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The Social significance of public housing, with special emphasis on the north side project

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1938-2

THE SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE OF PUBLIC HOUSING

WITH

SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON THE NORTH SIDE PROJECT.

A THESIS SUBMITTED

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

in the

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY OF THE
MUNICIPAL UNIVERSITY OF OMAHA

LAURA M. HEACOCK

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PREFACE

The desire to make this study grew out of an interest in the problems of the children and their families with whom the writer came in contact during her fourteen years teaching experience in Kellom School from September 1924 to June 1938.

In connection with her work as a grade school teacher she often visited in the homes. She found that a better knowledge of the child's home conditions made her work more efficient in helping him to adjust to school problems and situations.

She widened her knowledge of the home situation still further by taking the school census for several years in the Kellom School District. As a census enumerator she was required to visit every home within the district. This gave her a wider acquaintance with the neighborhoods in which the children lived, the relationship which existed between families and the general physical conditions of the homes.

For nine years the writer taught in a north east room on the second floor of Kellom School. The windows of this room provided a perfect view of the area now covered by the North Side Project.

As the years went by the properties in this area became more and more dilapidated. The gradual deterioration caused a change in the occupants of the rental

properties in the neighborhood. Those who had sufficient income to do so moved to other parts of the city. Their places were taken up by less fortunate tenants whose incomes forced them to accept whatever vacancies they could afford.

The change in tenants also created a change in the membership of the schoolroom and added still other problems of adjustment.

The decision of the committee of Real Estate men appointed by Mayor Roy Towl to select the site, to designate the area north of Kellom School as the blighted area on which they wished to construct the new project, made the writer decide to find out what social significance such a venture would have upon the families of the neighborhoods surrounding Kellom School and upon the city at large.

The writer expresses her appreciation to the parties interviewed and the many sources referred to in the body of this thesis.

INTRODUCTION

Social Significance is the quality of being important to the welfare of human society or the meaning of any institution to members of society.

The purpose of this study is to find out how Public Housing has affected the welfare of the citizens of Omaha generally, and how the Logan Fontenelle Homes Project has affected the social conditions of those people who formerly lived in that area as well as those who now live in the project.

Public Housing is Housing owned by the Federal Government, State or Political subdivision thereof, or by any other legally constituted authorized public body.

Public Housing in Omaha means the North Side Project called the Logan Fontenelle Homes and the South Side Project which is to be called Terrace Gardens.

The first part of the thesis is a short resume of the Public Housing programs in those European countries which have had an extensive governmental Housing program. The United States used the experiences of these European countries as a foundation upon which to erect its building program.

The Housing program of England is treated at greater length because she pioneered in Housing. The other countries are treated in respect to those matters in which their legislation or administration differed from that of England.

The stages of the development of the consciousness of the need for public housing in the United States are shown very briefly.

The remainder of the thesis is written on the findings concerning the North Side Project and those known facts concerning the South Side Project.

TECHNIQUE EMPLOYED

In addition to information gathered as a teacher in Kellom School and as a census enumerator, the writer acquired data in several ways.

1. By interviews, with members of committees who worked on the initial investigations before the first applications were sent to Washington, D. C.; with Sam Howell, chairman of the Local Housing Authority; with the attorney for the Local Housing Authority, Philip Klutznick; with the architects for the South Side Projects; with Everett Dodds, architect and Project Manager for Logan Fontenelle Homes; with George M. Ellis, engineer in charge of Works Progress Administration Project 833; with H. A. Wolf, director of the Real Estate Survey; with Mrs. Flora Potter, officer in the Juvenile Court; with Paul Josephson, assistant secretary to Council of Social Agencies; with Chief of Police John Pzanowski; with Fire Commissioner William Dorrance; with telephone, electric light and utilities department officials; with Miss Belle Ryan, assistant superintendent of Omaha Public Schools; with

Zenia Kahn, director of Social Workers in the County Assistance Bureau offices; with the Secretary of Urban League, Bernard E. Squires; with teachers of Kellom School and Principal E. D. Gepson.

2. A second means of acquiring data was that of checking the written records of the institutions named below.

The records of the Family Welfare and the Visiting Nurse Association were checked for the family record and for the records of the individual members. The twenty-two books of Police Court records from January 1, 1935 to August 1, 1938 were checked for the number and kinds of arrests made in the area now covered by the Logan Fontenelle Homes, the Juvenile Court, the County Assistance Bureau, and the Metropolitan Utilities District. Compiled data from the above named agencies were also used.

3. A third method employed was submitting alphabetized lists to the Nebraska Power and Metropolitan Utilities Districts for them to check over for electricity and gas.

4. A fourth method was that of referring to the city directories for the years 1935, 1936, 1937, and 1938: and by referring to the Omaha telephone directories for the years 1935, 1936, 1937 and 1938.

5. A fifth means of acquiring facts was reading from the files of the Omaha Bee News and Omaha World Herald for the years 1935, 1936, 1937 and the Omaha World Herald 1938.

6. Sixth, all alphabetized records were checked against a

card file made by the writer for such data as could be obtained in no other way.

7. Finally records were checked where data were kept according to address.

AVAILABILITY

Each office or agency had its own method of keeping records. For example, the Visiting Nurse Association had the city divided into districts over which each nurse gave service. They re-districted the city in June so that the files could not be used until the writer made an alphabetical card file of all the former residents of the area and also a file of the tenants of Logan Fontenelle Homes in July 1938. Then each card was checked against the general files of the Visiting Nurse Association. After that, the individual case records were pulled from the case record file and recorded on the card in the writer's file.

The same method was necessary for all relief cases, electricity, gas and telephone users and Juvenile Court cases.

The data from the Juvenile Court records were not used. The writer felt that any comparison between the former tenants of the area and the tenants of Logan Fontenelle Homes would not be fair because the tenants of the Logan Fontenelle Homes were a selected group.

They must have good credit rating and regular incomes.

They must be recommended by employers and former neighbors.

On the other hand, the former residents of the area were not a selected group. They were divided into two groups, responsible home owners and tenants in the low income groups. They lived in an area termed by the government as a blighted area. Opportunities for juvenile delinquency were therefore greater for this group, as will be shown later in the thesis. The home owners in this were able to move into better homes while the tenants moved into similar homes in near or far neighborhoods. As far as the number of cases of delinquency were concerned any change in conditions would need to come from the better opportunities for recreation afforded by the project.

Copies of maps for room density, encumbrance on property and plumbing from the unpublished Real Property Inventory were given to the writer by the administrator of Project 833 for use in getting material for the thesis. Only one copy of each map was given.

Ample opportunities for observing the conditions of homes in the area and of neighborhood relationships were afforded to the writer because she was a teacher in Kellom School for fourteen years and the people in the district were friendly to her.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The chief limitations of the study arose from the fact that the project had occupied for so short a time

that definite results could not be noted.

Another limiting factor was that the Annual reports of relief agencies, Visiting Nurse Association, and Omaha Fire Departments were not made until January 1, 1939.

To establish definite results on Public Schools several years' records would have to be made. All Federal relief records prior to 1936 were sent to Lincoln and were not available to anyone (even to the County Assistance Bureau of Douglas County).

All records of transfer of property in the Logan Fontenelle Area and all information pertaining to construction are in the archives at Washington, D. C.

Restrictions were placed upon the selection of tenants for the project by the rentals which were necessary because of the high cost of construction.

The type of tenant, the restrictions for eligibility, and the lack of likenesses which would made a basis for comparison limited the sources from which data could be gathered.

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PART I
IDEAS OF PUBLIC HOUSING

THE SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE OF PUBLIC HOUSING

With

SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON THE NORTH SIDE PROJECT

PART I IDEAS OF PUBLIC HOUSING

Definitions of Term Housing. The dictionary defines housing as "that which shelters or covers." Prior to the Industrial Age this shelter was provided by the individual and its comfort and social adequacy depended upon the initiative, energy and thrift of that individual. To him alone belonged the responsibility of providing the best that the environment afforded.

The Industrial Age, with its concentration of people in compact areas, its profound change in the habits and customs of the people, its environment often lacking in materials, sites and conditions for socially adequate housing, changed the concept of housing to that of a place of shelter close to one's work.

I

Harold H. Phelps, Contemporary Social Problems, 1932;

Edith Elmer Wood, The Housing of the Unskilled Wage Earner, 1919;

Carlton J. H. Hayes, A Political and Cultural History of Modern Europe, Vol. II, 1936, Chapter XV, pp. 3-60;

Clive Day, Economic Development in Modern Europe, 1933; pp. 154-170.

Carol Aronovici and McCalmons, Catching Up With Housing. 1936, Beneficial Management Corporation.

Development of Ideas About Housing. For many years there were no data available which would show what effect a workingman's housing had upon his working efficiency. Employers left the housing of their employees to investors whose interests were centered on housing for profit. They bought the houses and buildings left in the district when industry extended into residential areas. They often partitioned fine old residences into many small-roomed apartments in order to accommodate as many families as possible. Cheap, flimsy buildings were built on the back of lots already occupied so that light and air were at a premium. Housing at this time meant providing shelter for profit, giving the minimum essentials for the maximum profits.²

Adequate housing was reserved for those whose incomes were sufficiently large to pay the high rents demanded for comfortable living quarters or to build homes for themselves.

Since employers, employees and society were seemingly not conscious of the need for change, it was left to the

² Based on:

Carl Arnovici, Housing and the Housing Problem, 1920,
Morris Knowles, Industrial Housing, 1920,

J. Salywin Schapiro, Modern and Contemporary European History, 1929, Chs. III, XXVII, and XXVIII,

Edith Elmer Wood, Housing Progress in Western Europe, 1923.

social investigator to discover the frightful effects of inadequate housing and to attempt to awaken others to the dangers of leaving conditions as they were. Much credit belongs to Robert Owen for showing industrialists, through his successful experiment at New Lanark, that better housing is profitable for the employer. He demonstrated during the twenty-nine years of his management that not only the employee but also the whole community could be changed. He wrote that in twenty-nine years no lawyers nor magistrates were needed and no single legal punishment. The children were educated, genial and attractive. The conditions of the adults were improved through better homes, shorter working hours and recreational facilities. Drunkenness was almost unknown and illegitimacy was rare. Yet with all the improvements the industry cleared 300,000 dollars profit.³ Mr. Owen's departure from New Lanark was caused not from a lack of success but by a disagreement with his partners over the details of the management of recreational activities.

Other philanthropists became imbued with his ideas and several model villages were formed. The scope of these was necessarily limited to those who were wealthy and felt the need of social reform. The results were not

³ In January 1800 Robert Owen was invested with the sole management and direction of the New Lanark establishment. The dividend mentioned above was produced during the first ten years of his management. See Frank Podmore, Robert Owen, A Biography, Ch. V. 1924.

satisfactory and again housing for the worker was limited to housing-for-profit except in a few specific industries where the location of the industries necessitated building of homes for the employees.

The World War disclosed the fact that the economics of industry depend upon the capacity of the worker, which is directly proportional to his vigor and health. Furthermore the environment and conditions of life affect the health and vigor of the employee, his mental and bodily activity. His fatigue and ill-health diminish his working capacity.

While these facts were known to society soon after the war, it accepted no responsibility for providing or making employers provide socially adequate shelter for those families whose low incomes forced them to live in substandard homes. Even in 1938 the concept of responsibility of society for providing this shelter is not universally popular or accepted.

If legislation is taken as the standard of measurement, the United States seemed to have arrived at its acceptance of governmental responsibility for socially adequate housing rather slowly after much agitation and social pressure by groups of social workers whose work had made them conscious of conditions in housing.

PART II

EUROPEAN HOUSING

ENGLAND

England has the honor of being the pioneer both in Industrial Housing by philanthropists and in Public Housing. As early as 1851, Lord Shaftesbury procured the passage of the Laboring Classes Lodging House Act. This embodied the principle of government responsibility for the housing of its people. The Public Works Loan Commission was empowered to lend money to local authorities or private associations for housing working people. While this was not a definite subsidy it did provide money at a low rate of interest for building purposes.⁴

Most of the earlier legislation was of the restrictive type, and, in 1875 the Public Health Act gave to the local authorities the power of inspection and of forcing repairs needed in existing buildings. These were limited to light, ventilation, and sanitation.

A short time later the Torrens Act extended the power of the local authorities to the clearing of the whole slum areas. It provided the funds through the Public Works Loan Commission and prescribed the way of

⁴ Based on:

Carlton J. H. Hayes, A Political and Cultural History of Modern Europe, Vol. II, 1936, p. 86;

Morris Knowles, Industrial Housing, 1920;

Carol Arnovici, Housing and the Housing Problem, 1920,

Housing Betterment, January, 1922, p. 5.

demolition and the manner of rebuilding.⁵

The discovery of the germ theory of disease and the development of sanitary science and engineering contributed largely to the English public's growing awareness of the dangers of the evil conditions then in existence. This increasing knowledge led to the appointment in 1844 of the Royal Commission on Housing of the Working Classes. Their report a year later resulted in the Working Class Act which consolidated and harmonized existing legislation. Standards were set up by which future projects might be measured and which were to be changed whenever it was shown that the lag behind sanitary science was affecting the health and morality of the people.⁶

Just before the World War, attention was called to the shortage of housing and measures were taken to overcome it. The problem seemed to be much too difficult for the individual because of the high initial cost of building and the immovable character of the home once it

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Based on:

New Larned History, Vol. V., 1922, pp. 4126-4127;

Great Britain National Housing and Town Planning Council, pp. 4127-4128;

6

Based on:

The Cambridge Modern History, Vol. XII, 1929, pp. 730-765;

New Larned History for Ready Reference, Vol. V, p. 4122;

Carlton J. H. Hayes, A Political and Cultural History of Modern Europe, Vol. II, pp. 480, 745, 750-751;

L. T. Veiller, Housing and Health, Fourth Edition, 1910 National Housing Association.

was erected. To most of the English laborers home-owning was therefore an impossibility. Few could accumulate enough money in a lifetime to purchase a home and the high rate of interest made borrowing prohibitive. There were also the added loads of heavy taxes and repair which must be considered and the chances of having to sell if forced to move to keep working. Many solved their housing problems by living in dwellings built by capital. This insured them freedom to move as well as freedom from worry over the upkeep of the building.⁷

All would have been well if capital had not found more profitable places for investment. There were many fields opening which gave larger returns on the money with fewer worries attached. Housing brought many problems, such as: how to reduce the rent when the building got older and yet get an adequate rate of interest on the investment; how to keep the standard of accommodations up to the ever-improving standards in sanitary equipment without financial loss; what to do when an industry moved to another locality; how to handle the tendency of

⁷ Based on:

Thomas Adams, "House and Town Development in War Time," Landscape Architecture, April, 1918;

National Housing Associations' Publications, July, 1918;

Stuart Chase, "The Case Against Home Ownership," Survey Graphic, May, 1938.

general depreciation of the character of the tenants; and how to insure a sinking fund to repay the original investment. The inertia and indifference of many tenants of the laboring class did not ease the burden of the owners in any respect.

A survey of the housing needs in Great Britain in 1911 showed an overcrowding, when using as a standard two persons per room, of 3,139,472 persons. An estimated need of 100,000 buildings was shown in this report, but before much could be done to remedy the situation Great Britain was concentrating all efforts toward war preparation and housing of war workers. Not only the soldiers in training but also those workers who were preparing ammunitions, ships, and other war supplies must be housed and fed.

