

Let Contract for Rural Housing In Darlington

Washington, Feb. 1—(AP)—The United States Housing authority today approved a contract of \$77,900 awarded to Southern Builders, incorporated, Florence, S. C., for construction of a 45-unit rural re-housing project in Darlington county, S. C.

A unit in John Hope Homes, United States Housing authority low-rent housing project in Atlanta, Georgia, was completely furnished by residents of the nearby university homes.

According to the United States Housing authority, about sixty percent of all American farm families, or approximately 4,000,000 families are living under substandard housing conditions.

Birthday Ball Brings in \$70

Gonzales Gardens Tenants' association gave a Roosevelt Birthday ball in the social room of the housing development Saturday and raised \$70, which was turned over to the fund used for fighting infantile paralysis.

Among those present were Dr. Frank C. Owens, state chairman of the committee for the celebration of President Roosevelt's birthday, and Mayor L. B. Owens. Doctor Owens expressed himself as being greatly pleased at the amount of money raised. William R. Geddings, supervising manager of Gonzales Gardens, thanked those who attended and made the success of the occasion possible.

Included in the entertainment features were orchestra music, a floor show, a jitterbug contest, a waltz contest, square and round dancing.

City To Open 18th And 19th Playgrounds Here Next Week

Opening of Columbia's 18th and 19th playgrounds next week was announced today by Councilman Fred D. Marshall, head of the parks and playgrounds department.

These new playgrounds will be opened near Gonzales Gardens and Allen-Benedict court, the city's newest low cost housing projects.

Mr. Marshall pointed out that the playgrounds would not be for the exclusive use of tenants of the two housing projects but that children living in the vicinity would also be given use of the playgrounds.

Deluxe equipment including, two styles of swings, large and small, basketball courts, a volley ball court, a soft ball field, sand boxes, shelters, large and small slides, see-saw, a gym set, an enclosed merry-go-round and an octagonal

climb-a-round, has been installed in the Gonzales Gardens playgrounds and similar equipment will be installed in the Allen-Benedict court playground.

In addition to the playground activities, which are being supervised by WPA recreational directors, schools for pre-school age children, 3 to 6, are being conducted at the two projects by the WPA.

Mr. Marshall explained that the city's entire playground program had been placed under the national defense program in order that the WPA personnel might continue work at the various parks and playgrounds.

The councilman pointed out that soldiers who have families living here should send their children to the parks and playgrounds to participate in the activities.

Housing Project Covers Coal Seam

There's a seam of Pennsylvania anthracite underlying Valley View Terrace, public housing community in Scranton, Pa. However, the tenants in the 240 dwelling-unit project will get their heat from a central heating plant.

Title to the coal and subsurface was donated to the local housing authority by the owner. The coal will remain unmined.

United States Housing authority low-rent housing communities are today serving as centers for WPA cultural projects.

Federal Housing Man Calls Upon Governor

William G. Jones, of Washington, called upon Gov. Eubank today in connection with the rural housing program planned for this state.

The governor invited Mr. Jones to remain in Columbia and talk with members of the general assembly from districts in the state which are interested in the establishment of rural housing projects. Mr. Jones said he would return in 10 days for such discussion.

Rent Costs In Columbia Are Up 31%

Labor Department Survey

Also Shows Gains For Other S. C. Cities

The findings of the annual survey by the state department of labor of rent costs in South Carolina were made public today by W. Rhett Harley, state commissioner of labor.

Using costs in ten towns for purposes of comparison, the study shows that since this time last year, rents have increased in seven of these towns and decreased in three.

Taking the average of these towns, it was found that the increase was 14.1 per cent over last winter. The rent average in those towns last March was \$21.71, as against an average cost of \$24.77 this year.

The survey, as last year, was confined to five-room houses and apartments, and in each town was made in three categories. The three separate areas used in each town was labelled "near business area," "residential area" and "lowest (as to cost) area."

The report gives the average rent costs in each of these areas in each town and then the average of the three.

Columbia, Aiken, Orangeburg, Charleston, Summerville, Beaufort, Florence, Spartanburg, Greenville and Laurens are the towns used for the surveys. (Others were surveyed, but they were towns in which no surveys were made last winter and for that reason there are no comparative figures as to those.

Rent costs in Columbia, the study by the department's agents here showed, increased 31.2 per cent since last winter, and the average cost of rent here was the highest of any of the ten towns involved.

The average rent in the five-room category in Columbia in January of this year was found to be \$37.23 a month. It was \$28.38 per month last March, when the 1940 survey was made. The average charge in the near-business (section) area here was \$43.75 per month in January; in the residential area, \$52.15, and in the lowest-cost area, \$15.00.

Charleston's average in January of this year, counting all three areas, was \$34.42, as against \$28.29 last winter, the report of the survey discloses.

Rents increased in Columbia, Charleston, Summerville, Florence, Spartanburg, Greenville and Laurens, and decreased in Aiken, Orangeburg and Beaufort.

Commissioner Harley ascribes increased rent costs to large-scale defense activities at Charleston, Columbia and Spartanburg, as well as at Summerville, which is near Charleston, and says other places where increases have occurred have enjoyed the relative business boom now in progress in the state.

Harley believes Columbia's rent went up higher than Charleston's because of the comparatively sudden influx of workers and soldiers and their families for construction work or for army service at Fort Jackson. He points out that Charleston's "defense boom" growing out of the Charleston Navy yard, has been less sudden than that at Columbia.

Average five-room rent charges, taking into consideration the three classifications employed in the survey, were found to be as follows in January of this year:

Columbia, \$37.23; Charleston,

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Italians Back Along Entire Front

By the Associated Press
CAIRO, Egypt, Feb. 10.—British forces, launching a new drive against Italy's East African colony Eritrea from the north, have occupied the Red Sea port of Mersa el Aclai and the town of Karora, on the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan frontier.

KINSTON HOUSING UNIT

Kinston, N. C., Feb. 11—(AP)—The Kinston Housing authority announced today bids would be opened February 18 on construction of a 140-unit Negro housing development.

State Rent Rate Shows An Increase

The average monthly rent rate for ten South Carolina cities and towns increased from \$21.71 last March to \$24.77 this year, an annual survey by State Commissioner of Labor W. Rhett Harley showed yesterday.

Columbia, Aiken, Orangeburg, Charleston, Summerville, Beaufort, Florence, Spartanburg, Greenville and Laurens were used for the purposes of the survey, which showed increases for all but Aiken, Orangeburg and Beaufort. Decreases were shown for those three places.

The survey was confined to five-room dwellings and apartments.

Rent costs in Columbia increased 31.2 per cent, since last winter and the average here was higher than in any of the other nine points.

Average five-room charges for 20 cities and towns:

Columbia, \$37.23; Charleston, \$34.42; Greenville, \$30.52; Spartanburg, \$29.25; Florence, \$28.40; Hartsville, \$27.06; Aiken, \$26.50; Anderson, \$26.25; Newberry, \$26.17; Greenwood, \$25.83; Kingstree, \$25; Summerville, \$23.89; Bennettsville, \$22.40; Orangeburg, \$21.67; Rock Hill, \$21.56; Laurens, \$19.17; Gaffney, \$17.44; Beaufort, \$15.33; Allendale, \$13.67.