

A CASE STUDY

Thesis for the Degree of M. A.  
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY  
William Douglas Fromm  
1960





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### PROCESS IN URBAN RENEWAL:

By

Submitted to the College of Science and Arts of  
Michigan State University of Agriculture and  
Applied Science in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the  
degree of

Department of Sociology and Anthropology

**Approved**



William D. Fromm

# ABSTRACT

An important concern of urban planners today is the relocation of urban renewal site residents. A stipulation of the federal government states that before granting monies to cities for renewal purposes, the municipality will provide for the relocation of site residents in units which are "decent, safe and sanitary." This study is concerned with one such relocation program in the city of Detroit, Michigan.

It was the intent of this study to determine whether displaced families relocated in housing better than that which they left behind or whether they simply moved into other slum housing; whether relocation occurred in such a way as not to disturb the prevailing ecological structure of the city or whether relocatees settled randomly throughout the metropolitan area, and also to determine if the Relocation Agency of the City of Detroit, whose job it is to aid displaced persons in finding other units in which to live, was fulfilling that function.

Data from the files of the Detroit Relocation Agency were used in the testing of the hypotheses suggested in this thesis. An analysis of these data revealed that relocated families did not substantially better their housing and that relocation took place in such a way as not to disturb existing ecological patterns. It was also discovered that the Relocation Agency was not performing the function it was created for, that of assisting families to

## Abstract

William D. Fromm

relocate, but merely acting as a stimulus in clearing the sites for redevelopment.

A sociological study such as this can be undertaken to determine the unplanned consequences of our planning policies. In so doing, it can provide a basis for a more sophisticated inclusion of social variables in planned social change, and a more rational basis for the development of sociologically validated action models.

A SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF THE RELOCATION  
PROCESS IN URBAN RENEWAL:  
A CASE STUDY

By  
WILLIAM DOUGLAS FROMM

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## CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

This thesis is a study in urbanism, but more specifically, a study of the work of community practitioners, notably the city planners and other professionals associated with the improvement of the urban environment. Recently, sociologists have also become involved in these professional attempts to redesign and replan the city, usually by assisting the citizen participation phase of urban renewal.<sup>1</sup>

It should be noted here that these studies are intended to promote urban renewal, from the professional's standpoint; however, they are not studies of the project itself, such as the assessment of its consequences, its values or its results. This thesis does study the consequences of such applied programs, specifically, the relocation phase which is extremely important. Resettling of the site residents must be accomplished by the locality as one of the requirements set forth by the federal government before the granting of monies for renewal to the cities.

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<sup>1</sup>Herbert A. Thelen, "Communication Among Neighbors Combats Urban Blight," Etc., A Review of General Semantics (Autumn, 1953); Herbert A. Thelen, "Social Processes versus Community Deterioration"; Group Psychotherapy, Vol. LV, No. 3 (December, 1951); Herbert A. Thelen, Dynamics of Groups at Work (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1954); Herbert A. Thelen and Bettie Belk Sarchet, Neighbors In Action, Human Dynamics Laboratory (University of Chicago, 1954); William C. Loring, Jr., Frank L. Sweetser, and Charles F. Ernst, Community Organization for Citizen Participation in Urban Renewal, Housing Association of Metropolitan Boston (Boston, Massachusetts, 1957).

Urban sociologists concern themselves, among other things, with the blight which is affecting our cities, especially in their central cores, which is often a factor in the tremendous flight to the suburbs and outer areas. They are concerned with the characteristics of the inner areas of the cities . . . of the low income people, the minorities, the transiency, the high crime rates and high costs of governmental services to these areas. Sociologists and urban planners alike are concerned with slums and the effect these "sore spots" have on the entire city.

### The Urban Slum

The metropolitan areas of North America, and more specifically, of the United States, are growing rapidly. One of the consequences of this rapid growth is the ever increasing spread of slums. As the city expands outward from its center, the results of several waves of invasion and succession are seen in the movement of higher status residence and associated commercial services to the newer areas beyond the central cores. As the inner area is abandoned for "greener grass" further out, people of lower status move in to occupy the older section.

For a definition of a slum, the author quotes from the "Report on Urban Land Policies of the United Nations." A slum has been defined as:

. . . a building, group of buildings, or area characterized by over-crowding, deterioration, unsanitary conditions or absence of facilities or amenities which, because of these conditions or any of them, endanger the health, safety or



morals of its inhabitants or the community.<sup>2</sup>

Ecologically speaking, the slum may be an area of apparently static character, surrounded by areas in the process of change. Or, in time, it may be a habitation area in an interim position between a former "better" use and a coming new use of the space.

Nels Anderson enumerates some of the characteristics of slums:<sup>3</sup>

1. Appearance. This may be called a universal mark of the slum; its aspect of neglect and disorder with respect to buildings, yards, and streets. The appearance is generally one of structural over-age and decline.
2. Economic Status. Generally a slum is inhabited by people of the lowest income, although there may be occasional buildings of equally run-down appearance inhabited by families that are not so poor. In general, however, the slum is a poverty area.
3. Overcrowding. We may find that the space is overcrowded with buildings or the buildings may be overcrowded with people, or both. If the slum is "retreating" many buildings may have declined until they are unsafe for habitation, but there may be overcrowding in the buildings still occupied. The uninhabited space may then be occupied

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<sup>2</sup>Urban Land Policies, UN Secretariat, Document ST/SCA/9 (New York, April, 1952), p. 200.

<sup>3</sup>Nels Anderson, The Urban Community (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1959), p. 191.

by such unwelcome occupants as junkyards.

4. Population. In a slum of heterogeneous occupancy, many of the inhabitants there are persons not welcome in other residential areas, or they cannot afford to live elsewhere. Thus, it may be a refuge area for the aged, the chronically sick, the homeless, and the socially maladjusted. But such "odds and ends" may not be welcome even in some slums where a "sense of community" exists. If the slum population is racial or cultural, it may have a degree of social organization. It is a poverty area, slumlike in appearance.
5. Health and Sanitation. For understandable reasons, when compared with other areas of residence, the slum is characterized by low standards of sanitation. The slum is often most neglected by the public services for sanitation. For mixed reasons, it may also be an area of high sickness and death rates.
6. Morals. The slum may be an area of delinquency, crime, and vice, but this is more likely to be true of the socially disorganized slum. While such a slum may not be the habitat of "successful" criminals, it may be the habitat of marginal types or the hiding place of fugitive criminals. Vice may be found in the slum, but it is, by no means, confined to the slums.
7. Way of Life. Slums differ widely with respect to the social organization of their inhabitants. They range from the slum in which the inhabitants are strangers to one another, and

wish to be; to the family slum in which there is wide acquaintance between the inhabitants. Slums inhabited by immigrant groups may have a firm social organization.

8. Social Isolation. While every residential area within the modern city tends to be socially isolated from others, partly by choice and partly by location, the slum is especially so. It is the area of lowest status and this is known to slum dwellers. Their chief link with the rest of the community is their identification with the labor market, but there may be an additional link through politics. Slum dwellers function equally with others as citizens and as they are able to identify themselves with political groups.
9. Mobility. The slum is usually an area of high residential mobility, but a family-occupied slum may have a low rate of residential mobility. The high mobility of slum inhabitants is more true of American than European cities. Perhaps the most mobile is the slum occupied mainly by homeless males, especially itinerant workers.
10. Slum Permanency. In the rapidly growing American city some areas once occupied by slums are later occupied for other purposes. The "removed" slum emerges elsewhere, perhaps to be replaced still later by another occupancy. These shifts may be in response to related changes due to urban growth.

### The Ecology of Slums

By examining two theories of urban growth, notably those of Ernest Burgess<sup>4</sup> and Homer Hoyt,<sup>5</sup> one begins to see more clearly how ecological explanations of city expansion clarify the development of slum areas.

Developed in the early twenties to explain the ecological processes in the city, Burgess's theory conceived the city as a series of five concentric zones. At the core is his "loop" district with its shopping areas, its theater districts, its hotels, its office buildings, and the other businesses which seek a central location. In small communities these business functions intermingle; in the large cities they form more or less distinct subdistricts.

Next to the "loop" and extending out into the next zone are the city's commercial functions. In this area are found the market districts and the older wholesale districts and warehouses. Cutting across this and the remainder of outer zones along the railroad rights of way and forming long wedge-like areas are the bigger industrial sections of the city.

The second zone which Burgess describes, is called the "zone of transition." It is identified by the variety and changing character of uses. This is the area where the residential areas commence. In some sections, there are extremely old homes, in others,

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<sup>4</sup>Ernest W. Burgess, "The Growth of the City," in R. E. Park et al. (eds.), The City (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1925).

<sup>5</sup>Homer Hoyt, The Structure and Growth of Residential Neighborhoods in American Cities, Federal Housing Administration (Washington, D.C., 1939).

large old apartment houses. Some sections are characterized by rooming and tenement houses. The second zone blends into the third consisting mostly of working men's homes, factory workers, etc.

Burgess's fourth zone is where the white-collar workers and middle class families reside. He calls his fifth ring, the commuter's zone. This is where the suburban communities are found, the upper and middle income groups.

As growth proceeds, each zone of the diagram tends to invade the next outer zone following what the human ecologist refers to as "invasion-succession."<sup>6</sup> Figure 1 briefly describes the process.

A decade later, Homer Hoyt's study of residential areas in the United States provided a new perspective on the patterning of land uses and led to a theoretical explanation of residential land uses in terms of wedge-shaped sectors radial to the city's center along established lines of transportation. The sector theory thus provides a more detailed explanation of residential patterns of land use than set forth in the concentric zone theory. Hoyt's explanation holds that the different income classes of a city tend to be found in distinct areas describable in terms of sectors of a circle

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<sup>6</sup>Invasion is the interpenetration of one population group or use area by another, the difference between the new and old being economic, social or cultural.

Succession occurs when the new population group or use types finally displace the former occupants or uses of the area.

See F. Stuart Chapin, Jr., Urban Land Use Planning (New York: Harper and Bros., 1957), p. 27.

## FIGURE 1

INVASION AND SUCCESSION AS A  
CYCLE OF CHANGE<sup>7</sup>

- Step A. Equilibrium in the district, marked by lack of awareness on the part of the inhabitants of any invasion by an alien group.
- Step B. Disequilibrium arising from the flight of several upper-strata members of the community. This flight is in response to rumors of invasion.
- Step C. The creation of new restrictive covenants or reinforcement of dormant covenants following from these rumors.
- Step D. The rush invasion by the in-migrants to exploit the outposts established earlier.
- Step E. Reintegration of the area as the alien group acquires cumulative power. Mass exodus of the old occupants takes place at this level.
- Step F. Change of community status. The new occupants organize and dominate the area. Thus orderly succession and a new equilibrium has taken place.

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<sup>7</sup>E. Gordon Erickson, Urban Behavior (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1954), p. 155 and pp. 215-16.

centered on the central business district.<sup>8</sup> Figure 2 presents a simple, graphic representation of the two theories.

### Urban Renewal

Despite the fact that slums are universally condemned, they continue to exist. They not only exist, but they are thriving and growing and are threatening to destroy the pattern of urban living itself. It is this threat of the slums to urban life which has brought about increased recognition of urban planning. More and more, cities are adopting community master plans which are created for the purpose of guiding the orderly growth of the city and its surrounding area so that new slums will not develop. The ultimate object of making plans for the growth of the city is to make certain that city life, in the future, is as pleasant and enjoyable as is humanly possible. The ideal, of course, is to build the city anew, but this, on the contrary, is not really possible in most cases. The next best thing to do is to prevent further uncontrolled growth and start planning. Of course, existing slums cannot be left intact. The probable cause must be detected and destroyed and preventative measures put into operation. Many times, because of the tremendous cost involved, conservation techniques must be applied instead of complete redevelopment.

