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ONE DOLLAR A YEAR IN ADVANCE

Friday, December 17, 1937

Can See Many Miles  
From a point on the Trail Ridge  
road in Rocky Mountain national  
park in Colorado more than 100  
miles of the mountain range can be  
seen.

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Proprietary Remedies  
Toilet Requisites  
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Montgomery County

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yourself.

Naturally you want any help you  
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assistant. It will save your time,  
your energy and your money. A  
telephone will make you money—far  
more than the few cents a day that  
it costs.

It will keep you in touch with  
markets—getting the best prices.  
It will summon help in emergen-  
cies such as fire and illness.

It provides social contacts.  
Farming is a business. The cost?  
Business needs a telephone. The cost?  
Very low, only a few cents a day.

THE TELEPHONE COMPANY

THE FARM FAMILY NEEDS A TELEPHONE  
EVEN MORE THAN MOST FOLKS

King Midas Had Donkey Ears  
King Midas, although the world's  
richest man, had donkey's ears. So  
the legend tells us. And his barber,  
unable to contain the dreadful se-  
cret, whispered it into a hole in the  
ground. And the reeds that grew on  
the spot, says Science Service, re-  
peated his whisper and betrayed the  
secret. All of this, declares Prof.  
Robert Lehmann-Nitsche of Berlin,  
is simply effort on the part of the  
Greeks to explain the fact that this  
half-fabulous Oriental monarch wore  
a cap consisting of a horse's or  
wild ass' scalp with the ears and  
part of the mane attached. Pro-  
fessor Lehmann-Nitsche has found  
widespread evidence of the wearing  
of such ear-ornamented caps in  
early times. Later, when metal  
helmets replaced the original hide  
caps, they were ornamented with  
erect metal ears. And the horse-  
hair crests that still adorn the fancy  
dress helmets of some heavy cav-  
alry corps are a last remnant of the  
mane that hung from the old horse-  
scalp caps of ancient hunter-kings.

Betsy Ross' Name

Ross was Betsy Ross' maiden  
name, says the Philadelphia Inquir-  
er. She was the daughter of Samuel  
and Rebecca Ross. In 1772, she  
eloped to Gloucester, N. J., with  
John Ross, an upholsterer, and  
there married him. It was as the  
widow of Ross that she achieved  
fame by her reputed making of the  
first American flag. In 1777 she  
married Capt. Joseph Ashburne at  
Old Swedes church. Ashburne was  
captured by the British and died in  
Old Mill prison, Plymouth, England.  
In 1783 she married John Claypole.

Historic Reminders in Lima

In Lima, Peruvian capital dating  
from the early Spanish days of the  
Fifteenth century, are notable mon-  
uments reminiscent of the viceroys,  
the University of San Marcos, the  
oldest seat of learning in the West-  
ern hemisphere, and the finest ex-  
amples of Spanish colonial architec-  
ture in existence. Adjacent to mod-  
ern Lima are the ancient shrines of  
the pre-conquest peoples and the  
dead city of Coeval, which vies  
with Babylon in its antiquity.—  
Rocky Mountain Herald.

Fires in Schools

Exceed Five Daily

Kansas City Mo.—School build-  
ings catch fire at the rate of more  
than five a day, Dr. David J.  
Price, chief soil chemist of the  
Department of Agriculture, told  
the National Safety Congress con-  
vention here.

Most fires start in the base-  
ment, said Price, who investigat-  
ed the New London, Texas, ex-  
plosion of last spring which took  
more than 30 lives. Annually  
school fires cause \$5,000,000 loss,  
and in recent years 800 lives have  
been lost less in 30 outstanding  
disasters.

