

OPERATION 3M

The
£3,000,000 Slum Clearance
Scheme
of
Johannesburg City Council

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Progress Report for the Six Months
1st April—30th September, 1957

able to announce last April that by 1960 enough houses will have been built to accommodate in proper living conditions all the thousands of Johannesburg's Natives still slaves to squalor.

By supplementing the funds available to the City Council from regular sources (largely emanating from the Central Government), the mining interests' £3-million has brought into the realm of immediate actuality the elimination, at last, of the shantytowns and slums which have for so long lain upon the conscience of the nation at large and of Johannesburgers in particular.

Material and Spiritual Benefits

Given always the will to end this evil, given at last, too, the necessary finance, what was necessary was a labour organisation sufficiently large and skilled for the campaign, and armed with techniques by which it could make the utmost

use of the available resources. Johannesburg's very active force of Native builders — supervisors, artisans and labourers — trained, under the direction of Mr. A. J. Archibald, by the Housing Division of the City Council, has proved itself able to manage efficiently the latest techniques. No fewer than 10,000 houses a year are now being erected, and progress at that rate is planned for the next three years apart from the operation of the site-and-service scheme.

It is not only that houses as such are to be built: they are to constitute ordered townships and be the homes of settled and stable communities in which the best features of urban life will replace the present confusion of squalor and crime. The planned result now in sight is an immense material improvement in the life of the Bantu population. The spiritual benefits which will follow are equally little in doubt.

INTRODUCTORY

THE approach to Native housing in the Union of South Africa has, in recent years, been completely revolutionised by two most important enactments, namely, the Native Building Workers' Act, No 27 of 1951, and the Native Services Levy Act, No. 64 of 1952. Johannesburg, in common with many local authorities, has derived inestimable benefit from being able to make use of Natives trained under the former Act, while at the same time deriving additional funds for essential services from the operation of the latter.

For the first time a solution to the Native housing problem hove in sight, and Johannesburg City Council was able to embark on large-scale planning in the reasonable expectation of securing the necessary funds — at all events for essential services.

Grave Outlook

Unfortunately, despite an average allocation of housing funds of some £1-million a year, it soon became apparent that many years would have to elapse before permanent housing could be provided for all homeless families. The provision of 3,000 new dwellings each year

Situation Transformed

Such were the prospects when Sir Ernest Oppenheimer appeared on the scene, as an ordinary Johannesburg citizen taking an interest in the affairs of his city. During an inspection of the Native areas he asked and was told the reason for what appeared to be the undue multiplication of shacks. The direct result of what he then learned was a loan to the council of £3,000,000 at 4½% by leading mining houses, and by that great loan the whole situation has been transformed. Houses could now keep pace with shacks and even overtake them within a reasonable period.

The loan was welcomed by Dr. Verwoerd, who at once co-operated by undertaking to make available for slum removal 15,000 serviced sites, upon which the success of the whole scheme was dependent. Ministerial approval was, however, subject to the stipulation that the council's ordinary housing programme, financed through normal channels, should not be prejudiced in any way. In other words, the houses forthcoming from the £3,000,000 loan were to be additional to, and not in place of, houses to be built by the council from the National Housing Fund.

This account covers the first six months of the slum-removal scheme. It shows how essential in all large projects — Money, Manpower, Materials and Method — attention has been called "3M" because after men provided to the tune of £3-million the other three Ms was still necessary for the realisation of the first.

MI: MONEY

by local authorities for Native housing in the ordinary way made available by the Government National Housing Office, being granted to Johannesburg only. The loans received for Non-Residential by Johannesburg City Council from the National Housing Office for the past four financial years

