

THE STAR, JOHANNESBURG, TRAF

FINANCIAL POLICY OF CITY COUNCIL

PUBLIC ASPECTS OF NATIVE HOUSING

In his third and final article Dr. Macvicar deals with the wider public aspects of native housing, including the financial relations between the municipality and the Government.

In making a contribution to the now almost continuous discussion of juvenile crime and its causes, he recalls and emphasises the suggestion made by the recent Juvenile Delinquency Conference for the creation of a Board of Bantu Education, adapted to take a leading part in improved control of young natives as a measure against crime and vagrancy.

EDUCATION VERSUS CRIME

By NEIL MACVICAR, M.D., D.P.H.

The gross income of the Municipal Native Affairs Department for the 12 months ended June 30, 1939, was £237,471, of which £168,168 was from rents and £39,250 from beer halls. The total amount of working expenses was £166,181, salaries, wages, pension fund contributions, etc., accounting for £83,319 of this. Rents, rates and insurance, including payments for water, electricity, sanitary fees, came to £29,818, and grants-in-aid and gratuities to maternity and other hospitals, nursery schools, and other institutions £4,063. Medical services absorbed only £3,028.

Out of the balance of £71,290, interest on loan capital £46,548 and redemption on loan capital £17,852 were paid, and provision was also made for renewals. A deficit of £23,131 was brought forward from the previous year and a slightly smaller deficit of £22,897 is carried forward for next year.

CHANGES IN CITY POLICY

In past years it was the custom of the City Council to meet out of the rates any annual deficit on its native affairs account. The deficits formerly averaged about £15,000, recent deficits have been over £20,000. These deficits are now being carried forward.

It was also the custom of the municipality out of the "grants-in-aid and maternity hospital, hospital, for the benefit of native children of the city and locations. These grants are now no longer paid out of rates; they are debited to the Native Affairs Department account.

A change in the opposite direction has to be recorded. Formerly location medical and nursing services were entirely paid for out of native revenue, a small charge being made to the tenants. Now the Municipal Health Department has been given the control of these services and that department pays half the cost. The services are now free. It is estimated that the total cost of these services for one year will come to about £25,000. Thus say £12,500, the Health Department's share, will now fall upon the rates. This contribution is fully justified by the obvious benefit and security to the European section of the population from the Health Department's work in the locations.

One of the chief objects of the Native Urban Areas Act was to stop the practice, shamelessly indulged in by some municipalities at the time of making a profit out of their locations. The Act lays down that all revenue from locations shall be expended for the benefit of the location inhabitants, or at least of the native people resident within the municipal area. Thus the transfer of the grants-in-aid to the Native Affairs account was not contrary to the letter, at least, of the Act.

BEARING OF THE URBAN AREAS ACT

As regards the deficits, Section 8, sub-section (6) of the Act reads: "Any deficit on the native revenue account may be met by an advance from the general funds of the urban local authority on such terms and conditions as the Minister may approve." Presumably the Minister has approved of the deficits being carried forward.

The sub-section which follows (7), reads: "Nothing in this section contained shall be construed as prohibiting an urban local authority from appropriating, in accordance with the law governing such authority, to the expenditure arising from any location, native village or native hostel, moneys from other sources than the native revenue account, or from supplementing the native revenue account by moneys from general revenue." But it looks as if the City Council, except in the case of the medical and nursing services where the health department had to shoulder part of the cost in order to obtain control, had decided to abandon their former generous attitude and go in for a policy of strict economic segregation, trusting to the beer halls to pull them through.

On these lines true progress on the part of the natives can hardly be expected. If the native labourers were getting a living wage, there would be more hope. Something may be done with the beer hall profits if they go on increasing, but the more these profits increase the poorer the beer-drinkers, individually, become. It is a dubious gain. The native city population as a whole—barring a small upper stratum—are too depressed economically "to raise themselves by their own shoe laces." Many are sinking into debt. They need help from those who are able to help—the white population whom they serve.

That a city whose revenue turnover for the year amounted to £5,283,724, and whose treasurer reports "the City's finances are in a very sound position," should boggle at meeting a deficit of £23,000 on its native affairs account, and should charge up even its donations to its native revenue account is, meantime, difficult to explain or even credit.

INCREASE OF CRIME

The report on the statistics of crime just published shows that in the Witwatersrand police division serious crime among Europeans decreased by 38 per cent during the period 1930 to 1938, notwithstanding an increase of about 50 per cent in the white population. Serious native crime, on the other hand, increased during the same period by 90 per cent, with a population increase of somewhere between 80 and 60 per cent.

