

HOUSING, from page 1

battles ever to find a residence. Although the SU was able to take "Band-Aid" measures such as the Emergency Housing Registry and the quad trailers. Sharon said students in alliance

with all those presently threatened must force the governments to reverse their do-nothing attitude to housing. The Oct. 3 referendum to decide on National Union of

Students membership was pointed to as being decisive in this struggle.

NUS sees housing as one of its main areas for work in the coming period. The SU representative received a round of applause from the audience when he finished his remarks stating: "Decent housing is a key part of a quality education...Education is a right, not a privilege - privileges can

be taken away. This is one question we must win."

Alderman Leadbeater, describing himself as a socialist, argued that a crisis in housing has existed since the early days of capitalism when people move into huge cities to work on the factories.

"The housing situation is even more drastic now due to the general crisis of the whole international economic system

of capitalism." While stating that only a socialist system could in the long term alleviate this crisis, he outlined a number of piecemeal reforms that he feels might help. These closely resembled the ideas of Wright - rent control, landbanks owned by city and leased to developers, and the city involvement in public housing.

Although Leadbeater posed the question as being "where are our resources going to come from and who pays?"

Gordon Wright said that the NDP, while, of course, supporting a socialist economic system was a "practical party" as evidenced by its three provincial governments.

His short term solution also consisted of calling on the federal government to launch massive land assembly programs that would supply cheap land to municipalities and private developers - abolishing speculative profits. Various forms of assisted mortgage, cooperative housing and rent controls were outlined by Wright.

Wright described how it was impossible for the present government of Alberta to carry out any fundamental changes in its housing program, due to its direct links with the big developers.

"What is needed," he said, "is to take the millions being given away to the multinationals Syncrude and invest it on low cost public housing."

In the discussion period various members of the audience pointed out how piecemeal solutions such as rent review boards etc. have been tried in B.C. and Quebec and failed miserably. One person mentioned that it was a question of control - that as long as private developers had control over housing, the crisis could not be alleviated by a patch-up reforms.

Leadbeater agreed to the concept of nationalization of the housing industry under worker's control but somehow thought it more appropriate some later date.

Wright also counterposed an immediate solution with the government getting into the housing industry and competing with the private sector. He defended his views by saying such measures were "better than nothing."

The forum tended to propose any very realistic or evolutionary solutions to the crisis in housing.

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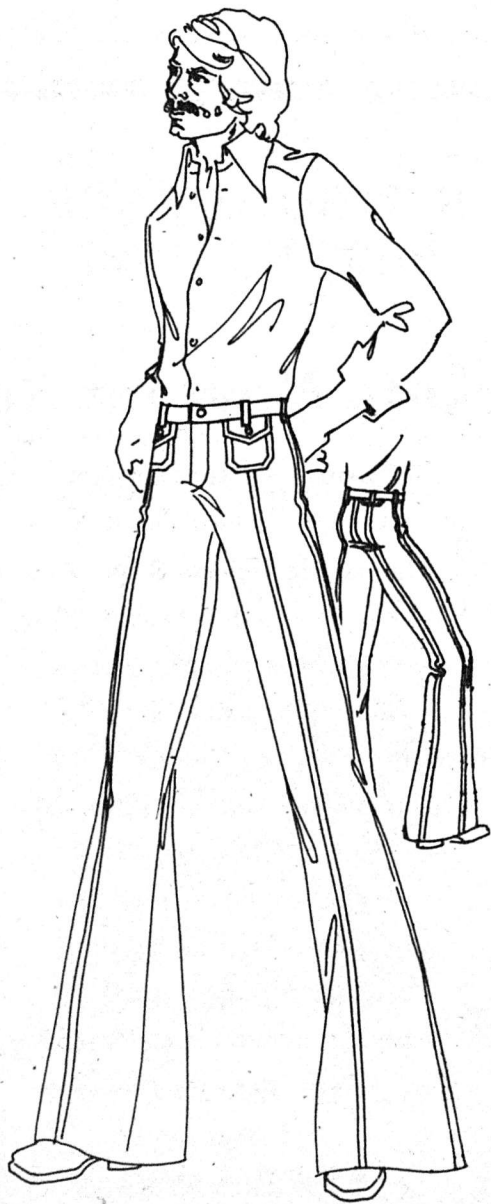
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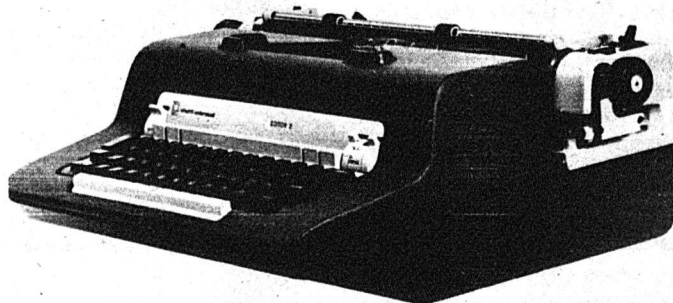
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