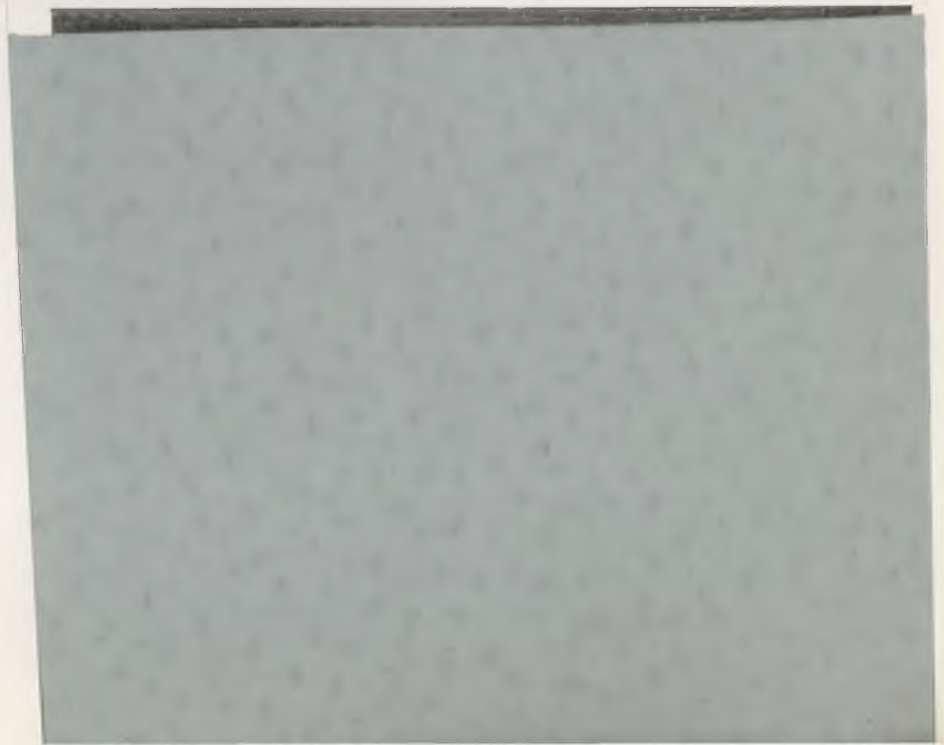
	£
.....	686,658
.....	854,863
.....	602,260
.....	908,959
	£3,052,740

AND THE NEW. Each trim little house has its small but adequate space for a garden. Every family arriving at its new home finds one apricot and one peach tree ready for planting there. In these cheerful new townships under the blue Transvaal sky the decencies of life reassert themselves and a new hope is born.



THE SLOUGH OF DESPOND. Shantytown's miserable shacks huddled together on land now so befouled that it will take years to sterilise it. The roofs of corrugated iron are precariously held in place by stones. The interiors never see the sun.

A NEW LIFE BEGINS. The road in the foreground divides two new Native townships, Mapetla to the left and Phiry to the right. Some houses in the latter still await their roofs. The stark appearance of these rows of new houses will soon be softened by trees and gardens sheltered by creeper-clad fences.



Although exceeding £3,000,000 this sum was inadequate to meet the Non-European housing position, and to it must be added the invaluable contribution of industry and commerce through the medium of the Native Services Levy Fund totalling nearly £2½-million for the four years under consideration. The annual contributions from the fund, after deduction of administrative costs and the 20 per cent. earmarked for transport, were as follows:

	£
1954-5	580,115
1955-6	603,519
1956-7	621,784
1957-8	600,550
	£2,405,968

The Native Services Levy has made possible not only the supply to the Native areas of main trunk services such as sewer outfalls, disposal works, main roads and high-tension electricity, but also the large-scale servicing of sites by the City Engineer's Department. Beginning in 1955, the council undertook a programme for the development of 10,000 serviced sites a year in accordance with the wishes of the Minister of Native Affairs, and it is these serviced sites which form the basis of all the council's housing projects.

Fortunate Timing

It will be noted that during the years 1954/57 an average erection of about 3,000 houses a year was maintained. With the money available houses could not be produced faster except by resorting to fractional houses or accepting long-term squatting. In July, 1956, the council was only just holding its own on the housing front without really making any impression on the tragic

backlog, which included the 15,000 families in the Shanty-town-Moroka slums.

It was at this critical stage that the superb offer of a loan of £3-million for Native housing was made by Sir Ernest Oppenheimer and his associates. It came at a particularly propitious time. The new techniques had been perfected, the requisite supervisory staff had been selected, sufficient Natives had been trained and bulk supplies of materials were available. All this, with 16,000 unencumbered serviced sites made available by the Minister of Native Affairs, provided the foundations for success. The timing, so important in any successful venture, was most fortunate.

M2: MANPOWER

AS functioning in the Native areas the Housing Division consists of a Principal Housing Engineer controlling a European supervisory staff of some 30 men, together with a complement of about 2,600 Natives. The Principal Housing Engineer's organisation is shown in our diagram and is responsible not only for the slum-removal scheme, but for all other building work undertaken by the division.

The Native labour force consists of 1,750 labourers and 850 skilled and semi-skilled workers made up as follows:—

Bricklayers	590 (405 learners)
Plasterers	21 (16 learners)
Carpenters	66 (31 learners)
Painters	29
Glaziers	9
Plumbers	31
Drainlayers	15
Welders	8

