

The guerrilla. November 11, 1969

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THE GUERRILLA



THE GUERRILLA

Allen Swerdlowe, editor
Ellen Lewis, photo editor

The content of *The Guerrilla* is devoted to the Madison community and those who live within its confines. The magazine will tentatively be published by *The Daily Cardinal* on a monthly basis and its substance will be aimed at surfacing various problems within the student community. This is not to say *The Guerrilla* will always be laden with heavy material—we plan one issue devoted entirely to student cooking and how to make food go further.

We hope that this magazine will be primarily written by the community at large. Therefore, the opinions in *The Guerrilla* do not necessarily reflect the editorial stance of *The Cardinal* and the subject matter likewise will not be

determined by the student newspaper.

The first issue of *Guerrilla* deals with problems that many students face when looking for adequate housing in Madison. We have tried to present, although not a complete index of housing in Madison, a summary of the crises that most students have in their quest for better dwellings and in an effort to improve substandard conditions that already exist.

We hope that you will express interest in *The Guerrilla* by suggesting topics that should be explored and by contributing material that can be used on these pages. Letters concerning *Guerrilla* are also welcome.

published by the daily cardinal

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the madison tenant union

The original foundations of the Madison Tenant Union were laid almost a year ago when a group of students began doing research into real estate and property ownership in the 8th ward. That research supported the thesis that the Mifflin-Bassett area, as well as other parts of the ward, were being bought out by a group of land speculators whose intention was (is) to eliminate the old homes in the neighborhood and replace them with high rise luxury units. The patterns and practices involved in the process were revealed as were the names of some of the persons and companies involved.

On the basis of this and other information several attempts were made to begin to organize a tenant union or a rent strike last spring. The black student strike forced a change in plans once and the Mifflin Street disorders caused the cancellation of meetings which would have begun to organize that neighborhood. Some preliminary meetings were finally held in late May and from that time until mid-June rumors circulated about the possibility of a rent strike in fall.

During the summer the Madison Tenant Union came into existence. Weekly meetings were held with between twenty and fifty persons in attendance. The summer work consisted mainly in laying groundwork for a city-wide effort to organize tenants. Community representatives were present at all meetings from such groups as WRO, Community Action Commission, NAACP, United Migrant Opportunities Service, and Wisconsin Alliance. Throughout the summer little organizing was done and most work was concentrated in talking to people about what role the union would have and how it should be organized if it were going to be city-wide.

During the summer the MTU intended to organize on the basis of geography, on the premise that people who live on the same block would probably already know each other and that the union would help pull together an already existent community. Also adopted as Union policy at

that time was that the MTU would be organized as a union rather than as a rent strike, as had the Ann Arbor Rent strike.

The use of labor unions as a model for organizing has not changed but the basis for organizing has. When the MTU reorganized in early September the plan to create geographic locals was dropped in favor of building the union around the individual landlords and corporations. The economics of the housing situation necessitated that if a landlord were to be dealt with we would have to have a substantial number of his tenants organized; if organization were done by block there could be ten landlords involved and a rent strike would probably not hurt any one of them significantly.

The locals, once organized, will elect a steward to represent the tenants in negotiations with the landlord and to help in handling grievances against the landlord. The stewards as a group (when ten locals are organized) will form the Union Policy Board, which will assume all responsibility for establishing Union-wide policy. On decisions affecting a local only, that local has autonomy from the other locals. When a decision to negotiate with, sue, or strike a landlord is made, it is made by the local.

Since September the MTU has been actively involved in organizing and in handling grievances. Membership recruitment began at a mass meeting held in the Union in late September. From this meeting came the first 80 members of the Union, as well as a large number of the persons now working for MTU.

Members of the organizing committee have been going door-to-door in the buildings of about ten to twelve landlords and in almost all cases the organizers themselves rent from the landlord they are working on. At the time of this writing over 300 \$2 memberships have been sold and MTU's first local has been organized. That local has succeeded in organizing 85% of the landlords tenants and the members have elected a steward (since negotiations are now going on with that land-

lord his name cannot be mentioned at this time). Several other locals are approaching 40-50 per cent organization.

Within one month after the mass meeting the MTU was already set to begin attempts to bargain. On October 20 a telegram was sent to James T. Devine, Sr. requesting that he recognize the MTU and negotiate. A follow-up was sent on the 22nd making the same request, with a deadline for a response of Friday (24th) at 10 a.m. Devine's son responded at 9:30 that morning and said that his father would be willing to talk, thereby averting the immediate possibility of some type of union action.

The first session with Devine's representatives (Attorney Robert C. Voss and James T. Devine, Jr.) and the Union, represented by Attorney Melvin Greenberg, Phil Ball (who rents from Devine), and Jonathan Lepie took place in Friday, October 31. The next session will take place within the next two weeks. Negotiations are also taking place with one other landlord (whose name also cannot be disclosed at this time by the MTU bargainers). It is in a similar manner that all future efforts by the Union and locals to reach demands will be handled. The first step, after organizing the tenants, will be to try to negotiate with the landlord for recognition of MTU and the acceptance of a collective bargaining agreement.

Direct action with landlords is only one tactic which the MTU plans to use to cure the housing problems described elsewhere in this issue. In order to reduce land speculation, which drives up taxes, property values, and rent, the union will make efforts to purchase buildings and develop them as cooperative housing units. This will help ease the pressure on the market and the shortage of housing in several ways. MTU ownership will take the building off the market for speculators and landlords, thereby reducing the absolute control they now have over the supply of housing and the corresponding

control exerted over rents. Coop housing also allows the residents of the house to have more control over the building and how it is run without having to obey a long series of rules laid down by a landlord. A third important factor is that coop living is substantially less expensive than apartment living (and with the Union not out to make a fortune as are many current owners, the rent will be even lower).

