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ARTICLE

To Learn but Not Live Together? The Early History of the University of British Columbia's International House

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Abstract
The University of British Columbia (UBC) opened Canada's first International House
(I-House) in 1959 after a decade of activism from students and faculty. Students had
demanded an I-House to help them find housing, and to ensure that "brotherhood may
prevail," as the I-House motto promised. The I-House campaign received support from
community groups that raised the funds to build the UBC I-House. UBC's administra-
tion wanted I-House as a social center that could coordinate fledgling international student
services and resisted the residential I-House model. Ultimately, UBC's administrators won
out and the residential component was never built. This paper examines the conflict about
building a residence to house international and domestic students together, chronicling the
competing visions of international student policy and services that were circulating at one
of Canada's largest universities in the early days of the Cold War.

Keywords: international students; international house; student housing; University of British Columbia;
Cold War

In March of 1959, the University of British Columbia (UBC) opened its International
House (UBCIH) in a gala ceremony that included a presentation by Eleanor Roosevelt.
UBC's was the first International House to open in Canada, a result of ten years
of activism by students, faculty, and private citizens. In addition to the visit from
Roosevelt, the opening ceremonies included "The International Concert," presented by
UBC's international student club, and a speech by UBC president Norman MacKenzie.
The next day UBCIH held its first symposium, entitled "Can Brotherhood Prevail in

Figure 1. Photo of UBC International House shortly before its official opening in 1959, courtesy of University of British Columbia Archives [UBC 1.1/2871].

the Space Age," with a plenary panel that included Margaret Mead.[1] All the events were held at the new I-House itself, a "beautiful building in a gorgeous setting" designed by the head of UBC's architecture school, Frederic Lasserre (see Figure 1). The house, the guests, and the topic of the symposium all spoke to the commitment UBC was making to ensure the International House (I-House) motto, "that brotherhood may prevail," would continue to be relevant into the second half of the twentieth century.[2]

But even at the moment it opened, UBCIH was moving away from one of the core principles of the I-House movement. The basis of every I-House before UBC had been a residence where international and domestic students would live and socialize together. I-Houses offered supports and services to international students of many types, but this residential component was the heart of the I-House concept. It had been the core of the I-House model since 1924 when the first house opened in New York. Yet UBCIH's initial building had a social space and offices, but no residence. Although UBCIH supporters intended to build residences that would house both international and domestic

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[1]Mary Thompson, "Reflections at Opening Ceremony of the Vancouver House," *International House Association Newsletter*, April 1959, 2, folder 1-14, box 1, International House Association, BC, Chapter fonds, 1951-1964, University of British Columbia Archives, Vancouver, Canada (hereafter IHABC).

[2]Thompson, "Reflections at Opening Ceremony of the Vancouver House," 2.

students in the years following the opening of UBCIH, UBC's administration never intended to allow this to happen. By 1962, only three years after UBCIH opened, UBC's president had officially quashed any such plans.

This article examines the history of UBC's international house and the efforts to build a residence that would house both international and domestic students. UBCIH was the result of student activism, faculty encouragement, and the support of private citizens and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), especially Rotary International, Zonta International, and the International House movement itself. But it was also supported and guided by UBC administrators. All these stakeholder groups had very different ideas about what they were doing, and what they wanted UBCIH to ultimately become.

Students desired housing, and saw I-House as a model that could help overcome the housing scarcity faced by international students as a result of socio-geographic pressures and the racism of Vancouver homeowners. The NGOs that ultimately raised the money for the building of UBCIH were much more politically motivated, and saw an I-House at UBC as a path to advancing Canada's goals in the Cold War. But UBC's administration appears to have had different goals, most obviously to find a way to better manage the growing number of international students on campus. It was UBC's administration that most clearly got what they wanted in UBCIH, much to the frustration of students and the disappointment of the House's financial backers.

The legacy of these decisions continues to shape international student services in Canada today. Although Canadian universities have prioritized the recruitment and retention of international students for at least the last decade,[3] there is little concern for where they will live while studying. The result is difficult conditions for students themselves, who often struggle to find housing,[4] and growing anger in some constituencies that universities have left surrounding communities to deal with this problem.[5] One aspect of this contemporary crisis has its roots in debates like that about UBCIH. Both students and NGOs advocated for a vision of international student

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[3]Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, "Canada's Universities in the World: AUCC Internationalization Survey" (Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, 2014), https://www.univcan.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/internationalization-survey-2014.pdf. See also Canada, "Canada's International Education Strategy: Harnessing Our Knowledge Advantage to Drive Innovation and Prosperity," 2014, http://international.gc.ca/global-markets-marches-mondiaux/assets/pdfs/overview-apercu-eng.pdf; Canada, "Building on Success: International Education Strategy 2019-2024," 2019, http://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2020/amc-gac/FR5-165-2019-eng.pdf; Marjorie Johnstone and Eunjung Lee, "Canada and the Global Rush for International Students: Reifying a Neo-imperial Order of Western Dominance in the Knowledge Economy Era," *Critical Sociology* 43, no. 7-8 (Nov. 2017), 1063–78; Marjorie Johnstone and Eunjung Lee, "Branded: International Education and 21st-Century Canadian Immigration, Education Policy, and the Welfare State," *International Social Work* 57, no. 3 (May 2014), 209-21.

[4]Moira J. Calder et al., "International Students Attending Canadian Universities: Their Experiences with Housing, Finances, and Other Issues," *Canadian Journal of Higher Education* 46, no. 2 (2016), 92.

[5]Tahmina Aziz, "International Students Struggle to Find Affordable Housing, Some Facing Homelessness," CTV News Vancouver, Sept. 6, 2023, https://bc.ctvnews.ca/international-students-struggle-to-find-affordable-housing-some-facing-homelessness-1.6550911; CBC Radio Canada, "Why a Foreign Student Cap Would Be 'Disastrous' for Canada's Schools," YouTube video, Sept. 10, 2023, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AXaj78HhjSE; Joe Friesen, "Ontario Colleges Are Fuelling Unprecedented Growth in International Students: As International Enrollment Grows, Some Say the Influx Is Feeding into

recruitment that would have purposefully included housing, but UBC's administration rejected this, and that decision has echoed through the decades since. Though the causes of the housing crisis are very complex, examining this case study of the development of one institution's international student services and policies provides an insight into why Canadian universities have not routinely built housing to host the increasing numbers of international students on their campuses.

This article contributes to a growing literature examining international students in the period after the Second World War.[6] In Canada this literature has tended to focus on the role of international students in the Cold War, and has generally argued that students have been used as vehicles for Canada's Cold War ambitions.[7] Much of this work has focused on the government and its policies. Roopa Desai Trilokekar has completed a study of Canada's foreign affairs department in the years after the Second World War, focusing on the ways it used international education to advance its foreign affairs agenda in the context of the Cold War.[8] John Allison has made a similar

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the Housing Crisis," *Globe and Mail*, Sept. 2, 2023; Joe Friesen and Marieke Walsh, "Quebec Rejects Cap on Student Visas Floated by Ottawa to Address Housing Crisis," *Globe and Mail*, Aug. 22, 2023.

