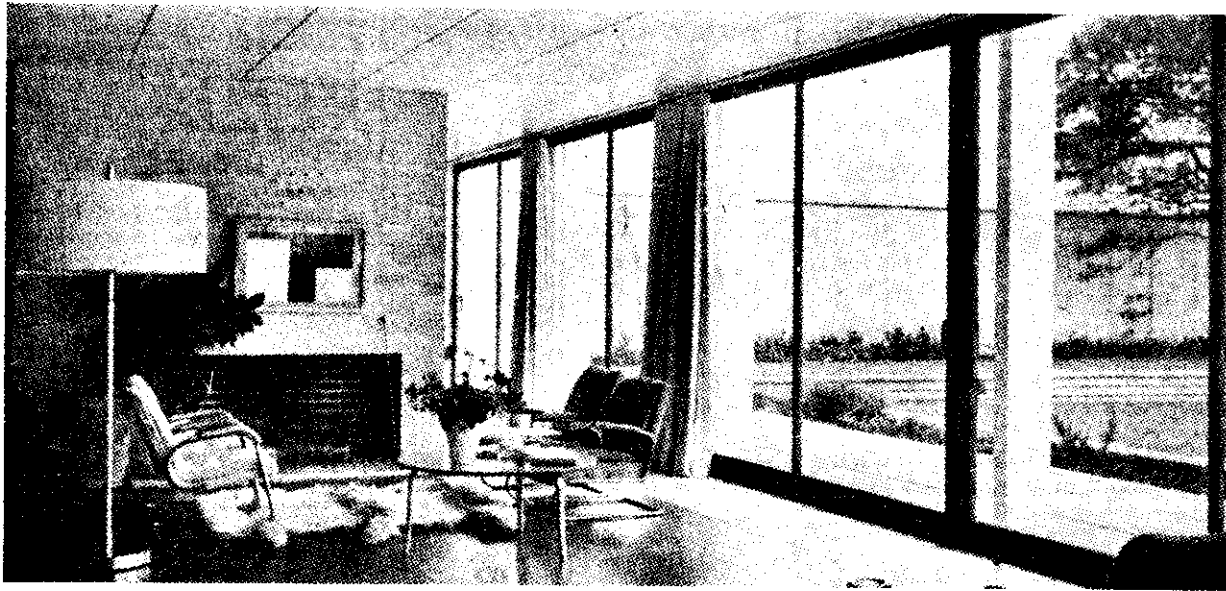


HOUSES TO LIVE IN



Freedom of planning, freedom of living. The wall is not a barrier between inside and outside—merely a transparent screen for protection against the elements. (Note: This is a large room, with expensive furniture: but this type of wall with glass from floor to ceiling is well within the reach of the average purse)

IN the new world we hope to build after the war we will need new houses—hundreds and thousands of new homes. Are they to be really new or just made-over old ones? House-planning is in the air, and we have tried to find out what the planning is really like. Here are some of the results of our inquiries:

UNIVERSITY LECTURER

FIRST, I'd say, blow up the whole wagon and start again from the beginning; that's my sovereign specific," said a university lecturer, to whom we took our questions.

"However, if that's impossible, I think this—that the sooner we get rid of the idea that it's respectable to have a house of your own, the better. I think the flat habit is a good one, and there could well be more communal living of the kind that is afforded by well-designed blocks of flats sharing big open spaces. Once we had people saying 'Heaven forbid! We will not have flats all over New Zealand.' They were thinking of the tenement slums, of course, and not of the kind of thing that modern imaginative architects have made possible.

"No, I wouldn't agree at all that a house is a machine for living in or that if a thing is designed to fulfil its purpose it will be beautiful of its own accord. I regard beauty as an essential part of efficiency. If a thing is offensive, I won't use it. And if I won't use it, then it isn't functioning, so what?

"There's no truth at all in the belief that we New Zealanders haven't any taste. In the matter of houses we have to take what we can get—the house I'm in has got all sorts of features I'd never incorporate in a house if I were building one, and it's the same with most people. But yet take things where people have got a choice, such as furnishings, and you find that if there is something decent in a shop one day it'll be gone the next.

"And that reminds me, that I think there's plenty of scope for fabrics to

be designed and woven locally in response to the local taste. We should get people who are capable of designing things—not merely fabrics, but all the things we use in our houses—according to local needs.

