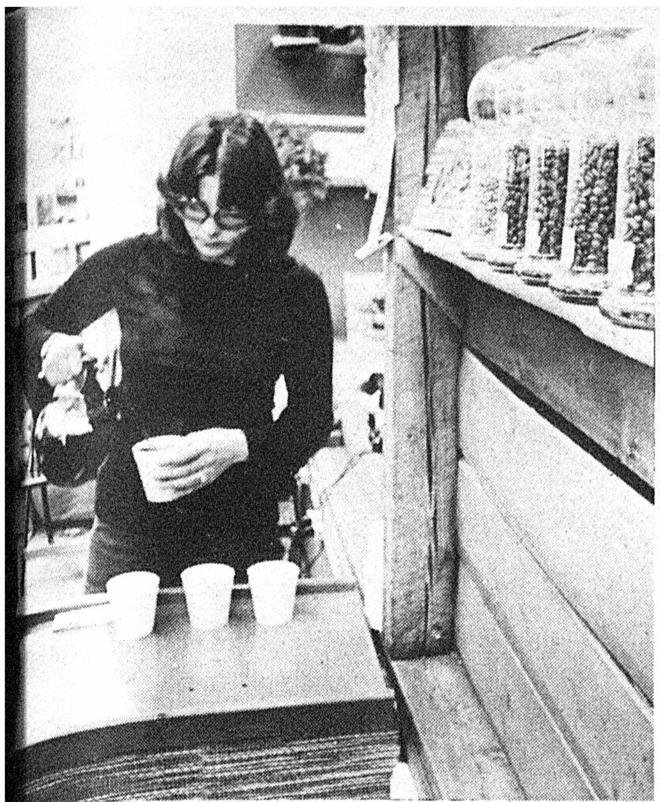

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The United States, promoting the interests of the giant coffee corporations (the U.S. buys 40% of the world coffee production) has done a great deal to sabotage any tendency on the part of the coffee producing nations to form what is described as another "cartel" which will "gang up on the developed world."

In the consuming nations the processing, sale and profits of coffee are all controlled by large corporations. An exchange in New York deals in coffee futures. Brokers buy and sell coffee from anywhere between a month and a year ahead making what are called "green coffee contracts." The future market in all commodities does not add any real value to a commodity, but only provides a way making more money for the wealthy by speculating on the value of commodities in the future.

The consumer now pays jacked-up prices for coffee that the corporations bought cheaply in the past year. For them, new prices provide windfall profits.

General Foods is the largest coffee producer in North America controlling over 38% of the coffee sold. Its brands include Maxwell House, Sanka, Maxim, and Yuban. The second largest producer on the continent is Standard Brands which sells Chase and Sanborn. These two companies, along with a few others, dominate the coffee market and set the price the consumer will pay for a pound of coffee.

unaround

ELEPHANT

by Ernie Miciak

The Housing Union Building (HUB) was built by the Students' Union in 1970 for a cost of $6,300,000, the largest dome structure in Canada at that time.

Built to provide low-cost, subsidized housing for students, HUB was the first large commercial development on campus and the first university residence where no attempt was made to regulate the behavior of the inhabitants.

Shortly after completion, HUB's design received honourable mention from the Canadian Housing and Design Council and a major U.S. magazine, *Progressive Architecture* devoted a good portion of an issue to it. But the praise was short-lived.

Plagued by maintenance and management problems, an approximate $120,000 per year operating deficit, and large loan payments, HUB quickly became a burden to the Students' Union. Under the 1974-75 McGhie administration the Students' Union faced financial insolvency until the Department of Advanced Education helped out with $100,000 towards the operating deficit, and $200,000 for loan payments. The department also recommended that a $700,000 loan it gave to the Students' Union be converted to an outright grant.

Then, last year, under the Leadbeater executive, the first Student owned housing complex on the continent was turned over to the university for a token dollar bill.

During the five years of Student Union financial dilemma corners were cut and maintenance of HUB was skimped. The mall floor was found difficult to clean, the dome roof leaked, and vandals ruined furniture and walls.