[6]For example, there is an array of recent historical accounts examining international students in the US and Australia, such as: Teresa Brawner Bevis, *A World History of Higher Education Exchange: The Legacy of American Scholarship* (Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 2019); Teresa Brawner Bevis and Christopher J. Lucas, *International Students in American Colleges and Universities: A History* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); Liping Bu, *Making the World like Us: Education, Cultural Expansion, and the American Century*, Perspectives on the Twentieth Century (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003); Paul A. Kramer, "Is the World Our Campus? International Students and U.S. Global Power in the Long Twentieth Century," in *Teaching America to the World and the World to America: Education and Foreign Relations since 1870*, ed. Richard Garlitz and Lisa Jarvinen (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2012), 11–50; Maria Elena Indelicato, *Australia's New Migrants: International Students' History of Affective Encounters with the Border* (New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2018); David Lowe, "Australia's Colombo Plans, Old and New: International Students as Foreign Relations," *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 21, no. 4 (Aug. 2015), 448–62; Daniel Oakman, "'Young Asians in Our Homes': Colombo Plan Students and White Australia," *Journal of Australian Studies* 26, no. 72 (Jan. 2002), 89–98; Daniel Oakman, *Facing Asia: A History of the Colombo Plan* (Canberra, ACT, Australia: ANU E Press, 2010); Jon Piccini, "'That Brotherhood May Prevail': International House Brisbane, Race and the Humanitarian Ethic in Cold War Australia," *History Australia* 17, no. 4 (Oct. 2020), 695–710; Wim Weymans, "At Home Abroad? International House New York and the Cité Universitaire in Paris: Cosmopolitan versus Diasporic Internationalism," in Florian Kläger and Klaus Stierstorfer, eds., *Diasporic Constructions of Home and Belonging* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015), 279–96, https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110408614-017.

[7]Dale M. McCartney, "Inventing International Students: Exploring Discourses in International Student Policy Talk, 1945-75," *Historical Studies in Education / Revue d'histoire de l'éducation* 28, no. 2 (2016), 1–27; Dale M. McCartney, "'A Question of Self-Interest': A Brief History of 50 Years of International Student Policy in Canada," *Canadian Journal of Higher Education* 51, no. 3 (Sept. 2021), 33–50; James D. Cameron, "International Student Integration into the Canadian University: A Post-World War Two Historical Case Study," *History of Intellectual Culture* 6, no. 1 (2006), 1–18; Roopa Desai Trilokekar, "International Education as Soft Power? The Contributions and Challenges of Canadian Foreign Policy to the Internationalization of Higher Education," *Higher Education* 59, no. 2 (Feb. 2010), 131–47; John Allison, "Walking the Line: Canadian Federalism, the Council of Ministers of Education, and the Case of International Education, 1970-1984," *Journal of Educational Administration and History* 39, no. 2 (Aug. 2007), 113–28; Laura Madokoro, "The Refugee Ritual: Sopron Students in Canada," *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* 19, no. 1 (2008), 253–78.

[8]Trilokekar, "International Education as Soft Power?"; Roopa Desai Trilokekar, "Federalism, Foreign Policy and the Internationalization of Higher Education: A Case Study of the International Academic

argument about the Council of Ministers of Education, the closest thing Canada has to a federal-level education ministry.[9] Dale M. McCartney's work has focused on the statements and attitudes of Canadian members of Parliament, and has broadly argued that they saw international students only through an instrumentalist lens that valued them for their contribution to helping Canada achieve its larger national goals in foreign affairs, immigration, and labor policy.[10] Although there are important differences between their conclusions, all three authors have focused on international student policy and discourse at the most macro of levels, and have argued that international students were primarily treated as extensions of governments' (both provincial and federal) political desires.

One article has offered a more granular examination of international student policy in the same era. Daniel Poitras, in his detailed study of the University of Toronto's International Student Centre (UTISC), argues that there was a genuine attempt at the UTISC to build a community that transcended the political goals of the federal government. He describes an internal narrative at the UTISC that "promoted inter-cultural connections and a form of globalism," which Poitras argues helped to build a meaningful and long-lasting community of international and domestic students.[11] Not coincidentally, Poitras's work is focused on the operation of a single student center at a single institution. This micro-level approach may account for the difference between Poitras's findings and those of Allison, Trilokekar, and McCartney. Poitras's work suggests that there was likely a gap between what governments believed they were doing when creating international student policy and the experience of students themselves.

Inspired by Poitras's method, this article takes a similar approach to the development of the UBCIH. The UTISC's discourse of integration is certainly similar to the values espoused in the International House movement, and by some proponents of UBCIH. But this narrative does not appear to have had as much impact at UBC, perhaps because of the resistance of the administration. Yet closely examining the development of UBCIH adds another wrinkle to our growing understanding of international students' place in Canadian higher education in the 1950s and 1960s. While UBCIH was supported both by instrumentalist Cold Warriors and by those who argued it presented the opportunity to overcome ethnic and racial prejudice, it ultimately appears that the pragmatic, managerial concerns of UBC's administration played the most significant role in determining the shape of UBCIH. This practical concern has generally been overlooked by Canadian scholarship to this point, but its victory at UBC foreshadows some of the themes in contemporary international student policy

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Relations Division, Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Canada" (PhD diss., Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto, 2007).

[9]Allison, "Walking the Line"; John Allison, *A Most Canadian Odyssey: Education Diplomacy and Federalism, 1844-1984* (London: Althouse Press, 2016).

[10]McCartney, "Inventing International Students"; Dale M. McCartney, "Border Imperialism and Exclusion in Canadian Parliamentary Talk about International Students," *Canadian Journal of Higher Education* 50, no. 4 (Dec. 2020), 37–51; see also McCartney, "'A Question of Self-Interest.'"

[11]Daniel Poitras, "Welcoming International and Foreign Students in Canada: Friendly Relations with Overseas Students at the University of Toronto, 1951-68," *Canadian Historical Review* 100, no. 1 (Feb. 2019), 25.

and discourse. Whereas once there were competing visions of the potential for international education, including internationalist visions that imagined student mobility could contribute to world peace, since the late 1960s this vision has been largely sidelined by a more administrative, instrumentalist agenda.[12] The example of the UBCIH offers insight into how advocates of that managerial agenda were able to repurpose internationalist efforts to their own end.

International House

The story of the inspiration for the International House movement (I-House, now known as International Houses Worldwide) is usually told the same way: Harry Edmonds, a prominent figure in the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), encountered a Chinese student on the steps of the Columbia University library in 1909.[13] Edmonds said "good morning" to the student, and the student stopped him to explain that Edmonds was the first person to greet him in three weeks in New York. Edmonds invited the student to dinner, and then apparently at the behest of his wife, Florence Edmonds, he began a tradition of weekly Sunday dinners with international students at his home in New York. Out of these informal meals Edmonds and his wife developed first an Intercollegiate Cosmopolitan Club and then eventually the idea of the International House. Given the YMCA's emphasis on housing, it is not a surprise that Edmonds was not satisfied with establishing just a club, and wanted to build residences for students. He convinced the Dodge and Rockefeller families to fund the purchase of land and the construction of a building near Columbia University in Manhattan, and I-House New York opened in 1924. Within a decade there were also I-Houses in Berkeley, California, and Chicago, soon followed by Paris and, after the Second World War, Tokyo, as well as several I-Houses in Australia and Vancouver.[14] Today I-House has locations in Australia, Canada, the United States, and Romania.

