

## NUS activities

# What's it done for us?

by Nancy McGill

*This is the third in a series of informational articles about the National Union of Students (NUS). U of A students will vote on whether the university should join NUS in conjunction with SU elections Friday.*

Since its inception in 1972, NUS has been involved in various areas of student concern, including student employment, housing, visa students, student aid and cutbacks. Student employment has been one of the most successful examples of NUS influence on governmental policy.

In 1975, the federal government announced the end of the Opportunities for Youth (OFY) program, an opportunity for student-planned summer employment. As a result of this government announcement, NUS officials organized a survey of student summer unemployment and how the end of OFY would affect this un-

employment. The results were presented to the Opposition in parliament and to several national daily newspapers. Partly as a result of the NUS presentation, the government announced the beginning of the Young Canada Works (YCW) program.

The original YCW program made provision for 26,000 jobs. A NUS lobby began in the summer of 1976; by the summer of 1977, the number of jobs available had risen to 33,000.

Also in connection with the YCW program NUS lobbied then minister of manpower and immigration Bud Cullen about the February deadline for YCW projects. Cullen cites the NUS lobby as the reason for extending the deadline to allow more students to take advantage of the program.

Student Housing is also a NUS concern. In 1975, NUS and the BC Federation of Students approached the BC Liberal caucus to pressure the government to resume Central

Mortgage and Housing Corporation loans for on-campus housing. After these meetings, CMHC once again made money available for loans for on-campus student housing.

NUS staffers have also been involved in assisting local student organizations establish housing registries across the country.

Regarding immigration, NUS has questioned Cullen's proposal that Teaching Assistantships be offered to visa students only after they have been advertised nationally. After protest by NUS and a number of other groups Cullen's office announced a two-year delay in the implementation of the proposal.

NUS is also currently preparing a presentation to the federal government on the new immigration policy.

Student aid has been another focus of NUS efforts. Since 1974, NUS has been pressuring the federal government for more student input in the Canada Student Loans.

decision-making process. Their criticism of the student loan plan has resulted in an agreement that a review will be undertaken.

In 1977-78, NUS protested the open-ended tax waiver that had existed for student aid application forms. The waiver allowed student aid officials to request the income tax files of students, and, if dependent, the files of spouses and their parents. NUS met with the federal cabinet to discuss the ethics of this policy. The government later agreed to change the verification to a simple yes/no answer.

In 1978, the federal opposition contacted NUS regarding Bill C-37, legislation to increase the debt load borne by students. As a result of NUS advice and a national NUS-coordinated telegram campaign, the opposition killed the bill in the House of Commons.

Recently student aid moved from the jurisdiction of the department of finance to that of the Secretary of State. Since then, the Secretary of State's office has announced a review of the current aid program and has asked NUS for input.

NUS is also at present coordinating an anti-cutbacks campaign at the federal-provincial level.



On Saturday night Cheryl and Steve pasted each other with cream pies. By Monday they were back to slinging mud.

## Songbooks available

Ready to sing? Well, here's some good news for you! U of A Recreation Students have once again undertaken the project of printing and distributing the very useful and comprehensive *Just Add Music and Stir Songbook*.

Interested groups and individuals are invited to place orders for songbooks within the next two weeks. Orders are being taken in the West Phys. Ed. and Rec. Centre, in the hallway across from the Athletics Office (go up the stairs when entering the centre from the Main North entrance).

The books are available between 10 am and 2 pm Mon. - Fri., and there will be a clerk on duty to take your order. Price is \$4 per copy.

Songbooks can be picked up during the latter part of March.

## LRT, from page 1

would reduce noise and pedestrian problems, but is more expensive. With the 87 Avenue route, the stop at Education is not convenient, especially for students and staff who work at the north end of campus, Webster said. Also, 87 Avenue would have to close during the LRT construction, making access to university quite difficult.

A subcommittee of the CDC is trying to determine the university's priorities with reference to the LRT proposal, Webster said. The first priority they have come up with is different from any of the city's proposals: 89th Ave, underground.

So it seems a number of discussions will be needed before the go-ahead for the project is given. Webster speculated the LRT may be erected by 1981.

## Think before you X: preferential vote

A preferential balloting system, which allows voters to rank candidates in order of preference, will once again be used in Friday's SU general election. As in the past the ballots will be tabulated by the computer. However, instead of punching holes in the more traditional computer card, the voter will be using a pencil to mark a sheet which will be read by the optical scanner in Computing Services.

Preferential balloting takes account voters' alternate choices when the candidate(s) receiving their first choice has been eliminated in the ballot.

The system will work in the following manner:

1) All of the first choices are counted. If any candidate

receives 50% of the vote in the first ballot, the winner is declared immediately.

2) If no candidate has a majority, the candidate with the lowest number of votes is dropped out. That candidate's votes are redistributed according to the next choices (which are still active) indicated on the ballots.

3) A second ballot count is taken.

4) If there is still no majority, steps two and three are repeated until a majority is reached, or until the candidate with the least number of votes has no more active choices.

5) The winning candidate is the one with the highest number of votes at the end.

6) In the event of a tie, the Returning Officer exercises the

tie-breaking vote.

For example:

If a voter selects candidate A as his first choice, and candidate A is eliminated on the first ballot, the voter's second choice on the preferential ballot (call him candidate B) is taken into account on the second ballot. Thus, even though the voter's first choice has been eliminated, his preferences are still considered. Only the second choices of voters who supported the eliminated first ballot are considered on the second ballot.

If candidate B is eliminated on the second ballot, the voters who listed candidate B as their second choice now have their third choice applied to the third ballot. Similarly, all those voters who listed candidate B as their first choice now have their

second choice applied to the third ballot.

This process continues until one candidate has at least 50% of the vote.

Voters will need to exercise some caution in marking their ballots. The optical scanner will only read marks made by HB pencils, which will be supplied at the polls. The voter should make heavy black marks which will completely fill the circle of his choice. It is important that no extraneous marks or folds be made on the ballots, and that all "mistakes" are erased cleanly.

The tabulation of election results should be completed between 7 and 9 pm on Friday.

All full and part-time members of the Students' Union are eligible to vote.

There will be an advance poll on Thursday from 1-5 pm outside the Returning Office, Rm. 271 SUB. Poll locations for Friday are listed elsewhere in today's paper.

Everybody is encouraged to take a few minutes to indicate their choice.

The Students' Union does affect you.

Vote Friday (don't forget your I.D. card!).

## Help for Hire-a-Student

The University of Alberta's Board of Governors will provide a grant to Edmonton Hire-A-Student for the third consecutive year.

The board approved a commendation from its finance committee which called for a grant of \$1,200 to help

support the 1979 program at a meeting February 2.

The primary function of Edmonton Hire-A-Student is the co-ordination and stimulation of job opportunities for secondary and post-secondary students in the Edmonton area.

Administrative and finan-

cial support for Edmonton Hire-A-Student comes from Canada Employment and Immigration, Alberta Advanced Education and Manpower and the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce.

The board approved \$1,000 grants to the Hire-A-Student program in 1977 and 1978.