

Be It Ever So Humble There's No Place Like...

EDITORIAL

Home Sweet Home. Dangling wires instead of electrical outlets. No hot water. Blocked pipes. A bathroom that doesn't operate. Garbage all around outside.

This is just one example of the housing conditions some students are forced to live in through limited finances or plain lack of good housing. Rooms without board range in cost from \$6 or \$7 to \$18 per week. Using \$12 as the average, that means it costs one person \$48 per month for a roof. That is one room in someone's home. The student either becomes accepted as a member of the family or spends most of his non-class time somewhere else. And pays \$48. for the privilege. If his is lucky.

Student housing has of late been a problem in any university city but massive enrollment at both Dalhousie and St. Mary's created an absolutely chaotic situation in Halifax this fall. Dalhousie set up an office for the newly appointed Housing Officer in the Arts and Administration Building to try to coordinate students looking for homes and people with potential homes for rent.

Latest figures estimate that the Housing Office placed between 3000 and 4000 students, but most of those were rooms.

Students who wanted to live in apartments were out of the picture. Dartmouth was the only possibility and rents for a one bedroom apartment in the same general area range from \$100 to \$190 per month. Then there is always the problem and expense of transportation.

Students who live in Dartmouth and do not have a car find it almost impossible to take part in any sort of time consuming extracurricular activity on campus. Some mention was made of starting a bus service for students but the idea was thrown out as being "unfeasible".

The area of Halifax occupied by the university is an old established district and consequently land prices are exorbitant. The Student Council has looked briefly into the possibility of buying houses for co-ops or to build apartments but nothing concrete has come of it. The Council committee on housing had its budget cut out completely

this year, so presumably little can be expected from that direction. The university has allotted some of the money from its Dal Horizons fund raising project for student apartment buildings of some sort, with a 1975 goal in mind. The student population at that time is estimated by the administration to be somewhere in neighborhood of 8,000. The housing slated would not come close to solving the problem that exists at the present time let alone six years from now.

Three apartment buildings are under construction at the moment in the vicinity of both Dalhousie and St. Mary's that may possibly relieve some of the pressure.

Co-ops have been suggested as a potential alternative. But landlords are more than reluctant to rent to students at all, let alone to groups of four and more. Money to buy a house is close to impossible to get, and Halifax land prices are out of sight.

The Housing Office is already making plans to improve its service next year and the people who work there are even now preparing themselves for the onslaught.

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