

Iain Macdonald Reports

Challenge To Build Best SUB In The West

By Iain Macdonald

The University of Alberta needs a new Students' Union Building, and students have the opportunity to create a building which will set new standards for building design in western Canada.

The challenge is not to build the west's biggest building, or the west's flashiest building, or the west's cheapest building.

The challenge is to build the most sensibly planned, aesthetically pleasing and economically sound building in the west. This is what the Students' Union Planning Commission has been trying to develop.

"SENSIBLE" PLANS

Sensible planning first requires facing some facts of life about our Edmonton campus. First, it is growing, and will continue to grow—fast. Second, with growth, the only consistent predictable fact is that of Change.

Our university as a community has to a large degree become a confederation of small groups of students and faculty, divided by building location, research facilities and course schedule into sub-groups of the major university community which all too often, separated by invisible lines from one another, come to resemble factions or cliques. Consequently, student activities no longer appeal to the campus at large, and a new sense of sophistication has entered the student's concept of what is right and desirable in the way of student activities.

But when student or other university groups wish to programme an event of value for the university community, they face formidable problems in communication. Advertising and promotional techniques on a major scale must be employed, draining energies and financial resources perhaps more usefully spent elsewhere.

"ALL MEMBERS"

Sensible planning means, then, that a SUB is required to attract all members of the university, bringing people together across and in spite of all existing natural and limited lines of communication.

Sensible planning means, simply, not just "something for everyone" or "something from everywhere," but a reason for everyone to discover access to everyone else.

Therefore, the new SUB should be a complex of essential campus services—bookstore, bank branch, barber shop, Student Counselling Services, National Employment Services, popular recreation area, central display areas for the arts.

Sensible planning also means providing for the socio-political impulse of responsible students who wish to take part in the determination of their campus environment.

TIME IS NOW

If ever a sense of community spirit and responsibility needed to be fostered, now was never a

better time. Therefore, the Students' Union as the organization through which the university community to a great degree organizes its out-of-class activities must create a major co-ordinating, and records centre.

How many worthwhile activities are eclipsed from one year to another because essential records are lost—left in a closet at home from the summer months? How many worthwhile activities drift from crisis to crisis because their leaders know of no resources to which they can turn for help and direction—but which may readily exist for them, if they only knew it?

Sensible planning means integrating service facilities which draw people into the proposed SUB closely with programme facilities, which aim at enriching the cultural and social climate of the campus as a whole.

CONSIDER COSTS

Economic soundness means, of course, that no more be built than can be afforded reasonably. Not just apparent building costs must be considered; the costs of furnishing and equipping and operating as well must also be calculated.

Basically the two types of areas defined, service and programme, have another kind of meaning of economic significance: service facilities must pay their own costs, while student fees and operating profits from services areas finance programme space.

What constitutes programme space? Not just offices and meeting rooms, but also a music listening lounge where programmes for music education can be arranged; an art gallery for carefully planned exhibits, a chapel for the campus grass-roots religious programme; creative arts workshops for students wishing to learn new skills or hobbies, like painting, sculpture, or ceramics.

Is the Students' Union to become the Great Central Government overseeing all this? Not at all.

CO-ORDINATION

The activities planned for already exist in one form or another, and the decentralized momentum exists to fill the proposed SUB with students from all corners of the campus equipped with better resources for carrying out their plans. The Students' Union simply co-ordinates building planning and financing; it is a student building, however, and it is not to be run absolutely by any one group.

A look at the existing SUB while considering its planned limitations allows realization of the possibilities for a new SUB.

SUB as it stands was planned as first phase of a four-stage development. Later stages, however, designed around a large gym and a large auditorium, never came to pass as soaring enrolment growth made a vastly

larger Physical Education Building necessary; and as the province built the Jubilee Auditorium.

COMMUNICATIONS

Sensible planning, again, means considering all factors and doing the best possible job of making available new facilities which restore communications and a sense of community to this population of scholars.

Finally, the new building must be aesthetically stimulating.

This campus is a place of higher education. Large statements about life are communicated daily in a thousand ways between the members of this campus community. With architecture as a strong mode of communicating, students are responsible for making a brilliant, striking statement about their life in providing a new SUB.

"FUNCTIONAL"

Brilliant, striking architecture however, is not a building which shocks for the sake of shocking; it is a building designed around function. Functionality need neither be sterile nor expensively camouflaged. Pure architectural aesthetics demand that the functions intended to be housed be surrounded by simple, flexible, economical form—but that much thought and personal creativity go into articulating this form.