This was the story that Edmonds told in his own memoirs, and while likely apocryphal, it captures the public face of the I-House movement.[15] The story emphasizes the I-House belief that Christian values, especially kindness, are at the heart of

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[12]McCartney, "'A Question of Self-Interest.'"

[13]See, for example, Bu, *Making the World like Us*; Azra Dawood, "'Building 'Brotherhood': John D. Rockefeller Jr. and the Foundations of New York City's International Student House," *Journal of Architecture* 24, no. 7 (Oct. 2019), 898–924; Caroline Donadio, "About International House," International House New York City, https://www.ihouse-nyc.org/blog/the-origins-of-international-house/; George Goodman Jr., "Harry Edmonds, Who Established International House, Is Dead at 96," *New York Times*, July 8, 1979, 35. In the UBC context, we see the story told in several places, including Denis Grant, "International House" (unpublished essay, Vancouver, BC, ca. 1955), folder 1-4, box 1, International House fonds, University of British Columbia Archives, Vancouver, BC, Canada (hereafter IHBC).

[14]Joe Lurie, *International House at the University of California, Berkeley: An Informal History* (Berkeley: International House at the University of California, Berkeley, 2006), https://ihouse.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/historybook.pdf; Caitlin Stone, "International House Melbourne and Its Collection," *University of Melbourne Collections*, no. 21 (2017), 33–37; Piccini, "'That Brotherhood May Prevail'"; Masami Kobayashi, "Preservation and Restoration of the International House of Japan," *Docomomo Journal*, no. 52 (March 2015), 54–59; Arthur Rae McCombs, "International House on the University of British Columbia Campus" (master's thesis, University of British Columbia, 1974).

[15]Dawood, "'Building 'Brotherhood'"; Donadio, "About International House"; Goodman Jr., "Harry Edmonds, Who Established International House, Is Dead at 96."

building relationships across borders. More than that, the story seems to promise that I-House could achieve what Edmonds called "the moral disarmament of the world," a precursor in his view to achieving real disarmament.[16] The I-House motto, "that brotherhood may prevail," conveys the same hopefulness that I-House could be a vehicle for lasting world peace.

Scholars have been more critical about the context and meaning of I-House, however. Azra Dawood has connected the development of the I-House movement to John D. Rockefeller's broader efforts to advance "Christian imperialism," a worldview that was built on the belief that Christianity and American values, especially liberal capitalism, were synonymous and should provide the bedrock for a global order in the twentieth century.[17] In the Australian context, Jon Piccini has argued something similar, suggesting that the International House at the University of Queensland "was produced by the sorts of colonial discourses that had long animated Western benevolence."[18] While Dawood acknowledges that "a sanitised interpretation of Rockefeller's I-Houses as sites of equitable—and secular—cultural exchange remains entrenched" in the public imagination, it is clear that the major financial supporters of I-Houses around the world were motivated by a shared vision of an American, capitalist, Christian empire.[19] The I-House movement represented two strands in the international debate about the utility of student mobility. Rockefeller and supporters like him largely favored it as a pathway to American global influence, while students appear to have seen it as a site of intercultural encounter and global community building.[20]

International House at UBC (UBCIH)

These motivations were certainly shared by some proponents of the UBCIH, most notably Leon Ladner, a corporate lawyer, leader of the Vancouver branch of the Rotary International club, and the chief fundraiser for the Vancouver I-House. However, the UBC example suggests there were other stakeholders who had different visions for what UBCIH could be. UBCIH was ultimately created by the work of a disparate and confusing array of organizations formed both on campus and off, with different ideas of what UBCIH should be, but united by a belief that an I-House offered the best opportunity to achieve those goals. Tracking these organizations can become confusing, but identifying their role in the process and their goals for an I-House helps demonstrate the competing visions of UBCIH and international student policy more broadly,

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[16]H. E. Edmonds, "Managing the World: The Most Representative International Assembly," *Christian Education* 7, no. 4 (1924), 207.

[17]Dawood, "Building 'Brotherhood'"; Azra Dawood, "Building Protestant Modernism: John D. Rockefeller Jr. and the Architecture of an American Internationalism (1919-1939)" (PhD diss., Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2018), https://dspace.mit.edu/handle/1721.1/120888.

[18]Piccini, "'That Brotherhood May Prevail,'" 697.

[19]Dawood, "'Building 'Brotherhood,'" 900.

[20]This sentiment is especially visible in the recollections of former I-House residents. See, for example, Lurie, *International House at the University of California, Berkeley*; Jacqueline Cloutier Masse, "Social Relations and Cultural Differences: Student Friendships in an International House" (master's thesis, University of Chicago, 1962), https://www.proquest.com/docview/302123959/citation/BAB64263DB7140C0PQ/1; Basil Shaw, *From Many Nations: A History of International House, University of Queensland, 1955 to 1994* (St. Lucia, Queensland, Australia: International House, 1995).

and illustrates the central deciding role that UBC administrators ultimately played in determining the form of UBCIH (see Table 1).

1949-1954: The Beginning of the Campaign

The campaign for an I-House at UBC started with students who were inspired by the I-House story and recognized a practical need for housing. Frene Ginwala, a South Asian student from South Africa, was the driving force behind the initial creation of an International House Club in the spring of 1949.[21] Ginwala entered UBC in the fall of 1948 and quickly dove into student politics, joining the International Relations Club and the Student Christian Movement, and running for a position on the elected student society board.[22] In February of 1949, she started a new club called the International Students Club, inspired by a visit to the I-House in New York that she had made before coming to Vancouver. Although the club stated it was open to both international and domestic students, it focused specifically on serving international student needs. It had four goals:

1. To get visiting students and Canadians tudents [*sic*] to meet together on an intimate basis.
2. To facilitate the exchange of ideas.
3. To help foreign students to become acquainted with campus life.
4. To aid in the establishment of an International House.[23]

Initially, Ginwala's group was interested in both the social and residential benefits of building an I-House. Organizing social activities soon became its focus, however, and a new, separate club was formed to work specifically toward the construction of a physical International House on campus.[24] This new group, called the International House Committee, featured international students from Czechoslovakia, India, and Hungary, domestic students, and a faculty member, Professor Stanley Read from the English department.[25] It was focused on achieving a residential I-House that could support housing for domestic and international students. Although Ginwala had left UBC for Columbia University after the spring of 1949, there was still substantial excitement among students and some faculty for the building of an I-House that could provide housing and support their vision of international friendship and collaboration.[26]

This new on-campus committee quickly made connections with community groups that had an interest in supporting the development of an I-House. Stanley Read says that this occurred coincidentally, as a result of events organized on international topics

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[21]"New International Student Club Formed," *Daily Ubyssey*, Feb. 22, 1949, 3.

[22]"Civil Liberties Sponsor Talk," *Daily Ubyssey*, Nov. 4, 1948, 1; "Eighteen Seek Posts on UBC Student Council," *Daily Ubyssey*, Feb. 3, 1949, 1.

