

The Church as Landlord— Owns "Rats and Cats Row"

St. Philips Church Exploits Negro Tenants in Entire Block on West 135th Street

By SOL AUERBACH.

VIII.

(This is the eighth of a series of articles appearing exclusively in the Daily Worker, exposing the conditions under which workers are forced to live. The first six articles, which appeared last week, described the results of an investigation in the tenements of Harlem. Yesterday, Richard B. Moore, president of the Harlem Tenants League, told of its program. Today, the exposure of the conditions in Harlem is continued.)

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WE have shown that landlords, supported by legislature and courts, rob the tenants to the extreme for lodgings which are not fit to live in, intimidate them and throw them out on the street.

E. A. Johnson, the politician who claims to represent the Negroes of Harlem, robbed Negro workers in his block of tenements on Seventh Ave.

There are other landlords in Harlem besides white and Negro capitalists and politicians.

The church is a large landlord in Harlem.

Money-Making Pulpit.

But read along and you will learn that the church, using its creed as a cloak to hide its servieny to landlord, legislature and court, takes no little hand in exploiting the Harlem tenants.

The clergy and other "respectable citizens" of Harlem have just given their support to this same E. A. Johnson, the robber-landlord of Seventh Avenue, as the republican candidate to fill the seat in Congress left vacant by the death of Congressman Weller.

The pulpit is a good money-making proposition in more ways than one.

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"Liberal" Tenements.

St. Philip's Church, under the actual supervision of Shelton H. Bishop, who calls himself a "liberal," owns the block of tenements on the odd side of West 135th Street, between Lenox and Seventh Avenues.

The Reverend Bishop lives in a roomy, well kept building, with con-

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Addressers Wanted in Strike Relief Drive

Volunteers to address envelopes for the textile relief drive should report at the Workers International Relief, Room 604, One Union Square.

From each according to his capacity, to each according to his needs.—Marx.

MAY DAY

THE following is a partial list arranged by the Communist Party; various districts are urged to send cities, halls, and speakers of their M

New York, May 1, Coliseum, E

Pittsburgh, May 1, 7:30 p. m.,

New Bedford, May 1, Bristol

Newark, May 1, 93 Mercer St.

Union City, May 1, 418 21st St.

Jersey City, May 1, 116 Mercer

New Brunswick, May 1, 11 Plu

Perth Amboy, May 1, Workers

Elizabeth, May 1.

Yonkers, May 5, Cooperative C

Detroit, May 1, 7:30 p. m., Da

Forest. Speakers: N. H. Tallentire

Cleveland, May 1, 7:30 p. m., P

Harlem Church Exploits Its Congregation in Tenements

(Continued from Page One)

cert hall and library. He has a cook, he has servants. The church, which also owns this property, keeps it in first class condition.

But come along to this row of six-story tenements, where workers live, some of whom listen to their landlord's sermons on Sundays, and see if the church is a softer landlord than the capitalist and the politician.

Rats and Cats.

Rats, rats, rats, rats almost as big as cats, and cats bigger than usual cats, is the keynote of this block. Rats because the building is in a state of decay, because the walls are rotten from defective plumbing, because ceilings fall and plaster is loose, because there is no dumbwaiter service, because the floors are coming apart, because the apartments have not been renovated for years.

Cats, big and bulky from much rat-meat, because traps don't catch the rats fast enough and cats are more reliable.

You can call this block belonging to St. Philip's Church "Rats and Cats Row."

A Disappointed Cat.

"Rats ran me out of here one night," said A. Fuller, living on the fourth floor at 111, "so I went out and got myself a cat. It used to be so before I got my cat that when you would be sitting here in this room you could see the rats chasing across the hall out there."

As he spoke, his fat black cat, suddenly dashed across the room and headed down the hall. The rat must have escaped for the cat looked disappointed when it came back.

"We once caught 30 rats at one time in a large cage in the hall," said Mrs. Williams, living at 125. "The rats terrorize you here. I once opened that dumbwaiter door and saw a rat on the rope staring at me."

Dumbwaiter Stench.

That is enough to give you an idea of the condition of this property owned by the church. The dumbwaiter has not worked for six years, the bells have been useless for even a longer time, garbage must be thrown down the dumbwaiter shaft-way.

When you open the door to the dumbwaiter in "Rats and Cats Row"

by all means keep your nose well covered. The garbage is piled as high as the second and third stories before it is removed. In the summer time it is almost unbearable.

More Money for Church.

St. Philip's as landlord will not disappoint you. You will find everything to be expected from a landlord. No renovations have been made since 1925, and none will be made unless the tenants agree to pay a rent raise.

The rents for old tenants are from \$32 to \$35 for four rooms, which are poorly ventilated, dilapidated, gas-lighted, inadequately heated and swarming with rats.

The tenants have been raised over the rent they originally paid and further raises are now being demanded. St. Philip's Church will no doubt be respectable and decorous enough to wait until May 31st when the Emergency Rent Laws expire, to pull over a wholesale rent-raise.

It also demands its rent on time. Fuller relates how when his rent was three days late the church's lawyer was sent to collect it.

The Money-Box.

ST. PHILIP'S, like all other churches of all other denominations, preaches "good-will among men" and "peace on earth." It preaches this creed to workers who it exploits in its own tenements.

The pulpit from which the Rev'd Bishop and the older Bishop talks is nothing but a money box in which is collected the coins, sweated out and lived out by the tenants on "Rats and Cats Row."

The landlord, you see, can be a minister, as well as a legislature and a politician.

Tomorrow we will take you along to talk to Father Bishop himself and see what he has to say about the church as landlord.

The Daily Worker has already received a number of letters from tenants in Harlem describing the conditions of their apartments and wholesale robbery. The letters are being published daily. Tenants are invited to write in freely to the Daily Worker.