

Hicks shirks housing responsibilities

The long cold winter is almost upon us so if any students are still without places to live they better find them fast. Of course finding a place to live in Halifax is much easier said than done, as we're sure you all well know. The point of this long and boring introduction which we will get to presently is housing - the lack of it at Dalhousie and the university's responsibility to provide it.

The university administration argues, often quite convincingly, that it provides more housing for Dalhousie students than most other urban universities provide their students. They also content that they are more than willing to provide more housing but at the present time they cannot afford to do so and unless and until the government provides the university with more money Dalhousie will be unable to build new residences. All this rhetoric is simply that - rhetoric.

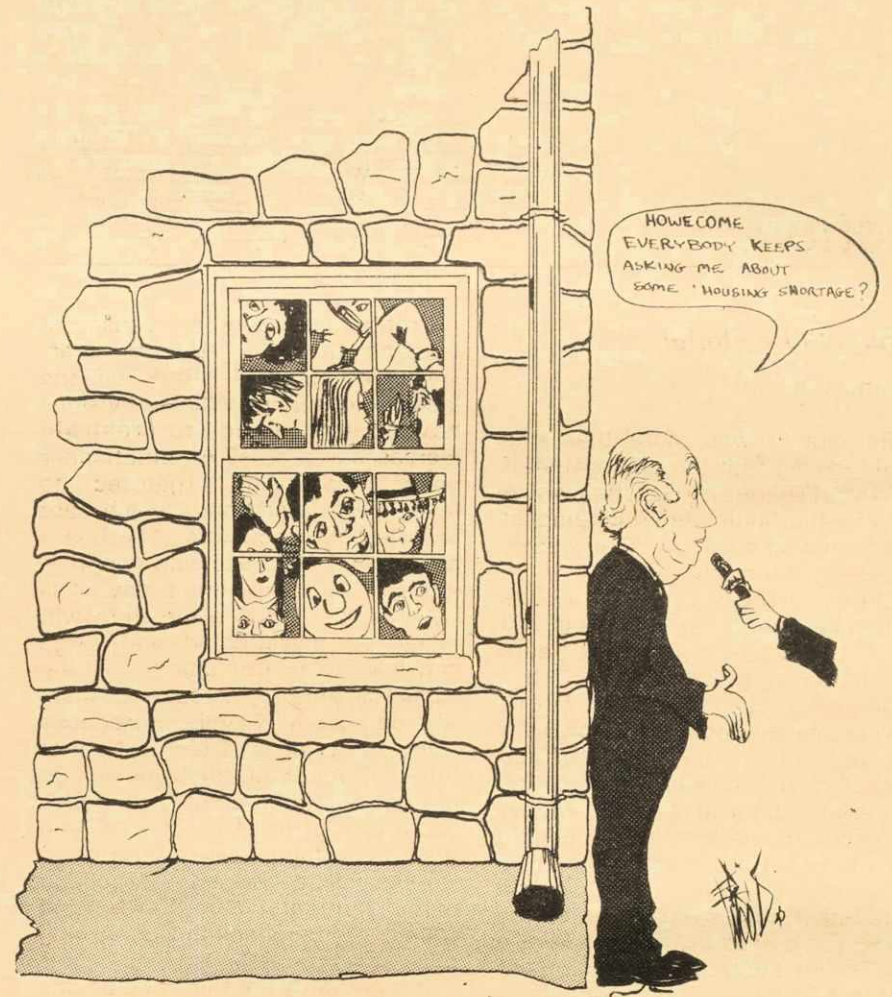
Lack of adequate housing is nothing new to Dalhousie and while numerous new buildings have gone up in the past few years none of them have provided more housing for students. As a matter of fact it is interesting to note that the two kinds of new buildings which interest and probably affect students the most - residences and a sports complex - still exist only on the drawing boards.

Dalhousie it is true has purchased various family houses in the university area over the past few years and has offered these houses to students. Unfortunately many of these houses are no longer available to students for accomodation purposes. They have either been torn down for parking lots or renovated to provide the faculty with new offices. The university is quite willing to make three students live, study, sleep together for 24 hours a day in one room in Howe Hall but is unwilling to make two or more faculty members share an office for the few hours a day that the faculty uses office space.

One begins to wonder after a year or so at Dalhousie just what the university's priorities are. It seems apparent that students are fairly low on the list yet the university could not exist without them. The university seems to feel that students are a necessary evil that must be tolerated for eight months of the year not that they are an essential and integral part of the university community.

Universities located in small towns or cities where it is assumed that students would be unable to find living accomodation off campus provide enough housing on campus to accomodate the full student body. When one considers how very expensive it is to live in Halifax and how limited student budgets are one wonders why Dalhousie does not follow the example of these smaller universities. The university should measure its adequacy or inadequacy in the housing area not against other large urban universities where housing may be plentiful but against universities situated in a poor housing area.

Traditional residences are needed at Dalhousie particularly to accomodate incoming freshmen but non-traditional accomodation is also needed. The student body consists of older graduate students and married students as well as younger, single students and the university should accomodate all types. Fenwick Towers, which is a University owned residence, has apartments rented out to non-students as well as students. This



hardly seems fair when there is inadequate housing space for registered Dalhousie students.

Not only that but the rents in Fenwick are hardly said to be lower than rents in other high rise apartments in the city. Fenwick could provide ideal living accomodation for married students but the University should certainly lower the rents for them. In actual fact the rents in Fenwick were raised last spring and the cost of a one or two bedroom apartment is out of the price range for many students.

Rent control and more low cost housing are desperately needed in Halifax but until the government does something to improve the critical shortage the very least Dalhousie can do is provide Dalhousie students with housing in the students' price range. It's about time the university administration stopped dragging its feet and shirking its responsibilities on the housing issue.

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Franco is a fig

The time is nigh for a harvest high. We at the GAZETTE feel that this editorial is totally uncalled for. However, this is the time of year when our tongues are loose and so are our hands, and you know where that leads to - (censored). Still there are certain factors about the student attitudes that have been brewing on this campus for the past week that deserve no attention.

There are two theories about Octoberfest. The better known concerns the deflection of the students attention from the mid-term massacre to the well publicized drink-a-thon. While the student is filling his gut with the brewery keg's golden excrement so is the professor. However the professor has already made out the mid-term (changed last year's numbers). The more you smash the worse you crash. This theory is as old as sin and probably as true.

The second theory has been kept a secret from us by the RCMP but we at the GAZETTE feel that it is about time the "lid" be blown off of it. Octobersober is an insidious plot to combat growing drug use. The more smashed the less hashed. The government is behind this - and do you know why? Think (try) - who controls the liquor commission - right - moolah compadre. The more grass the less cash. We at the GAZETTE feel that this is a disgraceful attitude. Therefore we propose a November Tokefest.

Where exactly does all this colectomy lead us too. Well if you come up with Planck's Constant you're close. Just remember all you Pisces out there, Pink Floyd has never been to the dark side of the moon.