

Rip off artists

Take HUB to the cleaners

by Kevin Gillese

"Disgusting - really disgusting - and the horrible thing is that they usually steal items worth less than a dollar. I put up a sign saying, 'What's The Price Of Your Integrity?' and I mean it. Is it worth being a thief to take a 25 cent birthday card?"

These are the words of Rose Rodewalt of the Candelier Shop on HUB Mall, and the sentiments she voices are far from uncommon amongst HUB merchants.

Van Gardener, owner of

Varsity Drugs in HUB, says that he loses "thousands and thousands of dollars each year from shoplifting - enough to reduce my profit percentage by three or four per cent. For some shops, that's enough to get down to the break even point or below."

Gardener says his store prosecutes everyone with a clear-cut case. "Originally I didn't want to do it but the volume of theft is simply too high. I mean, my staff here is

double because of the theft problem. I came in the first year HUB opened and there were big discounts on stuff in the store. I can't afford to do that anymore while the high theft rate continues."

Gardener blames high theft rates in HUB to: 1) the physical layout of the stores, and 2) pressures of university life.

"Shops in HUB have very poor visibility. There are different floor levels, pillars obstruct vision, and so on. Therefore, it's impossible to put up mirrors that will do much good and you just have to compensate with increased staff," he says.

"But there's another thing," he adds. "Do you know that theft is always increased during exam time? Last week I caught four people shoplifting within a fifteen minute period."

And the rip-off artists are pretty clever, says Dale Wright of the Plant Cupboard. "Oh yeah, they'll steal plant lights, seeds, fertilizer, small plants that they like ... nearly anything. Last week a girl walked in and was holding a bag of seeds, then put them back and walked out. I found out the next day that she'd opened the bag and dumped the seeds in her pocket before going. Or someone will walk up and rip a plant out or a pot - by the roots! It's amazing."

Joe Wong of HUB Food Market agrees with the others. "Any chance they get, they'll steal. I only hope that the ones who do aren't from HUB."

But that is not to say that stealing on campus is reserved only for the stores on HUB. Although the Bookstore is often reluctant to publicize the amount of money it loses from theft, estimates run as high as \$40,000 per year.

J.C. Malone, Manager of the U of A Bookstore, says their shrinkage is just under two per cent per year. Although shrinkage includes such things as clerical errors and other shop mistakes, the greatest part of that figure is a result of theft. The Bookstore's shrinkage is based on sales, which last year exceeded \$2,000,000. That means theft is up around \$40,000.

Theft necessitates higher pricing so that, as Van Gardener says, in the long run "everybody gets ripped off."



Good food, good times?

Food complaints ignored

by Kim St. Clair

Little action has been taken concerning recent complaints about food services in Lister Hall, says Sandy Bombardieri, secretary of the Lister Hall Student Association's Food Committee.

Recommendations for improvement were presented to the head of Housing and Food Services early in January. These recommendations were based on findings of a December survey, which revealed widespread dissatisfaction with cutbacks in quality of food services.

While complaints about institutional food are nothing new, the committee secretary attributes present discontent to several factors, one of which is the increase in room and board rates. "I wouldn't say the quality of the food is worse than last year," she said, "but it's more upsetting because of the increase in the cost."

Cutbacks in services are also to blame, she claims. This year hot breakfasts have been eliminated, breakfast is not served on Saturdays and Sundays, there are limited helpings of certain meals served, and sometimes only one choice is given for the main dish.