The narrow, prison-like stairwells, serving both residents and shoppers, were deemed unsuitable by merchants. Mall promotion was minimal and there was the perennial campus parking problem. Commercial leasing suffered.

So, in the midst of financial austerity, the university acquired an expensive, rather shabby tenement, a half-filled shopping mall, and a handful of merchants crying the blues.

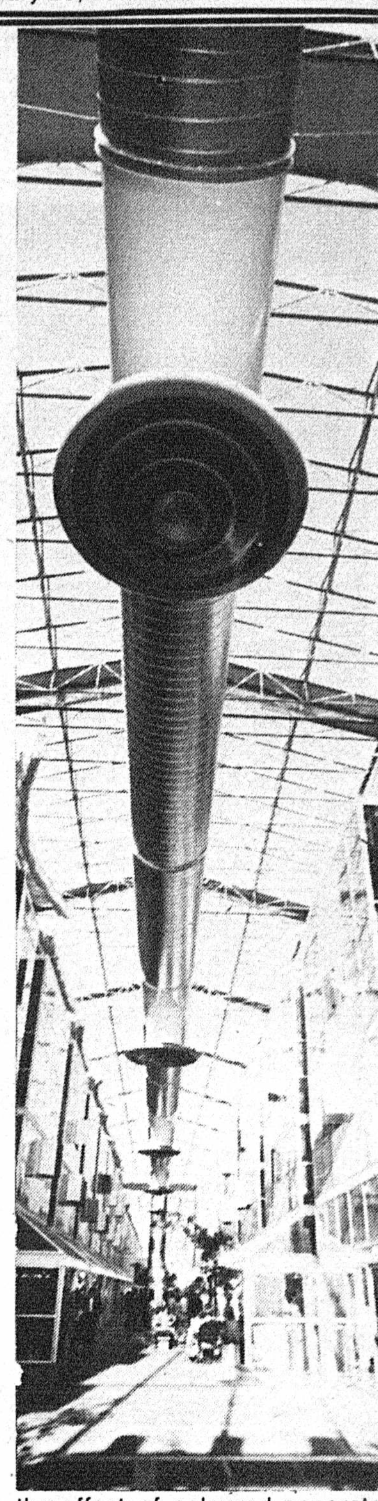
One of the first, and easiest, moves to offset costs was to raise rents. On Jan. 1, in line with provincial rent regulations tenants of HUB received notice of the maximum % increase. So much for low-cost student housing. A one-man, unfurnished suit now rents for $155 per month, furnished, $179. A two-man unfurnished is $215, furnished, $239; and the four-man suite is $335 unfurnished and $383 furnished.

