

HOUSING

Some Extremism Needed

Something new in housing? It's about time.

One of the biggest problems in housing today is the antiquated idea that houses have to look like houses. They don't, unless building codes somewhere are so rigid that experimentation is outlawed.

Houses can look different, and be expensive. They can also look different and be cheap to build, and to buy. Or so they should.

Owning a house in Canada is no easy matter, today, no matter what financing programs or building projects are launched. It still requires a very substantial portion of income to acquire a home, or to rent one.

Surely Canada is at the stage of technology where housing can be designed, and built, that is functional as well as reasonable in cost. And would it be unreasonable to ask that a house cost less than \$10,000?

Builders will be quick to point out that any type of housing can be

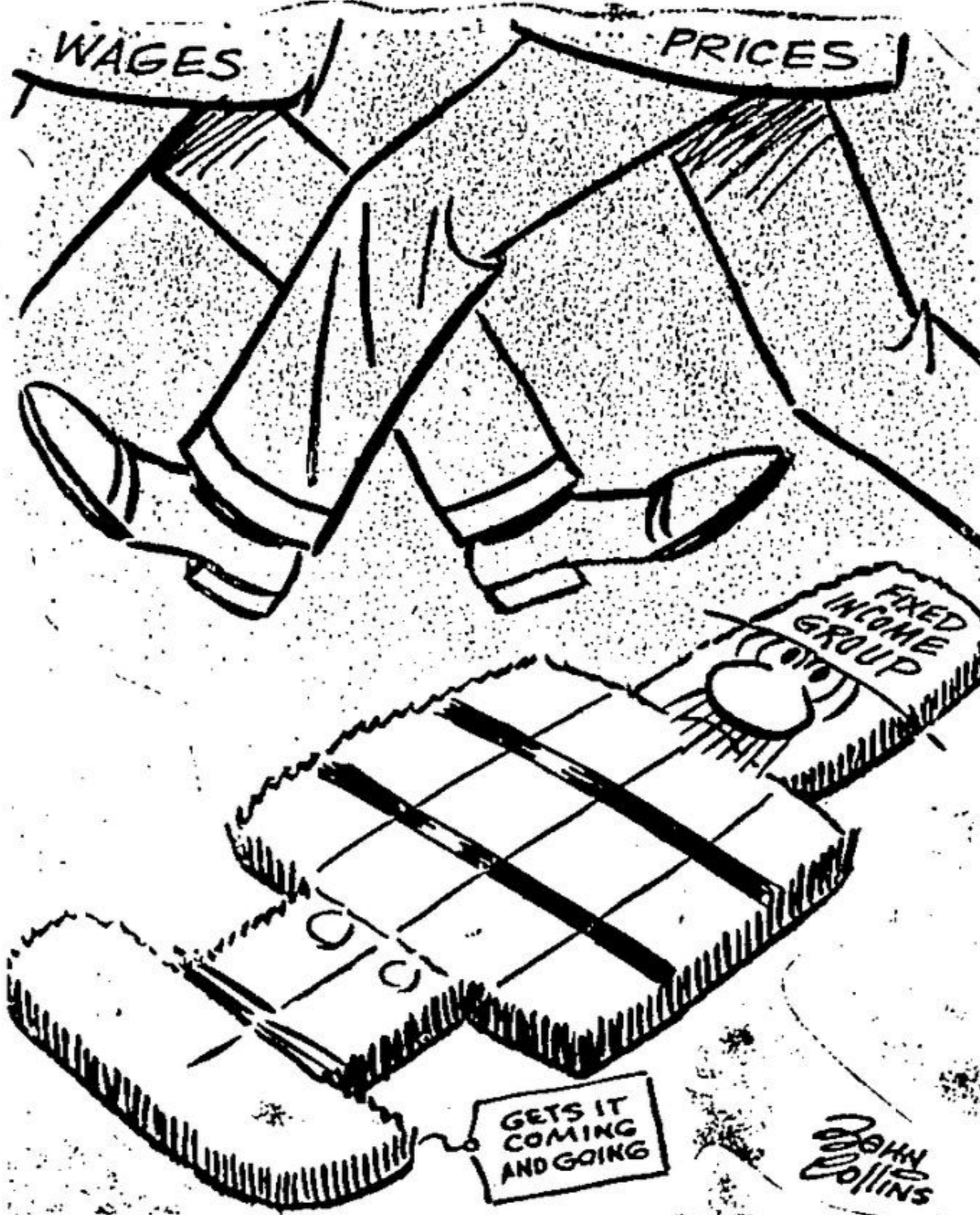
built, but it has to meet laws and regulations. And it has to get public acceptance.

