D. Speculative and General Public Buying.

In the latter part of 1935 several real estate syndicates were formed to buy acquired properties from mortgagee institutions, recondition, and sell them. Their dealings were principally with one of the larger banks with which they contracted to buy its acquired residential properties on conditional sales contracts. These syndicates were quite active until the bank's acquirements were disposed of but have since been quite inactive.

Some of the larger construction concerns bought residential lots quite freely in Areas "A-6", "B-15 to 23" inclusive, and "C-15", the aggregate being variously estimated at from 700 to 1,000 lots. These they have been improving and selling upon completion through the various real estate firms of the city.

The larger and stronger real estate concerns, having office downtown in San Francisco, do very little sub-dividing. In fact, most of them treat "residential" real estate as a sideline; however, two of them--Caldwell, Cornwall and Banker, and Baldwin and Howell--operate branch offices in the residential districts. One of these concerns, Caldwell, Cornwall and Banker, acquired two old cemeteries--the Odd Fellows' Cemetery ("B-10") and the Masonic Cemetery ("B-11")--platted them, and have been marketing the lots at from $100 to $200 per front foot in an orderly manner.

There is no evidence of speculative operations of the "buy today, sell tomorrow" variety on the part of the public, and the operations outlined have all been of a constructive nature, unaccompanied by anything that could be called a "promotional sales campaign" in the accepted sense of that term.

Apparently, San Francisco real estate activity, since its wild splurge in the seventies which has already been related, seems to have been conducted in a very conservative manner, and it is hard to imagine a "wild-eyed speculative real estate boom" here. There is some talk of a number of sub-divisions that will be opened up in "across the Bay" sections and marketed here as soon as the new bridges are opened to railroad, street car, and other common-carrier transportation, but it is not believed that any such activity has gotten beyond the "talk" stage as yet.