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(Abstracts of Recent Publications on Foreign Housing and Planning)

Compiled by the

International Housing Activities Staff
~~Office of the Administrator~~
U.S. Housing and Home Finance Agency

C O N T E N T S

	Page
Aided Self-Help Housing	1
Architecture	2
Building Methods	3
Company Housing	5
Housing Conditions in Foreign Countries	6
Housing Programs in Foreign Countries	9
Housing for the Aged	12
Housing the Single Persons	13
Land Use	13
Slum Clearance	14
Town Planning	15

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AIDED SELF-HELP HOUSING

1. "From Greek Devastation Have Come New Homes via Aided-Self-Help" by George A. Speer. Journal of Housing (NAHO), February 1953. pp. 51-58.

This article is a follow-up of a previous report "Unbeaten Greece Attacks Its Housing Problem" published in March 1950 in the same Journal, and written by George Reed and the present author, both formerly Housing Advisers of the ECA Mission in Greece. In this second illustrated article, the author describes the heroic effort of that little country to rebuild its rural villages after the war. At least 90,000 homes in over 2,100 farm areas were reported destroyed or severely damaged. This gigantic reconstruction job could not be assumed by the building industry alone which provided less than 25,000 units in the year 1949/1950. Assistance from ECA was urgently needed. The article shows the tremendous difficulties of the reconstruction program caused by a complete breakdown of transportation facilities, extreme distances of the isolated villages, and lack of funds, skilled labor, and materials.

The Greek Ministry of Housing and Reconstruction which was in charge of the program decided to provide the returning farmer with merely a nucleus of a home, just enough to get the farmer started again and to let him expand his house later. It is stated that this method permitted the limited funds to spread over a much wider area. These homes were entirely substandard and great care had to be taken to insure that the subsequent expansion would be properly done. Drawings for the completed houses were left with the village priest or teacher who could explain the drawings. Building materials for the equivalent of 9 million dollars were purchased and shipped from European countries and from USA; the rest was to be supplied by Greece herself. However, the author points out that lack of cash and of skilled building labor made it necessary to rely heavily on the farmer or the refugee family to build or to complete the expansible house, though with proper assistance and direction. Engineers of the ministry traveled from village to village assisting, advising and encouraging the families.

The article concludes that as the program finally developed, four out of every five houses were built with state assistance by the farmers themselves. The remainder was built by contractors. It is stated that by building only an expansible nucleus of a house and by employing the labor of the farmer families, the demands of material and labor were so reduced that three houses were provided at the usual cost of one. "Aided self help on this scale had never been seen before."

2. "Basic Problems of Self-Help Construction" (Grundprobleme der Bauselbsthilfe) by R. Frey. Die Volksheimstaette, Bielefeld, Vol. 4, No. 11, November 1952. pp. 3-8. (In German).

This article is a report on a discussion of self-help problems which took place at a regional meeting of the Deutsches Volksheimstaettenwerk (German People's Homestead Organization) in September 1952. The meeting dealt with the ethical and social-pedagogical experiences and requirements of self-help. It stressed the will of the individual to provide a home for his family by his own toil and sacrifice. Many questions of building group organization were discussed, such as the required minimum number of working hours, appraisal of the manual work contributed to the group project, and the order of allocating completed structures.

It was maintained that self-help projects are creating more orders for builders and materials dealers than they otherwise could expect. The use of mechanical equipment was believed desirable but, admittedly, its usefulness depends upon the size of the project and the cost of renting machines. Lengthy discussions centered around the selection of the participants and the desirable characteristics of the self-helper. Experience was quoted showing that the participation in self-help work does not necessarily affect the work performance of the employee in his main job. Lastly, the important role of the "Siedlungstraeger" (trustee agency) in the various phases of project planning, site selection, construction, financing, and advising the self-help groups was strongly emphasized. Floor plans, technical data, and a selected bibliography supplement the text.

3. The Revised Rural Hurricane Rehousing Scheme by the Housing Tribunal. Government Printer, Jamaica, 1953. 11 pp.

How to conduct an aided-self-help program in Jamaica, using three illustrated plans, is described in this leaflet which is available at the local level from "Secretary of Parochial Board." Government grants, loans, and technical assistance are outlined for the benefit of those who wish to build housing with their own efforts.

Cross Reference: See also Item No. 16 under the heading "Housing Programs in Foreign Countries."

ARCHITECTURE

4. The Observer's Book of British Architecture by John Penoyre and Michael Ryan, London and New York, 1951. 217 pp.

This pocket-sized illustrated guide to historical buildings also deals with modern architecture in a chapter entitled "The Twentieth Century" (pp. 155 ff.). It is said that the sense of scale and

proportion and the handling of the texture and color are not invented afresh by every generation. They come partly from the inspiration we get from new demands and the new methods we have for meeting them, and partly from the rich legacy of building tradition.