It appears that the well-known laudable character of the Bantu is seriously deteriorating on the Rand. There is no need to become sensational about it. But the prospect is not a pleasant one for anybody. A 10 per cent per annum increase of crime in so important an area as the Witwatersrand is not a small matter. It calls for immediate remedy, if such can be found.

It is fortunate that further time need not be lost in making investigations. In great measure the job has

been done. The report of the conference of experts on Bantu juvenile delinquency held in October, 1938, and the further report published in November, 1939, throw a flood of light upon the whole subject, trace the tendencies and the factors at work in Bantu location society that lead up to delinquency and crime, and suggest remedies. The remedies proposed are various and each is of value. But the whole problem boils down to two or three very simple propositions. The children in these locations are growing up without discipline. During the years of school life there are two forms of discipline that fall normally upon children, the discipline of the home and the discipline of school. The majority of these location children are getting neither.

PROBLEM OF THE CHILDREN

In 1938 there were estimated to be 40,400 native children of school-going age in Johannesburg, and official estimates stated that 60 per cent—i.e., over 24,000 of these children were not at school. Such improvement may have taken place since, but the population is increasing and the situation remains broadly unchanged.

The parents of these 24,000 children are mostly absent at work. There is nobody to make their children go to school. Neighbours are not in a position to apply discipline to these unattached children who as often as not do not want to go to school.

What would we expect of our own children if they were allowed to spend their lives from the age of six to 14 or longer with nothing to do and no discipline, and poorly fed into the bargain?

The children must be given the discipline that every person needs to make him fit to live as a member in any capacity, however humble, of civilised society. Until wages are raised to a decent living wage level so that mothers can stay at home—and this reform, however urgently called for, will take time—use must be made of the other great discipline of childhood. The children must be got into school and made to attend regularly. There is no time to lose! Each year a crop of Bantu adolescents is being turned loose on the labour market, not had at heart most of them, but ignorant, ill-nourished and above all, unused to any form of control. Suffering of food comes easy to them—native boys passed on from the Juvenile Court to the Children's Aid Society's shelter are not infrequently found to be ravenously hungry—and then follow naturally small thefts of money or trifles that can be exchanged for food. And so on—until crime has become habitual.

Other measures, no doubt, will be required. If teachers report that children sometimes cannot learn because they are starving, something will have to be done about it. But the urgent immediate need is to bring order out of chaos, to get that crowd of potential delinquents and criminals under the discipline of school.

The present tendency is to multiply reformatories. This is the old story of shutting the stable door after the horse is stolen.

Multiply schools! But first and most urgent of all, let the municipalities of the Reef towns ask Government for powers, legislative if necessary, to introduce compulsory school attendance for the children of all races within their boundaries. And let the public back the application with all their force, in their own interest and for the sake of the future of their own children.

A BOARD OF EDUCATION

A vitally important recommendation of the Juvenile Delinquency Conference is the following: That a Board of Bantu Education be set up, to include juvenile employment, and social welfare, such board to be composed, inter alia, of representatives of the Departments of Justice, Native Affairs, Labour, Social Welfare, Health and Education.

And the following report of the meeting of the City Council on January 30 is most encouraging: Mr. A. Ummink, chairman of the Council's Native Affairs Committee, moved the adjournment of the Council to draw attention to the serious native youth problem in Johannesburg. With most parents compelled by economic factors to work, many youths were under no control and had little chance of getting any schooling. There was one Government school for natives in Johannesburg and a few missionary schools subsidised by the Province. Running wild, the majority of native boys formed crime gangs. The position was serious and, if nothing was done, would become a menace to the community, European and native. "I suggest we build a big school as a start at Orlando and let it to the Government," he said, amid applause.

The writer wishes to thank Mr. Graham Ballenden, manager of the non-European Housing and Native Administration Department of the City of Johannesburg, the Research and Welfare Officer, and the Orlando superintendents and doctors for their courtesy in giving him information. (Continued.)

ECONOMIC CONDITIONS AT ALLY ORLANDO TOWNSHIP

DISPROPORTIONATE RENTALS IN VALUE OF HOUSES

To the Editor of The Star

Sir,—With keen interest I have read the three articles on native housing by Dr. Neil MacVicar, the moderate tone of which is sufficient to prove to your contributors' care to present as truthful and careful a case as possible from the facts supplied to him by Mr. Graham Ballenden, the Research and Welfare Officer, and the Orlando superintendents and doctors. Needless to say, I accept Dr. MacVicar's statements. I should like to point out certain points originally mentioned by me and not confused and others arising from the careful statement published which seems to strengthen the case for investigation of an independent body of Johannesburg citizens.

