

Housing crisis unsolved

by Clark Kent

Student housing management has always been unsatisfactory in the University of Alberta. A few problems that the director of student housing has been unable to solve include:

(1) Inability to provide students with single rooms. Each year about 300 students apply for single rooms in the Lister Hall Complex. 99.9% of them are not accepted, mainly because of "the lack of single rooms to accommodate the applicants." This may be true if we are considering only the Lister Hall Complex. But just look at the number of buildings that are laying idle: The Athabasca Hall, The Assiniboia Hall, and the Pembina Hall. (Although the Pembina Hall will reopen in the coming September, it will not help alleviate the demand for single rooms as evidenced in the past 2 or 3 years when Pembina Hall was open).

A comparison of the efforts made by the housing administration of the University of British Columbia, who are considering buying a hotel as a residence, with that of U of A will lead us to the conclusion that our U of A has not even put forth the minimal effort to supply the demand for single rooms.

It is not that the housing administration in U of A is unable to find buildings. It is its lack of foresight and reluctance to provide housing services that is the crucial issue. It may be argued that renovation of the Athabasca Hall and the Assiniboia Hall would cost

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some money. But if the housing administration knew what the strong demand for single rooms is, it would have the imagination to calculate that in less than one year all renovation costs would be recovered.

Take St. Joseph's College for example. All the rooms are filled every year, despite the existence of some complaints on certain matters. Take another example, the rooms in St. Stephen's are seldom all filled, mainly because the building and room conditions are unsatisfactory to prospective residents. I am sure that once the buildings that are let to lay idle have undergone some minimum level of renovation, 100% of the rooms there will be occupied. Thus, students looking for single rooms will all be happy and the housing administration will be able to provide services to the public while simultaneously making profits.

(2) The inability to provide students with rooms at a lower price than any other housing administration such as St. Joseph's, St. Stephen's, and even the HUB. According to the latest data available, rates in various dormitories for the 1975-76 session are:

-St. Joseph's College:

Single room & Board, \$157.00 per month;

-St. Stephen's College: Single room, \$55.60.00 per month;

HUB: 1-man unfurnished, \$120.00 per month and 2-man unfurnished, \$160.00 per month;

-Lister Hall: Double room and Board, \$155.00 per month.

A comparison of the above rates shows conclusively that Lister Hall charges the highest fees, noting that more than 98% of the rooms in Lister Hall are double rooms.

(3) inability to provide accommodation to students who are attending Spring or Summer sessions, at a rate comparable to those of other dormitories. The following shows fees for spring and summer sessions:

-St. Joseph's College: Single room & Board, \$140.00 per month;

-St. Stephen's College: Single room: \$55-60.00 per month;

-HUB: 1-man unfurnished, \$120.00 per month and 2-man unfurnished, \$160.00 per month;

@ Lister Hall: Single room (no food provided) \$180.00 per month, Double room (no food provided) \$90.00 per month.

Again the above indicates rates in Lister Hall are highest. No doubt each year only a handful of students who attend spring and summer sessions stayed in Lister Hall. We would like to ask the housing ad-

service is being reviewed and may be solved by the addition of another staff member.

4. The warm temperature in the premises is a problem associated with the building and cannot be remedied. (p.s. if people left the air conditioners on, that would partially solve the problem).

In summary, the Students' Council establishes policy by which the HUB Restaurant operates. Enforcement of policy is the responsibility of Students' Union staff, and to the best of my knowledge, these policies are being fairly and consistently enforced.

Terry Sharon

Commies go home

I don't understand the people who are pushing communism and socialism. I understand there are organizations on the U of A campus who are dedicated to this.

I am 21 years of age, 16 of which I lived in the U.S.S.R. I was born there and life there does not even compare to life in the free world. If people would only live there for a few months like the citizens do, they would probably get a taste of all the communism they want.

Five years ago I made my escape into West Germany, but not without receiving a bullet wound, shot at me when I was actually on West German soil. I would gladly escape again, even taking the chance of losing a leg or an arm or perhaps even my life. Once released from the hospital I came to Canada where I had relatives in Alberta.

Do you know of any other system that utilizes walls, fences sentrys, dogs, mines, patrol boats, watch towers to keep their people from running away? Life is not as rosy there as some try to make you believe. I was once a supporter of the communist system; it sounded like a good way of life for all. I now firmly believe it should be destroyed. Tourists are only allowed to see what the government wants you to see. Once away from the major centers, there isn't enough food to eat, and the citizens cannot clothe themselves properly. Fruit is only brought in for special occasions and is very expensive, especially compared to our standard of living.

Buying a pair of shoes is a major problem often involving travelling hundreds of miles to a store to buy them.

When a family is granted a permit to visit outside Russia, (which is a tedious process and

you're lucky if you even get it), one person from that family must remain as a "hostage" to ensure your return. The Secret Police have ears everywhere and it's not uncommon for people to just disappear.