Because of the relative unfamiliarity that most non-planners

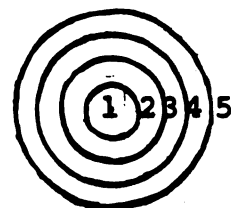
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<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 76.

FIGURE 2

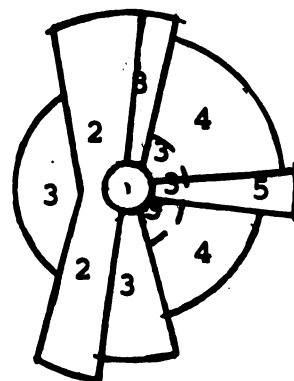
GENERALIZED EXPLANATIONS OF THE  
LAND USE PATTERNS OF CITIES.\*

1. Central Business District.
2. Zone of Transition.
3. Zone of Workingmen's Homes.
4. Zone of Better Residences
5. Commuter's Zone.



CONCENTRIC ZONE THEORY

1. Central Business District.
2. Wholesale Light Manufacturing.
3. Low-class Residential.
4. Medium-class Residential.
5. High-class Residential.



SECTOR THEORY

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\* Source: Chauncy D. Harris and Edward L. Ullman, "The Nature of Cities," The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science (November, 1945).



have with planning terms, it is believed best to define the terms used above.

Redevelopment can be defined as the complete rebuilding of an area after razing. This is the most expensive operation of renewal.

Conservation is the arresting of decay before it gets a start or right after it is recognized. Often this is done through the use of ordinances and laws. Conservation is usually done while the neighborhood is in a fairly stable stage and not when it can be classified as a slum. Conservation is, more or less "preventative maintenance."

Rehabilitation is another planning term which can mean a complete renewal of an area, but more often, it means partial "face lifting."

Urban Renewal is inclusive of all techniques and terms of the rebuilding of an area within a metropolitan boundary. Because of the expense involved, the term "urban renewal" when used by government officials, at least at the local level, usually excludes complete redevelopment.

Urban renewal has been going on since cities have existed and flourished. However, in the years since World War II, the term has assumed a more specialized meaning and has come to be associated with the prevention and elimination of blight. Urban renewal is not realized without great difficulty, for there are many problems with which the urban planner must contend.

At this point, it may be useful to examine urban

PLANNING  
IN SOME DETAIL

planning in some little detail.

### The Process of Urban Planning

According to the 1950 census about two out of every three inhabitants of our country live in urban areas ranging in size from 2500 persons to 10 million. Each day our cities and urban areas are becoming more populated and in every way more congested. The social consequences of such concentration is a major concern to the urban planners as well as the residents.

Many of the problems created by our cities, as many authorities have pointed out, resulted and will continue to result from the lack of foresight displayed by the builders and creators of the legal monstrosities called urban communities. What remains to be done is sometimes a highly confused issue. Many of the administrators themselves are not united in what they believe should be done, not to speak of the way it should be accomplished.

In the past lay people concerned themselves with problems of the city and its inhabitants, but recently a new science called urban or city planning has evolved. This new science attempts to produce some answers to the problems of slums, congestion, and the general conditions of urban sprawl.

City or urban planning, as the author will use the term throughout the rest of this thesis, is that science which, in its simplest sense, can be defined as intelligent forethought applied to the development of the community.<sup>9</sup> Actually city planning is

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<sup>9</sup>City Planning and Urban Development (U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Washington, D C., 1952), p. 5.

that which is applied only within the corporate limits of a city and urban planning is that which is applied to the city and its immediate surrounding area, but for the sake of clarity the author will use one or the other to assume the meaning of the latter.

To put even the simplest city plan into operation a master plan is required. This master plan is merely an outline which is used as a simple guide for the direction of the orderly growth of the area. It is usually given its legal basis by state statute and is set in operation by the city, county, regional or joint office. This master plan is almost always composed of at least several maps and overlays together with reports regarding population studies, land use and zoning studies, plus reports and supporting material for the guiding of intended future growth of the community. Planning is or should be concerned with the platforms and programs which, after proper approval, form the skeleton upon which the orderly growth of the community is planned and motivated. Of course, all attempts are not fully realized.

Planning, itself, is not a recent development, as many well-informed people think. Cities such as Rome and Washington, D. C. were planned. However, most cities simply grew and expanded in an uncontrolled manner. The planning profession is only now being recognized as an important and necessary function. Originally, the job of planning was supposedly done well enough by a planning commission composed of non-professionals, but modern society demands more of a professional body now: the professionally trained urban planner.

The people who are concerned with guiding the orderly development of a city need to consider not only the "pretty picture" aspects of a city graphically portrayed on some city hall wall, but with also the noise, smoke, odors, public health, morals and public welfare which always are present concerns where people are present in any numbers. Planners of not too long ago were not so worried about these "incidentals." They believed that if the city were made beautiful these things would take care of themselves. Today, however, most planners have some training in the social sciences, and recognize social as well as physical functions in planning.

In putting plans into operation there are two organs of government responsible for the planning function. These are the planning commission and the planning staff. The commission is an outgrowth of unofficial citizens' groups and committees which emerged to take care of the numerous problems arising in early government. It has been the traditional form of organization adopted by municipalities in setting up official planning agencies. Members of the commission are usually laymen from the various representative groups throughout the city.

What are the duties of the commission and how do these duties relate to the ones carried out by the planning staff? The duties of the commission are in summary as follows:

1. To develop and maintain a complete or general plan for a municipality.

2. To review and make recommendations on all decisions by other agencies dealing with the subject matter of the community plan.
3. To review and take action on all subdivision plots and other developments which involve the extension or enlargement of the city's developed area.
4. To prepare the zoning regulations and review and make recommendations on all amendments thereto.
5. To review and act on special exceptions permitted under zoning which involve major land uses.
6. To develop general plans and review all specific properties dealing with urban redevelopment where such a program is being undertaken by the municipality.
7. To prepare and review the capital improvement program where such a program is being undertaken in accordance with the comprehensive plan.<sup>10</sup>

The planning commission is usually responsible to the city council and must have all plans approved by it before they can go ahead with any significant programs. Some things of a minor nature do not have to be approved, but if challenged by a civic group or single person its plans can be overruled by the action of the council. Cases like this usually involve things like zoning changes, permits for businesses and the like.

The planning staff is composed of a number of professional

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<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 16.

people who are trained in drafting, graphics, mapping, economics, and sometimes sociology although the latter is only now gaining recognition by planners. Staffs may vary in size from two or three to thirty or forty. The staff undertakes various studies to determine the city's needs as a basis for planning. It prepares maps, reports and recommendations and submits them to the planning commission for approval.

Much social data and sociological thought are used by the urban planners in the preparation and application of their plans. But their own work, as a practical application of theory, and the results of their ideas and plans have rarely been tested. This thesis is one such test.

#### Housing, Urban Renewal, and the Federal Government

While it has long been recognized that slums are a detriment to the welfare of the city, very little was done before the 1930's to prevent or impede their growth, with the exception of a few unenforcible ordinances and laws.

Although efforts toward the elimination of blight in American cities were slow and cumbersome, the federal government has a long history of involvement in and support for slum clearance. The federal government's first action was taken in 1892 when Congress passed legislation to provide the sum of \$20,000 for an investigation

of slums in cities of 200,000 or more.<sup>11</sup>

Nothing significant was done until World War I when housing was provided for employees in the nation's shipyards. The United States Housing Corporation was established by executive order of the President during World War I for handling the construction of war housing and rent grievances.

In 1931, President Hoover called the President's Conference on Homebuilding and Home Ownership. This was followed in July, 1932, with the passage of the Federal Home Loan Bank Act, which provided authority to make advances to all types of lending institutions for promotion of home ownership.<sup>12</sup>

In the 1930's, there was hope that the construction of public housing units for low income families would completely eliminate slums. In 1932, the Emergency Relief and Construction Act authorized the Reconstruction Finance Corporation to make loans to corporations to provide housing for low income families. However, only two loans were made under this law. Two reasons given for this failure were that there was inadequate return on investments and the housing, itself, was beyond the means of the families who needed such help.

In 1933 the National Industrial Recovery Act provided federal funds to finance low-cost housing, slum clearance, and

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<sup>11</sup>Your Congress and American Housing--The Actions of Congress on Housing, 1892-1951, House Document No. 532, 82nd Congress, 2nd Session (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1952), p. 1.

<sup>12</sup>Glenn H. Beyer, Housing: A Factual Analysis (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1958), p. 241.

subsistence homesteads. The reason for this act was the need for creating jobs and not the need for adequate housing. Fifty projects were built with the help of this act.<sup>13</sup> The 36,600 units consequently constructed did not, however, substantially take care of the needs of the lowest income families, as is evidenced by the fact that slum growth was not thwarted to any extent in the Thirties, and even into the Forties.

The housing legislation of 1949 was the beginning of modern urban renewal and authorized a much broader housing program. This legislation authorized grants and loans to be made to local public agencies which were authorized to carry out a slum clearance program. The federal government was authorized to meet up to two thirds of the cost in buying, clearing and preparing slum land for redevelopment. This legislation has specified that all families facing displacement from redevelopment sites must be provided with "decent, safe and sanitary" housing at a price they can afford to pay and within reasonable distances from their place of employment. This meant that private rental and public housing was available to them. The 1954 legislation extends this requirement to conservation and rehabilitation projects. Relocation payments could, at that time, be as high as \$100 per family and up to \$2,500 for commercial establishments.<sup>14</sup> The total amount of relocation payments is met

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<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 247.

<sup>14</sup>The 1958 housing legislation increased the amount to \$200 per family.



by the federal government. Accurate records of family placements must be kept as evidence of compliance with the relocation feature of the law.

In 1956, the important Section 221, dealing with relocation housing, was added. Section 221 is a mortgage insurance program of the federal government to make available to persons displaced by any form of governmental action low cost relocation housing for sale or rent, through new or existing construction. The mortgage loan, at five and one-quarter per cent, plus FHA's standard one-half per cent mortgage insurance premium, may be 100 per cent of FHA appraised value with a maximum of \$9,000 for any dwelling (\$10,000 in high cost areas). The maximum mortgage maturity is 40 years, and the eligible buyer of single family homes need put up only \$200 down payment, any or all of which may be used to cover closing costs.

Because the area of study for this thesis is Detroit, Michigan, it is believed best to state the local requirements for the city at this time.

According to the Housing Commission of the City of Detroit, on March 13, 1951, the Common Council unanimously adopted a resolution which covers three major points:

1. The Housing Commission is authorized to undertake the relocation of persons displaced by public improvement.
2. Respective departments of the city government constructing public improvements are authorized to utilize the services of the Housing Commission for finding decent, safe and

sanitary housing and are further authorized to reimburse the Commission out of construction funds.

3. The Housing Commission is authorized to enter into agreements with the units of city government to perform relocation services on a reimbursable basis and to enter into agreements with state or other public agencies undertaking public improvements.<sup>15</sup>

As far as the federal government is concerned, before a city can qualify for funds to assist in urban renewal efforts it must have a comprehensive plan from which to work. The present legislation stipulates that this comprehensive plan or workable program must be submitted to the federal government by localities applying for funds for public housing as well as for all phases of urban renewal.