"SLUMS MUST  
GO!" says Straus  
Housing Authority Chief  
Opens Washington Office,  
Ready to Fight Squalor

By JOSEPH W. LaBINE

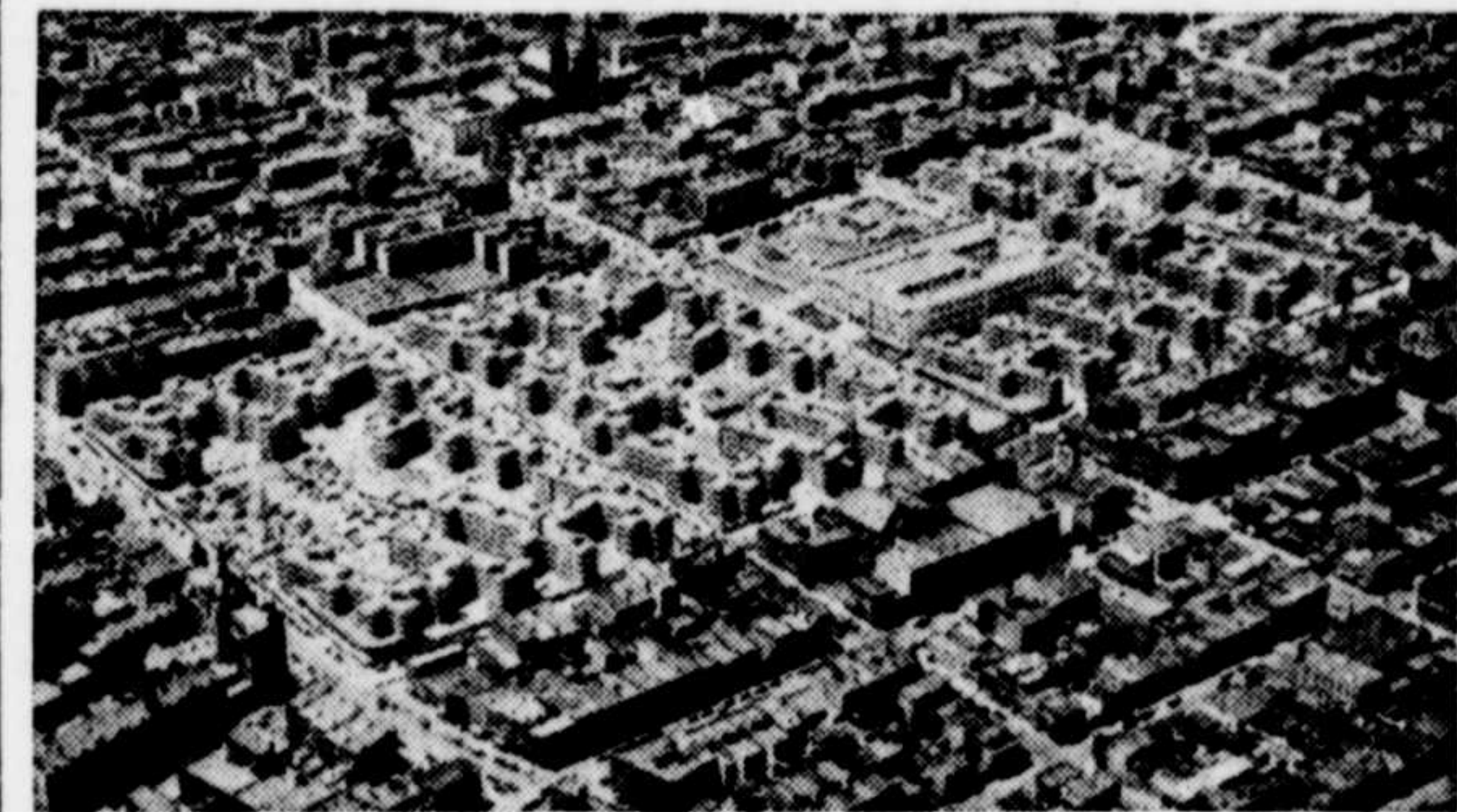
Maybe, in the snugness of your living room, you thought  
American living standards were pretty high. But that was before  
a fellow named Nathan Straus became director of the  
United States Housing Authority. After less than two months  
on the job, during which he's talked freely, Nathan Straus has  
made Americans hang their heads in shame. Our housing condi-  
tions, he explains, are deplorable.

Mr. Straus is not connected with the Federal Housing  
administration, which has been insuring loans on private  
dwellings and is now attempting to stimulate business  
through a housing boom. Although  
he's interested in FHA, the mon-  
umental task facing Straus is to clean  
out the slums. He is administrator  
for the new Wagner-Steagall act.

