

# IN SEARCH OF A ROOM

By DOUGLAS BARBOUR

My search for a room was finally successful, but the expanse being great and the rewards less than those wished for, brought me once again face to face with the problem of student housing in Halifax.

It is a big problem. And of all the cities of this country, Halifax, more than any other, seems to be a perfect situation for the organization of student co-operation.

Co-ops are old and honorable institutions in Toronto, and I am sure, elsewhere. They are completely separate from the university, are student organized and managed, are (and this is best of all) cheap, and they offer great opportunities for fellowship, fun, and housework.

Their rules are self-created, and are therefore much more in line with the outlook of the students.

What makes them better than a fraternity? Well for one thing they are co-educational. For another they are local, and year by year organizations, with no fees or obligations to an international organization. Perhaps, too, who knows, there would be less prejudice. That would depend entirely upon those who took part.

Co-ops are designed for the student, not for his parents, nor for his professors, but this does not mean that it should become a home for goof-offs. Ideally they would provide good living and study conditions for members, good training in what we might call "group therapy housekeeping" for it would be up to each member to provide help in one form or another as well as small rent.

Furthermore, male and female students living together in one house would probably be good for all parties concerned. I am sure there are many students today who feel that they are old enough to choose their way of living, and mature enough to live in what they consider a proper and moral way.

Why then do they not exist? Is the Dalhousie student too lazy, or too apathetic to see and grasp the great opportunities for college living offered by the co-ops?

Houses, especially unfurnished ones, are quite inexpensive in Halifax. The savings to be made by buying food for a fairly large group are not to be overlooked.

The inexpensive furniture can be purchased at auctions and at the various junk shops which permeate Halifax. The fact that the house can be rented for the summer, and used the full four years of college is another aspect worthy of consideration.

All these advantages plus the freedom of self-responsibility comes with membership in a co-op. What is preventing Dal students from taking the opportunity offered and perhaps gaining much more than they bargained for?

# POINTS OF VIEW

EDITOR'S NOTE:

In the spring of this year the Gazette ran an article on Mr. Pitso describing conditions in Basutoland as compared with the Republic of South Africa. Later, after the Gazette had discontinued publication we received a reply from the South African Embassy to Canada. As a service to the student body we are reprinting both the original article and the reply —

## POINT...

"Africans are given a much greater chance to better themselves in Basutoland than they are in the Republic of South Africa". This is the opinion of Peter Pitso, a student from Basutoland, who is studying on a scholarship for an honors Classic degree at Kings College.



PETER PITSO

Mr. Pitso is well qualified to speak on the subject. He spent the last four years teaching Latin in both his native land and in the Republic. In Basutoland, there is no discrimination. The Legislative Assembly consists of 80 members, 76 of which by law must be Africans. The Cabinet consists of 8 representatives and the Resident Commissioner (British). Of the eight, four represent various Government departments. Up until recently these four were always held by Europeans.

With the increase in higher educational opportunities for the Africans, these and other high Government posts have been relinquished by the British to them. Invoked Mr. Pitso, "It is a Government policy that the European must give way to qualified "Africans". Since the war there has been an attempt to do away with illiteracy. "Quite a number of schools have been built, especially of higher education", commented Mr. Pitso.

In contrast, education has been stultification. But in fairness to the South African Government", he admitted, "they have made quite a difference in the living conditions of Africans in the past 10 years such as clearing up the slums in Johannesburg."

It is Mr. Pitso's opinion that the apartheid policy in South Africa of the Verwoerd Government is objected to by few of the European population, whereas in Basutoland

to find the Europeans feel that "The Africans should be given a chance."

In Basutoland farming is the mainstay of the economy, especially sheep and cattle. Since the war the British have attempted to industrialize the country but as yet the results have "not been worth mentioning."

Mr. Pitso, a Roman Catholic, was born in the tribal village of Ramabanta's in the district of Maseru. He was educated first at the local mission school and later received a degree at Pius XII College in the Roma Valley. He then went into teaching.

It is Mr. Pitso's intention upon graduating to go back to Basutoland to continue teaching.

## ... COUNTER POINT

Dear Mr. Brazier:

I read with interest your account in the March 6 issue of the "Dalhousie Gazette" of your interview with Mr. Peter Pitso. Mr. Pitso claimed that as a citizen of Basutoland he spent four years teaching in his own territory as well as in the Republic of South Africa.

Reviewing education for Africans in Basutoland and South Africa Mr. Pitso is reported to have said: "Africans are given a much greater chance to better themselves in Basutoland than they are in the Republic of South Africa".

Mr. Pitso who is also claimed to be "well qualified to speak on the subject" should have known better than to draw a comparison between educational facilities in the Republic of South Africa and Basutoland.

In 1950-51 already South Africa spent two and a half times more per capita on African or Bantu education than Basutoland. At present four out of five Bantu children are at school. Each year there are 100,000 more and complete literacy will be achieved by Africans or Bantu in South Africa within this generation. With an illiteracy rate of higher than 80 per cent in the rest of Africa this is no small achievement.

Approximately 10,500,000 Bantu or Africans in South Africa possess more university degrees than the African states South of the Sahara together with a total population of more than 70 million. Expenditure on non-white education exceeded \$56 million during the past fiscal year.

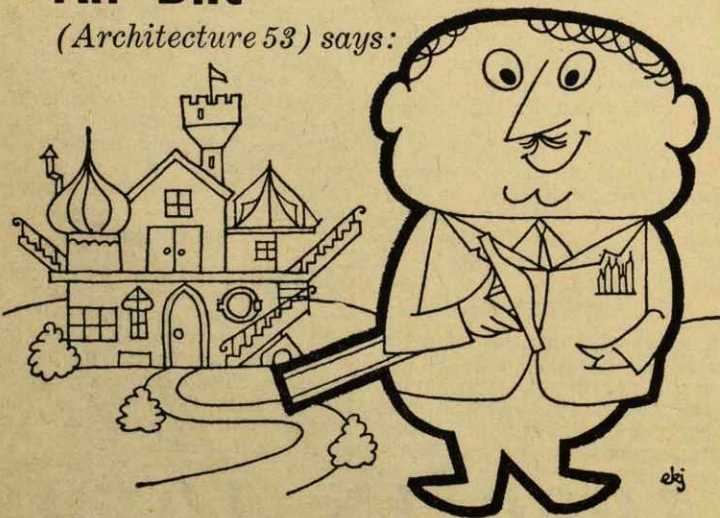
If Mr. Pitso's statement is true, 30,000 Africans or Bantu from the High Commission Territories — of which Basutoland is one — would hardly have the incentive to enter South Africa illegally every year. And why then would more than half of Basutoland's male population prefer to work in the Republic of South Africa?

The answer is obvious. Apart from better wages and better educational facilities, they also reap the benefit of free hospital services, better housing at a low rent and numerous other social services.

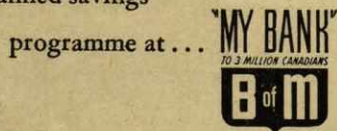
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L.E.S. de Villiers,  
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