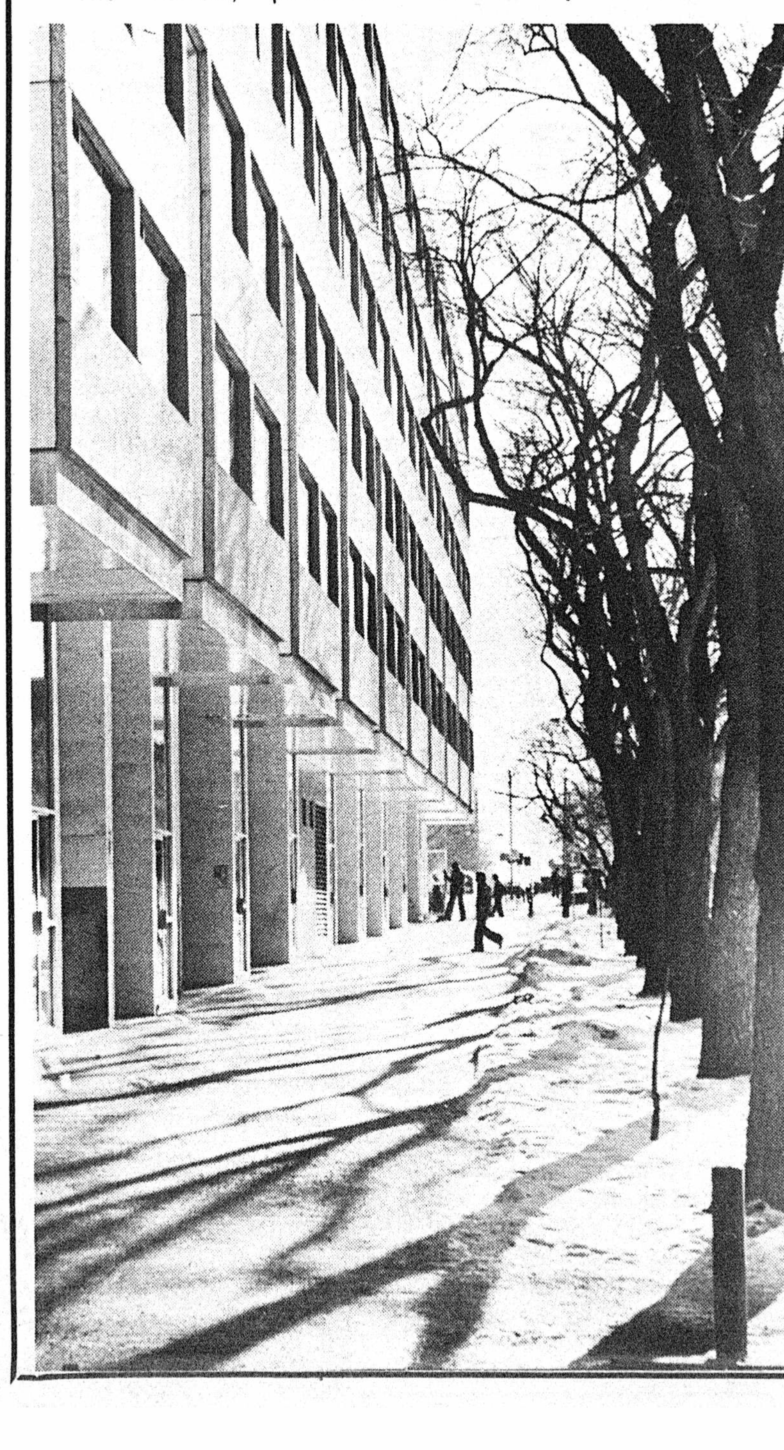
Rents are now comparable to those of other apartment complexes in the area, but in most cases the suites are not. Plans to refurbish vacant suites and to rebuild furniture are on the agenda for this summer.

The building's 425 suites house approximately 950 people. There is a waiting list of about ten months to get in.

HUB is administered by the university's Housing and Food Services and the director, David Young, is optimistic about the future of the complex. "It will take a lot of time because money is in short supply," he said. "But our long range plans are to model the mall something along the lines of (Vancouver's) Gastown."

Mall improvements are to begin during reading week with a $30,000 reflooring job. The new, easy to clean floor will be a seamless vinyl-based cover with the effect of coloured concrete which should diminish the present dirty grey dullness.





Another immediate improvement since the university's takeover was to be the construction of a large, convenient, south entrance, but the plan was aborted when only one contractor responded to tenders with a bid that was $70,000 higher than university estimates. The plan went back to "reconsideration" files.

With the appointment of the in-mall manager, Jerry Durant, HUB will have, as of Feb. 1, it's highest commercial occupancy to date. Forty-five of the fifty available spaces have been leased.

New additions to the mall will include a Ukrainian restaurant, a Chinese jade craft shop and a psychiatrist, all of which should prove to be popular on this campus. A division of a large accounting firm specializing in income tax will also take up residence on the mall.

Perhaps the most interesting new leasee is a scientific organizatioan called Technocracy Inc. This Pennsylvania-based non-profit organization supplies information to the public on such pertinent matters as ecology energy conservation, climate, transportation, recreation, and a host of other concerns.

The Fine Arts Store is the most recent addition to HUB. Previously located in the basement of the old arts building, the store has relocated in the defunct T.V. Lounge which was closed after vandals ruined the furniture and stole the television.

With the university take-over the Students' Union was spared further financial embarassment and HUB is on the road to a slow recovery. The original objectives of the complex have been lost to economics but, for the first time in HUB's short history a financial break-even year is in sight.