

The Willamina Times

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What Kind of a Deal Is the Housing Proposition?

Both the Willamina and Sheridan housing propositions are practically ready for occupancy but the new houses are tenantless. In Willamina it is almost a year since the announcement was made that because Willamina was a highly industrial community, manufacturing very essential war materials, it had been granted a housing project, whereby 20 new homes would be constructed at once for relieving the acute shortage of homes for workers.

Late in the fall, actual construction was begun and the construction group as well as the Housing Authority in Portland promised that these new homes would be available for rent about the first of the year. This writer called up Mr. Folger Johnson, chief of the housing administration in Portland, who stated that these homes would be for rent and were being built under special authority whereby critical materials would be released by the war department and proper priorities for the release of this material extended to the builder. Mr. Johnson also hastened to add that the project was built by private capital but under government guarantee.

Now Willamina's houses, after long weary months of spasmodic spurts of construction work, are ready for occupancy, although grounds and surroundings are still in deplorable condition and wood sheds non-existent and garages only a slab of concrete. But the interior of the homes are tenable and now the announcement is made that the homes are not for rent but only for sale and at \$5250 for the units without basements and \$5750 for those with basements.

Now, it may be that the public has nothing to say about a "private housing project" and it may be that they might have plenty to say. In Outer Mongolia, that this writer once referred to, where we like to talk of the inhabitants as half civilized, they take officials who arrange this kind of boon-doggery out and set them on their knees and have

them lean over conveniently for the boy with the battle axe.

That for the officials, but what about a bunch of people who stand for that kind of dam-foolishness? The priorities and the release of vital materials to a special group constitutes a vital right, given up by the public, NOT for some private person or group to make a special bunch of money (or is it), but to obtain something which will further the war effort. As such the public and every citizen has the right to ask the Housing Administration in Washington and in Portland, what the idea is. Willamina's housing project has not aided the war effort. It has, if possible, retarded it.

The homes are almost a stigma on the community. They will remain through the years as a monument to the greed of private groups and the bungling of public officials. They are in no manner or under any circumstances worth the tremendous prices asked for them, slightly more than half the money would be a good price, in the opinion of this writer, and if they can be sold at all, it will be because the housing situation is acute and the houses are ready and vacant.

And under such circumstances, public authority stands by to aid and assist private enterprise in bludgeoning from the public, profits that are out of line and oppressive.

This is exactly as the matter appears today and if any of the statements and charges made are not true, the Times will gladly rectify any such statements.

WILLAMINA CIVIC CLUB TO MEET SEPTEMBER 28 AT REBEKAH HALL

The Willamina Civic Club will meet Thursday, September 28th, at two o'clock at the Rebekah hall. This will be the first meeting of the club year.

Entertainment for the after-



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noon will be provided; Mrs. Esther Fawc giving the history of Willamina and the Civic Club and a vocal solo by Dr. Victor E. Johnson. Refreshments will be served by the executive board and officers.

The club president, Mrs. Ha-

zei Olson, reports an active club year has been planned, highlighted by Red Cross work.

All ladies of the community are invited to attend this meeting.

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4 We serve more military meals to personnel of the armed forces than any other two U. S. railroads combined. And, of course, service men and women have first call on our restricted ration points.



5 Southern Pacific crosses innumerable mountain ranges, and has to climb more major summits than any other U. S. railroad. It takes more locomotives to pull trains up steep mountain grades.



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S-P

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