

"After Guinness approached us and told us that they wanted to withdraw our distribution rights, we offered to print the book here in Canada and pay exactly the same royalties the Americans are presently paying the firm. Not only that, we also pointed out that we could publish and market it for one dollar less than the American edition, thereby saving the Canadian consumer, also. Without giving us anything more than very specious reasons, they refused."

"Kicked up quite a fuss"

These negotiations, if they could be called such, were taking place last spring, and following this refusal Hurtigs "kicked up quite a fuss."

The fuss raised included scores of letters written by Canadian booksellers in defence of Hurtigs, which stated that they would not buy the American edition of the *GBR*. The Canadian government also contacted Guinness and urged them to reconsider their move.

This response brought about a change in attitude by Guinness and, instead of giving the rights to Sterling, they decided to set up a branch plant in Canada. Although it has been suggested that this may be in contravention of Phase II of the Foreign Investment Act, they have continued with their plans and Hurtigs' rights to the *GBR* terminate January 1, 1976.

Mr. Hurtig says "I believe they will circumvent this (Act) by using their real-estate corporation to do the job, or by using a Canadian corporation which currently wholesales Sterling's books." The real-estate corporation which Mr. Hurtig is referring to is a concern based in Vancouver, which owns the British States there and also built the Lion's Gate Bridge. The Canadian corporation is Saunders of Toronto, which does not originate any Canadian publishing, but instead wholesales books which are published in the United States.

Ottawa's position

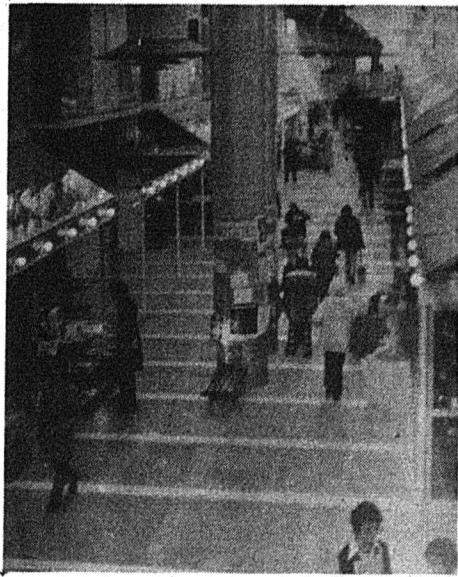
One of the ironies of the situation arises with respect to some of the federal government's statements it has made recently in respect to the "preservation of Canadian cultural development." Secretary of State Hugh Faulkner stated at a publisher's conference held in the United States last year that "the Canadian government believes strongly that the major segment of the publishing industry in Canada should be owned by Canadians." Although Mr. Hurtig has made a number of appeals to the federal government to initiate some type of action in regards to Guinness move (as it most certainly does affect "publishing industry in Canada"), no action has been forthcoming. And the entire affair sticks in Mel Hurtig's throat.

"Despite many letters to the Guinness people, they still refuse to say why they are taking this step. Despite appeals to the federal government, they have remained adamant in their refusal to do anything about the situation, although I still see a more perfect opportunity for them to prove they are interested in doing more than just mouthing words."

Mr. Hurtig goes on to say "It has been suggested that my interest in Canadian nationalism may be the root of this conflict with Guinness and this is perhaps another possibility. Guinness is a large organization, with companies and subsidiaries throughout the world, and this certainly could be a way for them to get back at me' for my activities. But I think that this has more important moral and ethical ramifications than that, because they have licenced editions of the *GBR* in many, many countries ... Now they are refusing Canada the same privilege."

Merchants mourn the unrealized potential of H.U.B.

by Greg Neiman



Of all the literature and rhetoric that has helped float the issue of the Students' Union's so-called worst investment, rare is the ode to its uniqueness, the paean to its amazing potential.

Virtually everything that has ever been said about HUB has been done with tongue in cheek, or a closed fist, or a rueful sigh. Its a long, barren, imposing, structure that's a greenhouse in summer, noisy at any particular time, the walls are cracking, and now the roof is beginning to leak. You can hear your neighbor urinating. How gross. You can only enter through narrow doorways leading to an athletic climb up cement stairs. How uninviting. Services on the mall seem limited to quick-and-hot-greased-burgers-and-chips-and-gravy fare. How bland.

