An Overcast Forecast in the ‘Sunshine City’: Segregation and Inequality in St. Petersburg, Florida, before 1960

James Anthony Schnur
Special Collections Librarian
Nelson Poynter Memorial Library
University of South Florida St. Petersburg
John Donaldson
Methodist Town
Cooper’s Quarters/Peppertown/Gas Plant District
Downtown waterfront, late 1890s
First Electrical Power Plant
Central Avenue Looking West from 5th Street
“Million-Dollar” Pier and Yacht Club
A BIT OF LACE
AND
OTHER POEMS

By LEW B. BROWN

1928
Published By The Author
St. Petersburg Florida
A BIT OF LACE AND OTHER POEMS

SUNSHINE CITY SUNSHINE

(A Song.)

We're the Sunshine Kids at play,
Healthy, happy ev'ry day,
    Girl or boy
    Full of joy,
Fresh and stronger with each morn,
All life's troubles laughed to scorn,
No one dares to feel forlorn
    In Sunshine City sun.

Chorus:
    Sunshine, sunshine,
    Sunshine City sunshine,
    Where the paper's given free
    Ev'ry day you fail to see
    Sunshine City sun;
    Come and play the winter through
    And your health and strength renew
    Where each day will welcome you
    Sunshine City sun.

Here the weary join our fun
And gain new life from the sun;
    Young grow strong,
    Old grow young,
Where the balmy breezes play,
Where we swim and romp each day
On the beach of Tampa Bay,
    Sunshine City sun.

Here the old find joy and cheer
Growing younger with each year—
    Watch their step
    Full of pep,
Playing shuffle, quoits and roque,
Making age a merry joke
With the happy sunshine folk—
    Sunshine City sun.

Celebrating the “Sunshine City” . . .
TO A MULATTO

O fatherless daughter of brutish lust—
Of a male thing false to his race's trust,
So base as to mingle his mother's blood
In Afric veins for shame's motherhood
And tarnish her virtue, ere this undefiled,
To granddam a bastard half-breed child—
In thine and in every tawney skin
Is writ indictment of the White Man's sin.

How fiercely thy proud Aryan blood complains
Against its bondage in a Negro's veins;
How bitterly curses thy shameless sire
Who plunged it into that lake of fire;
How madly longs for its God-given place
In a heart of its own superior race—
Alas, but to suffer through endless time
A guiltless doom for the White Man's crime.

Turn away thine eyes from the mountain slopes;
Forego thy visions and throttle thy hopes;
Accept thy sad lot, yield to cruel fate;
Degrade thyself lower to a dusky mate;
Find joy if you canst in lush motherhood
And pride and new hope in thy motley brood—
But God still reigns, and He is just;
This nation must travail for the White Man's lust.

... while promoting white supremacy ...
... and the inferiority of non-whites
Darktown Goes in for Scanty Bathing Suits

Methodist Town Shocked But Chief Decides Costumes Meet Requirements

Darktown denizens strutted their stuff yesterday at their private beach on St. Petersburg's expensive waterfront.

Overcast skies and threat of rain failed to keep them from the spot the city has provided on the south mole adjacent to the A.C.L. railroad pier where they can indulge in varied forms of water sports to their hearts' delight.

The usual Sabbath day crowd was there, but the "better element" of Methodist Town, Pepper Town and the south side negro district wasn't represented.

Object to Daring Styles

They didn't like the way their dusky brethren cavorted about the makeshift beach and especially objected to daring cut of some bathing suits.

Police Chief R.H. Noel heard about it and launched an investigation, but couldn't see anything wrong.

He did find some unusual styles in bathing suits.

For example, a hefty negress sported cut-me-down riding breeches and wore sleeves of a blue shirt for a brassiere which, as far as police could determine, amply covered her tremendous bulk.

Another ebony-hued damsel established herself as a fashion plate with an ingenious combination of "pepper and salt" trunks made from discarded trousers and a bright red sash draped about the upper part of her body. Topping off the ensemble, was a wide-brimmed picture hat which was the envy of many eyes.

The boys in the crowd splashed and splattered in the surf and frequently immersed to present as varied an assortment of colored trunks as has been seen on any beach where the young bloods go in for that sort of thing.

