of the weed, graded by strength and heavily taxed, might be sold in government-licensed shops. Mr. Kaplan believes this open system would discourage usage, particularly by teen-agers. Revenue would help to step up control of "hard" drugs.

But the underground does not mean to yield its rich, quasi-sacred grass market to the big money men.

"It's the economic basis of the counter-culture", says Blair Newman, a prominent San Francisco pot advocate. "We have to keep it out of the hands of the tobacco tycoons."

Believing legislation will come "within three years" Mr. Newman and his friends have formed a "philanthropic", non profit organization called Amorphia to stake their claim.

More confident still is a San Francisco consortium of Pot dealers known collectively as Felix the Cat. "Marijuana is legal" they say in publicity for their bold new venture — a packaged, filter tipped brand of pot cigarette named Grassmasters.

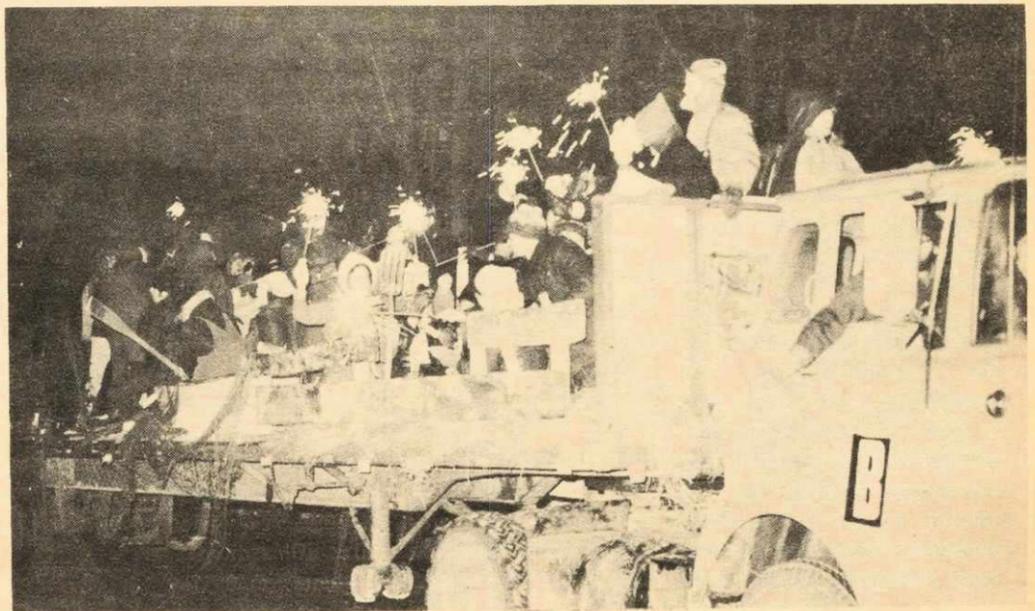
One "Mr. Felix" spokesman for the group told a radio station interviewer that 320 dealers in the Bay area are handling his first consignment of 5,000 cartons. A packet of 18 joints now sells at \$7.50, but he hopes to pass on savings to the smoker as business grows. By early spring they plan to have an automated rolling factory in Mexico and two more, underground in San Francisco and Berkely, with distribution centres from coast to coast.

Wouldn't the police object? "Oh, sure. But the government just isn't willing to push this. It's like the last days of prohibition when beer trucks drove around openly. I hope to have some trucks painted with our Felix symbol soon."

How was business?

"We turn about a ton of grass a month in the San Francisco area. That's worth \$250,000."

Mr. Felix claims to have a bail fund reserve of \$125,000 and is prepared for two supreme court appeals in the next couple of years. "Then we'll be out in the clear."



What foolish asses would have gone out on a night like that? (Photo by Dal Photography)

Legalize Abortion

Demonstrate for insured abortion Saturday, February 13. March starts at 1:30 at Victoria Park. Day Care provided at Anglican Diocesan Centre. Rally with speakers at Parade Square (Barrington near City Hall) at 3 p.m.

Abortion is a human right, make it a civil right



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