Among the seven elements which must be included in the workable program is a plan to assure the families displaced of decent, safe and sanitary housing. Setting forth the details to be covered in that portion of the workable program dealing with displaced families, the Federal Housing and Home Finance Agency has said, "It is important that the rehousing problem be understood by the community and that the city give consideration to the kind of organization which it will utilize to assist families so displaced, to find decent, safe and sanitary housing suitable for them and within their

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<sup>15</sup> Journal of the Common Council (City of Detroit, 1951), p. 528.

means.<sup>16</sup>

The City of Detroit submitted its workable program to the Urban Renewal Administration of the Housing and Home Finance Agency in April, 1955, and approval was granted on June 17, 1955.<sup>17</sup>

With respect to relocation, an official city publication has this to say:

It is recongized that if the City of Detroit is to proceed in an orderly fashion with its program for urban renewal, the alleviation of hardship among families facing displacement is a primary requisite. Further, it is recognized that such families must be aware of the relocation service at an early date. These steps will represent the supplementation of a regular service, originally established, and carried on continuously since August, 1949, when clearance of the sites for two low-rent public housing projects, Edward J. Jeffries Homes and Douglass Homes began.<sup>18</sup>

According to the Housing Commission, relocation requirements for families displaced as a result of clearance of public housing sites were not spelled out in the original legislation, the Housing Act of 1937. However, the Commission points out that administrative regulations have been set forth from time to time and relocation costs may be considered as an eligible expense. The major regulations are as follows:

- a. As a condition to preliminary approval by the Public Housing Administration of a public housing site on which families are

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<sup>16</sup>How Localities Can Develop a Workable Program for Urban Renewal, Housing and Home Finance Agency (Washington 25, D.C., December, 1955).

<sup>17</sup>Unofficial publication of the Detroit Housing Commission.

<sup>18</sup>Detroit's Workable Program, A Plan for the Improvement of Our City (City of Detroit, April, 1955), p. 82.

living, the local housing agency must submit and have approved a feasible relocation plan. The plan must show that there are sufficient public housing units available to accommodate eligible families being displaced. With respect to families not eligible for public housing, it must show that they can reasonably be expected to find dwelling accommodations not worse than those on the site and at rents within their means.

- b. If slum clearance and other governmental programs are being undertaken in a community, coordination of public housing and other relocation activity is to be achieved to avoid duplication of effort.
- c. In demonstrating the feasibility of relocation from the public housing site there must be recognition of any restrictions in the supply of housing for minorities and recognition of the demands of any other relocation which will take place in the community.

#### Relocation in Urban Renewal

Relocation is the process of moving families, individuals, businesses and industries from an area which is to be redeveloped or renewed, to other locations. The process is usually handled through a municipal relocation agency, which works in conjunction with, but is independent of, the urban planning commission.

Relocation is not an easy process. In moving people from a project area to a relocation area, the agency responsible must

make certain that decent, safe and sanitary housing is obtained by all the relocatees. There are problems with the aged, the sick, and the stubborn. There are many legal problems involved. In addition, the relocation personnel frequently must contend with racial and religious minority status and with the limitations imposed by low income.

It must be kept in mind that uncontrolled relocation can have adverse effects upon the city. After all, the ultimate objective of urban renewal is to improve the city. If displaced persons are merely forced out of an area without the least thought of how they will find housing and be absorbed into the community, the purpose of urban renewal becomes meaningless. Care must be taken to prevent displaced persons from simply moving from one slum area to another, making the renewal process endless.

It is this crucial aspect of urban renewal, the process of relocation, that we propose to examine in this thesis.

## CHAPTER II

## BACKGROUND DATA

It was noted in the preceding chapter that there is very little literature by sociologists on urban renewal, with the exception of several studies on citizen participation and two on relocation which are the only ones that attempt to analyze the problem from a sociological standpoint.

The fact that urban renewal is so new, at least as far as significant action is concerned, accounts primarily for the paucity of literature in regard to the relocation problem. Besides the above-mentioned studies on relocation, there have been others which provide only a statistical analysis as to the number of relocatees in an area, the dollar cost of a project, etc., but do not examine the sociological aspects of the relocation problem. Two exceptions to this are a study of the Dunbar Redevelopment Project of the City of Little Rock and a study by the Chicago Housing Authority.<sup>19</sup>

Relocation in Chicago

The Chicago study gave data on the character and quality of dwellings obtained in the movement from Chicago Housing Authority slum clearance sites, 1952-54.

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<sup>19</sup>"Dunbar Redevelopment Project," The Housing Authority of the City of Little Rock (1952); "The Relocation of Site Residents to Private Housing," Chicago Housing Authority (November, 1955).

As far as the direction moved from the various project areas<sup>20</sup> was concerned, the heaviest "migration" was to Oakland and Kenwood. Together with Hyde Park, Woodlawn, and West Englewood, these areas absorbed about 25 per cent of the total relocation load. Only eight per cent moved to scattered neighborhoods in South Shore, Roseland, Chatham, Brighton Park and Grand Crossing. Movements west massed in North Lawndale and East Garfield, where 28 per cent of the families concerned found housing.

According to the Chicago Housing Authority, when people moved into these areas they usually moved into the one closest to the redevelopment project area.<sup>21</sup> Almost half the families from the Cabrini Extension site moved southwest to the Garfield-Lawndale areas, a minimum distance of over three miles. Less than five per cent moved to areas more than one-half mile north of the site. Twelve per cent moved from five to six miles south to Oakland, Kenwood, and areas further south. Slightly more than half the families in the Abbott and Horner sites moved directly west to the Garfield-Lawndale areas, only two miles away. These data are summarized in Table I.

As far as the quality of the newly acquired housing is concerned, the data indicated a relatively high physical quality accompanied by extensive substandardness due to lack of adequate plumbing resulting from conversions. Many of the units moved to were substandard, but were an improvement over the slum areas.

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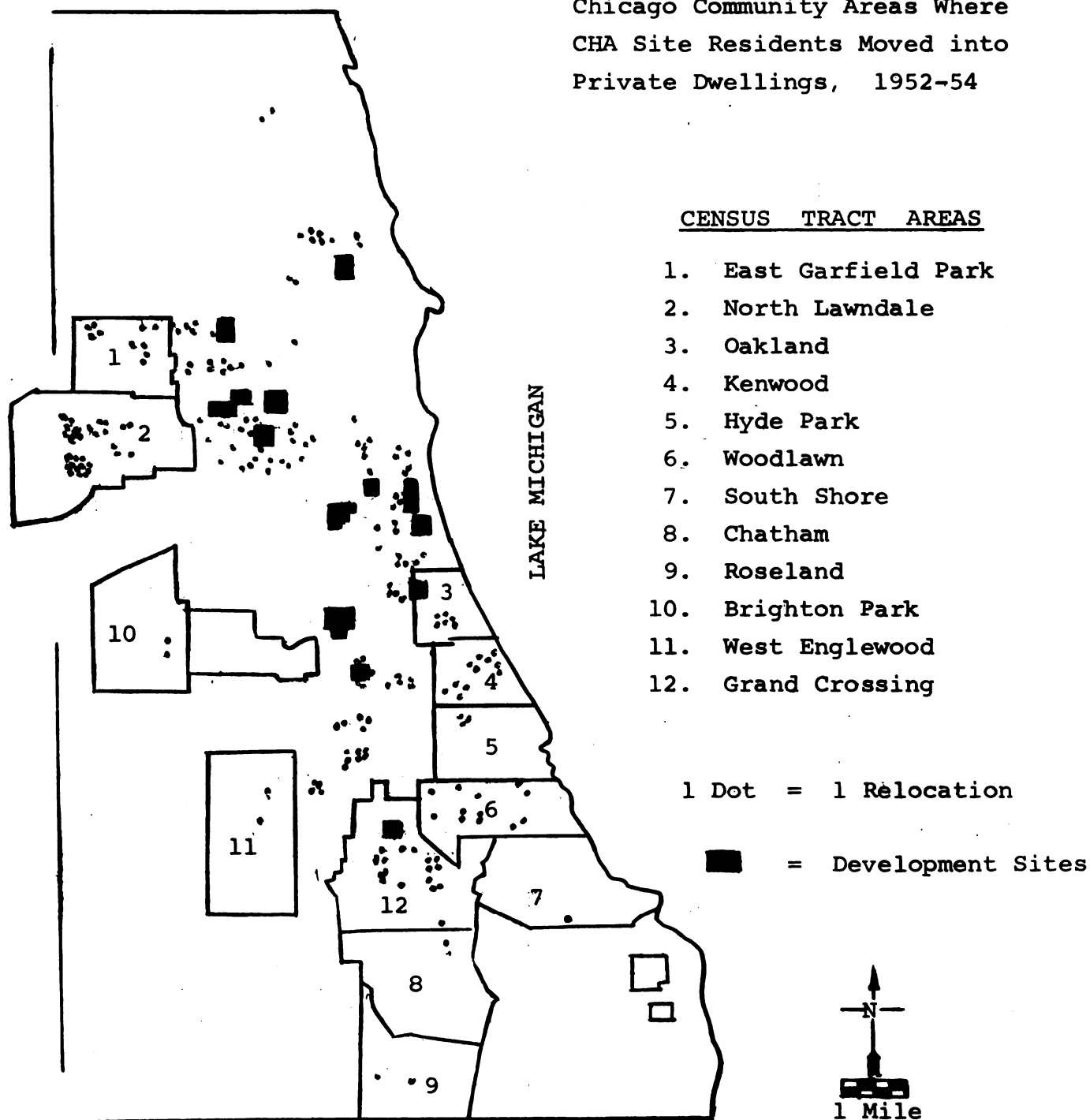
<sup>20</sup> See map of relocation.

<sup>21</sup> See Figure 3.

FIGURE 3

MAP OF RELOCATION\*

Chicago Community Areas Where  
CHA Site Residents Moved into  
Private Dwellings, 1952-54



\*Source: See Table I on following page.



TABLE I

DISTANCE MOVED IN MILES BY RELOCATEES FROM  
REDEVELOPMENT AREAS TO PRIVATE HOUSING\*

| <u>Miles</u>  | <u>Percentage</u> |
|---------------|-------------------|
| Less than 1.0 | 28.9%             |
| 1.0-1.9       | 13.2              |
| 2.0-2.9       | 23.8              |
| 3.0-4.9       | 24.0              |
| 5.0-more      | 10.0              |
| Median 2.3    |                   |

\*Source: Relocation of Site Residents  
to Private Housing, Chicago Housing Authority  
(November, 1955), p. 9.

However, in the worst areas, over one-fifth of the housing was dilapidated and over one-half the dwellings were substandard.<sup>22</sup>

The majority of the site residents learned about available housing through friends, neighbors, and former landlords.<sup>23</sup> The Chicago Housing Authority indicated that this has always been common practice because of the difficulty in obtaining information about vacancies for non-white occupancy in a market which has always been in short supply. According to the Chicago Housing Authority, 43 per cent of those eligible for public housing relocated to private dwellings and never applied for the publicly supported units. In response to the question, "Why didn't you apply for public housing?" families gave the reasons cited in Table II.

Almost 90 per cent of the people eligible who did not move to public housing found private dwellings through friends, neighbors and former landlords. The distribution of all families finding private dwellings by source of their information is summarized in Table III.

Further interviewing of the Chicago site residents revealed that their major objections to public housing were (1) the regulations (no dogs and cats, no roomers), and (2) economic (the rent was too high and the cost of furnishing the apartment).

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<sup>22</sup>"Relocation of Site Residents to Private Housing," Chicago Housing Authority (November, 1955), p. 5.