[23]"New International Student Club Formed."

[24]McCombs, "International House on the University of British Columbia Campus."

[25]Stanley E. Read, "International House: First Draft" (manuscript, Vancouver, BC, ca. 1955), International House Collection/Stanley Read (collector), University of British Columbia Archives, Vancouver, Canada (hereafter IHCSR).

[26]"Int. House Climax of 3-Year Dream," *The Ubyssey*, Jan. 15, 1952, 2.

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bringing students and members of these groups together, thereby creating an opportunity for them to share their mutual interests in supporting international students.[27] But it seems likely that Read or other faculty members may have drawn on their own connections to find support in the community. Regardless of what brought them together, by the spring of 1951 an off-campus group had emerged to support the International House Committee. It was officially affiliated to the International House movement, and thus was called the International House Association (IHA), British Columbia Chapter.

The bulk of the membership of this new group comprised UBC staff and faculty (and/or their wives) and members of the local Zonta International chapter. Zonta International was a women-only service club of middle-class and professional women with a focus on international issues. Founded in 1919 in Buffalo, the club had opened a chapter in Vancouver in 1949.[28] Ellen Harris, the chapter president and one of the founding members of the IHA, serves as a good example of the typical Zonta member. Harris had been a broadcaster for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's radio service in the 1940s and 1950s, and was the president of British Columbia's Ballet Society as well. She would go on to be the president of the entire Zonta International organization, serving from 1960 to 1962.[29] Harris was dedicated to the Cold War political project that animated many supporters of the I-House movement, and had the sort of status and social cachet that immediately elevated the IHA and made it considerably more influential than student-run clubs had been. Within a year, UBC had agreed to find a place on campus for the International Students Club, International House Committee, and IHA to meet, host events, and continue working toward a permanent I-House.

In the fall of 1951, UBC granted the International Students Club and International House Committee an office in a building at Acadia Camp. Acadia Camp was a Second World War-era military installation that had been used after the war to house the large numbers of veterans who attended UBC.[30] By the early 1950s, this huge influx of students was tapering off, and UBC had begun using the "huts" for student services, classes, and as fraternity houses.[31] Encouraged by Herrick Young, the president of International House Worldwide, members of both the on-campus and community groups saw this as a starting point for a campaign that would lead ultimately to a residence.[32] They created an International House Board of Directors to coordinate the many committees; manage the budget, furnishings, and eventually staff; and continue to lobby the university for an I-House. This board hired a part-time adviser for international students, and a part-time director for the International House, and set up a

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[27] Read, "International House: First Draft," 2.

[28] Eva Nielsen, "100 Years of Zonta International History," Zonta International, 2019, https://www.zonta.org/Web/About/100_Years_Zonta_International.aspx.

[29] Gisèle Yasmeen, "Remembering Ellen Harris," *Women's History Network* (blog), Dec. 14, 2014, https://womenshistorynetwork.org/remembering-ellen-harris/.

[30] Eric Damer and Herbert Rosengarten, *UBC: The First 100 Years* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia, 2009).

[31] Walter H. Gage, "Letter to President N. A. M. MacKenzie," Nov. 6, 1953, IHCSR.

[32] "Minutes of the General Meeting of the BC Chapter of the International House Association" (meeting minutes, Vancouver, BC, Nov. 10, 1952), folder 1-4, box 1, IHABC.

trust fund to raise money to pay these expenses and to build toward a new, permanent I-House in the future.[33]

As soon as the office was open, the committees and clubs began offering ad hoc student services to international students. These were primarily focused on social supports, with the on-campus student groups organizing Sunday dinners featuring speakers and dishes from different countries. The IHA focused on what it called "hospitality" activities that ranged from welcoming international students with gifts,[34] to entertaining them in homes and taking them "for drives in the vicinity,"[35] to providing them with temporary accommodations in the homes of IHA members over Christmas break.[36] The committees also organized dances and other social events for international and domestic students to mingle.[37] Perhaps most notably, groups also coordinated on a "Canadian Orientation Series," five days of seminars and talks to teach international students about Canadian life and culture.[38] By 1953 they were coordinating with UBC to contact each new international student when they arrived to invite them to a welcome tea service, and to introduce them to the program of events organized by the committees on campus and off.[39] With these growing duties, and their increasing importance to the university, there came complaints that the broad range of student groups was becoming unwieldy and preventing effective student supports, so it was decided in 1953 to combine the on-campus student groups into the International House Club, which would be affiliated to the UBC student society as well as provide student representation to both the International House Board (now running the office in Acadia Camp) and the IHA (the off-campus organization affiliated to International House Worldwide).[40]

From the perspective of the various off-campus committees, the motivation for taking on this social and support work appears to have been the kind of "humanitarian internationalism" that Jon Piccini identified in the campaign to build an I-House in Brisbane, Australia.[41] The first substantive gift the IHA ever gave UBC was a crest proclaiming "That Brotherhood May Prevail," to be mounted in the office at Acadia Camp, and the IHA especially was very self-conscious in its efforts to understand their work

[33]McCombs, "International House on the University of British Columbia Campus," 50.

[34]"Minutes of the Annual Meeting International House Association BC Chapter" (meeting minutes, Vancouver, BC, June 20, 1952), folder 1-4, box 1, IHABC.

[35]"Minutes of the General Meeting of the BC Chapter of the International House Association"(1952), 2; "Minutes of the Joint Meeting of the BC Chapter of the International House Association and the Vancouver Council for Friendly Relations with Foreign Students" (meeting minutes, Vancouver, BC, Sept. 30, 1953), folder 1-4, box 1, IHABC.

[36]"Minutes of the General Meeting of the International House Association" (meeting minutes, Vancouver, BC, Oct. 11, 1951), folder 1-4, box 1, IHABC.

[37]"Minutes of the Annual Meeting International House Association BC Chapter" (1952).

[38]McCombs, "International House on the University of British Columbia Campus," 47.

[39]"Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the BC Chapter of the International House Association" (meeting minutes, Vancouver, BC, June 22, 1953), folder 1-4, box 1, IHABC.

[40]"Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the BC Chapter of the International House Association" (1953); McCombs, "International House on the University of British Columbia Campus."

[41]Piccini, "'That Brotherhood May Prevail.'"

within the broader context of International House as a global movement.[42] A history of UBC's I-House efforts (apparently unpublished), likely commissioned by the IHA and written sometime in 1955, described Vancouver as "the crossroads of the Earth … the meeting point of the direct flows of traffic from Europe, Asia and South and Central Americas."[43] Thus, UBC presented "fertile soil for the cultivation of international goodwill," especially as students were "impressionable, unbiased."[44] The IHA was eager that international students have a good experience in Canada, but especially that they be assimilated into Canadian life and values. As Piccini suggests, there were colonial assumptions and discourses concealed within the IHA's understanding of international students, most notably the persistent assumption that they had some sort of social deficit and needed to be taught Canadian customs. But practically speaking, members of the IHA were much more concerned with doing the work of building support for an I-House than they were discussing the philosophy underpinning their efforts.