J. E. Hutton in his book, Welfare and Housing, says that there was a sudden necessity for the provision of housing accommodations in districts where the existing supply was unequal to the new accession of labor. He also states, "The high pressure at which the work of munitions

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N. H. Engle, "The British Housing Program," Annals of the Academy, Vol. 190, pp. 195-204;

Edith Elmer Wood, Recent Trends in American Housing, 1931;

Encyclopedia Britannica, Vol. XI, Fourteenth Edition, Article on "Housing in England.", p. 836

"British and American Housing", Saturday Evening Post, February, 1936.

production had to be performed led to a practical consideration of how best the efficiency of the workers could be maintained. The exigencies of the time had brought the employers generally into closer contacts with the needs of the employed in respect of the factors which are essential to their health and welfare."⁹

He especially stressed the discovery that the economics of industry depend at least as much upon the capacity of the worker, which is directly proportional to his health and vigor, as it does upon the wages paid him. He further states that the discovery of this last fact caused the establishment of a branch of the factory management which had to do with the supervision of the welfare of its employees.

After the war, the general housing shortage in England was greater than ever. With the exception of the buildings necessary for war workers, all constructive work had ceased for a period of four to six years. War had reduced personal means, laborers had been mobilized for war and war work, apprentices had ceased to become recruits for apprenticeships, and there was a monetary

⁹ J. E. Hutton, *Welfare and Housing*, 1918, p. 4

depreciation as well as very heavy taxation. All this had its special bearing upon this housing problem. Workers could no longer afford to live in the larger houses so many families lived together to reduce the cost of living. There was a tremendous amount of overcrowding of small houses.¹⁰

The shortage of dwellings and the lack of repair of older buildings caused a rise in building cost to the extent that it was above the middle and lower class income.

The census of Great Britain in 1921 showed that the overcrowding numbered 3,580,274 persons and there were only 215,215 empty dwellings as compared to 434,948 empty dwellings in 1911. Of the number empty in 1921, 45,000 needed to be demolished per year because of old age or substandard conditions below re-modeling levels. In order to consider the welfare of the people there needed to be 463,127 units erected to meet the standard of one family per dwelling unit.

So great a need could not be met by industrialists and was recognized as a government problem. The ministry

¹⁰ Based on:

Edith Elmer Wood, Housing Progress in Western Europe,
1925,

B. S. Townroe, The Slum Problem, 1928.

of Health was established as a definite part of the cabinet and sponsored definite legislative acts for Public Housing.

The Act of 1911 provided that the local authorities have the duty of preparing schemes for the building, as soon as possible, of the number of houses needed to house the working classes in their districts. Furthermore the local authorities were to make a survey of these needs and present them to the Local Government Board, which soon became the Ministry of Health. A government subsidy was to take the form of bearing the annual loss which represented the difference between the net revenues from the rents which could be charged for houses and the outgoings for interest, repairs, sinking fund, etc; in so far as it exceeded a local penny rate that was to represent the contribution of local authorities toward the loss.

The progress of the Local Authorities was very slow, and by 1921 because of financial stress, too little governmental control of Local Authorities, and terrific governmental losses in these projects, the number of

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Ramsay Muir, How England is Governed, 1935; p. 52.

J. W. Lang, "Housing Methods in Great Britain," Architectural Record, November, 1937, pp. 66-71;

E. M. Fisher and R. U. Ratcliff, "Forms of Financial Assistance to Housing in Europe," Annals of American Academy, Vol. 190, March, 1937, pp. 214-215;

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Garden Cities and Town Planning, October, 1929.

dwellings to be erected was limited to 175,000.

A later act of Parliament provided a government subsidy in the form of a lump sum grant per house offered to private persons building houses within prescribed limits of size and specification of character. The results of this scheme were as follows:

Erected by 1274 Municipal Authorities 170,000 houses,
by Public Utility Societies 4,500 houses, by private persons
or builders 40,000.

Again in 1923 the Minister of Health promoted a Housing Act in which a subsidy was offered (1) to Local Authorities of a pound per annum per house for twenty years toward the loss incurred by local authorities. (2) to private enterprise a pound per annum per house for twenty years to builders, or, the local authorities could on security of this payment raise the equivalent sum of about seventy-five pounds and give it as capital grant to builders. The local authorities were also empowered to increase the amount of the grant at the expense of the local rates. (3) For slum clearance, in this the approval of the Minister of Health was necessary. He was authorized to make grants toward the expenses incurred by local authorities in carrying out improvement schemes and the consequent re-housing work.

The amount of the grant was to take the form of a fixed annual contribution. The amount was to be settled in each case by consultation with local authorities and was not to exceed fifty percent of the estimated average annual loss likely to be incurred in carrying out the scheme. Contributions have varied. Usually fifty per cent has been paid in respect of approved schemes.

Additional powers were given to local authorities to assist private enterprise by way of loans to builders of houses not exceeding fifteen-hundred pounds in value. The amendment to the Small Dwellings Acquisition Act facilitated the loans to owner occupiers for houses not exceeding societies were authorized so that local authorities could facilitate their operations if they so desired. The effect of this scheme was very desirable. By the autumn of 1923 ten thousand builders had qualified to receive assistance and their dwellings were being constructed. By the next summer fifty thousand additional

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Coleman Woodbury, "Integrating Private and Public Enterprise in Housing," Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, March, 1937, pp.167;

Housing Policy in Europe, International Labor office, 1930, pp. 63-69;

House Production, Slum Clearance in England and Wales. Ministry of Health, London, 1935, pp. 3-9.

homes were being constructed.

The new Labor Government sponsored another Housing Act in 1924 leaving the provisions of the Act of 1923 untouched except for one or two minor details. It continued in operation over a period of fifteen years subject to periodic revision of subsidy amounts and created a new form of financial assistance.¹⁵

The Act increased the subsidy for houses built under certain conditions. The most important conditions were: (1) The annual charge on rates did not exceed four pounds, ten shillings per house. (2) Houses were to be let at rents prevailing for similar pre-war houses in that district.

This act was more attractive both to private enterprise and to local authorities. By taking a smaller grant the property could be sold by private enterprise, with certain restrictions and regulations, and the local authorities were authorized to grant subsidies of nine pounds per year for forty years in urban areas and twelve pounds, ten shillings for forty years for agricultural areas. The local authorities also could comply with

¹⁵ Keith Hutchinson, "Britain's Private Housing Boom," Survey Graphic, April, 1938, Vol. XXVII, No. 4, p. 233.

letting conditions in two ways, making up the loss out of the local rate to the amount not exceeding four pounds, ten shillings or raise the rent to amount necessary to keep local rates at required minimum.

The increase of houses built was very rapid up to 1927 when a Parliamentary Act reduced the subsidy on houses built under the 1923 Act to four pounds per house for twenty years and those built under the 1924 Act to Urban houses seven pounds, ten shillings and in agricultural areas eleven pounds, two shillings and six pence.

Previous to 1914 the number of houses built by voluntary agencies had been very small and even this number was brought to a standstill by the war. These agencies took the form of building societies, cooperatives, and co-partnership societies. After 1918, under the impetus of government subsidies, government regulation, inspection, and legislation, these agencies again took a prominent part in re-housing. The 1926-27 report of the Minister of Health left no room for doubt that the authority delegated to this department for inspection, notification of defect and to remedy or close the house when the owner had not done so, had much to do with solving the housing problem in England. ¹⁶

¹⁶ N. H. Engle, "The British Housing Program," The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Vol. 190, pp. 195-204.

A survey of the various parts of the Acts from 1919 to 1929 shows a rising standard for light, ventilation, sanitary equipment, density requirements, and size and arrangement of houses. It shows too that England had again "muddled through" her difficulties and had come out ahead in the matters of authorization of powers to local authorities, changing restrictions on sales of property, prevention of misuse of subsidies and the subsidy amounts to meet the needs, and in every instance the schemes have worked for the betterment of the people. For an example we cite regulation of density to twelve houses per acre which shows the following benefits: (1) It added to the economic ability of the tenant to pay rent by providing each with a plot of garden ground. (2) It has increased the tenant's opportunity for healthy living by providing ample air spaces and sunlight. (3) It had enhanced the attractiveness of homes with its landscaping and screening of undesirable buildings with foliage. (4) It had introduced a new standard of amenity by providing means of getting together with the common interest of gardens or landscaping. (5) It had reduced the road costs by placing roads and buildings to suit the contour of the land instead of in the long barracks-like rows facing the streets. (6) It had reduced excavation and filling costs thereby introducing a new economy in building. (7) It had made possible

the maximum of accommodation with the least waste of space.¹⁷

England has pointed the way for other countries to follow in the matter of housing. From the reports of the Housing Committees and the Ministry of Health much can be learned concerning the variability in cost of construction due to local conditions. The rental problems which have been discovered and in a measure solved have saved other countries such costly experimentation. It was found that London presented its own particular problems because of its excessively large urban area, its mobility of population from one section to another, and the great number of slum areas whose clearance meant the re-housing of so many people.

London was divided into two parts for the building program, Greater London and the London County Council. Before 1928, to meet the needs of the Greater London there were built one hundred fifty-two thousand, one hundred thirty-five dwellings, by local authorities, trusts or public societies, and private enterprise with the aid of government subsidies. In London County Council twenty-two thousand and four hundred fifty-three dwellings were completed and twenty-three slum areas

¹⁷ Louis H. Pink, The New Day in Housing, 1918, Ch. VIII.

cleared or under construction which would house twenty-seven thousand people.¹⁸

All Parliamentary Acts applied to Scotland as well as to England with a few variations in regard to administration. A survey of the housing conditions north of Tweed disclosed the fact that the standard was lower in Scotland. While rooms were found to be larger in Scotland there was less complete separation of sleeping and living rooms. There was also a tendency for the working classes in Edinburgh and Glasgow to be housed in tenement blocks.

The Royal Commission of 1918 recommended that two hundred thirty-five thousand, nine hundred ninety dwellings be constructed to relieve overcrowding. It also recommended that no dwelling be higher than three stories and limited the number of dwellings per acre to thirty-two, when they were that high. If single cottages were built only sixteen to an acre were allowed. Later figures showed a tendency toward housing having more rooms and a reduction in the proportion of the population living in one room dwellings in Scotland.

CONTINENTAL EUROPE

After the World War Europe was faced with not only

¹⁸ Based on data from an address by Right Honorable Sir Kingsley Wood, M.P., Minister of Health before the National Housing and Town Planning Conference, Harrogate, November 27, 1936, p. 2.

a shortage of dwellings but also with the problem of having many occupied dwellings which were wholly inadequate for healthy living. The solution of these problems was made more difficult by the inflation and instability of currencies. A wholesale adoption of the policy of loans and subsidies to stimulate the erection of dwellings was found throughout the continent. For greater stimulation there was a general remission of taxation upon dwellings when they were erected and rented under specific regulations.

Buildings were of two types: The one-family dwelling and multi-family dwelling. The choice of which type to build was influenced by economic, political, and climatic conditions.¹⁹

Austria. In Austria the famine which existed for a short time caused an exodus of many urban people to the country where living conditions were easier because food could be raised on a small plot of ground. The places left vacant by the exodus were taken by officers returning from those parts of the Old Austrian Empire which now belonged to other countries. Their return was followed by a collapse of money values and the need of growing

¹⁹ Based on:

Edith Elmer Wood, Housing the Unskilled Wage Earner ;
 Louis H. Pink, The New Day in Housing, 1928, Ch. VII

food was increasingly greater. To meet this emergency Housing Settlements under Cooperative Societies were begun. These consisted of one family dwellings with attached four or five metre gardens. These settlements were assisted by the Society of Friends and others who were interested in the welfare of the people.

Siedlings or settlements were built by Cooperative Societies on lands provided by the city of Vienna from extensive green belts in its possession. These cooperative societies grew to enormous size as thousands of families applied for membership. The conditions for membership were such that unskilled labor could comply and become members. Each intending householder must contribute from one thousand to two thousand hours of free labor. This labor was used in digging foundations, making roads, preparing blocks and assisting skilled labor. Members were allowed to work on summer evenings and over the week ends so there was no interference with their regular jobs.

After the stabilization of currency was effected, there was a return to building small flat dwellings in town areas and handsome blocks of dwellings were erected in Vienna. Over sixty thousand dwellings were completed in Vienna during the first fifteen years following the

World War.²⁰

Belgium. Belgium needed to replace her war-devastated areas as well as to take care of the shortage in houses caused by the cessation in building activities. By the Housing Act of 1919 building was stimulated through assistance given to regional building societies by a central society called Societe Nationale Des Logement a Bon arche. There were two-hundred sixty of these public utilities societies. Loans were made to the full value of lands and buildings under supervision of the Societe Nationale. Shareholders of the societies were the State, the provinces, the municipalities, and other public institutions and private persons.

The first loans, amounting to 570,000,000 francs, were made at a low rate of two per cent plus seventy-five hundredths per cent sinking fund plus twenty-five hundredths percent general cost for a period of sixty-five years. The State bore the difference between the rate at which the money could be raised and the low interest charged for loans, in effect a substantial subsidy. This placed the societies in a position where it was

20

Based on: Edith Elmer Wood, Recent Trends in American Housing, 1931, pp. 93, 96-98;

Housing Betterment, National Housing Association, 1927;

Edith Elmer Wood, Housing Progress in Western Europe, 1923,

Encyclopedia Britannica, Vol. XI, Fourteenth Edition;

Annals of the Academy of Political and Social Sciences, Vol. 190;

American Architect, May 5, 1920.

possible to let the dwellings at a rental of four and two-tenths percent to four and three tenths percent of the cost.²¹

By 1924 the interest rate was changed to three per cent charged for 100,000,000 francs and three and one-half percent for 300,000,000 francs. Under the first loan thirty-three thousand buildings were erected which included apartment dwellings and one-family houses. Under the next, 400,000,000 franc loan thirteen thousand dwellings were constructed.

Subsidies were also provided for individual families who wished to build homes for themselves. These subsidies ranged from twenty-five hundred to thirty-five hundred francs per dwelling and resulted in the erection of eighteen thousand dwellings in 1926. The plan was stopped at the end of the year because of financial stress and the depreciation of currency. A small number of municipalities had made additions to the subsidies given by the State. Provision was also made for the purchase of homes built by the societies by subsidies in the form of reduced prices.

²¹ Based on: Edith Elmer Wood, Housing of the Unskilled Wage Earner, 1921,

Louis H. Pink, The New Day in Housing, 1928, Ch. IV,

Housing Betterment, Febr. 1920, pp. 16-17,

American Architect, Dec. 1, 1920,

The New Larned History, Vol. V, 1922.

Out of the money received from this sale, the societies built more homes. To further encourage building, an exemption from land tax for a period of ten years was granted on every dwelling erected under certain value.

The slum clearance and re-housing plans were taken care of by La Ligue National Belge Contre les Taudis under measures created with the approval of the government and the patronage of the king. These measures included (1) inspection of dwellings, (2) construction of cheap dwellings costing from twenty thousand to twenty-five thousand francs, (3) subventions to families needing it to build or buy their houses up to six thousand francs, (4) exemption from property tax for ten years, (5) re-conditioning old houses and closing slums with recourse to the crown if municipalities failed to act, (6) sanitary inspection of dwellings to be independent of local authorities, (7) education in housekeeping.

