

# A unique state of education



By Robert R. Clifton

**F**OR THE PAST 12 years I have been on the faculty at Metropolitan State College, only two years less than the college has been in existence. My attraction for coming to MSC was the indication this institution was looking for people who appreciated that teaching, even at the college level, was the creative act of causing a person to want to learn; not simply for some arbitrary period called a semester but for the rest of a person's life.

Even in those early years there was talk about MSC being an "urban oriented" institution. I admit to not really understanding what that phrase meant but it sounded good. One also heard words like creativity, innovation and experimentation.

It is easy to appreciate the enormous disappointment I felt when I discovered that few of those expectations actually existed. It wasn't that the people then associated with MSC didn't want a different kind of educational institution, a place where innovation and creativity were encouraged, where being an effective teacher was considered your prime responsibility, a place where the community and the college could work cooperatively in helping to meet the needs of the city and its people. It was simply a case of being told that before we could develop the uniqueness of character we thought MSC was all about, first we had to look like higher education institutions are supposed to look. In short, we had to gain acceptance among our institutional peers.

That was a difficult and intimidating task. Dick Gregory had just written a book called *Nigger*. In the foreword, Gregory told his mother he never wanted her to be ashamed of that word again. Our struggle at MSC was similar in some ways. We welcomed the students other institutions didn't want. We took the returning veteran who was coming to college for the first time, the 23-year-old homemaker who had attended college 15 years earlier, and we accepted the high school graduate who wasn't listed in the top 10 percent of the class. We taught classes out of garages and renovated warehouses. Our student union was the old White Mule bar and the closest thing we had to an ivory tower was the elevator shaft in the Zook Building on Colfax Avenue.

Before we could offer a complete four-year baccalaureate program, our students were forced to transfer to other institutions within the state. Transferring students frequently were met with more than a raised eyebrow when it was discovered they had attended Metropolitan State College. Unofficially, the word from the University of Colorado was that a grade of "A" at MSC would at best only rate a "C" at the university. And almost as if to prove the strangeness and unacceptability of our student body, the students voted not once but twice against having intercollegiate athletics at MSC. No wonder we were looked upon with some suspicion.

We were a strange mixture but there was a sense of comradeship of purpose that seemed to permeate student body and faculty. We continued to jump through the hoops necessary for institutional approval. Our first graduation ceremony was conducted in Wyer Auditorium of the Denver Public Library and we gained the all important sanction of the North Central accrediting body. Like the Civil Rights Act of 1964, we were now legal but that didn't mean we were accepted into the neighborhood.

Indeed, we wanted to be different. And since we were now officially "approved," we began to feel more secure in attempting some alternative approaches to learning. We began to develop some classes, programs and even departments which seemed better designed to help solve some of the problems affecting an urban community. We established a School of Professional Studies. Not in pre-law or pre-medicine or engineering but in a whole new level of employment. It required sophisticated study but tended to be slightly beneath the pristine function of the academic university. We developed programs like Aerospace Science, Human Services, Law Enforcement, Allied Health and Administration of Community Services.

We developed a Center for Experimental Studies where new ideas and approaches could be tested before formal adoption. We established a Center for Community Services to explore ways of matching the resources of the college to those of the community.

We continued to struggle with the concept of urban orientation. That description seemed to suggest that the college must be an involved participant in the solution of community

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Graphics by Jack H. Shannon

problems. The learning process had to go beyond a study of theory.

As an institution we were confronted with a difficult dichotomy. Was the purpose of our college to help students learn how to live or was the purpose to help them learn how to earn a living. We found that both objectives were necessary. Therein lies the uniqueness of Metropolitan State College in relation to the university concept.

Better ways must be found to integrate and maximize the resources of the community with those of institutions of higher education. Academia does not respond very quickly to a change of purpose and direction. Through an unusual growth process, we have been fortunate at MSC in establishing an institution which has dared to experiment beyond the accepted norms of academia.