<sup>23</sup>See Table III

TABLE II

REASONS GIVEN BY ELIGIBLE RELOCATEES OF THE CHICAGO  
STUDY FOR NOT APPLYING FOR PUBLIC HOUSING\*

|                                |             |
|--------------------------------|-------------|
| <u>Total</u>                   | <u>100%</u> |
| Private dwelling available     | 42.9        |
| Thought they were ineligible   | 32.1        |
| Didn't care for public housing | 17.9        |
| Didn't know how to apply       | 7.1         |

\* Source: op. cit., p. 29.

TABLE III

SOURCES OF INFORMATION ON AVAILABILITY OF PRIVATE  
HOUSING FOR DISPLACED PERSONS BY ELIGIBILITY  
FOR PUBLIC HOUSING\*

| <u>Total</u>       | <u>Total</u> | <u>Eligible</u> | <u>Ineligible</u> |
|--------------------|--------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| Friends, neighbors | 73.3%        | 88.5            | 64.6              |
| Real estate firms  | 20.7         | 10.2            | 25.6              |
| Newspaper ads      | 7.0          | 1.3             | 9.7               |

\* Source: Ibid., p. 6.

### Relocation in Little Rock

During the Dunbar Redevelopment project,<sup>24</sup> the Housing Authority of the City of Little Rock served as the local public agency for slum clearance and redevelopment. It was the stated objective of the Housing Authority through its relocation office to aid these displaced families in finding rehousing accommodations that were decent, safe and sanitary at a price within the financial means of the families themselves.

At this particular time in the City of Little Rock, there were, according to the Little Rock Housing Authority, a number of suitable private and public dwellings available to displaced people. However, there was serious resistance by the residents to relocation. The Authority believed there were several reasons for this resistance, as is indicated in the following quotation:<sup>25</sup>

1. Strong neighborhood ties. In the struggle for existence, the slum dweller attaches himself to friends and relatives whose struggles are the same or similar, compensating somewhat for the misery of his existence. With relocation, the Agency feels, comes the fear of breaking these ties.
2. Racial and religious factors. Over 97 per cent of the occupants of the Dunbar area were Negroes which was an obstacle to relocation in other areas. In Dunbar, as in other sections, an individual becomes strongly identified with his neighborhood and his neighborhood church. Therefore, he strongly resists being separated from either.
3. Income factor. Approximately one-half of the site occupants had low and unstable incomes, and for them the slums represented the only place they could secure cheap housing from the landlords who, for obvious reasons, would be somewhat

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<sup>24</sup>The Dunbar Redevelopment Project, Final Relocation Report, Housing Authority of the City of Little Rock (1952).

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 3.

tolerant with their rent delinquency. Furthermore, the thought of relocation from these cheap homes to standard housing brought a fear of insecurity, as they were afraid of being unable to maintain a higher standard of living.

4. Slum dwelling by choice. A few of the families living in the Dunbar area had attained income sufficient to secure standard housing elsewhere, but they did not consider their present housing undesirable.
5. The general resistance to being compelled to move. Some of the occupants took the position that they were entitled to live where and however they chose, and the Housing Authority had no right to compel them to move. Furthermore, the Housing Authority, serving as the Redevelopment Agency, owned and operated the low-rent housing projects in the city, and the site occupants felt that they were being forced to move in order to fill recently-opened Booker homes. Actually, no such pressure was being exerted.

The Housing Authority of Little Rock points out that the process of relocation entails far more than the removal of families from the site. Several different types and kinds of contracts were entered into by the occupants by the time they were resettled in their new units. Some families made purchase contracts, and sometimes building and repair contracts. Others made moving contracts, land purchase contracts and rental contracts.

The Authority gave direct financial assistance in cases where the need was evident. This is the direct opposite of Detroit's policies. In the latter case, people received aid according to their expenses, whether they really needed the money or not.

It appears that the officials of the Little Rock Housing Authority encouraged the relocatees to solve their own problems. However, this is in direct conflict with their officially prescribed duty which is to help find units for displaced persons.

Summary of the Findings of the Studies

The report by the Chicago agency discovered that the persons to be relocated found out about available vacancies through friends, neighbors and former landlords. It is significant to note that the relocatees did not actually utilize the services of the Agency for this purpose.

The Chicago study also revealed that much of the housing into which relocated people moved was substandard and dilapidated, signifying that the relocatees did not substantially improve the quality of their housing.

The experience of Chicago suggests that there is a definite pattern to the resettling of the displaced people from an urban renewal area, that the areas settled in do not necessarily disrupt the general ecological patterns of the city.

The Chicago Housing Authority experience also revealed an apparent lack of interest in public housing due presumably to the lack of economic means and to objections to the regulations imposed by the management of public housing.

The relocation agencies of most cities have found a definite resistance to moving on the part of the relocatees. The Housing Authority of the City of Little Rock probed into this resistance, and found both positive and negative reasons to exist; positive in the sense of attachments to the area, and negative in inability to locate in better residential areas.

Limited as such data are, they provide clues and suggestions

about relocation as a social process, and offer a basis for developing the study of relocation as a sociological problem. This is the concern of this thesis in the following chapter.

## CHAPTER III

## RELOCATION AS A SOCIOLOGICAL PROBLEM

Relocation, as a phase of urban renewal, is an attempt to develop a controlled social process. It functions, first, to fulfill the obligation to aid persons displaced from urban renewal project areas in obtaining housing, and secondly, to disperse the relocatees among units that are considered by federal requirements to be "decent, safe and sanitary."

The relocation of displaced persons from an urban renewal area can have serious effects on the ecology of the city. In the first place, when a slum is torn down and a new use instituted the surrounding areas cannot help but be affected. One obvious possibility is for displaced persons to move in concentration into the nearby areas, and thus to establish new slums or reinforce existing ones.

These observations on relocation as a social process, and as a complex, difficult social issue in urban renewal, underscore a sociological relevance which has not been as yet studied. Clearly, relocation warrants sociological analysis. It is the intent of this thesis to undertake research in some phases of this problem.

To give some focus and limited framework to the study, a preliminary investigation of a Detroit urban renewal project chosen for study, and the previously cited Chicago study were used to develop three hypotheses.

The Chicago study suggested that a definite pattern of relocation was evident, which did not disrupt the prevailing



ecological pattern of the city. The Chicago data also suggested that relocated families do not substantially better themselves in housing by their move. This has been debated from time to time, and therefore seemed to merit testing.

Preliminary investigation yielded data that seemed to indicate that relocatees did not utilize the services of the Agency in locating housing outside of the project area, at least as far as project areas in Detroit are concerned. This, it must be noted, parallels the Chicago data.

Thus, this study is an attempt to determine the significance of relocation in efforts at eliminating blight and to discover its impact on the ecological distribution of the city's population.

### Three Hypotheses for Research

In the manner referred to above it was determined to test three hypotheses. The three so tested are:

1. Relocated people, in the majority of cases, do not acquire substantially better housing, but find it in the same type of area or in the same condition as that which they left behind.

This hypothesis, suggested by the Chicago data and preliminary investigation of the Detroit project area, would indicate, if validated, that urban renewal is a never-ending process, because we are merely shifting our slums from place to place.

2. The relocation of displaced persons occurs in such a way as not to disturb seriously the prevailing ecological structure of the city.

This hypothesis is based on the Chicago study. The final relocation map in Chapter II portrays this in graphic form.<sup>26</sup>

For purposes of study, it is assumed that relocation will have quite the same effects in Detroit. The findings of Detroit should be even more significant in testing this hypothesis because of the apparent 20 per cent vacancy rate in housing in that particular city in comparison to a shortage of housing in Chicago.<sup>27</sup>

3. The operating function of the Relocation Agency is different than the officially prescribed function; that is to say that most of people relocated did not utilize the services of the Agency, but found housing on their own.

If this is so, the federal requirement of "decent, safe and sanitary," has a tendency to lose its meaning. Again, Chicago data suggest this. If the hypothesis is true, relocation policies are not nearly as effective as could be possible. To achieve the utmost in urban improvement, much revamping of the procedures and policies of renewal would consequently have to be done.

### Methodology

Basic data for the Detroit case study were taken directly from the relocation files of the Detroit Housing Commission. Data were carefully gathered on each family to be relocated by the Housing

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<sup>26</sup> "Summary of Findings," Chicago Housing Authority (July, 1949), p. 1.

<sup>27</sup> This was indicated to the author by Mr. Homer Saunders of the Detroit Housing Commission Relocation Agency.

Commission staff and recorded on an Official Site Occupant Record. Data which applied directly to the hypotheses in this thesis were extracted from this record. Information on this record includes facts on the number of people in the family to be relocated, the race, place of residence, new location, quality of the "new" unit, etc. The record also indicates whether the people used the services of the Agency to find new housing or found it themselves.

Old addresses, as well as new, being on the record, provided the basis for determining whether there is a pattern to the people's settlement. The new addresses, together with information about the new area of settlement, indicated the condition of the units and (or) the type of areas the people moved to. The information regarding old and new addresses and distances moved by the relocatees was converted into map form. Through the use of dots representing new addresses of relocatees, one may see the actual relocation pattern of the displaced people, any particular clusters which result and the distances moved. This particular map may be seen in a later chapter.

### The Area of Study

An adequate case study required an on-going urban renewal project in which the relocation of residents was being brought to completion. The Westside Redevelopment Project in Detroit provided such a site for the study.

The Westside Redevelopment area, more commonly known as "Corktown," is situated in a slum in the heart of Detroit, Michigan.

The boundaries of the area are 12th Street, Bagley, Trumbull, Porter, John C. Lodge Expressway, West LaFayette and Howard Streets, inclusive of some dozen and one-half blocks.

Corktown began in the 1830's, as an area of Irish settlement. The density rose until its peak from 1880 until 1910. Through the Twenties the exodus began. Latin-Americans and Maltese moved in. Housing was always small and wood-structured, but large families have continued. At the present time, there are only about 20 families of Irish descent who remain in the area, and so the name "Corktown" is no longer representative of the people or of the entire area under discussion. Ethnic composition of the area is, at present, one quarter Latin-American, one quarter Maltese, one quarter Negro, and one quarter other.

Because of the changing character of Detroit, the area where Corktown is located, is no longer regarded as satisfactory for residential units. Therefore, it has been bought by the City of Detroit and is now in the process of being cleared of residences, populace, and structures of commercial and business types. When the city has finally cleared the area it plans to rezone it "light industrial."

## CHAPTER IV

## THE ANALYSIS OF RELOCATION: THREE HYPOTHESES

It is the object of urban planners to see that improvement is made in the physical and cultural atmosphere of the city. In efforts to realize this objective many cities are rehabilitating, including tearing down their slum areas. In almost all of these instances, persons are displaced and must find other units in which to live. Where they go and what type of housing they become attached to affects the future make-up of the city and has an important effect on the urban renewal plans the municipality may make or be forced to make.

The Quality of Housing for Relocated Families

Preliminary investigation suggested that newly acquired housing which relocated people obtained was not as good, or at least was not any better than that from which they moved. The previously cited Chicago study paralleled this finding. The first of our three hypotheses was, therefore, that relocated persons, in the majority of cases, do not acquire substantially better housing, but find it in the same type of area or in the same condition as that which they left behind. To test this hypothesis the author extracted two types of data from the files of the Relocation Agency of the City of Detroit; one, information as to the exact addresses of the relocated families and two, information as to the quality of the newly acquired units and of the neighborhood moved to.

Quality of the units were based on reports of inspections made by Agency personnel. Quality of the neighborhood was then derived, in part, from a neighborhood and area comparison with the project area.

