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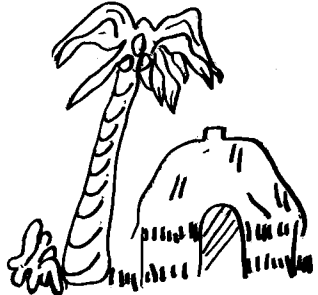
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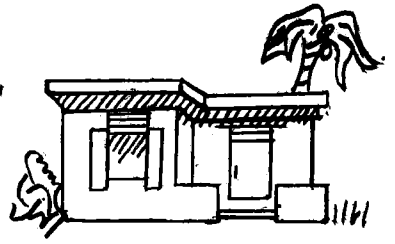
(Abstracts of Recent Publications on Foreign Housing and Planning)



Compiled by the

International Housing Activities,
~~Office of the Administrator~~

U.S. Housing and Home Finance Agency,



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ARCHITECTURE

1. "Clients for Housing: The Low-Income Tenant: Does He Want Super-tenements?" by Catherine Bauer. The Hague: News Sheet of the International Federation for Housing and Town Planning, August 1952. pp. 11-13.

This article which originally appeared in the American magazine, Progressive Architecture, May 1952, presents a strong case for the low-rise type of housing for low-income families. The author compares the advantages of both high-rise and low-rise types of dwellings and comes to a conclusion in favor of the latter. Miss Bauer states, "The residential skyscraper tends to require a highly organized, impersonal, and relatively inflexible mode of living for which most American families have little desire and less gift."

The author points out that twenty years ago, there was a widespread feeling among progressive housers and planners that social, economic, and technological forces would all push us inevitably in a single direction: toward a more collective mode of life. It is now believed, however, that the personal security which makes society possible--particularly democratic society--is a home-developed quality at base. Thus, while we need parks, playgrounds, more and better community centers and services of all kinds, these are not effective substitutes for private space and relative independence in the home environment.

The article emphasizes that the elevator building is particularly unsuitable for public housing. It is shown that people with servants, cars, and summer homes can overcome some of the disadvantages of skyscraper living while fully utilizing its expensive advantages. But such outlets are not open to families with very low incomes, from slums, mostly with children, and whose inevitably minimum-standard dwellings will be under public landlordship.

Miss Bauer concludes by stating, "If half as much loving ingenuity had been devoted to the design of the row house in this country as has been bestowed on fancy skyscrapers, we wouldn't automatically jump to apartments as soon as a density of 25, 30 or even 40 families per net acre is called for."

2. Structure in Building by W. Fisher Cassie and J. H. Napper. London: The Architectural Press, 1952.

This book is primarily intended for use by architects and students of architecture as an introduction to the study of structural design. As is stated in the preface, it does not deal with the theory underlying structural calculations, but rather it is an attempt to link the outlook of the engineer with that of the architect. The subjects discussed include a survey of structural forms, procedure in structural design, the applied loading, suitability of materials, developments in structure and the architect's approach to the choice of structure. The book is well illustrated with over 60 diagrams and pictures. 266 pp.

3. Inauguration of the "Unit of Habitation" of Le Corbusier at Marseille. Marseille: American Consul General, October 23, 1952.

An account of the dedication of the famous Le Corbusier apartment house. The two main criticisms of the project are pointed out. First, it is shown that although conceived as a low-cost housing project intended to provide well-planned accommodations for lower-income groups, it has proved so costly to build and has taken so long to finish that apartments are now only available on a co-proprieté basis at high prices. Second, it states that the whole conception of the building which is designed as a completely self-sufficient unit of habitation containing stores, a hotel, playgrounds on the roof and a children's nursery, is regarded as repugnant to the individualist sentiments of the French people.

The report goes on to say that in spite of the critics, the tenants now living in the building are apparently pleased with their accommodations and it is reported that many inquiries are being received from people who wish to secure apartments in the "Radiant City."

Prices for the various units in the building are included in the report along with a small illustrated booklet describing the housing features. 4 pp. plus booklet.

BUILDING CODES

4. Loading. London: The Council for Codes of Practice for Buildings, 1952.

This booklet gives the loads which it is recommended should be taken into account in the design of buildings. The imposed loads (including wind) described are minimum design loads for use with working stresses based on the properties of the various materials. No account was taken, however, of loads incidental to construction. The loadings described are sufficient to provide for normal effects of impact or acceleration. Types of loads discussed include imposed floor loads, stairs, landings and cantilever access balconies, imposed roof loads other than wind loads, wind pressures on walls and roofs, and local effects of wind. 33 pp.