At Metropolitan State College, we believe that students need valid academic credentials. We believe that students need the direction and wisdom of instructors in the "safety" of classroom theorizing. But we also believe that students need the opportunities to apply those theories. In so doing, they can become a valuable resource in solving community problems.

Neil Postman authored the satire entitled, *Once Upon A Time — A Fable of Student Power*. Postman wrote about life nearly ending in a major American city.

"The streets were covered with dirt, and there was no one to tidy them. The air and rivers were polluted and no one could cleanse them. The schools were rundown and no one believed in them," Postman declared.

"Thus, though a state of emergency officially existed, neither the Mayor nor anyone else could think of anything to do that would make their situation better rather than worse. And then an extraordinary thing happened."

Postman's extraordinary happening was that an aide to the mayor suggested that "the students of the public schools and the colleges of the city could be used as a resource to make the city livable again."

"But how can we use them?" asked the mayor. "And what would happen to their education if we did?"

"To this the aide replied, 'They will find their education in the process of saving their city.'"

This is the uniqueness of Metropolitan State College — a belief that there has to be a marriage of purpose and effort between the college and the community. That students can "find their education in the process of saving their city."

The State Legislature is now considering a bill that would merge Metropolitan State College with the University of Colorado at Denver. Perhaps a change of governance for the two institutions is needed — maybe even a merger. But MSC has an approach to learning substantially different from that of the university. It is important that this uniqueness be preserved.





"Something is wrong when the police department of Denver is afraid to keep order at a public meeting, when policemen in uniform are standing in the aisles, afraid to arrest disturbers."

For 3½ hours, the confrontation continued. Van Cise remained on stage throughout that time, delivering a message which could only be heard by 15 or 20 persons on stage. But his ad lib barbs at the mob scene gave witness to his courage, a courage which allowed him to withstand the insults and threats that were hurled at him by the assembled mob.

Finally, about midnight, the Kluxers marched out and the exhausted Van Cise left the building. His chief investigator, Bob Maiden, had been assigned to drive him home.

Maiden knew he had to get out of the downtown area quickly. The Klansmen planned to tar and feather Van Cise if they caught up with his car. The two men made a hasty exit from the rear door and arrived safely home after a wild chase in which shots were fired by the pursuers and the pursued.

In the primary, Morley won the Republican nomination by a substantial majority. The next day's *Denver Post* declared:

*Klan Wins In Denver  
Van Cise Ticket Snowed Under  
Klan Ticket Wins State And City*

A front-page cartoon showed a cart, labeled KKK, occupied by an overstuffed Dr. Locke with Morley and other Klan-designated office seekers in the car behind him. Locke held the reins and applied the whip to the Republican elephant which was pulling the cart. Locke was saying:

"Well, I guess you know who's boss now, don't ye?"  
In November, the Klan elected its ticket from top to bottom. Those of us who opposed the takeover licked our wounds and stayed alert, awaiting our chance to say "we told you so."

We didn't have long to wait.

**ITEM ONE:** It is Monday in late July 1924, between 6 and 7 p.m. It's impossible to drive east along the narrow stretch of West Colfax Avenue which links Golden with Denver.

Cars, three abreast, each carrying several occupants, are on their way to Table Mountain. Each Monday night sees the same ritual. Klansmen gather to watch a giant cross burning, and to hear the inflammatory words of bigoted spellbinders, who boast of the KKK's political successes for "100 percent Americans."

On this Monday night, Van Cise wants the license numbers of the cars heading up Table Mountain. He hopes to identify the sheet-clad members of the "Invisible Empire."

Joseph E. Cook and I volunteer, along with two secretaries from the DA's office, to ride in my Model T Ford touring car to a strategic place in the narrow pit off Colfax Avenue.

It is a point where cars must slow to make the turn off Colfax and up the mountain road. The plan is for the two of us to write down the license numbers as the young ladies call them off.