By the last condition it would seem that Belgium went a step farther than England in helping her people. However, J. E. Hutton informs us in his book, "Welfare and Housing," that the sanitary standards of housekeeping of the war workers of Belgium who were housed in the hostels of the Vickers Limited during the World War were much different, and from the English viewpoint, far below that of the English.²²

²² J. E. Hutton, Welfare and Housing, 1918, pp. 39-40

France. France had a much greater housing problem because the war had been fought over a larger portion of her territory. Reconstruction of rural areas as well as urban property was necessary. She too attacked the problem of housing her working classes. This was done by the state through its administrative departments and communes.²³

Most of the work was done by cooperative societies known as Societes d' Habilitation a'bon Marche. State assistance was given by granting loans at three and one-half per cent which was less than the market rate of interest. The loans made were as large as sixty per cent of the cost of the building or of its selling price whichever was the least. When re-payment of the loan to the State was guaranteed by the department or commune the amount loaned could be raised to seventy-five per cent of its cost.

State subsidies were granted to communes directly up to one-third the cost of building. They were also granted to organizations and other public or semi-public bodies who were willing to construct houses to be let at two-thirds of the market price for rental to large families of more than three children under sixteen years of age.

²³ William Bennett Munro, The Governments of Europe, 1938, International Labor Office, Geneva, European Housing Problems Since the War, 1924, and Housing Policy in Europe, 1931.

Communes were empowered to donate to the societies land areas for the purpose of construction. They could also make loans to these societies, subscribe to shares of the societies, or guarantee the interest on shares up to three per cent for twenty years. They might guarantee the interest and the sinking fund on loans which had the approval of the Public Offices.

The new buildings were exempt from certain taxes for a period of fifteen years.

Cooperative societies have been in existence in France since long before the World War. The three hundred forty existing societies had for their purpose the construction of cheap houses for the working classes. That their work was much needed is shown by the 1921 estimate which gave the number of dwellings needed in Paris alone as 47,794 and in the department of the Seine 13,924. That of the whole country was estimated to be 500,000 dwellings.

Since 1928 the French government has made even larger grants to the societies where two-thirds of the houses to be let are for families having at least four children under sixteen years of age. ²⁴

²⁴ Based on: New Larned History, Vol. V, 1922, pp. 4122-24, Housing Betterment, Jan. 1922, pp. 23-35 and April, 1922 pp. 147, American Architect, May 26, 1920, p. 656, Encyclopedia Britannica, Vol. XI, Fourteenth Edition.

Housing at the present time has again taken a minor position to that of preparation for defense caused by the feeling of insecurity which has encompassed Europe. Germany. From the time when she achieved her national unity to the World War, housing in Germany was in the hands of one thousand cooperative housing societies which had been fostered by the government and municipalities to offset speculation. Public auditing of their accounts was required and shares were sold to investors who were partly from the governmental and other public bodies.²⁵

After the World War, Germany was confronted with a house shortage. Rents had been raised to twenty per cent of the income and there was an excessive speculation in land. The currency fluctuations found in other countries were acute here. The state government took over the control of rentals in some divisions of the country and rationed the rooms in others. Householders were required to take lodgers for excess rooms.

All pre-war buildings were taxed to fifty percent of their pre-war rents. One-half of this tax was ear-marked

²⁵ Based on: Carol Arnovici, German Housing Reform,
 Louis H. Pink, The New Day in Housing, 1928, Ch. VI,
American Architect, May 5, 1920,
Housing Betterment, January, 1922,
 Edith Elmer Wood, Housing Progress in Western Europe, 1923,
 Edith Elmer Wood, Recent Trends in American Housing,
 pp. 18-19;
 Housing and Building Association, Frankfort a/ Main

to provide cheap mortgages for new buildings.

After 1924 the house tax was used by the state or municipality to buy second and third mortgages at a low rate of interest with a one percent repayment from the third year on. These subsidized dwellings numbered by the end of 1927 a total of 1, 620,682 constructed or in the process of construction.

Holland. Holland did not participate in the fighting in the World War so her problems in housing were those which pertained to the soil and the expensive foundations necessary for even the simplest construction. She had developed many new areas for cottage dwellings on reclaimed land whose surface had to be raised from ten to fifteen feet. Many of these dwellings as well as those built in other parts of Holland were erected upon expensive foundations set upon deeply driven piles.

26

Arie Keppler, Housing in the Netherlands, oo. 205-13;
Annals of American Academy, Vol. 190;
 Louis H. Pink, The New Day in Housing, 1928, Ch. V;
New Larned History, Vol V, 1922, pp. 4128ff.

between the actual rents and economic rents. Of this loss the state bore seventy-five per cent and the municipality twenty-five per cent. In 1920 minimum rents were fixed according to the space provided. This was figured on cubic feet not square feet of floor space.

In order that the burden might not be greater than the State or municipality could bear, the act of 1924 required new dwellings to bring in ninety per cent of the economic rent. Loans made to approved public utilities societies thereafter were as large as one hundred per cent of the cost of the building. The loans were granted through local authorities who took the full responsibility to the state.

Holland has been very successful with her housing. There has been a wonderful uniformity of annual building with a net increase of about forty thousand houses per year. This prevents the lag of building trade employment which has bothered almost every other progressive country and it has the added virtue of making a big contribution to the beauty of Holland through the skill and architectural taste in laying out the sites and designing the buildings.

Italy. Italy recognized that responsibility of the state in the matter of the housing of the poorer classes by legislation as early as 1908. This act gave a legal status to public utilities societies but allowed no subsidies for their use.

In 1919 there were several provisions made for State assistance in financing housing. Two types of housing plans were provided. One was called "Houses for People." These were to be constructed by corporate bodies, such as communes, communal institutes, cooperative societies, or industrial or agricultural societies. There were to be houses for rental only and must remain the property of the society. No dwelling was to have more than six rooms.²⁷

The other type was called the "Economic Housing." This type could be constructed by cooperative societies or their members to become the property of either the individual or of the society for rental. The economic housing dwellings were built by loans but were larger and of better quality. Each dwelling was limited to ten rooms. The state could contribute two and one-half per cent toward the amortization and payment of the loans. Communes were empowered to cooperate for direct construction themselves or through special institutes. They could take over necessary land and provide public services. No assistance was given to private enterprise working

²⁷ Based on: Edith Elmer Wood, Housing the Unskilled Wage Earner, 1919,

Encyclopedia Britannica, Fourteenth Edition, Vol. II 6

New Larned History, Vol. V, 1922, p. 4129;

Housing Betterment, April, 1922, pp. 155-159;

Shelter, February, 1938.

for speculative profit.

After 1923 amortization contributions by the state were discontinued but fiscal facilities were extended through building tax exemptions on both types of houses when they were constructed by communes or when under the direct control of communes. Duties on building materials were reduced and municipal lands were sold on favorable terms. Direct subsidies and contributions were also tendered. A terminal date was set for December, 1928. Since that date grants of tax exemption are obtainable for building dwellings for rental purposes which are limited to three rooms plus domestic offices.

Building in rural and semi-rural areas was likewise encouraged by state assistance to corporate authorities. This was in the form of twenty per cent contribution of the cost of construction, a reduction in railway rates of fifty percent for carrying building materials and exemptions from certain taxes.

Luxury building was suspended for one year after June 30, 1927 in order to relieve the strain on the building industry.

PART III

PUBLIC HOUSING IN UNITED STATES

THE UNITED STATES

While the United States pioneered in many other ways she waited for Europe to experiment in governmental construction of houses for the workers with low incomes. All efforts at the improvement of housing conditions prior to the World War were the work of civic and social workers under the authority and with the help of private and charitable organizations. To them we owe the credit for calling our attention to the dangers of conditions which were fast developing and for the opportunities for social progress through better housing. 28

Because of this growing awareness cities passed ordinances which aimed to correct some of the most outstanding evils, particularly those which had to do with fire hazards and health measures that would prevent epidemics and plagues. Committees were appointed whose business it was to survey the crowded conditions and make recommendations for their improvement. Since some of the city charters needed authorization by the state legislature to carry out the recommendations of their committees, this work came to be a state responsibility.

Most of this early legislation was of a restrictive

28

Based on: Morris Knowles, Industrial Housing, 1920;

"Proceedings National Housing Association," Vol. II, 1912, The Academy of Political Science, Columbia University, New York;

James Ford, Slums and Housing, 1936.

nature. It fixed minimum standards for light, air sanitation, and convenience. Several states appointed or established a housing authority whose work was to pass on plans and make inspections. The shortcoming of this legislation was that it gave no power to the housing authority to enforce the necessary compliance with the repairs or demolitions which inspectors had found to be necessary. Even in those states where some measure of enforcement was provided, many loopholes for escaping responsibility were found by landlords.

The annual reports from the Association for Improving the Conditions of the Poor, published in the middle of the nineteenth century in New York, show that people in the New York slum areas were living under conditions almost too terrible for belief.²⁹ A short time later the report of the Official Investigation of the Legislative Committee stated that the city was responsible for these conditions through its neglect and through its being the primary cause of being overcrowded and overpopulated.³⁰

The results of this report were first shown by the

²⁹ Report of the Association for Improving the Conditions of the Poor, 1853, New York.

³⁰ Report of the Legislative Committee of 1857, New York.

establishment of the Department of Health in 1866 and the passage of the First Tenement House Law in 1867. Both this law and the one passed twelve years later were of a regulatory nature. They attempted to provide fire protection through regulation of fire escapes, to furnish better light, ventilation and sanitation. They restricted the occupancy of cellar rooms and dark interior rooms. Windows were ordered cut into every room and no new buildings could be erected which had rooms without access to outside air.

Ways were found to follow the letter of this law by means of dumbbell tenements. The air shafts in these were fifty or sixty feet long but only twenty-eight inches wide except in the middle where they sometimes widened out to a few feet. The health of the tenant was not safeguarded as much as was desired so further legislation was passed which defined a tenement and limited the lot occupancy. Semi-annual inspection was ordered to insure compliance with the law.

Doctors, philanthropists and social workers continued the work of educating the public. How the Other Half Lives,

31

New Larned History, Vol. V, 1922, p. 4132;

New Republic, December 28, 1938, p. 217 and June 22, 1938 pp. 179, 181;

Nation, March 27, 1935;

Survey Graphic, Vol. XXVII, July, 1938

by Jacob Riis awakened a response in the hearts of the people of New York and gave such a strong backing to the reports of the Health Departments and State Commissions that the present Tenement House Law was passed.³²

This law set the highest standards of any law at the time of its passing.

The provisions of this law set a minimum standard in structure and sanitation for buildings erected or altered in the future. While the standards for buildings already in existence are lower in the above respects, yet the standards of maintenance (cleanliness and repair) for them are exactly the same as for the newer buildings. All cellar dwellings were prohibited in the new buildings. In the old buildings the ceilings of the cellar dwellings must be two feet above the ground. Basement apartments were allowed if the ceilings were four and one-half feet above the level of the pavement.

Tenement conditions in New York were not peculiar to that city alone. Large cities from the east to the west coast have had their problems to solve. Boston

32

Jacob A. Riis, How the Other Half Lives, 1890;

33

The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Vol. 190, 1937;

Current Developments in Housing, pp. 24-36;

The Bayonne Housing Corporation, Bayonne, New Jersey
Industrial Housing, 1925;

R. S. Whiting, Housing and Industry, 1918

found conditions not at all to her liking and proceeded to have those changed as far as they could be done by state legislation. This also was of a restrictive type and left the ownership in the hands of the individual. Minimum standards were set as to the sites upon which buildings could be erected, kinds of repairs which must be made and what kind of rebuilding must be done. These were used as a measuring basis for inspection and in the particulars of light, ventilation, sanitation, fire protection, and room density were similar to those set by the New York Law of 1901.³⁴

The San Francisco report of 1911 and 1913 showed that her chief troubles were overcrowding per room and fire risks, particularly in those wooden tenements which contained two-room apartments. Since 1914 regular tenement house inspections have been part of the duties of the city inspectors.³⁵

Baltimore, Richmond, and Washington, D.C. have a poorer housing program for the Negroes than for the white tenants. This has directly affected the health of the white population because dependence has been placed almost

³⁴ George Williams, The Law of the Apartments, Flats, and Tenements, 1908;

Reports: Chicago Department of Public Welfare, 1925;
 " Cincinnati Better Housing League, 1935;
 " Philadelphia Housing Associations, 1915;

Raymond Moley, Review of the Surveys of the Cleveland Foundation, 1923;

³⁵ Reports of the San Francisco Housing Association.

wholly upon the Negroes for domestic help. The realization of this fact was slow in attaining recognition. Social workers have long written about the dangers of disease and immorality which had their source in the environment furnished the workers both in industry and in the homes.

The United States has very recently built a number of projects which attempted to solve the housing problem for the Negro worker in deteriorated areas.³⁶ There still remain many unsightly as well as socially inadequate areas as was pointed out in articles and pictures in the September 13, 1938 issue of the Colliers.

The larger cities of the mid-west have had more room for expansion and the ground has been less expensive. Never-the-less, Chicago and St. Louis have found that they too must follow New York in the matter of legislation which corrects as far as possible the defects already present and prevents the future dangers as demonstrated in older and more crowded cities.

Edith Elmer Woods says that there is no community without its subnormal housing conditions which lower physical, mental and moral stamina. Many methods have

36

Harlem River Houses, New York, N.Y., 574 Units

Logan Fontenelle Homes, Omaha, Nebraska, 106 Units.

been tried to improve these conditions and better housing has been developed through a combination of popular agitation, private philanthropy, the creation of special dwelling centers by certain industries, and of political legislation.³⁷

The United States government entered the housing field during the World War. A survey was made of one hundred cities to find what housing was available and what type of building was necessary to properly house war workers. In these cities one hundred twenty-eight sites were selected and projects planned. Forty of the projects were started and sixty contracts had been granted. Twenty thousand workers had been housed before the Armistice was signed. Since there was no longer a necessity for government building the business was liquidated in 1919 and housing was turned back to private enterprise.

The war had done much to create a housing shortage. Capital had found a more profitable field for investment, the attention of workers had been centered upon the production of war supplies and home building had practically ceased. This shortage forced a large proportion of the

³⁷ Edith Elmer Woods, The Costs of Bad Housing.

The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Vol. 190, pp. 145-190.

American City population into unused, dilapidated, dwellings in areas which we now designate as slums. The social and moral effects were terrible. There was a general property deterioration; darkness and disease bred discontent, disorder, crime and resentment against society. Incurable ills were fostered.

In many places the Health Department had the power to clear slum areas but did not do so because they could not find the answers to the question of where to put the people while new buildings were being constructed and to the related question of where to get the money and the authority to do it.

The United States government again entered the housing field and attempted to relieve the stress of unemployment after the depression. The Emergency Relief and Reconstruction Act of 1932 permitted the Reconstruction Finance Corporation to make loans to construct, alter, or repair under government regulation or control, low cost housing and to effect slum clearance.

Again in 1933 an act of Congress created the Home

38

Edith Elmer Wood, Ph D., The Costs of Bad Housing, pp. 145-150; The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Vol. 190;

pp. Chicago, 1929.
Clifford Shaw, Delinquency Areas, 214

Report of National Commission on Law Observance and Enforcement, 1931;

Albion Fellows, Bacon, "What Bad Housing Means to the Community," National Housing Association Publications, New York, December, 1915.

