

LOOKING FOR A PLACE TO LIVE

BY ROBERT E. SEGAL

Just before closing shop in December, our Senators drove a nail in the coffin of an important housing bill which had passed the House. The proposal consisted of amendments to the Civil Rights Act of 1968.

Had the proposal carried, it would have given authority to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to investigate housing bias complaints, then bring those accused before administrative law judges named by the U.S. Department of Justice.

Fifty - four Senators tried to break a filibuster impeding passage of the law. But six more votes needed to make the required three-fifths majority could not be found.

Now a new political day has dawned. And those dismayed over continuing discrimination in housing must put their trust in Senate Majority Leader Howard Baker. Why? Because as the December shadows of defeat fell in Washington Senator Baker pledged to work for passage of a housing anti - bias bill in 1981.

The need for a new legislative tool for equal opportunity in housing is related closely to the deepening crisis in housing generally. How many developers and contractors can pay current swollen interest rates to raise the capital for building even a minimum of the number of new homes desperately needed? Who will come forward to rescue elderly widows faced with the choice of buying expensive condominiums or seeking new rental housing in a highly competitive market? Whence shall come geniuses to salvage the public wrecks so visible on the urban landscape?

When a HUD 37 - member panel placed its final, gloomy report on housing before the public a few weeks ago, one member of the panel warned that the shortage of homes facing America in the 1980s may become "the Vietnam of this decade." That report was largely concerned with the economics of the problem -- rent controls, loans, zoning laws, regulations governing lot sizes, rules applying to mobile homes, and related issues.

What's to be done then? Well, the President's Commission for A National Agenda For the Eighties has fascinating advice: The conclusion of some on that study group is that inasmuch as the older cities in Northeast and Midwest America are decaying, migration to the glorious Sun Belt is the proper prescription. Paint your wagon, come along, go west all ye denizens of obsolete Chicago and Newark and Pittsburgh and New York! Surely, you must know by now that Martin Anderson, one of President Reagan's inner circle, has concluded that poverty has been eliminated in the United States. So it can't be a matter of cash -- this business of finding a little grey home in the West.

But even if there are certain vestiges of poverty on the landscape, we now have at hand the idea of federal issuance of vouchers. You don't fancy the public school your kids now attend. Take heart Uncle Sam will give you an education chit so you can send the young ones to the school of your choice, integrated, lily white,

solid black, and of course, if you so desire -- parochial.

The same with housing. Conventional wisdom is that the average Joe spends 25% of his income on a place to live. Bingo: the government will give you a voucher for one - fourth the cost of your digs. You may be too old and feeble to go scrounging for lodgings a block or two away; but, bless your heart, here's this housing chit and just fly friendly skies to Phoenix and search for a home in that gentle climate.

All of which brings us back to the burning need for an extended Fair Housing Law. Discrimination frequently handicaps not only those home hunters who are black or Hispanic but also many who are disabled and elderly. Senator Baker has promised to push for fair housing legislation in 1981. It will be interesting to see if the new proposal is strong, if it passes, and if the man who branded the basic U.S. Civil Rights Act of 1964 "a bad piece of legislation" will support Senator Baker in this vital undertaking. That man is Ronald Reagan.

B'NAI B'RITH PRAISES HAIG

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- B'nai B'rith International terrorism Secretary of State Alexander M. Haig Jr. for his strong denunciation of international terrorism and pledged its full support in any campaign against terrorists.

In a letter to Haig, Jack J. Spitzer, B'nai B'rith president called terrorism "the greatest threat to peace in the world." "Unless it can be controlled, the very fabric of civilized life will be torn apart," he declared.

Asserting that "B'nai B'rith has a long record of opposing and exposing the whole network of international terrorism," Spitzer noted that last April in a private audience with Pope John Paul II, he urged the leader of the Roman Catholic world "to undertake the moral leadership" in a fight against terrorism.

Spitzer contended that international terrorism is "in large part inspired, trained and encouraged" by the Palestine Liberation Organization and noted that there is evidence implicating

the PLO in the seizure of the American hostages in Iran.

Citing the capture of 123 members of the B'nai B'rith staff and its headquarters in Washington by terrorists four years ago Spitzer declared that "our commitment to combating terrorism is more than philosophical; it is deeply personal."

"From direct experience we know how terrorism ravages the human spirit," he said. "From direct experience, we know about the brutality of those who respect neither life nor human dignity, but only their twisted aims."

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ARUM, GREB PROMOTE FIGHTS AT HACIENDA



BOXING AT HACIENDA -- DISCUSSING THE UPCOMING FEBRUARY 26 BOUTS AT THE HACIENDA RESORT HOTEL AND CASINO ARE OWNER PAUL LOWDEN, TOP RANK, INC. PRESIDENT BOB ARUM AND HACIENDA OFFICIAL BERNIE YUMAN. TICKETS FOR THE FIGHTS ARE NOW ON SALE AT THE CASINO CASHIER -- \$15 RINGSIDE, \$10 PREFERRED SEATING, AND \$5 GENERAL ADMISSION. THE MATCHES BEGIN AT 7:30 P.M. THE FIGHTS WILL BE BROADCAST LIVE THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY ON THE E.S.P.N. CABLE T.V. NETWORK.

Bob Arum, president of Top Rank, Inc. announced that the Hacienda Resort Hotel and Casino will be holding high calibre fights starting February 26. Arum recently decided to move his shows southward on the Las Vegas Strip to the newly-remodeled and expanded Hacienda.

The fights will be held the last Thursday of every month in the 22,000 sq. ft. Matador Arena convention and sports complex.

The E.S.P.N. cable T.V. network will broadcast the fights live to more than 8 million homes across the country.

Each card will feature 6 bouts, presented by Las Vegas veteran matchmaker Mel Greb. Seating in the Matador Arena tops 3,000. Ticket prices for non-championship fights are \$15 ringside, \$10 preferred, and \$5 general admission. Featured on the first, six - fight card is Kansas City's middle-weight Tony Chivaverini.

In upcoming matches Greb will bring to Las Vegas dynamic Don Curry heavy-weight Chris McDonald, and former amateur greats Johnny Bumphus, Davey Morre and Tony Tucker.

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