

## A and P Supermarket Chain Opens Books To Public View

By DENNIS ORCHARD  
OTTAWA (CP)—The A and P supermarket chain opened its books to the public in an unprecedented move here, under determined prodding from the Senate-Commons committee on living costs.

The figures included a massive Sept. 14 check of A and P prices against those of its major competitors in Eastern Canada — Loblaws, Dominion Stores and Steinberg's.

Statements on A and P operations showed growing sales, but lower profit margins this year than last.

G. N. Provost, firm chairman and president, suggested the committee ask primary producers and manufacturers why food prices are climbing.

He could not speak for other food chains, but A and P was not contributing to the upward trend.

### LISTED BY LETTERS

The company's brief to the committee named its competitors only by letters, but names were put to the letters at the insistence of Warren Allmand (L — Montreal Notre-Dame-de-Grace).

The checks by the independent Ambler Pricing Service on Sept. 14 showed that:

—On 2,364 items in stores of A and P and Loblaws Groceries Co. Ltd., prices were the same on 29 per cent of the items; A and P prices were lower on 63 per cent and Loblaws prices lower on eight per cent.

—On 2,433 items in stores of A and P and Dominion Stores Ltd. in Ontario, prices were the same on 54 per cent of the items, A and P prices were lower on 44 per cent and Dominion Stores prices lower on 12 per cent.

—On 2,273 items in stores of A and P and Steinberg's Ltd. in Ontario, prices were the same on 49 per cent of the items, A and P prices were lower on 39 per cent and Steinberg's prices lower on 12 per cent.

—On 1,070 items in stores of A and P and Dominion

Stores Ltd. in Quebec, prices were the same on 43 per cent of the items, A and P prices were lower on 48 per cent and Dominion Stores prices lower on nine per cent.

—On 967 items in stores of A and P and Steinberg's Ltd. in Quebec, prices were the same on 47 per cent of the items, A and P prices were lower on 42 per cent and Steinberg's Ltd. on 11 per cent.

### CHECKED IN TORONTO

Mr. Provost said the checks were made in the Metropolitan Toronto area on the examples for Ontario. He was not asked where the checks had been made in Quebec.

The A and P's statements were offered to the committee at first on a confidential basis. But the committee unanimously refused to accept this. They were subsequently distributed to reporters and subjected to rigorous examination by the committee.

One statement showed 1965 total sales of A and P's 196 retail outlets in Quebec, Ontario and Manitoba as \$218,390,000. The profit after taxes in 1965 was 2.34 per cent or \$5,110,326. Sales in the first 31 weeks of this year totalled \$139,311,000 and the profit after tax was 2.14 per cent.

Another statement showed that personnel, operating and maintenance costs represented 14.02 per cent of total sales in 1965 and 13.93 per cent of total sales in the first 31 weeks of 1966.

### ASKED ABOUT STAMPS

Mr. Provost was asked why A and P, almost alone among the chains in Ontario and Quebec, does not offer trading stamps as a sales promotion.

He said they would add to the cost of merchandise to the consumer.

He declined to confirm or deny a suggestion that trading stamps add two per cent to the cost of merchandise.

Mr. Provost said advertising costs represent less than one per cent of total sales figures.



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Quality made in Eastern Canada. Excellent resistance to decay. 4 bundles per square. 16" lengths. Second clear grade. Reg. 9.98 sq.