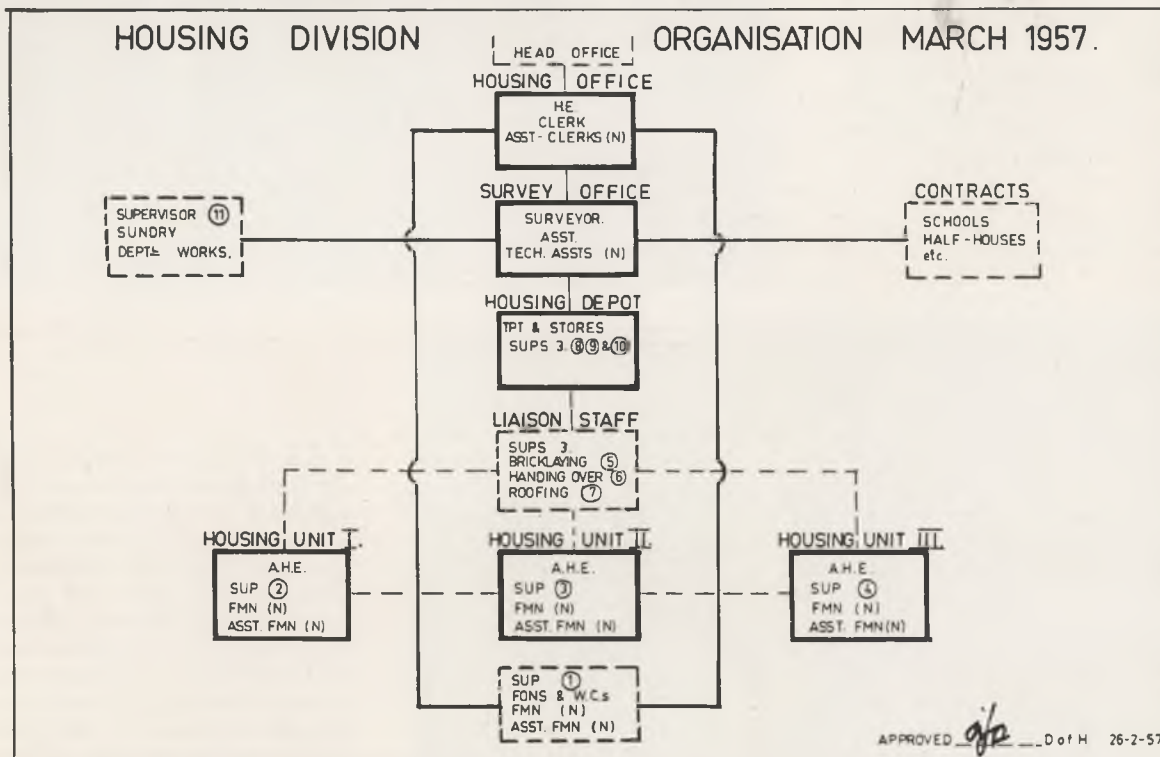


Diagram illustrating the organisation of the Housing Division of Johannesburg City Council. The explanation of the abbreviations is as follows: N — Native; Fmn — foreman; Sups — superintendents; H.E. — housing engineer; A.H.E. — assistant housing engineer; Fdns — foundations; Tpt — transport. The ringed numerals refer to an explanatory memorandum which has been drawn up to accompany the diagram.



VILLAGE IN THE MAKING. In this Nguni village called Dhlamini houses have been built end-on to the road. Apart from breaking the monotony this practice gives half the houses in any given area added privacy in that their windows face the windowless ends of neighbouring houses.

SLUM IN COURSE OF OBLITERATION. As this picture shows, each shack is demolished as soon as its occupants are moved to their new home. Some 70 families have been moved from the small area depicted alone. The sites of demolished shacks are marked by white crosses.



LARGE-SCALE OPERATION Some idea of the scale of Johannesburg City Council's slum-clearance operations can be seen from this picture. In the middle distance and again in the background can be seen the ample open spaces which have been left for schools, recreation grounds and parks. The planning of the great new town is the work of the planning branch of the city engineer's department.

Mechanics	9
Drivers	21
Surveyors, Technical Assistants and Draughtsmen	19
Checkers	36
Clerks	45

Consultative Committees

For consultation purposes two Native committees have been set up representing all sections of the building workers on the one hand and of the labourers on the other. All grievances and technical difficulties are brought before these committees, which have functioned most successfully.

Building workers are paid in accordance with the Native Building Workers' Act as shown in the following table. They are entitled to two consecutive weeks' leave for each year of service and one day off on full pay for any holiday that may fall within the period of their leave.

Designation				
(a) Registered learner who has not passed test.				
(b) Registered learner who has passed test.				
(c) Registered learner in second year after passing test.	1/3	2/16/3	1/ 7/6	4. 3.9.
(d) Registered Native building workers and other Natives on skilled work.	1/6	3/ 7/6	1/13/3	5. 0.9.
(e) Special rate for more competent workers in (d).	1/9	3/18/9	2/ 0/0	5.18.9.
(f) Team leaders.	2/-	4/10/0	2/ 4/0	6.14.0.

