

### Atlantic provinces endorse home warranty plan

A press release issued in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island on November 10, during a meeting of ministers responsible for housing in the Atlantic provinces, stated that provincial ministers and officials responsible for consumer affairs and housing in the Atlantic provinces (P.E.I., Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Newfoundland) met in Charlottetown with the executive of the new home certification program of the Atlantic provinces to review progress of the new home warranty plan, which was implemented recently.

The new home certification program is administered by a non-profit corporation formed by the housing industry of the Atlantic region.

The governments of the Atlantic provinces endorse this program, which provides consumer protection for new home buyers, by ensuring the builders registered under the plan build homes to the national building code standard. Under the program, the new home buyer receives a one-year warranty against any defects in workmanship or materials, plus four years insurance coverage against any major structural defects.

Buyers are also protected against the loss of their deposit through bankruptcy or fraud to a maximum of \$20,000.

The program now has offices in four Atlantic provinces and warranties are being issued to purchasers of new homes covered by the plan.

The chairman of the meeting, Bennett Campbell of P.E.I., expressed satisfaction with the progress made to date and encourages new home purchasers to consider the protection offered under this plan.

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### News briefs

- Olive Diefenbaker, wife of former Prime Minister John Diefenbaker, died in Ottawa on December 22. She was 74 years old. Mrs. Diefenbaker, who had been released from hospital to spend Christmas at home, had been suffering for the past three months from a heart ailment. Mr. and Mrs. Diefenbaker celebrated their twenty-third wedding anniversary on December 8. They had both been married previously.
- Effective December 22, the bank rate was decreased to 8½ per cent, the second reduction in a month. A drop in the bank rate is generally followed by a decrease in interest rates on consumer loans, mortgages and financial institutions.
- The consumer price index rose at an annual rate of 5.6 per cent in November, the smallest annual increase in the cost of living in nearly four years.
- Kitimat Pipe Line Ltd. of Calgary, Alberta, has made an application to the National Energy Board to build a 753-mile oil pipeline at a cost of \$494 million to carry oil from Alaska to refineries in the northern United States. If Government approval were given by July, start-up is expected in April 1979, when 300,000 barrels of crude oil a day would be delivered to Kitimat by tanker then moved to refineries in Minnesota, Wisconsin, the Dakotas and Montana. A maximum of 500,000 barrels a day is estimated by 1985.
- Researchers at Montreal's Clinical Research Institute have discovered that the human pituitary gland produces a pain-killing substance similar to morphine. Dr. Michel Chrétien, head of the research team, said the findings, which were presented to a special session of the New York Academy of Sciences recently, could explain why some people seem to suffer pain more than others.
- A \$125-million Manitoba Hydro debenture issue, guaranteed by the province of Manitoba was sold to the United States last month. The 30-year issue, dated December 1, carried an interest coupon of 8 5/8 per cent, and was sold at 99.25 to yield the investor 8.70 per cent. It is callable, at the option of Manitoba Hydro, after 18 years.
- The Law Reform Commission of Canada is to begin a broad investigation into the fundamental questions of

life and death. An official said the study, which would begin with the issue of euthanasia, may also include abortion. One of the objects is to propose to Parliament a legal definition of where life begins and ends.

■ Canada sent a gift of 500 pure bred Holstein-Friesian calves to India last month, from 100 farms in Ontario and Quebec. A \$500,000-contract from the Canadian International Development Agency paid for the project.

■ November trade figures continued a four-month decline and slipped into a deficit of \$104 million owing to reduced exports and higher imports. November exports declined for the third consecutive month, totalling \$2,985 million or 4.5 percent less than October's figure and 13 percent below that of August. Imports rose by 5 percent to \$3,089 million.

■ On behalf of its members, the Public Service Alliance donated, for the seventh consecutive year, the money usually spent on Christmas cards to the Canadian Save the Children Fund to help support four needy children. This year's recipients were in Sierra Leone; Rome; Istanbul; and Busan, Republic of Korea.

■ For the first time, the United States Department of the Interior presented its highest civilian award to a Canadian. John I. Nicol, Director General Parks Canada, received the Conservation Service Award at the 44th Annual Honours Convocation in Washington, December 7. The citation reads "In recognition of his accomplishments and dynamic leadership in stimulating close relationships between Canada and the United States in the field of national park management."

■ A John Deutsch Memorial for the Study of Economic Policy has been established for scholarships and to put on work shops and conferences, to perpetuate the memory of John James Deutsch, fourteen principal of Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, who died in March.

■ A total of 37,000 young Manitobans completed bicycle safety courses last summer bringing the total to about 84,000 trained during the past four years. The course, which lasts a week, provides young cyclists with theory and practical instruction, presentation of films on safety, bike check and a "bike rodeo".