The MTU also plans to concentrate efforts in the near future on the governmental agencies responsible for housing, namely the zoning administration and the building inspection department. These agencies have great potential power in making city housing and development policy but they have seldom exerted it.

A Union policy statement discussed the issue: "Government bureaus, such as the zoning administration and the inspection department have been used by speculators and developers to further their personal interests. MTU will try to gain appointment of tenants to these agencies in proportion to our numbers... We will also use economic and political pressure on the agencies until we are fairly represented."

The MTU's grievance committee began functioning about three weeks ago and has had some surprising success in handling cases. Promises of new furniture or paint, which in the past have often been broken, have been kept in almost all cases where MTU has been asked by a member to put some pressure on the landlord to act. There are also several rent withholdings now in the city, usually over failure of the landlord to live up to promises. The grievance committee is in contact with these people trying to help them reach a settlement without getting evicted or going to court.

According to the union policy statement quoted before, the long range aims of the MTU are tenant ownership of the buildings in which they live and community control of housing decisions.

tenant movement in united states

All across the country students and low-income families are realizing that it is time to do something about the financial and legal situation of tenants. Those who have been deprived of adequate housing are organizing to fight manipulative landlords and to pressure the government into passing laws advantageous to tenant needs and interests.

It is evident that rents have risen disproportionately to incomes, especially for those whose incomes are fairly fixed, and that the government has been very reluctant to appropriate sufficient financial aid in the development of low-cost public housing. Those who have become aware of their position in relation to landlords and the national government are taking it upon themselves to educate and organize their fellow tenants in order to improve that position by increasing their legal rights as tenants and by demanding an increase in the supply of suitable low-income housing.

In fact, the number of tenant organizations that have surfaced recently is so large, and the movement has become so important, that a National Conference for Tenants Rights and Housing was held in Chicago in January, 1969. What came out of that conference was, first of all, the resolution to form a national tenant organization and, secondly, a set of very concrete and specific demands which stressed the most urgent needs in urban housing.

Generally these demands were:

- 1) the national government should take action to increase and protect the legal rights of the tenant in dealing with the landlord (including the recognition of tenant organizations as bargaining agents, and the right of tenants to withhold rent and take legal action against the landlord without fear of eviction,
- 2) the tenants should become involved in the construction and control of housing in their own neighborhood, especially in black areas where blacks should be hired for the design, finance, and construction of the housing,
- 3) there should be more financing of such housing by national and state governments;
- 4) there should be enforceable laws to

assure minimum standards of safety and sanitation.

The National Tenant Organization (NTO) was a result of this conference. Working with the NTO is the National Tenants Rights Program (NTRP), a part of the American Friends Service Committee.

Together they are encouraging and aiding the formation and activities of local tenant organizations in all parts of the country. In addition, they print a magazine through which they keep these organizations informed of the activities of tenants in other areas.

DETROIT

Local tenant organizations have experienced success in many major cities:

* In Detroit, the United Tenants for Collective Action forced a landlord to sell them nine buildings.

Also in Detroit, a minister of Black Panthers, Ron Scott, led 2,000 families from 7 out of 8 public housing projects in that city, in a successful rent strike beginning February, 1969, which resulted in \$100,000 back rent being withheld in escrow. The rent strike was still going as of August, 1969.

CHICAGO

* In Chicago, 175 striking tenants recently formed the first tenant union to be recognized by the landlords as a bargaining agent. As a result of the bargaining which followed, some of the landlords were put out of business and their buildings after some negotiations with the public housing authority, were quickly bought up by the South Garfield Neighborhood Association and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference at a very low cost.

Also in Chicago, Mayor Daley has agreed to add a tenant to the board of the Chicago Housing Authority.

NEW YORK

New York probably has the longest history of tenant activity of any city in the country. These actions have often been led by Jesse Gray, who is now President of the National Tenant Organization. In 1959 one of Gray's unions struck 15 buildings and did eventually succeed in forcing improvements on 8 of them. His major

rent strike started late in 1963 and ended during the winter of 1964. The strike reached its peak in January, 1964 when 203 buildings and 3,000 families were involved with over \$100,000 per month going into escrow. But the strike was largely a failure because it did not lead to improvements in the housing situation in terms of rent, supply and maintenance.

WASHINGTON

In Washington D.C. the U.S. Court of Appeals granted protection to rent strikes as a legal tactic in disputes between landlords and Trenton Terrace Tenant's Council. The tenants, who are holding \$40,000 in escrow, vowed in June to keep the strike which at that time was already in its fourteenth month, going until the landlords raised substandard housing conditions to standard.

MILWAUKEE

The Milwaukee Tenant Union has approached that city's housing situation through legal channels and has acted mainly as an arbiter in grievances. Milwaukee has had 6000 housing units eliminated for expressways with nothing to replace it. Milwaukee's housing shortage is also more apparent than Madison especially in the core area. There is no actual membership or structure to the Union and it does not intend, at this time, to use tactics such as wide scale strikes.

The Milwaukee Union has managed to meet with Governor Knowles on inner city housing, after holding a "Conference on Gubernatorial Credibility" on his own last summer. They have just recently taken over a vacated Army barracks with 18 evicted families and the Army has agreed to let them stay there.

ANN ARBOR

The Ann Arbor Tenant Union was formed early in 1969 to combat spiralling rents in that city. The union was made up almost entirely of students of the University of Michigan and the strike concentrated on college area landlords.

The plan of the union was to withhold rents from landlords until they met the eight demands set forth by the union, among them, recognition of the union as a bargaining

agent, elimination of security deposits, and acceptance of a model lease.

When the strike began, there were 1800 union members and 1200 of these chose to put their rent into escrow. Each striker paid his first month's rent plus 10 per cent into the strike fund which was put into a Canadian bank to protect it from landlord access.

The Ann Arbor rent strike depended heavily on the courts for their strength, particularly stressing the importance of individual legal cases between landlords and tenants. By June 1969, the strike had already been successful in gaining a \$5 per month reduction for all tenants for the next school year from one of the 12 big landlords affected by the strike.