This practicality served UBC just fine. By 1953 the Acadia Camp office had become a de facto student services office for the growing number of international students on campus, and was helping those students overcome social challenges that were widely believed to stand in the way of their academic success. The result was outspoken support from university administration, especially President Norman MacKenzie. MacKenzie had always been generally supportive of international students on campus, but the success of the Acadia Camp office made him even more generous in his praise and more substantive in his offers of assistance.[45] He agreed to serve in the International House Club as an ex-officio member, and he promised the IHA that he would assist it in expanding its presence on campus.[46] Both IHA members and students in the International House Club hoped this meant UBC would grant them several of the Acadia Camp huts to turn into residences that could house both international and domestic students, serving as proto-I-Houses while the IHA worked to raise the funds to pay for a permanent I-House.[47] The vast majority of international students were living off campus at the time—meaning, in Stanley Read's estimation, their housing was difficult to find and substandard for their needs.[48] But MacKenzie had other plans, and while he gave the International House Board one full hut at Acadia Camp in 1954, it was to expand its social and student services offerings, not to serve as a residence.

The development of a service center was timely because the campus population was changing rapidly. The proportion of international students on UBC's campus grew significantly during the 1950s. In the 1948-1949 academic year, the year before Ginwala

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[42]McCombs, "International House on the University of British Columbia Campus," 47; see also "Minutes of the Annual Meeting International House Association BC Chapter" (1952).

[43]Grant, "International House," 7.

[44]Grant, "International House," 8.

[45]"New International Student Club Formed."

[46]"Minutes of the General Meeting of the BC Chapter of the International House Association" (1952).

[47]Peter Steckl, "Proposal for International House Committee" (memo, Vancouver, BC, 1951), International House Collection/William Black (collector), University of British Columbia Archives, Vancouver, Canada; see also McCombs, "International House on the University of British Columbia Campus."

[48]Stanley E. Read, "Letter to T. E. Ladner," Oct. 17, 1953, IHCSR.

started the I-House club, there had only been 146 international students on campus, representing less than 2 percent of the total student population. But by 1954 there were more than 460 international students, and by the 1957-1958 academic year—when the UBCIH began operation—there were 1,429, representing more than 15 percent of the total student population. Although the general number of international students in Canada was growing steadily in the 1950s, the international proportion of UBC's student population was more than double the national average, which was just 6.3 percent in 1958-1959.[49]

It was not just the numbers that were changing, but the composition as well. In 1949, a third of the international students on campus came from the United States, but by 1958 Americans represented less than 10 percent of the international enrollment. Americans were outnumbered by students from Great Britain (315 students, or 22 percent), Hungary (210, or 15 percent), and Trinidad (143, or 10 percent). There were also significant numbers of students from West Germany (103), the Netherlands (74), Taiwan (71), India (49), and even the Soviet Union (26). Altogether, more than sixty countries were represented on campus, not counting the thirty-eight students who were technically stateless.[50] The exploding population of international students meant that a dedicated service center made sense to the UBC administration, but despite all these students needing housing, MacKenzie's support for them ended with the narrow list of services that could be provided within a single Acadia Camp hut.

Even as the IHA and International House Board were trying to lobby MacKenzie to create residence in Acadia Camp, work was continuing off campus to try to find the funds to pay for a permanent I-House. In 1953 Herrick Young, the president of International House Worldwide, came to Vancouver to visit the IHA, and while in town visited with the Vancouver chapter of Rotary International.[51] Some Rotary members had already been supportive of the IHA, but this was the first time someone from the I-House groups had addressed the whole chapter. Young's speech attracted the attention of several leading figures in the Vancouver Rotary, most notably Leon J. Ladner and his son Thomas (Tom) Ellis Ladner, partners at one of Vancouver's largest law firms.[52] Leon Ladner was the son of one of the Ladner brothers (confusingly also named Thomas Ellis), who in the late nineteenth century had preempted vast swaths of Tsawwassen Nation land in the delta of the Fraser River south of Vancouver.[53] Like Ellen Harris of Zonta International, the Ladners were influential professionals with connections among the most powerful figures in the province. Unlike Harris, Leon Ladner was especially outspoken about his politics, which were virulently anti-communist and anti-social democrat, and meshed well with John D. Rockefeller's

[49]McCartney, "Inventing International Students."

[50]Charles B. Wood, "Registrar's Report to the President" (Vancouver, BC, Oct. 20, 1949), Registrar's Office fonds, folder 63-7, box 63, University of British Columbia Archives, Vancouver, Canada (hereafter ROBCA); Grant, "International House"; John E. A. Parnall, "Registrar's Report to the President" (Vancouver, BC, Oct. 1958), ROBCA.

[51]Grant, "International House," 4.

[52]Grant, "International House."

[53]Jacqueline Gresko, "Ladner, William Henry," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* (University of Toronto, 2003), http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/ladner_william_henry_13E.html.

initial vision for the International House movement.[54] The Ladners pledged that Rotary International would raise the funds to pay for a permanent International House on UBC's campus.

Rotary International's involvement in the building of the I-House was not entirely new; Rotary chapters in Australia had played an important role in the building of the Melbourne and Brisbane I-Houses, for example.[55] And I-Houses fit well with the group's broader politics. As Jared Goff has explained, Rotary International emerged from "the business progressivism and cultural internationalism" of the United States, especially before the Second World War.[56] Goff describes the Rotary philosophy as "civic internationalism," an approach that emphasized spreading the cultural and economic values of the US not as agents of the American empire but as advocates for those values' universal appeal to all members of an "emerging transnational class of businessmen and professionals."[57] The International House movement strongly resonated with this attitude. Figures like the Ladners saw it as valuable because it offered a potential pathway to a capitalist world order that was emphatically Anglo-American in content but proclaimed itself to be international and universal. The self-evident superiority of the Ladner worldview was embedded in a structure that was ostensibly about learning from each other across national boundaries. Both Ladners showed considerable passion for the building of the I-House, especially Leon, and his influence was decisive in actually collecting the necessary funds.

A glimpse of the specific political agenda of the Rotary can be seen in a presentation Stanley Read gave during a fundraising campaign in the fall of 1954. By this point the Ladners had been working on fundraising for a year, and were officially requesting that the Rotary Vancouver chapter commit to raising at least $150,000 to build an I-House at UBC.[58] Professor Read—primed by Tom Ladner—heavily emphasized to his audience the Cold War implications of hosting international students.[59] He told the Rotary members there were 468 international students from sixty-one countries at UBC, and that many of these students would return to their home countries after their studies. Thus, it was "important that we look after them well." He explained that "by bringing foreign students here—by making sure that they have a good chance to understand us—and that we have a good chance to understand them," it would be possible to build a more stable world. Read pointed to the success of the existing I-Houses as proof of concept. "Through them have passed more than sixty thousand students," he told the Rotary, "many of who [*sic*] today hold high offices in the countries of the world;

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[54] Ladner had been a Conservative member of Parliament in Vancouver from 1921 to 1930. For more on Ladner's politics, see Leon Johnson Ladner, *The Ladners of Ladner: By Covered Wagon to the Welfare State* (Vancouver: Mitchell Press, 1972). Note that the foreword to Ladner's book was written by Norman MacKenzie. For more on Rockefeller's politics, see Dawood, "Building Protestant Modernism."

