FOREDWORD

Five years ago, a Negro publication called THE VOICE came into being in Rochester with the idea of uplifting the Negro masses in every phase of community life, while also creating a strong desire for a better understanding between all races.

By carriers and representatives into from 700 to 800 homes weekly. This means of contact reached a mutual interest and stimulated discussion.

Improving housing for our group was and is Point 7 in THE VOICE platform, found on Page 2 of that publication. It was realized that Rochester, noted for its liberality, was not doing its part being in Rochester with the idea of homes. THE VOICE found of that publication. It was realized that Rochester, noted for its liberality, was not doing its part.

The VOICE platform, found on Page 2 of that publication. It was realized that Rochester, noted for its liberality, was not doing its part.

Housing became a live subject.

An acute shortage in one section, housing for Negro people is the way of aid to provide comfortable and sanitary homes. THE VOICE found its way by carriers and representatives into from 700 to 800 homes weekly. This means of contact created a mutual interest and stimulated discussion. Housing becomes a live subject.

Heating homes, a live subject.

Query after query as to what could be done about their plight was ever answered. Many of the homes, location and social conditions were made. There followed points were proved definitely by this survey: ONE, that there is an acute shortage in one section, along with bad homes; and TWO, that an overwhelming number of unfit homes were occupied by the Negro people at excessive rents. It was found that a serious problem exists within a minority, low income group, which must eventually affect the majority. The deplorable situation now facing the Negro people in regard to housing is far-reaching. For its amelioration, cooperation of city, state and national government is required, as in the Housing Act of 1938, based on the Wagner-Steagall Law.

City Manager Baker has received a copy of our original survey, of which the following is a revised and abbreviated edition. We are glad to report that the Citizens' Committee on Housing accepted the entire survey for further study.

The Barriers of Discrimination

The tenure where he now lives, there are numerous houses and apartments he cannot rent, because certain big real estate agencies set the example of refusing to rent to Negroes. Often their houses remain empty for months, even years, if while tenants don't apply.

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Rochester, N. Y.
THE FREDERICK DOUGLASS VOICE DEC. 20, 1954

Housing of Negro Families

(Continued from Page 1)

In the Seventeenth Ward, a great number of Negro families are housed in unsafe and unsanitary apartments rented to them by Negro landlords. The vast majority of these landlords are unable to provide a better housing situation because they are unable to pay the high rents demanded by the Negro families. Yet rents of $2.75, $4.00, $5.00, and $6.00 are paid weekly. We have come to the conclusion that the Negro families are not better off in these unsafe and unsanitary houses without safe- guards, both in depression and in prosperity times. In the Seventeenth Ward, a great number of Negro families are housed in unsafe and unsanitary apartments rented to them by Negro landlords. The vast majority of these landlords are unable to provide a better housing situation because they are unable to pay the high rents demanded by the Negro families. Yet rents of $2.75, $4.00, $5.00, and $6.00 are paid weekly. We have come to the conclusion that the Negro families are not better off in these unsafe and unsanitary houses without safe-}

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Housing of Negro Families

Continued from Page 2

Negro people are also members of the great human family. We also wish to point out that whenever a Negro family has been allowed to move into and live in a so-called exclusive section of the city, they have proved to be congenial, upright, clean, and worthy neighbors and citizens. It is unfortunate that the outspoken color prejudice must always enter into the picture and even go so far as to deny a humble people the God-given right to dwell in a home of their own.

Housing, an immediate problem

With the conclusion in March, 1938, of the Negro Housing survey conducted by THE VOICE, the news was broadcast in Rochester that both national and state governments are extending their laws for slum clearance, improved and low-rent housing—enforcement of the multiple-rental law and for special financial aid to the homeowners and small landlords. Of special interest is the establishment of the United States Housing Authority through the recent Wagner-Steagall Law. Half a billion dollars is now available. More is forthcoming to replace blighted areas or slum-dwelling with low-rent housing.

THE VOICE supports the plan for a broader survey than its editors were able to make. Such a survey should be carried through speedily so that the people’s suffering from unsafe and unsanitary housing can be alleviated by making use of the federal, government’s large-scale, low-rent housing program as specified in the Housing Act of 1938.

THIRD WARD

Survey covered 49 families involving 87 persons:

Without bath—9

Pernials—9

Gas—9

Leak in roof—6

Broken sewer pipes—7

Stairs—33

Electric—12

Bathrooms—25

Damp Cellar—18

Lamps—2

One case of a main living in a bar in the rear of 141 Adams St.

FIRST WARD

Survey covered 8 apartments involving 13 persons:

2 public toilets in hall used by 3 persons. Only 1 apartment with toilet and bath. One public shower in hall used by 5 persons in 5 apartments. Before it is placed in entering hallway. Ventilation—poor in rear apartments.

ELEVENTH WARD

Survey covered 15 families involving 31 persons:

Dark Rooms—9

Without bath—9

Stairs—5

Pernials—8

Trap door in cellar—3

Electric—16

Leak in ceiling—4

Leak in roof—2

Gas—2

Lamps—2

Bathrooms—8

Damp cellar—2

Sewer pipe broken—1

Outside cellar door

A family of six in 6 rooms, no baths, the toilet is in cellar, which is wet and damp. The child had scurvy later two months ago, another had a defective eye condition.

SEVENTH WARD

Survey covered 8 families involving 16 persons:

Dark Rooms—15

Without bath—15

Stairs—77

Bathrooms—12

Trap door to cellar—1

(Continued on Page 4)
LeROY, NEW YORK

Housing of Negro Families

Continued from Page 3

ECHTH WARD—Survey covered 10 families involving 16 persons:

- Dark rooms: 7
- Surveys: 7
- Traps down to cellar: 6
- Elevators: 6
- Gas: 6
- Latrines: 6
- Bathtubs: 6
- Latrine cellars: 6
- Leaks in roof: 6
- No cellar: 6
- Sewer pipes broken: 6
- Bath tubs out of order: 6
- Trusses in hallway: 6
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THE FREDERICK DOUGLASS VOICE DEC. 20, 1954

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