TRAVELLER

A MAN who had travelled much before the war, said that the Dutch system of twin house-units was the best he had seen both from the point of view of attractive town-planning and from the point of view of the individual householder. The identical-twin-unit consisted of two houses shoulder to shoulder with a sound-proof and fire-

proof wall between them and their garden space in front, behind and at one side. Thus paired neighbours could live self-containedly—for a wall separated the two gardens also. Their neighbours on the other side in each case were, of course, paired similarly, so that each individual had on the one side a shoulder-to-shoulder neighbour, and on the other a neighbour at double arm's length.

FROM A COUNTRY TOWN

"I WOULD build homes suitable for average families of five, and suitable for children, with large, airy rooms, large cupboards, long towel-rails, lots of windows, plentiful hot and cold water, and everything as durable and as easily cleaned as possible. I would place all electric points and switches as high as reasonably convenient for an adult to reach, and would enforce guards round the top of electric stoves and close-fitting, spark-proof screens for open fires. I would have thermostat control

on every appliance on which it was practical to install.

"I would also, if I had authority, decree two half-holidays in the week. The second half-holiday would be mother's half-day, when it would be an offence for her to do any domestic task other than care for any baby under nine months. I would also instruct architects to make provision for women with prams when they are designing post offices and other public buildings."

SIXTY-YEARS-OLD

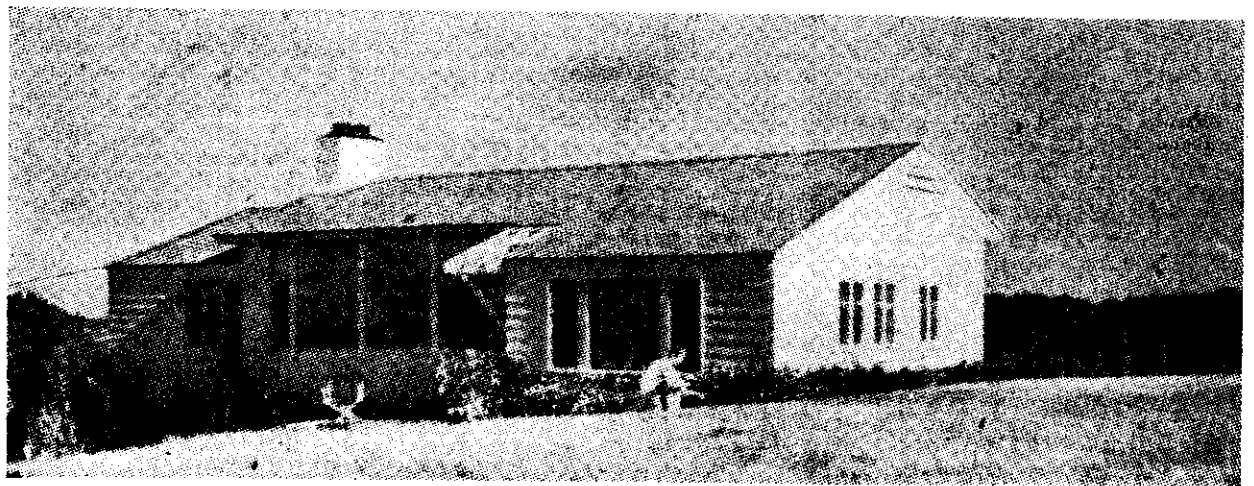
"I T will satisfy me if the world after the war learns how to make a chair. I do not think I exaggerate if I say that in 60 years I have only once or twice sat in a chair that was restful and really comfortable. And although the war is not being fought for old stagers like me, but for those now in the cradle or due to arrive there, it will still be desirable when these real and contemplated children grow up that they should be able to sit comfortably by their own firesides—if houses still have firesides. Otherwise, they will go out as young and old men go now, to see the pictures or the girls, or to drink or gamble or argue or plot, to their own and the social fabric's injury. Give us homes fit to stay in and chairs comfortable to sit in and our leisure will look after itself."

NEW ZEALAND ARCHITECT

"I THINK it is time we got away from the idea of houses as holes in which to shut ourselves up to live. Most houses of to-day are prisons—with holes punched in the walls. I conceive of a house as a place of shelter from the elements but as free and open as it is architecturally possible for it to be. I'm all for a feeling of freedom and space. Certain parts of the house, bedrooms and so on, must be private, but the rest should be of glass from ceiling to floor. Houses should give a feeling of space with no clear division between house and garden."

"Then you would not like to see a great extension of flats in the post-war world?"

(Continued on next page)



For the country—obviously not extravagant, obviously efficient—this home in Massachusetts has three bedrooms, a dining-kitchen with a veranda for eating outside, and a garage