[55] Stone, "International House Melbourne and Its Collection"; Piccini, "'That Brotherhood May Prevail.'"

[56] Brendan Goff, *Rotary International and the Selling of American Capitalism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2021), 4.

[57] Goff, *Rotary International and the Selling of American Capitalism*, 4.

[58] Donald C. G. MacKay, "The Story of the Part Played by the Vancouver Rotary Club in Establishing International House at UBC" (unpublished essay, Vancouver, BC, 1963), folder 1-8, box 1, Donald MacKay fonds, University of British Columbia Archives Vancouver, Canada.

[59] Stanley E. Read, "Letter to Dr. N. A. M. MacKenzie," Oct. 14, 1954, IHCSR.

and whose thinking controls world policies." Therefore, shaping their attitude toward Canada, and ensuring they understood the Canadian way of life, was an investment in building a world that was more amenable to those values. Read emphasized that this outcome could only be achieved if UBC could build an I-House that had a student center and residences. He finished by promising, "If you see fit to support this project, I can assure you on behalf of the President—that you will receive the full support of the University administration, the faculty, and the students." There was no mention of hardships faced by international students in the three-page speech; Read's emphasis was entirely on the Cold War political context, likely because he (or Tom Ladner) knew his audience.[60] After Read's speech, the proposal was passed unanimously by the Vancouver chapters' members.[61]

Within a few years of Frene Ginwala suggesting that UBC needed an I-House, the competing conceptions of how and why to support international students were clear in the efforts to build the house. Students were clearly inspired by the vision of a space for internationalist conversation and community building, but were also motivated by the challenges of finding suitable housing. Off-campus groups, led by prominent Vancouver citizens, saw the potential for the I-House to advance their Cold War goals, an internationalism that prioritized building consent for the expansion of the American empire. Meanwhile, UBC's administration welcomed both groups' efforts, and benefited from their energy in its attempts to build student services that could manage a burgeoning international student population. But it also defined its role narrowly, with a particular focus on what it saw as the services needed to enable academic success. These three camps fit together well at the time, but ultimately would disagree about the purpose of UBCIH. Contemporary debates about housing international students suggest that these struggles have had a long legacy, and their outcome continues to affect international students today.

1954-1958: Acadia Camp

The opening of the I-House "clubroom," in Hut L-4 in the Acadia Camp, integrated the I-House model further into UBC, and galvanized support both on campus and off.[62] The Zonta and Rotary clubs donated money and labor to renovate the hut and to add furnishings and a wall-size map of the world.[63] President MacKenzie nailed up the I-House sign above the door himself, and was an occasional attendee at functions at the hut (see Figure 2).[64] Student membership in the International House Club grew from 62 to 204 after the hut opened.[65] In general, the profile of the I-House grew dramatically.

The success of the clubroom appears to have assisted with fundraising too. It was only a few months after it opened that Professor Read delivered his speech, helping the Ladners to convince the Vancouver chapter of Rotary International to take on the cost

[60]Stanley E. Read, "Rotary - 12 October 54" (speech, Vancouver, BC, Oct. 12, 1954), IHCSR.
[61]MacKay, "The Story of the Part Played by the Vancouver Rotary Club in Establishing International House at UBC."
[62]"Presidential Nail Opens IHA Clubroom," *The Ubyssey*, March 16, 1954, 3.
[63]McCombs, "International House on the University of British Columbia Campus," 50.
[64]"Presidential Nail Opens IHA Clubroom."
[65]McCombs, "International House on the University of British Columbia Campus," 51.

Figure 2. President MacKenzie nails the International House sign on Hut L-4, opening the I-House "club-room." Photo courtesy of UBC Archives [UBC 1.1/5167].

of building a permanent I-House, and by the end of the next year the Rotary fundrais-ing committee had raised $100,000 of the proposed $150,000 needed.[66] The fundraising

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[66] Grant, "International House," 5. The actual cost of the building rose to $250,000 by the time it was being built. See Ellen Harris, "University of British Columbia International House Board of Directors Chairmans' Report for Year 1957-58" (Vancouver, BC, 1958), folder 1-1, subfolder 2, box 1, IHBC.

committee featured a number of Vancouver business leaders, including the Ladners; Thomas Braidwood, the vice president of BC Drugs; William Mowat, the assistant general manager for Canada of the prominent trust company Toronto General Trusts; and R. B. McKay, formerly the BC superintendent of the Canadian Bank of Commerce.[67] Although the Acadia hut was modest, it appears to have been enough to signal the value of the project, or UBC's commitment, to the leaders of the Vancouver Rotary.

The hut was also helpful in expanding the support and social services that I-House could offer. It expanded its social program, hosting more and larger dances and balls, organizing discussion groups, and turning the hut into a very popular, internationally themed café that attracted large numbers of students (and contributed to the fundraising efforts). It also took on more orientation activities, including greatly expanding its welcome events and arranging a regular series of talks aimed at international students to inform them about Canadian life and customs.[68] The I-House had become the center of the student services offered to international students, as well as a coordinator of internationally oriented cultural events on campus. Considering that the campus events were organized by the International House Club (the student group affiliated to the UBC student society), and that the International House Board of Directors (the UBC entity that liaised with the IHA) was managing the hut, overseeing fundraising for the permanent building, and generally ensuring the I-House was functioning, the creation of the Acadia Camp hut had clearly integrated the I-House more fully into UBC itself. What had once been a demand of a mishmash of on- and off-campus organizations was now a de facto extension of UBC's student services, helping to support—and manage—its population of international students.

There were signs that this arrangement, while perhaps ideal from the perspective of UBC's administration, was a source of growing frustration for other supporters, especially students. Students had been clear throughout the process that the clubroom should be the first step toward a residence, first at Acadia Camp and then afterward a more permanent structure once the new building was ready.[69] The Rotary expected something similar, and had expressed that to UBC officials, including President MacKenzie.[70] The IHA created an "accommodations" committee in 1955 and maintained it throughout the Acadia Camp era. This committee was focused on assisting international students seeking housing for both the short and longer term. The committee was a priority for students, and they put pressure on the IHA to help with this

[67]Grant, "International House," 5.

[68]"Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the BC Chapter of International House Association" (meeting minutes, Vancouver, BC, June 8, 1954), folder 1-4, box 1, IHABC; "Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the BC Chapter of International House Association" (meeting minutes, Vancouver, BC, June 29, 1955), folder 1-4, box 1, IHABC; "Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the BC Chapter, International House Association" (meeting minutes, Vancouver, BC, June 21, 1956), folder 1-4, box 1, IHABC; "Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the BC Chapter, International House Association" (meeting minutes, Vancouver, BC, May 17, 1957), folder 1-4, box 1, IHABC; Harris, "University of British Columbia International House Board of Directors Chairmans' Report for Year 1957-58"; Elmer H. Hara, "University of British Columbia Board of Directors, International House Annual President's Report, '57–'58" (Vancouver, BC, 1958), folder 1-1, subfolder 2, box 1, IHBC.

[69]Steckl, "Proposal for International House Committee."

