

SAVE THE OLD RESIDENCES

by Greg Neiman

Over the years, the university's oldest buildings have fallen to a deplorable state of misuse and neglect. Pembina, Athabasca, and Assiniboia Halls were once the center of university life; now they may be torn down.

According to A.A. Ryan, Provost and executive assistant to the President Max Wyman, the buildings are structurally sound. It's just that they've gone to pot inside, and have been condemned as residences by the fire marshal.

Athabasca Hall, opened in 1911, is the oldest university building on campus. It is now closed, except for the basement gym, and dining room. The rest of the building is not being used due to faulty wiring and plumbing.

Assiniboia, which opened in 1912, is in the poorest condition of the three. Ryan says that the

foundation and walls are solid, but years of neglect have rendered the interior useless.

Pembina, opened in 1914, is structurally the best of the three. Made of steel and concrete Pembina is now used as a residence for foreign students.

The three residences are part of the history of the university. Reg Lister worked on the construction of Athabasca for 25 cents an hour. He got a raise to 40 cents when Assiniboia was built. From these three residences the university was developed; we cannot let them be destroyed. Especially since the cost of renovation is less than the cost of tearing them down, they should be spared, even for their historical value alone.

Pembina could easily be renovated and used as a full-time residence, but Assiniboia, and Athabasca Halls

would have to undergo complete interior renovations, says Ryan.

"Tearing them (the buildings) down has been considered and reconsidered ever since we built Lister," Ryan adds that the cost of renovation would be high but equal to the cost of tearing down the buildings and the landscape around them.

Dr. Walter Neal, vice president planning and development, says that there are no real plans one way or the other to decide the future of the residences. "We first must know what physical conditions of the buildings are."

A few years back, there were plans to have the residence

torn down and replaced with new Graduate Housing. Due to lack of funds and other problems, however, they fell through.

According to Mrs. M.L. Marino, assistant to the vice-president planning and development, "They (the buildings) can sit there for a long time."

She says a committee has been formed to look into the feasibility of renovating the residences for mature student housing. "All we're doing now is feasibility studies."

Marino says that a report from the committee will probably be brought forward by spring.

"Unless we find that the cost would be so excessive...we will proceed to renovate them."

But she also adds that if the cost of renovation is very high then the residences would have to be destroyed.

These buildings have stood for half a century, and have seen thousands of students pass through their doors. When they were built, they were surrounded by barren fields, now they lie in the shadow of towering buildings, architectural eyesores, crowding to the point of choking out the existence of their progenitors. They have watched this campus grow, and now this growth may kill them. Can we let this happen?

WATERGATE

South Africa

(EARTH NEWS) — Recent developments in Watergate-conscious America and racism-conscious South Africa have produced reactions in high government that bear striking similarities.

Despite South Africa's reactionary government, the press in that country has remained tolerably free. Following the recent slaughter of 11 striking black miners by government police, newspapers all over the country undertook their own investigations and printed facts and opinions contrary to the health and well-being of Prime Minister John Vorster's government. In reaction, Vorster went before a party congress recently and threatened "drastic" action, including the possibility of banning all periodicals which

engaged in what he interprets as "racial incitement."

Vorster's threats came only days prior to President Nixon's recent denunciations of the press and TV networks for their Watergate coverage, and Nixon-associate Patrick Buchanan's implied threat to break up the three major TV networks on anti-trust grounds.

election scheme

(EARTH NEWS) — Boston Mayor Kevin White proposed in an open letter in the New York Times this week that a special national election should be held next year to elect a president and vice president. Naturally, Mayor White's proposal is based on the assumption that the President will either resign or be

removed from office.

White points out that up until 1886 a special election was the required method of naming successors to the executive offices in the event of the simultaneous vacancy of both the President and the Vice President. It was the Succession Act of 1886 which changed that procedure and set up the present method of succession through the cabinet. White argues that since the original succession method was mandated by an Act of Congress, it can be restored by an Act of Congress.

White's proposal would have the Speaker of the House serve as acting President until January 20th, 1975 when the newly elected President and Vice President would assume office for a full four-year term. White says the election would "reaffirm the workings of our political process...and return decision making directly to the people where it belongs."

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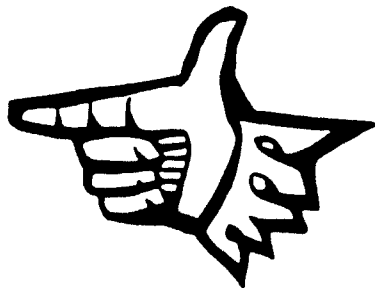
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