Economy is called fundamental to good building. To achieve it, in this century, the use of many machine-made materials may be essential. While they have a beauty of their own--their precision, their even texture, their economy--it is stated that not all materials used in modern architecture are necessarily machine-made. In many cases, local traditional materials are by far the best.

Modern architecture as yet may appear rather austere and more suitable to industrial than domestic use. Machine-made materials and modern structural methods, however, are held to be essential results of our social structure and are not a passing phase. Architects today are using the most readily available materials in a manner suitable to their nature. The honest use of the materials at hand is still as basic a principle of architecture today as it has always been.

BUILDING METHODS

5. Anti-Seismic Safety in Building by Eng. Mariano E. Pereira Bravo.
Submitted to the Second Congress of the Capitals, Lisbon 1950. 21 pp.

The author states that seismology has not yet attained a safe basis of knowledge applicable to the technique of economical building. Safety measures include the following aspects: (a) stability of the buildings, (b) safety of persons using the public streets, (c) protection against fire, (d) rapid evacuation of urban communities and first aid. The writer points out that while vertical seismic movements cause more damage on the lower floors, horizontal undulating movements more on the upper floors. In both cases, damage occurs at the highest points. Throughfares of constant width suffer corresponding to the tallness of the ruined buildings which explains the height limitations established in seismic zones. In Italy, buildings in such zones are limited to four or five floors, regardless of the existence of a basement. In Tokio, the total height is limited to 30 metres (about 100 ft.).

Buildings of L and U shapes are believed inadvisable, while circular and square designs, and in a lesser degree rectangular designs, appear safer because they constitute a closed figure. The author reports that earthquake experience in Yokohama and Tokio have shown that rigidity of construction and solid connections to foundations are desirable.

After dealing with evacuation problems, the article recommends a network of water reservoirs over towns to be used when water mains are damaged. In conclusion, it is suggested that the city councils, the

seismological observatories and civil engineering laboratories of all countries concerned establish permanent collaboration and a constant exchange of ideas.

6. Acoustics in Modern Building Practice by Fritz Ingerslew. London: The Architectural Press, 1952. 290 pp. (Original in Danish).

This textbook has been translated into English to familiarize architects and students with the findings and recommendations of Danish scientists in the field of architectural acoustics. Room acoustics and the properties of sound-absorbing materials are treated extensively. Also, the discussions of the phenomena of noise and the various methods of noise abatement appear to be of interest. It is stated that the best approach to sound insulation is to consider it as a planning problem because good planning will yield better results than later remedial measures. For example, the living room as a source of noise and the bedroom requiring quiet should, if possible, not be next to each other, especially if they belong to two different dwellings. The bathroom should also be as far as possible from the living room. The staircase should not be next to the bedrooms but should be used as insulation between flats or houses. In a pair of flats or houses, each unit should be planned as an image of the adjoining unit; this would considerably reduce the insulation problem. Various other solutions are mentioned for one-room flats.

In town planning, a careful study should be made of the noise created by traffic and industries as well as of the inevitable background noises in residential districts. The author states that shops and offices should be located along highways while dwellings, schools, churches and hospitals be situated on quiet streets. Dwellings should be set back from the street line and hedging and trees used to reduce the noise from the street. Courtyards surrounded by multi-storied buildings should be avoided.

Industries should be placed in special industrial districts. It is held preferable to have one or more large industrial districts rather than many small ones because industrial noise spreads out over a large area. They should be placed on the outskirts of a city and in such a position that the prevailing wind blows from the residential to the industrial district. With an increasing understanding of acoustics, efforts at separating industrial and residential districts can be improved.

7. "Swedish Cement Transported in Pneumatic Tanks." Johannesburg: The South African Builder, Vol. 30, No. 12, December 1952. p. 39.

In recent years, some new methods of transporting cement in bulk have been developed in Sweden. This article reports on specially designed "tank" ships equipped with automatic devices for handling the cargo. Another labor-saving method called the Interconsult System is

used to transport cement in bulk in metal tanks mounted on special trucks from the factory to the building site where it is stored in small silos. Quick and dustless unloading is effected by pneumatic devices. Unloading at the site is done at the rate of one ton per minute. It is stated that the site silos require less space than piles of bagged cement. The article stresses the labor and time saving advantages of this method and the elimination of losses through flying dust. The method is said to be in use in various other countries, including Morocco, France, Finland, Norway and Siam.