We take our appointed place. Cars, cars, hundreds of cars pass by and their numbers are called off. We write them down on yellow legal pads.

Without warning, burly "special officers" appear and grab the yellow pads. They flash a badge. I flash my own and so does Joe Cook. We are told to "get on down the road." We decline. They threaten arrest and we invite them to "crack their whip."

**A T THAT POINT,** several cars stop and men surround our Model T. They pick it up bodily and carry it over to the "hog-back road." There, a powerful Stutz roadster makes contact with my rear bumper and begins to push us up the road at a speed far in excess of what the Ford's gears can handle.

After a couple minutes of this "assist," the Stutz draws alongside and an occupant says: "You'll be damn sorry if you try to come back this way."

We didn't.

The next day, friends of mine who were on the mountain told me how the Klan's private security guards boasted of apprehending the "red-neck SOB's" who were taking down their car numbers. The yellow pads were shown from the platform and the crowd was told how they had treated the SOB's. I told my friends that I knew something about the incident myself, since I was one of the SOB's.

I asked my friends if they honestly approved of such conduct. They didn't answer.

**ITEM TWO:** It is August 1924. A young woman comes to the district attorney's office, where I am a deputy, and says she has been brutally raped by a man named Samples in a downtown office building, where she has briefly worked for him as a secretary.

The evidence is clear-cut. I file a charge of rape, explaining to the victim that she may have to tell the whole sordid story to an all-male jury.

Thinking it over, she comes back to me and says she doesn't want to go through such an ordeal. Can the case be dropped? I explain that such an action requires the judge's consent.

We go to the chambers of Dist. Judge Clarence J. Morley, one of the newly elected Klan judges who now is trying criminal cases in the West Side Court. She pleads with him to drop the case.

Counseling her like a father, the judge urges her to protect womanhood against such monsters. He assures her the court will protect her from unjustified attacks upon her character. She agrees to carry on with the case.

Samples is arrested and pleads innocent. Only then does Judge Morley realize the defendant is a highly placed Klansman: "Kleagle," or head man, of a large Ku Klux unit. Samples is convicted in Morley's court, but the judge grants him a new trial, saying he doesn't believe the woman's testimony.

Next time around, the jury is rigged with two Klansmen who have been ordered to vote for acquittal. A hung jury results. Another trial follows, with the same outcome. At last, the young woman refuses to go further and the case is dismissed.

By the end of the year, Judge Morley is governor of Colorado.

**ITEM THREE:** It is late spring in 1925. The Invisible Empire now runs the state from Locke's office at 14th Street and Glenarm Place. Morley plays the role of Charlie McCarthy to Locke's Edgar Bergen.

Liquor is banned from the land by the 18th Amendment to the Constitution. However, one Mrs. Molmsky has gained possession of a large number of cases of Royal Gorge bonded, but unlawful, whiskey.

Four prominent police officers, members of the vice squad, seize the whiskey and arrest the defendant, who pleads guilty and pays a fine. A justice of the peace orders the whiskey destroyed.

The officers comply by selling it at \$40 a case to a well-known bootlegger.

**I** CAME ACROSS these facts while carrying on an extensive investigation of reports that "protection" was being paid to underworld figures. I filed charges against the four policemen, accusing them of larceny and embezzlement.

Two Ku Klux Klan lawyers, Charley Roberts and Jim Kelley, appeared on behalf of the police officers.

Of course, we anticipated problems with a Klan-packed jury—but the case never went that far, thanks to the discoveries of a *Rocky Mountain News* reporter named Johnson.

Johnson was waiting outside Dr. Locke's office in hopes of getting a story on a big Klan celebration. The transom above the door was open and he recognized some of the voices. The newly elected KKK judge was there, as were the four accused officers, lawyer Roberts and, of course, the grand dragon himself.

Locke was issuing instructions for the disposition of the embezzlement case. State law held that liquor, since it was banned, had no "property right" attached to it. "Therefore," reasoned the good doctor, "if there is no property right in whiskey, it cannot be the subject of larceny."