This last point is the great stumbling block.

We expect houses to look like houses. Unfortunately, our concept of what we like in housing is relegated to four walls, a ceiling and a floor. Everything else is incidental. Our concept of housing hasn't changed radically since cave-living ended.

What brings all this to mind? Steel Company of Canada has completed an experimental house in Hamilton that makes extensive use of steel in its construction, from joists to roofing. Here was a marvelous opportunity to design something so different that real progress might have been made in housing design. The Steelco house looks like any other house built of brick and wood; two storeys, attached garage.

Canadians and their concepts are their own worst enemies when it comes to ideas about housing.



THE ECONOMICS DOORMAT

READERS' FORUM

Ulster Visitor Speaks Out

Sir: As a visitor from Northern Ireland, I have been very favorably impressed by the extent of sympathy shown by Canadians for the problems of my country. The natural fascination of the foreigner seems to be enhanced by the fact that coming from Belfast, and being still alive, one must be an almost unique phenomenon.

Noticeable, however, in people's attitudes is an unintentional yet marked degree of condescension. That I should ever wish to return to the city where I have spent all my life has

been greeted in some quarters with an air of surprise. Of course, in the light of the events of the last five years, there would seem to be little to draw one back to the shores of the Emerald Isle, and least of all to the war-torn streets of Belfast.

BILL SMILEY

He Loves The Environs But Hates Coffee Price

Travelling is tiring. It's eleven o'clock in the morning, a perfect day with temperature in the 80's, and any self-respecting tourist should be out stumping around looking at a castle or something.

But my wife is on the bed having a snooze, and I myself am almost relieved that I have to write a column and don't have to get out there and tromp.

About tromping. If you're going to do Britain, bring along your oldest, most comfortable pair of shoes. That noise you hear in the background is the barking of thousands of tourists' dogs as the furriners wearily climb yet another flight of stone steps.

We're in the middle of a heat wave here in Chester. Back home it would be just pleasant beach weather, but the Brits, who suffer stoically through the normal rigours of their windy, rainy Isle, can't take the heat.

This morning's newspaper reports that millions are fleeing to the beaches, that resort hotels are jammed, that the sale of deodorants is booming, and that it is expected there will be ten million cars on the roads this weekend. Thank goodness we're not touring by car.

INADEQUATE Highways are completely inadequate for the volume of traffic. The cars are piled up in hundreds, about twenty feet apart, and when something happens, there are usually four or five cars involved.

An Englishman on the train told me that "The trouble with England is that we never do anything until our backs are to the wall." He was commenting on those same highways, which were built for the traffic of twenty years ago, with no thought of the future.

Well, that's the way they've gone into every war, twenty years behind the times, but they've managed

to muddle through, so far. Speaking of wars, it is driven home to the tourist, through innumerable plaques in castles and cathedrals and other public places, what a tremendous toll of British blood was taken in the two great wars.

One plaque in the Castle in Edinburgh reveals that one Scottish regiment lost nearly 700 officers and almost 8,000 other ranks in World War I.

FASCINATION Edinburgh Castle is a fascinating place. My friend Dick Whittington, a history buff, would go right off his mind and would have to be dragged away by the constabulary when he saw the magnificent displays of ancient and honorable uniforms, coats of arms, weapons and such.

But I think he might turn purple with outrage had he seen us eating Chinese food up there on the great brooding Castle Rock. Even I had an uneasy feeling that William Wallace and Robert the Bruce would be rolling in their graves as I chomped my chow mein on the massive rock where heroic deeds were done and the course of history changed.