NEW ORLEANS

The two major American actions this year, besides the Ann Arbor strike, have been in St. Louis, Missouri and New Orleans. In St. Louis 1,000 tenants have been carrying on a rent strike since last February and have collected in escrow \$180,000 of back rent. The New Orleans Tenant Union, which is more than a year old, has about 8,000 members. On August 5, the Union, in cooperation with the Welfare Rights Organization, sponsored a 100 mile march to Baton Rouge in order to hold a demonstration at the Louisiana capitol against recent welfare cuts. These cuts were affecting the ability of recipients, who were already being overcharged, to pay their rents as tenants. As a result of the protest the Public Housing Authority agreed that recipients whose welfare checks had been cut would not have to pay rent, and that recipients evicted from private housing because they could not afford to pay rent would be placed in public housing.

* In Muskegon Heights, Michigan, the East Park Tenants Union, which operates in a public housing project, was able, after two rent strikes, to get the city fathers to agree to allow the Tenant Union to select three of their housing commissioners, giving, in effect, the tenants control of their own public housing.

community people voice problems

The following quotes were made by students concerning their living conditions and landlords.

"My landlord wants to be treated as a person so he does all these nice things for us—like he brought over a rug and his wife's sewing machine. It's crazy because you don't expect landlords to do anything. But in other ways he's really negligent. Like the bathroom is really a mess. He could have fixed it over the summer but he didn't."

Phyllis Myers
549 W. Mifflin
landlord: Charles Palit

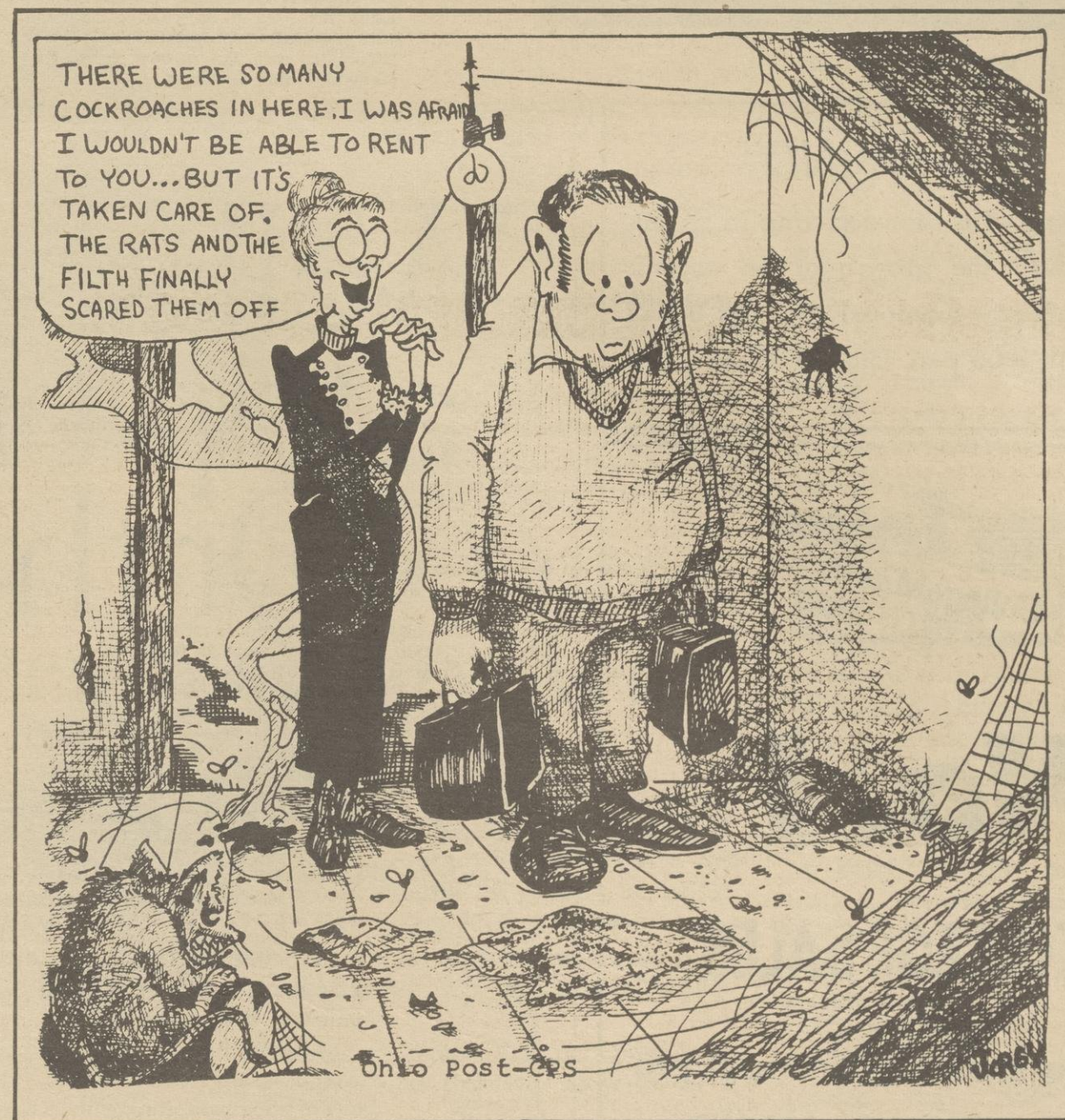
"My apartment would be fine for \$80 a month, but I'm paying \$280." Bill Shaw.

"The place is in bad shape. The people who lived there during the summer really ripped it apart. He fixed it up but not very well. The plaster was ripped off the walls. He fixed it but you can still tell... But the landlord's really a nice guy. I mean he comes over to our place and asks us if we need anything." Harvey Peterson.

