

Price ( )Nli PENNY



SLUMS . . .

SLUMS,

SLUMS,

The mean, narrow streets with their overcrowded and shabby houses. that spread like a festering sore through the heart of Cape Town and around the municipal boundaries, do not have to be there. They are not there by some law of nature, but they were built by man, and man can replace them with buildings fit for human beings to live in.

People are so used to the slums that they forget this, and look upon them as something fixed, something which has been and will be forever, like the famous Cape scenery. Yet there is a difference. Table Mountain's towering strength, the pine-clad slopes of Lion's Head, the illighty range of the twelve apostles, the sands and blue seas, \_all the beauties of Cape Town are the creation of nature and are enjoyed by rich tourists and the well-to-do. The poor have only the slums.

The men and women who keep the life of Cape Town flowing. who load and unload ships and railway trucks, who run the transport system, who keep the streets clean, who supply electricity, gas and water to the homes, who work in the citfs shops and factories-v all these have neither the leisure, the health nor the money to enjoy the natural beauties that surround them. Their lives are shut in between the dingy walls and badly kept streets that stretch from Signal Hill through District Six to XWoodstock and Salt River.

Among them are found people of all the races in South Africa, the Coloured, the African and the European. They differ in colour and creed, custom and even standard of living, but all of them must struggle to make ends meet; all suffer in health and happiness because of their poverty.

Nearly one-thn'd of Cape Town's population, numbering about 96,000 people, are crowded into four wards, Nos. 6 and 7 (Castle), 8 (Woodstock), and 9 (Salt River),. Many of them are living under conditions described by Dr. T. Shaddick Higgins, the Medical ORicer of Health, \_in a recent survey of certain areas.

He reported that more than one half of the poorer families are living in one-rooni lettings. Over 12,000 people are living more than 4 to one room.

'lihunsumls oi the tinciillgh, including Council Flats, luck baths,  
and :tdcquote sanitary fztcilitics. V  
XYm'kc-i's. lmth Iitn'uptun, Coloured and Native, live in these'  
ux'crcrmx'dcd, dilapidated thwlhngs in gurbzigc-strmm streets, because  
they cannot htitl houses elsewhere :tt i'cntals within their means.

THEY DIE

LIKE F LIES

It makes :l llllg'u (VliiifrcrciicC, whether UHL' lives in slums, or in the  
hcztutiful Villas of ()mngczicht, Suzi l'ooint, Kenilworth or Muizenberg.

111 Ix'cnihmrth, for instance, out of every 1000 people only one dies

Oi tuberculosis

111 District Six uight times us many tlic Hi this dreadful diseaSu.

Bronchitis and pneumonia cause the death Hf 4.0 out of each

thuusuml Cnhnii'utl infants, :15 ztguinst six of catch thousand white  
infants

The non-European death-rate per thousand is  
twice as high as the European.

Yet the White WUL'kel'hy position is almost cqually grim.

L(HV xx'ugcs, high rents, ()Vcix'i'mvdcd 511111555 homes. are ruining  
the health and physique of tile pumle, white and black. and leaving  
them thu YiCiilHH of (iiscztm and death.

LIFE ('3)

ON

1/5 PER DAY

On the 28111 July, 1938, tht- City Cntmcil published a Housing Report,  
which contained the results Of :l survey of ix'ards 2 to t), including the  
Central Area tmd inmdstock, This report exposes some scandalous  
facts.

In these wards, which are thickly populated by Coloured and  
Iiuropcun, it WLIS found that I4 per cent. of thc hreadwinners earn  
lcss than H) - (ten shillings) pct u'L-ck. ( H

Out of every seven wage earners, there is one who  
must clothe, feed, house and educate his family on  
ls. 5d. per day.

.Ximthci' 25 IWI' cent, (11' mic out of four, mm between l()/ - and  
- pt'l' Week

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t 3 per cunt, m' um third, cum between 30 - and 50,5- per week-

Another way of judging the economic Conditions of Cape Town is to look at the Councils experience with the fexx blocks ()1. flats which have been built under the slh-ecnllmlllc housing scheme. These flats are let at rentals from 71 () to 15, - per week, but only to people who are in regular clllplnylllellt and who earn between 30' - and (10/- per week.