COMPANY HOUSING

8. "How One Large Caribbean Concern Solves Its Staff Housing Problems." Kent House, Port-of-Spain, Trinidad: Information Bulletin of the Caribbean Commission, Vol. 5, No. 11, June 1952. p. 307.

The rapid development of the Lago oil refinery at Arima in the late thirties made it necessary to bring in many foreign staff members for whom company-owned rental housing was provided. Beginning in 1938 it was decided to encourage home owning among the locally hired employees. For this purpose, the Home Building Foundation was established. Its first project, called "Essoville", contained 77 homes which were to be sold to employees on installments. The company retained title until payments were completed. After the second World War, it was decided to sell the homes on a regular mortgage basis. Under the installment plan, as long as title was not transferred, the company had to face the problems of a landlord, including maintenance. Moreover, problems of employee relations arose when there were defaults in payments. Also, the return of the invested capital was very slow.

To finance the construction of the needed accommodations, the Home Building Foundation borrowed the necessary funds, first from the Aruba Bank in Oranjestad and later from the Lago Thrift Foundation. The latter is a savings institution to which both the employees and the company make fixed contributions based on salary. On this basis, about 360 units had been built by February 1952; 81 more homes are planned in the San Nicholas area. Houses may be bought on a down-payment of 1,500 guilders, but title is transferred only after one-third of the price has been paid. The average cost of the homes (four or five rooms, concrete block construction) has been 8,500 guilders.

9. "Industrial Firms House Their Employees." London: Housing Centre Review No. 6, December 1952. p. 14.

In an open forum of the General Committee of the Housing Centre held in October 1952, Mr. W. Soester, estate manager of an industrial firm, referred to the contribution of industrial firms to the housing of their workers. He states that before the war, labor was fairly

mobile and the average worker was able to find accommodations for about 15 shillings a week. The wartime move of factories away from the towns created a new situation which to some extent was met by conversions, and other temporary expedients. When, after the war, many industries decided to remain in their new quarters, a permanent solution of the housing problem had to be sought. Housing associations were formed with government approval and local authorities were prepared to advance up to 90% of cost plus subsidies to keep rents down. The firms appointed skilled administrators to foster more intimate contact between employer and employee with results which were called excellent. Mr. Soester stated that today, with the housing situation still acute, there was a growing tendency for industrial undertakings to adopt this method of housing their workers. He added that these houses were not "tied". If vacancies occurred, the local authority usually retained the right to nominate 20% of the tenants, but gave preference to employees of the firm concerned.

HOUSING CONDITIONS IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES

10. Housing in Canada, A Factual Summary, Fourth Quarter 1952 published by the Economic Research Department of the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation, Ottawa, Vol. 7, No. 14. 123 pp.

This quarterly provides comprehensive information on all phases of building construction, covering population trends, housebuilding activity, publicly assisted housebuilding, real estate lending, building materials and building labor, and building costs. A detailed list of sources of statistical data is included in the report.

It is pointed out that buoyant demand conditions, supported by rising incomes, easier lending terms introduced under the National Housing Act in October 1951, and by a greater availability of institutional mortgage funds, have been responsible for the rising volume of residential construction in 1952. In the third quarter of 1952 alone, institutional lending on all types of property was 59% higher in amount than in the corresponding period of 1951; over the first 9 months, the value of approved loans was only 5% higher. As construction employment reached record levels, wage rates of building labor continued to rise moderately. On the other hand, prices of building materials showed very little change, with output for most items declining.

A new regulation pertaining to the financing of rental housing was introduced in October 1952. It is expected to encourage increased activity in the construction of rental accommodations by raising the maximum loan on semi-detached or row housing from \$6,700 to \$8,500. The changes bring loans for semi-detached and row houses into line with individual houses. Also loans on multiple-family dwellings were raised from \$6,700 to \$7,200 per unit.

11. "Housing Progress in England." London: AmEmbassy London Despatch, February 18, 1953.

According to this report, remarkable progress was made in housing in 1952. The number of completions rose by 23% over 1951 and reached about 240,000 units. The number of houses under construction increased by 24%. The most disappointing feature, however, is seen in the slow response of private construction. While the proportion of privately built completions was expected to reach up to 25%, it actually contributed only 14%. This does not include rebuilt, war-destroyed houses, but its share in the number of approved dwellings rose from 13% to 19%. Builders insist that private enterprise would have made a bigger contribution in 1952, had several local authorities been more willing to grant licenses.