The charming situation of Orlando seems to me to be very much like the "flowers that bloom in the spring, iris in the" Vrededorp was built on one of the most charming and healthy sites round Johannesburg. The following points, however, have a very real bearing: (1) The number of houses in Orlando, according to the figures given by the municipality is 4,822 two-roomed houses, and 1,803 three-roomed houses. A two-roomed house contains a kitchen-living room size 14ft. 9in. x 10ft. 3in. and a bedroom size 9ft. 7in. x 10ft. 3in. In a three-roomed house there is an extra bedroom size 11ft. 3in. x 10ft. 3in. There are thus 7,624 bedrooms in Orlando, in which sleep between 22,600 and 40,000 native men, women and children, i.e. an average of roughly five humans in a space of 9ft. 7in. x 10ft. 3in. The rooms have no floors and no ceilings. The houses have practically no foundations, and one water-pipe in the street serves ten houses.

PRICE OF HOUSES

The contract price of the houses I understand was £24 each. According to Dr. MacVicar, the money to build the second 3,000 houses was borrowed from the Union Government at three-quarters of 1 per cent. interest. I do not know what rate of interest the first half was borrowed at, but native householders in the township are charged rent at a rate of 14 per cent. on the capital outlay, which does not seem to square with the statement that the municipality's object is not to make profits.

The City Council of Johannesburg has, to its credit, rigorously tackled the problems of slum clearance and housing among the European small wage-earners of the city and has established three praiseworthy European housing schemes, namely, the Jan Hofmeyr in Brixton, the Maurice Freeman in Betrams and the Glenesk or Pioneer in Turffontein. Others have been planned but have not yet come into being. In these townships—I will take the Jan Hofmeyr as an example, for there are all more or less modeled on the same plan—there are 184 houses comprising two types:

Type (a): Detached or semi-detached houses consisting of two

bedrooms, living room, kitchen, bath room, W.C. and two steps.

Type (b): Detached houses of six consisting of three bedrooms and the same facilities as type (a).

RENTAL CHARGES

Here we understand houses are situated on their own plots of 35ft. x 50ft. They are fitted with modern household conveniences including gas-cooker and heaters, with free water supply up to 3,750 gallons per month per house. The rents charged by the municipality are 10s. per week for the two bedroom houses and 12s. 6d. per week for the three bedroom houses. The occupation of these houses is limited to persons whose wages do not exceed £4 per week for the two bedroom houses and £5 per week for the three bedroom houses. This means that if we take the average income of the tenants at £3 10s. 10d. per week, the ratio of rent to income is about 18 per cent. and for the tenants of the three bedroom houses the ratio is 19 per cent., on the assumption that the average income is £4 10s. per week. Now compare this with the ratio of rents to wages of the native tenants of the Orlando and Western townships and what do we find? That tenants of two roomed houses pay 24 per cent. of their wages and tenants of three roomed houses pay 30 per cent. of their wages. Where is the equity in this?

If our civic government considers it fit and proper to provide houses for the poorer section of the European population on the basis of 18 per cent. to 19 per cent. of their wages, how much more imperative is it that the still poorer section of the native population should be provided with housing, within their means? If the rental of the houses in the municipal native townships were based on the same ratio of rents to wages as in the European townships, then the municipal rent should not be charging more than 10s. per month for any of its houses in the native townships, whereas the average rents are from 21s. to 25s. per month.

ACTUAL COST

But this ignores the important point of "what" received for rentals paid. What the municipality provided for 10s. per week in a European housing township is out of all proportion to what it offers for 2s. 3d. per week in the native townships. Take, for instance, the actual costs of the houses to the municipality. In the Jan Hofmeyr township the 10s. per week houses cost £250 each, and in the Maurice Freeman township they cost £274 each. Against this, the 5s. per week two roomed houses in the Western native township cost only £108 and in the Orlando township only £84 each. These facts clearly indicate that the tenants of the municipal native townships are being grossly overcharged. If we compare the value of what they receive for their rents with that received by the tenants of the municipal townships for Europeans.

This then brings me to another point that of rentals received in relation to capital outlay. In the municipal European housing schemes the yield is apparently about 4 per cent. per annum on all types of houses. But in the native townships the rent yield ranges from approximately 10 per cent. per annum in the Western native township to approximately 14 per cent. per annum in the Orlando township. I do not think anyone would wish me to accuse the Johannesburg Municipality of deliberately countenancing rent profiteering in its native townships, but when it is realised that the inhabitants of these townships are compelled to live there under the Urban Areas Act—they have no option—then one must come to the conclusion that advantage is being taken of the circumstances under which the native population is forced to live.

