

Landlords Make Workers Pay Because of Their Dark Skins

Foster Racial Prejudice to Better Exploit Cubans, Porto Ricans and Negroes

(This is the Fourteenth of a series of articles appearing exclusively in the Daily Worker exposing the conditions under which workers are forced to live. Previous articles described conditions in Negro Harlem. The present article continues the exposure of conditions in Lower Harlem, where many Latin-American workers live.)

By SOL AUERBACH

XIV.

YOU cannot definitely set off Lower Harlem as a section exclusively inhabited by Latin-Americans. From 100th Street up as far as 115th, from First Avenue to Seventh Avenue, you will find the homes of many Latin-American workers. You will also find the homes of many Negro, Italian, Jewish and East Indian workers.

HOUSE REJECTS FARM "CO-OPS"

WASHINGTON, April 24.—Administration forces defeated, with machine-like precision, proposed amendments to the administration farm bill as voting started in the House today.

The first four amendments offered by democrats and opponents of the measure were shouted down viva voce. One test vote showed 101 to 31 against the Larsen amendment of breaking his campaign pledges to the farmers.

Throughout the debate the congressmen showed a strong disinclination for record votes. All concerned know that the farm bill under discussion is a fraud against the farmers, and a breach of all promises for farm relief made by

It is a section in which, speaking in the terms of the artificial barriers set up by landlords, workers of all races have been allowed to mingle, to the advantage of the landlord, before the city plunges into the purely white belt to the south.

Baseball Here, Too!

Walk thru the east side of this section and you will see the children of many nationalities and races crowded out of their dingy and small apartments, scampering over the streets in search for sunlight and play. It is spring and the baseball season is on. Porto Rican, Cuban, Negro, East Indian, Barbadoes, St. Thomas, Philippine, Jewish, and Italian children are swinging at balls with chopped-off broomsticks.

You can always tell the difference between a poor workingclass district and a more well-to-do section by the games of the children alone, even if you do not notice the house-fronts. In some sections of the city children

(Continued on Page Two)

DARK SKIN MEANS HIGH RENTS FOR MANY WORKERS

Latin Americans, Too, Suffer Barriers

(Continued from Page One)

play with regular baseball bats, but here they cannot get even the nickel or dime necessary for a cheap bat.

* * *

Into Darkness.

LEAVE the sunlight—what there is of it permitted thru the elevator tracks on Third Avenue—alive with dust and grime, and enter one of the tenements between 102nd and 103rd Street. Notice that the bells are not working, although there are mail-boxes which have been put up by the tenants themselves. Climb thru this six story building, with no lights burning in the halls, and grope your way from door to door of the 39 flats.

You will have a good reception, no matter whether it be Latin-American, Negro or Italian who opens the door for you and asks you to come in. They are all glad to speak to you, once you convince them that you are just one of them.

A Cracking Whip.

This particular tenement, No. 1869, is a little more "fortunate" than the others in the neighborhood in having a landlord who would rather collect the rent in installments than dispossess the tenants. He has a good reason for this. He gets his money and at the same time he has a whip to crush over the heads of the tenants. For the tenants will not kick about falling ceilings, lack of water supply, rats and vermin, no garbage collection.

No sooner does a tenant say: "Why don't you fix the sink?" when the agent for the landlord, will hold out his hand and say:

"Have you got your rent?"

Rent or no rent, improvements are not forthcoming.

Pay for Color.

The system of rent raising is not as vicious here as in Upper Harlem, altho a colored worker is made to pay for the color of his skin in higher rents than those paid by white tenants in the same building. A Cuban family pays \$25 for four rooms on the fourth floor, a Negro family pays \$23 for 3 rooms on the third floor, another Negro family pay \$27 for three rooms on the fourth floor, a Porto Rican family pays \$26 for 4 rooms on the fifth floor, a Negro family pays \$20 for 3 rooms on the fifth floor, an American family pays \$15 for 3 rooms on the third floor, and so on.

The discrimination against Negro and Latin-American families is very evident, and is keenly felt by the tenants. A Negro, a lather living here knows that he is paying five more dollars for his flat than his next door neighbor, a Jew, is paying for his. Mrs. Verona knows that she is paying \$10 more for the same three rooms than the family below her is paying.

That is a part of the landlord's plan. He exploits the colored workers to the limit and makes them feel that he is doing them a favor by letting them remain in a mixed house.

Intimidation.

"If only we could all get together," said the Negro lather. "We get used to this discrimination. We look for it. When I ask the lady next door to lend me her rent receipt so that I can go to the agent and show him that I am paying more, she is afraid to give it to me. She may be thrown out. When I talk to the tenants about starting something they want me to start it. But I have only been here a year, and I haven't been working for weeks. The landlord didn't throw me out when I couldn't pay my rent and waited a few weeks for it. If I started anything now, out I go."

That is race prejudice in dollars and cents, the only terms in which the landlords think. They terrorize and intimidate the tenants, throw up walls of prejudice, in order to have a better hold on them. The dispossession of one Negro or Latin-American family in the tenement is enough to intimidate the others into submission.

* * *

Whitewash.

THE landlord had the janitor whitewash the interior of the dumbwaiters when a violation had been reported. The dumbwaiters had not been working for years. The doors were nailed up. The tenants were forced to take their own garbage and ashes from the coal stoves down to the court and dump it into the cans.

Many of them throw it out of the windows into the small court in the center of the building because there is no provision made for its removal. The children, who do most of the housework here — for both father and mother are at work—cannot help but drop the slop on the staircase and halls while carrying it down.

After the tenant inspector came and looked at the whitewash, the landlord had the janitor nail up the doors to the dumbwaiter shaft again.

* * *

Continue to follow the Daily Worker in its exposure of housing conditions thruout the city.

Tenants are invited to write letters to the Daily Worker about their apartments.