

Foreign Students Alienated

Story and pictures by Balan Mathews and Sheila Thompson

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P.C. Sartoris of student counselling service talks about the program from personal experience. While studying in the U.S. he and his wife befriended several overseas students. The program makes a tremendous contribution to interrelations on campus, he says. They take back to their native country their impressions of Canada. Henry said his main role is to help students get to know the university in early September.

Later in the year students come to the F.S.A. office in University Hall with other problems. Often they pertain to immigration. Some people feel intimidated by the cold and efficient bureaucracy they find at the immigration office. Mr. Henry can not put in special favors for people but does act as a go-between, clarifying situations.

The F.S.A. is also helpful in finding housing both private and in residences. St. Stephen's College, the oldest residence on campus, was to be torn down. It was taken over by the Child Development Centre, a nonprofit organization that has little funds for renovations. People living there are not complaining but the place is in a sorry condition.

Some students come to the F.S.A. with financial problems but it can do little to help. There are no scholarships that a student can apply for once he is here. Nor is he eligible for provincial or federal loans. Going to school in a foreign country is expensive. For example, six Hong Kong dollars equal one Canadian dollar.

Further, new government legislation, making it next to impossible for foreign students to take jobs, either part time or during the summer, works hardship on many people. Teaching assistantships at the university are not affected by this new law, but it is very difficult to persuade a private employer to go through the red tape involved in hiring a foreign student.

What do Canadian students think of foreign students: Those questioned around campus had no strong opinions one way or the other. However, most people recognized the value of having many countries represented at the university.

Some students were bothered by foreign students forming what they called "cliques". This was seen as a desire to remain apart from others. Others commented on the headaches caused by T.A.'s who have difficulty speaking English.

The foreign student gathers a very definite opinion of Canadians. One Iranian student, Paryin Ghorayshi, candidly told Gateway she was disappointed of the apathy of Canadian students.

"People here do not seem very interested. It surprises me that students are not asking 'why' of issues. I see no native people of Canada at the university. This does not seem right. In a rich nation there should not be a total class of people who have so much less than everyone else."

Chorayski sees several reasons why Albertans live an isolated life.

Albertans, Chorayski says, are isolated. One reason is geographic. Another is history.

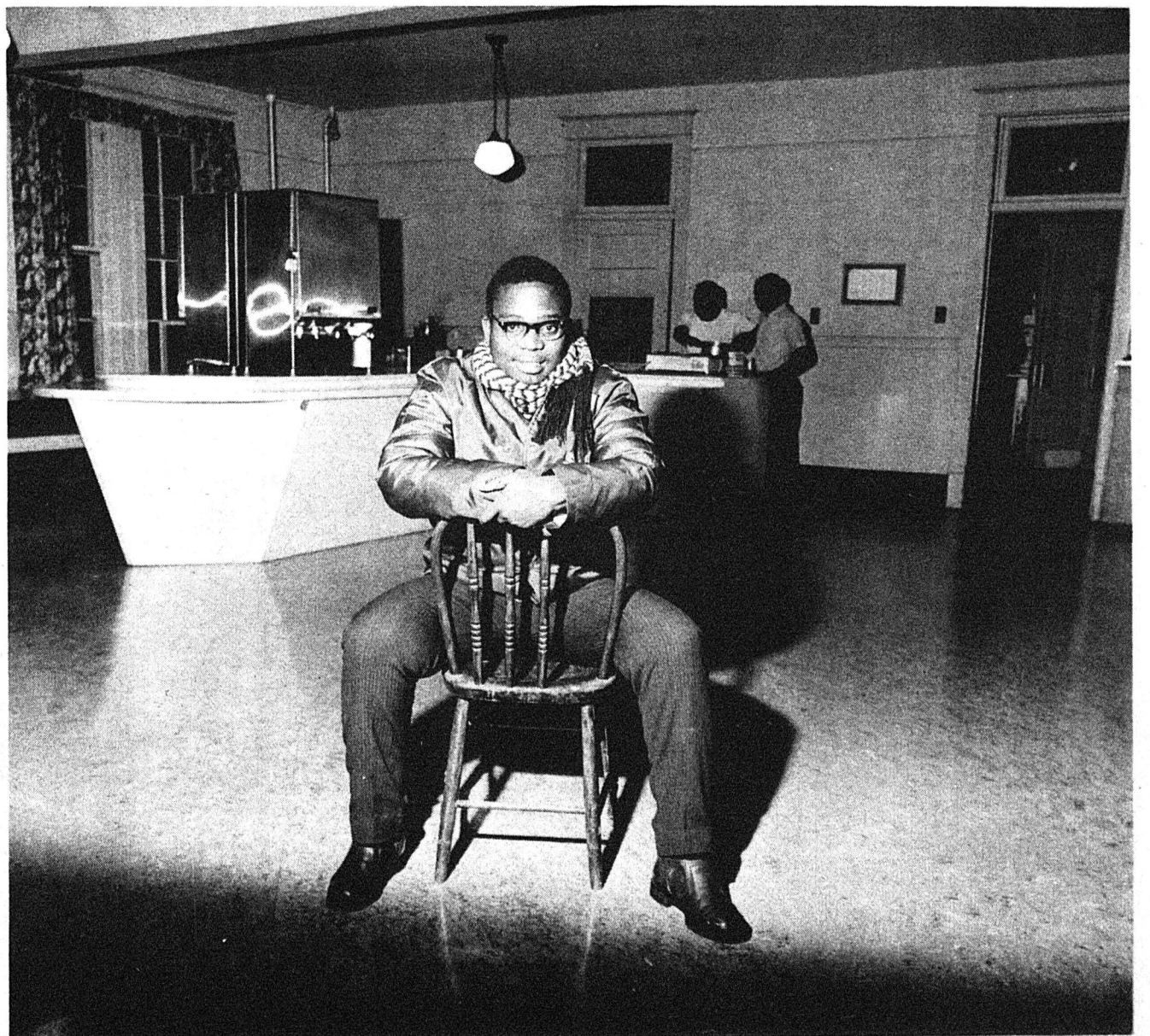
Albertans do not meet other people. Someone living in Britain, for example, can spend a weekend in France. There cultures have immediate contact with each other.

"I'm taking the first plane home when I've finished my studies. I miss my wife and children."
—student



"Sure wish they'd fix the stove in St. Steven's. It hasn't worked in ages." —student

"I find absolutely no racial discrimination here. Language, however, is a bit of a problem."
—student



"I'm taking the first plane home when I've finished my studies. I miss my wife and children."
—student