[70]Stanley E. Read, "Letter to Dr. N. A. M. MacKenzie," March 9, 1954, IHCSR.

issue. As the president of the IHA put it in 1957, "I do not think the importance of this committee can be overstressed."[71]

It is worth noting at this point that capturing student voices in this era is very challenging. The archival record is heavily slanted toward the institution's own record-keeping. Memos, letters, and the minutes of official meetings of administrators were carefully collected, and while they occasionally allude to student perspectives (as understood by administrators), they rarely include their actual voices. Similarly, while the off-campus organizations, which were run by middle-class professionals, kept excellent records, the student group did not. Occasionally, reports from the student club to the university have been saved, but these tend to be very quotidian and offer little insight into the attitudes of students. However, there are two informal studies from the early 1960s that offer a window into student perspectives. They both show that students were frustrated with the housing situation. Even aside from the challenge of having to find somewhere to stay as quickly as possible after arriving in Vancouver, students faced additional challenges resulting from racism and Canadian cultural arrogance. These two studies offer a clue about the situation international students faced in the 1950s and into the 1960s.

The first study was a 1962 investigation by student journalists into the racism of landlords operating in the area immediately surrounding UBC, a neighborhood called Point Grey. Student journalists—one Black, one White—worked together to test Point Grey houseowners about their renting policies. They found that 50 percent of the fifty homes they visited told the Black reporter the room had been rented, only to offer it to the White reporter when they visited a few minutes later.[72] The journalists gathered accounts from other sources as well, specifically Chinese and South Asian students, of explicit racism from landlords in the Point Grey area. All these landlords had advertised their rooms with UBC's off-campus housing service. The newspaper proclaimed that "Point Grey homeowners have built a Little Rock [Arkansas] on UBC's doorstep."[73] Although rudimentary, this study demonstrates just how dire the situation was for racialized international students seeking accommodations off campus, likely a key reason for the repeated demand that UBCIH include a residential component.

A more sophisticated study was conducted by UBC anthropology professor Cyril Belshaw the following year.[74] Belshaw wrote a report, which appears to have only been circulated within UBC circles, based on interviews with 149 students from thirty-seven different countries. As Belshaw admitted, these interviews were not a representative sample of students, especially as they were conducted during the summer, when most international students left campus to work. Belshaw's participants were still involved with classes or campus activities over the summer, meaning they were likely more

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[71]Hara, "University of British Columbia Board of Directors, International House Annual President's Report, '57– '58."

[72]"Pt. Grey Doors Slam on Negro Students: Landlords Reject Non-Whites," *The Ubyssey*, Sept. 20, 1962, 1, 7.

[73]"Pt. Grey Doors Slam on Negro Students: Landlords Reject Non-Whites."

[74]Cyril S. Belshaw, "A Voyage for Knowledge: An Exploratory Study of Overseas Students in the University of British Columbia" (unpublished essay, Vancouver, BC, 1963), folder 6-16, box 6, IHBC.

financially secure than most, and disproportionately graduate students. Nonetheless, they offer useful insight into the experiences and challenges international students faced, including with housing.

Despite the relative pecuniary comfort of the participants, Belshaw reported that finances were a great concern in general for students, and that this shaped their feelings about housing. They found housing both on and off campus to be expensive, especially for students with families.[75] This was exacerbated by the challenges they faced finding employment, especially for Black, South Asian, and East Asian students, who faced significant racism in the job market.[76] Belshaw commented that the "students who have experienced prejudice come to expect it," and he noted that they generally downplayed the frequency and force of the racism they faced when being interviewed, despite it likely playing a significant role in their financial difficulties.[77]

In addition to the issue of racism and the challenge of cost, students complained about the cultural context of the housing that was available to them. Belshaw explained that students faced significant cultural challenges when it came to housing. Some were social issues—differences in expectation about the amount and kind of socializing that would be available in student residences or in off-campus accommodations.[78] But some were the result of the cultural assumptions of UBC housing officials and Canadian landlords. One particular issue that Belshaw explored at length was the issue of food on campus. International students found the food they were served was both unpalatable and served in excessively large portions. Although students were "warned ahead of time that special dietary requirements are not provided for in the university, even on medical grounds," they still expressed disappointment at both the limited range of food available and the dismissive attitude of the university officials responsible for what Belshaw colorfully called "the machine of food supply."[79] Although there were occasional accommodations offered—Belshaw wrote that "such small kindnesses have lasting effects, but they are rare"—the majority of students found campus food services alienating.[80] Between the racism in off-campus housing and the cultural arrogance built into the on-campus housing system, it is easy to understand why students were so insistent that the UBCIH include a residential component, and that that element of the I-House open as soon as possible. The issue was certainly financial for many students, but more than that, it was a reflection of their desire to have a home on campus. IHA leaders may have hoped a UBCIH residence would help teach international students about Canadian culture, but the students themselves did not need more lessons in that area; they hoped that UBCIH would provide a space where they could enjoy some of their own cultural practices, and perhaps escape some of the racism that shaped their lives in Vancouver.

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[75]Belshaw, "A Voyage for Knowledge," 23.
[76]Belshaw, "A Voyage for Knowledge," 18-20.
[77]Belshaw, "A Voyage for Knowledge," 19.
[78]Belshaw, "A Voyage for Knowledge," 23-24.
[79]Belshaw, "A Voyage for Knowledge," 25.
[80]Belshaw, "A Voyage for Knowledge," 25.

1958-1962: A House Opens, a Door Closes

Despite the best efforts of the IHA and the student-run International House Club, there was never any serious consideration by the UBC administration of the idea of giving I-House more huts to use as mixed domestic and international student residences in the I-House style. Thus it probably should not have been surprising that the permanent I-House building opened in 1959 without any commitment from the university that it would be followed by residential structures. In fact, soon after Eleanor Roosevelt declared the UBCIH officially open, UBC's administration made it the university location for all international activities rather than an I-House in the traditional sense. UBC moved the United Nations Club, World University Service, Commonwealth Club, Canadian University Services Overseas, and student-run ethnic associations into UBCIH. This, in the words of the UBCIH director, made UBCIH "an international centre coordinating activities of student and faculty groups, University departments and community organizations whose objectives are international in nature."[81]

Neither students nor community groups gave up on trying to build residences.[82] In fact, the IHA went as far as contacting Minister of External Affairs Howard C. Green, who was the member of Parliament for the area in which UBC is located, to explore whether the university would be able to use the new National Housing Act of 1960 to get a government-supported mortgage to finance the building of I-House residences, should the IHA be unable to raise sufficient funds itself. Green was assured by the minister of public works that the funds could be used to build residences that housed international students.[83] Inspired by this news, IHA president Alex Wainman met with President MacKenzie in January of 1961 to discuss the building of residences in support of UBCIH. As he had for a decade, MacKenzie expressed his support for the I-House project, and Wainman took this as good news. But MacKenzie also argued there were significant obstacles in the way of building the residence, both financial and practical; he suggested that he would not proceed unless the provincial government agreed it was important, and encouraged Wainman to find a way to make that happen. Although Wainman appears to have been hopeful about the meeting, it seems clear reading his report about it that MacKenzie did not believe there was a realistic chance in the near term of building the residences.[84]

Whatever limited hope remained in January 1961 that a residence would be built was dashed the next year. In 1962 Norman MacKenzie left the position as UBC president and was replaced by John B. Macdonald. That same year, a new director of the

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[81]A. H. Sager, Director, UBC International House, July 6, 1962, as quoted in McCombs, "International House on the University of British Columbia Campus," 55.

