The Housing Committee Report

Report of City Manager's Advisory Committee on Housing in Rochester

To City Manager Harold W. Baker, and
Council of the City of Rochester:

The committee appointed by the City Manager to consider housing conditions in the city of Rochester respectfully presents the following report to the City Manager and to the City Council.

The committee was appointed at the suggestion of the Council of Social Agencies, whose staff, in the course of their work, had become aware of conditions which indicated the existence of serious housing problems in the city. Citizen interest in the matter of housing has also been aroused by publicity in relation to the enactment of the Wagner-Steagall Housing Law in August, 1937, known as the "U. S. Housing Act of 1937," which established the United States Housing Authority, and made federal funds available to municipal housing authorities for use in building low-rent housing for people of low incomes.

On March 2, 1938, the City Manager announced the appointment of a committee of eight persons consisting of: Arthur M. Lowenthal, manufacturer and former head of the County Emergency Work Bureau; Mr. Gerald M. Lambert, diocesan director of Catholic Charities in Rochester; Carl S. Hallauer, civic leader and editorial board member of the "Voice"; and representative of the Council of Social Agencies; Andrew S. Moodie, secretary of the Housing Committee of the Rochester Bureau of Municipal Research; and Charles W. Biddle, realtor; and chairman of the committee being the former head of the County Emergency Work Bureau of the city of Rochester, and representing the Negro population, and Arthur W. White, business manager of the Carpenters District Council.

On March 7, 1938, the committee held its first meeting in the office of the city manager who was present. Mayor Lester B. Rapp was present as a member ex-officio. Mr. Leonard W. Jones, president of the League of Women Voters; Howard W. Cline, editor of "The Voice"; and representing the Negro population; and Arthur W. White, business manager of the Carpenters District Council. On March 7, 1938, the committee held its first meeting in the office of the city manager who was present. Mayor Lester B. Rapp was present as a member ex-officio. Mr. Leonard W. Jones, president of the League of Women Voters; Howard W. Cline, editor of "The Voice"; and representing the Negro population; and Arthur W. White, business manager of the Carpenters District Council. On March 7, 1938, the committee held its first meeting in the office of the city manager who was present. Mayor Lester B. Rapp was present as a member ex-officio. Mr. Leonard W. Jones, president of the League of Women Voters; Howard W. Cline, editor of "The Voice"; and representing the Negro population; and Arthur W. White, business manager of the Carpenters District Council.

At the second meeting on March 15, 1938, the request of the committee, Mr. Oscar W. Knopt, secretary of the Council of Social Agencies, explained the housing report made for the Council of Social Agencies in 1937. It was agreed that this report could be considered only as a guide or indicator for a more thorough study. A sub-committee composed of Messrs. Lowenthal, Doane, Hallauer, Slade and Swan was appointed by the chairman, with the city manager serving ex-officio to make recommendations as to the scope of the proposed survey of housing conditions in the city. The sub-committee called upon Dr. C. Luther Fry of the University of Rochester and W. Earl Weller, director of the Rochester Bureau of Municipal Research, to aid them in their considerations. The sudden death of Dr. Fry, only a few weeks later, was an irreparable loss to this committee as well as to the community.

The Housing Survey

A report made to the sub-committee and later to the whole advisory committee by Mr. Swan and Mr. Weller, following a study by them of the Syracuse housing program, recommended an adequate survey to determine the extent and distribution of sub-standard dwellings in Rochester for the purposes of determining the nature of a popular housing program. This report also recommended that the area for study should be determined by the results of a recent census tract study made by Dr. Fry and the Department of Sociology of the University of Rochester. On the basis of eleven sociological indicators considered most important, such as the death rate, number of new tuberculosis cases, number of cases under care of the public health nursing association, and the density of population, five census tracts were shown to be most likely to contain sub-standard housing and therefore to be the most appropriate fields for an intensive survey. Later another census tract was added, making six in all. A survey with the use of WPA funds was recommended. This report was submitted to the advisory committee on April 13, 1938.

The report of this sub-committee was accepted by the committee, and the recommendations were transmitted by the City Manager to the Council, which approved them, and authorized the setting up of a WPA project to carry on the survey. After numerous conferences between the City Manager and WPA officials in Albany and Washington it was found that in order to meet regulations of the WPA and USHA, a city-wide real property survey was required. A grant of $120,276.80 was made for this purpose with the city contributing $12,000.00. The Rochester Bureau of Municipal Research was requested to plan and supervise the work of this city-wide survey and Harold S. Rand was selected by the Bureau as supervisor. The committee decided, however, that it would still be worth while to make an intensive survey of the census tracts designated for special study in the report submitted by Mr. Swan and Mr. Weller for which city employees only would be used. The cost of the latter survey was borne by the WPA project, the actual cost being approximately $8,500.

The conclusions of this committee are based entirely upon the findings resulting from the intensive survey of the six census tracts mentioned and not upon the city-wide survey.

The intensive survey of the six census tracts was begun on September 27, 1938. The city-wide survey began on October 6th, 1938. The field work on the special areas was concluded by December 1, 1938. The committee held no meetings between April 13, 1938, when the recommendations of the sub-committee were adopted, and February 15th, 1939, when the first report of the special survey was presented. The committee decided to receive the report of each census tract as soon as completed rather than to await the completion of reports of all six tracts and to release each report to the public accordingly. From Feb. 16, 1939, to the date of this report the committee has held twelve sessions and two sub-committees have held several sessions.

The Rating Scale

In preparing the rating it was found that no rating scale for tabulating the findings of housing surveys had been approved by the federal or state housing agencies. Therefore Mr. Weller and others collaborated. Continued next issue
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The Voice is not responsible for articles appearing in the columns other than its editorial

The Pulse of this Community!