As far as the inspection reports were concerned, personnel from the Agency went into the field, and inspected the newly acquired units. At no time, was there a standard housing classification system used. A field inspector was told generally what to look for in order to classify a unit as substandard or standard, but the actual classification was left up to him. Generally, the majority of units were clearly in one category or the other. A list of some 25 criteria were used to help determine the classification of the dwelling, the major ones of which were exterior condition, lack of toilet facilities or related facilities, number of persons per room, etc.

Out of the 300 families under discussion, 71 were found by the personnel of the Agency to be living in extremely unsatisfactory and substandard housing. When a substandard dwelling was found, a letter indicating this classification was sent to the family concerned and if a reply was not received within 30 days, the case was dismissed.

If one were to go one mile in all directions from the project area, except to the east, which is downtown, generally poor housing conditions would be found to exist. It must be noted that in most urban renewal projects, only a portion of the slum area is "operated upon." This is because of the tremendous cost involved and because

of the limits of size approved for federal financing. An inspection of new addresses of the displaced residents reveals that 80.6 per cent of the 300 families moved within a one mile radius of the redevelopment area, and the large majority of this percentage moved within several blocks. When it is said that relocatees settle within several blocks of the area, they are really settling within the same slum, but outside of the area currently chosen for redevelopment.

When judged on the basis of the neighborhood moved into, only 35 or 40 families effected any considerable improvement in the quality of their housing. The data, then, support the hypothesis being tested, and indicate that the typical relocated family did not substantially improve its housing.

It should be noted that professional planners and city administrators have frequently observed that many of the relocatees are forced to move again into substandard units because of the cost factor. They simply cannot afford anything more.

If this hypothesis has general applicability in the major problem areas in all of our cities, then planning policies in general must be restudied, for apparently we are merely shifting our slums from one area of the city to another. It could be a never-ending process, something the budgets of most planning departments could never stand.

#### The Pattern of Relocation in Detroit

If relocated families, for the most part, moved into similar types of housing, this would suggest a continuation of the existing

ecological pattern. We hypothesize that the relocation of displaced persons occurs in such a way as not to disturb the prevailing ecological structure of the city. The Chicago study, previously cited, revealed a definite pattern of settlement and a maximum distance moved. Though Detroit now has a 20 per cent vacancy rate in housing as a consequence of the tremendous flight to the suburbs within the last 15 years, as indicated by the Housing Commission, preliminary investigation suggested that the pattern might be very similar to the relocation pattern of Chicago, even though that city has, if anything, a shortage of housing. Therefore, the hypothesis to be treated is simply that relocated families cluster in specific areas of the city and do not resettle randomly throughout the metropolitan area, thus not disturbing the ecological structure of the city.

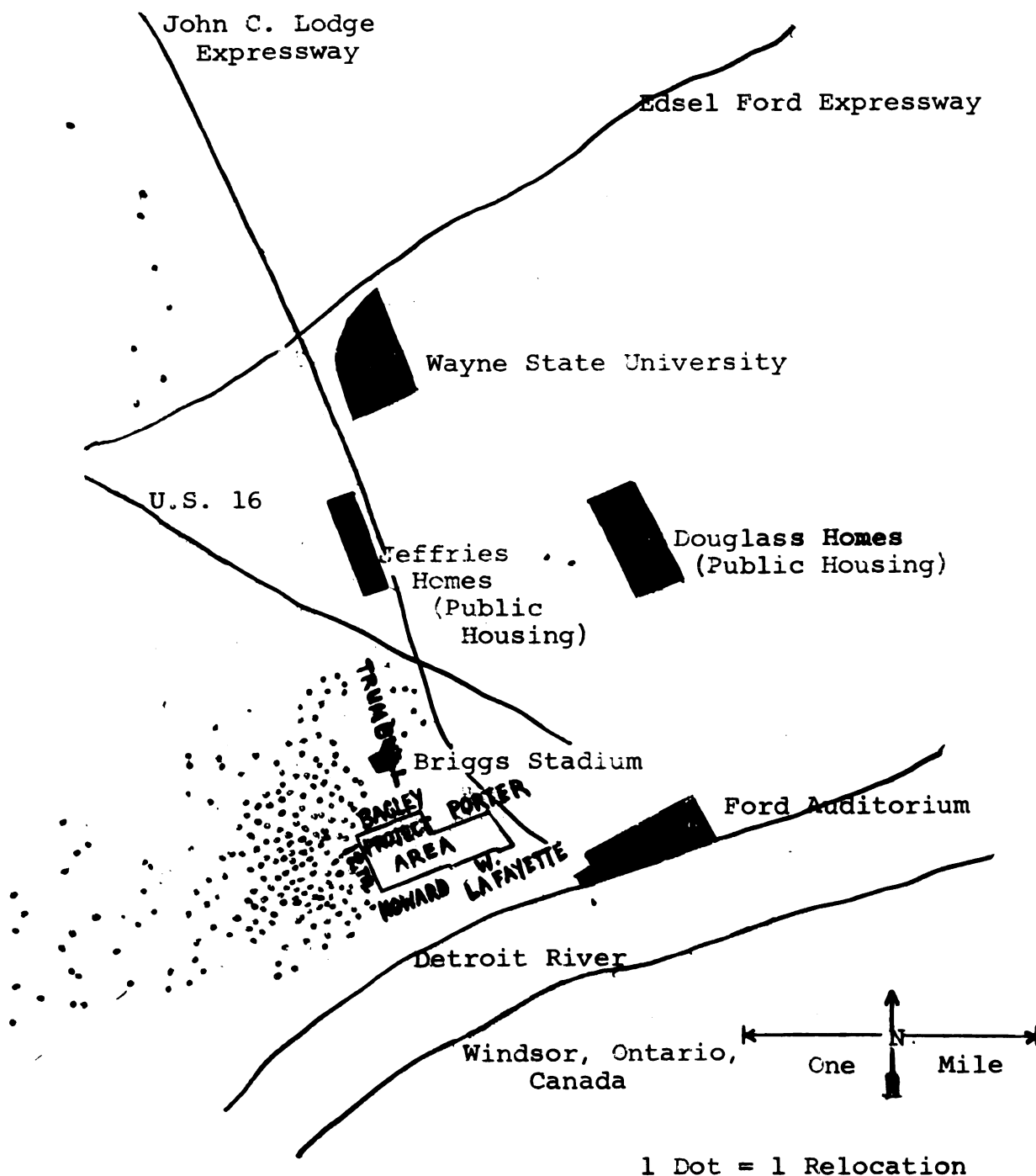
Data to test this hypothesis were taken from the files of the Agency. Again, new addresses were used to indicate the area to which residents moved. Each of the new addresses was pin-pointed on a Detroit street map, sufficiently detailed to permit locating the specific block.

After identifying the new locations of the families, the data was then organized graphically on a map (Figure 4) in the form of a series of dots, one dot signifying one relocation. A few identifying marks were transferred along with the dots to give orientation to the reader. These marks, as indicated on the map, are as follows: the Detroit River, the Westside Redevelopment Project (Corktown), Brewster Douglass Homes (public housing), Jeffries



FIGURE 4

THE PATTERN OF SETTLEMENT AFTER RELOCATION FROM THE  
WESTSIDE REDEVELOPMENT AREA



Homes (public housing), Wayne State University, Briggs Stadium (home of the Detroit Tiger Baseball club), the Ford Memorial Auditorium, John C. Lodge Expressway, Edsel Ford Expressway, U.S. Highway No. 16 and the Henry Ford Hospital.

As can be observed from the map, the large majority of the displaced families settled within a one-mile radius of the redevelopment project area and most, as was previously mentioned, settled in areas immediately adjacent to Corktown, itself. The area adjacent to the John C. Lodge Expressway on the east side is not resettled because that is the heart of downtown.

An enumeration of relocated families within given distances from the project reveals that more than two thirds (68.3 per cent) relocated within a half-mile radius, and 80.6 per cent within a one-mile radius. Table IV summarizes this enumeration.

It is the observation of the Relocation Agency that the families of lowest income moved the shortest distance. In case of the high ownership areas, such as the Mack-Concord Project area, on the east side of Detroit, the displaced persons scattered randomly throughout the metropolitan area and had a tendency to move further from the project area than any other group. In addition to economic limitations, lower income people in these areas frequently have many close ethnic, religious and cultural ties, which they find difficult, if not impossible, to break. To maintain these associations while locating within their limited means, they relocate next to the area from which they moved.

The two hypotheses discussed above seem to support one another.

TABLE IV

DISTANCED MOVED BY RELOCATEES FROM THE  
REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT AREA

| <u>Distance Moved in Miles</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|--------------------------------|--------------|
| 0.0-0.5                        | 68.3%        |
| 0.6-1.0                        | 12.3         |
| 1.1-2.0                        | 16.4         |
| 2.0 and more                   | <u>3.0</u>   |
|                                | 100.0        |

If a relocated family seeks the same type of house and living condition as that which it left behind and, at the same time, tries to hold onto its cultural, religious and ethnic associations, the easiest thing to do is to pick out a house in an area adjacent to the one just moved from. Chances are this newly acquired unit is merely a block or two from the old.

So, as a consequence, relocatees settle in areas not unlike the ones they moved from, in similar types of homes and in the same general cultural atmosphere. At the same time there is no serious disruption in the ecological structure of the city.

#### The Functions of a Relocation Agency

In order to facilitate the relocation of displaced persons from an urban renewal area, most cities include within the structure of their renewal machinery a municipal relocation agency, which is either part of the housing commission or planning department. It must be kept in mind that the federal government specifies that in order for a city to become eligible to receive funds in the form of grants for urban renewal, it must present a program in renewal which insures "decent, safe and sanitary" housing for all displaced persons. This federal requirement is one of the seven qualifications a municipality must satisfy before it is even considered to receive grants. Thus, the relocation agency's official function is to help find other housing for families displaced through urban renewal efforts. In many instances, however, the actual and intended functions could and do differ remarkably. This is to be exemplified by the

Detroit case study.

A preliminary analysis suggested that the operating function of the Detroit Relocation Agency, that is, what, in fact, the Agency did, was something other than its officially prescribed function. It seemed that the Agency did not assure the relocatees adequate housing units after relocation. In fact, the Agency did not aid the residents in finding housing of any kind in over 95 per cent of the cases. Thus, we hypothesize that the operating or accepted function of the Relocation Agency of the Housing Commission of the City of Detroit is different than the officially prescribed function; that is to say that most of the families displaced from an urban renewal area do not utilize the services of the Agency, whose official purpose for existence is to assist the relocatees in finding units in which to live.

At the time the data for this thesis were gathered, which was March of 1960, all but a half-dozen or so families had moved from the renewal site, and it might appear that these 300 displaced families have been relocated in dwellings referred to them by the Relocation Agency. But, the data revealed that almost all of the 300 resettled with no assistance from the Agency. For the most part, when given an eviction notice, effective at some future date, the persons concerned moved on their own, without seeking advice or assistance from the professional people concerned. Out of the 300 families who have relocated since receiving notices of renewal plans for the area, only seven have requested aid of the Agency. Of these seven, four were referred to and placed in public units, and three

were relocated in private rental housing. In other words, only 2.3 per cent of the relocated people were actually aided by the Agency.

This finding does not necessarily mean that the Agency has no function, but without a doubt, its function is not the officially prescribed one. It would seem that the Agency's function is to ensure that people relocate, even if by their own efforts, and thus, clear the area of its residents in order to allow the renewal program to proceed.

