

# The Inquiring Reporter

"I could write a book!"

If Nick Paglia, developer of the attractive Briar Roots Acres residential complex, ever writes his book, it should be a hum-dinger. Sort of a cross between "Frankenstein" and "How to Win Friends and Influence Popele."

At midnight, sitting behind a desk stacked high with paper-work in his tract office at Comstock and Lake Mead Blvd., Nick tried to smile at the Inquiring Reporter. But all he could muster was a stifled yawn. You could tell it had been a long day- and night.

"I've been in the building game a long time," Nick reminisced. "It's fascinating work- sometimes. A guy gets a lot of satisfaction out of putting people in a fine, new home. Makes you feel good. But you run into a lot of headaches in this business, too. No matter how many people you please, there's always a few who give you nothing but grief."

The telephone rang- at midnight, yet! Nick wearily picked up the receiver. You could see he expected the worst.

"Yes, Mrs. Y," he said tensely. "Yes . . . Yes . . . Yes. . ." Suddenly a relieved grin erased his worried expression. "Well, that's just fine. . . No, that's perfectly all right. Glad to do it. . . Yes, Mrs. Y. . . Yes. . . Thank you, Mrs. Y. Good night." He hung up.

"That was one of our new buyers," he explained. "Her heating plant was out of whack. So I sent a man around to look it over. Needed a minor adjustment. Told her to call me night or day if everything wasn't completely satisfactory. Said she just had to let me know everything is fine now and how much she appreciated our concern for her comfort.

"Most people are like that," Nick observed. "They know a satisfied customer is a contractor's best advertisement. But there's always someone you can't satisfy-- a real trouble-maker." He sighed a long sigh.

"Take this Mrs. X, for instance," he said. "Nothing seems to suit her. So she's spreading a lot of misrepresentations about our homes here in Briar Root Acres and subjecting our realtor, Marge Elliott, to a mess of unjust criticism. As a result, some

innocent people are jeopardizing their investments and risking loss of good credit ratings by listening to her.

"It's enough to make you sick," he said sadly. "She's not only hurting our customers - she's hurting me and Marge with her malicious gossip. We could sue, of course, and probably break this poor, misguided soul. But we don't want to do that. And it might only make a martyr out of her in the eyes of people who didn't know the truth."

He handed the Inquiring Reporter a sheaf of typewritten sheets.

"That's an official report to the mayor and city manager from the city director of building and safety," Nick said. "It covers a recent inspection tour of occupied homes here in Briar Root Acres by the director, his senior building inspector, a representative of the state contractor's board and the chief inspector for the building and loan company. You'll note that some of the houses were picked at random and others were inspected at the request of this Mrs. X. I think the report speaks for itself."

It did. The report included the following comments opposite designated addresses:

" . . . No complaint, felt contractor had done all he had been asked."

" . . . No complaint, was satisfied with house."

" . . . Party pleased with home, complained of electric bill."

" . . . No complaint."

" . . . Wall leak in corner and side of bedroom. This is the only real problem we found, apparently settling of the house and wall to be re-pointed (contractor notified to proceed with this)."

The signed report noted that no code violations had been found during the inspection tour. It also noted that wherever a complaint had been made "the contractor appeared agreeable to fix what was possible

as quickly as they filed notices with his office."

"There were quite a few complaints about electric bills this winter," Nick admitted. "So we checked and found the charges in Briar Root Acres averaged about the same as those in three similar developments out this way. It seems Las Vegas had the coldest winter in the history of the local weather bureau. The power company told us there had been an unusually large number of complaints this winter.

"But it wasn't the cold weather that caused all the high bills. We took a look at one bill that Mrs. X was citing as being 'outrageous' and found it was for two months! . . . D'ya see what I mean by headaches?" We did.

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