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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE
COMMITTEE ON HOUSING, BUILDING AND PLANNING

STUDY TOUR OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
6 to 18 June 1964

SUMMARY OF FINAL "ROUND-UP"

Prepared by the USA Housing and Home Finance Agency

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FOREWORD

This summary of the proceedings of the Final "Round-up" or Critique held on the last day of the Study Tour in the USA has been abstracted from stenotype notes. Every effort has been made to accurately reflect the important substance of what each participant seemed to mean and to quote especially the clarifying statements if notes were adequate. Every one will appreciate the difficulty of reaching a full understanding of what was said, limited as we are by our individual word usages, accents, separate languages, and resulting translations.

Accustomed as we are to self criticism, we feel well rewarded for having had the opportunity to listen to the observations of our overseas visitors and we hope that our explanations and points of view will have been helpful to our guests. As Administrator Weaver announced, my office will try to answer questions which have not been sufficiently explained or which may arise from time to time.

JAMES A. MOORE
Assistant Administrator
Washington, D.C.
July, 1964

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Abstract of Final Round Up

- USA - Study Tour -

June 18, 1964

Following a procedural statement by James A. Moore, at 9:30 A.M. (USA), Harry Bernhard (Sweden), who is Chairman of the Committee, took the Chair. He announced that visiting delegates would speak briefly to conclude by Noon as follows:

1. Housing policy - three speakers
2. Construction and costs - three speakers
3. Planning - two speakers
4. Applicability of U.S. solutions to housing problems to the developing countries - one speaker.

In the afternoon Administrative Weaver (USA) and his supporting staff of top officials would respond to the observations made by the visitors.

HOUSING POLICY

Harry Bernhard (Sweden)

The aim of U.S. housing policy to provide a decent home and suitable living environment to every American family as soon as feasible seems sound and everyone will accept this goal. The problem is to adjust resources to needs. Government has many avenues it could take in pursuit of this policy. It can be flexible in its choices. From the material and publications so far distributed it is not clear that the tremendous capacity of the capital market in the USA has been adequately described to us. Obviously there are great demands on this market both for domestic and international obligations but the question is how to channel the flow of capital into the building materials market and to do so in such a way as to encourage improved productivity in the building industry.

There is danger that government officials will not choose the right path in the administration of programmes. The citizens often do not receive from officials the equality of treatment envisaged in the law. Some income groups seem to be left outside the programmes of either government or private industry. This is wrong though it is usual in most countries.

Radburn, New Jersey is well known as a town for the motor age and now Reston, Virginia will become well known in the future. The philosophy and practical approach of New Haven were stimulating.

It is good that the Federal Government is active in the housing field. Unfortunately public housing is limited to special groups and income levels. It stratifies citizens in classes. Although occupants of public housing have better housing and an improved environment in comparison with their previous abodes, it would be better to achieve a greater mixing of income classes and races.

Federal subsidy is attached to the buildings rather than to the people served. It would be better to let families remain in the neighbourhoods where they have previously lived and to evolve housing standards for all types of families; not to stigmatize those who live in public housing; not to move people out when their incomes rise; to help the families so equal opportunities are more adequately assured everyone.

The intent of U.S. housing policy is thus found to be perfect. The execution fails to assure equal opportunity for all despite adequate building material and a capital market of vast resources. New approaches being tried are stimulating but are too dependent on personal decisions of officials.

HOUSING POLICY (Continued)

Manuel Perez-Olea (Spain)

Perhaps, he says, from lack of time for proper observation of the US scene, the speaker and many of his colleagues wonder whether the United States has a housing policy at all in the sense the concept is used by Western European governments. It is true there is much activity, both public and private, but it appears that there is no clear delineation of responsibility for accomplishment of policy. As a result some social classes fail to be served by either governmental or private undertakings.

The role of public housing in the United States proved to be a surprise both to the Western and Eastern delegates. We had known that private enterprise was emphasized. But it is a surprise to see that housing is treated as though it were profit making business like any other business. Yet the family gets its "whole sense of life" from the house in which he lives. This vital aspect of life is left to a surprising degree to the policies of private enterprise and business ideology.

The U.S. governments at all levels - Federal, State, and local - should assume stronger direction of housing activity. This does not mean complete socialization. On the contrary, private business should be sponsored but at the same time guided by carefully defined public policy. Government exists for the benefit of the whole community. Housing is a problem that affects the whole community. Therefore,

housing should be the more direct concern of that community and of the government responsible for its conditions. Private enterprise cannot be expected to serve community interest without strong direction from governmental authorities.

There seems also to be need for better co-ordination by central organizational changes as once proposed by President Kennedy and which it is understood may be resubmitted to the Congress at a future time. This is an essential need.

The FHA and other governmental organizations at Federal, State and local levels are doing an excellent job. Some of the best things seen have been the result of governmental activity, as for example in Cleveland with its public housing or New Haven with its urban renewal programme.

But sometimes governments do not have the legal or financial means to achieve policy aims. Stronger public administration is needed in the field of housing and planning. This is obvious.

The speaker closed with expressions of gratitude for courtesies of many friends in the United States.

HOUSING POLICY (Continued)

Adam Andrzejewski (Poland)

Housing policy, as agreed in the Committee meetings in Washington, is closely linked to economic policy. It is difficult for a representative of a Socialist country to speak of the housing policy of the United States. Limited knowledge suggests that certain questions be posed the answers to which would clarify our understanding of the American situation.

In the course of the study tour the participants have become aware of the enormous scope of housing construction in the United States. Evidently at least 6 per cent of Gross National Product goes for new construction, maintenance, and modernization of housing, or something like \$80 to \$120 per capita every year. These are large figures.

The construction industry appears to be the most powerful motive force for housing development. It is adequate to satisfy the housing needs of the population which on the average has rather good housing.

Why then is there a large amount of housing in a bad state of repair? And why are substantial numbers of families of low income poorly housed?

It appears that new construction and also the urban renewal programme principally benefit families with the better and certainly not the lowest incomes.

The documental material gives a summary of housing need up to 1970. Is there a plan for all public and private construction for the same period of time?

What administrative means are available for assuring proper co-ordination of housing programmes and for making certain that actual construction will meet the requirements during any given time period? Also, how can each section of the country be assured the proper share of housing construction?

Another question concerns whether any research has been done on the social attitudes of those displaced by urban renewal? Has research been undertaken on the rehabilitation or adaptation of the aged who have been displaced by urban renewal and perhaps put into some form of collective housing?

There are two economically oriented questions. Houses built for the population in general, especially one-family houses are of light (wooden) material although the equipment is of high standard. On the other hand, public housing, though with somewhat lower quality of kitchen and other fixtures, is of more durable character. Is there not some contradiction here? Will the houses for the general population meet the requirements for economic advance for any length of time?

The construction and materials industries are well organized and serve each other effectively. Transportation is well organized. Household equipment and its variety are good. Administration of housing for older and low-income families is well organized.

An expression of appreciation concluded the statement.

HOUSING CONSTRUCTION AND COSTS

Hendrik Broersma (Netherlands)

The statement opened with an expression of appreciation.

