

O.H.C. housing program 20 year growth

Ontario Housing Corporation, the largest social housing agency in Canada, celebrates its 20th anniversary this month.

The corporation, which began in 1964 with a small portfolio of social housing, has grown in two decades to become a \$3.3 billion enterprise, providing shelter for more than 250,000 people across Ontario.

"Assisted housing has become one of the largest and most important social programs in the province," OHC chairman Allan Moses said.

"In 1984, OHC subsidizes one in every 10 rental households in Ontario, and one in every seven rental households in most of our major cities.

"That kind of growth in just 20 years is unpre-

cedented. When you consider that OHC has helped over half a million people with their housing, that is a substantial commitment by the people of Ontario to house the less fortunate in our province."

Ontario Housing Corporation was created in August, 1964 to administer social housing in the province. The new corporation was given control over a small portfolio of social housing in existence at the time -- about 6,200 units -- and a mandate to construct new social housing where requested by a local municipal council.

In the second half of the 1960's, OHC expanded dramatically, constructing as many as 10,000 new social housing units a year in municipalities across Ontario. The corporation

regularly accounted for more than 90 per cent of all public housing construction in Canada during this period, and accounted for more than 10 per cent of all housing starts of all kinds in Ontario.

At the same time, OHC embarked on a number of new initiatives to provide housing assistance in other areas.

In 1966, the shortage of student housing at colleges and universities across Ontario prompted the formation of OHC's student housing wing, Ontario Student Housing Corporation. During the late '60s and early '70s, OSHC built more than \$90 million worth of student residences -- containing some 12,000 beds -- at virtually every major university in the province.

In 1967, the high price of land brought about the formation of OHC's H.O.M.E. Plan -- Home Ownership Made Easy for moderate-income families. Under the plan, OHC created subdivisions where a family could obtain a serviced lot suitable for construction of a home.

The plan allowed homeowners to lease their lot from OHC, and receive a 50-year, interest-free loan for part of the cost. In a 10 year period, OHC's H.O.M.E. Plan enabled 25,000 families in Ontario to obtain their first home.

In 1970, OHC entered the infant condominium market in Ontario with a mandate to popularize the concept in the province. Through its Condominium Loan Program, OHC subsequently became the largest lender of mortgage money for condominium construction in Canada. Within a four-year period, OHC triggered the development of 15,000 condo-

miniums in Ontario, after which the condominium concept went on to thrive by itself.

Meanwhile, OHC's social housing portfolio continued to expand at a rapid pace. By 1974, the corporation's 10th anniversary, OHC's initial stock of 6,200 social housing units had grown to 64,869 units -- more than 10 times the start-up portfolio.

The number of units subsidized by OHC nearly doubled during its second decade - from 64,000 units in 1974 to 115,000 in 1984.

The corporation achieved this assistance through a number of new housing initiatives, primarily involving rent supplement programs, in which OHC subsidized tenants in buildings not owned by the corporation.

Today, OHC provides housing for families with dependent children, senior citizens, physically-handicapped and mentally-retarded persons.

OHC housing is assigned on the basis of need, with the neediest applicant receiving the first available unit. A point scale is used to determine need, with applicants receiving points in a number of categories -- level of income, number of dependants, health factors and so forth.

Tenants in OHC housing pay rent based on their incomes, and most tenants pay about 25 per cent of their income in rent. As this does not cover the full cost of each unit, the balance is paid by OHC in the form of a rent subsidy. Total OHC rent subsidies -- about \$6 million a week in 1984 -- are funded on a 50:50 basis by the federal and provincial governments.

In 1984, social housing across Ontario is administered by a network of 450 volunteers

Ministry of Education Student Health Support Services

The province's school boards and the Ministry of Health will be responsible for providing health support services to students who require such services during the school day, Education Minister Dr. Bette Stephenson and Health Minister Keith Norton announced last week.

The Home Care program of the Ministry of Health will provide a wide variety of health support services to students including the injection of prescribed medication, catheterization and tube feeding.

The school boards will

be responsible for the administration of oral medication to students when prescribed as essential to the child's participation in school programs and for such assistance to physically disabled students as lifting, help with mobility and feeding.

The Ministry of Community and Social Services will continue to provide health support services in children's residential care and treatment centres.

The Ministers said that the action was taken after school board personnel, parents and rep-

resentatives of local agencies expressed concern regarding the provision of health support services to school-age children. As a result of a study of the matter the government decided that the provision of such services would be the responsibility of the school boards, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Community and Social Services.

Dr. Stephenson said that provision of the services is to begin this September with the provision of full services by September 1985.

Northern Affairs -

FREE DRUGS

by JANE E. GREER

Residents of Ontario 65 years of age or older, who are receiving an Old Age Security Pension, are entitled to free prescription drugs if the drug is listed in the Ontario Drug Formulary and it is obtained in Ontario.

This means that if you are a pensioner living in Ontario and have started to receive your Old Age Security pension, you should always ask the pharmacist if a drug prescribed by your doctor is covered by the plan.

In order to obtain drugs free under this plan you show your pharmacist your Ontario senior citizen's privilege card when you get a drug prescription filled. This plastic card, the size of a credit card, with your name and number on it, is sent to you automatically about six weeks after you receive your first Old Age

Security pension cheque.

If you have not received your card yet and you are receiving your Old Age Security pension, you can apply for a card by writing to: Ontario Drug Benefit, Ministry of Health, P.O. Box 78, Kingston, Ontario K7L 5K2 or by contacting your Northern Affairs office. As well, if you have paid for a prescription covered under the plan you can apply for a reimbursement of the money paid as long as the drug is listed in the Ontario Drug Formulary.