MEDICAL ATTENTION

The principle of sub-economic housing has very rightly been accepted as a means of solving the European slum problems in this city, and I submit that the same principle should be applied to all problems of slum clearance. If it were applied to native housing on the same basis as to European housing, then the municipality would be able to reduce the rents of its native houses to some figure less than 10s. per month.

It is not quite correct to say that there is free medical attention in Orlando because should a doctor be called to the house a fee of 1s. is charged for the service. With that exception your contributor's statement is correct. It ought, however, to be pointed out that these arrangements came into operation last year when all health services in the township were placed under control of the M.O.H. and are no longer managed by the Native Affairs Department of the municipality. The Public Health Department bears one-half of the cost. Before this there was only one doctor for the 40,000 natives, and he was not at the township every day. For his services the Native Affairs Department levied an extra sixpence on the rent of every house, which was compulsory.

After eight years, there are now two doctors. Their hours are from 9 to 5 daily. Neither is resident, and it is practically impossible to get medical attention after 5 p.m. Large crowds of natives attend the clinics. Many wait all day and fail to see the doctors—which is only to be expected. The doctors are worked to death, but face an impossibility. There is no hospital, worth speaking of. Patients have to be transferred to the General Hospital. If any serious illness or accident occurs after 5 o'clock the patient has to be got to Johannesburg somehow, if it can be done.

MEDICAL SERVICE

There are two dentists, who are not there all the time. It is also true there is now a European health visitor in the township every day. Recently the number of nurses has been brought up to 22. It is, however, not correct that all these nurses are fully-qualified midwives. The figures given by Dr. MacVicar may seem impressive. But in view of the population, with no private doctors, dentist, etc., a hospital with 10 beds only and no European matron, and the fact that practically all nursing has to be done in small overcrowded houses without water laid on and no sewerage. This becomes more impressive in the reverse sense.

The S.A.R. has what amounts to a

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ORLANDO TOWNSHIP.

in value of Houses.

Harry W. Haynes,
March 8, 1940.

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monopoly of transport to and from Orlando. A month's ticket costs 1s. 6d. In your issue of January 27 this year I read: "During the year 1939 the train services to Orlando and Pinville carried 1,865,823 passengers with an average cost of 6d. per passenger."

I am open to denial, but I think the railway fare charged is excessive. On one point alone I think my suggestion may be carried out. That is the real ownership of the stores in Orlando which, theoretically, must be owned and run solely by natives. Into this matter a most searching inquiry seems to be indicated. At the moment we are presumably out to check war profiteering. Whether or not anything is actually being done in the matter I do not know, as I have no supporting evidence. But I do know that, within a week from writing this letter a native paid the following prices in an Orlando store:

- Ten ounces fourth-grade meat 6d.
- (price in Johannesburg 3d. to 4d. 10).
- Five pounds white sugar, 2s.
- One local candle 2d.
- Two candles, 3d.
- Half-pound Joko tea, 1s. 6d.
- Neslé's milk (in 9d.)
- Eight pounds mealie meal, 1s.

The schools in Orlando are run by the missions which, I believe, are subsidised by the Government to a very small extent. With the resources at their disposal the missions appear to have carried through a very big task. The point of the school authorities at one particular school which I raised in my first letter, however, still remains. It should not be allowed to remain one day longer. It is "just plain scandalous."

HARRY W. HAYNES

CITY HOUSING SEGREGATION

ORLANDO TOWNSHIP

"THE STAR"

MCNAMEE VILLAGE COMPARED. (M.J.Dennehy). March 12th, 1940.

THE STAR, J

NEWS

are 14s. and 16s. per month respectively. This is inclusive of all services—only one extra charge is made—1s. 6d. per month for electric light. All streets are being tarred and social amenities are well provided for. If this can be done by minor municipalities, we can surely emulate the fine example set.

The financial aspect as exposed by your correspondent, certainly calls for correction. If there is to be preferential treatment it should be extended to the lesser wage-earners. Considering that rentals absorb from 24 per cent. to 30 per cent. of the earnings, to which has to be added the excessive transport charges plus the cost of presentable clothing, since the average employer insists upon neatness of dress plus personal cleanliness, and that after all this has been paid for, further sums have to be found for food and nourishment, it is not surprising that overcrowding takes place.

Only through publicity can the gravity of the position be brought home to the ratepayers. It is not merely a matter of a fair deal to the native — that should be sufficient to induce rapid and decisive action—it is a matter of ensuring our own health and well-being for the future.

