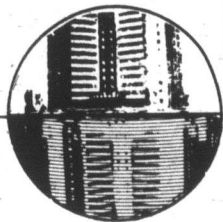


tenant talk



By MIKE SOLOMON

More and more every year, we ordinary people - known technically as "consumers" - are faced with barrages of new selling techniques and often we get bowled over or lose out on what at first seemed a darned good buy.

More and more it's being drummed home, usually by unfortunate experience, that it is best to look before you leap. Seems like a good resolution to hang on to in 1971.

Of inestimable value in this quest is a new series of pamphlets designed to help consumers make wise buying decisions.

The pamphlets, produced by the Ontario Department of Financial and Commercial Affairs, are entitled "Helping the Consumer", "Before You Buy", "Buying a Used Car" and "Buying Real Estate". They are free.

Each describes suggested procedures to follow and outlines the legal rights and responsibilities of both the consumer and the seller. Yes, consumers have rights, too!

The purpose of the pamphlets is to provide information to help us avoid the most common pitfalls that have come to the department's attention since its formation as a consumer protection force in 1966.

"Helping the Consumer" lists the various services available within the department, and "Before You Buy" details the consumer's rights and obligations in credit buying. The other two outline steps the consumer should take before buying a used car or real estate.

The pamphlets, available from the department's information officer at 555 Yonge St., Toronto, provide good guides on how not to get stung in 1971!

CONTRACTS

The department's Consumer Protection Bureau reminds us all that to protect ourselves any understanding between us and the seller must be clearly spelled out in contracts.

A dispute recently taken up by the Bureau involved a couple who said a merchant they contracted to install broadloom refused to return their deposit even though he was unable to install the rug as previously arranged.

The couple had signed a contract to buy broadloom for their home and put down a deposit of \$100.

The retailer agreed to install the broadloom on a specified date (agreed on by both parties) to coincide with the couple's vacation.

The merchant failed to deliver as arranged and the couple asked for a refund of the \$100 deposit. The retailer refused to refund the deposit in full, retaining part of the money "for services rendered".

However, the bureau pointed out that because the installation date had been written into the contract, it became a condition of sale and was therefore binding on the merchant.

The Consumer Protection Act clearly defines what is required in a contract of sale. The bureau was able to negotiate a complete refund of the deposit as the merchant was unable to fulfill his part of the contract.

Another couple of pointers:

- Beware of enticing advertisements that appear to offer a lot in exchange for little in the way of money.

COMPARISON SHOPPING

- Do comparison shopping to establish that you are getting value for your money.

That way we stand a chance of having a Happy New Year.

By the way, a series of public hearings on franchising will be held in the Huron Room on the second floor of the governmental Macdonald Building on Wellesley St., Toronto, Jan. 18, 19 and 20 and briefs, letters and oral presentations will be welcomed by the organizing committee.

Franchising is a system in which one person (a franchisor) authorizes another person (a franchisee) to distribute goods or services under a marketing plan devised by the franchisor.

Under the franchise plan, the franchisee uses the franchisor's trade mark or other commercial symbol and maintains practises outlined in the franchise agreement.

If you want to find out more about it or to make some kind of presentation to the committee, contact Mrs. D.A. Staff, Department of Financial and Commercial Affairs, 555 Yonge St., Toronto, 5, in writing, or phone 365-5151. Written submissions should be filed in five copies and should be in as early as possible.

RCMP officer charged in evidence money theft

An RCMP Corporal will appear in Brampton Court House Jan 6, to face a charge involving the theft of approximately \$18,000 which was being used as evidence in a trial two weeks ago.

Elden Delaney Davie, 29, of Bay Ridges, Ontario, will be arraigned on a charge of theft over \$50.

The charge was laid by the Ontario Provincial Police

following a week-long investigation by Inspector Dan Higley.

Inspector Higley had been called in to investigate the disappearance of the money which was being used in a conspiracy trial.

Insp. Higley told The News his department had laid the charge Tuesday at 5 p.m. but said there could be no further information until Davie's trial.

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OPEN SUNDAY, JAN. 3 FROM 1 P.M. TO 6 P.M. (For viewing only)

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