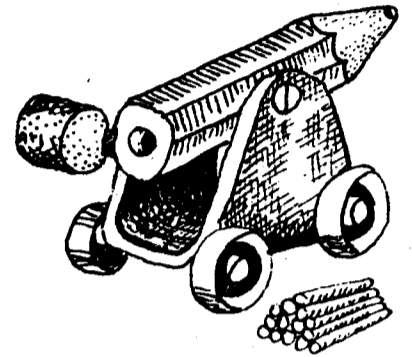
The money earned is taxed so heavily that most of it goes back into the State and you never see it. Both the parents must work if they are to make a meagre living for the family. Hundreds of people over the years have been killed trying to escape and my heart mourns for them. They are probably happier dead than they were alive.

I was talking to a gentleman not long ago who had ventured behind the "Iron Curtain" with a group on a day tour. He told me of a little boy of about 12 years of age who came running up to them and with tears in his eyes begged them to take him with them out of this country. Such is the suffering on mankind that you've never seen.

Under no circumstances will I once again live under communist rule. I wish this letter to remain anonymous for several reasons. For one thing I was in the Army at my time of escape and they don't particularly like people running off, especially if they know anything at all about their military setups.

Name Withheld by Request

editorial



Step backwards

The Leadbeater executive highlighted their first Students' Council meeting with a proposal for a giant step backwards in HUB rental policy. The executive intends to sponsor a motion calling for a lower rent structure for tenants during the May to August rental period at the next meeting.

The argument for this proposal totally overlooks the fact that every student on this campus is heavily subsidizing the HUB tenants already, and to ask for further subsidization is unwarranted and unjustified.

The popularity of the Spring and Summer academic sessions reflected itself in a substantial increase in enrollment in 1974. This trend is expected to continue, and HUB could be the primary student residence if it were so promoted. The inclusion of a HUB application form with the Registrar's mail-out to prospective students would greatly enhance the possibilities of 100% summer occupancy. Even with last summer's student population the occupancy rate was 80%. It would not appear to be an insurmountable task to attract tenants if the special sessions again increase in popularity.

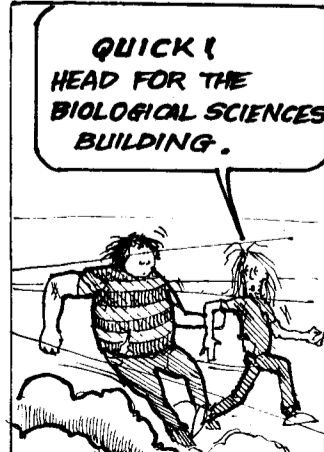
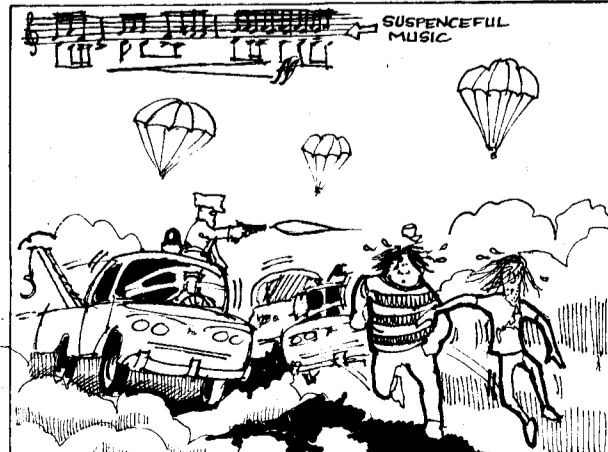
The proposal also defies a previous Council commitment to maintain competitive rental rates with other student accommodation in the campus area. Apartments do not adjust their rental structures. With more renters than possible accommodations in the area, there simply is no need to compete for tenants.

Further, the million dollar government housing subsidization stipulated the rents must be kept in line with comparable accommodation. Lowering the rates would contradict this commitment, a commitment far too important to ignore.

Since there is a serious shortage of adequate housing in the University area, it is a privilege enjoyed by few to live on campus. Accommodation in HUB not only provides one with this convenience, it also costs the same as living away from campus. If Leadbeater's campaign promise of "a new marketing concept for HUB" means decreasing the Students' Union revenue rather than maintaining or increasing its potential, the HUB financial problems could well plague our finances again in a very short period of time.

Leadbeater's proposal to promote full occupancy is a temporary measure that is both unsound and half-baked. It appears to be windowdressing rather than a responsible and positive administrative policy.

Bernie Fritze



AND SO THEY RAN INTO THE BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES BUILDING... THEY ARE STILL IN THERE... THEY CAN'T BE FOUND AND THEY CAN'T FIND THEIR WAY OUT— BUT IF THEY EVER DO—LOOK OUT! MEANWHILE, REMEMBER THEIR LAST STIRRING BATTLE CRY...

WORKERS OF THE WORLD, UNITE!