5. Sanitary Appliances. London: The Council for Codes of Practice for Buildings, 1952.

This code deals with the selection and installation of sanitary appliances. It includes sections on materials, appliances and components; on design considerations for various types of appliances such as baths, drainers, foot baths, grease traps, lavatory basins, showers, sinks, urinals, wash tubs, and water closets; provision and installation of appliances, work on site, inspection and testing, and maintenance. 30 pp.

6. Structural Softwood, Measurement of Characteristics Affecting Strength.
London: British Standards Institution, 1952.

This British Standard is intended to provide standard methods of assessing the measurable characteristics and moisture content of softwood for the purpose of computing the strength of individual members. The booklet on wood contains information on moisture content, density, measurement, tolerances, rate of growth, shakes, splits and checks, slope of grain, and knots. 14 pp.

7. Stabilized Earth Walls - Construction (Colonial Building Notes No. 8).
Watford, Herts: Building Research Station, August 1952.

A clearly written pamphlet on the methods of earth construction. It discusses the methods of stabilization, methods of construction, efficiency of stabilized walls, including pointers on strength, durability, thermal comfort and pest infestation, and concludes with notes on the design of buildings with earth walls. 10 pp.

HOUSING FINANCE

8. "Thirty Years After a Londoner Comes Back" by I. Horwitz. New South Wales: Building Societies' Gazette, May 1950. p. 280.

A short paper given in London by the senior vice-president of the Association of Co-operative Building Societies, N.S.W. on the financing of houses in New South Wales, Australia. He tells how, in the midst of the depression, his government launched a novel scheme of home finance. By this scheme, the government agreed with any finance body having funds for investment--banks, insurance companies, friendly societies, super-annuation funds, etc.--that if they would lend their funds to cooperative building societies at a maximum rate of interest that is substantially below ruling overdraft rates, the government would guarantee full repayment of all money so lent. The government further agreed with building societies coming into the scheme that if they lent to their members in certain circumstances 90 percent of value of the homes they wished to acquire (since raised to 100 percent), the government would indemnify the building society against loss arising out of the fact that the loan exceeded 80 percent of the value of the home.

The writer shows that the success of the scheme was immediate; that within two years, real estate finance had completely thawed out and a peak level in home building had been reached. Just before the war, he states, it was financing probably 75 percent of the less expensive type of home and had the backing of practically all finance institutions of standing.

He goes on to show that these terminating societies have only borrowing members and their funds are procured from any finance body having investment money to lend. Loans to these societies are at substantially less than ruling overdraft rates, in that the government guarantees repayment of every penny borrowed. Members of societies borrow for terms up to thirty years at a rate of interest slightly higher than the society pays on its borrowing. The member also pays a small management charge. The growth of this type of society has been phenomenal, the article states, and its future expansion is assured by reason of the fact that it has the support of all political parties.

9. "Cost Norms for Native Housing" by A. L. Glen. Pretoria: Bulletin No. 8, National Building Research Institute, June 1952. pp. 38-59.

The Cost Norm for Native Housing is defined in an article in this bulletin from South Africa as the cost of the National Housing and Planning Commission type Native House NE 51/9, in standard construction. Detailed studies at Vereeniging have given a complete breakdown into material, labor and overhead costs. These costs have been adjusted to ruling prices in 19 centers giving the "Regional Cost Norms" and a proposed Native Housing Cost Index related to the cost as on January 1st, 1952, will give variations with time. Reduced Cost Norms cover cost-reducing variations in specification.

The article states that these norms are useful in estimating costs and judging tenders.

10. The Rating of Site Values, Ministry of Housing and Local Government, Scottish Home Department. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1952.

A report on the rating of site values for purposes of taxation. It discusses the historical background to site valuation, the basis of a site value rate, problems of valuation, and the application of site value rating to Scotland. 133 pp.

HOUSING RESEARCH

11. "A Study of the Socio-Economic Status of Native Families in the Payneville Location, Springs" by H. J. J. van Beinum. Pretoria: Bulletin No. 8, National Building Research Institute, June 1952. pp. 60-68.