This may satisfy the federal requirements if adequate checks are made to assure that displaced families are housed in "decent, safe and sanitary" units. However, the tendency on the part of the occupants of these slum areas is to move on the first indication of renewal plans by the city, sometimes notifying the Relocation Agency of the move, sometimes not, thus making adequate checking difficult.

It would seem that the function of the Relocation Agency must be redefined. For the most part the Agency does not perform the service of finding units for the displaced families, but merely acts as a stimulus to remove them from the area. Though this may facilitate an urban renewal program, it does not satisfy the responsibility vested in local government by the federal government.

In the next chapter, we shall explore the sociological implications of this, as well as the data obtained in testing the other hypotheses.

## CHAPTER V

## CONCLUSION: SOME COMMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS

The Agency

Up to this point in the thesis, we have discussed the background of the problems with which this study is concerned, the area about which the research was gathered, the make-up of the study, and the stating and testing of the hypotheses. In this chapter some consequences and implications of the study will be discussed and several proposals for the improvement of the relocation process will be suggested.

The Relocation Agency of the City of Detroit, according to the data presented in this thesis, does not fulfill the prescribed function given it by the federal government, which is to assist persons displaced from urban renewal projects in finding units outside of the project area which are in "decent, safe and sanitary" condition. The function actually performed by the Agency, which can be called the operating function, is that of acting as a stimulus to remove persons from the renewal area so that urban renewal efforts can begin as quickly as possible.

Robert K. Merton<sup>28</sup> differentiates between two types of functions, the explanation of which can be applied to clarify the

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<sup>28</sup>Robert K. Merton, "Manifest and Latent Functions," Social Theory and Social Structure, The Free Press (Glencoe, Illinois, 1949), p. 63.

difference between prescribed and operating functions. Merton uses the term "manifest function" to mean one which refers to the objective consequences for a specified unit (person, subgroup, social or cultural system) which contribute to its adjustment or adoption and was so intended. In the case of the Detroit Agency, the manifest function would be the prescribed one, as it is supposed to be the intention of the Relocation Agency to see that certain services are performed for displaced persons. This manifest function is prescribed for the agency by the federal government as a requirement for federal financing. Thus, at the outset, the agency's manifest function originates from a larger system of government. However, this distinction must be made: it is a manifest function from the perspective of the federal government; however, the relocation agency has come to recognize a different function for itself.

Merton uses the term "latent" to refer to unintended and unrecognized consequences of the same order. However, this term does not quite apply to the operating function as we know it, for to fall within this classification, what, in fact, the Agency does would have to be unintended and unrecognized. By the evidence presented in this thesis, it is seen that the main concern of the Agency is to clear the area of residents as quickly as possible so that renewal work may begin. This represents a shift from the originally prescribed function of providing assistance in finding "decent, safe and sanitary" housing units for displaced persons. This shift is a consequence of pressures generated by the total complex of the urban renewal program, in which relocation becomes an



instrument for expediting these renewal efforts. This function deviates considerably from the one prescribed by the federal government, a fact of which the relocation staff is admittedly aware. This does not meet Merton's definition of latent function, although it may be so for the federal government. Merton, of course, recognizes that what is either latent or manifest for one social unit may not be so for another.

It is true that the people to be displaced are not literally told to get out of the area; however, over 95 per cent of them were not aided by the Agency in any way in finding other living units. Notices were received by the residents informing them that they were in a renewal area and that the property which they were renting (or buying) would be taken over by the city. They almost immediately moved on their own even though ample notice was given advising them of the relocation service available to them.

After the family moved to another area, the case was all but closed, for merely a routine check was made to assure that the relocation was made into standard housing. This check, however, was not always made, but if it was and the unit was found to be sub-standard, a notice was sent to the family notifying them of this, and if a reply was not received by the Agency within 30 days, the case was officially closed.

Thus, letting the families move on their own seems to indicate that the Agency's prime concern is getting them out of the area.

However, yielding to the pressure of getting the families out of the area has at least two consequences: (1) rigorous housing standards

are not applied, thus increasing the chances of people not improving their housing, something with which renewal personnel are supposed to be concerned, and (2) a loss of control over relocation movement, thus contributing to the increasing use of and density of adjoining slum areas.

Thus, renewal is a never-ending process. We are cleaning one section of a city and contributing to the slum areas of another. This is done by merely shifting the "ingredients" of a slum to another section of the city.

The Agency personnel recognized that few displaced families utilized the services of the staff. These professionals felt that there were perhaps three major reasons why Agency services, for the most part, were not used. The three are as follows: (1) the relocatees had their own ideas as to what they wanted in looking for a house and wanted no help from anyone, (2) there is the possibility of some resentment for authority, believing that officialdom always means trouble, and (3) there is an "inability" on the part of the relocatees to see the advantages of a "picked out place." This suggests definite awareness by professional personnel of a cultural gap between themselves and the slum-dwellers whom they are seeking to relocate.

### The Slums

It has not been too many years since urban renewal was developed as the answer to slums. It was intended to help eliminate the problems involved and make our cities beautiful again. However, urban

renewal, as now planned and carried out, according to the evidence presented by this thesis, may physically clear one slum, while transferring its social characteristics to another neighborhood. Thus, renewal may become mere physical change and not contribute to the elimination of slums at all.

John Seeley believes that a slum is a "social necessity" and that there will always be poorer sections of communities.<sup>29</sup> He asserts that many of the services offered by the slum are intended for consumers from all social classes. These are notably bootlegging, call-girl services, "vice," etc. These, Seeley points out, are for the benefit of what he calls the "overworld" and not the underworld. The slum, in other words, serves many segments of the population, not only the slum-dwellers. The slum offers these services which would not easily be tolerated in "decent" neighborhoods. One function of slum neighborhoods is to provide such services, and as long as there is a demand, there will be a supply.

Seeley points out that some slum-dwellers are there out of necessity, in that their low income does not enable them to live elsewhere, and some for profit, in that the slum provides a convenient and safe place for the location of "undesirable" social services. Urban renewal concerns itself with the low-income slum dwellers, since it displaces them when it eliminates their slum residences. But such physical removal does not eliminate their

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<sup>29</sup> John R. Seeley, "The Slum: Its Nature, Use and Users," Journal of American Institute of Planners, XXV, No. 1 (February, 1959), pp. 7-14.

necessity to live in the slums, since their low income forces them to move into similar, nearby housing. The data of this thesis has clearly documented this fact.

While the physical clearance of an area may force out all who live there, those who operate the less legitimate functions (bootlegging, prostitution, etc.) are merely forced to relocate elsewhere, a process that contributes to the social decline of another area. Thus, the transfer of both low-income residents and illegitimate operations to adjoining areas by the actions of urban renewal does not eliminate the slum, but merely shifts its location within the city.

The slum, however symbolized by physical characteristics, is a social process, as Seeley suggests. Urban renewal's function of physical clearance and renewal has little, if any, impact on the social processes producing slums.

### The People

We have found that in relocating displaced families do not necessarily improve their housing, and they frequently relocate in the same types of neighborhoods and in the same patterns. This puzzles many administrators who fail to realize that lower class people hold different values. In the first place, the ethnic, racial and cultural values of lower class individuals and families may differ markedly from middle-class professionals, resulting in different outlooks on life.

Chances are the lower class people in these areas are not

well educated and informed and consequently do not understand the reasons behind relocation or renewal. To be sure, then, there is to be expected much resistance to authority. The result is that there is as little contact with the Agency as possible as there is little reliance on its services.

In a cogent evaluation of urban renewal, Herbert J. Gans discusses a lack of effective communication between the professional world of Agency officials and the lower-class, slum world of the relocatees:<sup>30</sup>

(1) Relocation procedures were developed by middle class professionals and thus they assumed the self-sufficiency of the nuclear family household. However, this assumption is not often true in the slums. Many of the individuals' households are tied to those of other families by strong bonds, either of kinship or peer-group membership. (2) Differences exist between relocation officials and residents in the evaluation of physical and social "standardness" of housing. To be sure, a slum dweller may take social priority over physical values. (3) The scheduling of relocation is based on requirements of the clearance program. If relocation takes longer than expected, this may force officials to interpret the federal relocation provisions as written, and limit the apartment choices of the relocatees to the number required by law. (4) Since relocation procedures do not allow for the transfer of the social system, the shock of the relocation process itself is likely to affect negatively a number of people who have never lived anywhere else than in the slums, and whose social and emotional ties are entirely within the neighborhood. (5) Another problem involves the communication difficulties between the redevelopment officials and the residents. Working people are often hostile toward governmental authority in general and feel that city officials and politicians deprive them of things they value or are trying to cheat them out of their belongings.

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<sup>30</sup> Herbert J. Gans, "Human Implications of Redevelopment and Relocation," Journal of American Institute of Planners, XXV, No. 1 (February, 1959), pp. 15-25.

In addition, Gans feels that because of their generally suspicious view of city government, working people reinterpret the agency's communications accordingly. For example, Gans states that many years often result between announcements of redevelopment and its execution. This is assumed by the residents to be due to the city's desire to confuse the residents, scare them out of the area and thus reduce the acquisition costs of property and the relocation problem. He also points out that many troubles possibly stem from the fact that the agency is so vague in its policies that rumors get started and misunderstandings evolve.

#### Public Housing

During the 1930's when public housing became a major government program, it was hoped by professional planners that slums could be erased by replacing them with publicly built housing projects.

However, John P. Dean points out that social reformers failed to see that merely moving a family into new housing does not erase crime or juvenile delinquency.<sup>31</sup> Public housing enthusiasts, Dean points out, emphasized the inadequate physical environment of the slums and assumed a causal relationship between bad housing and anti-social behavior, and so thought slum clearance would remove the social ills. The lack of a demonstrably simple causal relationship between housing and behavior may, therefore, permit the transfer

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<sup>31</sup>John P. Dean, "The Myths of Housing Reform," American Sociological Review, Vol. 14, No. 2 (April, 1949), pp. 281-289.

of a slum social environment into a new housing unit. The point is, therefore, that public housing, from the start, did not do the job expected of it.

Down through the years, the situation has become even worse. Public housing has come increasingly to house those lowest on the social scale, and thus to earn a reputation for being the "dumping grounds" of American communities. Though this was not the original intent of public housing, this newer clientele has lowered the public image of public housing in America.

During the last five or ten years public housing has also gained a negative reputation among the poorer classes. Some slum residents feel that the rents in public units are too high. Others feel that living in public housing subjects one to too much authority, to too many rules and regulations. Still others feel that living in public housing labels one a welfare case. This suggests that public housing is less of a resource for urban renewal than professionals may presume.

#### Suggestions for Improving the Relocation Process

This study implies that the relocation machinery needs revamping. To be sure, relocation is a necessary process, but at present fails to achieve the goals prescribed by Congress.

Although the Detroit Housing Commission realizes that it has certain problems, in many instances professional planners and other city administrators have a tendency to see the city only from

a technical point of view. It not often is, but should be recognized that both the technical and sociological viewpoints are important.

As a consequence of doing research in the area of relocation, the author has several suggestions, both original and quoted which, if followed, could improve the relocation process. They are summarized below:

1. We must improve our race relations. Negroes and other American minorities are concentrated in the inner cities. If our society keeps limiting them to these living areas, the overcrowding which will result will overcome our renewal efforts. This effect is already being seen and felt.

2. We must realize, nationally, that replacing old dilapidated neighborhoods with new high-rent housing is not the answer to renewal, for the people who are displaced by these projects cannot move into high-rent housing, either because their race doesn't permit it, or they are without the necessary monthly income.