One-family houses differ from those in Europe in being of wood rather than masonry. Construction along traditional lines is similar to that in Netherlands. Construction is good but there is a question concerning the life-time of the resulting wooden houses. The life-time is a function of maintenance: good maintenance, long life.

Even in expensive dwellings it is not customary to finish the inner walls of garages; a marked contrast to Holland.

When it is realized that the roof and roof covering of houses are light in weight, it follows that the walls also may be of light construction.

The use of a few, say four or five, large elements in houses might have been expected because the US has the facilities so to operate but this we did not find.

The foundations of concrete are similar to those in Netherlands. Factory fabricated partition walls are not covered in the factory because of the subsequent need to add wiring and plumbing. Since plasterboard rather than wet wall construction is common, this constitutes no problem. The custom of placing bath and kitchen beside each other reduces the amount of piping.

The speaker assumes that much of the maintenance such as house painting would be done by the occupants.

There is a question whether the light partitions provide adequate sound insulation.

Land is much more available in the US than in Netherlands and represents a lower fraction of the cost of house and lot. It is doubtful that Netherlands home builders could build at prices to compete with those in the US. Other European countries have even higher construction costs than in the Netherlands. Certainly Netherlands could not build one-family houses as in the US without making the entire country a sprawling city within 20 years.

There seems a question whether the emphasis on the savings in man-hours at construction sites is not partially negated by the system of sub-contracting. Do sub-contractors try to save man-hours? (ED. Note - Later it was explained to Mr. Broersma following the meeting that sub-contractors must save man-hours to save costs, especially since labour is so costly and such an important part of the building process.)

Rush-hour traffic to and from the suburbs now constitutes an important problem which has not been solved.

In general, it may be said construction is good, especially the apartment buildings. Equipment is of a high level. Land in the suburbs is inexpensive. The cost of construction is not high. Looking to the future, why are not more attached houses being built?

HOUSING CONSTRUCTION AND COSTS (Continued)

Vladimir Cervenka (Czechoslovakia)

An expression of appreciation to the hosts introduced the topic.

Much study of documentary material will be necessary to bring all aspects of the Study Tour into focus. It is hoped that participants may write additional questions from time to time.

Some cost comparisons would be helpful: detached houses vs. attached houses vs. apartment buildings; ten story structures vs. 25 or more stories; reinforced concrete apartment structures vs. steel frame type structures. It would be desirable to compare quality as well as cost in these instances.

Sometimes exterior walls are of traditional brick while in other instances there are curtain walls of prefabricated components. What is the experience of the users? Which type do the occupants of apartments prefer? Which has the better appearance?

A visit to a factory producing prefabricated building components would be useful because of the importance of this type of operation throughout Europe. (ED Note - This was subsequently arranged for Mr. Cervenka).

Lift slab construction would be of interest and is known to be used in the US but some was observed. Observation would be useful.

It appears that the US is most interested in financial policies, less in housing problems, still less in community problems, and least in technical developments and their influence on cost. It would seem appropriate that the HHFA give better balance to administration of housing, building, and planning.

HOUSING CONSTRUCTION AND COSTS (Continued)

Louri Rodin (USSR)

The brief Study Tour was insufficient to provide a basis for final conclusions concerning housing in the US. Certain observations can be made tentatively.

The movement of higher income people to the suburbs leaves some space for families of low income. The US is confronted with the need to industrialize construction and to provide better passenger transportation within cities.

There is unequal opportunity for various segments of the population.

One-family house construction including prefabrication of components is rather well developed and transportation of components is good. Building equipment and construction equipment are good.

One-family houses, however, do not have a sufficiently long life.

In the cities where apartment buildings and subways are provided the solution is better. The use of personal passenger automobiles to get to and from work crowd the streets and is a poor form of transportation.

Construction of multi-story houses is not sufficiently industrialized. Outer walls are largely built on the site. Insufficient use is made of concrete for this purpose. Furthermore, trucks rather than pumps are used in transporting concrete on site. Pumps are cheaper than trucks.

The pouring of concrete was wasteful in the use of labour. There are few prefabricated concrete components. The exterior walls must be surfaced with brick or some rendering - an expensive operation.

Although what the eye can see appears of good standard, it seems unthinkable that there is no Federal governmental standard for all construction.

There is no evidence of soundproofing, especially in one-family houses where the ill and the elderly must contend with the noise of children at play.

The absence of insulation between concrete and wooden elements seems amazing since the wood in contact with concrete will rot when the concrete becomes a bit damp.

Carelessness in construction was often observed. The materials include many light or flimsy elements and often do not represent sound construction. Hence, there would be governmental standards which are universally obligatory. Cheap construction may be expensive in the long run. The ECE Secretariat should give some thought to standards.

The statement concluded with a note of appreciation to the hosts.

PLANNING

Andre Lalando (France)

The planning and urban renewal problems of the United States are similar to those to be found in European countries. Land is used less intensely in the US cities in general than it is in France where there is less low-density suburban development. There seems to be good collaboration between the public and private sectors. However, the public interest should determine the outcome of any plan.

The law does not seem to protect the former land owner, commercial or residential, when urban renewal displaces families or firms.

How is land appraised for expropriation under urban renewal? Do public agencies and private enterprises participate together in building skyscrapers? (ED. Note: like they do in the French mixed societies). How is this participation, if any, established and who benefits?

May public authorities carry out plans once they are made? How is land made available and financed when the plans call for parks, cultural centres, and the like?

Who determines and how, the proper densities for land development; i.e. who decides that 50 dwellings per acre are permitted. What financial methods are involved in rendering such decisions?

In France an effort is being made to develop societies of home and property owners which will help to give answers to some such questions.

New communities should be diverse in character. Some new towns appear to be artificial in character.

In the speaker's opinion the elderly should be housed in scattered locations; yet there should be social centres, eating places, etc. in which such people can gather.

To what extent do promoters of housing developments bear the resulting community costs for schools, playgrounds, etc.? Does the answer vary with the standards established by particular communities?

It would be instructive to see the long-range building plans of some large cities and whether they have taken into account the prospective doubling of their populations in the next few decades.

The speaker concluded with words of appreciation to the hosts.

PLANNING (Continued)

Victor Elizarov (Ukrainian SSR)

A problem common to all of our countries but seen in its most acute form in the United States is how to handle urban renewal on a large scale.

The density of urban population appears very high. It was apparent in looking down from the Empire State Building that no building land is left in New York City. How can building continue at least without excessive density.

It is not clear from observations and documents so far examined just how urban renewal is controlled. In the Ukraine as well as in the Soviet Union, the whole apparatus of state and city organizations are used in urban renewal planning. Many scientific research organizations give scientific guidance to what is done. The speaker wants to know whether this is done in the USA and how. What research is being done concerning social problems, transportation problems, etc.?

The one-family houses built by private companies in the suburbs are much more scattered than in Europe and involve certain extra costs for community facilities, schools etc. The automobile occupies a more important role than in any other country in the world. In Europe the pedestrian and automobile have separate functions but in the USA except perhaps for the new community of Reston there is no such separation of function. (People ride to the corner drug store, the speaker seems to be saying).