Owners Loan Corporation, the Tennessee Valley Authority, and the Housing Division of the Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works. The Home Owners Loan Corporation was created to finance existing mortgage debts on residences where mortgagers were in distress. It was restricted to owners who were in involuntary default on June 1933 or whose default, at a later date was due to circumstances beyond their control. This was not low cost housing and did not relieve the housing shortage in any greater measure than to prevent occupants of these houses having to live with someone else.

The Department of Commerce in 1934 made a survey of housing conditions in a Real Property Inventory. Much of the information was used to establish the need of later housing projects. In the same year the Federal Housing Authority was set up for the purpose of planning and administration. Further legislation was enacted in 1935 to create work for the unemployed by public works. This legislation established the Works Progress Administration and the Suburban Resettlement Division of the Resettlement Administration.

The construction of new homes was placed under the authority of the Housing Division of the Public Works Administration, the Works Progress Administration and the Resettlement Division of the Tennessee Valley Administration. The duty of the first named organization was to clean out slums, build and operate low rent houses,

supervise the demolition of the old buildings and the operation of the new. The Logan Pontonelle Homes were under their supervision.

The work of the Resettlement Division was to plan low cost housing in suburban areas adjacent to indirect centers. The Twin River Project and the Kearney Valley Project in Nebraska came under their supervision. In the United States seven limited dividend projects have been completed and occupied.

Experience showed the need of both local and national legislation for a long term housing project. Before this legislation was completed the Federal Government constructed fifty-one low cost housing projects under the supervision of the Housing Division of the Public Works Administration. The list was published in the Harlem River Houses pamphlet³⁹ by the Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works.

39

Harlem River Houses: Federal Emergency Administration
Of Public Works.

Housing Division, Howard A. Gray, Director, page 15

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PART IV

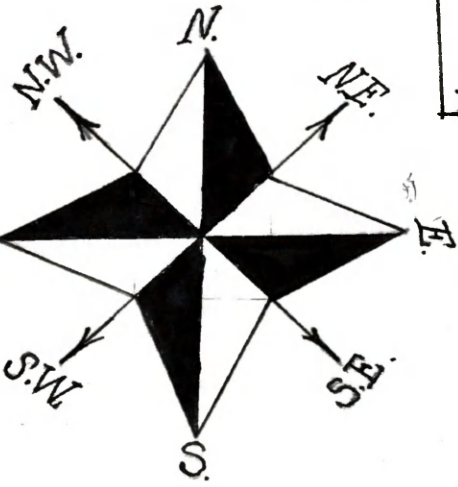
PUBLIC HOUSING IN OMAHA

Map No 1.

Location of Projects
Van Fontenelle Homes
Terrace Garden
and

Kellom School District

OMAHA



Parking Area

Legend

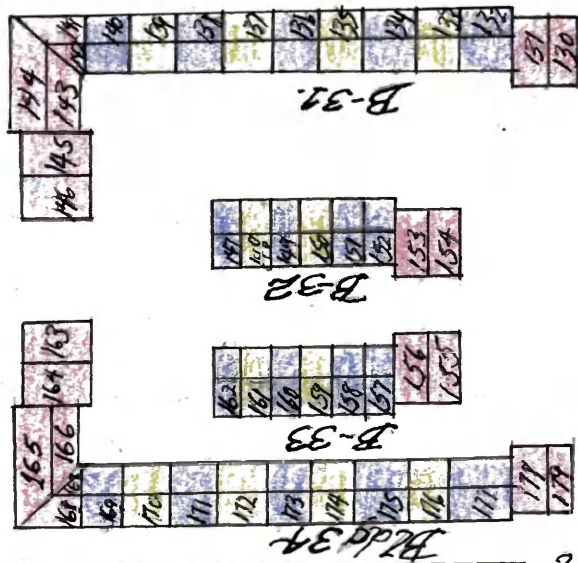
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3 Room 4-4	2 Room 3 Room
10	80
123	80
21	80
204	80
Total	Total

Total Units 284

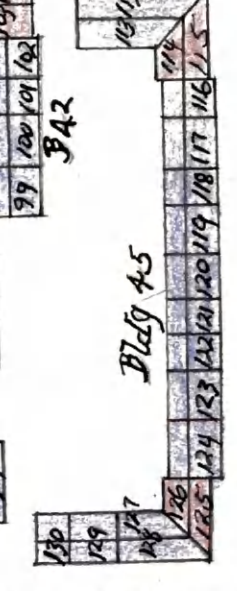
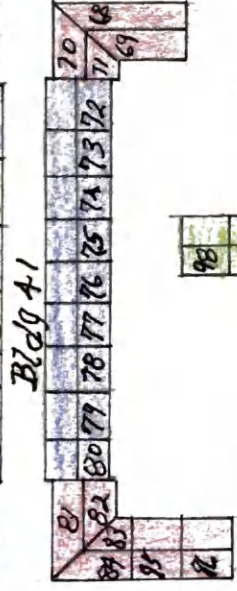
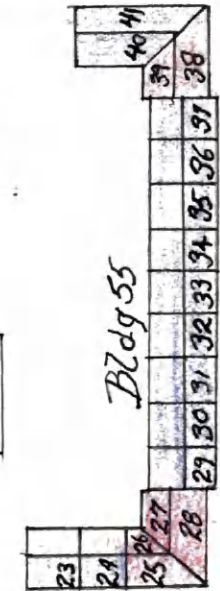
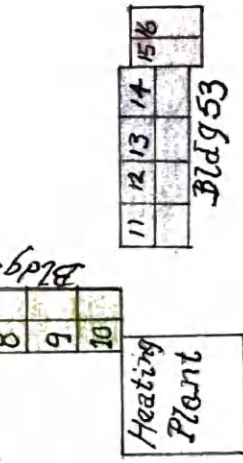
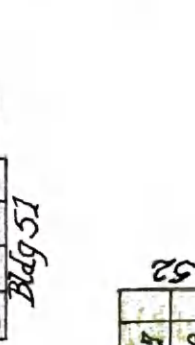
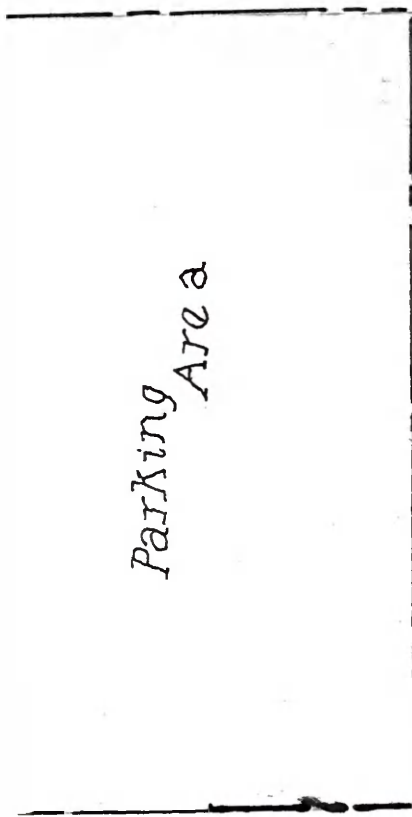
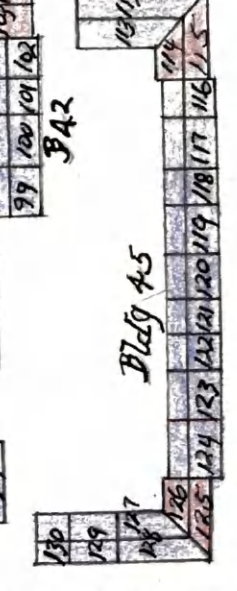
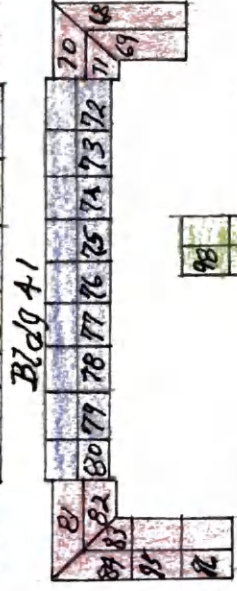
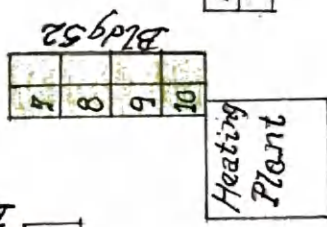
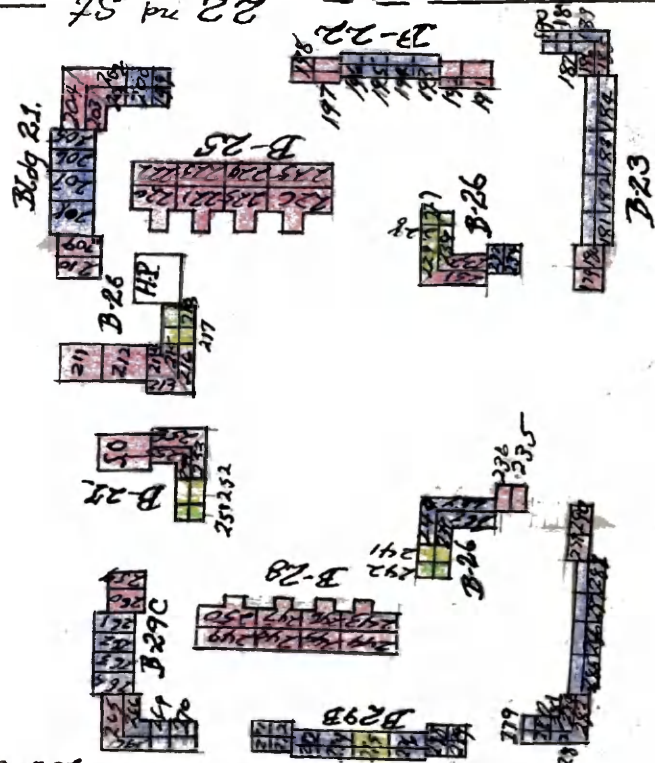
Project No H-2001

COLOR KEY

- Red - 3-Rooms
- Green - 4-Rooms
- Blue - 4-Rooms
- Yellow - 5-Rooms



22nd St



20th St

Location The Logan Fontenelle Homes project was one of the fifty-one projects constructed by the Federal Government. The boundaries of the Logan Fontenelle Homes follow. The south boundary from twentieth street to twenty-fourth streets is Paul street. The north boundary from twentieth to twenty-second streets is a line approximately two hundred feet south of Clark street; and from twenty-second to twenty-fourth street the north boundary is Seward street. The east boundary is twentieth street and the west boundary is twenty-fourth street.

The following data were furnished by Mr. Philip Klutznick in an interview of August 8, 1938.⁴⁰

LOGAN FONTENELLE HOMES

How It Came Into Being "Logan Fontenelle Homes" is the name given to the north side project. The first application for this project was made by the city of Omaha to the Public Works Administration Housing Division. The November 1933 National Industrial Recovery Act provided a recovery program in which one section was earmarked for housing for the amount of one hundred million dollars.

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Philip Klutznick, Attorney for the Local Housing Authority.

Mayor Roy Towl directed assistant city attorney Philip Klutznick to see what Omaha could do about getting a part of that money to use on a housing project which would put some of her unemployed to work.

A voluntary committee composed of fifty leading citizens was organized. They agreed on the existence of blighted areas in Omaha and favored the idea of a housing project for the city.

Mayor Towl then designated a sub-committee of Real Estate men headed by Harry A. Wolf to select a site. An Architects' committee and the Local Chapter of Architects cooperated to investigate the type of construction. Photographs were taken of the selected site and informal applications along the ideas which prevailed in other Public Works Administration were prepared and forwarded to the proper authorities. These applications had a strictly unemployment approach since no social data were required.

The first application for the south side was sent and filed at the same time.

In all the Public Works Administration projects, everything was done under the direct authority and supervision of the housing division of the Public Works Administration.

For safety's sake, to prevent any trouble in construction or operation, the Nebraska Legislature passed Senate File 256 which authorized the appointment, by the mayor, of a local housing authority consisting of five members.

This act was amended in the 1937 session to define more specifically the authority and duties of the local housing authority.

The application for the north side project was approved under Mayor Towl's administration and work was begun on the acquisition of property in March 1935.

Louis Dodds was sent from Washington, D. C. to take over the project. All lands had been acquired by August 1935 and the last family moved out of the area by January 1936. At that time contracts were let for demolition. Each contract was completed before the next one was let.

The following data were taken from the files of the Logan Fontenelle Homes:

Demolition Contract February 1936.

Foundation Contract August 1936.

Superstructure Contract November 1936.

Project completed February 22, 1938.

The steps preceeding the beginning of the project were as follows:

1. Need shown for slum clearance.
2. Site determined and ascertained if all property can be acquired.
3. Approved by United States Housing Authority.
4. Property optioned.
5. Options closed, title acquired.
6. Buildings demolished, site cleared, no buildings

allowed to be moved to prevent graft.

7. Foundations put in.
8. Superstructure erected. (included plumbing, heating, etc, by twenty sub-contractors)
9. Separate contracts let for refrigerators, ranges, shades and landscaping.

For construction work Union Labor was used. Works ^{W.P. U}
Progress Administration laborer worked for one hundred thirty hours a month and there was a penalty upon the contractor if any laborer exceeded his rightful number of hours.

There were twenty sub-contractors and one general contractor employed under direct contract with the housing division of the Public Works Administration. Also employed were a project manager, an assistant manager, a project engineer, six architects and engineer assistants, and an accountant and four stenographers.

The project fulfilled the purpose for which it was begun . One half million dollars was paid to labor by the contractors. This did not include the salaries of the administrators of those of the Public Works Administration employees.

Administration The project is the property of the United States and is operated under a lease by the housing authority of Omaha, Nebraska. The lease is for sixteen months and is subject to renewal by the United States Housing Authority.

By virtue of this lease the United States Housing Authority can audit the books at any time it sees fit.

Monthly reports are mailed by the end of the tenth day which cover all income and expenses. A budget has been made up specifically for this project by the United States Housing Authority in which definite amounts are allocated for each item per month and the Omaha housing authority would be called to strict account if the amount were exceeded. Accordingly, the tenants are allowed a certain amount of electricity per month for their utilities rent, and meters are placed in the houses which are read by the local housing authority to see that no tenant exceeds his allowances and that he pays all excess amounts.

The personnel of the Logan Fontenelle Homes is as follows:

1 Manager	1 Engineer
1 Assistant Manager	3 Firemen
1 Bookkeeper, cashier, stenographer	2 Coal-passers
1 Clerk-typist	1 Landscape Foreman
1 Superintendent of Maintenance	1 Carpenter
2 Janitors	1 Handyman

There are two hundred eighty-four units in the project which is built as row houses and flats. Each house is a complete unit having a private entrance, bath, Westinghouse refrigerator, Crown gas range and built in kitchen cabinet. The floors are cement covered with asphalt tiles and the

windows are all metal casement type.

Every house is as fire proof as it is possible to make it. The only wood is in the doors.

Three large laundries equipped with stationary tubs, hotplates, drying rooms with blower fans to facilitate drying and a careful program of assignments insure that the needs of the tenants can be amply cared for. Garbage cans are placed at convenient intervals and are emptied daily by the city collectors. Papers and tin cans are also collected every day by the janitors.

The lawns are maintained under the charge of a trained gardener with the help of the men on the force.