For the present, all United States  
housing activities are aimed at the  
spectre of Recession, a severe dip in  
business which threatens to wipe  
out many of the past three years'  
gains. President Roosevelt seeks to  
stimulate America's financial pulse  
with a housing boom through liber-  
alization of existing laws, as out-  
lined in his special message to con-  
gress on November 29. Through this  
program he forecasts construction  
of 3,000,000 to 4,000,000 new houses  
in the next five years.

The Key to Recovery.

Though slum clearance and pri-  
vate housing are separate enter-  
prises, both can help avoid Reces-  
sion. Economists now regard a  
large volume of new construction as  
the keystone to further recovery.



Greatest of PWA's slum-clearance projects was Williamsburg Houses  
in New York, costing \$13,459,000, covering 12 city blocks and providing  
homes for 1,622. The government expects to get half its investment back.

tion. Economists now regard a  
large volume of new construction as  
the keystone to further recovery.

The small improvement in building  
evidence last spring was hit on the  
head by rising costs, strikes, an  
armament boom and growing un-  
certainty about the future. Drastic  
action must be taken immediately,  
for America faces the worst housing  
shortage in its history. Speaking  
conservatively, we need 900,000 new  
dwelling units every year. Actually  
we built only 57,000 in 1935, 250,000  
in 1936 and about 400,000 this year.

Although Mr. Straus' building ac-  
tivity will be confined to helping  
those who cannot help themselves,  
it does not mean that business will  
not profit. The history of slum  
clearance projects, in which Europe  
leads America to a shameful de-  
gree, is that government building al-  
ways stimulates private construc-  
tion.

The Wagner-Steagall bill was  
passed by congress last spring after  
a stormy three-year legislative life.  
Briefly, it creates the United States  
Housing authority which Mr. Straus  
heads. It provides half a billion  
dollars to be loaned state and mu-  
nicipal housing authorities during  
the next three years, for use solely  
in creating new dwelling units for  
the tenement population. Between  
100,000 and 120,000 units is its three-  
year goal. In addition to the loans,  
annual "subsidy" appropriations  
will be made to state and local au-  
thorities for making up the differ-  
ence between the "economic rent"  
on houses built and what the low-  
income renter can afford to pay. For  
1938 this subsidy appropriation to-  
tals \$26,000,000.

How It Works.

