

Buck Jones:

I share a small room with four other guys in a boarding house. I pay \$358 a month – it just went up eighteen dollars. I don't know if the place is under rent-control, but I hope so.

I've got a pretty good thing to go to on the twelfth: a roomers' meeting. I'm going to try and check it out.

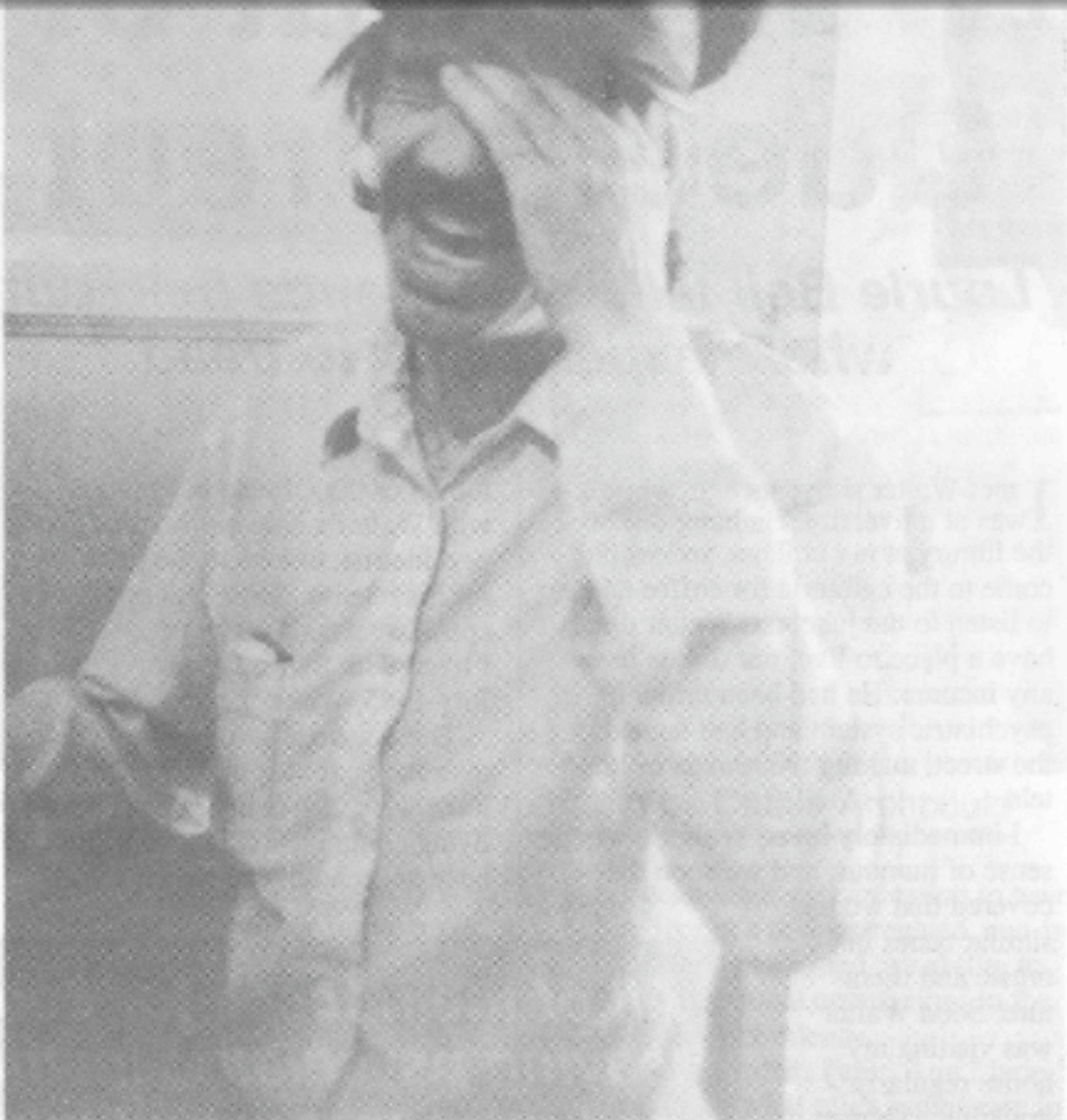
I had to come up with first and last when I moved in. I never see my cheque: it goes directly to my worker. He pays my rent. I go check with him every Friday, and he gives me fourteen bucks a week. I get the balance at the end of the month.

About 24 people live on the first and second floor of the house. Most are ex-psychiatric. Some come in off the street. Some of them sniff glue or smoke dope. They're not even law-abiding.

The landlady and the cook live on the third floor. The landlady doles out the pills every day. I don't take any. There's a lady who cleans everything and does the laundry. There's a few cockroaches, but it's pretty clean.

There used to be a TV, but not anymore. Sometimes I lose some clothes. Once, I got cleaned out. And there's no heat.

Sometimes the food's not good – sometimes it's cold. If you come in late for dinner, the cook won't heat anything up. She says the kitchen is closed after six. If I don't phone, they don't save my chow. Some people take seconds before you've even had yours; you've got to really



push your way around. I don't want to be pushed around like that.

This one guy beat up the cook because he wanted another cup of coffee. I said, "Hey, she didn't do sweet nothin'. What do you want to pick on her for? Pick on me." He tried to kill me last month. My worker says I could have laid charges. If he touches me again, I will. He's at the East End Detention Centre now, and I hope he stays there for life.

Once I went to a hotel downtown, where I was supposed to work for a room. I worked for 48 hours, washing the dishes, cutting the onions, this and that – but the man still wouldn't give me a room. Then I said, "Look, I'll bend over backwards for you. Just tell me what you

want done." So I had to go downstairs and clean out a place that was just filthy; it was wall-to-wall grease. I had to scrape the grease along the floor and shoot it out the back way. That's not for me.

I got one person I want to live with me. Her name's Clem. I'll take care of myself and of the lady. I don't want to go and apply to the city for low-cost housing if I can find a room on my own. I do it my way, or no way at all.

I had a dream one night that I was living out in the country with my woman: we'd just moved into this giant house. This thing had 192 rooms. And I said, "Hey. That's nice."