M. J. DENNEHY.

ORLANDO TOWNSHIP

MCNAMEE VILLAGE

COMPARED

Price 12th 1940
To the Editor of The Star

Sir,—Thanks largely to your courtesy in affording space, conditions as they actually are at Orlando are better known now. As it is obvious that corrective measures will have to be applied, chiefly in the form of considerable expansion both of housing accommodation and amenities, I suggest that a competent and independent opinion be obtained as to the actual cost of such buildings plus a fair profit for the contractor.

In this connection the following as an illustration of what is being done by smaller and, from the point of view of borrowing powers, less favourably placed municipalities, may prove of interest. I am indebted for the information to the South African Health Magazine, November, 1939, and references are to McNamee Village, Port Elizabeth. In this village houses of two and three rooms are erected. The walls are of brick and concrete, externally "pebble dashed" in various colours of stone. They are fully rat proofed and ceilings and floors installed. A waterborne sewerage system is in operation. Each house has its own water supply, is fitted with food cupboards, fireplaces, sinks, washing platforms, etc., and electric light. The houses are semi-detached and each block of two houses has a w.c. Fully fenced, all houses have their own little garden. For every 12 houses a playground for children is provided. For every 200 houses a resident headman is held accountable as supervisor and for every 400 houses a fully-qualified visiting native nurse is provided. The township is within five miles of the city and is well served by both bus and train. Rentals

ard duties at the Royal palaces.

SLUM DWELLERS GRATEFUL

The Star, 29/4/40

**SUCCESS OF HOUSING
SCHEMES**

Pessimists who declared that the poor in South Africa would keep "coals in the bath" if transferred to up-to-date homes, and that it was futile to try to make a "silk purse out of a sow's ear" have generally proved to be wrong, states the Central Housing Board in its report presented to Parliament to-day.

"We have had practical proof now that, as a general proposition, these dismal prophecies were wrong," states the board. "Yet waste both of houses and of opportunity can and does occur and it is to prevent it that management is required.

"Neglect may lead to depreciation and if it is continued over a long period of years, the commodity may even become valueless as many private property owners have found to their cost when houses have been declared slums under the Act and demolition orders have been served on them."

The report states that the board has assisted local authorities to prepare satisfactory schemes and that the high cost of maintenance in some cases is due to faulty house construction. It then deals with the after-care of tenants.

The majority removed from slum houses are satisfactory and require little guidance. They gratefully take full advantage of the new amenities. Some are thriftless and careless in their domestic habits, but are susceptible of permanent improvement under the combined influence of environment and instruction.

SUPERVISION

Such people require visiting more regularly, the closer supervision being gradually relaxed as the standard improves. The remainder, a small minority, are tenants who must be kept under constant supervision to prevent deterioration in standard, and those of sub-normal types without the will or, perhaps, the mental capacity to help themselves.

These constitute a permanent charge on the benevolence of the community and must be cared for in the hope that the effort made to assist the older generation will, at least, not be wasted on the children.

The municipal landlord, the board states, has to ensure that the new tenants understand the conditions of tenancy and may have to give advice generally in the use of new homes. Later, help may be given in a variety of ways. A careful watch, too, has to be kept on the small minority who are troublesome, particularly those who consider that the public authority is "fair game for exploitation and are always finding excuses for the non-payment of rent."

"Then there are the tenant who allows his children to 'maltreat' the house and the quarrelsome tenant who is never happy unless quarrelling with the neighbours or his wife. There is the tenant who drinks or gambles, so that both the family and landlord have to go short; the other whose mental capacity does not permit the reception of new ideas; and the one who must be taught to keep the house clean."

Shipping that has been seen

The Star 29/4/40
HOUSING BOARD SCHEMES FOR SLUMS

INCREASED EXPENDITURE OF TEN MILLIONS PROPOSED

Since 1920 about 130,000 people all over the Union have been rehoused under various Government-aided housing schemes, and 50,000 of them have been removed from slums during the last few years. In spite of the war, annual provisions are still urgently required from the State to carry on this great social reform, the rescue of families from mean, overcrowded dwellings, dirty and verminous from generations of tenants.

These observations appear in the annual report of the Central Housing Board presented to Parliament to-day.

To enable local authorities to deal properly with slum elimination and the rehousing of the poorer section, the board recommends that the following total commitments of loan money, under the Housing Act of 1920, be entered into by the Government, the unexpended balance to be spread, possibly, over the next six to eight years:

Economic: £10,000,000, an increase of £3,872,000 over the present commitment of £6,128,000;

Sub-economic: £19,000,000, an increase of £5,250,000 over the present commitment of £13,750,000; and

For the housing of the aged poor and totally unfit: A minimum of £250,000, an increase of £150,000 over and above the existing commitment.