He directed that, when I made my opening statement in the trial, Roberts should move for dismissal. Locke turned to the judge and ordered him to sustain the motion. The judge agreed, and the players subsequently acted out their parts.

Although we couldn't try the defendants again, lest they be placed in double jeopardy, we appealed the legal aspects of the case and the judge subsequently took a beating from the Colorado Supreme Court, which reversed the ruling with strong words of condemnation.

Later, we raided the office of the grand dragon, securing irrefutable evidence that every jury panel was chosen from Klan membership roles, except for a few names that sounded Jewish and a handful of black persons, just for appearances.

The Klan's victory at the polls stimulated a short-lived rush in applications for membership. Just a week after Morley's election as governor, he and Locke went to Union Station to meet the KKK's national leader, Imperial Wizard Hiram Wesley Evans of Atlanta, as he arrived in a luxurious private railroad car.

The next evening, Evans presided over the initiation of 5,000 new Klan members.

Soon afterward, however, the tide changed. Within a few months, John Galen Locke was sent to the Denver County jail. The offense was income tax evasion and Locke was fined \$1,500 and received 10 days in jail. Short-term federal prisoners were housed in the old county jail at 14th and Kalamath, which joined the present district attorney's office.

The spectacle of the governor of Colorado making frequent visits to the county jail didn't sit well with the public. Neither did other scandals which arose from the police department and the Legislature. The Klan's influence waned as quickly as it had risen and, within a couple of years, its influence amounted to very little.

By the next Republican primary, in September 1927, Morley wasn't even a candidate for nomination. The voters elected a Democrat: State Sen. William H. "Billy" Adams of Alamosa, who had been one of the few members of the Senate to hold out against the Klan hysteria.

It all brings to mind the adage: "You can fool some of the people all of the time and all of the people some of the time, but you can't fool all of the people all of the time."

*It could happen again. We should see to it that it does not.*



The photos from top to bottom are of Denver's Klan-busting district attorney of the 1920s, Phillip S. Van Cise; former Denver District Judge Clarence J. Morley, who was elected governor of Colorado under the Klan sign; and Judge O. Otto Moore (1976 photo), who retired from the Colorado Supreme Court in 1969 after serving for 20 years, the last two as chief justice.

Judge Moore is only the fourth justice in Colorado history to have served the high court for 20 years. He came to Denver in 1901 and received his law degree from the University of Denver in 1922.

# The Klan in Colorado

By Judge O. Otto Moore

**F**OR FIVE YEARS in the 1920s, Colorado writhed in a caldron of hatred, bigotry, racial strife and turmoil brought by the phenomenal growth of the Ku Klux Klan.

The Klan virtually owned the Republican Party. It controlled every branch of state government — and, with few exceptions, its townhalls and courthouses as well.

From a downtown Denver headquarters, the Klan spewed out a barrage of hate-filled propaganda which turned neighbor against neighbor and drove honest merchants out of business. Crosses blazed on the front lawns of Catholics, Jews and blacks. Vigilantes drove terrified families from their neighborhoods.

Fortunately, this reign of terror eventually died out, largely through the courage of the few who refused to be intimidated. One of these was Denver Dist. Atty. Phillip S. Van Cise. It was my good fortune to work with him during that time.

The Klan held sway in the state from 1922 until about 1927. In those days, it claimed to stand for "100 percent pure Americanism." No Catholic could fit that standard since their first priority of allegiance — at least in the eyes of the Klansmen — was to Rome. For reasons less clearly defined, Jews and blacks also were excluded.

Thus, in the Klan's eyes, only white, Anglicans could be trusted with power. Strange as it may seem, vast numbers of people were led to believe that Colorado's, and even America's survival, depended on the elimination of Catholics, Jews and blacks from meaningful participation in the political and economic life of every community.