There are structural possibilities, there are materials which properly used give an exciting effect, there are color and window details which can make a building of and by itself a fascinating study.

There is nowhere any excuse or reason for mediocrity.

Mediocrity is the product of timidity: the Students' Union, having faced the fact that a new building is needed, must give conscientious thought to the concept outlined here—and its purpose must be to make available the best building possible within the available finances, in every sense of the word "best."

President Cragg Reviews SUB Expansion History

Report to the Members of the Students' Union

In the following weeks, you will be hearing a great deal about Students' Union Building Expansion. I would like to describe very briefly the history of this project together with the present stage development.

In the years following 1945, students, members of the academic faculty, and architects developed a four stage SUB development program and recommended immediate construction of Phase 1. The existing Students' Union Building was opened in 1950. Office space for the Students' Union, Lounge areas, and Food Services were considered the most pressing requirements for the first stage of the Students' Union Building. Fine Arts facilities and a gymnasium were to be included in later stages. For many reasons Phases 2, 3, and 4 which were called for in the original plans were never constructed.

FEE INCREASE

In the fall of 1961, the Students' Union President, Peter Hyndman initiated the present program. Since that time an increase of \$5.00 per student has been accepted by the members of the Students' Union for the purpose of SUB Expansion. Last year a committee was formed under the Chairmanship of Iain Macdonald, then Secretary-Treasurer of the Students' Union. This committee had as its purpose eventual presentation to Students' Council of a detailed proposal for the expansion of our present facilities.

The SUB Expansion Committee, now called the Planning Commission has had short but successful life. Last year 50 students analysed by survey the needs of the present student body, con-

ducted studies of the present Students' Union program in an attempt to ascertain facility needs and finally investigated the financial position of the Students' Union in relation to such a project.

The summer was spent gathering all the collected information together and preparing a detailed description of facilities.

PROJECT REVIEWED

The fall term has been spent for the most part reviewing the entire project. Financial considerations are now being checked by the firm of Clarkson & Gordon. The written proposal has been revised several times and will appear in a summarized form in The Gateway. The building design is being handled by the firm of Richards, Berretti and Jellinek. The preliminary drawings and the scale model of the proposed building will be on display December 1 and 2.

A preliminary description of the proposal will appear in The Gateway. On Dec. 1, a detailed presentation of the proposal will be given to Students' Council. A general meeting of the Students' Union will be held on Monday, Dec. 2 in the evening for the purpose of acquainting the student body with the detailed proposal.

I hope that your interest will be aroused by these descriptions. The financial commitment will be the largest ever undertaken by this organization. Any suggestions or criticisms will be welcomed by Iain Macdonald, Chairman of the Planning Commission, any Executive Members, as well as your faculty representative.

Sincerely,
A. W. Cragg,
President,
Students' Union

Varsity Voices

"The Issues"

To The Editor:

Ha hah! I cannot allow Miss Wilson's letter to pass without comment. In that letter I noticed the usual calm, rational attitude characteristic of many demonstrators. To develop a logical counterargument they must use terms as "anaemic imagination," "blatant attempt" and "shameless affront." If this doesn't prove their point then the final conclusive rebuttal is to accuse the opponent of being a "vicious liar."

To these overpowering arguments I have no reply save to quote an old but wise Ukrainian saying. "Sticks and stones may

break my bones . . ."

I am a liar because Miss Wilson was present at City Hall and did not see any attack which I mentioned. I question whether Miss Wilson (or any demonstrator) can see anything through those rose colored glasses.

However, rather than being spiteful I should be thankful that at least one person can still see the issues clearly—that at least one person can recognize the absolute right and truth and will act upon it. Of course I missed the procession of temperance groups that Miss Wilson led at Clarke Stadium. (She must have done this. Her acute awareness of

moral issues could allow here no other action.) God is on her side (as evidenced by two "brave" ministers who were protected by only twenty police officers). So Christians unite. Your Messiah has come. Here's one who knows the absolute right. We've been saved.

I still think I'm going to throw up.

The Phantom Uke Rides Again
P.S. I apologize. There is no ethnic issue. Don Sellar should apologize to Miss Wilson too for reporting the action by using the words "ethnic mob." The fact that those nasty Ukrainians met the demonstrators doesn't enter the situation, I guess.



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