By BOB CREAMER

"Negroes wreck property values wherever they get in." So goes the Iron Law of Falling Values.

This "law" is the favorite "reason" for keeping Negroes out of the neighborhood, even among those who consider the problem on enlightened lines.

Our House Divided

Negroes wreck property values everywhere we went from the slums on the Near South Side to the mansions overlooking the river.

We put it to a number of tests and found that, as far as Pearsia is concerned, the Iron Law is dead wrong---nothing but a chain of myths forged by the same fears and prejudices that underlie other excuses for discrimination.

Studies made by researchers in San Francisco, Philadelphia, Chicago, Kansas City, Albany, Rochester, and other cities have shown one thing:

The entry of Negroes into all-white neighborhoods most often doesn't hurt values and in many cases it boosts them.

Here in Pearsia, we are now satisfied that the same thing applies.

IN THE TWO "mixed" neighborhoods above Pearsia's bluff and in the many blocks on the Near South Side where Negroes and whites live together, we put the Iron Law to some tests.

The classic offense of Negroes against property is that they let it run down, and our tests show that many Negroes do live in rundown houses.

But if you want to find a Negro in the Gale-Nebraska, Wilton-Embert, or Park Road areas, or even along Howell; don't look for a shack---look for the best house on the block.

This is especially true around the Gale Avenue. As a typical bluffer area, the neighborhood was on the decline before Negroes could buy there freely.

For the police didn't bring Negroes into the area. They did not want to buy runny houses, although the whites had many.

Continued on Page A4

(See "Effect")

Effect on Real Estate Prices Put to Test

Continued from Page A-1

to sell. A lot of colored families have built new homes, while those who didn't frequently added salted, siding and storm windows to the houses they bought.

They are pulling up this fallen area—rather than tearing it down, and many people are beginning to realize it. One white homeowner challenged us to compare his Negro neighbor's home price with the others on the block. "If you can find a leaf on there," he said, "I'll eat it." Another admitted, "The colored homes put ours to shame.

The same could be said of Pearsia Heights and the 160 block Wilton; yet the Negro home seeker is still getting a cold shoulder. This boosts a lot of Negroes like the one who asked us: 'How can they kick when you build a $25,000 home next to a $10,000 one?'

THE ANSWER is found in two other "proofs" given for the fall- ing value theory. The first is that whites will not move into "mixed" areas, and the second is that it is impossible to get your money out of a house in such a neighborhood.

We could cut the argument very short by citing one case—a white family who bought a house on Gale near two colored homes in 1937 for $400 and sold it last month for $900.

But everybody doesn't double their money. A more average case is the white man who bought in the neighborhood in 1934 for $8,000 and sold in 1931 for more than $11,000.

But most of the other cases have moved into their neighborhood in recent years have stayed.

Seven volunteered to tell us they had moved into the Gale-Nebraska area with full knowledge that Negroes were in the neighborhood. A check at the county recorder's office showed that fourteen more houses were purchased there in the past five years.

So whites have moved into a "mixed" area, and at the same time and at almost the same rate as colored.

As for getting your money out of a house, that is a good trick in any neighborhood. But it isn't any harder on Gale than it is elsewhere.

Panic has made the Iron Law come true in some instances in