Headquarters for this lawless band of vigilantes was at 14th Street and Glenarm Place, in the office of Dr. John Galen Locke, grand dragon for the Ku Klux Klan in the state of Colorado. That meant he was the dictator who ruled this "Invisible Empire" with an iron hand.

Many Protestant churches became strongholds of Klanism. Others were torn into factions; the majority caught up in the prevailing hysteria, the minority silenced by the fear of being ostracized.

Service clubs, Masonic lodges, and other fraternal groups were torn by similar dissension, extending into the highest levels of their leadership. Such conflicts continued to rage even after the Klan disintegrated.

In May 1923, the Klan's Denver segment elected its candidate for mayor — Ben Stapleton — by an overwhelming majority. After that, it controlled major City Hall appointments. (Stapleton later cast off the yoke of Klanism and became one of Denver's best mayors.)

William J. Candlish, a man with no experience in police work, was named chief of police. Seasoned policemen, many of whom happened to be Irish Catholics, received lowly assignments, while Klansmen were elevated to command positions.

Determined to take over the entire justice system, Dr. Locke planted one of his henchmen and a Klan sympathizer on the jury commission. The task was to see that most of the men on the jury list were Klansmen.

By now, City Hall, the police department and the jury selection process fell under control of the grand dragon. All that was left was the courts, and even this didn't pose much of a problem.

The city's two justices of the peace already were appointed by the Klan-controlled mayor. The county judge was a top-level Klansman. All that remained was the one-man juvenile court and the seven district courts.

Therefore, one of the Klan's objectives in the November

1924 general election was to take over the district court. But the grand dragon's aspirations didn't end there. Having exceeded even his own hopes in the municipal elections the year before, Dr. Locke was determined to take over the state government.

During that spring and summer, the Klan organized boycotts against businessmen who refused to join. Klansmen took an oath that they wouldn't trade with Catholics, Jews or Negroes — and would patronize only those establishments owned by their fellow members. The boycott was amazingly effective, and I knew many businessmen who joined the Klan to avoid business failure.

Next came torchlight parades. Thousands of men wearing white robes and hoods over their faces marched along downtown Denver streets. One summer night, it took four hours for the mass of Klansmen to pass the point where I stood. Such a show of power had a single purpose: to intimidate and stifle any organized resistance to the intended Klan takeover.

Van Cise wasn't intimidated. He had opposed the Klan from the beginning. In spite of the KKK's demonstrated political muscle, he was outspoken in denouncing its activities and exposing its ambitions. Since the Klan was in complete control of the Denver GOP organization, Van Cise vowed to place an anti-Klan slate on the Republican primary ballot.

This ticket was to be known as the "visible government" ticket, since the Klan proudly boasted of being the Invisible Empire. To get the visible candidates on the ballot, it required that 100 voters, each claiming to be a Republican, sign a petition.

I was one of the signers of this petition and, as a member of this "committee of 100," I became an advocate of the visible slate's election.

Van Cise and the committee planned a mass meeting on the night of Sept. 4, 1924, five days before the primary, in the city auditorium. It was scheduled for 8 p.m., and the Rocky Mountain News announced in its morning edition that the doors would open at 7. The paper said Van Cise would talk about "Morley and the courts" as well as the Klan boycott.

Denver Dist. Judge Clarence J. Morley was the Klan's candidate for governor. We in the district attorney's office knew him well. He was the KKK's grand cyclops, placing him second in command to Dr. Locke.

Within 10 minutes after the auditorium doors opened for the Van Cise rally, it was filled to standing room only. Every Klan unit, or klavern, had been ordered to send its members and see that they packed the house.

I shall never forget that night.

From the instant that Van Cise arose to speak, the Klansmen began hooting, howling, singing, whistling and using various kinds of noisemakers. Van Cise shouted his prepared address, but the only ones who could hear a word were those on stage or at the nearby press table.

"The Klan," he shouted, "advocates mob action, and tonight we see the mob, and we see what mob rule means."

