

CHICAGO TO BLOCK EXCESSIVE CHARGES OF RENT LANDLORDS

Committees Appointed in City Council to Investigate Profiteering.

CHICAGO, April 15.—This city is attempting to prevent rent profiteering by regulating increases in rates and by organizing a \$100,000,000 corporation to build homes and sell them on easy payments. Meanwhile Chicago's flat dwellers have been forming unions to wage war on alleged profiteering landlords and committees in the city council have been investigating increases in rents ranging up to 100 and even 200 per cent.

Several hundred families have solved their individual housing problems by making their homes in houseboats moored in the branches of the Chicago river, the Calumet and lakes in south Chicago. Once in possession of a house boat, the owner only has to pay \$1 a month for the privilege of mooring his craft. If he does not like his location he can move his home boat elsewhere. Many of these boats cost \$1,000 each and have five rooms, parlor, dining room, kitchen and two bedrooms.

Tenants Buy Apartments. In some cases groups of tenants have solved the rent problem by forming cooperative companies and buying the apartment houses in which they live.

The housing corporation, which has been financed by banks and business men, has under consideration a plan to build a row of model homes in Grant park, on the lake front. Examples of many types of standardized homes would be erected, furnished and surrounded by settings of trees and shrubbery so that a prospective purchaser of a

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new home could look over the styles before placing his order.

Permit 30% Increase. Attempts have been made to check rent profiteering by cooperation of the city council and the Cook County Real Estate board which investigated complaints and, when increases were found to be excessive, advised the landlord to withdraw his demands. In general the investigators have allowed an increase of about 30 per cent over last year's rentals.

A proposal was made to erect scores of portable houses but the carpenters' union declared its opposition to that plan even if the houses come from union factories.

The recent tornadoes which destroyed 100 houses and damaged 400 more in Chicago and its suburbs have augmented a housing shortage which had already become acute through suspension of building operations in the war and long-drawn builders' contracts.