Is there any construction research? None was observed.

State imposed standards for construction are needed to improve structures, reduce fire hazards, etc.

The speaker concluded with words of appreciation.

APPLICABILITY OF US SOLUTIONS TO DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Shafik Hamed Elsadri (UAR)

The speaker, officially an observer in the ECE Committee, was introduced as the Chairman of the Committee on Housing, Building and Planning of the United Nations Economic and Social Council.

Much progress in housing, building, and planning has taken place in the United States since the end of the Second World War. During this period many including the speaker came to the US to learn how progress is achieved. The speaker did graduate study at Harvard in architecture and planning 1946-49. Many others have followed a similar pattern of study and observation in the United States.

At an earlier period it was indicated that 12 million homes would be built in a ten year period. This was accomplished and surpassed. After a fifteen year absence the speaker returned to the US in 1963 and again twice in 1964. These visits have convinced the speaker that the US with its unlimited resources and potentialities in both private and public sectors has achieved great progress in housing, building, and planning. The record of private enterprise is impressive.

Now what can developing countries gain from such advanced countries as the USA, USSR, Sweden, and others? The advanced countries have many things in common. For example, every family should have a decent home meeting standards, although economic and social status varies from country to country.

It is important to understand the philosophy behind the solution of a problem so that one may work out his own approach in his own country. Nothing is easier or worse than to try to imitate what one has seen abroad.

Using the UN technical assistance programme, developing countries should seek to carry out vital projects in different disciplines using better methods but with local social and economic conditions and local resources fully in mind.

Developing countries need a long-term programme for successive achievements through project after project, each of which must be carefully defined. Only then, and only through technical assistance applied to specific programmes can developing countries gain from the experience of the developed countries.

None-the-less the speaker, as millions of others, admires much that has come to pass in recent years in the US in housing, building, and planning. The Dulles International Airport, Gypsum Building, Marina City, Yale's Arts and Architecture Building and its Rare Book Library, the National Housing Center, Portland Cement

Laboratory, the Lincoln Center, the new community of Reston, various developments in Washington, D.C. and elsewhere in the course of the Study Tour are fitting witnesses to US achievements. But they all require further examination and consideration on the part of developing countries to be of significance to them. Thinking must be deep if lessons are to be gained.

The speaker concluded with a word of appreciation to the hosts.

OTHER GUEST DISCUSSANTS

Emanoil Florescu (Romania)

The speaker observed that the private builders in response to the free market mechanism build in accordance with consumer effective demand and thus do not build new housing for those with insufficient income. This causes a type of social segregation.

The private builders give little consideration to the esthetics of architecture. This is a great pity considering the potential the United States offers and its proven achievements in architecture and cultural advancement.

Then was added a word of thanks for the conduct of the Tour.

Olavi Lindblom (Finland)

Inquired concerning the average income of the industrial worker which would permit a judgment concerning the house buying capacity. (ED. Note--Mr. Lindblom later was given a copy of Table 54, "Average Annual Earnings per Full-Time Employee 1959-1962," Survey of Current Business, U.S. Dept. of Commerce, July 1963. For 1962, for example, the average annual earning in all industry was \$5,013. (Some industries were considerably lower and some much higher.)

Fernando Baeta (Portugal)

The speaker began with a few words of appreciation.

He had seen only prefabricated wooden houses and wonders whether any are prefabricated of steel. He considered that replacement of a single house on an individual lot might be difficult since construction is usually undertaken in large groups. He raised the question of whether so fragile an item as a wooden house could be left unoccupied for any length of time without danger of deterioration.

The meeting adjourned for lunch. Bankers Trust Company, where the meeting was held, was host at the luncheon.

HOST COUNTRY COMMENTS

James A. Moore (USA) opened the afternoon session at 1:30 P.M. with a statement of procedure for the speakers representing the United States.

Robert C. Weaver (USA)

Following introductory remarks and presentation of top officials of constituent agencies of the Housing and Home Finance Agency, the speaker reiterated an observation of one of the guests that after they had returned to their home countries and had studied many of the documents which had been supplied, questions more important than those posed in the meeting would occur. The Conference and Tour would be a success were people but stimulated to think about the subject matter.

"..... through Mr. Moore's office we hope that we will be able to supply you continuously with information and materials which will shed greater light on the subjects which are within your concern, and for which we possibly have given you only a brief introduction in these few days you've been here with us."

The speaker had observed by visits to perhaps a third of the countries represented in the meeting that problems are not unique to any one country but reappear in each country. Yet solutions found useful by one nation cannot be transplanted without adaptation to the traditions and cultural patterns of another nation.

The questions, criticisms, and observations made by the visitors identified some of the more pressing problems of the USA.

"..... some of the solutions which were suggested reflected primarily the backgrounds of the persons from which they emanated."

"There is no question that we do have and have had a serious problem in the United States in providing housing for all income groups in the nation. This was accentuated by the rapid rate of urbanization and the housing shortage occasioned here by the necessities of war production.

"We have now returned to a normal housing market with a normal rate of vacancies of over five percent quantitatively we have pretty much solved our problem of getting enough housing in this country. Our two problems, therefore, are first, to meet the housing requirements of the years ahead and to raise the quality of the housing and community facilities which are provided."

Introduction of additional new programmes of housing for families of the middle-income segment is one answer to the current problem which both the Federal government and the State of New York have begun.

Governmental, university, and private research studies have alerted the US to the danger of social stratification in housing projects. In response to this problem the State of New York requires that a certain percentage of families of low-income be housed in projects otherwise for families of middle-income. The Federal government is experimenting with various solutions to the problem. Elderly, for example, are being distributed through various public housing projects to test their reaction. Families with children and the elderly are being placed in the same structure in the West Side urban renewal area in New York which the group visited. However, there are separate entrances for each group from different parts of the "L" shaped building.

Europeans have difficulty in understanding that, "We have three-plus levels of government. The first, the Federal government is in many ways the least important as far as controls of housing are concerned ..."

The fifty States of the Federal union possess all power not specifically delegated to the Federal government by constitutional enactment.

Local governments are creatures of State governments and derive their power solely from the State governments. "The result is that in many instances, particularly in our suburban developments, there is no effective urban oriented government created until after all of the planning decisions have been made."

During the very period the European guests were in the USA the Supreme Court of the United States handed down one of the most momentous decisions in history. The ultimate effect will be to reduce the domination rural areas have had in State legislatures and the Congress "making them more responsive to the needs and to the opinions of the urban and suburban population of the nation." The veneration with which the rural life has been held is nearing an end. This is very important to "such matters as planning and national housing standards and programming for housing in this country."

"..... the role of government and particularly of Federal government in such matters as design, type of materials, and type of communities which are developed, the choice between using the automobile and mass transit facilities are decisions which the consumer makes.

"The role of government in this is to encourage, to facilitate, and to aid in maximizing these choices. It is not the role to decide what the choice should be....."