Chinese restaurants are common here, but I don't think their food is as good as that in Canada, on the whole. I detect the stuff, but my wife loves it, so I wind up hacking at an egg roll when I'd rather be getting into some Dover sole.

Food prices here are a little lower than at home, but not much. There are thousands of lousy little restaurants, something like our "greasy spoons." Poor food badly cooked, litter everywhere and sloppy service.

CLASSY JOINTS At the other end of the stick are the classy joints: excellent food, beautifully cooked, elegant surroundings and four waiters hovering. But you'd better be well fixed with travellers' cheques if

you wander into one of them. There's not too much in between, though most hotels, even small ones, serve a decent dinner for about four dollars. Bars have sandwiches, and the good pubs have hot and cold lunches.

Something that irritates me no end is the coffee racket. You are served an enormous three-course dinner, so lavish you can eat only half of it. Then the robbers want eleven or twelve pence for a cup of coffee. Even though I'm dying for coffee, and the meal itself was reasonable in price, that bit of Scottish blood in me makes me refuse to pay about thirty cents for a cup of the worst coffee in the world.

That's about the only thing that annoys me, and it's childish on my part. Generally, the English and Scots we've come in contact with are the soul of courtesy and friendliness. We've not had a single unpleasant incident, though I must admit that the natives have a penchant for doing most things backwards.

NO RECEIPT Example. In London, I booked a room in an Edinburgh hotel. I paid the agent the full price for two nights in the hotel. The hotel turned out to be worst one north of the Tweed, but that's another story. O.K. Checking out of the Edinburgh hotel, I asked for a receipt. They wouldn't give me one.

"But I've paid for the room," I expostulated. "Na na, sorry, we canna gie ye a receipt because ye havena gien us any monny." I protested vehemently but came up against the indomitable Scottish spirit that has held the thin red line so many times, and had to retreat in disarray. Up the Scots!

Meanwhile, it's time for a half of bitter and a crack at Chester's Roman Wall. Haven't walked it for thirty years.

Heroines Are Forgotten

History's slim crop of heroines has never been fully harvested and women are often relegated to the "footnote" section of text books.

Most Canadians never heard of doughty Judge Emily Murphy of Edmonton — created first woman judge of the British Empire in 1916. She wrote a book on drug abuses, and led court battles to change the discriminatory BNA Act, making women eligible for the Senate by a 1929 Privy Council decision.

Canadians ignored Toronto's Dr. Emily Stowe, first woman doctor who set up a medical school and hospital for women — opened the University of Toronto for women, fought for provincial fair labor laws for women factory workers —

and organized the country's first woman suffrage movement.

Joan of Arc was mythologized for centuries until transcripts of her Inquisition trial came to light in the nineteen hundreds. Pagan Celtic Queen Martia Proba formulated and collected the laws which, eventually went in the famous Magna Carta.

History at last is being re-written and re-evaluated by feminist scholars. Perhaps the new knowledge will help women feel proud of their past — and strive harder for a brighter and more "contributing" future sharing the limelight they deserve.

(Unchurched Editorials)

Ontario Exports Booming

Preliminary figures for the first half of 1973 confirm earlier forecasts that Ontario is looking towards a record export year, likely topping the \$10 billion mark.

The prediction is based on the rate of increase shown in the first six months this year when Ontario domestic exports climbed to \$5.23 billion, an increase of 19.2 per cent beyond last year's figure of \$4.39 billion.

In the important sector of fully manufactured goods, exports increased by \$525 million over the first six months of 1972 or by 17.5 per cent.

It is anticipated that by the end of the year the province will have exported about \$7 billion worth of fully manufactured goods. The remaining \$3 billion will be composed mostly of food and fabricated materials.

Canada's export boom is also continuing with exports up 23.9 per cent for a total of \$11.7 billion. Ontario's share of this boom is 44.7 per cent, off by 1.7 per cent compared with last year.

The preliminary figures are based on information from Statistics Canada.

