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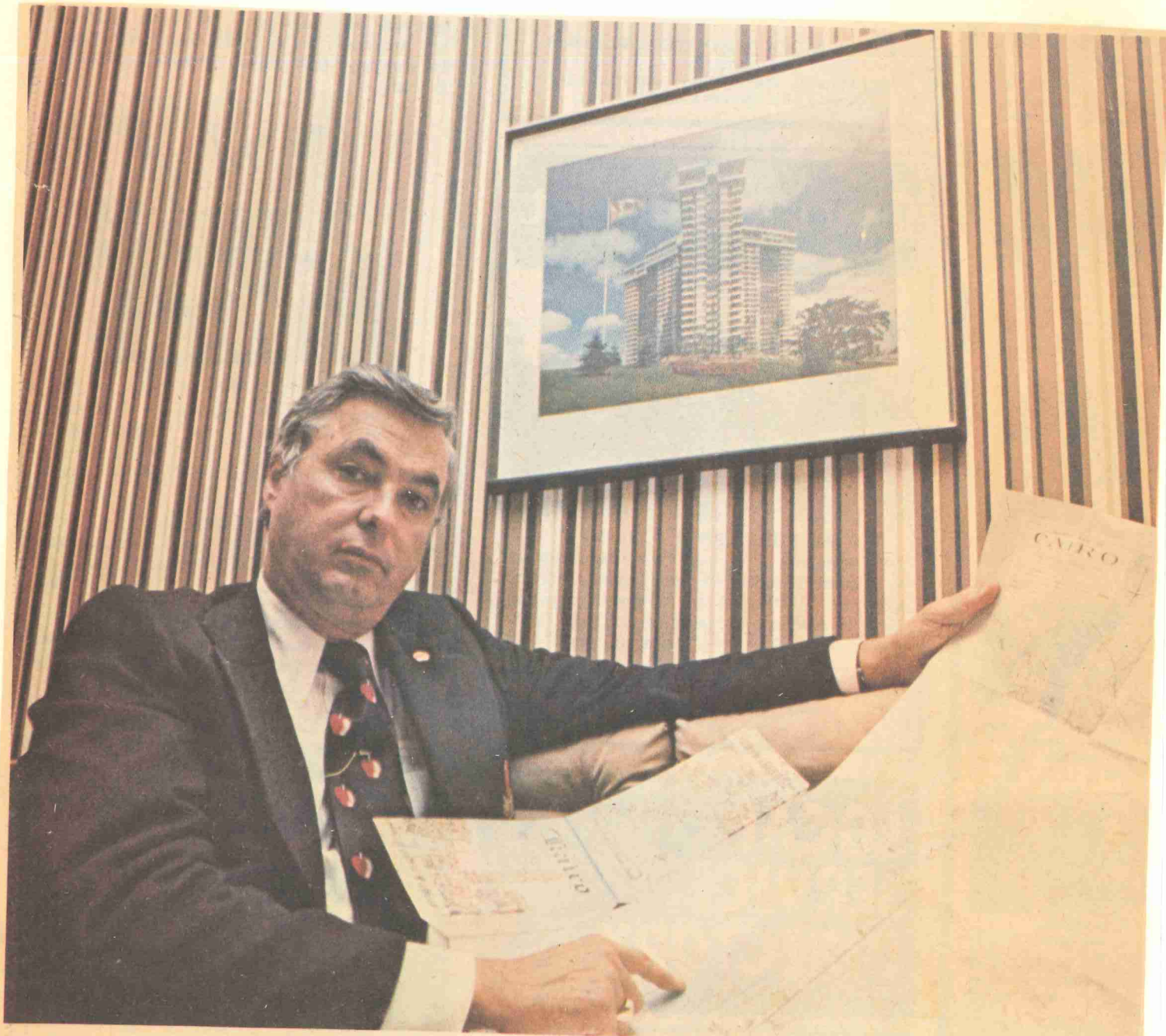
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SHIPP, HAROLD

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**From the balcony, a view of the Pyramids:**

# Shipp to build luxury condominiums in Egypt



In its search for North American know-how, the United Arab Emirates has turned to Mississauga's Shipp Corporation for the design and construction of a high-rise condominium apartment

building in Cairo. Shipp says the biggest problem in construction there is the lack of speed. In one case it took 12 years to complete a 16-storey hotel.

