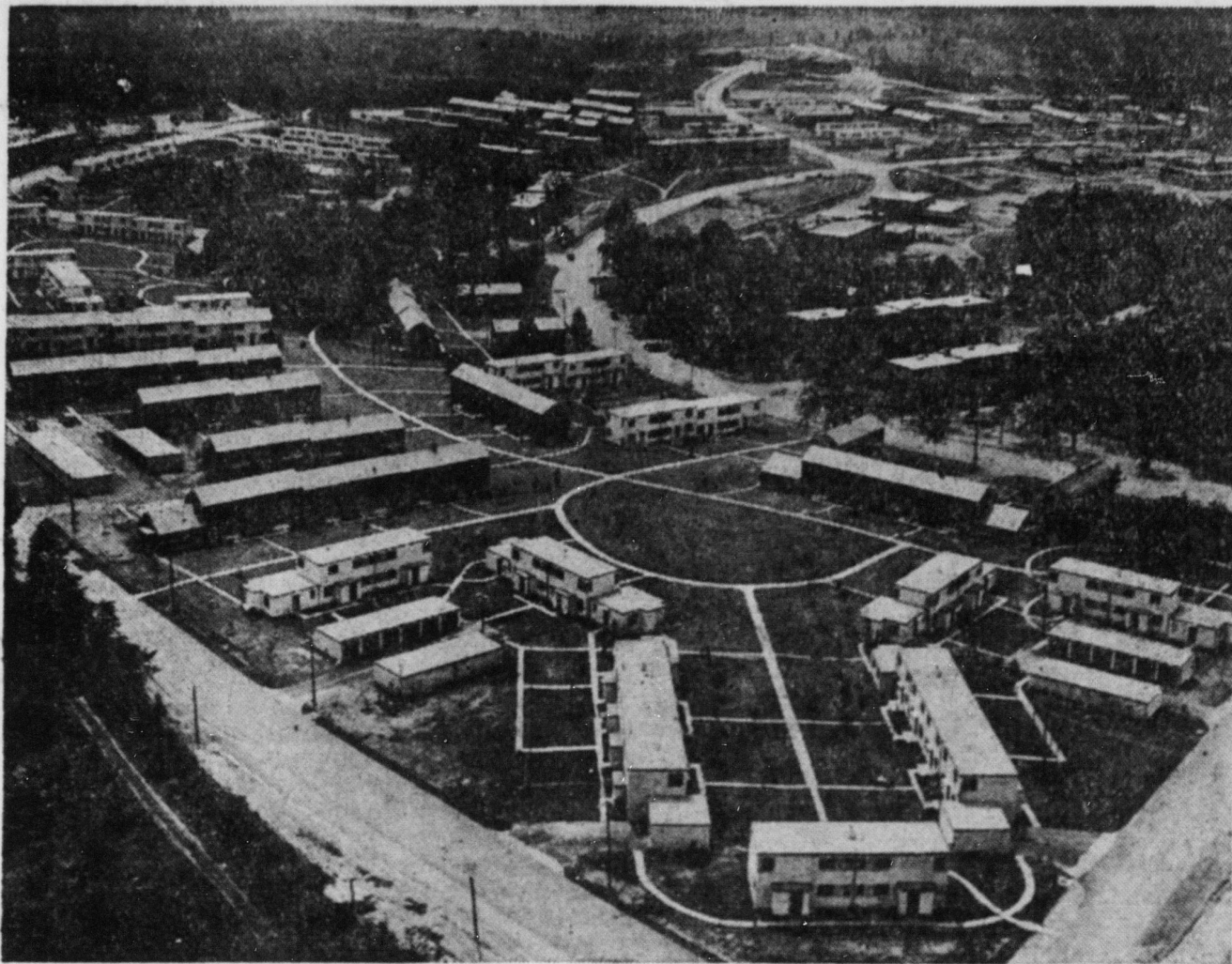


FIRST OF 'TUGWELLTOWNS' IS BORN

Families Start Moving Into 885 Houses of Model Community Built by Resettlement Administration at Greenbelt, Md.



Greenbelt, Md., as seen from the air. Here the first of Tugwell's visions may be realized.

By WILLIAM C. UTLEY
ONE of Prof. Rexford Guy Tugwell's principal Utopias is now open for business, and some say it's good and some say it's bad. At any rate, the first families have moved into Greenbelt, Md., "model town" of the resettlement administration formerly headed by Tugwell, and perhaps we shall one day see just how effective the co-operative, slumless community can be.