M3: MATERIALS

DURING the six months under review, an average number of 200 houses a week was built under the £3-million slum-removal scheme apart from building elsewhere. This necessitated the handling of materials on a vast scale by transport most of which is privately owned. Deliveries of materials average 270 loads a day or a load every two minutes. The daily consumption of materials is as follows:—

Bricks (equivalent to 1,200 tons)	400,000
Sand (cu. yards)	600
Ash (cu. yards)	250
Lime and Cement (pkts.)	2,000
Steel windows	200
Steel doors	150
Asbestos sheets	1,500
Timber (lineal feet)	7,500

The scale of the operations and of the bulk buying involved can be judged by the fact that contracts have recently been placed for no less than 400 miles of corrugated asbestos sheeting, 37,000 steel door jambs and 76,000 steel windows in surrounds. The number of bricks consumed daily would, if placed end to end, stretch from Randfontein to Springs. If laid on top of one another in the conventional manner at sea level they would form a column more than three times the height of Mount Everest.

Guaranteed Deliveries

Materials represent 80 per cent. of the total expenditure on Native housing undertaken departmentally. With a mass-production system running at 40 to 50 houses a day, deliveries of material must be guaranteed, for the whole organisation may be brought to a standstill by the

and level, and they carry out all survey operations in the Native areas from the pegging of stands to precise levelling for sewer profiles.

Each of the construction units, of which there are three, is directed by a housing engineer with a European supervisor. Each unit consists of 525 men directly controlled by a Native foreman. The units have an establishment which, on paper, enables 16 houses to be constructed each working day. That this target is not often achieved is accounted for by bad weather, sickness, labour troubles and other difficulties.

The work is divided into three main tasks, namely, the laying of foundations up to floor level; the building of the superstructure and roofing; and the finishing, which includes glazing and painting.

Native Foremen

The success of the scheme has been due in large measure to the initiative, enthusiasm and patience of the engineers and their supervisors. The key men in the organisation are undoubtedly the Native foremen, whose responsibility far exceeds that which would normally be entrusted to a Native. Each foreman is entirely responsible, with his four assistant foremen, for the discipline, organisation and output of 500 odd men. Experience has proved beyond doubt that a good Native foreman is able to maintain far better control than any European. He knows what his men are feeling and thinking and saying, which gives him a tremendous advantage.

In general, the purpose of the European staff is to remain in the background, providing technical advice, ensuring that materials are forthcoming, and generally assisting the Native foremen in every possible way. The

PROGRESS

ON its way up to the now-maintained target of 200, the weekly production of houses has fluctuated. Apart from the loss of time due to rain, which was unusually high for the winter months, the only serious loss was caused by a complete close-down on 26th June.

The construction of 5,015 houses in a period of six months must be regarded as an outstanding achievement. The distribution of 5,015 houses amongst the various townships has been as follows

Group	Scheme	Houses Completed	Type
Nguni	Zondi	445	51/6
Nguni	Dhlamini	485	51/6
"Other"	Chiawelo	608	51/6
Sotho	Mapetla	1,342	51/6
Sotho and Phiri			
Nguni	Jabulani	1,781	51/7
Sotho		354	51/6

Arrangements for the occupation of houses as completed have been made at a speed reflecting great credit to the organisation of the City Council's Non-European affairs department. It is not unusual for houses to be occupied within 24 hours after having been handed over by the housing division. When it is realised that the particular family has to be selected as to size, income and ethnic group, it can be seen that this is a very fine achievement.

It is most heartening to note the large areas of Shantytown and Moroka which, as our pictures show, are being demolished as the building of new houses progresses.

The first slum dwellers were moved on the 1st July, 1957, and the number now provided with houses is about 15,000. Unfortunately it has not been possible to keep pace with this in the provision of all amenities; and that of schools in particular has lagged behind. It is, however, intended to switch one of the construction units from houses to schools, and it is hoped that 21 schools in the new areas will have been completed before the middle of 1958.

Native workers are encouraged to feel that this is their work and that they are building for their own people.

Basic Design

The basic design of house adopted for the scheme is the National Housing Office's type 51/6, a four-roomed dwelling of 514 square feet. In order to keep costs down to the minimum so that rents might be as low as possible, it was decided to adopt an austerity finish. Thus a floor is laid in the kitchen only, and internal wall surfaces are left rough.

One of the main difficulties has been that of providing suitable houses, not only for different wage groups, but also for the three main ethnic groups. In other words, it has been necessary to move construction units from place to place in accordance with the demand at a given time for houses for a particular ethnic group. This has to some extent militated against efficiency.

IN PARTNERSHIP. A European supervisor instructs a Native in the art of jointing. Note the substantial wall and its damp-course, and the large dump of building materials in the background. The Transvaal climate gives good building weather most of the time.



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