Recreation Large play spaces are provided which are accessible to each house and are protected from trucks or cars by large posts spaced too close for their entrance. Trees planted at intervals along the grass surrounding these areas will furnish shade for the warmer days.

As soon as the city improves the park space to the north of the property the United States housing authority will equip it with sand boxes, low and high swings, high slides, turning poles, horizontal bars and basket ball equipment. No child within or without the project will be excluded. The use of the equipment will be subject to rules similar to that now used by the city. The children will be under the supervision of the recreation supervisor who has charge of recreation in the project.

There are two large recreation rooms in the project. Each room has a kitchen which is equipped with dishes, silver, utensils, a refrigerator and range, coatroom, a toilet, an office and a small storeroom. There are also one hundred folding chairs, twenty-five folding card tables and a piano in each room. Games suitable for both children and adults are part of the equipment. Recreational activities are under the sponsorship of the Works Progress Administration. There are two full time directors in charge. An advisory board consisting of two members of the colored section, two members of the white section and two members of the Kellom Parent Teacher Association has been selected for year-around activities which will tend to unite the project to the whole neighborhood.

The 1938 Summer Recreation Program for Children included pre-kindergarten classes in the play areas two mornings each week; two colored boys clubs arranged according to ages, sewing classes for girls two days a week; a girl's club and adult activities.

The Club Rooms are open on Tuesday and Friday nights for the adult members of the project. An official hostess is chosen from the tenants who make ~~their~~ own entertainment. Parties may be arranged by reservation when the room is not in use.

Adult recreational activities for the summer of 1938 included a street dance for each section, a Works Progress Administration Orchestra evening program for each, and a

puppet show to which all ages could go.

Requirements for Tenancy

1. Must be a family unit.
2. Income cannot exceed five times the amount of rent unless there are three or more children, then it can be six times the rent. The flexible make up of the family is studied and estimate of required needs for clothing and food is considered. (a minimum standard is not yet known)
3. Need for housing, No tenant comes from standard homes.
4. Continuous income means the total family income. This is closely checked.
5. Applicant's general desirability is checked; gets along with his neighbors, etc.

The four steps required before a family can become a tenant are:

1. Applicant files a formal application copy.
2. If application meets all requirements, home investigator makes a visit and fills in regular forms.

A blank requesting information is sent to employer or employers.

- ✓ 3. If employer's reports and investigator's report show applicant is eligible, a credit report and character report from the Credit Bureau is obtained.
4. All files are scored by the housing manager, Sam Howell, or the assistant manager, E. M. Ouren. After eligibility is

established the applicant is notified when there is a vacancy. If applicant is not eligible he is notified but no reason is given for non-eligibility.

Initial occupancy began March 1, 1938 with one hundred twenty families. On March 15, 1938 forty more families became occupants. The dwellings gradually filled until May 24, 1938 when every unit was occupied.

Each tenant signed a lease which clearly stated the twenty-eight conditions of occupancy. He was thereby held responsible for reasonable care of the property both inside and outside. All pictures, shades, awnings, curtains, and carpets were to be placed under certain regulations which prevent marring of walls, floors, or woodwork. Windows must be free from loose articles or placards, and hallways and sidewalks kept free of obstructions of any kind.

Children must play in play areas and not on the sidewalks. In fact these twenty-eight conditions are designed for the safety, comfort and welfare of all of the occupants of the Logan Fontenelle Homes.

There have been a few voluntary removals. Some moved out of town, a small number bought homes, two or three families went back to live with their relatives and a few were dissatisfied with the requirements. Only one had to be removed for lack of rental. He became unemployed and moved without eviction notice.

How the Project Meets Low Income Needs The question "How does the project, The Logan Fontenelle Homes, meet the need for low income groups?" is best answered by this table showing the range of income of the occupants on August 1, 1938.

TABLE I
RANGE OF INCOME
of
THE RESIDENTS OF LOGAN FONTENELLE HOMES

<u>Income</u>	<u>White</u>	<u>Negro</u>
\$ 500 to 800	10	6
801 to 1000	25	17
1001 to 1200	55	37
1201 to 1500	66	31
1501 to 1800	21	15
Over 1800	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>
Total	178	108

Since less than one seventh of the tenants receive over fifteen hundred dollars and the requirements are such that only those are eligible who were in need of housing within the low range group, it would seem that the project has met the need in so far as the number of units allowed.

Children and Schools The number of children living in the project were divided as to ages in the following way:

TABLE II

CHILDREN LIVING IN THE PROJECT AS TO AGES

<u>Age of Child</u>	<u>White</u>		<u>Negro</u>	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Under 2	26	26	4	3
2 to 5	42	34	12	17
6 to 12	36	41	11	23
13 to 16	13	23	7	8
17 to 18	4	6	2	2

Counting the children from six to eighteen as of school age, there are living in the project one hundred twenty-three white children and fifty-three negro children or a total of one hundred seventy-six children. Of this number, sixty-eight children entered Kellom School by May 24, 1938. A number of the children continued in the school to which they had been going before moving so that there might not be a break in the semester's school work. Some of the children attended high school so there was no shift or transfer of schools for them. A few children were attending parochial schools and the parents continued their schooling in those schools until the end of the school year. No data were available as to the school to

which the above mentioned children would be sent. Two extra teachers were sent to Kellom School in April to take care of the increased teaching load.

Any change in the number on the teaching staff at Kellom for the fall semester awaited the enrollment of the first few weeks of school. Statistics for the cost of Public Housing to the Omaha Public Schools will not be available for at least two years.

A survey of the addresses discloses that eighty-four families formerly living in the area moved into adjoining neighborhoods which were still in the Kellom School District so that the children from these families did not need to change schools.

Housing and Economic Conditions in Area Before 1935

A table showing where former residents lived in 1938 is shown below.

TABLE III

MOBILITY OF FORMER RESIDENTS OF THE AREA

A. Families Moved to Immediate Neighborhoods

North of Project	38
South of Project	7
East of Project	15
West of Project	24

B. Families Moved to Neighborhoods In Adjoining School Districts	
North of Grace and East of twenty-third street	8
North of Ohio from sixteenth to twenty-first	4
North of Ames between twenty- sixth and thirty-fifth	4
South of Dodge and west of twenty-fourth	6
C. Other Omaha School Districts	
West of thirty-fifth street	1
South Omaha	4
Florence	2
D. Outside of Omaha	
Sarpy County Bellevue Road	2
East Omaha	3
E. Unlisted in 1937 or 1938 Directories	
Business firms unlisted in 1937 or 1938 directories.	2
Families not listed in the 1937 and 1938 City directories or by Visiting Nurse Association or County Assistance Bureau records.	32
Total families listed as to residence.	152

Information pertaining to the mobility of the former residents of the area and to the condition of the homes to which they moved may be compared in another manner. That is a comparison as to ownership and condition of the houses in the area.

Of the houses demolished in the area now occupied by the Logan Fontenelle Homes, fifty-nine percent were occupied by their owners. They were well kept, usually painted, and presented a good appearance. The yards had nice lawns, shrubbery and flowers. Most of them had a vegetable garden to the side or in the rear.

On all sides of these home-owned properties were houses to let. These rental properties were deteriorating rapidly. Very few of them were either painted or in good repair. Tenants tore boards from the siding to replenish their fires and roofs were crudely patched when a roof-fire or weathering forced the landlord to do something to keep them in use. Windows were left unattended when broken, porch posts rotted off and let the porch roofs sag at queer angles and boards from floors and steps were often missing. The yards were patches of weeds in which trash and ashes were thrown at random. Where houses were torn down, the lots grew up in weeds as high as a man's head.

The ruins of a church had been left for several years after the roof caved in because its members were too poor to do much with it. After they managed to roof the basement for their use, the scattered bricks and mortar made a very unsightly picture.

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Pleasant Green Baptist Church on the north east corner of twenty-second and Paul streets.

Tenants who would occupy the type of property pictured above could not be depended upon to build up the neighborhood. Therefore, the home owners had no opportunities to sell their property. They were "frozen in" this neighborhood. The government purchased their property at a fair price and thereby released their money for the purchasing of homes in better neighborhoods. The conditions of the home-owners were therefore definitely bettered.

Of the forty-one percent of homes which were rental property no records were available in Omaha. When the transfer of title had been completed the records were sent to Washington, D. C. and are not accessible. Mr. Klutznick stated that most of this property which did not belong to the heirs of one estate was held on tax titles. By various means the purchaser of these tax titles avoided the burden of tax-paying to such an extent that of the approximately twenty-thousand dollars taxes due per annum, an estimated fifteen thousand was delinquent and had been for a long period of years.

In as much as conditions for the home-owners were definitely bettered, the problem then was to discover, if possible, the housing conditions of the other forty-one percent.

The families which moved into dwellings in the Kellom School District chose those which they were able to afford. They seldom were able to get better houses but at least

they were not poorer than the houses which they had left.

The families moving into the districts north of Ohio street and those south of Dodge were in neighborhoods which have been maintained on a higher standard than were the former homes.

The following conclusions therefore are found concerning the housing and economic conditions of former residents of the area.

1. Fifty-nine percent of the families were definitely bettered economically and socially. Their assets were freed to purchase homes in higher economic and more socially adequate neighborhoods.
2. Forty-one percent found little change in the conditions of housing.

TABLE IV

UTILITIES AND SERVICE DISTRIBUTION

for

FORMER RESIDENTS OF THE AREA

Number of former residents of the area	
using telephones-----	29
Number of former residents of the area	
using electricity-----	143
Number of former residents of the area	
whose residences were connected with city	
water-----	177
Number of former residents of the area using	
gas-----	44

TABLE V
 UTILITIES AND SERVICE DISTRIBUTION
 for
 LOGAN FONTENELLE HOMES RESIDENT

Number of Logan Fontenelle Homes	
residents using telephones-----	77
Number of Logan Fontenelle Homes	
residents using electricity-----	284
Number of Logan Fontenelle Homes	
units connected with city water-----	284
Number of Logan Fontenelle Homes	
residents using gas-----	284

Table V shows that the number using telephones increased 4.6%. 18.9% of the former residents of the area used telephones while 23.5% of the Logan Fontenelle Homes residents use them. It should be mentioned, too, that there is a pay telephone in the Logan Fontenelle Homes office which is at the disposal of the tenants at any hour when the office is open. A probable cause of the difference in number using telephones is that the former residents of the area were an unselected group many of whom will be shown to have received aid after moving. They were therefore unable to afford a telephone.

The same reason would hold true for the use of electricity, water and gas. However, here it must be noted that the Logan Fontenelle residents were not eligible as tenants

in the project unless they were living in sub-standard homes.

The housing standard and use of utilities is for them very much better. The increase in the number of users of the utilities and electricity also improves economic conditions in the city.

The City Directory for 1935 listed the occupations of the people then residing in the area now covered by the Logan Fontenelle Homes as the following table shows.

TABLE VI

OCCUPATIONS OF FORMER RESIDENTS OF THE AREA

Proprietors of business having that business in the district-----	24
Unskilled Laborers-----	39
Car Drivers-----	7
Pastors-----	2
Rabbi-----	2
Plasterers-----	4
Peddlers-----	4
Funeral Director-----	1
Bricklayer-----	1
Caretaker-----	1

Occupations of Former Residents (continued)

Porters-----	3
Clerks-----	4
Janitors-----	3
Salesmen-----	4
Radio Repairer-----	1
Foreman -----	1
Car Wrecker-----	1
Helpers-----	2
Waiters-----	4
Truckers-----	2
Maids-----	2
Lineman-----	1
Mechanics-----	4
Stationary Fireman-----	1
Fire Department Captain-----	1
Boiler Washer-----	1
Butchers-----	3
Assistant Circulation Manager-----	1
Plumber-----	1
Furniture Repairer-----	1
Fireman-----	1
Total Listed Occupations-----	129

TABLE VII

OCCUPATION DISTRIBUTION OF
 THE LOGAN FONTENELLE HOMES AREA ACCORDING
 TO RACE

<u>White</u>	<u>Negro</u>
Clerks-----47	Clerks-----4
Salesmen-----17	Mechanics-----10
Street Care Operators--- 6	Truck Drivers----- 8
Bakers----- 5	Attorneys----- 1
Unskilled Labor----- 5	Bar Tender----- 1
Skilled Laborers----- 6	Butchers----- 7
Bus Drivers----- 5	Chauffer----- 1
Printers----- 4	Firemen----- 4
Waiters----- 4	Hide Inspector-----1
Teachers----- 3	Janitors-----9
Cooks----- 3	Laborers-----16
Nurses----- 2	Mechanic----- 1
Barbers----- 2	Musicians----- 5
Batterymen----- 2	Porters-----12
Bookkeepers----- 3	R. R. Porters----- 6
Butcher----- 1	Pensioners----- 7
Cab Drivers-----2	Service Station Operators----- 1
Call Clerks-----3	Soldiers----- 2
Cashiers-----4	Truck Driver----- 1
Chemist-----1	Waiters-----26
Crane Operator-----1	Fire Lighter----- 1

Occupations Residents Logan Fontenelle (continued)

White

Draftsmen-----3
 Fireman-----1
 Janitors-----3
 Kennelman-----1
 Optican-----1
 Engineer-----1
 Porter-----1
 Pensioners (Government
 and Industrial)-----8
 Presser-----1
 Radio Announcer-----1
 Radio Operator-----1
 Service Station Opera-
 tors-----2
 Soda Clerk-----1
 Soldier-----1
 Superintendent Labor
 Group-----1
 Trainmen-----2
 Stenographers-----2
 Cream Sampler-----1
 Sales Women-----2
 Telephone Operator-----1
 Carpenter-----1

Negro

Undertaker -----1
 Beauty Operators-----2
 Elevator Operator-----1
 Laundresses-----2
 Cooks-----2
 Pharmacists-----2
 Policeman-----1
 Stenographer -----1
 Physician-----1
 Tailor-----1

A comparison of Table VI and Table VII shows that the former residents of this area had a much larger number

of unskilled laborers and a smaller proportion of people in the professional and supervisory groups. Since the tenancy of the Logan Fontenelle Homes depends upon a regular income, that group would naturally show a larger number of its people employed in the skilled labor and professional occupations than would the unselected group which lived in the area in 1935.

Health Service A survey of the records of the Visiting Nurse Association furnished the data for the comparison of the services rendered to the families of the Former Residents of the area and the Logan Fontenelle Homes Residents.

TABLE VIII

VISITS MADE BY THE VISITING NURSE ASSOCIATION TO
FORMER RESIDENTS OF THE AREA FOR THE PERIOD EXTENDING
FROM

JANUARY 1, 1935 to AUGUST 1, 1938

<u>Year</u>	<u>Visits Made</u>
1935-----	238
1936-----	186
1937-----	179
1938-----	102
Total-----	705

Over the same period of time the families now living in the Logan Fontenelle Homes records were studied and show the following care to have been received.

TABLE IX

VISITS MADE BY THE VISITING NURSE ASSOCIATION TO
THE RESIDENTS OF LOGAN FONTENELLE HOMES

<u>Year</u>	<u>Visits Made</u>
1935-----	329
1936-----	200
1937-----	252
1938-----	352
Total-----	1133

TABLE X

COMPARISON OF CARE RECEIVED

FROM JANUARY 1, 1935 TO AUGUST 1, 1938

NUMBER AS TO FAMILIES AND PERCENTAGE RECEIVING CARE

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Number of Families</u>	<u>Number of Families Served</u>	<u>Percentage of total number of Families</u>
Former Residents of Area-----	152-----	40-----	26.3%
Logan Fontenelle Residents-----	284-----	89-----	31.1%

Since these visits may be paid for by the families if they are able to do so, the larger percentage of calls may be accounted for by the fact that a regular income makes possible better care.