Nothing good is being said about HUB, or in recent history, has ever been said. The reading market is kept up to date on the errors, in accuracies, misfired prophecies, and inflationary flubs resulting in headaches and woes far beyond the scope of its owners and managers to cope with them. Deeper and deeper plunges the rock down the well of debt, and although a slowdown has been predicted, we are still falling.

But that's because nobody has really looked for good things in HUB, and believe it or not, those good things really do exist.

Think of it this way, we're the only students' union with its own housing and shopping facility, complete with the world's longest indoor shopping mall and room for a thousand students to live.

The stores offer services which in some cases can be found nowhere else. The Plant Cupboard stocks imported plants that cannot be found elsewhere in the city. Our hamburgers are also of high fame and repute, and the beer costs less than downtown. Slip and fall in the mud? There's a laundromat right there to serve you, and you can wait in the comfort of a friend's apartment, or play pool, sit in a rocking chair, shoot the pinball machines, or if the spirit moves you, do a four block streak in total indoor warmth and comfort.

Its all in how you look at it.

And looking deeper, you'll find that HUB can be even a better place to live or shop, if only the owners of the building would have stuck to the original plan. That's where most of the complaints arise, and the allegations of mismanagement, even fraud, are most bitter.

The merchants in HUB feel they've been sold short by their owners who have simply not lived up to promises made, or have stuck to the original plan which would have, in the opinions of some, made HUB more viable to us.

Most merchants, who wish not to be named for business purposes, feel our problems result from the following areas of mismanagement and inefficiency:

The "Day One" complaint

From day one, say some merchants, they were promised a host of good things from the Students' Union, but somehow these were never provided.

No less than four indoor entrances from other buildings were to have been completed by the end of this year, and there exist only two. A link to Tory and one other to Fine Arts have been planned and promised, but nothing in the way of visible action has taken place. This means students have to enter up the narrow, forbidding stairways, and according to merchants, this does not attract the casual customer.

Along the same vein, a stairwell on the south end of HUB was promised for the completion this October, to attract people into the complex, but passersby will notice no such appendage.

The Day One complaint also recalls unkept promises regarding promotion of the mall by its owner and manager.

One merchant mentioned a figure of \$100 thousand that was to be used the

first year of HUB's existence to promote the mall. This, or no-part of it, was ever used.

Original merchants from way back then say they were led to believe the mall was to be filled with high-pressured big name customer magnets, like Eaton's, Woodwards, or others of that ilk. Thus they spent great amounts on interior design and planned a service repertoire to compliment those tenants. They never arrived. Instead the mall filled with fast food joints and part-time small business interests whose overhead would not even match that spent in painting the original stores.

Another merchant recalls a letter sent to him asking him to hurry and get his store ready for the September of '72 opening with the twenty two other merchants occupying the mall. It turned out he was the sole merchant in HUB for eight months following that September. There were no other merchants.

The "Ever After" complaint

Merchants recall hassles trying to get minor repairs taken care of. When the sun rose in summer, and it became impossible to breathe, some merchants were given the old university bureaucracy relay race when they tried to get some movement of air in the mall.

Who will shop in a mall that causes your clothes to wilt?

As well, they found that trying to compete with the sun in the bright lights game proved a loser. How can you attract customers into a mall when the stores look like caverns hiding dark secrets?

Light bulbs have not been replaced in the entrances, parking has been denied to customers, the sign outside of the mall remains demolished since a bus ran through it weeks ago. (Signs and advertising of all types had been promised for years and never provided.)

Merchants contend the Students' Union has been trying its level best to keep shoppers out of their stores by making entrance a difficulty, air a rare commodity, and by refusing to maintain even a modicum of good appearance within and without the building.

Thus it has become impossible for

merchants to do good business, to pay rent, or to make the building self sufficient.

Answers to these complaints range from a bleak admission of mismanagement in some areas, surprise that the aforementioned promises were even made, and a general hearty wish that the problems ever had to fall on their shoulders.

Plus a few comments on lack of participation in decision making processes by the merchants. But the fact remains that merchants have been flatly denied membership on boards and committees within the SU and university framework in matters dealing with them.

So there you are.

Perhaps HUB could have been a Cadillac organisation instead of the edsel it is now. Who can say for sure? But most agree that if we knew then what we know now, things would have been different.

We could have had, and in some senses still have a pretty interesting arrangement stretching its neck across the southern half of the campus. Its not as much a white elephant as most of us have said. You just have to look at it right.