"The landlord refused to clean up the apartment when we moved in. There has been furniture on order for three months. It's supposed to be a furnished apartment." Herbie Lucy

"We have a converted coal furnace that works at 20 per cent efficiency and leaks all over the place. My bedroom has no heat, no radiator. The landlord has about 80 lists about our house but hasn't done anything. We've seen the maintenance man once. But he did give us paint. No landlord is a good landlord. There's just something intrinsic about landlords."

"I'm an unusual case because the landlord's son lives in the building so he does a great job."



Ohio Post-CPS

mifflin street is not only ghetto

The Mifflin Street riots of last spring created many impressions in the minds of the community, mostly false. Most of these misconceptions have to do with the residents of that neighborhood and are not likely to change as a result of a news-

paper article. The other myths concern housing in that vicinity and the reactions of the community to the conditions.

The Mayor's Committee of Thirty spent several nights in the area shortly after the end of the disturbance and the members

of that group were generally shocked by the living conditions. The thought that there were slums and ghettos in their city was unconscionable; a progressive, liberal city like Madison just was not supposed to have buildings like that. The reaction was similar when the building inspector's office found 615 building code violations in the four block area in early June.

Rather than shatter the city image efforts were made to explain the situation in such a way that that image would remain only slightly tarnished. This meant that the blame for housing conditions would have to be shifted from the pillars of the community who own and make money from the buildings to some other group of lesser stature in Madison mythology. The logical result of this was the Mifflin St. Report, which placed blame for the disturbance on the area residents and largely ignored housing as a cause of the problem. Since students and tenants in general are low on the city social scale and realtors and landlords are high, the perfect solution to the civic crisis was obvious—blame the underlings.

The net result of the entire incident, in terms of the responses of landlords, has proven the fact that the report did effectively soothe the restless consciences of the city—landlords, after making ordered repairs, continue to raise rent and put as little money as possible into the houses for maintenance.

The Mifflin Street area is unique from other city neighborhoods with a high percentage of renters—its residents are highly political and it has had a civil disturbance. Except for these two qualities there is not much difference between Mifflin-Bassett, Randall-Spring, Gilman-Carroll, and areas on the East, South, and even for West sides of the city. Neighborhoods with high rents, low standards of living, and absentee landlordism are scattered throughout the city. There are more condemned buildings on the East side than in the student areas and percentage-wise rents are rising faster in other parts of town than in the near campus region. Although rents in these areas, particularly on the near East side, are not up to the same level as those near campus, they will eventually approach the same figures, especially with the current movement of students in that direction.

Leasing condemned property is illegal, but it is done anyway in Madison. In a perverse way this practice is at times a service to elderly and poor people, because it is only low cost housing they can find. What is more frequently the case is that the apartments in a condemned building will rent for the same or slightly less than the surrounding houses and if the building ever is improved to meet standards, it is the tenants who pay for it in the end.

Prosecution of such offenses occurs seldom; prosecuting any landlord violation of the laws he so staunchly upholds is not common. Of the 615 Mifflin-Bassett code violations, 99 (16 per cent) were uncorrected as of October 7, almost three months after the "deadline" set by the inspector. Only one court case is being brought against the offending property holders. Four months ago, at the height of interest in housing and the neighborhood, this would have been publicized by all of the city news media; the public conscience has been so eased since then by the Report and general adverse publicity for students and tenants that the housing situation no longer arouses guilt feelings or bruised civic pride.

That state of unconsciousness will not remain for long; one way or another the residents of most neighborhoods controlled by slumlords will not be as quiet as they have been. Conditions have worsened since last May all over the city. Rents have not leveled off and will never level off if inflation continues and if public conscience remains dormant. Tenants will try to revive public sympathy but will more likely try to move directly to correct their own situations.

The Madison Tenant Union is rapidly evolving. Tenants at the Truax housing project have organized themselves, in concert with MTU. The building inspectors office has had an increase in complaints and in business in general. Frictions between tenants and landlords are becoming the rule in almost all absentee-run buildings. Eventually the public will be made aware that there are poor conditions throughout Madison. When it becomes clear that Mifflin-Bassett is not the only ghetto, the municipal conscience which forgot about housing during the summer may be forced to face the problem without immediately looking to the nearest and handiest scapegoat.



Mifflin Street

"A NEW WIND"

Premier showing of a film depicting in an impressionistic way the growth of an organic world community. sponsored by the Baha'i Assoc. Tonight, 8:00 p.m. Univ. YMCA.



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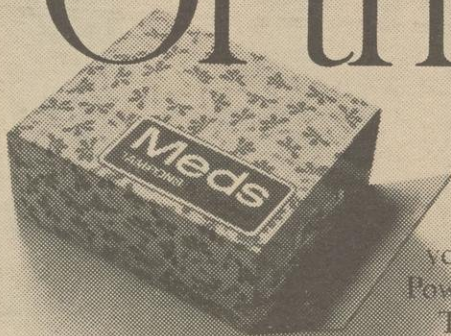
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studies of living situations

The Red Kibbutz



The residents of "The Red Kibbutz" at 413 W. Mifflin Street all agree that they merely live in an "average" dwelling of the Mifflin-Bassett Street area. Living in an "average" place in that student ghetto, however, does not prevent tenants from falling victim to a vicious combination of high rents, building code violations, and endless troubles with landlords.

"The Red Kibbutz" is owned and managed by Madison attorney Aubrey Fowler. Four girls, all students, share the four-bedroom house and split the monthly rate of \$275. They have their share of grievances regarding the building.

"The place was a wreck when we moved in," said Rhonda Hanson, 21, a senior at the University. "We had to paint and clean it ourselves. Fowler bought us the paint, but we had to do the work. Also, the place was rented as furnished, but it was only partially furnished with flimsy, unusable stuff which we had to replace."