TABLE XI

VISITING NURSES ASSOCIATION VISITS TO CASES HAVING
TUBERCULOSIS AND TO CONTACT FAMILIES OF FORMER
RESIDENTS OF AREA

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number of Families Visited</u>	<u>Number of Visits Made</u>
1935-----	3-----	31-----
1936-----	2-----	9-----
1937-----	4-----	29-----
1938-----	3-----	16-----
Total-----	12-----	85-----

TABLE XII

VISITING NURSES ASSOCIATION VISITS TO CASES OF
CONTAGIOUS DISEASES IN THE FAMILIES OF
FORMER RESIDENTS OF THE AREA

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number of Families Visited</u>	<u>Number of Visits Made</u>
1935-----	0-----	0-----
1936-----	0-----	0-----
1937-----	1-----	18-----
1938-----	0-----	0-----
Total-----	1-----	18-----

TABLE XIII

VISITING NURSE ASSOCIATION VISITS TO CASES HAVING
TUBERCULOSIS AND TO CONTACTS IN THE
FAMILIES OF LOGAN FONTENELLE
RESIDENTS

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number of Families Visited</u>	<u>Number of Visits Made</u>
1935	4	56
1936	7	119
1937	8	65
1938	5	28
Total	24	268

TABLE XIV

VISITING NURSE ASSOCIATION VISITS TO CASES OF
LOGAN FONTENELLE HOMES RESIDENTS

<u>Year</u>	<u>Families Visited</u>	<u>Visits Made</u>
1935	3	6
1936	1	1
1937	3	37
1938	4	16
Total	11	60

No specific tables were made for the large number of cases pertaining to child care for two reasons:

1. The captions on the records did not differentiate between infant care which was necessitated because of lack of nutrition, sunlight, proper ventilation and

sanitation, and those which came under the heading of a pre-school check up or from those which were follow-up cases from the Baby Station.

2. The records did not state whether the calls were charity calls or whether paid for by the patients. This was particularly true of cases of pre-natal and post-natal care, and post-operative cases.

The relationship of the number of calls to the income or to housing conditions therefore could not be established.

The number of calls to a home in which there is tuberculosis must be very large. For the protection to other members of the family and to the community, a careful check must be made upon both those who are ill and the contacts. Table XIII, therefore, shows a total of two hundred sixty-eight visits made to twenty-four families of Logan Fontenelle Homes, as compared to Table XII which shows eighty-five visits made to twelve families of former residents of the area.

For the good health of the community a very close check-up of contagious diseases is also necessary. Table XII shows us that former residents of the area were more fortunate in that they had only one family under the care of the Visiting Nurse Association because of contagious disease while the Logan Fontenelle Homes residents had eleven families. The writer had

to be very careful about drawing too definite conclusions about that because many families of the Kellom school send their contagious disease cases to the City Emergency Hospital where they are under the care of the City Health Department. They would therefore not be under the care of the Visiting Nurse Association nor recorded in their files.

The years from 1935 to 1937 found both groups of families living in inadequate homes. The health conditions in the two groups which depend upon adequate housing were therefore comparable as shown in Table VIII.

To the one hundred fifty-two families of former residents of the area six hundred-three visits were made by the Visiting Nurse Association during the period from January 1, 1935 to December 31, 1937. This was an average of 3.96 visits per family. During the same period visits made to the two hundred eighty-four families which now reside in Logan Fontenelle Homes numbered seven hundred eighty-one. This was an average of 2.39 visits per family. ⁴¹

It is evident that the families of the former residents of the area required more visits per family than did those families which now reside in the Logan Fontenelle Homes.

The portion of the year of 1938 in which the project was occupied has another story to tell. To the families of the former residents of the area, sixty-seven hundredths visit per family were made by the Visiting Nurse Association from January 1, 1938 to August 1, 1938 while to the families of the Logan Fontenelle Homes one and twenty-three hundredths visits per family were made. However the majority of these visits were for pre-natal and post-natal care and infant health. As has been stated before, no record told whether these visits were paid for or not.

The predominance of visits made which had to do with Infant Health, therefore, would indicate that the tenants of the Logan Fontenelle Homes were aware of the importance of child health.

Another health record was made by wards and showed the results of tuberculosis skin tests that were given to the high school students by the Nebrasks Tuberculosis Association, Miss Alice Marshall, Executive Secretary; and the follow up work done by the Visiting Nurse Association. The record for Ward Three was used because the Logan Fontenelle Homes are in that Ward.

Map No. 2.

Location of Projects
Logan Fontenelle Homes
Terrace Garden
and
Ward Three

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OMAHA

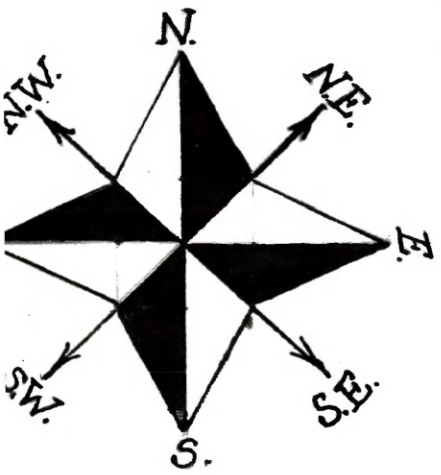
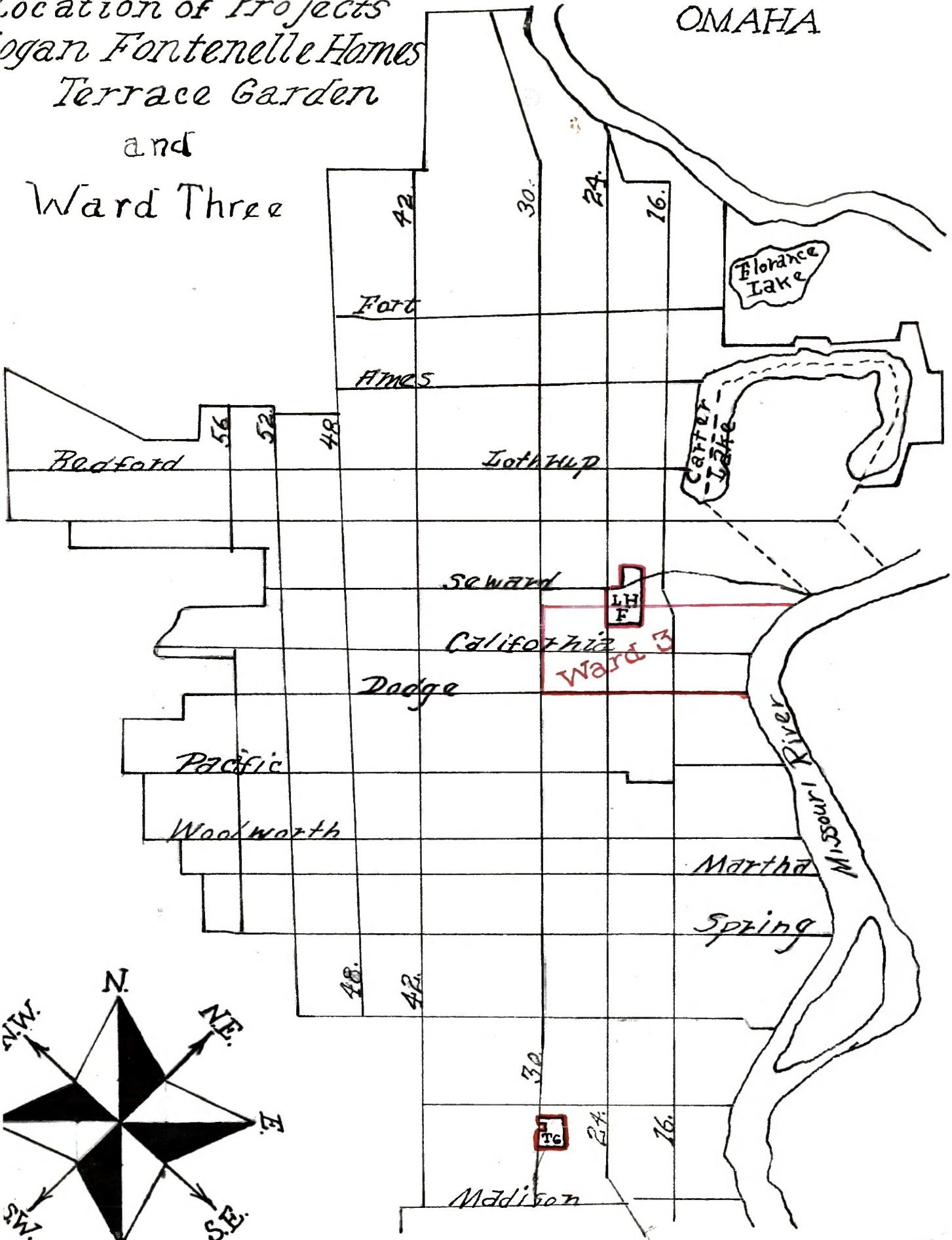


TABLE XV

TUBERCULOSIS SKIN TESTING

AMONG HIGH SCHOOL PUPILS IN OMAHA WARD THREE

Subject	Number	Total Per- Cent of	Number	Percent of total	Percent Ward 3
Total High School Pop- ulation	10851	100%	450	4%	100%
Skin Tests given	6852	63.1%	311	4.5%	69%
Total Num- ber of react- ors	1316	19.8%	95	7%	31%

Miss Marshall stated that a reaction indicated only that the individual had acquired the germs at some time, not necessarily that the disease is active at the present time. The only way to tell whether the positive reactor has the disease is to have an X-ray taken. This was done as follows:

One thousand three hundred six-teen Reactors, Ward Three, Ninety-five Reactors. Seven hundred forty-six Reactors with X-ray taken, Ward Three, Fifty-eight Reactors, with X-ray taken Sixty-one percent.

Only fifteen families in Ward Three paid for their X-rays. Explanation of the statistics: Miss Marshall felt that the figures indicated, since the percentage of Reactors was higher in Ward Three than in the general high school population tested, that there must be more

active cases in Ward Three with which these individuals could have come in contact, because contact over a considerable period of time is the only way that tuberculosis can be acquired.

The problem is closely related to the housing problem. With the crowded conditions known to exist in Ward Three, children would necessarily be in close contact with any active cases of tuberculosis.⁴²

Another Ward study of the Family Welfare Association submitted February 6, 1935 is to be found on the next page. This is the only relief record available for that year because all Federal Emergency Relief Administration records previous to 1936 are in the vaults at the state capitol and are not open to anyone at this time (August 1, 1938.) The study is for Ward Three of which the area covered by the Logan Fontenelle Homes is a small part. We do have the county assistance records for 1936, 1937, and part of 1938. These were used as a basis for comparison of the two groups of families for those years.

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Page one of the report as presented to the Neighborhood Council Ward Three, February 6, 1935 by Miss Alice Marshall, Entitled "Tuberculosis Skin Testing Among High School Pupils in Omaha." Ward Three

Missouri River

Izard

Ward 3

Burt

California

Cass

Chicago

Davenport

Capital

Dodge

16

20

21

22

24

29

30

Hamilton

Cuming

Capital

Square

Relief

TABLE XVI

A STUDY OF FORTY THREE CASES OF DEPENDENCY
IN WARD THREE

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Couples	14	32.7
Divorced	13	30.2
Unmarried Couples	3	7
Widowed	5	11.3
Separated	5	11.3
Deserted	2	5
Single Woman	1	2.5
Widower	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Total	43	100
Couples		32.7
Unmarried Couples		<u>7</u> 39.7
Broken Homes	Percent	Percent
Widowed	11.3	
Divorced	30.2	30.2
Separated	11.3	11.3
Deserted	<u>5</u> 57.8	<u>5</u> 46.5
Live in rooms (31)		72%
Moved more than once during 1934		53.5%
Children	95	
Average to a Family	2	

(continued)	76	
Number above school age	11	11.5%
Number below school age	24	25%
Number of school age	60	63%

The Social Service Exchange averages five agencies⁴³ registered on each family.

The following tables are based on the figures taken from the files of the County Assistance Bureau, using the card files of residents as given by the 1935 City Directory and the office file of the Logan Fontenelle Homes.

TABLE XVII

DIRECT RELIEF RECEIVED BY FORMER RESIDENTS OF THE AREA
AFTER MOVING FROM THE AREA JANUARY 1, 1936 TO
AUGUST 1, 1938

<u>Year</u>	<u>Amount</u>
1936	\$169.85
1937	518.57
1938	250.75

Families went to Works Progress Administration without having relief--17.

Number of families now on direct relief--2.

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Submitted by Mrs. Florence Spangler, Family Welfare Association. February 6, 1935.

TABLE XVIII

DIRECT RELIEF RECEIVED BY LOGAN FONTENELLE HOMES
BEFORE AND AFTER MOVING TO THE PROJECT
JANUARY 1, 1936 TO AUGUST 1, 1938

<u>Year</u>	<u>Amount</u>
1936	\$8.00
1937	75.26
1938	None

Families on Direct Relief who went on Works Progress Administration----1.

Families went to Works Progress Administration without having relief----4.

Number of families now on direct relief-----0.

In as much as the families applying for residency in the Logan Fontenelle Homes must have a regular income and a good credit rating, the two-hundred eighty-four families would be a more select group and therefore more apt to have avoided the necessity of having to have relief.

TABLE XIX

OLD AGE ASSISTANCE RECEIVED BY FORMER RESIDENTS OF
THE AREA AFTER MOVING FROM THE AREA
JANUARY 1, 1936 TO AUGUST 1, 1938

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Amount</u>
1936	none	none
1937	none	none
1938	none	none

TABLE XX

OLD AGE ASSISTANCE RECEIVED BY LOGAN FONTENELLE HOMES
RESIDENTS BEFORE AND AFTER MOVING INTO THE
PROJECT JANUARY 1, TO AUGUST 1, 1938

<u>Number</u>	<u>Amount</u>
7	\$ 939.
6	1215.60
7	1062.80

Seven pensioners reside in the Logan Fontenelle Homes. The pension is considered as a regular income. In two homes both the husband and the wife receive old age assistance. As the table shows there was no record of old age assistance being given to a 1935 resident.

TABLE XXI

AID TO DEPENDENT CHILDREN OF FORMER
RESIDENTS OF THE AREA

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number</u>
1935	none
1936	none
1937	none
1938	none

The children in two families on direct relief were considered when the budgets were made.

TABLE XXII

AID TO DEPENDENT CHILDREN OF
LOGAN FONTENELLE-HOMES RESIDENTS

<u>Number of children</u>	<u>Amount of Aid</u>
5	\$216.
5	559.61
7	580.55

TABLE XXIII

BLIND AID TO FORMER RESIDENTS OF THE AREA

<u>Year</u>	<u>Amount</u>
1936	\$200.
1937	240.
1938	100.

TABLE XXIV

BLIND AID TO LOGAN FONTENELLE HOMES RESIDENTS

<u>Year</u>	<u>Amount</u>
1936	none
1937	none
1938	\$19.70

One blind couple of the 1935 residents received blind aid for the full time. A brother of one of the Logan Fontenelle Homes residents came to live with her in August. Since this resident was supporting an aged mother on her small income as a clerk, the social worker arranged for the transfer of his blind aid from the county in which he had lived to Douglas County to make it possible

for them to live in the project and allow his sister to take care of him.