A year ago this time Greenbelt was the target of much criticism concerning high costs, waste and venture of the federal government into "collectivism," "communism," and other horrible social and economic isms which, during the heated days of the last presidential campaign, were grouped under one general head—"Tugwellism." Friends of the project usually had defenses for these charges; what you believe is probably greatly influenced by the trend of your politics. The important thing today is that the experiment is definitely under way, and is soon to be followed by counterparts in other sections of the nation.

Greenbelt, with its 885 housing units, rests on a crescent-shaped plateau, 12 miles outside Washington, D. C. Standing sentinel over the town is a belt of green trees from which it gets its name. Mirroring it is an artificial lake of some 25 acres.

Here 885 families, hand-picked to give the project the greatest chance of success, will find homes at rents varying from \$18 to \$41 a month. Their local government will be run by an ultra-modern city manager, under the first city manager charter to be granted by the state of Maryland. All the community's business will be directed and conducted by a Rochdale co-operative, which was sponsored by the late Edward A. Filene, Boston merchant. Settlers who buy shares in the "consumer distribution corporation" will receive rebates at all the stores in the community.

Inhabitants Carefully Selected.

It is not easy for a family to be admitted to life in Greenbelt. The resettlement administration has taken every precaution in selecting the tenants and, purportedly, political "pull" doesn't mean a thing. First, all persons with incomes of \$1,000 to \$2,100, who were interested, were asked to register with RA, giving name, residence, income and other information; hundreds were dropped immediately on the basis of this preliminary data. Those whose applications survived were asked for more detailed information about themselves, and this was checked by officials. The candidates were then visited in their homes, their character and credit ratings investigated and their references verified. The final selections were made on the basis of a summary of all these findings. If Greenbelt is to succeed, the durability of its buildings must be matched by the integrity and sincerity of its inhabitants.

These tenants will be living in the most completely planned community in America. Where they may have lived in city slums, with poor environment for their children, they are now set down in the rolling green hills of Maryland, where fresh air is plentiful, where there is a good school, where their budgets will allow them to live as well as their much wealthier city neighbors.

Greenbelt's citizens can go to and from work in the city, if they like, by bus. At home in the evening after the day's labors they can putter around in a garden. They will

have a real share in the community life, the opportunity to enjoy lake sports and free range of several thousand beautiful acres of town land.

The houses are white with ensemble grouping and harmonizing architecture. The drive and walks are flanked with trees, most of them still young. There are as few traffic hazards as possible, with every imaginable precaution for safety having been taken. All highways are crossed by means of underpasses, so that the children who attend the two schools will not find it necessary to watch out for automobiles.

Queer at first do Greenbelt's houses appear to the uninitiated, for the front doors are at the back, if that is not taxing the reader's logic. In other words, they face on the open space at the rear, rather than on the street. They are durable and attractive, but not ornate.

Kitchens Are Sensibly Modern.

Foundations are of concrete and roofs of tinted slate. Broad casement windows assure plenty of sunlight, and plenty of air. In this climate the summers are likely to be hot, but ceilings of poured concrete, reinforced with steel rods, keep the rooms cool. Brass-capped door sills combine with copper weather sheathing to banish drafts. Foundations and walls have been built to last a hundred years, but they have not been foolishly planned to outlast the Coliseum in Rome. Closets are of knotty pine, and oak is used on stairways only where they are most likely to be trod upon.

Kitchens are modern, compact, economical—but not faddish. There are metal cupboards with deep shelves and smooth, easy-dusting doors. Sinks are of enamel and bathroom walls are covered with inexpensive waterproof paint. All fixtures are sturdy and in good taste.

Greenbelt's business and community center at the head of the residential crescent, includes a mercantile building, a municipal garage, a fire-house, a town inn, a restaurant and a school. The latter is perhaps the most remarkable building. Gray concrete pilasters flank its sides like inverted flying buttresses. There is a chiseled frieze of cubist characters. Interiors are the ultimate in scientific design. The buttresses support the walls of a spacious gymnasium. Light brown walls and great expanses of white plaster help to diffuse the plentiful sunlight which enters corridors and school rooms through windows and glass brick panels built into the walls. Students keep their belongings in individual lockers. The outer wall of each classroom is of transparent glass, stretching almost the entire height of the room. Conditions such as these are about all a teacher could ask for.

All commercial operations are conducted by the consumers' corporation. Two per cent of the gross revenue will be turned over to the federal government as rent; any remaining profits will be returned to the customers as dividends. Operated on this plan will be a general merchandise store, a drug store, a food and meat market, a motion picture theater, a barber shop, a beauty parlor and a garage and service station. When and if the community decides it does not like this system, it may adopt a new one.