Miss Hanson then proceeded to list the following complaints about the house (several of which are violations of the Madison building code): a shaky basement stairway; a kitchen with plaster falling out of the ceiling; a side exit with a door that does not open; and the fact that out of nine windows on the first floor, only one of them can be opened.

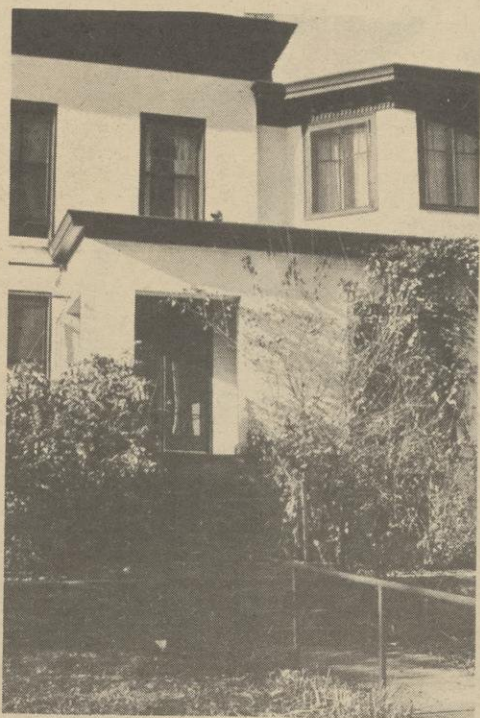
The problems of "The Red Kibbutz" do not end with physical conditions. The occupants are also disturbed by the owner's management practices. Last summer the screens were not completely installed until August. In addition, Fowler responded to a complaint of a shaky railing on the back porch not by repairing the railing but by destroying the porch.

Where do people like the residents of "The Red Kibbutz" take their housing problems? Miss Hanson specifically pointed out that the avalanche of building inspectors which hit the Mifflin-Bassett area following last spring's disturbances there was nothing but a nuisance.

"They gave us no cooperation, only hassles," she said. "When they saw a motor scooter which belonged to a friend of ours parked in our driveway for a while, they threatened to bust us for cohabitation. They also complained that there were too many bicycles parked in front of our house."

The amazing fact about "The Red Kibbutz" is not the building code violations, not the harassment by the inspectors, and not the high rent. What is almost unbelievable is that the residents insist that this is only an average house! "This isn't anywhere as bad as some of the places," remarked Miss Hanson.

Groves Coop



Grove's women's co-op is located on the corner of Pinckney and Gorham in one of the oldest buildings in the city. Both of these facts have played (and will in the future play) a part in determining whether Groves will be allowed to continue to exist.

Groves occupies a house built in 1855 which has great historic value—the house is included on a walking tour of Madison's historic sites. The Taychopera Foundation, which is actively involved in preserving such buildings, often includes Groves on its lists of priorities. Both Taychopera and University League are made up of very influential and powerful residents of the city.

The location of Groves is, unlike its historic character, a factor which could shorten the life of the co-op. The corner of Gorham and Pinckney is a very attractive one for real estate developers for several reasons: it is a corner lot, which makes it more demanded than a mid-block parcel; the area is already zoned for heavy density residency, so the developer would not have to plead with city council for a zoning variance to build a high rise; and the site is, in the eyes of developers, part of a neighborhood destined to be converted into high rise buildings in the near future.

Groves is unique among other co-ops in Madison in that they own the building they occupy, rather than renting it as do most of the others. The mortgage on the building is held by the University Board of Regents. The land around Groves is owned by the Paul E. Stark Co., which is the source of Groves' problems.

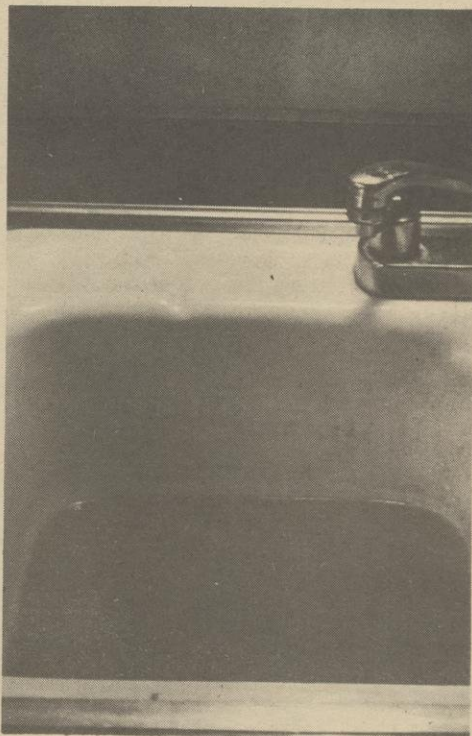
Last spring The Stark Co. was becoming very eager to buy out Groves so that it could tear it down and construct an L-shaped high rise. The plans for this structure had already been drawn up; the land which Groves occupies was all Stark needed to have enough land to put up the high rise.

The Stark Co. had not mowed the lawn on some of its property adjacent to Groves, but when a city building inspector came to the house, he threatened action against Groves unless they mowed the lawn. The co-op called Stark several times, after several threats from the city (eviction being one of them), and eventually Stark cut the grass. Why the inspectors threatened Groves rather than Stark is unknown.

Around the same time last spring (during final exams), an insurance inspector visited the co-op to see if the house was adequately insured. Because the residents were studying for exams, cleaning activities in the house were minimal. As a result of the inspection, and largely because of the temporary condition the house was in, the state ordered Groves to either take out more insurance or move out of the house. The insurance commission went to the Regents to get them to exert pressure on the co-op, since they hold the mortgage. The co-op was able to raise the extra money needed for increased insurance, but not without putting an additional strain on an already tight financial situation.

Since the insurance inspection, when Stark was making offers to buy out the co-op, the pressure to vacate has lessened. The Stark Co. still does want the property, however, and residents of Groves, as well as groups like Taychopera and University League, are expecting to have to fight to keep the building standing.