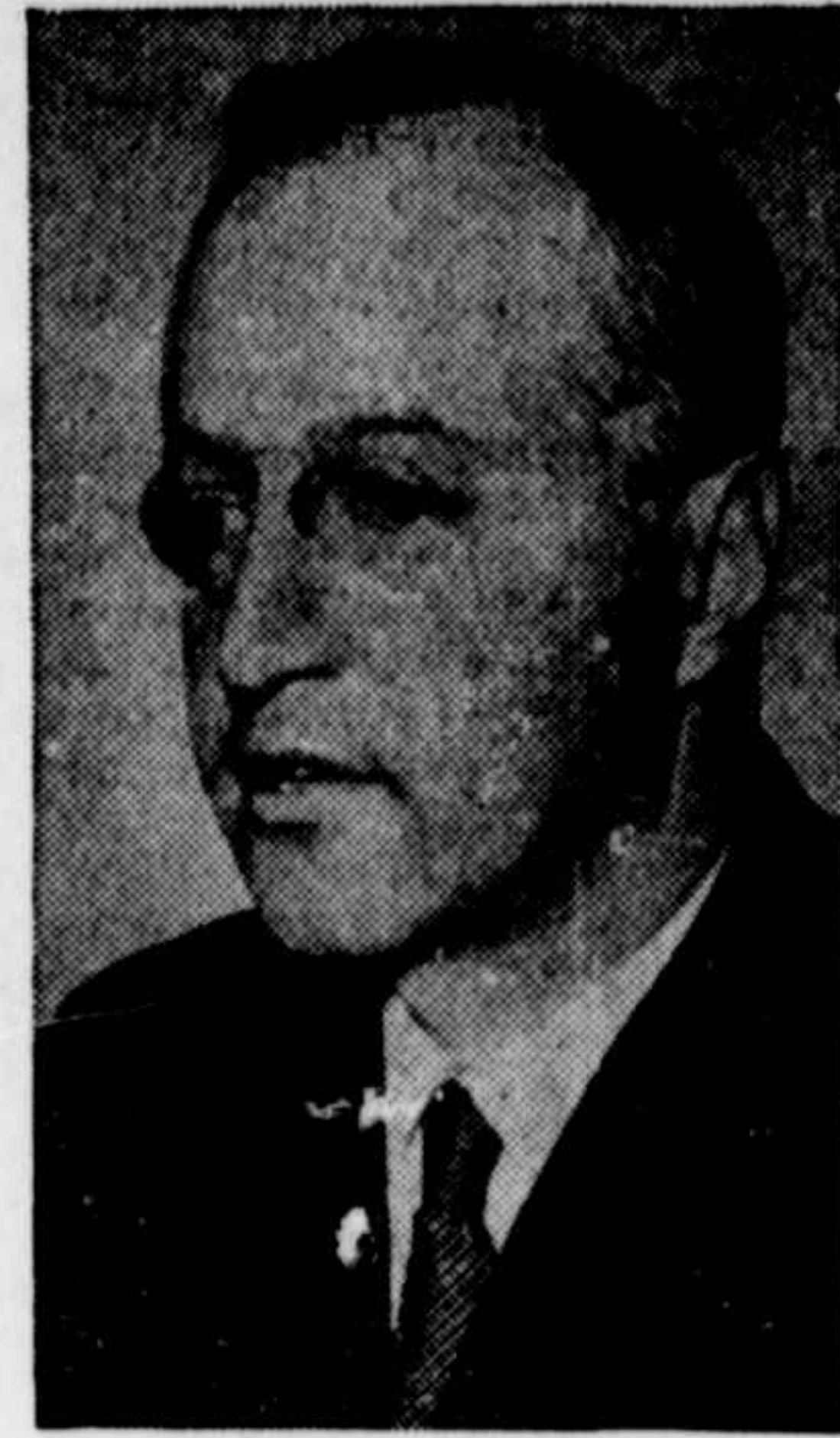
The government will build no  
houses or apartment buildings. Thir-  
ty states have already adopted en-  
abling acts permitting them to set  
up local housing authorities needed  
for the new program. These au-  
thorities can borrow 90 per cent of  
the cost of any project, to be re-  
paid within 60 years. In addition  
to the 10 per cent building expense,  
authorities must pay at least one-  
fifth the difference between the low  
rent charged and the "economic  
rent." The government's rent sub-  
sidy will never be more than four-  
fifths of the difference.

If a tenant cannot afford to pay  
the "economic rent" on his slum-  
clearance apartment, why should  
the government and local housing  
authority pay the difference? The  
answer is that the government has  
at last officially recognized that  
many Americans can never afford  
to rent sanitary living quarters.

This recognition is one sign of a  
more common-sense attitude to-  
ward the housing problem. PWA's  
slum-clearance projects in New  
York, Chicago and other metropol-  
itan points were successful in wiping  
out parts of the blighted area, but  
they failed because the intended ten-  
ants couldn't afford rents of \$12 a  
month per room.

Fills Are Nice, But—

Another good sign is Nathan  
Straus' determination to give sensi-  
ble housing without the frills that  
went with PWA projects. PWA  
sought ideal living conditions, in-  
corporating cross ventilation, no  
walk-ups more than three or four  
stories and "no room entered  
through another." Straus also likes  
these frills, but he realizes the ne-  
cessity is to remove America's low-



NATHAN STRAUS

successful that the conservative ad-  
ministration continued it.

Economic Factor Paramount.  
Although the social aspect of slum  
clearance has long been stressed in  
the United States, it was an econ-  
omic development that led to es-  
tablishment of the Housing Authori-  
ty. Juvenile delinquency and physi-  
cal deterioration of slum dwellers  
have been mourned for years but  
the government is tackling its pres-  
ent job as a business proposition.

It goes deeper than the current  
Recession. Blighted areas affect  
both the tenement occupant and the  
more fortunate (in some respects)  
taxpayer. Run-down cities require  
large police, fire and hospitalization  
appropriations. Moreover, dilapidat-  
ed residential areas spread like a  
plague, destroying neighboring  
property. When these things hap-  
pen the city is apt to get in serious  
financial difficulty.