A new scheme effective January 1, 1953 no longer requires that the builder of a private house show equal need with someone on the local authority waiting list. Local authorities still require a special license for houses having an area of 1,000 to 1,500 square feet. But up to 1,000 sq. ft., the license must now be given automatically. Rent or selling price still remain controlled. Licenses for as many as 12 houses of this size in a block must be issued on application by speculative builders. A step which may encourage private building by easing costs somewhat is seen in the withdrawal beginning November 18, 1952 of the "development charge." (See Item No. 21). Since that date, prices of land are reported to have soared, but the Ministry expects that this will be only temporary. The builders also claim that the requirement of the New Streets Act of 1951 serves as a deterrent to building. This act requires that in urban areas, no new house may be erected in a private street until the estimated amount of the expected road charges has been paid or secured by the owner.

It is further reported that an economy-type house called "The People's House" now represents between 60% and 70% of all local authority contracts in England and Wales. With the same amount of materials and manpower 11 houses now can be built instead of 10 as before. A circular of the Minister of Housing and Local Government dated January 31, 1952 recommends the use of new building methods by which labor saving and quicker completions can be achieved. These methods would result in substantial reductions in prices of non-traditional house types and also in lower fees and loan charges because the houses are completed faster and rents are obtained earlier. The Minister added that although the housing problem would not be solved in 1953, "a certain easement" may occur which would allow big-scale slum clearance and redevelopment.

12. "Housing in Bolivia." New York: Report of the United Nations Mission of Technical Assistance to Bolivia, October 1951. p. 91 ff.

This is a comprehensive report (124 pp.) investigating the national resources of Bolivia and recommending methods for the economic and social development of the country. The typical housing accommodations in cities

mining camps, and in rural areas are characterized as differing greatly from accepted Western standards of health and decency. However, some public housing projects and also some company housing are said to meet reasonable standards. Except in tropical and semi-tropical areas, houses are one or two-room adobe huts without windows, chimney, running water or sanitation. Since the climate in the plains is tropical, and on the Altiplano, sunny and dry, most household tasks are performed in the open air. Construction costs of adobe houses are called relatively low since they can be built with local labor and materials. Heating requirements seem to be the main factor limiting the house size. Therefore, the introduction of cheap oil stoves would serve to improve housing standards. Since, according to the report, the existing house type has many advantages, the report advocates it should be improved rather than replaced.

Several recommendations are made to raise the standard of living by an improved use of existing resources. It is suggested that housing conditions should be improved by demonstration housings on a limited scale for imitation by both public and private organizations. An educational campaign for the improvement of existing housing also is proposed. It is stated that expenditure of typical families for alcohol and coca could be diverted to the laying of floors, the installation of stoves, windows, a cleaner water supply, and simple sanitary arrangements. While the Mission recognizes that poverty is responsible in a large measure for the unsatisfactory status of housing, it believes that a greater awareness in the population of the desirability of cleanliness, order, and privacy may go far to improve conditions. Maps and statistics are included.

13. The Economic Development of Nicaragua. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1953. 413 pp.

This report of a mission organized by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development at the request of the Government of Nicaragua indicates that Nicaragua is blessed with excellent natural resources and a relatively small population. Most of the people are very poor but there is a small well-to-do class. The Government is actively supporting a development program.

Most house buyers meet the credit problem "by using their bank credit facilities for agricultural purposes, which releases funds for construction." Otherwise, the construction industry is on a cash basis.

"Maestros" rather than architects or engineers have been in charge of most building in the past, but now the larger buildings are being constructed under supervision of professionals. "Reinforced concrete and concrete blocks are the common materials of construction for the better buildings. Mixed construction (taquezal)--wood framing and masonry fill--is being used less than previously and is confined entirely to low-cost building. All-wood construction is little used because of the termite problem." (p. 162).

HOUSING PROGRAMS IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES

14. "Tory Reform for Housing." London: The Economist, February 14, 1953. pp. 395-397.

The editors recount that 240,000 dwellings, mostly by public authorities, were built in the United Kingdom in 1952 compared with 195,000 in 1951. Though materials shortages may hamper construction, it appears that 300,000 houses will be completed in 1953.

