

The Gateway

member of the canadian university press

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two issues in one

Friday's announcement by housing and food services director Derek Bone calling for an increase in residence rents brings up two issues on which students should act.

First, the manner in which Mr. Bone handled the matter was not in the best interests of students. Since the issue of residence rents is a matter of direct student concern, we feel Mr. Bone should have at least given notice to the inter-residence council, if not the students' council itself, long before he did. He gave only a few hours official notice, hardly time for students to study the matter and take a stand.

As students are such an important part of the university community, they should be given every opportunity to participate in the university's affairs, or, at least in affairs which directly concern them.

Mr. Bone Friday offered to discuss the increase with council, and if the Board of Governors had not deferred the issue, students would have been given a chance for discussion only after the fact, which would be of little or no value.

Since the B of G has seen fit to defer the issue, supposedly to allow student government to make a presentation on the increase, perhaps they should see fit to allow students to participate in all matters which concern them, preferably by allowing them to sit on all major decision-making boards.

the increase itself

The rent increase proposed Friday by housing and food services director Derek Bone should be carefully considered by students.

There are threats attached which may mean if the increase is not accepted, funds previously allocated for academic use will be funneled into supporting the residence.

This move would be detrimental to the expansion and progress of the university, but a rent increase would be just as detrimental to each out-of-town student on campus.

Not only will residence students find higher rents, but so will every student who rents a room or boards in the city, as ever-greedy landlords

Perhaps then we would see open decisions rather than these behind-closed-doors type of decisions which have characterized the university to date.

The second issue to arise out of Friday's announcement is the matter of who pays for student residences. At present, residences are privately-financed, with the provincial government backing the loans.

Since the majority of students at this university are not residents of Edmonton, most of them have to find accommodation for their stay here, and only 1,700 can be accommodated in the university's residences.

The cost to an Edmonton student to attend is usually about \$600 per year less than an out-of-town student, for the simple reason that he lives at home and is in effect subsidized by his parents.

But what about the rest? Because there is no university in their area, should they be penalized to the extent of \$600 per year to come to university?

No. The cost of operating student residences on campus should be borne by the provincial government, and academic funds from the government should not suffer because of this subsidization.

Either that, or the provincial government should build hundreds of new universities, one in each Alberta community to end this tremendous inequality.

look for excuses to raise their rents.

Mr. Bone has partly justified the increase by saying U of A rates are fifth-lowest in Canada, and points to comparable accommodation at the University of British Columbia where the rents range from \$87 to \$95 a month for a double room.

What he forgets is that the cost of living is quite a bit higher in Vancouver than it is here.

Students should not be forced to pay another \$8 a month for the same rather poor services they have been receiving for three years.

If the services were up to acceptable standards Mr. Bone might have a case.



"our boy—what pays \$90 to share some little room—should have to ask for food from home?"

lib spry

it is up to students to ask why

Following is an editorial reprinted from the University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon campus, *Sheaf*. Miss Spry is editor-in-chief of *The Sheaf*.

Just what sort of education are we being offered at this and other universities? Earle Birney feels it is a poor one, and there are many, students, faculty, administration and taxpayers, who are more than willing to agree with him.

They are not only more than willing to agree with him, but are equally willing to produce myriads of suggestions as to how this situation can be remedied.

But before reform of any sort can be implemented, it is necessary to ask why it should be done.

To repeat an old, old cry, the university of today has become a machine which is churning out thousands of graduates each year.

It is using a system which has been developing over the years which will produce a tangible end-product in the most efficient and least problematic way possible.

"If it is a BA it must be good," seems to be the motto of firms which send recruiting officers to the campuses.

"If we produce enough graduates, we are doing our bit for business," seems to be the motto of the administration.

It is highly unlikely the administrations of universities in this country are going to admit that the present philosophy behind the educational system is wrong. This is a system which is their bread and butter.

If they can lose their jobs for poli-

tical reasons, they can just as easily lose their jobs for openly and actively criticizing the how and why of their position.

It is the responsibility of the student to question the system, and to produce concrete answers to questions which ask: why?

Why do I come to university? Why am I being taught the way I am being taught? Why do I have to have 15 courses to graduate? Why do I have to sit in classes which offer me nothing? Why should I come to university?

We feel that if reform is going to come about, and be of any use, students must be able to present to the so-called powers that be very good reasons why the system is wrong, and not just a whole pile of explanations as to how changes can be made.

Everyone can find a solution of some type as to how things can be changed, not many are willing to answer why the reforms should be made.

We feel the answer to this question lies in the amount of students who quit school, who flunk out, who drink, who turn to doctors and counsellors for aid, who commit suicide.

Something must be done to stop universities from turning into de-personalized computer centres recording numbers.

We should be attending university because it offers us a chance to discuss, to think, to consider, to challenge ideas offered to us by other students, by professors and in books.

It should be offering us a real education, not just a money-making piece of goatskin.