Look at statistics a moment, from  
both social and economic view-  
points. Twenty-one per cent of  
Cleveland's murders are committed  
in a slum district covering less than  
1 per cent of the city's area and  
housing 2 1/2 per cent of the popula-  
tion. In Harlem, tuberculosis is  
three times as prevalent as in the  
rest of New York city. A third city  
finds its city-wide police protection  
costs \$4.37 per capita, but in the  
slums it is \$11.50.

Similar convincing figures can be  
produced in any city of the nation.  
Unlike PWA, Mr. Straus does not  
plan to build apartments in the  
midst of yesterday's ruins. New  
sites will be chosen in unblighted  
areas and tenants will be lifted away  
from the slums completely. In due  
time, if the Housing Authority is  
successful, all present slum sites  
will be evacuated. The property  
will then be open for commercial  
development.

New Homes, New People.  
Mr. Straus does not believe that  
slum dwellers will create slum con-  
ditions wherever they go. PWA's  
experience has been good in this re-  
spect, proving that underprivileged  
classes are largely victims of cir-  
cumstance, ready to reform if given  
an opportunity.

The present half-billion dollar ap-  
propriation is hardly more than a  
drop in the bucket, Mr. Straus ad-  
mits. To rehouse the needy one-  
third of our population would re-  
quire 10,000 new dwelling units,  
compared with 120,000 units possible  
under the present fund. But half a  
billion dollars will help get the ball  
rolling and should demonstrate for  
all time the possibilities in slum  
clearance work. Aided by the ex-  
perience of PWA, which did not es-  
tablish such a bad housing record  
as many people would believe, the  
new Housing Act can start its  
work without pioneering.

Business Man, Idealist.  
The newest of the New Deal's ad-  
ministrators, Mr. Straus is probably  
one of the most capable. His expe-  
rience with Hillside and other pri-  
vate housing projects equips him  
from the practical point of view,  
while his social-mindedness gives

est one-third from the slums into  
decent living quarters, not to place  
them in "ideal" houses.

Homes built under the new Housing  
Authority will rent for \$5 to  
\$5.50 per room per month, if possi-  
ble. They will be plain, but they  
will also be modern and sanitary.

Such economical housing will not  
conflict with private interests, Mr.  
Straus claims, and with reason. No  
private builder can erect suitable  
housing in New York or Chicago to  
rent at much less than \$12 to \$14  
a room per month. At least, he  
can't do it at a profit. Straus knows,  
because he sponsored Hillside, a  
New York private housing project  
with 1,416 apartments renting at an  
average of \$11 a room. Although  
Hillside is ideal, it's not made for  
people in the lowest income brack-  
ets.

How United States Housing Works.

America's slum conditions are the  
worst in the Western world. No-  
where outside the Orient can more  
squalor be found than in our own  
metropolitan centers. Take indoor

plumbing for example. Though con-  
sidered a non-essential on the farm,  
it certainly ranks as a vital health  
factor in crowded city life. Yet 25  
per cent of American urban homes  
have no bathing facilities and one-  
fifth are without private, indoor wa-  
ter closets. Approximately 4,000,000  
American city families are without  
the barest "modern improvements."

Since 1919 about 3,300,000 dwelling  
units have been erected in Great  
Britain through a combination of  
public and private effort. Of these,  
1,300,000 have been built with some  
public assistance, the remainder by  
private interests. Although Eng-  
land's housing program was started  
under a labor government, it was so

him enough of the idealist's view-  
point to forge ahead despite obsta-  
cles.

His career has been varied, start-  
ing with two years at Princeton,  
two more at Heidelberg and a few  
more as a department store official.  
He once published the humorous  
magazine Puck, rose from gob to  
ensign during the World war and  
was an active and liberal New York  
state senator from 1921 to 1926.

His chief interest, growing with  
the years, has been low-cost, low-  
rental housing. That, it seems, is  
the kind of a man who should head  
the United States Housing Authori-  
ty.

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Chicago's PWA Jane Addams Houses, light in a sea of slums.

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