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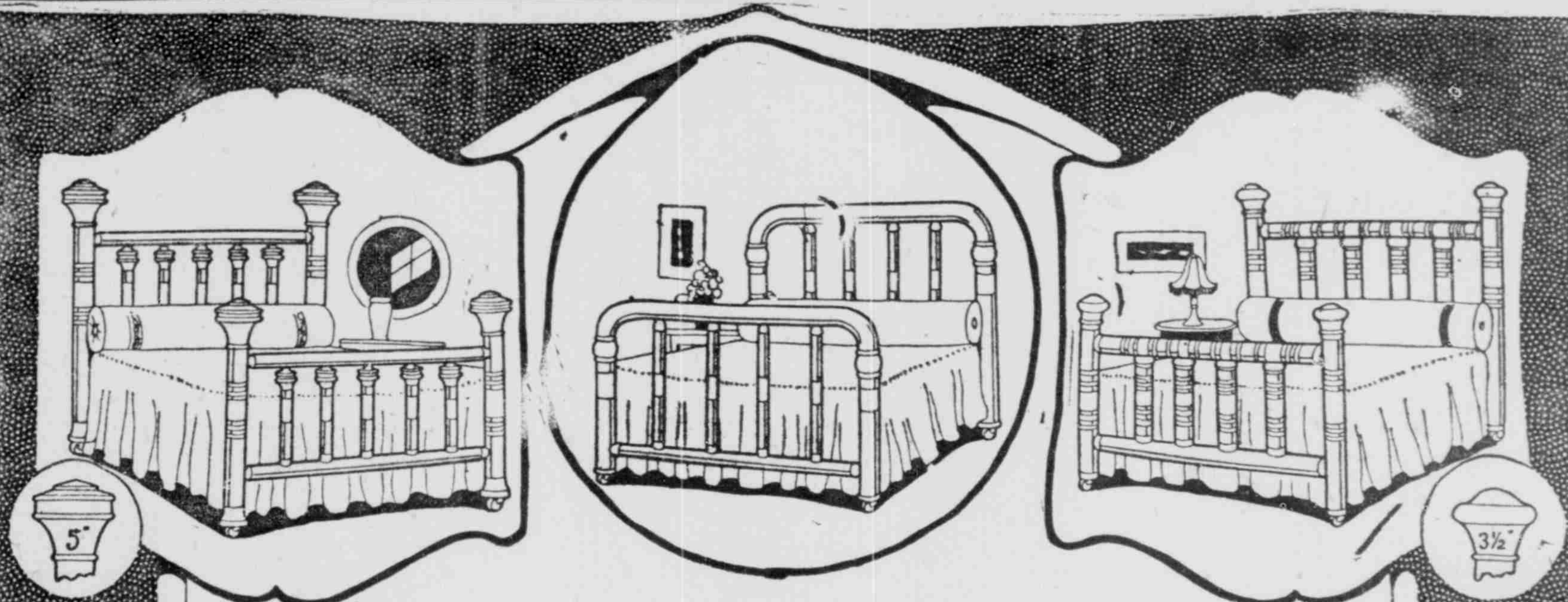
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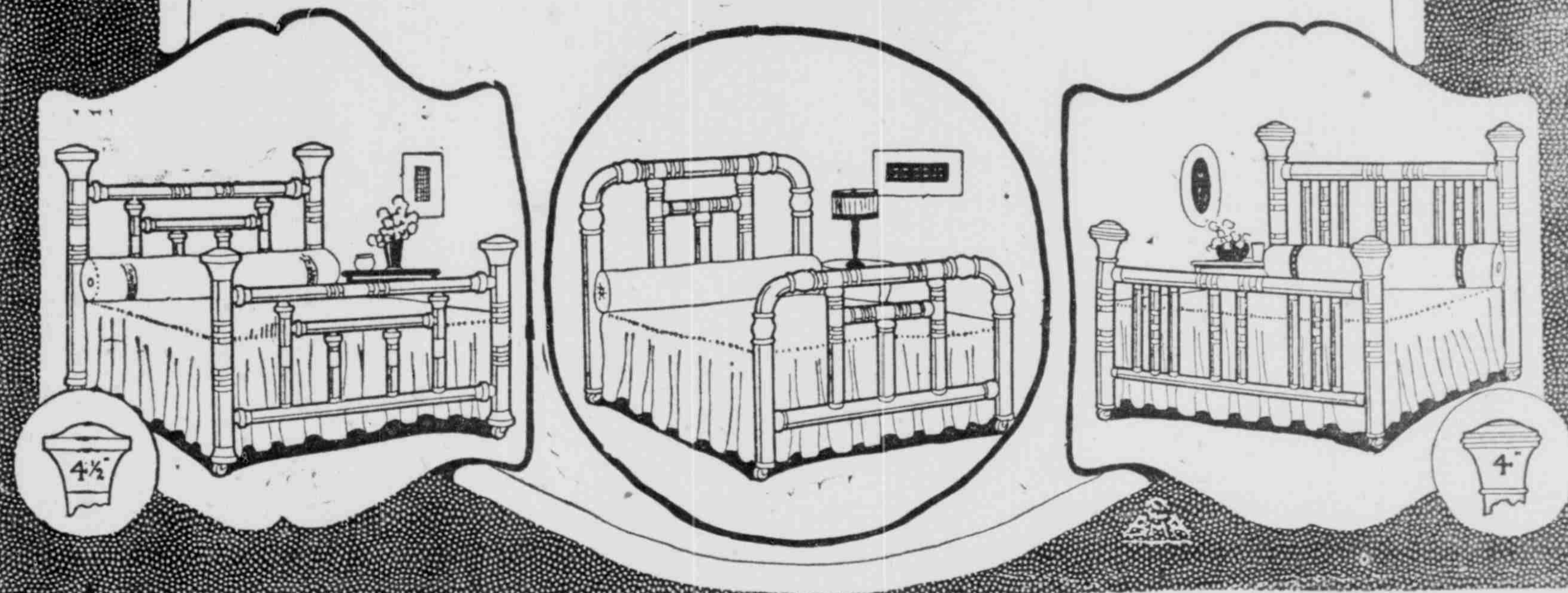
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