Fuel Price Hurts Farm

"The recent increase in the price of fuel will cost Ontario consumers an extra \$5.5 million in grocery money," says Frank Wall, vice-president, Ontario Federation of Agriculture. He referred to the announcement by one oil company that it would increase the cost of gas and diesel oil by two cents a gallon and the price of heating oil by 1.4 cents.

"This added cost is ultimately passed on the consumer in the price of food. It cannot be otherwise."

Farmers spent \$53.5 million on fuel for food production in 1970. In 1973 farmers had to pay \$60 million. "That is an increase of \$6.5 million in just three years. Add the \$2.5 million price increase announced. The resulting hikes in the price of oil and gas have added an extra \$9 million to the farmers' costs of producing food in just three years."

Mr. Wall said that increases to the farmers are multiplied throughout the food chain, thus doubling the cost to consumers. "All suppliers of farm inputs, including machinery, feed and fertilizer, all use gasoline or diesel fuel. So do processors, transporters and wholesalers. The actual cost to consumers will be nearer \$18 million."

"Farmers are enraged by this fourth increase since January of 1973. How can we possibly hope that food prices will level off, when the cost of production continues to climb at this rate?"

"Consumers the media, and the opposition parties have pressured the federal government into putting controls on meat exports. This resulted in a price drop to farmers. Now, they must pressure the government to roll back the farmers' costs or else the cost-price squeeze will drive more and more farmers out of business, he said.

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People Need Blood And It's Up to You

What makes someone give blood? People who have never taken time out to do just that, are usually puzzled by the question. They understand that blood is life, and they can see that without blood hundreds of thousands of people might not be alive this minute. But they often think that because there has never been a critical shortage of blood in Canada in the past that there will never be one in the future.

Some people who have never given blood say they stay away from Red Cross clinics because they are afraid of the needle. Others say they can't afford the time. Others hear the publicity for clinics and read the billboards and newspapers, in fact they always agree with what's said. "Blood is Life" and "There's no substitute for blood." But when it comes time to give, they just don't follow through.

And that's probably one of the biggest differences between people who give blood and people who don't. The people who give say: "It's up to me." The ones who don't remain apprehensive about making the vital decision.

But if you took the time to stop by a blood donor clinic (and you have an opportunity next Monday at the Holy Cross Church auditorium) and talked to one or two of the blood donors, you might discover that many regular blood donors were apprehensive about giving.

more reasoned approach by the men of moderation gets quickly lost in the morass of intolerance and bigotry which is political Ulster. This is hope in the fact that this very destruction is bringing forth a strengthened social and community awareness in some of the worst affected areas of the province. In general this point was very effectively made by David Bleakley, an elected member of the new provincial assembly, in his book Peace in Ulster. Ever since this publication nearly a year ago, new and vigorous movements for peace have arisen in some of the ghetto areas of Belfast and Londonderry: movements which belie the overconfident assumptions of many of our political demagogues.

The Bible says that: "Where there is no vision the people will perish." In Ulster today there is a vision: one not of a united Ireland nor of an Orangeman's paradise, but rather of a peaceful and prosperous land. Only now, after events of the most appalling barbarity, does such a shared vision appear to be gaining ground.

If, despite the terrible agony of the past years, a deeper awareness can arise within the two communities of their really important mutual interests and objectives, then I believe the creation of a new Ulster, one no longer dedicated to the bigotries of the past, to be eminently practicable. In such an expectation I not only return to my country, but I say with pride that the "red hand" of Ulster is etched deeply in my heart.

Christopher J. Burchill RR2

Mobile Home Development Gaining More Acceptance

According to a survey conducted by the Canadian Mobile Home and Travel Trailer Association, one out of every five single-family housing starts in Canada in 1972 involved a mobile home.

The association defines the term "mobile home" as "the ultimate in pre-fabrication being manufactured and furnished completely under controlled conditions at a factory and transported on its own chassis to site for connection to utilities and services, for use with or without a permanent foundation for year-round living."

In 1969 when it became apparent that mobile homes were providing increasingly acceptable housing, the CMHTA joined government to lay down specific standards for the construction of mobile homes.