A description is given in this article from South Africa of the methods and results of a socio-economic survey conducted in the Payneville Native Location. The purpose of the survey was to obtain data for the planning of a new Native township, and information was required

on the number of houses of different size needed and the rent-paying ability of the families to be housed. The conclusion is reached that the population is made up of three economic groups, each of which requires a different class of housing, each class requiring a variety of house sizes.

The article describes the methodology used in making the study and breaks down the family budget in terms of rent, food, clothing, fuel, transport and tax.

HOUSING SITUATION

12. "Israel Grapples with Its Housing Crisis--The New States's Number One Problem" by Charles Abrams. The Hague: News Sheet of the International Federation for Housing and Town Planning, August 1952. pp. 22-25.

Charles Abrams offers a constructive report based on his visit to Israel in July 1950 on the dimensions of Israel's housing crisis and the plans being made to surmount it. He describes in vivid terms the immigration and living space standards, the congestion now existing, and the bottlenecks preventing fast construction of new units.

Mr. Abrams offers several good policy suggestions. He suggests that a ministry of town planning and housing should be set up to overhaul the program and coordinate the now divided activities, as well as relate plans and specifications to national economic requirements. "Specifications should include use of the maximum amount of native products such as wallboard and cement blocks. It seems a waste to expend currency on costly prefabricated houses when these funds can be more profitably used in the expansion of native factories to produce at least some of the building material locally."

He also stresses the fact that architectural planning, house building, and city planning should be related to economic planning and not function independently.

13. Housing Progress Abroad, A Quarterly Review. Ottawa: Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation, March 1952.

This issue of Housing Progress Abroad provides a progress report with tabular material on housing developments during 1951 in the United Kingdom, U. S., Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and Sweden. It shows that while housing developments in Canada during 1951 were highlighted by a decline in start and the general firming of mortgage interest rates, Australia shows an appreciable increase in household activities in the 1951 period. Activity in New Zealand and the United

Kingdom remained approximately at the same level as in 1950, while in the U. S., Sweden and South Africa, there was a decline in activity-- a decline which, in the U. S. and Sweden, was more pronounced in urban areas than in rural parts. 77 pp.

14. Bostadsbyggandet I Sverige Aren 1949 Och 1950. (Housing Construction in Sweden in 1949 and 1950) by the Royal Housing Board. Stockholm: Kungl. Boktryckeriet. P. A. Norstedt & Soner, 1952. (In Swedish with English Summary).

A presentation of the latest housing statistics for Sweden. It presents data on new construction, reconstructed or converted buildings, demolished buildings, and the net increase in the number of housing units for the country. 144 pp.

15. Housing and the Census. London: U. S. Embassy Report, August 12, 1952.

A statistical summary of the British housing situation based on that country's 1951 census, and evaluation of some press comments thereon. It is shown that the increase of 3.75 million in population between 1931 and 1951 has been absorbed without worsening the standard of housing density and an improvement in density has occurred among the worst housed families. An average of 1.32 rooms per person are available for those living in private households. The position in regard to density is worse comparatively in Scotland than in England and Wales, though a considerable improvement has occurred since 1931. The worst area for shared accommodation is Greater London, where a fifth of the population of England and Wales lives.

The report goes on to show that the biggest aggravation of the housing problem is the large number of small families, particularly individuals living alone, with more than adequate housing accommodation. This suggests, it states, that steps to encourage better distribution and improvement of existing houses, with perhaps some concentration of new houses in one or two of the worst areas, are more urgently necessary than is an increased housing program.

Other data and analyses are given in this report on housing need, density of occupation, households lacking amenities, housing of manual workers, and the extent of problems of subsidies and rent control. 8 pp.

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING

16. Climate and Town Districts Consequences and Demands by Ernst Egli. Verlag fur Architektur AG, Erlenbach-Zurich, 1951. (In English and German).

This book is a study of the development of city growth, urban housing and community life. "Its subject is thus the change from old to new, the development of the traditional forms of the human residence towards new forms not yet found." Its purpose is to help the planner in his search for new basic principles of town building. It may also be viewed as a dissertation on town planning as it applies to humanity living in all geographical locations.

The book, as the author points out, attempts to answer three basic questions:

1. How do situation and local surroundings influence the structure of a town; that is, its inner organization as well as its outer aspect?
2. Which are the principal town structures, with regard to their geographic conditions?
3. What conclusions may we draw from these considerations, both for the past and the future of town planning, for the traditional and for the developing town?