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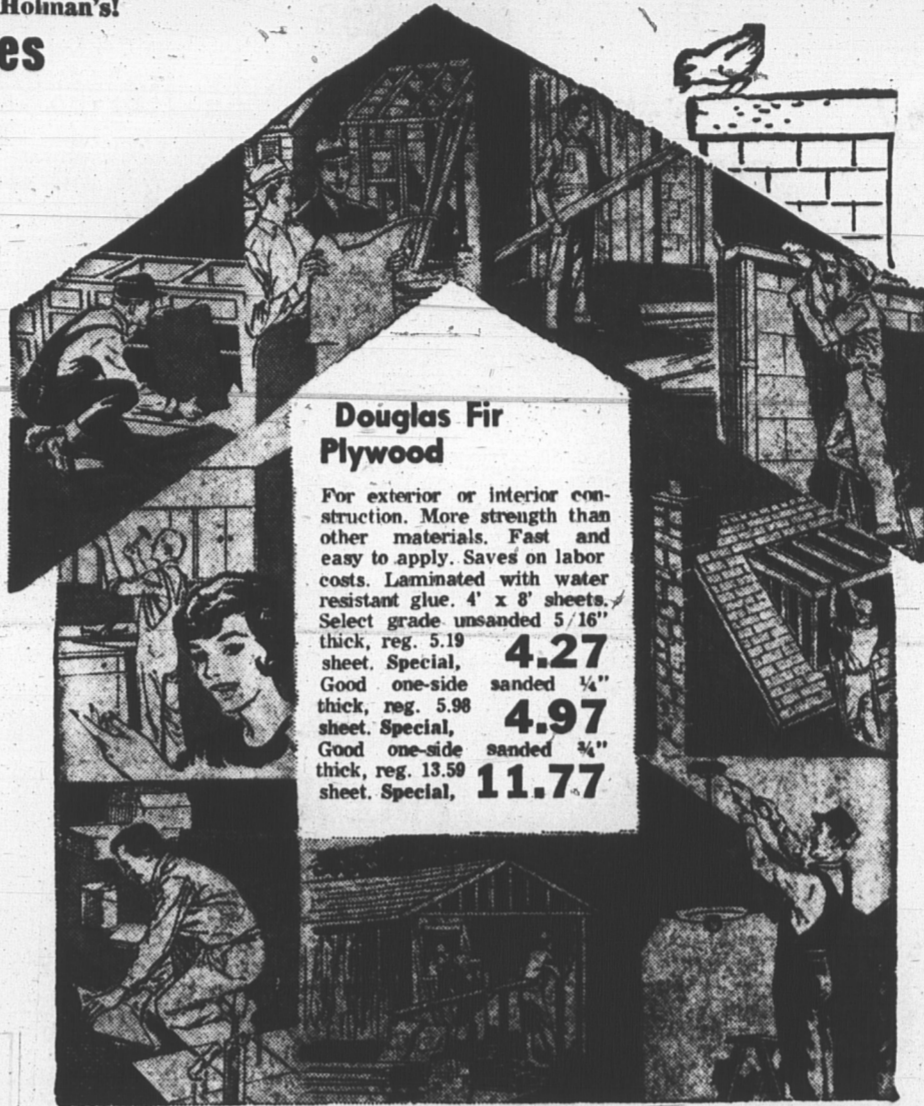
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May be laid on almost any floor above or below grade level. Very easy to maintain. Requires only occasional waxing. Complete color range. 9" x 9" square or 4 1/2" x 18" plank. Domestic gauge.

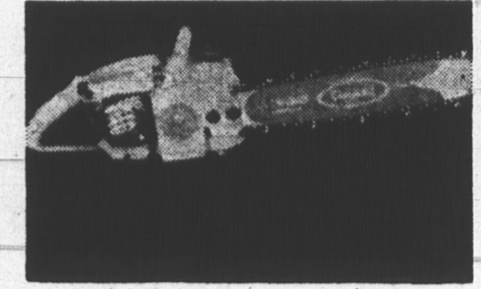
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### Douglas Fir Plywood

For exterior or interior construction. More strength than other materials. Fast and easy to apply. Saves on labor costs. Laminated with water resistant glue. 4' x 8' sheets. Select grade unsanded 5/16" thick, reg. 5.19 **4.27** sheet. Special, Good one-side sanded 1/4" thick, reg. 5.98 **4.97** sheet. Special, Good one-side sanded 3/8" thick, reg. 13.59 **11.77** sheet. Special.

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An all-purpose compact saw. So simple and safe anybody can operate it. Reduces chores to half the time. Easy to clean fuel filter. 16" bar and chain included. Full 30 day guarantee.

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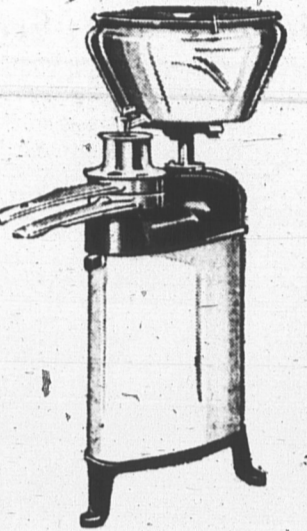
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WED., OCTOBER 19, 1966