According to Bombardieri, the Student Association is not

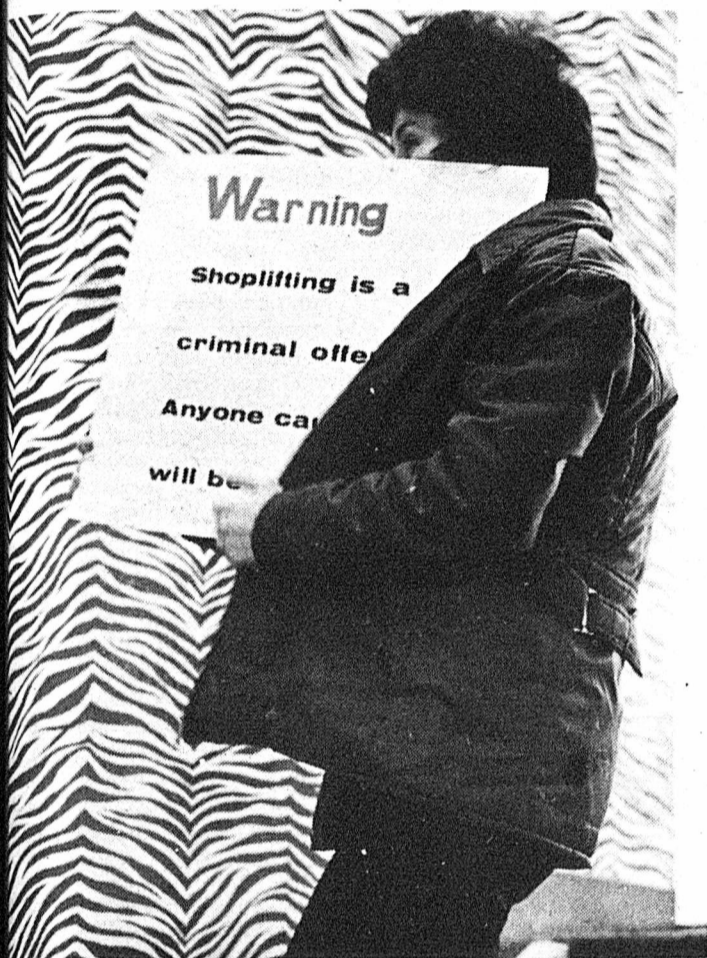
satisfied with official response to complaints. "I think the administration knows what's going on," she explained, "and they're putting us off. I would like to see some positive action. We've been pushing a long time."

Requests made by the Committee were for: a complete salad bar, hot breakfasts every week-day, removal of lunches, vegetables, and second tray suppers that are extremely unsatisfactory, and for an increase in quality, temperature and freshness of food served.

It was also suggested that steam tables and heat lamps be better utilized, and that the number of rich desserts be decreased to allow for improvement in other areas.

Bombardieri conceded that heat lamps are now being used and that the salad bar has been enlarged, but she maintains that the main complaint is about the quality of food.

The Food Committee has sent a survey to sixty-five other universities to obtain information about the development of a more varied menu and a specialized meal card scheme. Under such a scheme, students could choose year long menus according to taste, appetite, and cost.



If you can identify this person, turn her in to your local campus security guard.

Lougheed closes door

"I have been most discouraged by Premier Lougheed's closed door policies." SU President Graeme Leadbeater announced at a news conference yesterday.

Leadbeater told his audience that the SU executive sought out the Premier in order to discuss a number of student and general concerns. "We wanted to talk about tuition fee increases, how monies from the Heritage Trust Fund might be used in relation to education, plus a number of topics of general concern to the youth of this province. We were flatly refused a meeting and told to see the various ministers involved."

"I was disappointed that we got this kind of put-off from his office and although I can appreciate that the Premier is a busy man, I think a meeting might have and should have been arranged," Leadbeater said. "I think we have a legitimate reason to see the Premier and, further, that we do represent a large number of the youth of this province."

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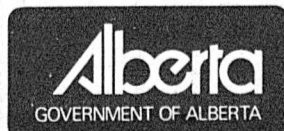
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STUDENTS FINANCE BOARD



The Minister's Advisory Committee on Student Affairs invite students and institutional representatives to make written submissions regarding three areas of importance to students:

**COUNSELLING,
FINANCING,
& HOUSING.**

Please forward your submissions before March 15 to:

Dr. A. G. Scott, Chairman
Minister's Advisory Committee
on Student Affairs
c/o Glenrose Hospital
10230 - 111 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta
T5G 0B7

A public meeting was held in Edmonton on February 7, 1976.

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