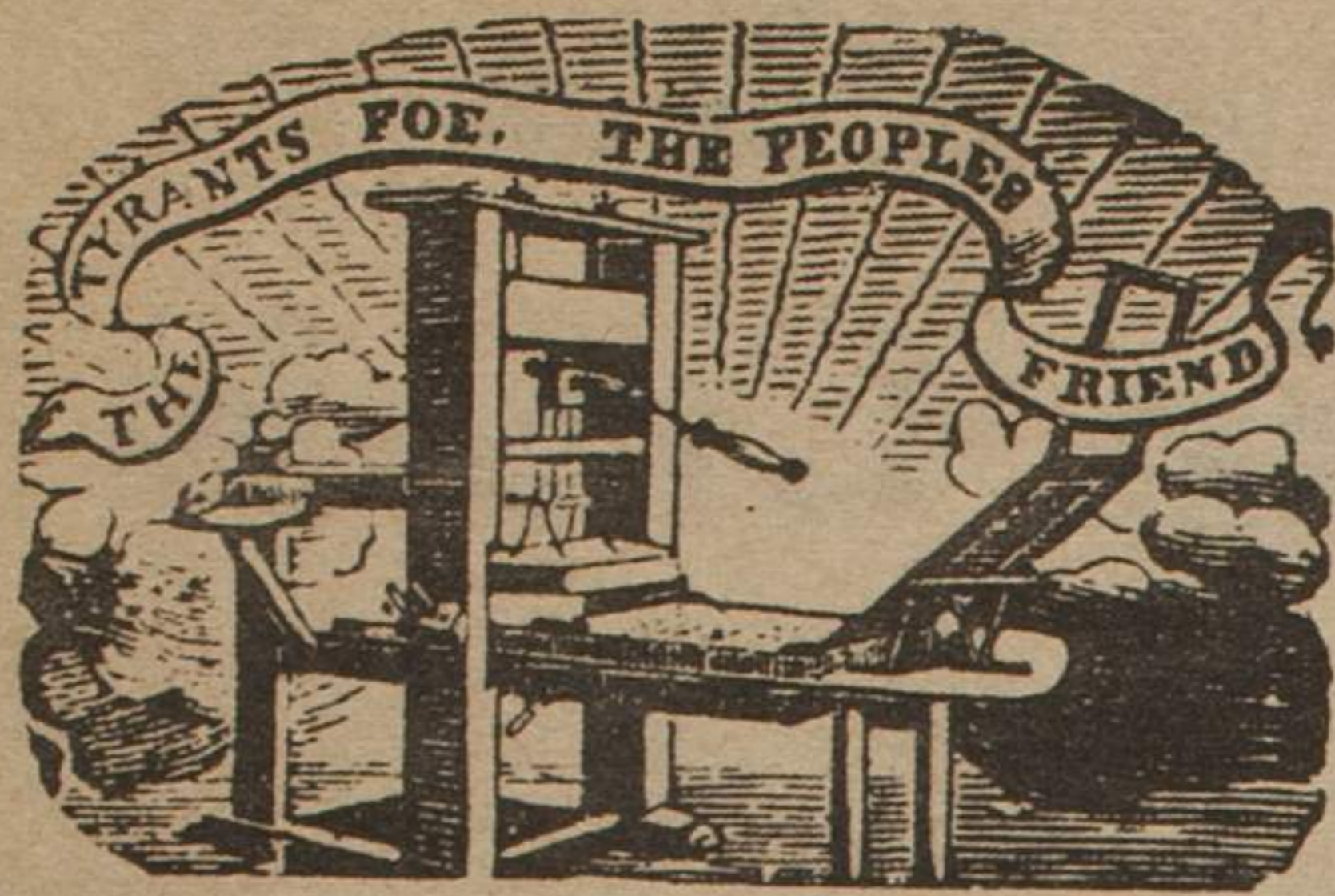


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FEDERAL BUCKS TO SLASH RENTS

BY SUSIE HANNA

After many months of delay, the Lawrence Housing Authority (LHA) is finally moving to start a federally-funded rent subsidy program.

Lawrence qualified for the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) program over a year ago, and since August, \$700,000 has been available to start the five-year program. But until recently, not much action has been taken by the LHA to start the program.

The HUD program, known as Section 8 Existing Housing Assistance, is designed to assist lower-income families who pay more than 25 per cent of their income for housing. The program is available only to families, the handicapped and persons over 62 who meet specified income limits. HUD pays that part of the rent which exceeds 25 per cent of the tenant's income.