11 A.M. — 7 P.M.

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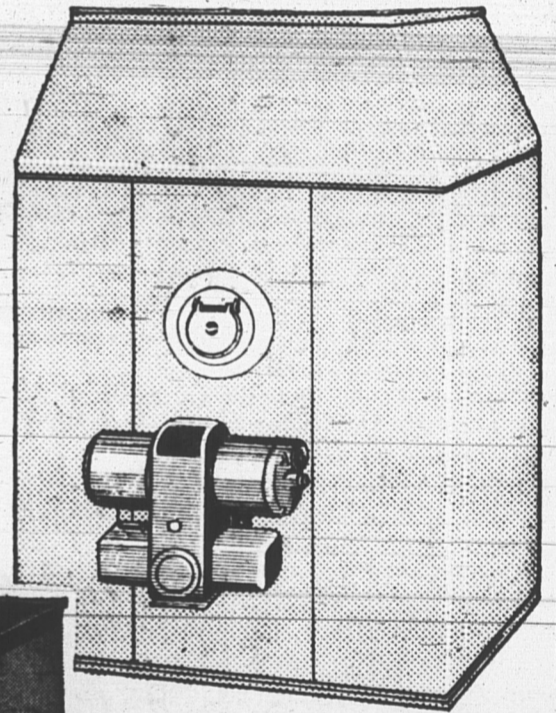
MADE BY ENTERPRISE

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### ENTERPRISE SPACE HEATERS

HEATS UP TO 3 ROOMS—Modern design space-saving cabinet. 35,000 B.T.U. heating capacity. Complete with 2-gal tank and automatic draft. Reg. 99.95—SPECIAL

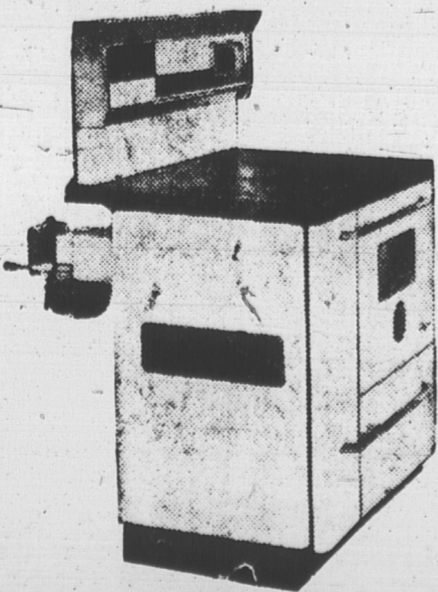
**84.97**

NO DOWN PAYMENT—7.00 MONTHLY!

HEATS UP TO 5 ROOMS—Designed to save on your fuel bills. 45,000 B.T.U. heating capacity. Doors on side help heat your floors, an exclusive Enterprise feature. With 5-gal oil tank and automatic draft. Reg. 139.95. SPECIAL

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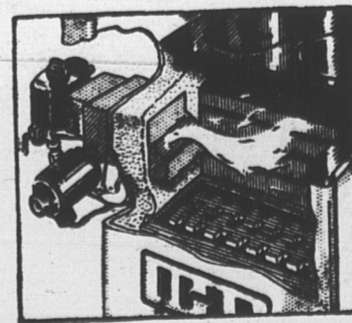
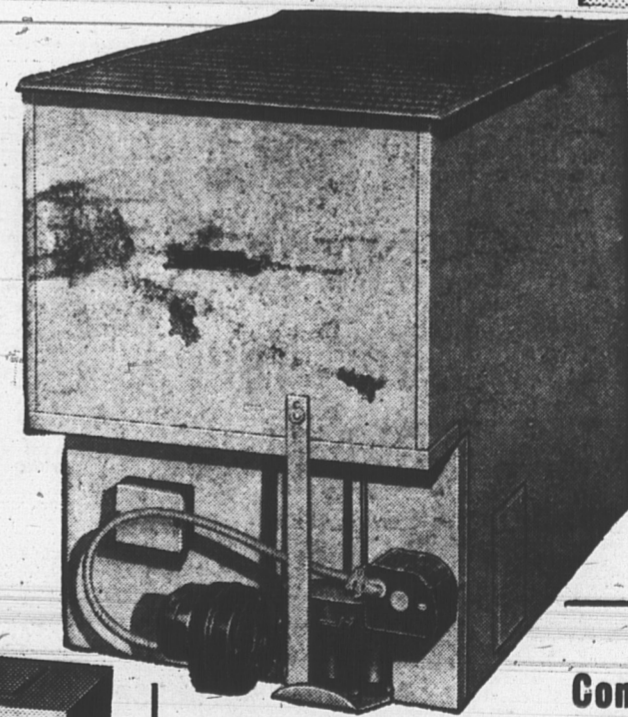
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Especially designed for burning wood, or even garbage with Kemac burner. Family size oven finished in lifetime porcelain enamel. Roomy storage drawer for cooking utensils or as warming compartment. Exclusive Enterprise design gives balanced heat for best cooking results.

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