EFFECT OF THE WAR

"The class of man catered for under the Act," says the report, "appears to be somewhat affected by the uncertainties of war. While demands from local authorities for funds under the Act have risen steeply since the outbreak of war, with a view, possibly, to preventing unemployment in the building trade, there has been a decline in applications under the Additional Housing Act.

"This, however, may be due to the fact that the board had to warn building societies during the year that funds were running very low. The

IT CANNOT LAST

Entire stock carpet squares marked at pre-September prices. Get in quickly. —The Orient Carpet Co., of S.A. (Pty.), Ltd., under Standard Bank, Eloff and Market Streets. r/adv

main point, however, to be emphasised is that building societies should be assured of a programme spread over several years, as it is almost impossible for them to operate the Additional Housing Act satisfactorily unless they know that Parliament will annually provide loan funds for the purposes of the Act.

"It is suggested that the Government should earmark £1,500,000 for assistance under the Act spread over the next four years. The board also believes that the annual provision of funds by Parliament should not be less than £750,000 for economic housing, £2,500,000 for sub-economic housing, £50,000 for the housing of the aged poor, and £350,000 for assistance under the Additional Housing Act.

A NEW PRINCIPLE

"By the Slums Act of 1934 a comprehensive attack on slums was begun. The Act introduced an entirely new principle in housing administration, one destined to create great social changes.

"Can we say that the problem is at last fully realised by all citizens?"

"It is worth while to reflect that for a large section of the poor there is still really no such thing as home. Home life has no meaning for them and they can have no part or lot in such things.

"Whereas the mental and material disadvantages of overcrowding need no emphasis, even more grievous is its deadly moral effect. What morality is possible when whole families have to grow up in single rooms?"

"It is sincerely to be hoped that the Government will be able to increase the necessary financial commitment and make the required annual provision of funds despite the war to carry on the great social reform to which it, with its predecessors, put its hand."

The report shows that under the Additional Housing Act of 1937, empowering the Government to advance money to approved building societies and assist people to obtain loans for building houses, 812 loans, valued at £891,000, were granted by different societies during 1939. The amount advanced by the Government was £297,000.

Loans approved for European housing up to the end of last year totalled £7,442,000, made up as follows: Economic housing, £5,448,000 (7,441 houses and two hostels); sub-economic housing, £1,914,000 (3,063 houses);

housing of the aged, poor and unfit, £80,000 (215 dwellings).

Loan applications approved for non-European housing up to the end of last year totalled £5,206,000, of which £1,082,000 was for economic housing involving the construction of 9,846 dwellings, £4,107,000 for sub-economic housing (3,063 dwellings) and £16,900 for housing the aged poor and totally unfit (136 dwellings).

The board consists of Sir Edward Thornton (chairman), Mr. R. S. Gordon (deputy chairman), Messrs. F. Walton Jameson, J. Lockwood Hall and G. R. Savage, members, and Mr. J. Sanders, secretary.

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"THE STAR"NEW AMENITIES FOR NATIVES.
Germiston Location Improvements.30th April, 1940.

ISSUES

NO. 1015

The Star
**NEW AMENITIES
 FOR NATIVES**
30/4/40
**GERMISTON LOCATION
 IMPROVEMENTS**

Residents in the Germiston location will benefit by new amenities which the Town Council decided last night to provide. These include a soup kitchen during the winter for necessitous residents, for which the Council voted a monthly sum of £10.

This expenditure is subject to the Minister agreeing that it be charged against the native revenue account, the vote also to be reviewed in conjunction with the Council's annual estimates.

A proposal to distribute free bread at the kitchen was not sanctioned, the matter being deferred until the monthly estimated cost of running the soup kitchen is ascertained.

The natives are also to be given the use of the boxing ring, which is to be purchased by the Council from the Germiston Amateur Boxing Club for £20, and an additional soccer field is to be laid out next to the existing field near the location boundary.

TRAFFIC CONGESTION

Residents recently complained of the congestion of traffic at the main gate into the location. This matter is to be remedied by the provision of a native traffic officer at the gate as from Wednesday. His hours of duty will be from 6 to 9.30 in the morning and from 4.30 to 9 at night. This matter is also subject to the consent of the Minister of Native Affairs.

The Council also agreed that, subject to the consent of the Minister, provision be made in the Native Revenue account estimates for a grant of £226 to the Transvaal (Carnegie) Non-European Library and that provision for an annual grant of this amount be made on all future Native Revenue account estimates.

on after the war.