For example, heretofore in the matter of design of housing, the Federal government has taken a rather negative "hands-off" position. The exception has been that the FHA has always established minimum standards for houses on which it has insured mortgages. These standards have had a wide influence throughout the industry. They have tended to upgrade design.

Recently the Federal government has become more positive. Competitions are being held in design of projects and buildings by the Federal Housing Administration; the Public Housing Administration has been working with the American Institute of Architects to improve the design of the public housing projects of the local authorities; and the Urban Renewal Administration has been using both exhortation and financial incentives to seek better design. "This fall we have an HHEA-wide design competition in all of our programmes with a very blue-ribbon jury to give attention, recognition, and rewards to the best examples of design throughout the various programmes."

"You will note that what we are doing is not saying what is good design because I do not think any bureaucrat, not even myself, is capable of making the decision for the people of this nation; but we are emphasizing that in every community, in every part of the country the people be design conscious and (you) stress this, make their own decisions."

Now consider some misunderstandings which arose because of the shortness of the visit in this country.

First, not all suburban houses are single-family structures of wood framing and siding. Masonry structures are prevalent in some parts of the country. In warmer climates brick veneer is often used over a wooden frame.

The US is increasingly stressing cluster developments of attached houses for the suburbs. These are often called "row-houses" or "town-houses." Even when detached structures are used they can be grouped close together so as to leave wide expanses of open space. This assures economies in roads, water lines, sewer systems, etc. FHA has recently issued a bulletin on this subject and there is much other literature available on the subject. The National Association of Home Builders has long sought better utilization of land.

The critical view of some guest speakers concerning the tendency to social and income stratification has its counterpart in a vast amount of critical writing in this country.

In the Housing Bill of 1964 now being considered in the Congress is a proposal for Federal assistance in the development of new communities. All economic classes would intermingle and many different types of housing structures would be included in such proposed communities.

Economic diversification, "an economic mix", is being tested in some of the Urban renewal areas; for example in West Side Urban Renewal in New York City, Brookline Massachusetts Renewal programme, Mill Creek renewal in St. Louis, and in San Francisco. "We have public housing, medium-income housing and what you would call high-income housing, all within the same urban renewal project. So we are planning from the beginning for economic and ethnic diversification....."

In response to the gentleman from the Ukraine that New York City has no additional land for building, New York has five boroughs of which Manhattan Island, seen from the Empire State Building, constitutes but one. "There are large areas of open space in Queens which is another borough, in the Bronx, which is a borough to the North, and in Brooklyn, which is a borough to the south. In addition, we are creating more open spaces in the City of New York by a new bridge that brings Staten Island or the borough of Richmond in direct access to the rest of New York; an access which was previously done, uniquely, by the Staten Island Ferry; the only five-cent ride we have in the country, I believe.

"As far as Manhattan itself is concerned, its construction is a continuing process of tearing down old and building up new."

In the Park Avenue area in which the meeting was being held, 25 years ago there was a mixture of commercial activities, apartment houses, and small office buildings. These have been replaced with very high office buildings, a more economic utilization of the valuable land.

With respect to research, much is being conducted by private business, universities, foundations, etc., and only a part by government. FHA has an experimental programme with new types of construction and rehabilitation.

Urban renewal programmes experiment with social services to assure that people get more consideration. Other programmes within HHFA include new experiments in handling of the housing needs of families of low-income.

There are also experiments with mass transit facilities in our cities. HHFA has a 25 million dollar programme for such experimentation. (ED. Note-- Congress is in the process of authorizing a twelve or fifteen fold increase in this amount.)

Concerning the comments on the use of light materials in the construction of houses, "...it is not accidental that many of our suburban houses are not to last until the end of time. This is wholly within the tradition of a growing, dynamic, and changing nation. It reflects the fact that we expect great technical changes in the future as in the past, and we do not believe that any generation should build for perpetuity. We have discovered, for example, in our cities that many of the buildings which were constructed like fortresses present great problems for urban renewal, because our buildings, like your buildings, can be structurally sound, but can become architecturally obsolete. I realize this is not unique to this country."

The speaker then referred to the 300 to 500 year old houses he had observed in Edinburgh which were expensive to demolish because of their solidity but even more expensive to rehabilitate. "And I don't believe that we yet have gotten to that epitome of knowledge where we can build forever."

There was an implication that architecture under free enterprise would be less creative than where there is more public participation. "..... we can show you some of the finest architecture and some of the worst architecture in the world and I think each one of you can do the same."

Philip N. Brownstein (USA)

The speaker was impressed with the ruggedness of the participants who had withstood so much travel so successfully.

Had the trip not been limited to the more populous section of the country but had it extended west of Chicago the participants would have been even more impressed with the vast amount of open land. "Nevertheless, we are concerned because in many of our metropolitan centers available land for construction is becoming a problem."

The demobilization of 16 million men under arms at the end of World War II thrust upon the building industry the problem of housing as quickly as possible the families of these men who had been living with relatives or other families. The emphasis was on speed of output, not on quality of design or good land utilization. Since 1946 some 20 million residential units have been built. As Administrator Weaver indicated the critical shortage is past.

"As a matter of fact, we are in very good balance between supply and demand. So, we can take new account of some of these things and one of them that we are paying a great deal of attention to at the present time is better land utilization and the planned unit concept, the cluster house, with the common green so to speak which is in common ownership."

Ten or twelve units per acre is now possible density in contrast with the customary four single-family houses per acre in suburbia today. This is a tripling of the number of units on any given amount of land.

"I would like to emphasize, too, that our role in the Federal government is one of assisting private enterprise to achieve the kind of a basic objective that will allow the individual by choice to select the kind of living accommodation that he wants to have.

"The inclination of people will vary. We recognize in FHA that families will differ. There are some who prefer allotting a larger portion of the family income to shelter and the lesser portion of the income to other living costs.

"This we take into account in determining the necessary criteria for establishing credit reliability, in approving the purchase of houses with FHA insured mortgages.

"We start off with a basic sort of rule-of-thumb of the average person allotting about 25 percent of his take-home pay to shelter, but we recognize that this will vary; that the preference of one family will be to allocate 30 percent of its take-home pay, another family may want to allocate only about 20 percent; so that these are our fluid criteria that we have established. We try to take into account to the maximum degree possible the personal preference and personal inclination of the individual family. The average for homes financed with FHA insured mortgages is currently between 20 and 21 percent.

"There are families who prefer renting to owning and we believe that the individual ought to have his choice. We think that selectivity is extremely essential."

A guest speaker had referred to a variety of household equipment some of which would require more maintenance than other types. "This is because the individuals want these things. The sale of housing in the United States is extremely competitive. Under our system the builder who builds the better house is the one who is more successful and he does this by appealing to what the public wants..." Even in areas of present over supply and high vacancy, an understanding builder can assess the character of demand and build for a profit.

It is not correct that the average individual does his own maintenance work on his home. The average family, for example, would probably hire a painter rather than to paint its own house.

"In conclusion, let me say to you that our role in the Federal government is to provide a mechanism through which private industry and private interests can supply the kind of housing that the American public needs and wants."