155 pp., 99 illus.

17. New Towns and the Case for Them by Lord Beveridge. London: University of London Press Ltd., July 1952.

A booklet based on a lecture given by the author on the need for and development of new towns. In it, the author discusses the administrative and social problems involved in establishing new towns. An appendix to this booklet contains short descriptions of each of the new towns of England. 24 pp.

18. Report on a Revised Plan for the Town and Region of GANDHIDHAM, Kutch, India. Boston: Adams, Howard and Greeley, August 1952.

This report was prepared for the Government of India, the Technical Cooperation Administration of the U. S. Department of State by Adams, Howard and Greeley in collaboration with the U. S. Housing and Home Finance Agency.

It begins with a summary of major recommendations followed by a review of the historical development of the area. Other sections of the report include discussions on the economic base of the new town,

population studies, administrative problems and proposals, planning proposals, and elements in the town plan on housing, schools and recreation, shopping, industry, water and sewers, and location of principal buildings. The planning proposals are all illustrated. 48 pp.

19. "New Towns in India" by Otto H. Koenigsberger. Liverpool: The Town Planning Review, July 1952. pp. 95-131.

An article on town planning for India in which are discussed some good planning guides for tropical areas. The following ones are listed:

1. Planning problems of underdeveloped regions are problems of numbers. It is necessary to mobilize the people themselves for their solution. Model villages and pilot schemes have little effect, unless funds are available to multiply them on a country-wide scale.
2. The people who are to benefit by planning are poor and produce little. Thinking in terms of welfare is of no avail if the aggregate production of the country is not enough to pay for it. The emphasis must be upon increased production and balanced occupational distribution. Improved living conditions, amenities and welfare must go hand in hand with greater productivity, but cannot precede it.
3. Tropical traditions and habits of outdoor living provide important opportunities for cheap and effective solutions.
4. Groups or chains of villages may prove better solutions for underdeveloped areas than the concentrated towns and cities of the West.

The article goes on to explain the emergence and significance of these tenets and to exemplify their application to the new towns of India. In so doing, the author discusses the economic features, climatic conditions, sociological features, and neighborhood planning. Many of the new towns of India are used as examples along with illustrations of their physical plans.

20. "Town and Regional Planning in Italy" by Giovanni Astengo. Liverpool: The Town Planning Review, July 1952. pp. 166-181.

A presentation of the general picture of town planning in Italy. The author reviews the pre-war town planning of various Italian cities, then discusses the progress which has been made in town planning in the post-war period. The article is profusely illustrated with planning schemes and housing projects for Naples, Milan, Rome, Turin and other Italian cities.

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TROPICAL HOUSING

21. "Building in the Tropics" by John Rannells. New York: Architectural Record, August 1952. pp. 153-181.

A sub-title to this article states it is an approach to the study of building types suitable for tropical conditions. More exactly, it is an analysis of the general geographic and climatic factors affecting building design in the tropical areas of the world. Many illustrations of local solutions to these problems are included in the article, not for low-cost housing, however.

22. "Correlations of Equatorial Climatic Factors with Comfort" by P. Y. Ho. London: Journal of the Institution of Heating and Ventilating Engineers, August 1952. pp. 196-197.

A short paper showing that the analysis of observations of Malayan indoor climate gives a correlation of 0.55 between the effective temperature and the comfort vote, similar to the results obtained in the United Kingdom. Partial correlation coefficients are given for the various climatic factors, and an empirical equation was derived to express the comfort vote as a function of these factors. A total correlation coefficient of $r = 0.67$ was found. Air movement is shown to be more important than temperature variation.

23. "On Some Observations of Indoor Climate in Malaya" by C. G. Webb. London: Journal of the Institution of Heating and Ventilating Engineers, August 1952. pp. 189-195.

An article on temperature variation in tropical housing from the University of Malaya, Singapore. It tells how occupied premises of various kinds common in Malaya were selected, and the occupants trained to make continuous observations of the climate, and their reaction to it, over a period of 24 hours or more under ordinary living and working conditions. The records were examined and compared with simultaneous outdoor data.

It was found possible to form a conspectus of the Malayan indoor climate and of its relation to that found outdoors; to measure the sensitivity of the observers to slowly changing climate, to determine the most favored conditions, and to construct an objective comfort scale for such observers. Certain remarks are also made on the function of the Malayan house.