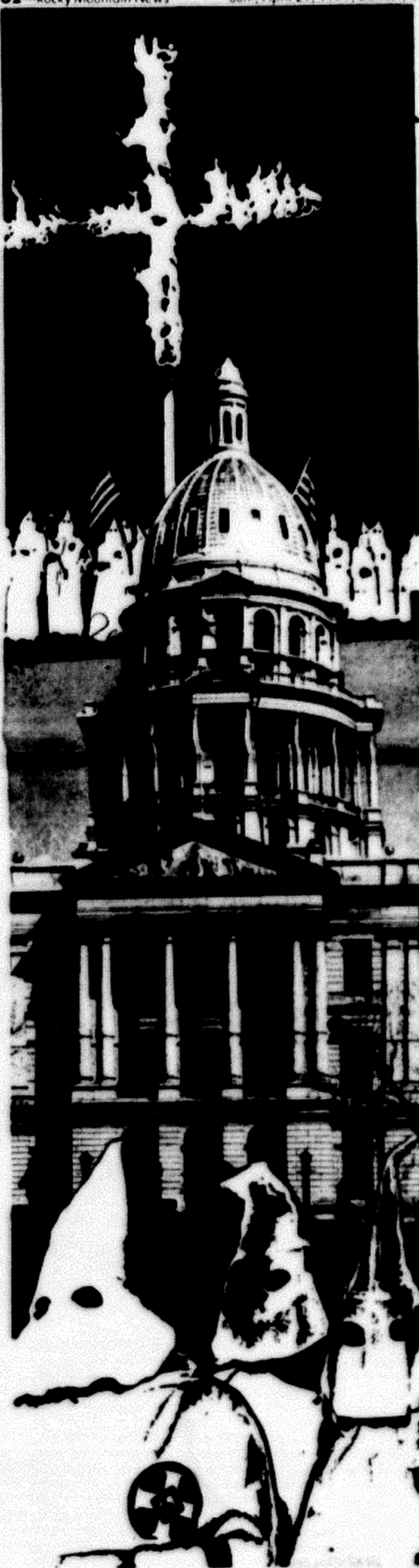
To those few who could hear him, Van Cise further warned against letting the Klan take over the courts, declaring:

"Most of us appear infrequently before our judges, but when we do, we want to know that our opponents likewise appear before them and not behind them."

The experienced judges seeking re-election, he said, "are to be pilloried, not because they have been unfaithful to their trusts, but because they would not stultify themselves by pledges which only the unworthy and corrupt would either demand or give."

As the hooting and howling continued with unabated fury, dozens of policemen in full uniform strode up and down the aisles with folded arms and smiling faces. Every one was a Klansman.

Vainly, Van Cise tried to out-shout the mob. As reported by the Rocky Mountain News, he told them:



# Commentary and Editorials

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Graphics by Jack H. Shannon

## A 'real dollar mortgage'

By Michael J. McManus

**I**NSURANCE BROKER and financial theorist Mike Wilton has a dream — and a scheme — of transforming America's financial practices. He calls it the "real dollar mortgage."

"I have a house that I will sell to you, with no downpayment and at only 4½ percent interest," Wilton told his friend Richard Loeber. "provided that you are willing to index your mortgage payment to the consumer price index (CPI). I will loan you the \$80,000 for the house, but I want you to pay me back \$80,000 real 1979 dollars, though that means your payments will increase with the cost of living."

"A standard 10½ percent mortgage would cost \$800 per month for 20 years. The initial payment on my 4½ percent mortgage would be only \$500. But I would adjust that amount each quarter to the CPI. If, by some miracle there was no increase in inflation, your mortgage payment would not increase, as is likely. I'm taking the premium out of the interest rate, but in exchange, I want to index the principal you will owe me, so that I get paid back in real terms, what I have loaned you."