William L. Slayton (USA)

Business in connexion with the recent Alaskan earthquake had prevented the Commissioner from joining the Study Tour as planned for visits to urban renewal areas in Philadelphia and New Haven. The problem in Alaska is how to adapt urban renewal procedures to the situation there.

(ED. Note--Information from those returning from Alaska indicate that houses of wood withstood the earthquake quite well. Masonry structures unless reinforced concrete fell apart. Information was not obtained on steel frames.)

As emphasized by Administrator Weaver, the structure of the Federal government conditions the operations of the Urban Renewal Programme. The Federal government "is basically an assisting agency rather than a directing governmental agency."

By permission of State governments given to cities through enabling legislation the Federal government deals direct with cities without going through the State governments. "We deal directly with 750 cities. The Urban Renewal Administration does have regulations. The federal law does have certain basic requirements, but primarily the assistance is financial and technical and our regulations apply primarily to procedures rather than to the substance of the plans themselves."

"The urban renewal projects are carried out under local law, not under Federal law. The land is acquired under the authority exercised by the city. All the operations are undertaken under city authority which has been given to that city by its State government not the Federal government."

The density permitted in an urban renewal project and the uses to which land is put including public uses are decided by the cities themselves. An urban renewal plan governs the use of land for parks, schools, playgrounds and the like. It determines whether land is to be for public or private use and whether for housing, commercial, industrial or other uses. The density is established for dwelling use and the type of housing to be built is specified. The Federal government reviews this city plan "and confers with the city on its technical aspects but the basic decisions on that, how that area is to be used and how it is to be rebuilt is determined by the city."

Some property owners can always be expected to oppose acquisition of certain of their properties for urban renewal purposes. In the event persuasion and an offer to buy are unsuccessful, the urban renewal authority of the city is empowered to take court action. By exercise of eminent domain private property can be taken for public uses upon payment of compensation.

Although some States try to give preference to former owners in urban renewal areas so they can re-establish themselves after the renewal is completed, the Federal law makes no such requirement. Land may be put to a completely different use. The former owner may be financially unable to buy into the renewed area. A business enterprise may not be an owner of real property and thus would have no right in the matter.

Because there are so many levels of government, planning is a complicated issue. In any given large metropolitan area there are many local governments. Each city within a metropolitan area plans only within its own borders. The Federal government provides assistance as an incentive for the many local governments to collaborate in metropolitan wide planning.

..... "The difficulty we have here is that even though there has been a metropolitan planning agency and even though it may prepare a plan for the development of the entire metropolitan area, it does not itself have the authority to see that these plans will be carried out. We are in the process of exploring techniques to see what can be done to improve the possibility of a metropolitan plan being carried out in these metropolitan areas.

"We have a few examples of governments that deal with the metropolitan area in its entirety but these are very few and we find generally that most local governments resist this kind of governmental organization."

There is much research on population growth in metropolitan areas and studies of proper locations for the anticipated new people. Again the problem is to put any given plan into effect.

"To sum up, the Federal government in these areas is a government that provides primarily financial and technical assistance and must rely on the authority of the local governments to carry out the plans themselves."

Mrs. Marie McGuire (USA)

After the Commissioner had been with the group in Cleveland she had visited an American Indian reservation in the West. She considers that her observations should be of interest especially to emerging countries. The Indians are using simple techniques and family aided self-help to build their own houses. This has proved successful in the rural and semi-rural areas where they live.

Many of the guest speakers have referred to the possibility that the limitations imposed on the income of occupants of public housing would establish undemocratic class stratification. Certain ameliorating conditions should be considered.

".... the local authority in accepting low-income families has a great variety of choice. By no means is it limited to a very small income group. In addition to that, the local housing authorities throughout the country set their own limits according to the economic base in that community. And this definition of low income, for instance in New York, may bear no relationship whatsoever to a low-income family definition in the southern part of the country.

".... we have a turnover in the public housing rental programme of approximately 22 percent of the tenants (per annum). Many of these purchase homes or rent standard private apartments."

Changing economic opportunity for even the low-income group gives a constant turn-over in the particular families living in public housing. There may be a stigma attached to living in public housing but there is relief in that most families do not stay permanently. Today 2½ million people live in public housing compared with a total of 12 million people who previously have lived there.

Another safeguard was included in the Housing Act of 1961 which permits families to remain in public housing though their incomes may have increased past the limit of eligibility until the local authority can assure that they can have standard housing which they can afford.

Commissioner Brownstein of FHA had mentioned that there is a surplus of vacant houses in some areas. In some cases local housing authorities are buying some of the vacant units for use of families of low income. This tends to overcome segregation of income-groups by area.

The Public Housing Administration also is emphasizing the rehabilitation of existing units for rent to families of low-income. This also tends to scatter such families over much of an urban area.

"We are also emphasizing scattered sites and smaller sites and smaller developments. We are invading the grey areas of the city, attempting by the use of public dollars to upgrade these areas and perhaps even attract private capital to them."

Public Housing is emphasizing better site use than in the past.

What type of housing is preferred by the elderly is subject to various studies some of which will be listed for Mr. Moore who can send information to any of the visitors who make inquiry.

The cross-fertilization of ideas provided by the teamwork of the various constituent agencies of the HHFA has given opportunity for consideration of many solutions of problems. Social planning, for example, is now given new impetus in the public housing programme. Social services are being brought to public housing projects which formerly have often failed to share adequately in such services.

"It was a very real joy to meet so many of you whom I met last year and make so many new friends and I hope we will be together again soon."

From the CHAIR, Mr. Moore indicated that should there be questions from the floor on finance, that in addition to officials specializing in finance who were previously introduced such as President Baughman of the Federal National Mortgage Association of HHFA, there was also present a representative of the Federal Home Loan Bank Board, Simon Trévas.

Frederick P. Rose (USA)

A constant competitive price analysis decides when and whether to use structural steel or reinforced concrete. In New York and other metropolitan areas in the last few years there has been almost exclusive use of flat plate reinforced concrete construction for large buildings. This is not the result of government fiat but the fact that improved technology for reinforced concrete has given it a competitive advantage.

The steel industry is not standing still in the face of competition. Developed in the past six years is a fireproofing spray-on method of coating steel with asbestos cement which is less expensive than using light-weight concrete to fireproof steel.

The New York City Housing Authority establishes its own design and specifications for competitive bidding. Private agencies and organizations "such as the American Institute of Steel Construction or most recently, large private industrial companies such as the Bethlehem Steel Company or the United States Steel Company have at their own expense developed a complete set of bidding plans for structural steel."

Recent experience shows a 7 per cent cost differential for total construction-steel "would cost 7 per cent more than reinforced concrete" for specific buildings in New York.

Reinforced concrete has advantages especially for buildings of 10 or 12 stories or more because of the economies in the use of repetitive forms.

On the other hand within the past year and half two new types of steel have lowered the cost of steel: the new A-36 which is stronger and less is required for any given structural requirement and "Cor-Ten" steel (one of several trade names) "which is rust resistant." The cost advantage could turn from reinforced concrete to steel at any time. This rivalry is better than to have government fiat on what material to use.