In 1933 the Medical Officer of Health found that 38 per cent. of the shuncluelers-ur 0110 family out of three--Cnnl(l nut Q61 21 flat because the hrcmlwinnersl income was too low.

In H137, 8 per cent. could not afford Council letutseege two (mt of three working Class families, according to 1931 census of applicants for the cheap-letting scheme.

FIGHT

FOR

HIGHER

WAGES !

When poverty and ill-health (Inc In lack of food are so xx'itlespt'ezul during 1931 period that is considered ttprospemusf the worker has good reason to be alarmed about his future during the C(1111ing' (lepressimy HL- cannot expect anything from elllll(llyers 01' the authorities, for, in spite of all the verbal sympathy he has had from them, they have done nothing on their own initiative to better his position. '

His only remedy is to join the trade unions, and to urge trade union leaders to undertake a strong campaign for raising the wages of all sections of wage earners, whether skilled or unskilled, whether European, Coloured or Native.

In particular the (luerlllllellt must be fm'Cetl to give u lead lw putting an end to the scandalous exploitation (lf workers in the mile way and harbour services, and in other state (lepzll'tlllellts. The (lovernment, and the City Council, too, must pay 1931 living wage to all its employees.

But even higher wages will not enable the workers to get decent housing, for suitable houses (lr; not exmt 111 tape lmxn.

A BOLD

HOUSING

PLAN

At present the responsibility for SlthllleClctlrlllCe rests with the City Council. The Council has built houses for 11011eE111'011c51115 at Bok-makirie 2111(1 (lleenmre, 11ml hnnsing' schemes for 12111'()1)e8115 have

been provided by the Citizens Housing League at Koeberg and Epping Forest. But these housing schemes are so small that they scarcely touch the fringes of the problem. A great objection to them is that they are placed so far from the working centres that the tenants lose in fares whatever they may save there in rent. In addition the cost of living generally is higher in the outlying areas. The population in the crowded quarters cannot be shifted to the outskirts of the City. Workers should be rehoused within easy distance of their work. Dock workers, for instance, should be housed near the docks.

There is a minimum requirement for 2000 new houses or flats per year. In five years, with 10,000 new houses built, much overcrowding and slums would be swept away.

Blocks of flats should be planned on a grand scale similar to working class flats found in Holland, England and Soviet Russia. There is no reason why houses should not be built with plenty of space between for sun and air. There should be lawns and trees, playgrounds and sun-balconies, lifts for prams and people (if the blocks are higher than three storeys), with day-nursery schools and central heating for winter.

The question of space can be easily solved by building upwards. In this way space can be utilised to the best advantage, enabling large numbers of families to live in a minimum area.

One important condition is essential to an effective housing policy: rent must not exceed one quarter of the weekly wages earned (which is the standard laid down by the Government under the Railway Rebate Scheme for European employees).

The rent of existing Council Flats should be reduced to 5/- per week for a 2-roomed flat and 7/- per week for a three-roomed flat.

MAKE

THE

GOVERNMENT

PAY

Is this possible? Where is the money to come from? The Government must pay. The Central Housing Board, appointed by the Government, has money available to municipalities for 50m, elimination at 34/ per cent. interest. This money must be used to the full to relieve overcrowding and assist slum clearance.

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The Government must be compelled to give additional subsidies

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to enable the (,01111011 to plan on a large scale. Rents could be lowered generally by means of such measures.

CONTROL

THE

LANDLORDS

Private houses, too, must be more vigorously controlled. Only a small proportion of houses at present fall under the Rent Act. Privately owned houses should be regularly inspected and the landlords compelled to carry out necessary repairs. Many could be modernised and made comfortable and healthy, easing the present overcrowding. Every house should be placed under the control of the Rent Board, which should ensure that there is no undue profiteering or over crowding and that every house is properly habitable and sanitary.

WHY IS

IT NOT

DONE?

Now, all this is very nice and sure enough, with an ancient pressure on the Government, the money for such a plan will also be forthcoming, But why has the City Council not taken steps to put such a plan into life before? Why is the Council so slow in tackling large scale building of flats for workers? Men the special correspondent (Times, 3/8/38.)

AGAINST

EVICCTIONS

Jerry Street has been demolished for nearly two years, yet no new homes have been built in its place. In Dorp Street. Caledon Street, Wale Street and Pentz Street-all over a hundred of poor families have been evicted from their homes by the City Council and driven into the streets. The houses they formerly occupied have been pulled down to the ground. but not a single brick has been laid down to build new homes for the homeless.