It is a good idea to tell your doctor and your dentist that you are eligible for the drug benefit so they will know you can get drugs listed in the Ontario Drug Formulary at no charge. This will help them in prescribing for you.

For this and other information on government programs and services contact your nearest Northern Affairs Office located on the lower floor of the Peninsula Building in Marathon, phone 229-1153 or for areas outside of Marathon ask your telephone operator for Zenith 33160.

Taking Care of Business

The Northwestern Ontario Associated Chambers of Commerce will be "Taking Care of Business" in Dryden, September 28, 29, 30 at the association's 49th Annual Convention.

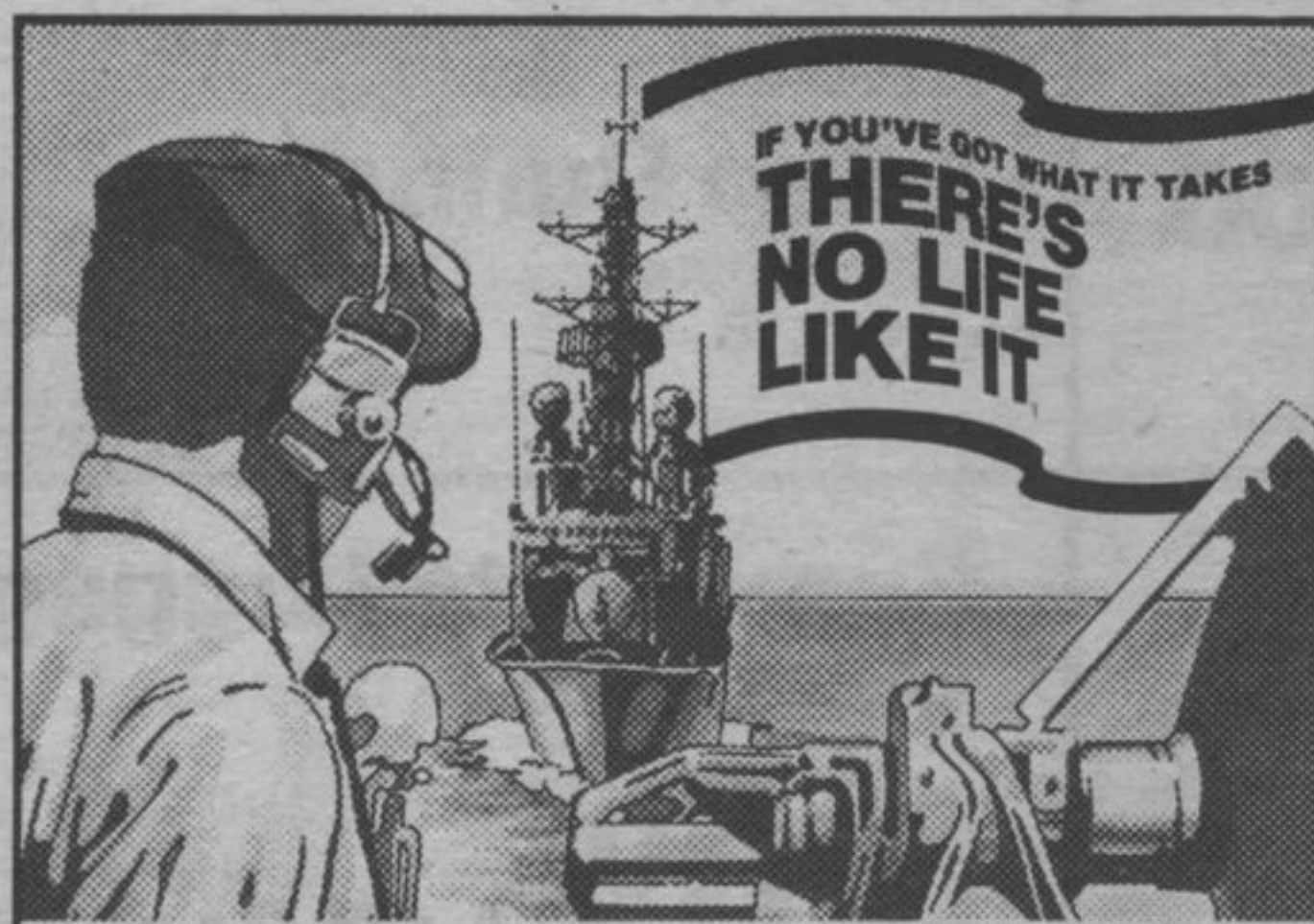
N.O.A.C.C. President, Bob Mapledoram, of Thunder Bay recently called on member chambers to submit resolutions of concern to business in the Northwest. Resolutions will be debated in open forum and those that are accept-

able to all delegates, will be presented to the provincial cabinet later this year.

Speakers at the convention will include Northern Affairs Minister Leo Bernier, as well as the President of the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce, Will Klein.

The Northwestern Ontario Associated Chamber of Commerce represents business from White River to the Manitoba border.

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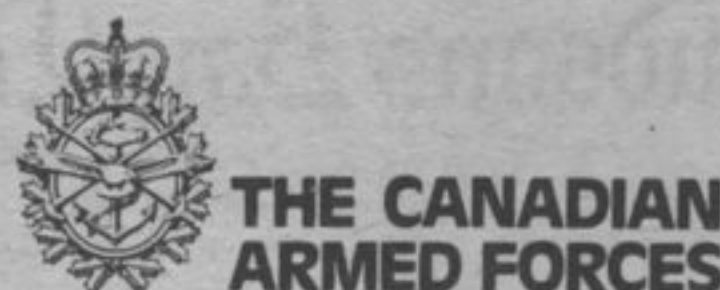


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