3. It has been suggested, from time to time, that some sort of temporary new housing be established so that displaced persons can be relocated in decent, safe and sanitary, but temporary, dwellings until more permanent dwellings of a good quality can be found. This, however, must be strictly controlled, for too often the word "temporary" means "permanent."

4. More programs should be forced at the national and local level to aim at convincing the people of the urgent need for urban renewal, and of the disadvantages of harboring slums. The general



populace, long in the dark on this subject, must be made to realize that the longer slums exist, they will grow more and more and this growth, in turn, means higher costs, resulting in higher taxes.

5. We must realize that a campaign to "sell" public housing to the qualified would be beneficial to all. Many displaced persons have an aversion to public housing because of what it may stand for, e.g., government, the poor, welfare cases, etc., but often people who could be better off in public housing move into worse slums than those from which they moved. This is definitely not improving the city.

Herbert Gans, who has been involved in various urban renewal projects, recommends several proposals for procedural change in relocation policies:<sup>32</sup>

1. The relocation plan should take priority over the renewal phases of the total plan, and no renewal plan should be approved by federal or local agencies until a proper relocation plan has been developed.

2. This relocation plan should be based on a thorough knowledge of the project area residents, so that the plan fits their demands and needs and so that officials have some understanding of the consequences of their actions before they put the plan into effect. The federal agency ought to re-evaluate its relation to the local agencies, raising its requirements for such phases as rent collection. The latter would make it possible for the local agency to be more sensitive to certain needs of the project area residents.

3. Any renewal plan which requires the clearance of an area and large-scale relocation should contain provisions for the rehabilitation of site structures if changes in market conditions suddenly reduce the amount of land required by the redeveloper.

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<sup>32</sup>Gans, op. cit., p. 24.

4. Local and federal agencies should provide interest-free loans to relocatees who wish to buy new homes.

5. These agencies should provide similar loans to project area landlords whose present buildings provide decent, safe and sanitary housing, to allow them to purchase new buildings in other areas or to rehabilitate such buildings and to make them available to project area residents.

6. Landlords with units eligible for relocation housing anywhere in the community should be encouraged to rent to relocatees, through such incentives as rehabilitation loans, subsidies for redecorating, and the like.

7. When project area rents have been low, so that residents' housing costs are raised sharply as a result of relocation, the federal and local agencies should set up a rent moratorium to allow relocatees to save some money for future rentals. The length of this moratorium should be based on the gap between project area and relocation area rentals.

8. Liquidation funds in lieu of moving allowances should be provided to small store owners and other businessmen who will not be able to reopen their firms elsewhere. Other federal and local programs should be made available to provide occupational retraining and other vocational aids to those who want them.

9. Communication between the redevelopment agency and the residents should be set up so that:

(a) The amount of information given to site residents is maximized, and the development of rumors due to information vacuums is prevented.

(b) Officials are trained to understand the inevitably deprivatory nature of relocation for the residents, so that they have more insight into what relocation means to the residents, and can develop a more tolerant attitude towards their reactions of shock and protest.

10. The relocation staff should be strengthened by the addition of:

(a) Social workers who can provide aid to residents faced with additional problems resulting from relocation, and can make referrals to other city agencies that deal with such problems.

(b) Real estate technicians who can develop a thorough inventory of the city's housing supply, and can also weed out unscrupulous landlords who are likely to exploit the relocatees.

11. In relocation projects that involve the destruction of a positive social system, experiments should be conducted to:

(a) Find ways of relocating together extended families living together in separate but adjacent households, provided they want to be moved en masse.

(b) Make it possible for important project area institutions and organizations to re-establish themselves in those neighborhoods which have received the majority of relocatees, or in central locations where they are accessible to scattered relocatees.

(c) Develop group relocation methods to allow members of an ethnic group who want to stay together to move into an area as a group. This is especially important if there are neighborhoods with available relocation housing in which there are presently no members of that ethnic group.

12. Previous relocation projects suggest that most people relocate themselves, and only a small proportion are relocated by the agency. In the future, procedures should be revised on this basis. Then the major functions of the relocation agency should be:

(a) To make sure that the supply of relocation housing is sufficient to give relocatees a maximum choice of decent, safe and sanitary dwelling units at rents they are willing to pay and in neighborhoods in which they want to live.

(b) To provide information and other aids that will enable relocatees to evaluate these dwelling units, and to make the best housing choice in relation to their needs and wants.

(c) To offer relocation service to those who want to be moved by the agency.

To be sure, many planners and city administrators would not approve of some of the above proposals for it is evident that they are radical and would involve much more expense than is experienced in the present renewal and relocation procedures. However, modifications of our present procedures in the general direction of the above proposals will tend to make relocation much easier and more satisfying for both the residents and administrators.

Roger R. Rice, a graduate student in sociology at Michigan State University recently wrote a short paper for an urban planning seminar in which he came forth with several suggestions for the improvement of the relocation process.<sup>33</sup> The author would like to mention what he considers the most important of these proposals and expand somewhat upon them.

1. Better trained and qualified staff for relocation service. As far as the author is concerned this is one of the most important aspects of relocation. Up to very recently, there has been no evidence of training people especially in relocation. Even now, there is very little of it going on.

2. Mandatory checks on where all relocatees go and follow-up studies--with authority to improve conditions if not satisfactory. In actuality, most agencies have a mandatory check on the newly acquired housing, but what is needed is a stricter inspection policy. One check is all that is usually completed and many times, this is a very lax one. Often, if the house is considered substandard and no response is received from a "substandard notice" the case is dismissed.

3. Higher standards for inspection of relocation housing. Obviously, this is related to No. 2, but is different in this respect. To be sure, the inspections are sometimes quite lax. There is no standard to go by in many cases. There should be rules set down by the federal government and adhered to, under some sort of penalty if not complied with. Perhaps some of the laxity would be omitted.

### Unexplored Areas

This thesis revealed that a pattern of relocation does exist, but detailed study could explore the ethnic, religious and

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<sup>33</sup> Roger R. Rice, "The Problem of Relocation" (unpublished paper prepared for an urban renewal seminar, Department of Urban Planning and Landscape Architecture, Michigan State University, Winter, 1960).

and cultural ties which pull relocatees together and set them apart culturally and psychologically from middle class professionals.

It was the intent of this thesis to study relocation as carried out by a relocation agency, and to analyze some of the objective consequences of this relocation process. A study of the people who are relocated was not defined at the outset as within the scope of the thesis. However, the difference between the prescribed and operating functions cannot be fully analyzed without reference to their behavior, and the belief and values that motivate such behavior. For example, this study has discovered that slum-dwellers avoid contact with authority, prefer to locate housing without official help, and apparently have a low opinion of public housing. All of this prevents relocation from functioning as Congress intended.

The cultural gap between middle class professionals and lower-class slum-dwellers is generic to the problem of relocation. It is a class difference, but often as in this case, compounded of ethnic and racial differences. A full exploration of the differences in perspectives and values, with consequences for urban renewal, is a study of considerable magnitude, certainly beyond the scope and framework of this study. Yet it remains the significant issue for analysis, with implications that extend beyond urban renewal.

APPENDIX

THE RELOCATION AGENCY OF THE CITY  
OF DETROIT

## THE RELOCATION AGENCY OF THE CITY OF DETROIT

The Responsibility

The Detroit Housing Commission has been designated as the agency responsible for handling the relocation of all families, single persons, and commercial establishments displaced by all types of governmental action in the City of Detroit.

On December 17, 1956, the Common Council approved the establishment of a relocation agency office at the central office of the Housing Commission. A relocation supervisor is in charge of the office.

Relocation personnel are recruited by the Detroit Civil Service Commission in accordance with regular procedures followed by the City of Detroit. The Housing Commission now has on its management and tenant selection staffs employees who have had relocation experience. This experience was obtained during clearance of the Edward J. Jeffries and Douglass Homes public housing sites and of the Gratiot redevelopment site. Some of the people now employed by the Relocation Agency have had social welfare experience. The present supervisor is a housing manager (grade II). He has had experience as site manager of the four blocks acquired by the city for its public housing development, known as Michigan 1-11.

The present relocation service is financed entirely by the City of Detroit with funds especially allocated for this purpose.

The Relocation Agency staff strength is presently as follows:

1960

| <u>Title</u>             | <u>Salary Range per Year</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|--------------|
| 1 Relocation Supervisor  | \$6526-7390                  | \$7390       |
| 1 Public Housing Aide    | 4657-5107                    | 5107         |
| 1 Technical Aide General | 4967-5065                    | 5065         |
| 1 Senior Clerk           | 4566-5007                    | 5007         |
| 2 Typists                | 3772-4112                    | 8224         |
| 1 Stenographer           | 3958-4222                    | 4222         |

In addition to the above staff the Housing Commission had anticipated that the City Plan Commission will, from time to time, have personnel assigned to handle matters relative to the master plan industrial pattern and provide map service, but as of 1960, no such personnel have been so assigned. It was hoped, at least, to have one senior city planner and one technical aide, general, to become the first personnel from the Plan Commission to help with relocation matters. It would be the responsibility of these personnel to assist small businessmen and other commercial establishments in finding suitable locations.

In addition to the Civil Service employees shown in the foregoing list, it is the intention of the Housing Commission to employ housing expeditors on a part-time basis. Their job will be to establish contacts with local real estate firms and landlords and to obtain listings of available vacancies suitable for use for relocation, either for sale or for rent.

When tentative plans were being laid for the operation of



the Relocation Agency, it was expected that during the peak period of relocation work, of the foregoing staff, one public housing aide and one technical aide general would be assigned to full-time field work for each specific redevelopment project. They would work under the direction of the relocation supervisor and their primary responsibility would be to establish and maintain contacts with site residents, giving them whatever assistance is indicated to meet their needs. Housing aides and technical aides not assigned to specific redevelopment projects will constitute a pool of field workers to be assigned to the relocation of families from conservation projects, from highways' areas, etc. The general staff will, in other words, be responsible for the relocation of families displaced through all types of governmental action other than redevelopment.

According to the staff of the Relocation Agency, the reason for this division of work is that the relocation load expected within the next few years will be particularly heavy. Also, while every possible type of relocation aid or assistance will be given to all families displaced through governmental action, it is recognized that persons, businesses, and families displaced from projects financed through Title I of the Housing Act of 1949 may be given assistance beyond that provided for other displaced families and that relocation requirements for such projects are more specific than those generally applied.

As property is acquired by the City for urban renewal projects, site management personnel will be recruited and site management

offices will be opened within the larger clearance areas. Site management personnel will work in close cooperation with relocation personnel and will share on-site office space with them for the convenience of residents and workers. For example, the project studied in this thesis, the Westside Redevelopment project, has a central relocation office in this project area.

#### The Relocation Advisory Committee

The Relocation Advisory Committee is a city-wide committee which concerns itself with the over-all problems of displacement resulting from all types of governmental action. On the committee are representatives from a variety of public interest groups, from public and private social agencies, from each public agency engaged in any type of program which displaces people, and from the areas where displacement is occurring.

The members of the Housing Commission staff feel that coordination of all displacement through this type of broad, city-wide committee is essential to the success of the City of Detroit's plans for community improvement. However, they also feel that as specific projects get under way, subcommittees of the over-all advisory committee, established to deal with the detailed problems of each project will be necessary, and provision for such subcommittees is being made.

Personnel of the over-all committee will include leadership from the various project areas. These leaders will be chosen because of their sense of community responsibility and their acceptance as

leaders by (1) the people to be displaced, and (2) the community at large. One of these recognized leaders is the Reverend Father Francis H. Kern of the Roman Catholic Most Holy Trinity Church, located in the Westside Redevelopment area of the City.