Under no circumstances should the people of Cape Town allow the City Council to evict another family until it has provided alternative accommodation.

THE RICH AGAINST,

HOME

BUILDING

Why is the City Council pursuing this policy? Because the City Council is ruled by the Reform Party, which represents the interests of the middle class and not of the working classes.

The rich landlords and merchants of the city do not wish the Council to be concerned with its schemes for the construction of flats for the workers. They place every obstacle in the path of the development of the city. They do not want the Council to provide (the) housing for the poor. (The) Council is charged by the rich landlords.

SLIM PROPERTY (THE) LANDLORD A BIGGER RACKET ON HIS MONEY THAN AN ADDITIONAL STRUT BUILDING.

And so we have a vast horde of landlords, large and small, who live off the backs of the tenants, who profit from high rents and who through their influence in the City Council bar the way to the construction of new homes.

THE

MUNICIPAL

RACKET

The big landowners and the rich merchants of Cape Town run the City Council. In the last six months exposures have been made for example in connection with the Uitzendal land deal, the Wintman's Case, the Watter Bridge scandal, which shows how the Council is being run in the interests of a small section. Five Reform Party Councillors have already been counselled to resign from the Council because of illegal practices. A few PWNC want to introduce reforms and introduce graft into the giving of Council contracts, because there are few Councillors who genuinely represent the workers and the poor and who would advance a sound and sound housing policy.



CLEAN  
THE  
CITY  
COUNCIL

This is a job that all the ratepayers have to tackle, but above all it is a job for the workers. The workers are members of trade unions, as well as the 110,000 of the 110,000, 110,000 suffer from the shocking state of housing in the 110,000 class areas of Cape Town. The 110,000 of the 110,000 of the 110,000 they have the right to expect that organised workers will lead them to fight for a clean progressive Council.

TO (SET HOUSING FOR THE WORKERS THERE MUST  
BE A POLICY OF THE CITY COUNCIL FOR ALL RACES  
SEGREGATION

The capitalists raise the cry of "segregation," by which they really mean that there must be "white areas" and "black areas," 21,000 not 51,000 where white and black, through living side by side, must cover that in spite of colour differences they have the same problem to solve, and must co-operate to find a solution.

Workers of all races are asking for segregation in any of its forms, but for better houses at lower rents, 21,000 higher wages, which will allow them to live in decency and comfort, obtain a reasonable amount of pleasure, and bring up happy, healthy children. We, Communists, are justified in saying that the needs of the mass of the people in Cape Town are shamefully neglected. We denounce the system of segregation, because it will be used to divide the workers, and to brand the non-European as "inferior," while it will not make the least improvement in the conditions of the European worker.

BUILD  
THE  
COMMUNIST  
PARTY

Of course we Communists believe that lasting and permanent improvements will only be brought about by the overthrow of Imperialism, the smashing of the power of the landlords by the Workers, and the Poor Farmers, which will build Socialism. But to bring that about in our country we must have to

unite all Sections of the South African people, the workers and poor farmers and the oppressed nationalities; we shall have to organise all workers and other sections of the people; and we shall have to build a powerful Communist Party consisting of the best, most honest, most devoted and sincere fighters in the ranks of the people—a party which will lead the struggle of the poor and oppressed.

UNITY

CAN'T

DEMANDS

NOW !

But given unity in the ranks of the Cape Town workers, our City could be rebuilt now!

In Cape Town a housing programme must be started for the working population. Houses can and will be built, if the workers put their representatives into the City Council. The fight for better and cheaper housing is a fight for all workers, European, African and Coloured.

Not only have the workers a right, but it is their duty to make these demands, and they must win them if they are to preserve their own lives and those of their families.

PASS THIS RESOLUTION ON TO OTHERS AFTER YOU HAVE

READ IT.



Join the Communist Party of South Africa, the party  
which leads the struggles of all poor and oppressed people!  
Fill in the Form below and post it to :-

The District Secretary, .

Communist Party of S.A.,

P.O. Box 1176, Cape Town.

I WISH TO JOIN THE COMMUNIST  
PARTY OF SOUTH AFRICA.

Name .....

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