

Ed. Note: The following article was written at the end of January, 1972 and is now somewhat dated.

One morning a while back I woke up to an editorial by CHED editorialist, Eddie Keen. He was talking about Welfare Slum Housing and gave names and addresses and invited the public to go and look for themselves.

My photographer - roommate, Gary Armstrong, and I went and did just that. We went to some of the homes of the welfare recipients and talked to the people. Generally they were co-operative, their homes spotless and the predicament one of the most frustrating stories of red-tape and apathy on the part of people who can help them.

Only three people refused to invite us into their homes. One was a woman who feared that publicity of her predicament would get in trouble with her landlord. She did not wish to go home-hunting with her seven children in the middle of winter.

Most of the people did not want their photographs taken or their names mentioned, probably to avoid embarrassments or hassles with their landlords.

I have tried to present the facts as I have found them, anyone wishing to check my sources is invited to do so.

Edmonton's a nice place

SAME COMPLAINTS

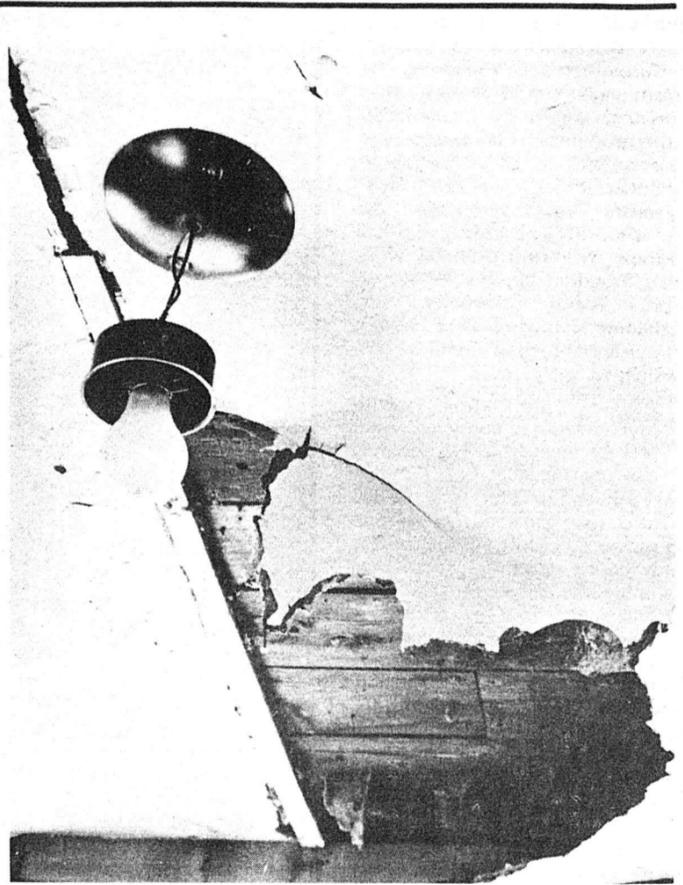
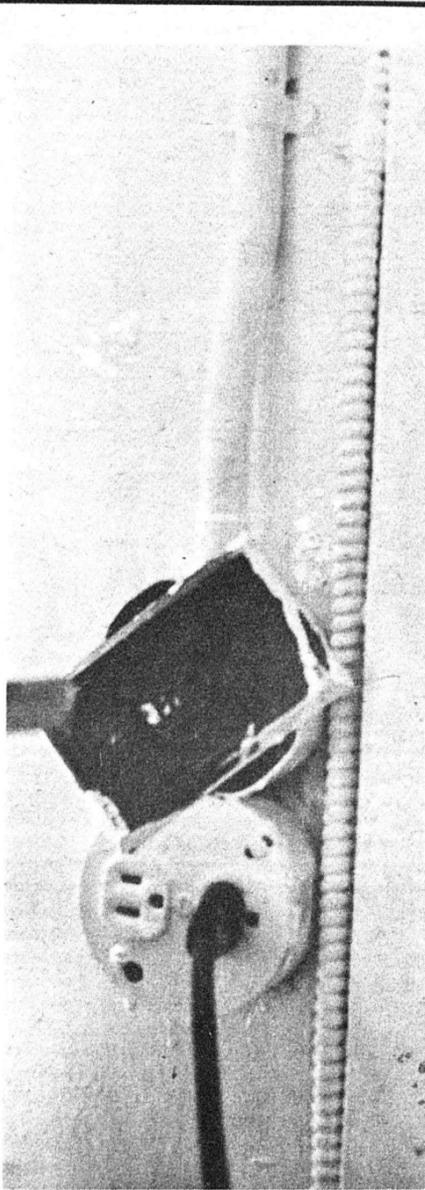
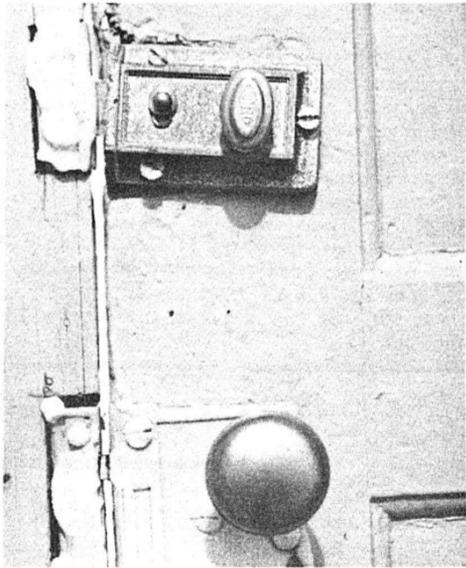
In our tour of the houses many things kept coming up again and again. There were many complaints about the heating and the lack of properly fitting doors and windows. In one house one door was boarded up because of the draft.