Subcommittees for the projects will, of course, be made up primarily of people who live and work within the project area. Within Detroit's redevelopment projects and first conservation project, a number of responsible leaders have emerged and shown a constructive interest in relocation planning.

Detroit's Policies and Procedures for Locating,  
Inspecting, and Referring Site Occupants to  
Permanent Relocation Accommodations

As was previously pointed out, the central relocation service established on December 17, 1956, is a part of the Housing Commission and has been constituted as a separate division under the supervision of the director-secretary. The commission is the local public housing agency and also the urban renewal agency for the City of Detroit.

According to intentions the relocation supervisor is supposed to work closely with the Housing Commission's urban renewal, technical, public housing operations, and research division in the development of documentary material pertaining to relocation and in the execution of relocation plans for the various projects for which the Commission is responsible. As was mentioned earlier, working relationships are supposed to be developed with personnel from the

Plan Commission for this purpose.

Description of Methods for Making Inspections and  
Certifying the Habitability of Housing  
Accommodations Located by Site  
Families or a Local  
Public Agency

1. The Inspection Sheet

The inspection will be used for inspecting all dwellings used for the relocation of families from the various sites. Most of the items on this inspection sheet have been taken from the City of Detroit's housing and building codes which are enforced by the Department of Health and the Department of Building and Safety Engineering. They were developed in a conference of representatives from the two departments and from the Housing Commission. Additional items, not included in the codes, have been added. All items incorporate standards at least as high as those required by law and in some instances the standards are higher.

2. Referrals by the Local Public Agency

All dwellings to which families are referred by the Detroit Housing Commission will be inspected prior to the referral. Staff members given this assignment will attend training sessions conducted by representatives of the Department of Health and the Department of Safety Engineering so that they will be fully qualified for this inspection task. If possible,

persons with previous experience of this type will be recruited. Dwellings found to meet the standards shown on the inspection sheet will be used for permanent relocation referrals. If the standards are not met, the dwellings will be classified as unsuitable for permanent relocation and any arrangements for their use made with realtors, expeditors, etc., will be cancelled. However, under certain conditions, outlined below, such dwellings, if in habitable condition, will be used for temporary relocation.

If site residents move on their own initiative after receiving the Housing Commission's informational statement and prior to legal action, an inspection of their new dwelling will be made by a relocation staff member and an inspection sheet completed. If standards as outlined on the inspection sheet are met, the relocation obligation in the particular instance will be recorded as "obligation discharged." If the standards are not met, a record to this effect will be made and further assistance will be offered until the family has been given an opportunity to move to "decent, safe and sanitary" housing. All contacts with families moving voluntarily will be recorded. Every effort will be made to keep at a minimum voluntary moves to unsatisfactory housing. This will be accomplished by keeping site residents fully informed and by establishing working relationships with them at an early date.

Every effort will be made to keep the number of disappeared families at a minimum. This will be accomplished through

distribution of written material emphasizing the importance of notifying the relocation office when a move is contemplated and through frequent home visit checks of the entire site. Contacts with schools in the area will be developed at an early date so that the relocation office will be informed of all school withdrawals and the resulting new addresses. Families will also be traced through the utility companies, if necessary. On previous occasions, the Detroit Edison Company, Michigan Bell Telephone Company, and the Michigan Consolidated Gas Company have assisted in tracing lost families. Further, relatives and references will be contacted in tracing these families.

Temporary relocation housing has been a "touchy" question ever since the word "relocation" came into existence. The word "temporary" implies that something is not permanent, therefore, not satisfactory for extended use. In the case of the Relocation Agency, however, this isn't exactly so. According to the Housing Commission, if private dwellings made available are found by staff inspectors to be in safe and habitable condition and, in general, at least as desirable as housing within the site, yet do not meet all standards for decent, safe and sanitary housing, they may be used for temporary relocation. However, only in emergency situations will temporary relocations be made. They will be kept at an absolute minimum and will be made only if the families so relocated are in full accord with the plan.

In determining whether dwellings are in habitable condition

and suitable for temporary relocation, the following criteria will be used:

a. Building Specifications and Repairs

The over-all condition of the building must be satisfactory.

b. Water Supply and Facilities

All items in the inspection sheet must be met.

c. Sanitation

Items 1 and 4 in the inspection sheet must be met.

d. Fire Precautions

Premises must be free of fire hazards.

e. Wiring

Wiring must be in safe condition.

f. Heating

Standards shown in the inspection sheet must be met.

The Detroit Housing Commission permits temporary relocation only under two conditions:

- a. When on-site tenancy constitutes a hazard for the family which cannot be practically corrected and a satisfactory permanent move cannot be immediately achieved.
- b. When continued tenancy in the on-site relocation seriously hampers progress of the project and a satisfactory permanent move cannot be achieved within a reasonable period.

To help residents who are attempting to find their own housing, the Commission has printed a pamphlet entitled, When You Look For A House. The purpose of this document, according to officials of the Relocation Agency is to outline in simple language the items

to be noted by site residents who are attempting to find housing. Thus, there is a serious attempt by the authorities to make sure that the emphasis is placed on "decent, safe and sanitary" housing. Of course, there is no guarantee that the people will oblige by following these forms, even to a small degree. The Relocation Agency even offers to answer any questions "relocatees" may have about the forms or moving in general. A private conference can be arranged between some official of the Agency and a prospective "home hunter."

The pamphlet, When You Look For A House, is illustrated as follows.

#### Relocatee's Guide to House Hunting

"In looking for a new house, remember that it should be 'decent, safe and sanitary.' This means it should have certain features set forth by our local health and building departments. Your new house should have all these things:"

1. Rooms which are large enough for comfortable living . . . with at least 80 square feet.
2. Enough space for sleeping . . . 500 cubic feet for every person.
3. Ceilings which are seven and one-half feet high.
4. Walls and ceilings in good repair.
5. In the case of basement quarters, no more than half the ceiling height may be below sidewalk level and ceilings should be at least seven feet high.



6. Basements must be dry.
7. Every room must have one or more windows.
8. Porches and railings must be firm and safe.
9. Buildings must be strong and in good condition.
10. The roof must be in good condition.
11. Windows must be in good condition.
12. A dwelling must have plumbing which is in good working condition, a private sink, bathtub and toilet which is not shared with other persons or families, and hot and cold running water.
13. Be sure there are no rats in the building.
14. Screens must be provided from April 15 to November 15.
15. Every bathroom and kitchen must have an outside window.
16. The outside and inside of the house should be free of garbage and rubbish.
17. Buildings with three or more dwelling units must have two outside doors.
18. Stairways and doorways must be kept clear.
19. Dangerous materials which will burn easily or explode must not be stored in buildings or yards.
20. Wiring must be in safe condition.
21. Heating equipment must be safe and in good working order.

### Record Keeping

The following forms are utilized to provide accurate and complete relocation records:

1. Site Occupant Relocation Record

The "Site Occupant Relocation Record" is used in the preparation of data for relocation plans and is designated primarily for Title I projects. Its purpose is to secure information, usually on a sampling basis, which will enable the Housing Commission to plan for the relocation of all families, and businesses within a specific area.

2. Relocation Survey Register

The basic record of relocation activity for individual householders and families will be the "Relocation Survey Register," completed at the time property is acquired for every person or family living within the boundaries of such property on the date of acquisition.

3. Household Control Card

In addition to the "Relocation Survey Register," a "Household Control Card" carrying basic information on relocation activity for individuals and families will be used. This card will be filed alphabetically and will give easy access to a summary of basic information on each family or household.

4. Vacant Dwelling Record

In order to have adequate control of dwellings made available for relocation purposes and to record referrals made and

5. Structure Control Card

In order to maintain a satisfactory control over on-site structures and a complete record of the dates they are vacated and eventually demolished, a "Structure Control Card" will be used.

6. Commercial and Institutional

Pertinent relocation information on business establishments, industrial plants, and institutions will be recorded on a "Commercial and Institutional Control Record."

7. Referral Form

A "Referral Form" will be issued to families or persons, giving them listings of private housing obtained by the Housing Commission. The top portion of this form will be completed (in duplicate) at the relocation office, the other given to the referral. One copy will be retained at the relocation office, the other given to the referred person for presentation to the landlord, real estate agency or management company. When information is received as to action taken on the referral, the bottom portion of the form will be completed and retained in the relocation office.

8. Inspection Check Sheet, Site Transfers

In emergency situations families or persons may occasionally be transferred from one on-site location to another. Before such action is taken, the unit to which the tenant is to be transferred will be inspected and the "Inspection Check Sheet" completed.

9. Relocation Summary Sheet

A "Relocation Summary Check Sheet" will be used as a final control on relocation action. It will include pertinent information about persons relocated and about structures vacated.

Notification to the Site Residents

Written statements are sent out in ample time notifying residents that their property has been acquired by the City of Detroit from their landlord and that field survey people will be coming to visit them to explain anything in regard to relocation.

Legal Action and Non-payment of Rent

The Housing Commission will take legal action only in extreme cases, in order to insure that residents are moved out in time so as not to block urban renewal progress. The following four reasons shall constitute a basis for eviction proceedings:

1. Non-payment of rent.
2. Committing of a nuisance.
3. Refusal of housing which meets all relocation standards and requirements.
4. Complete lack of cooperation such as repeated refusal to discuss plans or give necessary information.

There are two forms to be used for terminating tenancy for non-payment of rent (Seven Day Notice) or for the other reasons outlined (30 Day Notice). Eviction is the last resort. Every attempt to arrive at a solution with the family will be made.

### Relocation Payments

Relocation payments, consisting of moving expenses and/or reimbursement for actual direct loss of property, will be made in amounts not to exceed a total of \$200 per family or single householder, and \$2500 for businesses for those displaced from Title I Sites.

## SAMPLE OF FORM LETTER SENT TO SITE RESIDENTS

Dear Resident:

As you know, the building in which you are living is one of a number in the ~~---~~ Conservation Project area which will be torn down.

The Detroit Housing Commission has purchased property in your neighborhood in order to improve the community and will be removing certain buildings.

Because you must move in order to make these improvements possible, a Relocation Office has been opened at 2211 Orleans. Office hours are 8:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M., Monday through Friday. Mr. Homer Saunders Relocation Supervisor, and his staff will help you find another place to live. They will keep in touch with you through office interviews and home visits. Their lists of available apartments, flats and houses are for your use.

If you are interested in public housing, they will explain the rules for admission, accept your application if you qualify, and give you preference for existing vacancies.

Also available to families who must move is financial help in the form of relocation payments of not more than \$200 to cover the cost of moving or loss of property. A written statement of the conditions under which payment may be made may be obtained at the Relocation Office.

The Detroit Housing Commission is responsible for seeing that the house you select is in good condition, convenient to your job, and safe and sanitary. Attached is a list of housing standards you may use as a guide when looking for another home. You should not accept any house, flat or apartment unless it meets these standards.

The staff at the Relocation Office will want to know when and where you plan to move. Give your new address to the Relocation Office before you move. They will visit the home you have chosen to make sure it is in good condition.

Do not accept temporary housing unless it is absolutely necessary. If you do find it necessary to move into temporary accommodations, the Relocation staff will still be responsible for helping you locate a better place to live.

The plans for your neighborhood require that the building in which you are living be vacated as soon as possible.

Meanwhile you should begin to look for another place. Contact the Relocation Office at 2211 Orleans, Woodward 3-0955 as soon as you can. The staff there is waiting to help you.

Very truly yours,

DETROIT HOUSING COMMISSION

Mark K. Herley  
Director-Secretary

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