Some of the costumes were too scanty to win favor with as police said, the "better element," but Chief Noel who surveyed the situation with the critical eye of a censor could find nothing wrong — and sunset found boys and girls, men and women of Darktown trudging west on the A.C.L. right of way, homeward bound and looking forward to next Sunday's outing without disturbance from the "better element."
Negro Jitterbug Contest Slated

Featured in tonight’s stage show at the Playhouse theater will be a contest between the high stepping dark skins of Peppertown and the living brown skins of Methodist Town. In the last all-negro contest at the Playhouse the Peppertown dark skins had the edge and Methodist Town is out to get revenge, boasting of new talent and a variety of entertainers. The Methodist Town aggregation has accepted the challenge. Two feature pictures scheduled to run continuously from 1 p.m. are “Sing While You’re Able,” starring Pinkey Tomlin and Toby Wing and “Navy Secrets” starring Fay Wray and Grant Withers. The stage show is scheduled to start at 8:30 p.m.

HAPPY ENDING

Olympe Bradna, beautiful French star now appearing with Pat O’Brien and Roland Young in “Happy Ending,” was literally born to the theater. Her parents were stars of the continental stage and began Olympe’s career as a thespian when she was three months old. Now that Miss Bradna is a Hollywood star, she really is happy—and so are her parents.

ON STAGE
TONIGHT 8:30
JITTERBUG CONTEST
ALL NEGRO
CONTESTANTS
PEPPER TOWN
VERSUS
METHODIST TOWN

FREE BARBE-Q
BILL’S PLACE
CANDY BLVD.
Celebrate Bill’s Birthday
Tuesday Oct. 17
Dance Admission 25c
DANCE TONIGHT
Admission 25c
ORCHESTRA
HONOR STUDENT, TEACHER END VISIT

Alan Alspaugh, left, and Dr. Alfredo M. Sharpe have returned to Sedalia, N.C., after holiday visit there.

Back to School Grind
Facing Palmer Pupil, Language Instructor

It's back to the grind for two Palmer Memorial Institute students. They are Dr. Alfredo M. Sharpe and Alan Alspaugh.

AS 1957 BEGINS

Adopting Pertinent Rules
Is Assurance of New Life

By JAMES A. BOND
Supervisor, Palmetto Negro School

In what sense is the New Year "new"? Why is it called the "New Year"? For most of us, it only means a chance to start over in the same old way. For others, it means a new beginning. The new year is a time for making decisions and resolving to do things differently. This year, we have the opportunity to adopt new rules and habits that will help us grow and succeed.

District Chief Issues Plea
For Carriers

Seager yesterday issued a plea for the carriers. He said appointments are being made at the district office, 2142 24th Street South.

Seager said all the routes are new and being served. He said the carriers are very important to the district. The district is looking for carriers who will be able to perform their duties.

GETTING 10-GALLON HATS

A Southern Methodist University co-ed, Babs Runyon, puts on a 10-gallon stetson hat on Syracusian head hocky player Jim Brown, left, upon the team's arrival in Dallas for the Cotton Bowl game today. The comedy stunt is being lifted by Syracuse co-captains Jim Riddon, center, and Bill Brown.

FAMU Lyceum
Program Told

City bars go on the three-month 5 a.m. closing time when they reopen Wednesday. Most of them remained open until 2 a.m. this morning but will be closed today. The closing rule also applies to the bars in the city's legal department.

Trinity Members Exchange Gifts
At Yule Party

The annual Christmas party is due to Pitkin County, which seeks to balance closing time with the interests of the community. Bars outside the city limits, however, are subject to the 5 a.m. closing rule.

OBITUARIES

Mrs. Ben Costen
36-Year Resident

Mrs. Eliza Johnson, a resident of 36 years, died yesterday at 100 United States South St. Mrs. Costen moved here from her home in Atlanta.

Newspaper typography and layout. No additional information or questions can be derived from the image.
DAVIS ELEMENTARY (St. Petersburg) 1914

(Formerly called Davis Academy)

Principals:
J. W. Ovaltree 1914-16
Rev. W. H. Holmes 1916-19
M. Selmo 1919-21
H. D. Bryant 1921-22
R. L. Dabney 1922-23
Carlos Haile 1923-24
G. T. Wiggins 1924-27
L. H. Kirksey 1927-30
Mrs. R. McLin 1930-38
Mrs. Emma Booker 1938-39
Mrs. R. M. Blye 1939-44
John H. Hopkins 1944-52
Mrs. Amanda Howard 1952-56
Emanuel Stewart 1956-57
Louis W. McCoy 1957-58
William G. Thompson 1958-62

St. Petersburg Negro School
Davis Elementary site today
Jordan Elementary School building today
The imposing 31-classroom school shown in the top photo, right, began in 1927 as a $49,490 eight-classroom unit. It has had many changes and additions since then; photo at lower right shows how Gibbs looked in 1935 after one addition but before the front corridor was enclosed for office areas.