Service of Police Department From the duplicate jail records of the Omaha Police Department the following data were taken. These pertained to the number and kinds of police and ambulance calls and arrests that were made in that territory now covered by the Logan Fontenelle Homes, or, of people living in that area from January 1, 1935 to August 1, 1938.

TABLE XXV

POLICE AND AMBULANCE ARRESTS AND CALLS

<u>Cause</u>	<u>1935</u>	<u>1936</u>	<u>1937</u>	<u>1938</u>	<u>Totals</u>
Drunk	80	30	16	11	137
Disturb Peace	76	14	20	5	115
Complaining Witness	20	9	7	2	38
Reckless Driving	15	4	11	5	35
Speeding	2		11	1	14
Investigation	14	21	25	11	71
Assault Battery	4	2			6
Prostitution and Vagrancy	2	7		6	15
Disorderly House Proprietor	1	4			5
Inmate Disorderly House					

(continued)

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Cause	1935	1936	1937	1938	Totals
Petit Larceny	5	1	1	1	8
Improper Auto License	1				1
Malicious destruction of property	2	1			3
Carrying Concealed weapons	1				1
Violation city ordinance	3			2	5
Fugitive from Justice	1	1			2
Violation State Statute	1		1		2
Liquor Law	1	1	1		3
Improper Parking	1			1	2
Violation of House Rool	1				1
Incorrigibility	5	4		4	13
Operating Car Influence of Liquor		1			1
Improper Lights	1				1
Totals	238	133	96	50	517

As shown in Table XXV there was a large break in the number of arrests after 1935 in all charges excepting investigation. In as much as this area was fenced and brightly lighted as soon as demolition had been completed, and a watchman guarded the place after working hours, there were only those calls which arose from troubles in the adjoining neighborhoods or from disobedience to traffic rules by car drivers.

All 1938 calls were from the streets surrounding the area and none were from residences in the project. The cost therefore to the city for police protection to that area was materially lessened after the project was started.

Services of the Fire Department The records for the Fire Department are kept in a different manner. They are kept as company records in performance and amount of equipment used. Seven companies serviced the Logan Fontenelle Homes area and extended their services in all directions with the station as a center.

The records of the seven companies for the years 1935, 1936, 1937 and the city total is given to show how that area compares with that of the whole city. The records of 1938 will not be available before December 31, 1938. There have been two large fires in buildings close to the railroad tracks at twenty-first and Nicholas this summer. These are just one block from the project and were serviced by the same fire companies.

As has been before stated the buildings in the project are fireproof throughout with the exception of the doors. Inflammable cleaning fluid is forbidden by the lease so fire calls are limited to neighborhood buildings.

The homes which were demolished were very old and not fireproof so many fires could be expected although the total amount of fire loss might be small.

The records for Engine Companies one, three, four, six, fourteen and fifteen and Hook and Ladder Company two were copied for the years 1935, 1936, 1937. The report of hours of use for the equipment was also copied.⁴⁴

Inspections of buildings made by Senior Captains numbered seven hundred fifty-seven. City total inspections made by Senior Captains were three thousand four hundred thirty-nine and by Junior Captains two thousand seven hundred sixty-five. There was a decrease of one hundred sixty-five alarms in 1935 but an increase in the amount of fire loss which was caused by the destruction of Rivett Lumber and Coal Company at forty-first and Lake Street. This was seventeen blocks west of the project so had nothing to do with it.

A city total increase of one thousand three hundred and one alarms with a twenty-one thousand two hundred

seven fire loss reduction was reported for 1936. Records for inspections for 1936 were as follows: The Senior Captains inspected five hundred forty-eight buildings and Junior Captains inspected six hundred and one buildings for the companies one, three, four, six, fourteen, fifteen and two.⁴⁵

City inspection totals by Senior Captains were three thousand one hundred seventy-eight, by Junior Captains two thousand eight hundred thirty-two buildings.

In 1937 there were seven hundred ninety fewer alarms with an increase in fire losses of thirty-seven thousand eight hundred twenty-one dollars. This was attributed to the fire in the uninsured building belonging to the United States Government at twenty-second and Hickory street, and to lack of inspection due to lack of man⁴⁶ power.

No comparisons can be made as to the number of fire calls to the area direct or to the amount of fire losses in that area. It can be definitely stated that fireproof units covering that area are a safe-guard to neighboring properties and to the public school which is directly across the street south.

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Report of Omaha Fire Department for 1936.

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Report of Omaha Fire Department for 1937.

Table XXVI
Year of 1935

Eng. E.	Portable Ex. Used.	No. Times Boister	Wk. Boister	Wk. Line Pump	Wk. Pump	Wk. Hr. Pump	No. Bldgs. Inspected	
Eng. Co.	Alarms. Rspdn.	Miles. Tran.	Times Worked.	Hrs. Man.	Ft. Hose Used.	Ft. Ladd. Used.	Traps Used.	I. Ch. v. U. s. d.
4.		2	72	20'55"				Sr. 293 Jr. 178
6.		2	138	26'22"	2	10'		160 100
14.		9	130	19'50"	2	11'		105 107
15.		6	83	14'50"	2	11'		91 52
2.		4						80 120
41.		23.	423	80'77"	4	21'		729 557
	178		1199	Totals for City	24	54'39"		3439 2765
1.	314	515. %0.	131.	46'75"	216.00.	72.	2.	
3.	400.	439. 3.	78.4	49'11"	30,250.	156.	7.	
4.	366.	809. 7.	114.	64'30"	18,000.	120.	1.	
6.	430.	840. 3.	150.	70'26"	34,500.	116.		
14.	496.	1355.	200.	104'13"	31,700.	348.	12.	
15.	280.	1017. 7.	151.	84'50"	22,300.	67.		
He-L.	342.	773. 7.	238.	115'46"		6282.	67.	
Total	2628.	5550. 7	1168.	535 %1.	157,350.	92,812.	83.	
Total Per Year ALL CO.		16512.		1716'29"	408,775-230,682	27,585.	359.	16.

Report of 1936.
Company Performance Record

Eng Co.	Alarms Resp to.	Miles Trav.	Fire's Worked.	Hrs. Men.	Ft. Hose Used	Ft. Ladder Used	Thyrs Used
4.	473.	769.	99.	89'10"	29,500.	66.	4.
6.	524.	1123.	202.	107'22"	44,150.	240.	5.
14.	570.	1830.	279.	119'40"	42,500.	140.	2.
15.	375.	1253.	240.	155'35"	39,700.	68.	
2.	415.	953.	290.	137'37"	18,410.	572.4.	70.
Total of City	2357.	5928.	1110.	633'16.4"	155,850	122,560.	82.
Eng Co.	Part Used	Booster Pump Used	Booster Pump Wk	Times Rumper	Hr. Men Wkd. 2 1/2 Ltr	Bldgs. Inspected	
4.	4.	127.	2155"	3.	1'40"	144.	139.
6.	2.	170.	36'05"	5.	7'15"	70.	100.
14.		208.	50'30"			20.	204.
15.	3	140.	28'30"	1.	1'00"	192.	98.
2.	2.					115.	60.
Total	11	645.	136'10"	9.	9'55"	531	601.

Increase of 1301 Alarms
Fire Loss Reduced 21,207.

Fire Report 1937

Eng Co.	Alarms Respto	Miles Trans	Tires Worked	Hrs Men Worked	Ft Hose Used	Ft Ladder Used	Tarps Used
4.	382.	674.	190.	65'	36,750.	20,000.	138.
6.	442.	982.	128.	94'	28,650.	17,400.	108.
14.	481.	1367.	200.	118'45"	39,305.	27,350.	1.
15.	325.	1006.	170.	67'10"	30,150.	15,950.	56.
H&L	344.	712.	240.	122'16"			4932.
2.							52.
Total	1974.	4741	928.	466'71"	134,855.	80,700	5234.
							54.

CO Performance.

Eng Co.	Port Ex Used	Pump 3/4 Line	Hrs P. 3/4 Line	T.Mes. 13. P. 2 1/2 Line	Hrs. Min. Pumper 2 1/2 Line	
4.	1.	118.	1345"	3.	5'15"	790 Less Alarms Increased Fire Loss \$37,821 Uninsured Bldg US Govt. 22nd Hickory. Lack of Inspection. Due to Lack of Main Power
6.		117.	17'30"	5.	9'45"	
14.	7.	171.	23'05"	2.	2'	
15.	11.	121.	17'35"	1.	1'15"	
2.						
Total	19.	517.	71'15"	11.	17'68"	



Low Rent Housing Need In Part II of the application of the housing authority for financial assistance for a Low-rent Housing and Slum Clearance Project, the need for low rent housing was shown by giving the following facts from the Real Property Inventory made in Omaha in 1936.

Total dwellings in city-----	60489
Owner Occupied-----	27830
Tenant Occupied-----	30626
Vacant-----	2033

Total vacant units in 1936 aggregated 3.3% of the total number of dwelling units in the city. The greatest proportion of vacancies that were available were for rentals.

The Real Estate Board Vacancy Survey of April 1938, showed that there were seven hundred fifty-nine houses and one hundred eighty-six duplexes and flats vacant in Omaha.

A summary of the Real Estate Board Annual Vacancy Survey since April 1935 shows the following vacancies in Omaha.

TABLE XXIX

VACANCIES IN OMAHA

<u>Houses</u>	<u>1935</u>	<u>1936</u>	<u>1937</u>	<u>1938</u>
April	524	577	635	759
November	616	750	820	
Duplexes and Flats April	175	90	95	186
November	156	88	121	

The important fact to find out about these vacancies was the number of houses which were too old or in need of so much repair that they could not be called habitable.

Table XXIX shows how many of these houses were in no condition to be used.

TABLE XXX

CONDITION OF VACANCIES IN OMAHA

<u>Vacancies in April</u>			<u>Vacancies in November</u>	
<u>Year</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Old Houses</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Old Houses</u>
1935	524	473	616	528
1936	577	474	750	587
1937	635	460	820	674
1938	759	674		

From the number of old houses in need of major repair we can safely say that the larger percent of vacant houses were not very desirable as rental properties.

If there were no need for these houses they could be left vacant or demolished, however, the Real Property Inventory of 1936 states that there were one thousand eight hundred forty-four occupied dwellings which had one extra family. There were one hundred thirty-one dwellings which had two or more extra families under the same roof. Since the maximum vacancies for 1936 were only seven hundred fifty vacant dwelling units, over sixty percent of these families could not be housed in single units.

The natural answer to this problem would be an increase in building. A study of the building done in the seven year period between nineteen hundred thirty and nineteen hundred thirty-seven shows that there were only one thousand eight-hundred seventy dwelling units erected in that period. This was not even sufficient to take care of the two thousand fifty-two new families which were added to Omaha's population in the same seven years.

Not only were there not enough dwelling units erected to care for the new families but the units erected could not meet the need for the low income group because of the original cost per unit.

The average cost per unit made it necessary to charge between forty and fifty dollars per month in order to make a fair income on the owner's investment. This was far above the twenty dollar top limit set by the Wagner Stegall Act.

The data given by the Real Property Inventory for rental payments made in Omaha is as follows.

There were two hundred seventy-one units for which a rental of five dollars or less per month was paid.

Two thousand three hundred eighty-four units rented for five to ten dollars monthly. Six thousand seven hundred rented for ten to fifteen dollars per month.

Seven thousand nine hundred ninety units rented for fifteen to twenty dollars per month. Finally there were

forty-one thousand one hundred eleven units rented for a monthly rental over twenty dollars.

Incomes represented by ten dollars and under rentals in housing are too low for the Wagner Steagall Act and incomes represented by rentals above twenty dollars are too high to qualify. There are left fourteen thousand six hundred ninety families in Omaha who might be termed low income of six hundred to twelve hundred dollars.

These families were paying in 1936 an average annual rental of one hundred eighty-two dollars for dwelling units in the condition as shown by Table XXXI.

TABLE XXXI

CONDITIONS OF OCCUPIED UNITS BY RENTALS

Rentals per month	Unfit for use	Need major repair	Good or minor repair	Total
\$10 to \$15	138	2720	3842	6700
\$15 to \$20	34	1984	5972	7990
Over \$20	7	2343	38,761	41,133
Totals	179	7047	48,575	55,823

Of the fourteen thousand six hundred ninety families in pertinent income range four thousand nine hundred seventy-six occupied dwellings either unfit for use or in need of major repairs.

From the data given under Table XXXI it is evident that there was not sufficient vacant rental property in good condition to absorb the large number of families which were poorly housed. The chief engineer of the

building department of the city of Omaha said condemnation proceedings have been withheld in instances where it appeared there were not sufficient houses for low income groups to absorb the number which would be de-housed by demolition. This condition of deterioration and obsolescence therefore will have to be remedied first by the construction of new units to take the place of unsafe and insanitary houses.

For those with incomes above that of the low income group there are two possibilities. First, they may acquire property of their own by building or buying, Second, they may rent property which is in good repair because they are able to pay enough rental to make it possible for the landlord to get a fair return on money invested in property and upkeep.

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For the families in the low income group home-ownership is hardly possible because of the cost of money, the cost of land and the cost of construction.

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Under the present system of housing construction, all of these costs are so high as to be almost prohibitive.

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Application of the Housing Authority for financial assistance for a Low Rent Housing and Slum Clearance Project, Part II.

"Families in low income group are defined as families who are in the lowest income group and who cannot afford to pay enough to cause private enterprise in their locality or metropolitan area to build an adequate supply of decent, safe and sanitary dwellings for their use."

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Homes for Workers, Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works.

The financing costs alone run as high as twenty-five percent of every dollar borrowed. Very few people who wish to build homes have all the money necessary and so must borrow part. This would be true in the majority of cases with the families in the low income group. If they waited to save enough to pay cash for their property the family would be grown and away from home.

For the welfare of the children and for the greatest social return to the community, this housing need should be met. Since private enterprise cannot do so, the need must be met by the local community or by the larger units, the state, and nation. Provision was made by the Wagner Steagall Act⁴⁹ for setting up correct authority to do this.

Since one of the provisions of the Wagner Steagall Act was the elimination of unsafe and insanitary housing conditions, the Local Housing Authority used the Real Property Inventory report to show that plumbing heating and room density conditions in Omaha were such as to

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The Wagner Steagall Act provided financial assistance to states for elimination of unsafe and insanitary housing conditions; for eradication of slums; for provision of safe and sanitary dwellings for families of low income; for reduction of unemployment and stimulation of business activities and for a United States Housing Authority.

It also provided the method of procedure in states where there are duly constituted housing authorities.

make a large number of homes unsafe, and insanitary show the findings of the Real Property Inventory Report of 1936.