1327 Spring St.



The first few minutes of a conversation with one of the tenants at 1327 Spring St. would give the impression that they have few complaints about their apartment. After that time, however, the minor annoyances begin to come out and the tenants themselves discover that they are not getting what they are paying for.

The complaint which arose early in two discussions with the residents was the rent. The apartment for five girls rents for \$300 per month, payable in three month installments in advance. There are two and one-half bedrooms, two baths, living room, dining room, and kitchen. The apartment, until this school year, could be rented for \$300 per month on a nine month lease; the \$300 rate must now be paid for a full twelve months.

The manager of the building is Otto Gebhardt, who owns a sizable portion of the property in that neighborhood. According to one of the tenants, Judy, "At the beginning of the school year we told him we needed a plumber for our kitchen sink. All that happens is that he comes over once a week and plunges it himself, but we do that ourselves at least three or four times a week."

As the conversation progresses many other large and small grievances arise. "The heat is ridiculous—either we sit here freezing or there is steam coming off the pipes." There is a shortage of light sockets throughout the apartment: none in the dining room, none in one of the bedrooms, only one in the other bedrooms, none in the bathrooms.

According to some of last years tenants the building had not been visited by an exterminator in almost four years and the infestation last spring was severe. The building was in complete disrepair in June due to neglect but has been improved somewhat since then, although the shingle exterior is still absent on large sections of the back of the building.

Current and old tenants agree that the garbage situation is intolerable. The garbage for about thirty to thirty-five tenants goes into the same place but the cans provided usually fill up within four days. The next three days' garbage piles up on top of the cans and spills into the driveway and parking lot or it piles up in the apartments. This is the case when the garbage is taken out every week. Judy stated that pickups have been missed this year and last year's tenants recalled that during final exams and around the time everyone was moving out, the manager did not take out the garbage for two weeks. The pile reached the kitchen windows (six feet above the ground) of the adjacent building and made the parking lot inaccessible for two days, in addition to attracting every wild or tame animal for blocks around.

The few complaints rapidly became many and, combined with the rent and the reluctance of the landlord to do anything about either, the girls are already disgusted and frustrated in their second month of glorious apartment living.

The Living Coop



In the face of soaring rents, an impersonalized atmosphere, and strict regulation on the part of the University, the Landlord and the Law, more and more students are turning to the living co-operative for relief. In the co-op tenants claim they find friendship more easily than in the high rise (where you may never meet your neighbor) or in the dorm (where you meet your neighbor regularly whether you want to or not). Shared responsibility draws people together and that is what the co-op is based on—equal participation by all of its members. That is, participation in all aspects of living, including rulemaking as well as basic household chores. All of the regulation within each respective co-op (with the exception of city and state ordinances) are determined by the occupants of that co-op for only as long as they live there—rules are not set by student parents nor by the Regents in 1912. Most of the living co-ops are not renting their buildings from the local despot-landlords, but are rather church affiliated, own their own buildings and so escape the tricky leases binding them to rules of behavior.

Mass habitation is cheaper, too. Food bought in bulk may be purchased wholesale to feed more people less expensively. And rent goes down when you have up to fifty people sharing one building.

Today Madison has nine living co-ops ranging in size from fifteen to fifty people (at Resistance House and Stone Manor, respectively). They are: three Friends Co-ops, Channing-Murray (affiliated with the Unitarian Church), and International Co-op (accepting both foreign and American students), Groves House (an all woman co-op), Rochdale (all male), Stone Manor, and 240 Langdon (a co-ed co-op formed by the now defunct Phi Kappa Theta Fraternity).

Rochdale was the first Madison co-op. Inspired by successful living co-operatives in England, in 1933 it was begun as an all male living experiment. In the 1940's when the men from Rochdale were drafted their girlfriends took over the Rochdale furniture and set up Groves House in a building donated to them by Professor Harold Groves. Groves became a type of opposition house for women who disliked the way University housing was going even back then and battled women's regulations as defined by the University. Somehow it wasn't until 1965 that the Friends began the first co-operative for both men and women and the idea caught on.

Students have begun to realize that by working together they can make campus living a little more tolerable and a lot cheaper. After the living co-ops came the eating co-operative, the Green Lantern, the late book co-op (R.I.P.), the Mifflin and Johnson Street grocery co-ops. The Madison Association of Student Co-operatives (MASC) attempts to bring together all the co-ops in our area through open meetings in which members can discuss common problems and means of achieving common goals. In the future, MASC may become eligible for federal housing funds through which it may establish other co-ops and liberate other students from the Madison Housing Trap.



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Our interviewer will be here next week. Talk to him.

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security deposits

Security deposits provide a fairly sizable source of revenue for many landlords, who make it a policy to keep as much of the deposit as they can. Deposits are ostensibly to be used only to make repairs on abnormal damage caused but, due to tenant apathy and fear and favorable judges, it is relatively easy for landlords to keep as much as they want.

Standard procedure in campus area dwellings is to assess each tenant a security deposit equal to one month's rent, payable before moving in, in addition to whatever advance rent the tenant may have to pay. The landlord has that money to invest or bank for one year, since he will not have to repay it until at least a year after he gets it. If he buys bank notes with the deposit money, he will get 7 per cent interest; he would get considerably more return that 7 per cent if he invested it in some capital improvement, such as a new building. With one exception, no Madison landlords or rea-

itors ever consider returning interest with a security deposit.

As an example, if a landlord has 100 tenants paying \$70 security deposits, he will make \$490 in interest just by holding the money for a year, even if he returns all deposits. It must also be remembered that this is the minimum return he will get for using his tenants' money for a year.

In some Mifflin St. apartments owned by Mullins, tenants are told that they can do anything to their apartments they want, such as painting, using nails, and putting up posters. When it comes time to return security deposits, however, it has happened that \$5 is taken off for everything which was done to the apartment, previous statements notwithstanding. Whether the money was deducted was used to repair the 'damage' is unknown.