(EDITORIAL — H. W. C.)

Word has been received that Miss Norinne Anderson has been accepted at the Brockport Normal as a student. This piece of interesting news should bring joy to the hearts of all broad-minded people—particularly Negroes.

The work of the New York State Temporary Commission is now leading from all over the State and we, here, should rejoice in the part we as a people have played in aiding this Commission last January.

The aim or purpose of education is, always has been, and will ever be, preparation for complete living; that is, to be useful in one's day and generation and live happily. To secure this requires the acquisition of knowledge found in two fields of human endeavor. First, man and his experiences and achievements and external nature; second, training to intelligent and productive activity is the use of this knowledge and the proper enjoyment of it.

Our wish for Miss Anderson is true success in her chosen field—a life of service.

The Vacation Bible School

The Community Vacation Bible School which has operated under the direction of Rev. O. E. Downer, pastor of the Church of God on Ormond Street, and several other persons from the Federation of Churches and the National Youth Administration of which Miss Elizabeth Langford is Supervisor, deserve the recognition of the entire community at large.

The total enrollment represented 70 pupils, an imposing figure, we must admit. They enjoyed the spiritual side, the instructive and educational side and the recreational side of this great work for over three weeks under the guidance of competent teachers.

Now the question arises, where should these children be playing in the community, particularly in the 7th Ward? There is no playground and few facilities for our group other than the Saint Peter Claver House which should be used more by the parents and children of that community.

We wish to commend Rev. Downer, Rev. B. J. Brown, Mr. Gordon, Miss Lila Thorne of N. Y. A., Mr. Kenneth Berry, Mrs. Pearl Brown, Mr. Black of Harrison Street, and several other persons from the Federation of Churches.

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We Suggested COTTAGE PUDDING...

A YOUNG WIFE called us at 4:30 in the afternoon.

"The boss was coming to dinner and her cake had broken apart. What should she do?"

We suggested she cut the broken layers into squares and serve as cottage pudding with lemon sauce. The boss loved it.

Providing practical tips is one way to help make homemaking — the most important job in the world — easier and pleasanter. Another is keeping you posted on all the latest home-making conveniences.

Today, any woman who wastes time watching an oven or waiting for water to heat is doing what gas will do automatic-
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Rally Sunday at the Munford 2d Baptist

Rev. H. Curry of Texas, the new pastor of the Munford Second Baptist Church, has been at his post for several weeks. This Fall he will enter the Rochester Colored Divinity School, and continue his pastorate at Munford.

On Sunday, July 30th, the Annual Rally Day was observed at the church with a great speaker from Buffalo, N. Y. at the afternoon services. This year the treasury reported that over $250.00 has been raised, which was the second rally held this year.

A large audience was present coming from Rochester and the surrounding towns.

Obituaries

The late Mrs. Effie Dixon of 57 Ford Street, passed away suddenly at her home on Sunday, July 16th.

Funeral services were held on Monday, July 17th at 2:30 at the Rev. James E. Rose, pastor of the Mt. Olivet Baptist Church officiated. She leaves to mourn her loss her husband, Paul Dixon.

On Friday, July 28th, Mr. Addison Wormely, 70 years old, of 20 East Avenue, passed away peacefully in the Strong Memorial Hospital.

He leaves to mourn his loss two sons, Leo and George; four daughters, Myra and Minnie Wormely, Mrs. Laura Alexander and Mrs. Mary Johnson, seven grandchildren, three sisters, Mrs. Minnie Smith, Mrs. Mary Merton, Mrs. Ada Phillips, two brothers, Robert Johnson and Sonny Johnson, all of this city.

Funeral services were held on Monday last from the New Holts O. M. E. Church, with the Rev. Murphy Grier officiating. Interment in the family plot at Fowler's, New York.

Funeral services were under the direction of the Latimer Funeral Home.

Classified Want Ads...

For Rent — Twofamily apartment house; family must be acquainted with one another or willing to work out problem of central heating. 150.00 per month. Apply in person at the Voice office.

For Rent — A very fine four-room and bath apartment with the balance of the apartment occupied by one small family. Tenement located near bus line. The rental is $26.00 per month. The apartment is heated by separate hot water heater. This is a real bargain — don't delay. Apply in person at the Voice newspaper office from 6 to 7 p.m. and 8:30 to 9 p.m., or call Slade Realty, Main 7758.

For Rent — Two apartments — newly papered and painted, furnish own heat, centrally located, near Clarissa St. Rent reasonable. — Please apply in person at the Voice office — daily from 6 to 8 p.m.

For Rent — Comfortable room for working couple or one single near bus line. Geneso 4796 W.

Such is Life!

Man comes into the world without his consent and leaves it against his will. When he is little the big girls kiss him and when he is big the little girls kiss him. If he makes a lot of money, he is discontent; if he makes a lot of money, he is discontent. If he needs credit, he can't get it. If he needs credit, he can't get it. If he is prosperous, everyone wants to do something for him. If he is religious, he is a hypocrite; if he don't go to the temple he is a hard-hearted sinner. If he gives to charity, it is for show; if he doesn't, he is a stingy cuss. If he is affectionate, he is a soft specimen; if he doesn't care for his wife he is cold-hearted. If he is young, there was a great future before him; if he is old, a ripe age, he missed his calling. If he saves his money, he is a tight wad; if he spends it, he has no foresight. If he is active in politics it is for graft; if he is not interested in politics, he is no good to his country. If he has money, he is a grafter; if he hasn't, no good to his country.

It's all in the way you look at it!