The Economist is critical of the program in several respects: (1) housing is being built at the expense of much needed industrial use of capital; (2) the defense effort has been slowed; (3) the international balance of payments has been weakened; (4) "People would put up with their present houses more willingly if a new house were not such remarkable value for money. The ratio of rooms to people is now the highest ever recorded and if the demand for houses were not artificially inflated, it would be apparent that the country already has enough houses, and attention could turn back to improving their average quality." (5) "The present Government has not only perpetuated this inflated demand for new houses by continuing the indiscriminate payment of subsidies. It has substantially increased the housing subsidies. They cannot admittedly be swept away altogether but no one has ever explained why prosperous working-class families should not pay an economic rent--except that they are conditioned by long years of subsidy and rent control to regard the present level of rents as sacred and immutable, even though the proportion of income absorbed by rent is much lower than it was before the war....." (6) "....So many scarce resources are today lavished on providing subsidized houses for those who could afford to pay the full cost of them, that actually less is being done than for many years past for those who really need help. Before the war, progress was being made with slum clearance and with the relief of overcrowding, the only kinds of housing that qualified for subsidy under the last of the prewar housing Acts.the slums have been creeping back. People are still living in houses that were condemned fifteen years ago--and paying higher rates (taxes) in order to subsidize still further the minority who are lucky enough to get a new house. (7)present housing policy fails either to make the best use of the accommodation that now exists or to look after it properly; and for both kinds of failure, the Rent Restriction Acts are to blame."

The editors conclude that the present administration could if it would make its mark "in three spheres at once--the economic, the social and the political. Economically, he (the Minister of Housing) could meet the country's most crying need--for capital to put into wealth-creating industry. Socially, he could end the untold human misery that now lies behind the maldistribution (not the shortage, for there is no real shortage) of houses. Politically, by turning back to slum clearance and overcrowding, he could strike a real blow for the central principle of Tory Reform--that the state's assistance should be given generously to those, who really need it."

15. "Housing in Communist Countries - Part I, Russia" by Desmond Donnelly. London: Town and Country Planning, November 1952. pp. 506-508.

This article deals mainly with the housing conditions in Moscow which is called a city of fantastic contrasts. On his recent trip, the author was impressed by the enormous spaciousness of the main streets which are 150-200 yards in width. Obviously, street widening took place since the revolution and "presumably was made possible by the departure of the landlords to another place." Whole rows of buildings were pulled down. Many large buildings were jacked up on rollers and moved. All over Moscow new building was taking place at a seemingly incredible rate. Most of it was either new office blocks or 7-10 story flats, in addition to the half dozen skyscrapers. The author stated that no cottage type houses are being built in the city, although there is a standard rural cottage for the country areas.

In spite of this building drive, great areas of shacks and slums still remain and housing is called "probably Russia's biggest internal social problem." Moscow is building flats at the rate of approximately 35,000 units per year. Most are of a standard two- or three-room type. They are called far inferior to British housing, although they may seem good to a former Russian slum dweller. Rents based on earnings vary between 5% and 10% of the breadwinner's wage (presumably on the basis of a public subsidy). It is anticipated that it will take 20 years to solve Moscow's housing problem and that then the city's area will have doubled in size (present area is about 300 square kilometers, that is about 74,000 acres). Since new industry is located elsewhere, no substantial population increase is expected.

The author believes that Moscow is no exception and that also in other places he has seen such as Sverdlovsk in the Urals and from Omsk across Siberia to Irkutsk on the Outer Mongolian Border, a "fiendish" building boom has been going on caused, obviously, by the present industrialization. Although the flats are called unsuitable by British standards and their architecture is characterized as heavy and ornate, the author states it would be unwise to overlook the magnitude of Russia's industrial revolution. "It is Manchester in the early nineteenth century multiplied on a scale not easy to envisage."

16. "Housing in South Africa." The South African Builder, Vol. 31, No. 1, Johannesburg, January 1953. pp. 13-15.

After long debates and against considerable opposition, Parliament has adopted the "Native Services Levy Act of 1952" which provides for a levy on certain employers of indigenous labor in the larger towns of the Union. The levy amounts to a maximum of 2s.6d. for each week's work by a Negro employee. The revenue from this levy is to be used to subsidize community facilities and services for urban Negroes. Up to 6d. may be used for transport subsidies, the other 2s. would be used by local authorities for the installation of water, sanitation, lighting, roads,

and other approved services. These services will be supplied up to the border of the housing project only. As it appears from this source, the housing projects themselves will not be aided by the levy. They may be built by the employees themselves with the aid of loans for materials and the provision of suitable sites.

Employers of domestic servants and of workers housed in suitable "company housing" are exempt while government, provincial and local administrations, and railways are included. A committee composed of representatives of the various interested groups will advise the Minister of Native Affairs on all pertinent matters, especially on the application of the law to any area and also on any variation in the size of the contributions. The article expects that the provision of those essential services will help remove one of the biggest obstacles in the problem of Negro housing in the major European urban areas of South Africa. Various earlier attempts to solve the problem with the financial aid of localities or the state, for financial reasons, are said to have yielded only limited results.

17. Housing Activities in Puerto Rico Planned in the Ninth Six-Year Financial Program of the Puerto Rico Planning Board. Published February 1952. 66 pp.