Staff photo by Fred Loek



By ROB McCORMICK

The site will be somewhere along the west bank of the Nile. Most of the apartments will look across the half-mile wide river at the Cairo skyline, about eight kilometers away. The rest will see the sun setting nightly behind the 5,000-year-old Pyramids.

Agreement in principle has been reached between the Canadian organization that will build the high-rise condominium and the Egyptian entrepreneurs who have organized the collaboration. The next six months or a year will be devoted to working out the details.

The builder and designer is Mississauga's Shipp Corporation, the 54-year-old firm whose concrete and steel dominion includes the Applewood group and whose current projects in Toronto and Mississauga carry price tags well in excess of \$170-million.

#### CATERS UNABASHEDLY

Not unlike Shipp's most recent domestic undertaking, the luxurious Applewood Landmark, the Egyptian endeavor will be the kind of development that caters unabashedly to the wealthier strata, with the apartments expected to sell for the equivalent of about \$180,000 (The Egyptian pound worth about \$1.45 U.S.).

"Much of the market will consist of expatriate Egyptians who do not reside in Cairo all the time, but who have condominiums there, much as someone here might have a similar residence in Ft. Lauderdale," said Harold Gordon Shipp last week.

There is more than mere affluence behind the rambling, 2,000-square-foot condominiums with everything from standard double garages to individual health studio facilities for each unit. Culture plays a role, because for the Egyptian, the home is more than just a base of operations. It is a centre in itself.

"The Egyptian spends much more time at home than the North American," Shipp said. "He doesn't eat out and entertain himself outside the home nearly as frequently as we do, so the investment is an important one."

## 'If we make a success of this, it opens up all of the Mideast'

Unlike other businessmen who have attempted, over the years, to tap the gold mine that exists in an Egyptian market hungry for North American expertise, Shipp did not try to bull his way into the Mideast. He was invited.

In March Shipp had traveled to Cairo with a team that consisted of his vice-president of construction, a mechanical engineer, an architect, his four subcontractors and a representative from the trade and commerce branch of the Federal Government.

The sojourn was an exploratory trip to allow his principals a close look at Cairo. The conclusion was that that country had the manpower and equipment necessary to build high-rises, but lacked the organization, technical sophistication and productivity, as well as what Shipp called the expertise in the construction of the super-dwellings.

The squad returned confident that the Egyptians were, however, able to maintain the structures, and required only some guidance in the other areas.

"We will be designer and builder for the United Arab Emirates investor group. We'll work to co-ordinate and advertise the sales of the suites and will train and direct the management of the corporation after the sale," Shipp said.

#### ATTRACTIVE TARGET

Under a suppressive form of socialism until four years ago, Cairo is described by Shipp as a city that can be compared to Europe after the war. Little technological progress has been made, and communications and transportation systems have been allowed to deteriorate. But now there exists in the metropolis a remarkable vitality, the developer said, a

quality that makes Cairo an attractive target for industrious businessmen.

"It makes me very proud to think that we were the company invited into Egypt. We are in the process of developing trust between the two countries, and that could take as long as a year. These things can't be done over the phone or by cable. They must be done in person," Shipp said.

He sees the first condominium on the Nile as a stepping stone into an unexplored frontier for his firm.

"We're just building the one to start with, but I'm confident that if we make a success of this, it opens up all the Mideast."

Not that he needs the business. He has been asked why he pursues Egypt with his firm involved in so many developments here.

"I guess it's the challenge that drives men to try and improve the world and try to do something better or more efficiently than someone else before."

#### THE LITTLE GUY

Talk to Shipp and you're talking big money, big motives, big jobs. It's inevitable. But just as inevitable is the ironic anecdote of the little guy that he delights in relating.

On the September trip he emerged one morning from his room at the Nile Hilton hotel and proceeded to the pool, where the gregarious builder made the acquaintance of an Egyptian gentleman.

The standard introductory questions established that the man, now the hotel's purchasing manager, had once lived in Canada. Near Toronto, actually, just to the west. That's right, in Mississauga.

"Maybe you've heard of my firm, sir," Shipp offered. "We've built homes in that area."

The man had indeed heard of Shipp. He'd lived on Queen Fredrica Dr. and once owned a Shipp home.

"It just proves what my mother always told me," Shipp reflected from his North Service Rd. office last week. "You should always be nice to people, because you never know whether you're going to meet them again."

Yeah, it's a small world alright.