THERE ARE STILL SLUMS

While, according to the latest report of the Central Housing Board, 130,000 persons all over the Union have been re-housed in the last twenty years under various State-aided housing schemes, it must not be concluded that the housing position in this country is by any means satisfactory. In recent years, with the assistance of State aid, 50,000 persons have been removed from slums and housed in happier and healthier surroundings. But slums still abound, as everyone with knowledge of the larger urban areas knows only too well; nor is the evil likely to be remedied unless the processes employed in the past by local authorities are speeded up and supplemented by a substantial improvement in the economic conditions of those who find their miserable refuge in these areas. There is a comfortable but quite mistaken belief that the slum is a fixed and static factor in urban communities. As a matter of fact, the slum tends to grow in ratio as the population grows; for those migrant people, unfitted for town or industrial life, who are the camp followers of industrial development, too often bring social and housing deterioration in their wake. The consequence is that the decent, though poor, dwellings of to-day too rapidly become the slums of to-morrow; and, in the larger cities, slum eradication becomes a Sisyphean toil. As soon as one area is rebuilt or one depressed element re-housed, another has declined to a social sub-level.

The board itself, with, perhaps, a wider knowledge of local government tendencies than any single authority in the country, seems to doubt if citizens yet realise what the slum problem really is. The Slums Act of 1934 inaugurated a comprehensive attack on a housing squalor that was a reproach to the Union. Yet only 50,000 persons have been rescued from these conditions since then; a total, we fear, far short of the potential slum dwellers who have, in that period, swollen the numbers of the country's economic misfits. The board denies that "once a slum dweller, always a slum dweller." "The majority of those rescued from slum houses are satisfactory and require little guidance." Only a small minority are people who have to be kept under constant supervision. If this is true of the small proportion who have been rescued from overcrowding, insanitation and the fetid accompaniments of squalid homes, it must be true also of those who, though no fault of their own, are condemned to endure such conditions because they have no alternative. The board underlines this reflection when it asks, "What morality is possible when whole families have to grow up in single rooms?" The blame for the continuance of these conditions is not primarily the State's. The Government has money to lend to the local authorities for remedial housing measures; but it obviously cannot act in advance of those authorities. The latter, in their turn, will never be found very far ahead of public opinion which—in the last resort—means the outlook and attitude of the average citizen towards the less fortunate dwellers in his midst.

"RAND DAILY MAIL"

Suggested Township For Poor Indians.
Priest Gives Evidence.

Suggested Township For Poor Indians

Priest Gives Evidence

WHAT the majority of the poorer class Indians in Johannesburg would welcome any scheme of the City Council to establish an Asiatic township at Claremont was the opinion expressed by an Indian priest, the Rev. B. L. E. Sigamoney, who gave evidence before the Provincial Commission of Inquiry which continued its sitting at the Library yesterday.

For eight years, Mr. Sigamoney told the Commissioner, Mr. F. Glen Leary, he had felt the need for such a township. When he first came to Johannesburg in 1927 he had been appalled by the slum conditions in which the Indian community were living.

He added that he had travelled extensively in England, and on the excellent rehousing schemes he saw being put into operation there for the amelioration of the poorer classes he based his campaign to relieve the distress of the Indians in the city. He had taken councillors on a tour of inspection of the Malay location at that time. One of the councillors who had been appalled at what he saw was the present Mayor, Mr. J. J. Page.

"I have been hammering on the door of the City Council ever since to get them to move in the matter," Mr. Sigamoney said.

The commission was appointed to hear objections to the City Council's plan to retain certain land in the western areas for the proposed establishment of an Asiatic township at Claremont.

Mr. J. G. Kneen, instructed by Messrs. Moodie and Robertson, is appearing for the City Council, and among the objectors are Mr. J. S. Tighy, a councillor in the districts concerned, Mr. A. Doring, on behalf of the Roodepoort-Maraisburg Town

Council, and representatives of various ratepayers' and property owners' associations in the western districts.

Questioned on the Feetham Commission report, Mr. Sigamoney, who, with a deputation of three others, represented the Transvaal Tamil Benefit Society, said that its effect was to legalise illegal property-owning by Indians.

Mr. Walshe (representing the Western Areas Property Owners' Association): Mr. J. H. Hofmeyr put the position in a nutshell when he said that Indians obtained indirect ownership of land?

Mr. Sigamoney: That is the responsibility of the Government.

Mr. Walshe: If all slum conditions in the Malay location and at Burghersdorp were eliminated, would the Indian community still prefer to go and live at Claremont?