Loeber, 32, was fascinated. But he did not become a \$32,000 a year computer executive by making snap judgments. In applying Wilton's theory to his own financial situation, Loeber first found that his income had tripled over a decade, while the CPI had not quite doubled. So Loeber believed it was conservative that his income would increase at least as fast as inflation in the future.

Next, he ran computer simulations under different assumptions of what his income growth might be and what inflation might be in the years ahead. For example, he found that if inflation were to be as bad as 10 percent annually, it would not be until the fifth year that his mortgage payment would rise to \$800, or that of a standard mortgage.

Meanwhile, he would have saved \$9,000 in payments — enough to cover future rises in mortgage payments through the ninth year. By that time, his mortgage payment would be \$1,203. That sounded frightening, until Loeber saw that he would be earning \$70,700 in 1988, assuming his income simply keeps up with inflation.

That \$1,203 is only 20 percent of my projected income — no more costly to me in 1988 than \$509 a month is to me today," Loeber says. "Furthermore, I can save \$180 a month due to tax deductions which I don't get today."

"And if I sell the house in 10 years, I will still have paid off 40 percent of the principal, as in a conventional mortgage. Thus, I will have built equity. And house values tend to rise faster than inflation, so I gain there, too."

The result? Loeber and his wife are moving into a beautiful new four-bedroom house. They bought the house with a 4½ percent mortgage. Such innovation could lead to inflation-proof savings accounts, guaranteeing 3½ percent above inflation — or 12½ percent interest on passbook savings.

Implications of the nation's first real dollar mortgage are staggering.

According to the National Association of Homebuilders, about 10 million families who cannot afford a house today — could do so with real dollar mortgages. At a time when the dream of home ownership is receding for millions, that is important news.

Two of the three economists I called in Washington for this article wanted to know where they could get a "real dollar mortgage."

Mike Wilton sold his house "to prove a point — that people will buy a house on a real dollar concept. That means a financial revolution is possible," he says, "that would reduce the financing costs of all manufactured goods, business and government services."

"It makes possible inflation proof savings accounts, life insurance annuities and pensions. For example, if a bank were to receive 4½ percent plus inflation on its mortgages, it could afford to pay 3½ percent plus inflation on savings accounts," Wilton says, speaking as a board member of the Washington Federal Savings & Loan of New York. That would mean 12½ percent interest on passbook savings accounts."

Thus there would be an incentive to save that doesn't exist today. Since no investment promises to be inflation proof, money would flood into savings accounts of banks offering "real dollar" accounts. That money could then be loaned out in real dollar mortgages. The system could operate parallel to existing practices.

In fact, inflation itself could be pushed down dramatically by taking inflation out of interest rates.

"The present system compounds inflation," says Wilton, "because you pay for yesterday's inflation and tomorrow's inflation today."

"Yesterday's inflation is included in the price of goods and services. This can't be escaped. But you pay for tomorrow's inflation by paying interest rates for all financing which includes a premium for anticipated inflation tomorrow."

"By separating out tomorrow's inflation, and dropping interest rates while making it a function of principal, you would then pay for tomorrow's inflation tomorrow, only when, as, and if inflation occurred, and to the extent of inflation. You would also pay for it with tomorrow's inflated dollars."

All of that may sound confusing.

Richard Loeber puts it this way:

"I will never have to pay more than \$509 a month compared to my present income for an \$80,000 mortgage."

Asked for a reaction to this way of fighting inflation, and helping people live with it, the Council on Wage and Price Stability in the White House refused to react — even after I sent an earlier column on the subject for a response. The Federal Home Loan Bank Board, which oversees savings banks, has failed to answer a request by Washington Federal to service Loeber's loan, a technicality, since Wilton is putting up the money himself.

HUD Assistant Secretary Larry Simons said:

"To consider real dollar mortgages, we would first have to put them into context of the entire economic structure of the country. The whole financial system would have to change."

Perhaps it's time.

Michael J. McManus writes a weekly column entitled, "The Northern Perspective," for 70 northern newspapers.