A question was asked about covering concrete with brick or other exterior skin materials. Northern climatic conditions impose much weathering on concrete surfaces so that those exposed must be very dense and the concrete must be carefully controlled up to 5,000 and over pounds per square inch using air-entrained concrete. When necessary, high early-strength cements must be used which make "it much more expensive to produce these fine finishes which are resistant to the abrasive acts of the weather..." It is cheaper to provide a coating of masonry or a metal skin or other surfacing. Although exposed reinforced concrete columns such as were seen at 72nd and Third Avenue is attractive, it is higher in cost than when coverings are used.

Cost is a primary consideration for mass housing.

Concerning whether concrete should be pumped in high-rise construction, "pumping would be improper because the settling of aggregates would prevent proper setting." A crane operated hopper, which is the normal method of pouring up to 30 stories, from mobile cranes or the European method "of site-operated built-in crane towers allows us, by means of cable, to hoist at a much greater rate" and any higher concrete should be lifted into place.

"However, we do pump plaster and our normal method plastering is to pump it through the building, and then apply it, either by spray or by hand."

Dry-well technique has largely replaced wet plastering. This was illustrated at the U.S. Gypsum Building.

"In pumping the plaster, however, we have been making increased use of a process called guniting which is spraying of concrete on a reinforced mesh and we use this for retaining walls, swimming pools, and other areas where we have expansion problems and where a joint would be difficult or a one-face form would be more expensive than the normal two-face form concrete, or what you call "shuttering" in Europe.

Concerning the relative cost of a ten-story versus a twenty-story building, many studies have been made. ".....certain elements such as the elevators which usually run under three per cent of the total cost of the building, will be a little bit higher per room or per unit for the taller building."

"The other costs, for example, the reinforced concrete previously alluded to, runs about 22 per cent of the total cost of the building, and that will be less expensive for the taller building.

"As recently as ten years ago the optimum building of reinforced concrete would have been 18 stories. Today, 30 stories are attained very easily and at a smaller cost per room or per unit than for a ten-story building." The recent advances in technology have made this possible.

When coupled with the lower land cost per dwelling unit, the construction of higher buildings is obviously advantageous cost-wise.

Tenants will now pay a premium for the upper stories of buildings and tend to favour high buildings to avoid noise and dirt of the congested areas near the ground.

Concerning the reaction of building occupants to the exterior covering on a building, "The tenant does not care whether a wall is made of cream cheese or steel or concrete or brick as long as it keeps out the weather."

The tenant is interested in the floor plan. FHA minimum property standards have led the way in many instances to better plans and in other cases the FHA followed accepted modern apartment design standards. Lay-outs to permit complete privacy for bedrooms and provision of foyers to make unnecessary to pass through a living room to reach a bedroom has become standard practice in apartment construction.

It is the American housewife who has insisted on the high quality of plumbing and kitchen and bath equipment to be found. If a building is to sell or rent readily, it must be well equipped with high quality products. This has been more important to the housewife than, say, soundproofing.

The speaker welcomed the FHA/HHFA attention to soundproofing and the new code requirement for sound transmission. New York City is leading the way by preparing a new code to be applied to all types of buildings regardless of manner of financing. Probably the requirement will be a "50 decible wall for those partitions dividing apartments and something like 30 decibels between room in the same apartment; and similar standards for impact noise between floors."

Another question posed by guest speakers concerns the relative merit and cost of lift-slab and pre-cast complete units compared with traditional methods, methods such as are being used, for example, in the Soviet Union. Here, lift-slab and tilt-up and prefabrication of large components is more expensive than traditional methods. These matters have been well discussed in technical societies such as the National Society of Civil Engineers. The Concrete Institute has concluded that recent economies in reinforced concrete construction methods have given this traditional method of building a cost advantage.

"...it is common in New York City.....to achieve a two-day cycle of concrete construction. That means if the third floor is poured on Monday, the fourth floor will be poured on Wednesday and the fifth floor will be poured on Friday. That includes stripping of the concrete, pouring, finishing of all surfaces in its natural order.

"It would be extremely difficult to build a 30-story building with any pre-cast units achieving this economy of speed. Also, on 25 or 30 story buildings, by the time we are pouring the concrete on the 25th floor, the masonry is well along on the fourth and fifth floors.

"By the time the masonry is up to the 15th floor, the plasterers are probably working four or five floors behind or the dry-wall is being installed. We use intermediate waterproofing methods for a slab in order to achieve time economy which is of principal importance here in America."

Heat insulation is no problem. "We are able to achieve the requirements of 20 degree Centigrade at zero degrees; 20 degrees inside or 68 degrees Fahrenheit.. This requires no governmental attention..

"Concrete in contact with wood members which Mr. Rodin noticed is found occasionally.....it is our general practice to use vapour barriers such as poly-ethylene material in all direct contact with the earth so the moisture is stopped before it reaches the concrete and normally does not reach the wood.

"In addition, it is common practice in this country to use wood preservative; chemicals are applied under pressure to all wood surface in contact with moisture.

"...there is a constant evaluation and re-evaluation of all our building techniques because of our American system of competition is using various methods and procedures.There is this co-operation between government and private enterprise to produce the best system..... Some of our governmental agencies as Dr. Weaver mentioned will sponsor such experiments as the rehabilitation programme."

Even though a process may not have been economical in the past, Government will use funds experimentally to test new methods and procedures. "...we can expect that to continue and to produce good housing in America."

Burl Johnson (USA)

The speaker expressed pleasure and gratitude for being able to participate and to receive constructive criticism from the guests.

"However, perhaps we have been a bit derelict in our duty and so intent in showing you housing that we have failed to explain that in the American way of life, generally individuals have an inherent right to the freedom of choice. This applies not only to his employment and his religion but also and very importantly to the ownership of his home."

The consumer can dictate where and when houses will be built. "The public here creates the market and 70 per cent of them are home owners." (ED. Note: 62 per cent according to Census of 1960 but the figure is rising.)

The guests have raised few questions about a most important facet of the programme. "A very sophisticated financing technique involves not only our government but private enterprise as well..."

Many house builders are small enterprisers who produce less than ten houses a year.

".....in climates which are as adverse to wood as Florida, which is termite laden and very damp and moist, many homes are a hundred years and older. Wood if properly used and reasonably maintained is a very, very good usable housing material and is preferred by many of our home owners. There are many homes in the Washington and New York areas that are built out of wood that exceed a hundred years in their life."

There need be no concern about condensation of moisture in modern wooden houses with dry-wall construction. Modern heating, which normally uses blown forced air, obviates the problem.

Concerning use of other material beside wood, the National Homes factory indicated that about 2,000 pounds of aluminum now are used in a factory-produced dwelling unit. Formerly about 200 pounds would have been used.

The American poet Robert Frost once wrote, "The woods are lovely, cool, and deep, but I have promises to keep, and miles to go before I sleep."

The speaker concluded it would be wonderful if we would all apply these thoughts.

OTHER COMMENTATORS

I.A. Iliuschenko (Secretariat)

The speaker inquired why American people are moving to the suburbs on such a large scale now which he understands is a new trend. He also wondered from the fact that only one factory for prefabrication had been visited and that one using wood as the principal material whether this is typical.