Mr. Sigamoney: Probably not. The first two districts would be nearer the city.

He added that a township at Claremont was what was wanted for the poorer sections of the Indian community.

Mr. Walshe said that even if the commission approved of this scheme it would take between 18 months and two years for it to be passed as a township, and then it depended on Parliament whether or not Indians were granted the freehold title of the land in the district.

"The City Council is prepared to take that risk," interjected Mr. Kneen.

The deputation was cross-examined at length by Mr. J. S. Tighy and others present.

After an inspection of various districts in the western areas yesterday afternoon, the inquiry was adjourned until July 5.

"The Star" Western Areas Scheme - Indian Appeal For Housing.

National

WESTERN AREAS SCHEME

INDIAN APPEAL FOR HOUSING

Evidence supporting the City Council's scheme for establishing an Indian township at Claremont was given to the Western Areas Commission yesterday by the Rev. B. L. E. Sigamoney, on behalf of the Transvaal Tamil Benefit Society.

The commission, of which Mr. Glen Leary, magistrate at Springs, is commissioner, is inquiring into the proposal to establish new non-European townships in the western area of Johannesburg. At the end of yesterday's evidence, the hearing was adjourned until July 5.

Mr. Sigamoney said the Transvaal Indian Congress had decided not to take part in supporting the scheme, but to leave the question to the Tamil Society. Congress members feared that the scheme was a step towards segregation; also, influential members of congress were landlords in the Malay location and considered that their interests might be detrimentally affected.

Tamils lived at present in the Malay location, Fordsburg, Sophiatown, Bertrams, Ophirton and Newclare. The accommodation they occupied was of the slum type, and they paid relatively high rentals. The average rental for a room was £2 a month, and for a house of two rooms and a kitchen, £3 a month.

"The Tamil Society supports an Asiatic housing scheme, for which there is as much need as housing schemes for Europeans and coloured people" he said.

ORLANDO SCHEME

"But Indians would not patronise a housing scheme in the vicinity of Orlando because they would feel that this was an attempt at segregation, and because the distance from their occupation would make the scheme impossible.

"Hawkers, for example, buy produce at the market at 4 a.m. Waiters start work at 6 a.m., and in many cases do not finish until midnight."

In reply to questions, Mr. Sigamoney said it was inconsistent for the Afrikaans people to object to the presence of the Indians when some of them had sold stands to Indians in the western areas.

Mr. Tighy: That is being done under the lap.

Mr. Sigamoney: It is a dishonest way of acquiring property. The Government has made our people dishonest because of the restrictions placed on them.

He added that the Claremont housing scheme would be a heaven compared with the hell in which some Indians were living, sometimes with as many as six people sleeping in one room.

PAGE TWELVE

City Asked to Spend £984,000

CAPITAL expenditure of more than £984,000 will be considered by the Johannesburg City Council at its special meeting this afternoon. The Council will be asked to make application to the Administrator and the Central Housing Board for a sub-economic loan of £401,075 to finance the establishment of Coronation Township for coloured people, and formally to vote £433,000 for the extensions to the Orlando Power Station. The sum required for all the schemes to be recommended is £984,672.

The Coronation Township scheme—one of the most important in the Council's slum clearance and rehousing policy—involves the construction of 375 two-roomed houses at £125 each, 487 three-roomed houses at £160 each, and 188 four-roomed houses at £220 each, but it is proposed, as a start, to build only 400 houses to ascertain what support the coloured people will give to the scheme.

Approval of the Council's expenditure of £433,000 on the new power station extensions was given by the Administrator in Executive Committee at the end of January.

Among other large financial items to be dealt with to-day is a recommendation from the Non-European and Native Affairs Committee for the purchase of 6½ acres on the Booyens Estate, adjoining Stafford Township for £32,000 for the erection of a native hostel and brewery.

Originally, the Council had agreed to secure ground at the Village Deep for this purpose at a cost of £41,000; but the committee has reported against this proposal on account of legal difficulties.

NEW SWIMMING BATH

An amount of £28,055 is to be voted for further work at the Westpark Cemetery, £9,000 for a compound to house 250 caddies at the Bedford Park Municipal Golf Course, and £26,457 for the construction of the Melville swimming bath.

The Public Health Committee has recommended that application be made for a sub-economic loan of £21,750 for the erection of a girls' hostel in Queen Street, Bertrams, and £11,900 for a girls' hostel at Langlaagte North.

The inclusion of Craighall and Craighall Park in the municipal area requires a vote of £21,435 for electricity reticulation.

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