

Encounter

Where will we live?

I do not claim to be an expert on development. In fact I know very little about servicing a lot of land, excavating, laying foundations and the many other essential phases of building a home.

Nor do I have training in high financing or how costs of developments, mortgage rates etc are figured out. Or how the investor calculates his fair return on his investment. All of these details are beyond my education limit.

But the most important thing right now is that I am not a professional journalist and I am just trying to make the thoughts of my family and many other families like us known to the people that have the power to make the changes that **MUST BE MADE**.

One thing I do know is the frustration of trying to find a good home for my family. A home that is bright, clean, in good repair, not in a slum ghetto and most of all at a rent that we can afford. But like many people across Canada in this situation we are used as political footballs and given all kinds of promises and no action.

For many years this City has been encouraging all forms of industry to come to this area. No

by C. D. Beattie

plans were ever made for the people that would come as a result of the industry. Every one knows that if you expand you must plan, but no plans were included for where the people would live. We also have one of the largest concentrations of Armed Forces in this area, but there is nowhere near the amount of PMQ'S needed to house all the families. This was where the Federal Government has not made enough plans. As a result not only the natives of this area find it hard to find a home but the serviceman too.

The rentals charged in most cases are too high compared to the units condition. But the most important fact is that the rentals are too high for the per capita income of the people.

So what choice does a man have? Not many!

He could go into Public Housing (if there was a unit empty) But he then becomes "a second class



The city is schizophrenic

citizen unable too keep up with todays affluent society. Where he would be penalized for trying to get ahead. So he tries moonlighting to get extra food, clothes or furniture. Big Brother finds out and up goes his rent. (In some cases as high as 2/3 of what his nett extra pay is). He loses his pride, his individuality, his dignity and eventually his incentive to get ahead. He gives up trying and ends up another person on Welfare. We are told the sociologists don't approve of big public housing projects, well neither do the people living in them. They are the ones that are treated like lepers and suffer from the ghetto stigma. They are the ones that have the mental torment of family tension and in some cases the eventual marriage breakdown and separation that often follows.

As another choice he can live in a sardine can type flat, for a rental of \$110.00 and up (if he can find one). Where as a tenant he has even less rights than in public housing. With no luxuries such as a backyard or a clothes line or cupboards or floor covering on the floors.

Or, he can become prey, for one of our many Slum Lords or a better title "Vulture Landlords". And live in a place crawling with bugs, cockroaches, rats and other choice extras. Plus no heat or in some cases no toilet that works. Beside this in some cases the rent is higher than in our luxury buildings. They say a man's home is his castle but in this case it is his hall.

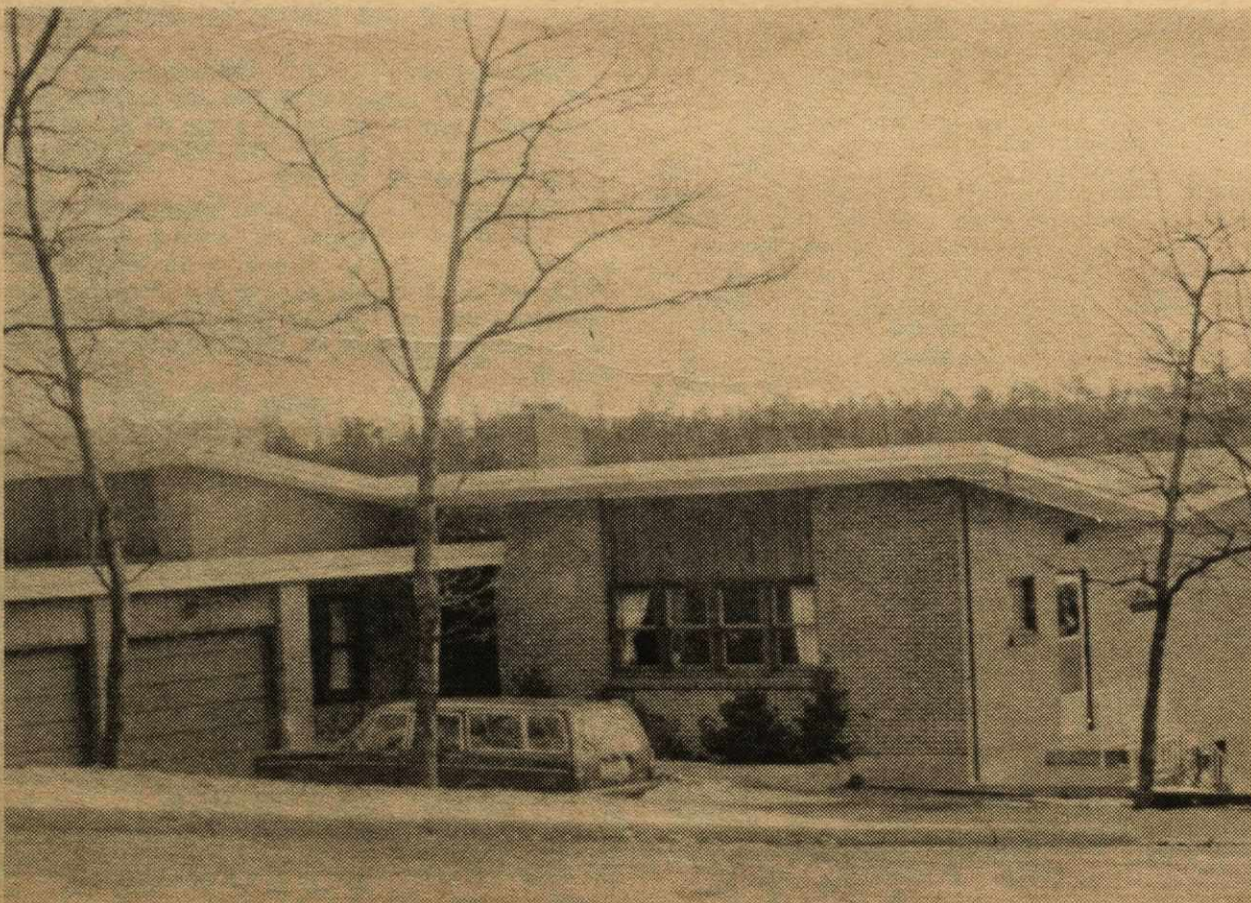
If he is fortunate enough to make over \$8,000.00 a year he can live in one of the new plush apartment projects that are being planned. With wall to wall comfort. But how many men in this area makes over \$8,000.00 a year.

So what happens, the wife has to go to work. On the average womens salary in this area by the time she has deductions at source, cost of baby-sitters etc taken off she is lucky to clear \$100.00 a month. There is nothing wrong with a woman going to work in some cases the home gains other than by dollars and cents. But in the City of Halifax there are not enough capable women to fullfill the role of temporary mother to the children. Nor is there nearly enough good nursery or day care facilities. What we need is some form of subsidy so that the owners of the nursery can still make a profit but at the same time the family that is trying to get ahead doesn't pay all of the extra pay on care of the children and rent. A lot of women myself included would willingly go to work if we were certain that our children were being well cared for and loved in our absence.

It is the right not the privilege of every man woman and child to have a home that he can feel security in and be proud of.

You can call in all the consultants and experts to make their plans but let the unskilled or the non expert be heard when he is begging for the right to provide a decent home for his family at a price he can afford on our sub-standard NS wages.

Please planners remember this man. He may be the one who cleaned your hospital room, picked up your garbage, sweeps your streets or drives the bus that took you to the office. He is a vital part of this city too. So why not make plans with him in mind.



The contradictions are everywhere