Robert C. Weaver (USA)

"In answering the first question, one has to be almost inconsistent because what appears to be a new trend is merely a new manifestation of a long-enduring trend in the development of American cities.

"In the first place you have to realize that our cities are almost universally much younger than the cities of your country.

"In the second place this country has developed primarily, particularly in its older cities, by the immigration of large numbers of persons primarily from Europe. Over the centuries some 42 million immigrants have come to our shores and that was primarily a movement which ceased with the coming of World War I. It has somewhat continued by a different type of migration, an internal migration, primarily composed of persons from agricultural sections of the country as technology reduced the demand for this labour and also the migration of two groups; Puerto Ricans on the east coast who are Americans and have free movement in all parts of this country; and the Mexican-Americans coming into Texas, California, and primarily in the western states.

"In the early period, take a city like New York, there was a tradition that as the newer and poorer elements came into the country, they would settle first in the oldest sections of the city. The former residents, as they improved economically and socially, moved away from and out of the center of the city. For years this was possible within the limits of the city. In fact it was necessary because we did not have the transit facilities that would permit people to live anywhere but within walking or horse carriage driving distance from the central city and economic heart of our urban areas.

"At the same time, factories were all in the central cities, primarily the central cities because the working people who did the work were there as an available labor reserve.

"Two changes occurred beginning with the 20th Century. The first was a revolution in transit. The horse-drawn car, the street car, the railroad, the bus, finally the automobile. The bicycle has never been as significant as it has been in many parts of Europe.

"At the same time the railroads have been very active in land development. They speculatively built little spurs of line that didn't go anywhere."

"The railroads then promoted the suburban communities which could utilize these spur lines and which would permit them to sell the surrounding land. People moved out thinking to avoid the problems of the city: dirt, noise, congestion, etc. By the end of World War I there was little vacant land within the limits of the city. Then the traditional movement outward went beyond the political boundaries of the cities. New transportation facilities, particularly the automobile permitted development to extend even farther.

"Then we go back to a cultural factor which I mentioned this morning. This still is a country with very strong rural roots. Many of the people who came to this country came with hope that they would be able to own some land. This would give them economic independence and the idea of owning one's own home with some land around it, even if it is not cultivated, had both a political and economic value and I might even add, a puritanical cultural value. There is something pure about living out in the country in addition to the air.

"Now we are finding several things happening. As we redevelop our central cities, we are having two movements. We are having a continuation of movement of people out into the suburbs but we are having a lot of people moving back from the suburbs ... because of the traffic problem endured in getting into and out of the central city.

"And also we are for the first time developing new areas where there is something to come back to ... This comes back to my basic point that it is our role to develop greater choices. We get the two-way movement. Some people are going out and some people are coming back. We have both movements and I think this will continue in this country.

"Your second question as to whether or not the fact that you were shown only one factory National Homes in Indiana -- whether this was symbolic and typical of our situation. The answer is both yes and no.

"In a tour as restricted in time and space as this one, we have attempted to give you as wide an exposure to as many aspects of our activity as possible.

"Also, we had hoped that the mix would be fairly symbolic of the situation. We have many instances of prefabrication factories. Most of them are using wood as the basic material as Mr. Rose and Mr. Brownstein and others mentioned; that is, the American people seem to prefer wood.

"We have steel houses, we have aluminium houses; we had a porcelain house at one time which I liked very much. The only difficulty was that we were never able to make it economically feasible. It was a delightful house; just think, instead of painting, you take a damp cloth and wipe both internally and externally and the upkeep was practically nil.

"By and large most prefabricated houses in this country are developed in factories such as the one you visited. This is a typical, not the only, but a typical factory whereas those using other materials would be a typical."

FHA is now examining a new type of concrete which will provide a house for about "40 percent of the cost of any type of construction we now have. The difficulty is that it would have to be put up in large numbers and prefabricated at the site. We are always getting these new breakthroughs and this one has great possibilities. I say this a bit guardedly because I would have said the same thing about the porcelain house which is a matter of history and in fact was a failure."

Georg Guenther (Germany)

The speaker had visited the US 14 years ago for a six month period with a team to study the US program. Much progress has taken place since. Twelve years ago the speaker was on an American-German commission to conduct a competition to bring new ideas into German use. Progress has since been made in Germany.

Two years ago, following meetings of the ECE Committee in Geneva, a new program of urban renewal was introduced in Germany in which certain ideas were borrowed from the American experience.

Such experiments as the urban renewal program in New Haven have been valuable to observe. More information is needed on computation of net project cost -- something the speaker would explore in a post Study Tour trip to Washington.

The speaker considers that American planners should give more attention to the pedestrian and that this seems to be found in such places as the Rockefeller Center and the proposed International Trade Center.

The small city, the town, the village should not be overlooked in the planning process. Rural renewal also is important.

The open space program is significant. In general transit facilities are behind those of European cities. Low density increases traffic problems in the US.

The speaker wonders how such inexpensive one-family houses can be built -- much cheaper than in Europe. This is despite the high wages paid US workers. Germany should adopt the lighter types of construction such as in America, perhaps as a cost reducing factor. There should be less concern for building structures that will stand a hundred years.

The cooperation between government and private enterprise is impressive.

The speaker concluded with words of appreciation to the hosts.

Robert C. Weaver (USA)

Urban renewal is only 15 years old. The best advice the US can give to others is to point out our mistakes so they may be avoided.

"I do hope that those of you who go into urban renewal will take one word of counsel and be sure to have your patience quotas very high. This is a long, slow, frustrating, difficult process and it isn't easy.

"I hope that all of you have the same feeling as the last speaker and will give your expression to this by coming back to this country and looking at depth into the various things which still interest you. You have not had an opportunity to get into them as deeply as you would like."

Iouri Rodin (USSR)

The speaker said his first remarks made in the morning were those of the specialist covering an assigned subject. These of the afternoon remarks are those of the Soviet Delegate.

"First of all, let me say that I would like very much to thank the American Government and all those who worked so hard on our sessions and our Study Tour.

"I have one remark of social significance. In our trip we saw the most highly-developed part of the United States and for that reason we think that on the basis of what we have seen it would be very difficult to make a generalization covering the whole country.

"We did not see the housing conditions in the South and we did not see the housing conditions in agriculture. What we saw, I'm sure cannot be extended to all American housing. We did not see any housing belonging to Negroes. (ED. Note -- The speaker may not have been aware that he visited in the homes of several Negro families; also that certain housing projects which he visited had a high percentage of Negro families.)

"Finally, according to the American statistics, there is quite a bit of unemployment in the country and that means there are a lot of people who do not have sufficient wages and consequently many families are unable to buy or pay for apartments provided by private enterprise. It is not surprising that there is a long waiting list of people wanting public housing built by local governmental organizations. Thus in New Haven there was less than a hundred housing units built every year. There are about 50 to 60 thousand people waiting for all of this. We cannot agree with Mr. Brownstein when he said today that there is no longer any shortage of housing in the country. We would rather agree with what Mr. Weaver said more carefully that in the United States there still exists a housing problem.

