

tor. He was artistic director of the Stratford Festival from 1967 to 1974 and has acted and directed in productions for television.

In 1960 he received an honorary degree from McGill University, and has also won the Canadian Drama Award, the \$50,000 Royal Bank Award (1974), and the Molson Award for promotion of better understanding between the French and English cultures in Canada.

Mr. Gascon was appointed an officer of the Order of Canada in 1967, and was recently elevated to Companion.

Rentals offer proves popular

Builders have submitted more than 250 proposals to build 23,000 units of rental housing in response to the Federal Government's invitation for proposals under the Accelerated Rental Housing Program, Urban Affairs Minister Barney Danson announced recently.

The proposals would require some \$550 million, more than 2.5 times the \$200 million offered by Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), which offered financing at 8 percent interest to builders who would construct modest accommodation for rental at agreed rates.

"The response has been absolutely overwhelming," Mr. Danson said. "We will be screening these proposals to select those which can best serve people's needs but, obviously, there are going to be many good proposals which we will not be able to finance with our present budget. It may be that we can find some more money but I am also hopeful that some of these projects will be taken up by private lenders. The recent amendments to the National Housing Act make available interest-reducing annual grants of up to \$600 per unit for builders who can get an NHA-mortgage from an ap-

Housing starts, apartment vacancies

Housing starts during May rose to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 212,700 dwelling units for all areas of Canada, according to preliminary figures issued by Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC). The final April rate was 186,100.

Actual starts in urban areas in May were 16,897, a decrease of 15 per cent from the 19,880 recorded in May of last year. During the first five months of 1975, starts totalled 47,193, compared to 71,488 a year ago.

Starts of single detached dwellings during May totalled 8,925, virtually no change from May 1974. Starts for multiple dwellings were down 26 per cent to 7,972, from those of May a year ago.

Apartment vacancy survey

A CMHC survey shows that the average vacancy rate for privately-initiated apartments in 22 metropolitan areas in April was unchanged from that of December 1974, at 1.2 per cent. The survey excludes units complete within the last six months.

The tightest market conditions for rented apartments were in Regina, Saskatchewan, with 0.1 per cent, followed by Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, and Vancouver, British Columbia, at 0.2 per cent, Victoria, British Columbia, (0.3); Saint John, New Brunswick, (0.4); St. John's, Newfoundland, (0.5); Thunder Bay, Ontario, (0.7); and Edmonton, Alberta, (0.8).

Most of the vacancies were in St. Catharines-Niagara (3.4); Windsor (3.2); London (3.1), and Kitchener (3.9), all in Ontario.

proved lender and are willing to enter an agreement with CMHC about rents."

Proposals were received from all provinces and the Northwest Territories.

The biggest response was from Toronto, where builders submitted proposals involving more than \$143 million. Montreal proposals amounted to almost \$80 million, Winnipeg and Edmonton about \$29 million, Calgary and Vancouver over \$8 million, Halifax, \$14 million, St. John's, Newfoundland and Saint John, New Brunswick, more than \$11 million.

Instant photos of sea ice may aid northern shipping

Shipping in far northern Canadian waters even at the best of times is a dangerous exercise. Heavy pack ice forces captains of many supply ships and other vessels to work between mid-August and the end of September, and even then the ice presents a formidable obstacle.

Some day, dedicated satellite channels may be used to flash photos pinpointing the location of sea ice to the captains of ships in the Arctic. The instant photos will enable them to plot the daily courses that will best steer them through the floes.

Such new services, however, are probably still a few years off. And not everyone can afford to lug a satellite "dish" around.

Meantime, it may be possible to use HF radio to relay, *via* facsimile machines, photos of sea ice snapped by the Earth Resources Technology Satellite (ERTS) to ships and other stations in the Arctic.

At the request of the Canada Centre for Remote Sensing of the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, staff members of CRC's radio-environment program broadcast a total of 107 pictures, between August 15 and September 25 last, using standard facsimile gear similar to that in weather and newspaper offices.

The geophysical Motor Vessels *Carino* and *Explorer* participated in the experiments, receiving pictures relayed *via* CRC HF radio during telephone links between CRC and the ERTS ground station at Prince Albert, Saskatchewan.

Propagation conditions were disturbed, as they often can be in the North, for much of the time. Despite this problem and delays caused by late delivery of receiving equipment, Dr. J.S. Belrose, director, Radio Propagation Laboratory, believes "we can get good quality pictures with the same reliability as that of HF voice — about 80 to 90 per cent — into the North, on a more or less regular basis". He foresees a bright future for facsimile transmission to the North *via* HF, particularly since inexpensive radio-facsimile installations could be left on continuously for repeat transmissions under varying propagation conditions.

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