TABLE XXXII

PLUMBING IN DWELLING UNITS IN OMAHA

Units with shared toilets-----	2,887
Units with running water but no toilets-----	1,935
Units with no adequate plumbing-----	49,621
Units with adequate plumbing-----	6,048
Total dwelling units-----	60,621

TABLE XXXIII

CENTRAL HEATING IN DWELLING UNITS IN OMAHA

Units with central heating, steam, hot water, warm air-----	49,278
Units without central heating-----	11,343
Total dwelling units-----	60,621

TABLE XXXIV

ROOM DENSITY IN DWELLING UNITS IN OMAHA

Units which were overcrowded-----	9,187
Units which were not overcrowded-----	49,269
Total occupied units-----	58,456

TABLE XXXV

ROOM DENSITY AS TO NUMBER OF PERSONS PER ROOM

Dwelling units one to one and one-half persons per room-----	5,771
---	-------

Dwelling units one and one-half to two persons	
per room-----	2,658
Dwelling units two or more persons	
per room-----	758
Total number of units overcrowded-----	9,187

Table XXXII shows that of the sixty-thousand six hundred twenty-one dwelling units more than eighty percent were without adequate plumbing. This condition places those dwellings below the standard for healthful and safe living.

Table XXXIII indicates that the dwelling units are in better shape for heating than for plumbing since more than eighty percent of the units have central heating.

However, as Tables XXXIV and XXXV show there is considerable over-crowding in the occupied units in Omaha.

An added fact established by the Real Property Inventory was that while there was an over-crowding of nine thousand one hundred eighty-seven units there were available only one thousand three hundred-one vacancies which were fit for use. The reason for this over-crowding was given as economic necessity.

The application of the Local Housing Authority for Financial Assistance for a Low Rent Housing and Slum Clearance Project stated that in Omaha there were only

three hundred sixty units with rentals under twenty dollars which were available. With nine thousand one-hundred eighty-seven overcrowded units needing that many vacancies to care for that condition, and the economic necessity demanding low rental which could be met by only three hundred one available units, there still need to be eight thousand units constructed to prevent overcrowding.

The two hundred eighty-four units in Logan Fontenelle Homes rent for four dollars and sixty-six cents per room plus two dollars and twelve cents utilities rental per room. This cares for families with an income of from five-hundred dollars to eighteen hundred dollars but does not take care of the many low income families whose income averages lower than five hundred dollars. The Housing Authority of Omaha is attempting to reach that group with the larger project in South Omaha.

Benefits of Logan Fontenelle Homes Below is a summary of all the benefits of the project as a worthwhile enterprise for the city of Omaha.

1. It has fulfilled its original purpose of furnishing employment to many unemployed people.
2. It has paid out one half million dollars for labor to those who had previously been unemployed.
3. It has changed a blighted area to a beauty spot.

4. It has been instrumental in causing the improvement of adjoining properties.
5. It has made a more pleasant outlook for the children of Kellom School.
6. It has lessened the cost to the city in police and fire protection.
7. It has improved the chances of not only its two hundred eighty-four families for health but all the families which contact these in business and in schools.
8. It has created happier home lives by taking families out of insanitary, obsolete homes and putting them into clean, beautiful homes.
9. It has provided two hundred eighty-four units within walking distance of main street and with very good transportation to other parts of the city.
10. It has reduced the size of a potential crime area by furnishing the neighborhood with a small section where overcrowding is not permitted, by improving the chances of healthful happy living and by providing socially adequate recreation for leisure time.
11. It has helped industry by increasing the number of families who use phones, electricity, gas and city water.
12. It has provided a way of educating public opinion by demonstrating the benefits of adequate housing.

SOUTH OMAHA PROJECT

Applications As stated on page forty-three of this thesis, an application for a South Side Project was filed at the same time as the North Side Project. They were registered as application 82001 North Side and application 82002 for the South Side. Nothing definite materialized out of application 82002 so a new application was sent to the Department of Interior, United States Housing Authority, Nathan Straus Administrator, Washington, D. C. This applied for financial assistance for a Low Rent Housing and Slum Clearance Project under provisions provided by the Wagner Steagall Act. This application was made by the Housing Authority of the city of Omaha and contained seventy-seven typewritten pages setting forth the reasons why such financial assistance should be given.

It defined families in low income groups as families who are in the lowest income group and who cannot afford to pay enough to cause private enterprise in their locality or metropolitan area to build an adequate supply of decent, safe, and sanitary dwellings for their use.

Using the Real Property Inventory and the Real Estate Board Annual Vacancy statistics it established the need for additional housing in Omaha so well that it was accepted. Mr. Nathan Straus stated that not only was the contract for the South Side Project signed and on its

way but also application for additional buildings in the Logan Fontenelle Site would be favorably received if the Local Housing Authority thought best to file them.⁵⁰

The chairman Mr. Sam Howell stated, "The local authority agreed it would be best to get the South Omaha project well along before moving to obtain two additional projects as suggested Friday by Nathan Straus, United States Housing Authority Administrator."⁵¹

Location The boundaries of the Project are:

North Boundary "R" street from twenty-eighth to thirtieth. South boundary "W" street from twenty-eighth to thirtieth. East boundary twenty-eighth street from "R" to "W" street. West Boundary thirtieth street with the exception of one block from "S" street to "T" street where the boundary lies one hundred twenty-five foot eastward. The boundary was moved eastward there, because the land was occupied by a church and some well maintained houses which were prohibitive in price.

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Nathan Straus, United States Housing Authority Administrator in Speech before Omaha Chamber of Commerce. Friday July 29, 1938.

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Omaha World Herald, July 30, 1938

Type of Housing The proposed development will be made up of five hundred twenty-two units in this manner:

TABLE XXXVI

PROPOSED MAKE UP OF SOUTH OMAHA PROJECT

Detached houses-----	0
Row Houses-----	398
Flats, two stories-----	124
Apartments, three stories-----	0
Other types-----	0
Total Units-----	522

Part Two, Section Ten of the Application gives the conclusions of the Local Housing Authority as to the type of housing best suited to families in the immediate program as quoted below:

"The Local Authority has determined row houses and flats are best suited for the project for the following reasons:

1. Smaller land acquisition cost per living unit.
2. Smaller construction costs per living unit.
3. Maintenance and operation is a less complicated problem than in case of detached dwellings or apartments.
4. Maintenance and operation can be kept at comparatively low level.
5. Presents best acceptable possibility for lowest possible rentals.

6. Can be planned as to provide to the extent possible and practicable and the desirable features of detached dwellings in so far as air, light, ventilation and use of outdoor spaces are concerned.

From Part Two, Section Ten, the contemplated unit size is also quoted: "Ample space provided in living units for families with children and this is contemplated in construction of a preponderate number of four and five room units and a small percentage of six room units for families of five or six persons, a minor percentage of three room units for small families and a small percentage of two room units for aged or newly married couples." "It is hoped to have a large percentage of row houses as against flats so that a maximum number of families may have small individual areas of land contiguous to their houses for clothes drying, small gardens and recreation."

"It is planned to provide small individual yards defined by fences or hedges for families that desire individually attended gardens."

Program Part Two, Section Nine of the application, Conclusions of Local Authority as to immediate program to take the matter of selections of tenants and the amount of rental to be charged.

TABLE XXXVII

PROPOSED OCCUPANTS

Approximate Number	White	Negro
families to be housed in project, estimated	350	150

TABLE XXXVIII

PROPOSED RENTAL

Average monthly shelter, Judgment of Local Housing Authority-----	\$3.75
Average amount utility charge for light, heat, cooking refrigeration which these families can afford-----	\$2.75

Financial Assistance Requested The amount of the authorized bond issue was \$3,741,000. The maximum amount of annual contribution requested from the United States Housing Authority was three and one-half percent of development cost \$95,935. There will be no local annual contribution other than tax exemption which will be about forty-five percent of the annual contribution requested from the United States Housing Authority.

The loan was requested for the time of sixty years with interest at three percent per annum. The amount of the annual contribution to be made by the state, city county, or other political sub-divisions is shown in Table XXXIX.

TABLE XXXIX

MAXIMUM AMOUNT ANNUAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO BE MADE BY
STATE CITY COUNTY OR OTHER POLITICAL SUBDIVISION

Subject	Percent which ass- essments are norm- ally of mar- ket value	Amount would be assessed on market value	Current tax rate	Amount current taxes would be
State Tax	70%	\$1,954,800	2.64	\$5160.672
County Tax	70%	1,954,800	5.26	10282.248
City Tax	70%	1,954,800	15.	29322.00
School Tax	70%	1,954,800	13.	25412.40
Other(munic- ipal Univer- sity	70%	1,954,800	1.	1954.80
Total amount of all local annual contributions				\$72,132.12.

The members of the committee of the Local Authority on
August 1, 1938 were:

Chairman Sam Howell-----Insurance
Vice Chairman, Ray Gould-----Contractor
Secretary, Catherine Garrick-----Supervisor
Health Education
Grant Benson-----Real Estate
John J. Larkin-----Undertaker

The laws provide that this committee be appointed by
the mayor with the approval of the governing body.
The professional services of Norman Brigham and J. M.
Nachtigall as architects; Louis Sholes and Kenneth
Reed as appraisers and Philip Klutznick, general counsel
and advisor, Eugene D. O'Sullivan Associate Counsel were
secured.

CONCLUSION

In this brief study of Public Housing in Omaha the ^Writer has arrived at the following conclusions:

The net result of accomplishment by governmental housing is quite small. The needs of the large number in the low income group in Omaha have not been met wholly by either government or private enterprise. There has been made only a small beginning. It will take several years to determine the main advantages and disadvantages of such a movement.

Private enterprise has not been able to meet the housing needs with available vacancies in good conditions either by building or reconditioning. As Table XXXI shows, eighty-two percent of the total vacancies listed in April and November for the four years beginning with January 1, 1935 were old houses in need of repair.

Private enterprise has not shown a desire or ability to replace old houses with new ones at a rental low enough to be within the low income group levels. This is not a criticism of private enterprise. The high cost of land, construction and financing make it imperative that the rentals be high enough to repay the original investment before the building has to be replaced for obsolescence. The housing furnished by private enterprise must therefore be for income groups above the low income standard.

The low income group can not finance their own home buying for several reasons.

1. Their income is too low to allow for the accumulation of enough cash to buy property outright.
2. The costs of financing are too heavy for a low income to bear.
3. An attempt to save the entire capital for construction would have to be over such an extended period that the family would be grown up and away from home before it could be accomplished.

Logan Fontenelle Homes has not reached a sufficient number within the low income group since it cares for only thirty-five white families and twenty-three negro families or a total of fifty-eight families whose incomes are between five hundred and one thousand dollars and a total of only two hundred eighty-four families with incomes below eighteen hundred dollars. The South Side Project will be filled with tenants a majority of whom have incomes less than one thousand dollars, and the minimum income may be at least two hundred dollars lower than that of the Logan Fontenelle Homes.

The total number of tenants, with incomes within those limits set by the Wagner Steagall Act, which will be cared for by the two projects are eight hundred six. Comparing this number with that of nine thousand one hundred eighty-seven units overcrowded because of economic necessity shows that less than ten percent of the low income group

have been provided with adequate housing.

The records of the Visiting Nurse Association show that they are giving very good service to the city. They can not eliminate the two health conditioning factors which are directly related to bad housing. They work with the full knowledge that bad housing lowers resistance to disease and multiplies the chances of infection.

The Ward Three report of the Tuberculosis Association definitely relates the chances for infection and lowered resistance to tuberculosis to the overcrowding and other poor housing condition of that ward.

Private enterprise can not meet the need and governmental housing has only begun. There must be further extension of public housing under such conditions and arrangements as will meet the needs of Omaha economically and financially. This may be done either through government subsidy to private enterprise or government control and ownership.

The South Side Project has been able to lower the cost of construction by local control of the project in all of its stages and can therefore charge a lower rental per unit.

The plans include another improvement over that of Logan Fontenelle Homes. That is a fenced in area for each unit where the family may have its own garden spot. This will furnish pleasant occupation for leisure time, provide

an extension of the family diet, help in the family budget and in sociability.

Another benefit of public housing to Omaha is that it has made possible the demolition of eight hundred-six deteriorated houses in Omaha. One of the provisions of the Wagner Steagall Act was that for every unit erected one deteriorated unit must be demolished.

By improving the standard of living of eight hundred six families, public housing has helped the city socially and financially. It has provided socially adequate recreation for two hundred eighty-four families and will provide for five hundred twenty-two more in South Omaha. It has extended the area of influence to all neighborhoods which touch the projects through their recreation program.

By eliminating two blighted areas, public housing has lowered the cost for police protection to the city of Omaha. By extending the recreation program of the project as well as providing adequate housing, public housing has reduced the opportunities for juvenile delinquency and destroyed two areas of crime potentiality. By building fire proof units and regulating the use of cleaning fluids and waste disposals, public housing has benefited not only the soon to-be total of eight hundred-six families but also all adjoining properties. It has reduced the number of fire calls to the finished project area to an invisible minimum.

Public housing has bettered the living conditions of all former home owners in the two area. It has allowed those families to buy property in better neighborhoods. Fifty-nine percent of the former residents of the area now called Logan Fontenelle Homes have purchased homes as described above and the supposition is that the former property owners in the south side area will do like wise.

The results of tax exemptions are not definite as yet. The home owners who bought property in better neighborhoods still pay taxes. They bought property of like or of greater value. These homes just purchased will continue at a higher assessed valuation for a longer period of years than would have been possible to those in the blighted areas.

Another factor supporting the argument that little will be lost in taxes through tax exemptions is that the adjoining properties in the Logan Fontenelle Homes have already been substantially improved. This improvement will cause them to have higher assessed values which mean higher taxes.

Construction and occupancy of the two housing projects brought financial betterment in several ways.

1. It created and will create work for skilled and unskilled labor.
2. Logan Fontenelle Homes brought prosperity to stores close to the project.

3. Lower rentals released money to buy other commodities in the community.
4. It caused an increase of customers with sure return in money for services rendered by electricity, gas, water and telephone.
5. Took many families off direct relief and provided family income through Works Progress Administration Labor.

By removing two blighted areas the chances for epidemics have been greatly reduced.

By regulations for disposal of garbage and waste materials and for general care of property they have added to the safety of all the tenants in the area.

They have provided for future health programs by making the tenants health conscious.

By the entire plans for the projects they have created two beauty spots which greatly improve the neighborhoods where they are located.

By having so many people re-housed during demolition and building, social workers and people related to the problem of furnishing rental properties have had the housing needs called to their attention.

The ~~extension~~ expansion of the public housing program has been a further aid in arousing public interest. It has furnished opportunities for revaluation of goals and activities in housing.

It has provided a check on the housing authority and created opportunities for adult education.

Finally the total accomplishments of public housing in Omaha are:

1. Made a beginning in housing the low-income group.
2. Demolished eight hundred and six deteriorated housing units.
3. Provided socially adequate housing for two hundred eighty-four families.
4. Contracted to provide socially adequate housing for five hundred twenty-two families more.
5. Eliminated two areas where resistance to disease were low and multiple chances for infection were present.
6. Provided work for many unemployed.
7. Used experiences gained in Logan Fontenelle Housing to provide better housing at lower rentals for five hundred twenty-two families.
8. Lowered the cost of police and fire protection to two areas in the city.
9. Provided a better budgeting plan for incomes of six hundred eight families through lower rentals for adequate housing.
10. Provided a recreation program which will be socially adequate for the six hundred eighty families in the two projects and will also include the families of the two

school districts of west side and Kellom school.

11. Removed two areas where conditions made possible the increase of crime.
12. Provided for higher esthetic standards through their beautiful planned units and landscaping in the project.
13. It has helped industry by increasing the number of families who use phones, electricity, gas and city water.
14. Has provided a way for educating public opinion by demonstrating through its completed project the benefits of adequate housing.

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