[82]International House Board of Directors, "Additions to the International House and Means of Financing Same" (memo, Vancouver, BC, Nov. 28, 1960), folder 1-12, box 1, IHBC.

[83]David J. Walker, "Letter to the Honourable Howard C. Green, Minister of External Affairs," Dec. 12, 1960, folder 1-7, box 1, IHABC. See also Ronald Jephson, "Letter to Mr. Alex Wainman," Dec. 27, 1960, folder 1-7, box 1, IHABC.

[84]Alex W. Wainman, "Confidential Report of an Interview with the President of the University of British Columbia" (memo, Vancouver, BC, Jan. 11, 1961), folder 1-7, box 1, IHABC.

UBCIH, Arthur Sager, was appointed by the board.[85] Sager came from the United Nations Training Centre at UBC, which made him initially a popular choice with the community groups, and it meant he was well acquainted with international student services on campus. However, within two months of his appointment, Sager announced the end of efforts to build an I-House. He told the leadership of the IHA in a letter in July that the residence was not possible, both because it violated university policy and because it would interfere with the services that the UBCIH was already offering to international students.[86]

This new direction was predictably frustrating to the IHA, and leading figures from the Rotary and Zonta clubs wrote angry letters in response.[87] They insisted that the UBCIH could continue to provide services to students (which they agreed was valuable) while also building an I-House. But the administration would not budge. When representatives from the International House Board of Directors met with President Macdonald a few weeks after Sager's bombshell, the president laid out his vision for UBCIH. He confirmed the plan in Sager's letter, telling the board that all of the internationally oriented organizations on campus would be subsumed under the leadership of the International House Board of Directors. That board would no longer be allowed to pursue a residence, and instead would be responsible for managing basically all internationally oriented work on campus. But he also narrowed the role of the I-House volunteers, both students and community members. In a follow-up letter to the International House Board of Directors, he explained his

> personal view that wise functions for the [International] House might include primarily the provision of a suitable orientation program for foreign students newly arrived on campus and secondly, the provision of a centre for student activities (preferably open to all students) in which the program is designed to provide an international flavor to this particular student function.[88]

Macdonald also showed he had not seriously considered the vision of an I-House advanced by the IHA or the International House Board of Directors. He told the board that he rejected the idea of building residences attached to UBCIH because "residences within this University should be available to all students and … it is educationally undesirable to segregate the foreign students from the rest of the campus."[89] Of course this was not the I-House proposal at all. It had always been premised on a residence with a mixed population of international and domestic students, and its goal (whether motivated by naivete, imperialism, or a desire for cross-cultural learning opportunities) had always been integration, not segregation. It was surely galling to the board to have their goals misrepresented in that fashion, but, perhaps because they had been primed by

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[85] Peter Ford, "International House Board of Directors Chairman's Report" (Vancouver, BC, May 14, 1962), folder 1-12, box 1, IHABC.

[86] "Letter to Mr. W. C. Wakely" (Vancouver, BC, July 25, 1962), folder 1-12, box 1, IHBC.

[87] "Letter to Mr. W. C. Wakely"; Ellen Harris, "Letter to Mr. Wakely" (Vancouver, BC, July 24, 1962), folder 1-12, box 1, IHBC.

[88] John B. Macdonald, "Letter to Mr. W. C. Wakely, Chairman, Board of Directors, International House," Aug. 16, 1962, folder 1-12, box 1, IHBC.

[89] Macdonald, "Letter to Mr. W. C. Wakely, Chairman, Board of Directors, Inhernational House."

Sager's letter, they were so clearly resigned to Macdonald's stance that they did not even bother correcting him in the reply letter a few weeks later.[90] Although students continued to speak in favor of a residence for many years afterward, Macdonald's letter marked the end of a complex, multiyear effort by students, faculty, staff, and community members to bring a residential I-House to UBC's campus.[91] UBC's administration got what it wanted from UBCIH, as several decades later it became the focal point of what would come to be called the internationalization of UBC's campus. But the original vision of an I-House at UBC that would live up to the promise of the New York branch was dashed permanently.

Conclusion

Given the broad community and campus support for an I-House residence, it seems remarkable that one was never built. But the particular version of an I-House that did emerge on UBC's campus was not random. It was the result of a contested process of development in which UBC's own administration ultimately played the decisive role. UBCIH is a structure that served the university's specific, pragmatic needs, rather than the grander political goals associated with the I-House movement internationally. Moreover, UBC's administration defined those pragmatic needs very narrowly, and excluded housing for international students from the list of services UBCIH should provide. Student housing policy at UBC is worthy of its own study, but the example of the debate about UBCIH shows that university leaders did not see housing international students specifically, as a group that faced additional challenges in finding their own housing, as a necessity or their responsibility. By bracketing housing out of the international student service framework, UBC's administration may have contributed to the foundation for the heated contemporary debates about international student housing in Canada's popular media.[92]

This should perhaps not be surprising, but it goes against the tenor of much of the history thus far written about both I-Houses and international student policy in Canada in the 1950s and 1960s. It is true that some themes that feature prominently in the existing historiography are present at this institution-specific level. Cold War-era imperialism, whether it is described as Christian or capitalist, definitely shaped the attitudes of some UBCIH supporters, especially those in the Rotary. And the exclusionary rhetoric and racism that Canadian scholars have described in international student policy drove student desire for the I-House to a significant extent. But to this point, there has been considerably less consideration of the role of institutional actors in the development of international student policy, and the example of UBCIH suggests they had a different set of priorities.

There are lessons here for those more interested in contemporary international student issues. UBC's presidents, at least, appear to have been primarily concerned

[90]W. Cecil Wakely, "Letter to John B. Macdonald, President, University of British Columbia," Sept. 10, 1962, folder 1-12, box 1, IHBC.

[91]McCombs, "International House on the University of British Columbia Campus."

[92]For a short overview of this debate that was written as it was happening, see Dale M. McCartney et al., "Editorial," *Comparative and International Education* 52, no. 1 (Sept. 2023), https://doi.org/10.5206/cie-eci.v52i1.16781.

with the management of international students on their campuses. There was little evidence that they shared student worries about exclusion or racism, and similarly limited proof that they shared the Rotary's view that universities were fighting the Cold War on their campuses. But there was substantial evidence that the presidents wanted UBCIH to help students get oriented to campus life, and to build a social space where students might meet each other and find supportive figures. Although it is difficult and risky to extrapolate these priorities to the contemporary context, the conflict itself is a reminder that what can sometimes look coherent from the outside is actually riven by very different conceptions and visions. Throughout the 1950s, community groups, student clubs, and the UBC administration all repeatedly proclaimed their support for the building of an I-House at UBC. Only once it was built did their vastly different visions for the I-House come into full view.

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