This Six-Year Program, listing the various projects planned by the Governor and submitted to the Legislature in March 1952, covers the period 1952-53 to 1957-58. The recommendations included in this document aim at producing a balanced program of public activities in harmony with the economic resources and social objectives of the government and are planned to stimulate economic progress of the Island. With regard to housing, the program aims at the elimination of slums and at the provision of adequate housing for low-income families. The slum population of Puerto Rico is estimated at 96,000 families. The average annual increase is about 4,000 families. Up to June 30, 1951, the Puerto Rico Housing Authority had completed more than 4,800 dwelling units; 3,400 had been under construction. Moreover, about 2,000 lots had been provided in land and utility types of development. In addition, the Municipal Housing Authorities of San Juan, Ponce, and Mayaguez finished 3,300 units, had under construction 600 units, and provided 1,500 lots.

The Financial Program for the next six years provides facilities for nearly 44,000 families which include a backlog of about 50,000 families now living in slums. This program is based on the assumption that Puerto Rico will be assigned 30,000 units under Title III of the United States Housing Act of 1949. In addition, the Social Programs Administration of the Department of Agriculture and Commerce plans to resettle 48,000 landless farm families. Of these, 37,000 will be resettled within the next six years. The construction of 250 rural houses is the beginning of an experimental program under which about 2,500 houses will be built.

18. Report on the European Housing Conference Organized by the European Regional Organization of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions. Paris: February 1952. 44 pp.

The Conference adopted the following resolutions regarding "social housing" in Western Europe: One million new dwellings per year are held necessary merely to accommodate the increasing population and to replace dilapidated housing. The housing shortage caused by war losses has been estimated by ECE at 10 million dwellings. On the whole, about 2 million units per year should be built in Western Europe. Since social housing is called a defense measure, more MSA aid is requested to achieve this goal. Also the individual countries should provide adequate and regular sources of financing. In certain countries, the trade unions themselves should provide practical examples of good housing, with financial aid from the respective governments and from MSA.

It is further demanded that additional funds at low interest rate be made available by insurance companies, social security administrations, and credit institutions. In order to obtain capital for the housing programs, consideration should also be given to the creation of an International Bank for building loans. Every effort should be made to obtain a building cost reduction, especially by saving materials and manpower, by means of modern building techniques, normalization, standardization, and mass production. Where necessary, laws should be altered to enable speedy and efficient expropriation of building sites. In countries suffering from an acute housing shortage, temporary solutions may be unavoidable, but the Conference maintains that emergency dwellings (duplex houses) and self-building "can only be tolerated in really exceptional cases and even then subject to certain guarantees."

HOUSING FOR THE AGED

19. "Housing for the Aged - A Task for Housing Associations?" De Woningbouwvereniging, Vol 12, No. 12. Amsterdam: December 1952. p. 117 ff. (In Dutch).

This article deals with the construction and maintenance of homes for the aged. The author points out that the mere construction of such homes without facilities for the care of the inhabitants would not be an adequate solution to the problems of the aged. Although there is considerable interest among Dutch building companies in the construction of homes for the aged, these companies are usually inexperienced in their operation, the writer continues. The article recommends as a solution that builders of homes for the aged cooperate with organizations which specialize in housing for the aged. The article mentions several organizations which, after completion, could take over the management of the developments.

HOUSING THE SINGLE PERSONS

20. "Housing the Single Worker" by D. J. Baily. London: Housing Centre Review, No. 6, December 1952. pp. 8-9.

The author, connected with the National Association of Women Civil Servants, admits that at first glance the housing requirements of the single worker do not begin to compare with the obvious plight of hundreds of families. Yet the basic need is the same. Some women have chosen a career. Others, owing to two world wars, have remained single.

Evacuation experiences proved that the most important requirements are privacy and an unshared kitchen. Local authorities are said to cater almost entirely to families and old people, but it is contended that the single worker deserves an undisputed place in the housing queue, especially since he contributes a substantial portion of the subsidy. Reference is made to the example contributed by the Hackney Borough Council (London). The flats of the Buccleuch House project, accommodating 96 single women workers, are said to be spacious and well designed. However, a survey by the Association indicated that most of the other boroughs of London believe that there is no great demand for this type of accommodation. If some provision were made, it would release dwellings suitable for whole families. The author recommends, therefore, that some plan be devised for an exchange between such women and families on the housing list.

The plan to establish a special housing association is not believed to be a solution because a fairly large number of singles would be required to take up shares and to qualify for a subsidy, but the overwhelming majority of the single workers would be interested in the project only as prospective tenants and not as providers of capital.