There are no churches in Greenbelt but free land is available for them if community groups desire to build them. Greenbelters are given plenty of opportunity to contribute their share toward the beautifying of the town. Anyone may secure the head gardener's advice at any time free of charge. Trees or bushes for landscaping may be obtained

free from the town nursery to which they were transplanted when the land was cleared.

This Is "Tugwelltown."

Greenbelt epitomizes Professor Tugwell's philosophy. He said its aim was:

"To obtain a large tract of land and thus avoid the complications ordinarily due to diverse ownerships; in this tract to create a community, protected by an encircling green belt; the community to be designed primarily for families of modest incomes, and arranged and managed so as to encourage a family and community life which will be better than they now enjoy, but which will not involve subjecting them to coercive or theoretical and untested discipline.

"The dwellings and the land upon which they are located are to be held in one ownership, preferably a public agency to which the federal government will transfer title, and which agency will rent or lease the dwellings but will not sell them; a municipal government to be set up, in character with such governments now existing or possible in that region; co-ordination to be established, in relation to the local and state governments, so that there may be provided those public services of educational and other character which the community will require; and, finally, to accomplish these purposes in such a way that the community may be a taxpaying participant in the region, that extravagant outlays from the individual family income will not be necessary, and that the rents will be suitable to families of modest income.

"To develop a land-use plan for the entire tract; to devise a system of rural economy co-ordinated with the land-use plan for the rural portions of the tract surrounding the suburban community; and to integrate both the physical plans and the economies of the rural area and the suburban community."

Whether or not the model town can be regarded as the answer to the low-cost housing program, even if Greenbelt succeeds as a happy, prospering community, depends on how you look at it. It has been pointed out by opponents that the project cost far too much and that there were too many delays, allegedly attributable to "government efficiency," in its construction.

What Sponsors Contend.

Only 885 families may be housed in Greenbelt, opponents point out, yet the cost is \$14,227,000, or more than \$16,000 a house. The government's estimated net return on the investment, they say, is less than 1/2 of 1 per cent. Even if interest were waived, it would take 237 years to repay the cost.

Against this the sponsors reply that it is unfair to pro-rate the cost among the houses alone, for it includes the business buildings, landscaping and many other things. Presumably their answer would have been the same if the cost had been regarded \$16,000 per family.

Also there is the argument that the "made work," transient relief labor and such, skyrocketed the cost. They contend that low-cost housing is spreading and that repayments under the Wagner act will be more generous than those at Greenbelt. They attempt to show that costs of slum conditions are indirect but that they are even greater than the cost to the government of subsidizing model communities; that well-built homes are in the long run cheaper than flimsier dwellings built for sale; and the Greenbelt accountants write off a third of the total cost as excess labor costs, more directly chargeable to work relief than to the Greenbelt residents.

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"Suicide for Three"

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Famous Headline Hunter

HELLO, EVERYBODY:

Ever get stuck with a rubber check? Well, sir, that is an adventure in itself—and not a very pleasant one, either. But here's a case where a bad check led from one thing to another, and finally wound up with that blood-curdling experience that H. Eugene Percifield of Sea Cliff, N. Y., had with a vicious criminal on the Halifax river at Daytona, Fla.

Gene Percifield's dad ran an automobile agency in Lake Worth, Fla., back in 1928, and it was there that the curious chain of events started that was to lead to the most terrifying ten minutes of George's life. A stranger came to the agency one day, bought a new car, and paid for it with a check.

Before the man drove away, Gene saw him transfer two pistols from his pockets to the pockets of the newly purchased car, but he thought nothing of it at the moment. It was only when the stranger's check was returned marked "No Funds" that Gene realized what sort of a man his dad had been dealing with.

The crook was gone—and so was the car. Gene's dad notified the police and let it go at that. Gene never expected to see the bird again, but a couple of days after the check was returned, he ran across him—in a manner that makes him shiver every time he thinks of it.

Gene and two other young lads his own age had gone to Jacksonville to drive three new cars down for his dad. They were on their way back, about twenty-five miles north of Daytona, when Gene spied a new sedan parked at a filling station, and saw a man standing beside it who looked like the crook who had passed the bad check on his dad.

Gene Captured the Crook.

Gene stopped the other two cars—told the lads who were driving them what he had seen. They drove their buses back to the filling station, parked them, one in back, one in front and one alongside of the crook's car, completely hemming him in.

Gene climbed out of his car and started for the crook. It was then—and only then—that he remembered THE GUNS—the two pistols the man



Through the Bridge Railing Into the River.

had been carrying when he bought the car from his dad a few days before.