Another example of security deposit practices involves an apartment at 219 N. Bassett owned by Arnold Beiler. This past summer three girls signed a lease for two

and one-half summer months and each paid a \$50 security deposit. A fourth girl moved in, with consent of the landlord, and the four girls split the rent.

Mr. Beiler, however, became insistent that the fourth girl also had to pay the \$50 deposit. Why a \$200 deposit was needed for two and one-half months is not known, but Beiler continued to demand it and the girls initially refused.

In late July he effectively used a fear tactic to induce the tenant to pay; he called a lawyer who in turn called the girl and threatened to take her to court for the \$50. The deposit was paid very shortly thereafter, although the legality of his demand was questionable.

When the deposits were returned last month, \$35 (\$8.75 per person) was deducted from the \$200 for fees to the attorney who had made the court threat for Beiler. The tenants had, in effect, paid Beiler's lawyer \$35 to harass them.

minimum housing code

The following are from the Minimum Housing and Property Code of Madison, Wisconsin. All landlords are required to adhere to these regulations. Violations of this code is violation of your lease.

- * Every dwelling shall contain a kitchen sink, a flush water closet, a lavatory basin and a bathtub or shower all in good working condition and properly connected to hot and cold water lines.

- * Every dwelling shall have supplied water heating facilities which are properly installed and properly connected with the hot water lines.

- * The owner of every dwelling shall be responsible for supplying such building with garbage and refuse storage facilities.

- * Every dwelling shall have at least two accessible unobstructed means of exit.

- * Every dwelling shall be equipped with a heating system maintaining minimum temperature of 70 degrees Fahrenheit in all habitable rooms and 75 degrees Fahrenheit in all bathrooms and water closets compartments.

- * Every dwelling shall have the public passageways and stairways and exit doors illuminated from sunset to sunrise.

- * All exterior property areas shall be kept free from weeds.

- * All exterior property shall be maintained in a clean and sanitary condition free from debris, rubbish or garbage, physical hazards, rodents and infestation.

- * Every plumbing fixture shall be free from defects, leaks, and obstructions.

- * Every bathroom floor surface shall be properly constructed and maintained so as to be reasonably impervious to water and be easily kept in clean and sanitary condition.

- * Exterior wood surfaces of buildings

and structures that are not inherently resistant to deterioration shall be periodically treated with a protective coating of paint.

- * Landscaping, plantings and other decorative surface treatments shall be installed if necessary and maintained to present an attractive appearance in all court and yard areas.

- * Every foundation, floor, wall ceiling, chimney, and roof shall be reasonably weathertight, watertight, and rodent-proof.

- * No dwelling with two or more sleeping rooms shall be arranged so that access to a bathroom or water closet compartment intended for use by occupants of more than one sleeping room can be had only by going through another sleeping room.

- * Every owner of a residential building containing two or more dwelling units shall be responsible for maintaining in a clean, proper and sanitary condition the shared or public areas of the building and premises thereof.

- * Every owner of a residential building shall be responsible for hanging, installation, and maintenance of all screens and double or storm doors and windows.

- * The owner or operator shall not occupy or let to another for occupancy any space in a residential building unless it is clean, sanitary, fit for human occupancy.

- * Every owner shall neatly display in a conspicuous accessible place in every residential building a list of not less than three alternate agents and their phone numbers to be called to arrange for emergency work.

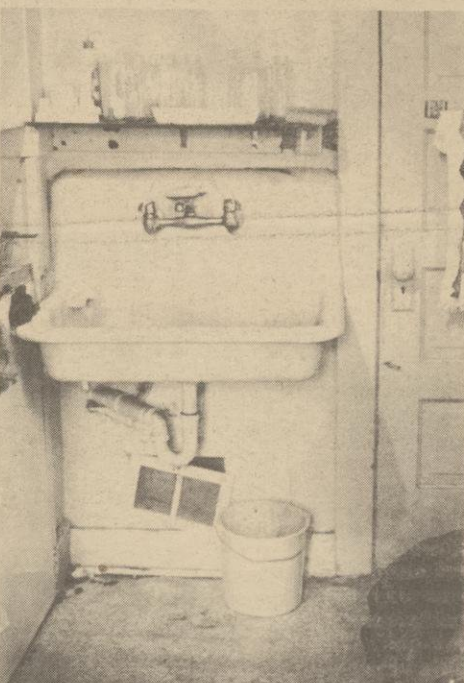
- * There shall be 2 electrical outlets in each living room, 1 in the dining room, 1 in each bedroom, 2 in each kitchen, and 1 in the bathroom.

- * Every required exit stairway shall be not less than 3 feet wide and, when there are more than 3 stairs there shall be at least one handrail.