LAND USE

21. "Planning and Land Values - The Case for Taxing Unearned Gain" by J. C. Johnstone. London: Daily Telegraph, November 29, 1952.

A flood of debate has been touched off in Parliament and the British press over a measure which now has eliminated in its present form both the "development charge" intended to recapture to the State the "unearned increment" and the compensation to private owners for rights to development in higher use types that were taken by the State in Lord Silkin's Act of 1947. This is the law which followed the work of the Barlow and Uthwatt Commissions and the "White Paper" of the Coalition government of 1944. The measure was extremely complicated and covered 209 pages but had support from all parties at the time of its passage.

J C. Johnstone states, "....the general principle was beautifully simple. The State was to buy out all development rights as they stood in 1947 and to pay for them by July 1, 1953 Every owner desiring to develop or to change existing use must apply to the local planning authority for permission.

"If permission was refused no question of compensation arose, since that was deemed to have been settled once and for all. If it was granted, the owner must buy back the development right from the State and for this he must pay a development charge assessed by a Central Land Board.

"Such a charge would represent the development value in 1947 plus any "betterment" since that date. In the case of sale, the land was expected to pass at "existing use" value and the new owner would pay the development charge."

Practice indicates that the scheme removed incentive to develop land and created practical problems in equity. (See also Item No. 11).

SLUM CLEARANCE

22. Housing in Denmark Since 1930 by Esbjørn Hiort. Published by Jul. Gjellerups Forlag, Copenhagen, 1952; English translation published by The Architectural Press, London. 112 pp.

This attractively illustrated book has been sponsored by the Danish Ministry of Housing, the City of Copenhagen, the Joint Organization of Social Welfare Housing Societies, and by individual housing associations. It is a helpful introduction to the study of housing conditions in Denmark and presents statistical and planning details with skill. Five chapters deal with the social and economic aspects of housing, with technical matters and building research, with town planning, dwelling types, and slum clearance.

The chapter devoted to slum clearance (p. 103 ff.) points out that under the enabling legislation of 1939 only one slum clearance project has as yet been carried out, namely in the Adelgade-Borgergade area of Copenhagen. Despite State subsidies and public loans at a low rate of interest, it has proved necessary to rebuild the district with high-rental apartments and offices to provide a reasonable return on the invested capital. The cost of expropriation and the compensation paid to evacuated commercial and industrial enterprises raised the total costs to 110% of assessment, although the condemnation evaluation of the property was estimated on the basis of 70% of its tax assessment.

Confronted by the growing housing shortage, the authorities abandoned plans of condemning old houses except in the case of danger, at least until a housing reserve has been worked up. However, those of opposite

opinion insist that for social reasons slum clearance should be continued and suburban dwellings should be erected with State aid to rehouse the evacuees. It is stated that to date no solution has been found for the many difficult problems connected with slum clearance and the entire question is now being investigated by a government commission. In the larger cities, local slum clearance boards have ordered the inspection of all buildings in the older sections. The results of these surveys will be published in "block reports" for each tenement block. In Copenhagen, the board proposes as a first step to condemn buildings in the worst sections to ensure riddance of the most defective dwellings within a reasonable period. The owner of condemned houses may appeal to the Supreme Board whose decision is final.

TOWN PLANNING

23. Economy in Land Use in England. London: American Embassy Despatch, October 22, 1952.

The British Ministry of Housing and Local Government has issued a handbook "The Density of Residential Areas" which is concerned chiefly with a more economical use of land. It suggests that long-term rehabilitation of towns under the Town and Country Planning Act of 1947 will require considerable areas of land. The Handbook attempts to lay down minimum standards of density which appear to establish somewhat higher densities than were common between the wars and recommends close attention to detail, avoidance of waste, and judicious use of terrace houses and low flats. It states that the overall saving of land in a neighborhood resulting from the substitution of flats for houses is by no means in proportion to the net savings of land for the area occupied by the dwellings alone.

It also points out the paradox of the inter-war development which produced better dwellings, but also produced in many respects worse towns, and states that low density lay close to the root of the trouble. It is held significant that the universally admired charm and character of so many old towns is frequently associated with medium and high densities. It goes on to say that one of the major difficulties that had to be faced since the war is that the pressure for housing has forced a certain amount of detailed planning to be undertaken before some of the wider issues of policy have been fully considered and settled. Furthermore, it is suggested that streets be designed with regard to the normal traffic expected to use them so as to avoid extravagant widths and increased costs of road construction and maintenance.