The LHA members have said the major roadblock to beginning the program here has been that the "fair market rent" limits set by HUD, were too low for Lawrence, where rents are extraordinarily high due to the University population.

Fair market rent is the maximum a dwelling can be rented for under the program. Currently, the limit for Lawrence is \$158 a month for a one-bedroom unit, and \$189 for a two-bedroom unit; this price includes utilities.

The LHA feared that the program would fail if it was started with the current rent limits because qualified persons wouldn't be able to find qualified housing within the established price range.

To qualify, a dwelling must pass the City Minimum Housing Code inspection.

Prompted by a November decision by the LHA not to proceed with the Section 8 program, a HUD official, James Smith, attended the January LHA meeting to urge the board to pursue the program. He told the LHA that HUD would adjust the rent limits so the program would succeed here.

Board members expressed surprise at this offer. Kay Calvin, chairman, said she hadn't known that HUD would be willing to raise the limits.

A few days after that meeting, Sarah Peters, executive director, made a formal request for a 19 per cent increase and said the LHA intends to ask for an additional increase of 10 per cent.

But the LHA has known that HUD would negotiate the price, according to members of the Lawrence League of Women Voters who've been observing the Authority, and according to a HUD official in Topeka.

The problem in Lawrence, according to Abner Purney, HUD hous-



ing program specialist, has been that "the Authority hasn't been pushing the program."

"I don't think they (LHA) really want to do it," he told PUBLIC NOTICE recently. "They probably think it's too much trouble for the number of units involved"

Asked if the LHA was aware that they could ask for a rent limit increase, he said, "I think so."

"If a housing authority is serious about its problems, we (HUD) will help them any way we can," he said. "But we can't help unless they ask. They have to take the initiative. They've just been sitting on this contract for six months."

Although Lawrence has been offered money for just 40 units, Purney said that more units possibly could be funded in the future. He cited Topeka's program as an example. With nearly all of their 240 units filled, they are now requesting funding for 120 more.

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Justice Tougher to Buy

BY STEVE TREASTER

Utilities could no longer shop around for an understanding judge when appealing Kansas Corporation Commission decisions under legislation introduced recently by State Sen. Arnold Berman (D-Lawrence.)

The KCC is the state regulatory body charged with regulating utilities and Common Carriers. Under current Kansas procedure any KCC decision can be appealed by the utility involved to any district court in the state where that utility serves the public.

As a result, utilities have often turned to District Judges in small, unpopulated counties to overturn the statewide decisions of the KCC, an agency with a staff of experts.

Within the last year, a Linn County District Judge ordered the KCC to reverse a long-standing practice and mandated that utilities must charge their customers for production facilities still under construction. The last KCC decision on Southwestern Bell Telephone rates was reversed by a Cowley County Judge.

The new law would place jurisdiction for KCC appeals in the Kansas Court of Appeals, the second highest court in Kansas. Appeals of that decision could then be made to the Kansas Supreme Court.

300 CANS of BEER on the WALL...

BY BARRY SHALINSKY

Upon entering a duplex on New Jersey Street in East Lawrence, it becomes evident that someone living there likes his beer. Empty beer cans line the ledges along the ceiling in the kitchen, living room, and bedroom. Nearly every color in the spectrum is represented on those ledges, as are scores of brewers from many nations. Three large cans, about a gallon

each, sit atop the television set because they are much too large to fit on a ledge.

The person responsible for these metallic cylinders is Garth Burns, a data analyst at KU's remote sensing lab. He enjoys his avocation as curator of one of the largest collections of beer cans in Lawrence. He finds that it

mixes well with another of his interests: politics. According to Burns, "National political conventions are a good place to collect cans because people often bring their own beer."

Garth started collecting beer cans in about 1972. One indication of how recently Burns started collecting is that all of his cans have tab top openers. Brewers had already abandoned the old style of cans which required a church key opener.

Before getting married, Burns lived in a house with people from both coasts who drank different beers. They had about twenty cans. One night, these people were drinking beer and started listing all the beers they ever drank. This interested Garth in collecting cans. He started his own collection when he moved to New Jersey Street. "At the old house, one of the guys had a 'White label' and a 'Black label'. I never have gotten a 'White label'."

While White label is one of many cans he has never collected, what is even worse for Garth is to lose cans he has. In Louisville, he



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