"Mr. Chairman ... we would mention the tactlessness which occurred at the beginning of the trip. The National Association of Home Builders made a selection of the literature published in 1963 and tried to impose on the delegates the idea that the government of the United States of America and private enterprise in this country provides millions of people with housing and in this way are combating Communism and that the supply of houses at reasonable rates is the main way in which they might go against Communism.

"Finally there was a statement made by a newspaper to the effect that houses are a weapon to be used against the Reds. The Association apparently was trying to give the impression that the United States' houses are not built for the benefit of the citizens of the country but rather in order to fight communism.

"We have a saying in the Soviet Union that people talk about what is bothering them. This Association evidently is very concerned at the successes of the Socialist countries in the field of home construction.

"The Delegations of the Socialist countries have been intelligent enough and patient enough not to engage in this discussion but we were happy to have had the explanation given to us by Mr. Moore when we protested about this. He said that the statements were not in accordance with the policy of the American Government or in accordance with the views of the American Delegation and this propaganda trick of using anti-Communist literature simply was an accident. The Government was not responsible for its distribution and the US Delegation didn't know that it was to be given out.

"We are very grateful to Mr. Moore for being able to prevent any further distribution among the delegates of such literary garbage. Our Delegation, and I think the Delegations of other Socialist countries, were satisfied with Mr. Moore's explanation.

"Gentlemen, permit me now to thank our Chairman for the manner in which he has conducted both the sessions and Study Tour and we would like to express to him our sympathy for the work which he undertook by himself speaking in the name of all Delegates all the time during this trip, but we hope that when we return to Europe we will be able to come back to our democratic order which has been established by tradition in our Committee enabling the Delegations of all countries to make their comments in the course of the Study Tours.

"Permit me now, once again, to thank very greatly, the Government of the United States of America as well as the American Delegates and all the people and organizations who have received us here in this country and to Mrs. Carlsen in particular, charming Mrs. Carlsen once again. In particular we would like to thank Mr. Moore once again.

"Thank you very much."

Robert C. Weaver (USA)

"I shall attempt to emulate the action by the Delegate of the Soviet Union by refraining from discussing the ideological issues."

Vladimir Korol (Bylorussian SSR)

The little that could be seen on a short tour suggested various points of policy which could be subject to criticism. Many questions were raised about urban renewal because less was known about this. The architecture found in urban renewal areas was rather glum. Good planning is necessary to success in housing policy in a city.

The new town of Reston seemed not to have a proper sized commercial center in relation to the number of proposed dwellings. It would have been better to have observed more carefully the achievements of English and Scandinavian cities.

A lot of waste space particularly in foyers or halls was observed in US apartments. With the same material as goes into 100 US apartments, the speaker could plan 105 and the occupants wouldn't know the difference.

The speaker concluded with an expression of appreciation.

Robert C. Weaver (USA)

"In connexion with the last comments, I am convinced, though I may be wrong, because we are still experimenting and quite young in this activity, that our new communities, and we purposely in our agency call them new communities rather than new towns, will have a distinct American flavour. They will not be exact counterparts of the European new towns because our country is not an exact prototype or counterpart of European countries.

"I think that the trends to date and certainly the research we have done suggest that ours will be less self-contained than are the new towns that I have visited and read about in many parts of Europe, and of course the reasons for this are many.

"One of them is our motor transportation. We are not developing a self-contained economy in these new communities although we are providing and certainly the Federal government is encouraging a great deal of commercial, industrial, and business activity as to minimize the necessity for transportation but not to eliminate its possibility.

"I think our new community, Reston, is one example. We will provide employment for some of its residents on site. Many will commute to and from the city of Washington and other parts of the urban area although they may live in that community. I think this is a pattern that is evolving. I might say the word "evolving" advisedly because we are just beginning in this particular activity and it may well be that my crystal ball will be skewed by history as time goes on.

"The question of standards of shelter harasses every country. Some are worried by the poor economics of the situation. In other words, with the limited amount of resources, with the growing unmet demand, do you raise the standards so high that you cut in half the number of people that you serve or do you compromise the standards in order to meet the demand?

"We in this country can have relatively high minimum standards and still meet a large part of the need. However, I have concentrated on the concept of minimum standards because in our economy, in our society, the public agencies restrict themselves to setting a floor beneath which we do not go. It always permits us to exceed those minimums and as we encourage it (higher standards) we will have a situation where there is a great deal of construction which by many persons' standards and by criteria is not the most economical as far as space is concerned or as far as economy is concerned.

"But here again, in a consumer-oriented economy it is the individual who makes this choice. As Mr. Brownstein suggested, you have some people who spend 25 percent of their income for housing, others 20, others something else, and these standards reflect these choices. At this time the more elaborate housing is not taking away factors of production, either material or labour, nor does it prevent supplying the minimum needs for other elements in the population. We can do both. Yet we still have, as the speaker from the Soviet Union put it so well, a housing problem and we will have it for a long time.

"I have no illusion that my successor will not inherit problems but I do believe that we are going to be able, in the years ahead, to reduce the dimensions of these problems and to provide a larger number of our citizens and a larger proportion of our families with decent housing.

"In this connexion, I would like to make one final observation. I think somewhat inadvertently, if one from outer space were to listen to this discussion, he might assume that the only supply of housing is in the new housing developed each year. Actually, it is about three percent of the total supply in our economy. That is why my remarks this morning when I emphasized that we had made great quantitative progress are significant.

"During the war years when we had a housing shortage the quality of the housing in use tended to get worse

"In the last five or six years, the quality of the housing has improved and this has been affected in large measure by the demolition of the substandard unsatisfactory housing and the movement of low income people into housing of higher standard which is possible when there is a normal vacancy rate.

"I don't mean to imply that we can solve the problem totally that way. We have to increase the supply of low-cost housing. This we have done recently and this we propose to do at a more rapid pace. But it is much easier to solve this problem and to make real progress when you have an excess supply than it is when you have a shortage.

"We hope increasingly to utilize better the existing supply. We know that the pressure in the market of a greater quantity of any good eases the price and permits the consumer to be a better buy for his dollar.

"In this connexion, it is pertinent to observe that in 1960 we had about 1,200,000 housing starts in this nation. In 1963, we had almost 1,600,000 housing starts. These are private and public units, residential in nature. By 1970 we expect to have 2,000,000.

"All of this will help in meeting these problems and all of this will leave a lot of problems for us to discuss when you come back next time".

Harry Bernhard (Sweden)

The Chairman of the Committee said "this is thanksgiving time" and proceeded to thank the hosts of the various levels of governments and private and professional groups and especially the Administrator and Assistant Administrator. He gave special acknowledgment to the UN Secretariat and to the guest speakers for their participation.

Ben Reiner (Secretariat)

Informally and unofficially awarded United Nations lapel buttons to Messrs. Moore and Burroughs for their conduct of the Study Tour. Thus they would "join other colleagues in this Committee who have earned this in their country when they served as hosts."

The meeting adjourned by Administrator Weaver at 4:40 P.M.