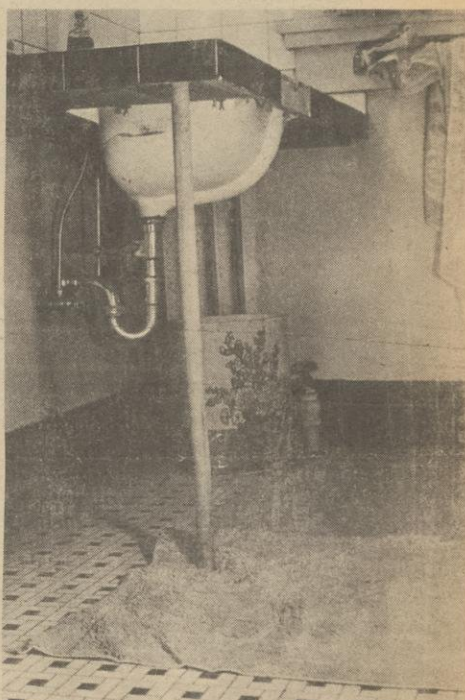
Outside



Kitchen



Bathroom



Bedroom



typical dwelling

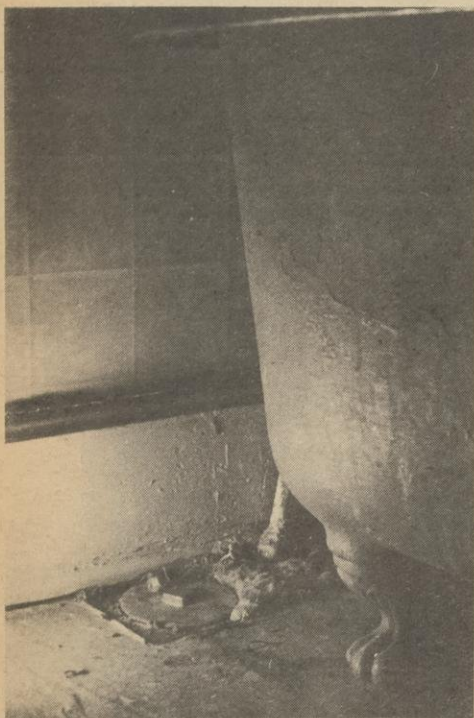
community voices grievances

"I wish the landlord would do something about the bathroom floor in the apartment over ours. Every time the toilet overflows up there it leaks down into our bathroom. It's so damp now we have mushrooms growing on the floor."

Sue Whinfield, tenant
115 N. Bassett

"The city was upset with my houses for aesthetic reasons, rather than safety; the government doesn't have the right to legislate aesthetics." Five rm. apt for four, rent \$280

William T. Bandy, landlord
115 N. Bassett



115 North Bassett

"I'm really sick of this slum business. But we've got the rental guy running now. We have 6 people living in our house and whenever there's something wrong each of us calls up. We have philosophical raps with him about housing and the poor guy's really scared of us. Now we get instant service. It's really amazing."

"Our electrical sockets don't work, the garbage isn't collected often enough, the hot water leaks, and the front door opens into a bedroom. Otherwise the apartment is fine."

"The building inspector came yesterday and told me I couldn't live in the room so I have to sleep in the living room. There have been two fires and there's no new doorknobs. He bought us a new G.E. vacuum with every attachment possible. He put in a new heating system. But we pay a helluva lot too."

"My landlord is an exception. He was superintendant of the building and then he finally got enough money to buy the place. So he keeps it in really incredible condition. Of course we pay for it. But as for the housing situation in general... well... that's another story."

THE GUERRILLA



way out of the bedroom. There are no storm windows but you'd expect they'd have panes of glass in the window. We had to putty them up." Ralph Augenfeld, 1001 Blake

"I haven't had a cent in security deposit returned to me from the three landlords I've had in Madison. One place was torn down the month after we moved out, so he didn't use any of the money for its intended purpose. Last spring we got back nothing in an apartment where the owner (Campus Rentals and later Gebhardt) had not had an exterminator in since 1965; needless to say the entire building was infested with mice, ants, and other nice things." Jeff Kannel, former tenant of Langlots, Munz, Gebhardt

"We asked to have a shower in September. He finally put it in in January. Meanwhile I went over to my friend's to take showers."

"When we signed the contract she told us she would put in new showers. Now she says there's no possibility."

"I was in one apartment on East Washington where the smell was so bad because the plumbing was broken that they couldn't live in their bedroom. And the landlord absolutely refused to fix it. Besides the building leans to one side. And they're paying \$250 for 3 girls to live in two bedrooms."

"It makes me mad that it's impossible for three people to live in a three bedroom place. We couldn't afford it unless we had a fourth and so now we have to share a bedroom between two people."

Robin Kutner
529 W. Mifflin
landlord: Mullins

"One bad thing is that I have to pay 60 per cent of my rent before I move in."

"In two years the tenants upstairs and us could own the house."

Euclyn Telkari
435 W. Dayton

"The room is one small room with extravagant rents. It has no windows. The landlord refuses to do anything. He always talks about how much he does for his tenants. But when you go to him he just puts it off for this reason or that."

"They came off as really nice but they don't do a damn thing. Just little things are very annoying. The place was really a pigsty when we moved in. You can tell when they don't care about you and all they want is their money. My room is a converted porch and they haven't put in heating yet. We went to them twice and they haven't done anything. My rent payment was due on September and I haven't paid it yet. I'm not going to give my rent and then freeze to death."

Ruth Pelham
141 E. Gorham
Apts. of Madison
Sack Helfitz

"My landlord's O.K. but the rent is ridiculous."

landlords reply

"I am confident that the tenants we have get what they pay for, that they're not overcharged."

Robert Castleberg
Paul E. Stark Co.

"I don't think it (rent) is out of line. Some students say that they have to pay for location. I had to pay more for the land because of the location."

Phil Engen

"Some landlords are overcharging and some are not maintaining their property. Speaking for ourselves we challenge anyone to find properties with lower rentals per size and space than those owned and operated by Johnson-Marion Inc."

Daniel H. Neviasser, Pres.
Johnson-Marion, Inc.

"I suppose there is a shortage in the campus area...the campus area is a desirable area so there would always tend to be a shortage."

Joseph Dapin
small landlord

"If it (the Tenant Union) becomes a radical tool it will be of little value to anyone. I have little confidence that it will be anything other than just that."

Daniel H. Neviasser
THE SIMILARITY OF THE ABOVE QUOTES IS NOT A MISTAKE.

"I could lower my rents 25 per cent if it weren't for student damages."

W. T. Bandy

"It would be rather difficult for the University to get money for apartments in view of the national effort to cut construction projects, unless the University can prove there is a shortage."

Steve Boyle
(Press Secretary to Gov. Knowles
who himself suffered a \$50 rent
increase in August.

"Tenants have a perfect right to organize."

Patrick Lucey

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