24. "Town Planning in Denmark" in Housing in Denmark Since 1930 by Esbjørn Hiort. Published by Jul. Gjellerups Forlag, Copenhagen, 1952; English translation published by The Architectural Press, London. 112 pp.

(This book was referred to in Item No. 22 of this issue under the heading "Slum Clearance.")

The chapter devoted to town planning stresses local self-government. The local councils alone determine the local building bylaws but the Ministry of Housing has to sanction them. Under the Town Planning Act of 1938, about 220 towns are obliged to adopt town plans and a number of them have already obtained approval for their development plans. Other communities which have submitted proposals are now revising them in accordance with suggestions of the Ministry. It is stated that the 1938 Act was not effective enough because it did not offer opportunities for large-scale planning, nor did it restrain amorphous growth beyond town limits. As a result of these and other shortcomings, the Town Planning Act was revised in 1949. The new law made possible cooperation in town planning within a region and also the regulation of urban development (zoning) beyond town limits. Now it also became possible to carry out the proposals of the Environs Planning Commission in Copenhagen which in 1948 created an integrated general environs plan.

Although in 1950 there was introduced a 3% annual tax on unearned increment in land values (after deduction of improvement costs), there is no regulation of land values. An attempt to regulate by taxation or by granting state loans only to those housing projects which are to be built on reasonably priced sites has been tried. Also municipalities try to influence prices of land by buying tracts on the outskirts for future use.

25. "Row Houses as an Element of City Planning" (Das Reihnhaus in der Stadtplanung) by Paul A. R. Frank. Die Volksheimstaette, Bielefeld, Vol. 5, No. 1, January 1953. p. 7. (In German).

In the ubiquitous controversy between advocates of multi-story and low level construction, this author presents the case for the row house as follows: One-family houses or two-family houses in fact may require too much space within the cities, but not so the rows of slim one-family structures. On the basis of sixty units per hectar (1 hectar equals 2.4711 acres), the average single lot would include an area of about 165 sq.m. (that is, 1,776 sq. ft.), and the distance between two rows would be 20 meters (about 65.6 ft.). He suggests that in row-house developments small streets could be built simply at the end of each block to reduce the street cost to the abutter.

The gardens of row houses may be small but larger gardens require additional care which not always has been desirable. Small gardens provide some recreation and also may yield some fruits or vegetables. Furthermore, research at the Hygiene Institute at Hamburg has indicated that in row housing projects at the city fringe, tuberculosis is almost unknown. If, for projects of the size of a whole city section, streets, playgrounds, schools and other community facilities must be provided, a gross density of 40 dwellings per hectare (about 16 units per acre) still could be achieved. It also is held incorrect to assume that by the construction of low buildings in rows, the distance between home and work greatly increases. At any rate, the author believes that modern mass transportation would tend to shorten the travelling time. Thus, in his opinion, the best solution of the problem of providing healthy although moderately-sized dwellings is row housing.

26. Town Planning--Progressive Uttar Pradesh. Publications Bureau, Information Directorate, Uttar Pradesh Government, Lucknow, India, 1952. 48 pp. Illustrated.

The Town Planning Department of Uttar Pradesh, an independent agency since 1950, evolved from a Town Planning Section started in 1947 in the Public Works Department with assistance of Albert Mayer and R. D. Trudgett, planners from the U.S.A. The scope, objectives, and functions of town planning are described briefly, and the bulk of the publication is devoted to short descriptions of the many works undertaken by the department. These range from master plans for towns such as Agra, Banaras and Allahabad to various housing schemes, public buildings, and shopping centers.

Finally, there is a brief discussion of a proposed Town Planning Bill which "shall be based on the Indian and English legislation on the subject." The booklet is one of a "Progressive Uttar Pradesh" series which deal with power projects, administrative reorganization, prison reforms, and law and order. Together, these booklets give an impressive picture of enlightened government dealing with vastly difficult problems in the years since India's independence.

27. Developing Village India by M. S. Randhawa and others. Indian Council of Agricultural Research. Published by Orient Longmans Ltd., Calcutta. Revised Edition, 1951. 290 pp. Illustrated.

This book is a symposium of 52 articles on many aspects of Indian villages and village life. Of four articles under the heading "Health and Sanitation," one very short article (1½ p.) is entitled "Model Housing for Villages," one "Aqua Privy" and another "Sanitary Conveniences for Village Schools." The principal emphasis of the article on model housing is on good village planning with respect to sun, wind, topography, drainage and land use. Designs of three model village houses are presented.

pictorially with credit given to the Concrete Association of India. The other articles in the book are grouped under the headings, Organization, Publicity and Propaganda, Agriculture and Nutrition, Horticulture, Cottage Industries, Education and Culture.

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