Gene's eye cast wildly about in search of some sort of weapon. There wasn't a thing in sight. Then, his knees shaking, his tongue dry against the roof of his mouth, he thrust his hand inside his coat, pretending he had a gun there, and faced the crook.

The crook took it quietly enough. He didn't even make any protest when Gene told him he was going to take him in to Daytona and turn him over to the police. There was a woman with the crook and Gene got in the back seat with her. The crook sat up front, driving the car according to Gene's directions.

It was about nine o'clock of a cool, balmy night. The car bowled along at a fast clip, and was rapidly nearing Daytona. The crook had taken his capture so meekly—was following so obediently that Gene was lulled into a false sense of security. He was beginning to think that things weren't going to be so bad after all. But later—just a few moments later—he was going to change his mind about that.

Drove Right Into the River.

They were coming into Daytona when things began to happen. There the crook failed for the first time to follow directions and turned onto a bridge that led over the Halifax. Gene told him to stop or he'd knock his block off, but he might as well have been talking to a post. The man stepped on the gas and drove on.

They were about the middle of the bridge now. The woman, in the back seat with Gene, began to get panicky. She called to the crook to stop or she'd jump out of the car. The crook said, "Oh, you will, eh?" AND DROVE THE CAR THROUGH THE BRIDGE RAILING INTO THE RIVER.

The car turned turtle as it hit the river, and sank in five feet of water. Gene landed in a stooped position, his feet on the inverted top of the car. The water rose to his knees—his chest—HIS NECK. And still it was coming up. He cursed—prayed—tried to break a window. Then he took one last deep breath as the water covered him over.

A seat cushion was on his back, pushing him down. He thrust it aside and managed to get his nose above water in a narrow space between the water and the up-ended floor of the car. Then he felt something kick him under water—the woman—struggling in her death throes at the bottom of the car.

Gene grabbed her and tried to pull her head up into that narrow pocket of air at the top of the car. She slipped out of his arms and sank down again. Gene went down after her and found—an opening—a broken window beneath the surface of the water. He dived—felt someone grab him from outside, and was pulled out, a piece of broken glass cutting a deep gash in his back as he went.

As he came up, he saw a straw hat floating on the surface of the water. A crowd of people lined the bridge rail. Two men who were fishing nearby had jumped in to help the occupants of the wrecked car. They pulled out the woman—extricated the crook, who was standing on his head in the water, trying to drown himself. They turned him over to police on the bridge, and Gene went back to find his two pals and the three cars they were driving down from Jacksonville.

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Table Manners

Manners vary considerably in different parts of the world—especially table manners. What we would consider terribly rude in this country is regarded as excellent form in India, says London Tit-Bits Magazine. If you dine with an Indian in his country you are expected to lick the platter clean—to leave anything on your plate is an insult to his food. Be sure to call for a second helping of everything in a loud voice, and a third, if possible. Always praise the items and give the impression that the food is delicious. You are expected to insist when you cannot eat more, not when you have had sufficient. Patting your stomach as proof is one sign. Indians are great eaters, and "strong" and "fat" are eynonymous, especially among the "bannia" (shopkeeper) class. Among them it is common practice to tie a length of cotton round their waists and eat until their stomachs swell and the cotton snaps. Then they cease immediately.

Areas of the States

In the following list the figures represent the square miles of the states: Texas, 265,896; California, 158,297; Montana, 146,997; New Mexico, 122,634; Arizona, 113,956; Nevada, 110,690; Colorado, 103,948; Wyoming, 97,914; Oregon, 96,699; Utah, 84,990; Minnesota, 84,682; Idaho, 83,888; Kansas, 82,158; South Dakota, 77,615; Nebraska, 77,520; North Dakota, 70,837; Oklahoma, 70,057; Missouri, 69,420; Washington, 69,127; Georgia, 59,265; Florida, 58,668; Michigan, 57,980; Illinois, 56,665; Iowa, 56,147; Wisconsin, 56,068; Arkansas, 53,335; North Carolina, 52,428; Alabama, 51,998; New York, 49,204; Louisiana, 48,506; Mississippi, 46,865; Pennsylvania, 45,128; Virginia, 42,627; Tennessee, 42,022; Ohio, 41,040; Kentucky, 40,598; Indiana, 36,354; Maine, 33,040; South Carolina, 30,989; West Virginia, 24,170; Maryland, 12,527; Vermont, 9,564; New Hampshire, 9,341; Massachusetts, 8,266; New Jersey, 8,224; Connecticut, 4,965; Delaware, 2,370; Rhode Island, 1,248.

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