PERMANENCY Today's mobile home barely resembles the travel trailer used for vacationing. Instead it is a permanent residence which merely retains its mobility. It must be hauled by heavy transport which can cost the owner up to \$100 dollars for 100 miles. Because of such costs, mobile homes though able to be moved about, tend to remain in one place.

During 1972 single width mobile homes shipped in British Columbia far outnumbered other provinces — 5,321 compared to 3,419 in Alberta, 2,974 in Quebec, 1,652 in Ontario, and 1,581 in Nova Scotia. (Statistics from CMHTA). Between December 1971 and December 1972, shipments of Canadian made mobile homes increased from 13,788 to 18,593.

According to the Canadian Consumer Credit Factbook, published jointly by the Canadian Consumer Loan Association and the Federal Council of Sales Finance Companies, the main sources of financing for the purchase of mobile homes are chartered banks and finance companies.

Recently under the National Housing Act, purchasers of mobile homes have become eligible for mortgage credit which may be used for purchase of land and mobile homes together, or for the home itself. Still today, loans from finance companies and chartered banks carry the costs of most mobile homes.

FINANCING In 1972 the CMHTA compared purchases through chartered banks and finance companies. In a pamphlet

put out by the association an example of financing a \$10,000 three bedroom mobile home is given:

Bank A—down payment \$2,500 or 25 per cent; Bank B—down payment \$2,500 or 25 per cent; Finance Company—down payment \$1,500 or 15 per cent. Bank A—principal to be repaid monthly with interest at 12 per cent; Bank B—principal to be repaid monthly with interest at 10.81 per cent; Finance Company—principal to be repaid monthly with interest at 13.25 per cent.

It would appear that chartered banks charge less in interest per year. But on the other hand, their down payment requirements are far higher (10 per cent) than finance companies.

The largest age group living in mobile homes involves those 45 years and older (36 per cent) and the largest occupation group has

as its male family head skilled or unskilled labor (50 per cent). By income, the largest users of mobile homes are in the \$5,000 to \$7,500 income group (32 per cent). These statistics are based on a 1970 survey.

Today, approximately 350,000 people live in mobile homes in Canada, with a growth rate of approximately 60,000 per year. The Canadian Consumer Credit Factbook points out that as municipalities change their attitudes toward permanent trailer parks, sales of mobile homes are expected to rise sharply.

As stated in the Factbook: "In the future, sales of mobile homes are expected to increase dramatically as the ranks of typical purchasers — young marrieds and retired couples — are augmented by lower income groups seeking relatively less expensive accommodation."

Ontario Scene

Davis Government More Aggressive



by DON O'Hearn Queen's Park Bureau Of The Herald TORONTO—There have been indications that from now on we may be watching a more aggressive Davis Government.

The signs have come from various directions. For example there was consumer and commercial affairs minister John Clement's quick and fairly tough action on food prices.

Then Darcy McKeough in his energy post has been criticizing oil companies in language not too often heard about private companies from a minister of the Crown.

But probably the strongest impressions have been coming from the premier himself.

Mr. Davis has been showing very definite signs of toughening up. He has been becoming more aggressive in his criticism. And not only of the opposition but also of his own party.

This was on display at seminars organized here recently by the Young PCs. The premier told them they would have to do a better job of communication.

As a message this was not entirely new. But the intensity with which the premier pushed it this time was setting a new tone. And the general outlook would be that we might have some more stirring times in the future.

EDUCATIONAL CAMPAIGN? A main point of the premier, however, one has to wonder about.

This is his call for the party to stress the progressive steps of his government. He is asking workers to do a big educational job for it and for his leadership.

Experience would tend to show that any such educational campaign has to originate at the top and be led with force from there.

This is the story in elections. If the leader is battling the lower echelons tend to pick up his spirit and drive-and faith.

But it seems that left on their own they can't carry a ball very successfully.

PHIL SIDBALL MAYOR

you see that someday, people you love may need blood, you'll probably understand. Hopefully, you'll do something to help. What makes someone give blood? The answer to that question varies with the individual. The important thing is that people give generously. People who give blood believe in life, and pass it on. What about you?