

# Alcohol Pyramid

HALIFAX (CUP) — An illegal chain letter is circulating at Dalhousie University here and the University of New Brunswick campus in Fredericton.

The chain letter called the Halifax/Dartmouth Christmas Cheer Program, first appeared here in early August and has continued unbroken with almost 5000 participants. Many students are involved in the scheme, which promises a return of 32 bottles of "cheers" for an investment of \$16.50.

The letter wants the recipient to "be prepared for the festive season," by sending one bottle of alcohol to the person whose name and telephone number is at the top of the list they receive, in the presence of the friend who "introduces them to the program".

The participant can then put her or his name at the bottom of the list. The cheer program promises 32 free bottles in return, since each new member must pass the letter on to two other people.

Staff Sargent Walter Leigh, of the RCMP's commercial crime detachment in Halifax, says he knows about the letter but won't

investigate unless someone files an official complaint.

"We've had some calls about the letter from all over the province, and I've been advising those people that the scheme is illegal. Now, whether they choose to participate in the chain after that I don't know," says Leigh.

Leigh says pyramid schemes are illegal in Canada under section 198 1E of the criminal code, which says any program that has participants investing much less than they expect in return is against the law.

Leigh says he has seen similar programs "every year around this time." Because the scheme does not involve money like most pyramids, Leigh says the cheer program doesn't worry him.

"It's almost a victimless scheme. Even those who lose, only lose one bottle of alcohol," he says.

One Halifax resident, Mary, says she received the letter last Monday, after hearing about it through her friends.

"It's been going through the Bank of Commerce, Sears, a travel agency downtown and the Victoria General (hospital)," she

says.

While she does not know where the letter originated, she does question its appearance.

"The letter is laid out really well. Everything on it is centered and it looks like word processor type. It looks like someone's secretary did it," she adds.

Alice, a third year UNB student who received the letter from a friend two weeks ago, says she's having some trouble passing it on to other people.

"It's not that they don't want it because it's illegal," she says, "but because people are naturally suspicious."

Both women know people who have received the promise of "free" booze.

Unlike most chain letter schemes, this one has seven carefully devised steps to ensure its longevity. "The people who created the chain don't want you to pass it on to just anybody, but someone you think is trusted and reliable," says Alice.

The chain hasn't broken yet, but Leigh says it probably has reached its saturation point in Halifax.



# Tools for Peace on P.E.I.

Since the popular revolution of 1979, the Nicaraguan people have made significant advances in health, education and land reform. Literacy has jumped from 40% to 87%. Polio and measles have been eradicated and Nicaragua has been selected as one of the five model countries in primary health care by the World Health Organization. Nicaragua is working toward self-sufficiency and self-reliance by democratic means.

These advances are being threatened by Reagan's recent trade embargo against Nicaragua and his continued support for CIA-trained "Contras", attacking hospitals, schools, co-ops and economic targets.

The "Tools for Peace" cam-

aign will be on Prince Edward Island from November 9 through November 10, presenting films, and lectures about Nicaragua, and asking for donations of tools, such as school supplies, and sewing supplies.

This campaign is part of a national activity aimed at sending much needed equipment (medical, agricultural, school and fishing tools) to the people of Nicaragua.

The P.E.I. program will include films such as *Americas in Transition*, *The Dirty War*, *Missing, Under Fire*, *In the Name of Democracy*, *When the Mountains Tremble*, and *With Our Own Hands*. It will also include lectures and discussion about the issues, and current information on Nicaragua.



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