In all of the houses, the people had complained to the authorities. Their complaints apparently fell on

are about 3,000 families in the city needing low-cost housing.

Many complained of inadequate inspections by the housing and welfare departments. Many times the only thing the people were sure of was that the deaf ears and idle fingers.

One woman expressed a need for the city to build low-cost housing units. Statistics back her up. There



CONDEMNED HOUSING

The first three pictures are of the inside of a house at 10224 - 95 St. The house is owned by John Lakusta who wanted to rent the place for \$150 a month. The present tenant talked the price down to \$130 a month. Living there are a man, a woman, and two children ages 6 years and 2 months.

Their house has been condemned by the city.

The house has no basement, a hole in the floor and parts of the same floor that can double for trampolines. The lack of weatherproofing makes the place extremely drafty. The only source of heat is a gas-burner heater located in the living room. The present tenant told us that they cannot keep food in the cupboards because of the mice. He also told us that the wiring is all outside the walls and the place has many areas where the wiring is bare.

He has complained to Social Service and he guesses they have told Lakusta, but nothing has been done. They want to move.

The last picture is of a house at 10354 - 93 St. It too is owned by Lakusta. A native family with 7 children live there. The bricks in the building are gaped in many places and the masonry is cracking. It too has been condemned by the city.

story Fugi

photo G. Armstrong

WELFARE DOESN'T CARE

When we talked to Gene Cardinal and his wife in their home on 129 St., they both seemed to stress this point that welfare doesn't seem to care.

Their home is spotless and well kept up despite the many things wrong with it. Their five children were all happy and playing when we arrived.

One child is mute and needs special education the family cannot provide for him.

Their home is owned by Warner Jansen and the rent is \$185. Because of the archaic heating system and faulty plumbing the utilities run very high, in the neighborhood of \$50 a month.

Gene Cardinal and his young son Mike can be seen in front of the heater, located in a basement so cold that snow drifts through the door. The furnace seems home-made and is a fire hazard that puts many of B.C.'s forests to shame. The family also has to use the stove to help heat the home.

Some of the things we saw were a roof collapsing and leaking, an oven door held closed by a piece of wire attached to an adjacent cupboard, small and drafty bedrooms. Gene also complained of various other things that haven't been looked after, like the repair of the stove, (half of the burners don't work) mice, and painting of the house (Jansen did give them two gallons of paint for Christmas).

The Cardinal residence is at 12529 - 129 St.