Under the leadership of George W. Perkins, the community established a library and an auditorium-gymnasium just south of the high school, across Ninth Avenue. In 1946 these were deeded to the School Board on condition that they would be completed and a mortgage paid off. The library, named for Educator Perkins, is pictured in the lower left corner of photo above.

North of the main building is the Gibbs Vocational School. It has facilities for teaching youths salable occupational skills.

Principals have been Samuel Reed, 1927-29; Geo. W. Perkins, 1929-32; Mrs. Theresa McKinney, 1932; Rev. John Carter, 1932-33; Geo. W. Perkins, 1938-46; Andrew Polk, 1946-52; John W. Rembert, 1952-58; Emanuel Stewart, 1958-62†.

Gibbs High has long been recognized as one of the South's greatest Negro schools. Its scintillating bands and fast-breaking teams have won many honors.

A new Gibbs High is being constructed east of the present site. (See Schools of the Future.)
Spa Beach (whites only)
Pass-a-Grille Beach (whites only)
St. Petersburg, Fla. Baybro Creek.
MAPS SHOW PROPOSED NEGRO SEGREGATION PROJECT
### Neighborhood Map

**5th Ave. S**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Street</th>
<th>Block Number</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E. 2nd St.</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S. 2nd St.</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Emerson Ave. S**

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>S. 2nd St.</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**6th Ave. S**

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<td>E. 2nd St.</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S. 2nd St.</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Rose Lawn**

<table>
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<th>Street</th>
<th>Block Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E. 2nd St.</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S. 2nd St.</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Legend:**

- **W** = White occupancy
- **N** = Negro

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*Note: The image contains handwritten and hand-drawn elements, indicating the map's purpose and the fields of interest.*
No Index Number

Sallie Howard moved from this house into Unit 243
Jordan Park, on June 5, 1940.

Sallie Howard lived on ground floor, which is store
room used as dwelling. No direct ventilation. Only
one door. Toilet on back porch - in order to get to
toilet occupants have to come out front door and go
around building. Flooring in toilet dangerous for use.
No bath or shower.
4 - Room house on Lot 25 - Tangerine Heights Sub.
(Parcel # 59)

Known as 1203 - Walton St. S.

No utilities.

Privy

Use hand pump next door.
Elliott Birt: 2926 Fairfield Ave. S.

Elliott Birt moved into Unit 95 Jordan Park on May 16, 1940.

1½-story frame house. Roof so bad that it rains in instead of leaking. Can see daylight through roof of kitchen. 2nd. floor can not be used. No water - carry from neighbor's. Privy in bad condition. No plumbing of any kind. No electricity.
Johnnie Barnes - 2861 Freemont Terrace S.

Johnnie Barnes moved from this house into Unit 25, Jordan Park on April 13, 1940.

2861 Freemont Terrace S. is 1-story frame house in poor condition. Broken boards in porch flooring. Roof in bad shape.

1097 - 19th St. S. - Ulysses Swain

Ulysses Swain moved from this apartment into Unit 54 Jordan Park, on June 15, 1940.

This is apartment over stores in undesirable neighborhood. Unfit for use. Stairway is dangerous and flooring is bad throughout. Window out in kitchen. Toilet on porch - out of order. Water in kitchen. 3 families use one toilet. No bath or shower. No closets. Rooms are small.
Solomon Smith - 2618½ Irving Ave. S.

Solomon Smith moved from this house into Unit 206 Jordan Park, on May 4, 1940.

2618½ Irving Ave. S. is 1-story 1-family house situated on same lot with 3 other houses close together. Poorly constructed house, unfit for use. Roof leaks - large cracks in wall.

John Handy - 449 - 11th St. S.

John Handy moved into Unit 313 Jordan Park, on June 15, 1940.

449 - 11th St. S. is 2-story, one unit house, unfit for use. 4 families living in it. No electricity - wiring condemned. Faucet in kitchen but no sink. No bath. Kitchen shared. No screens. Front porch dangerous for use. Toilet on porch in poor condition. Have to pour water in to flush. Toilet shared. 4 rooms - 3 sleeping rooms - 10 people.
Henry Bonner - 1339 - 19th St. S.

Henry Bonner moved into Unit 176, Jordan Park, June 25, 1940.

John W. Bryant - #3 Peppertown

John W. Bryant moved into Unit 32 Jordan Park on April 7, 1940.

#3 Peppertown: 1-story frame house in congested section. Poor construction - steps in bad condition. Wrapping paper on walls to keep the cold out. Water in yard - none in kitchen. No sink. House infested with mice and roaches. No way of keeping them out, so many holes in floor, etc. Toilet on porch, in bad condition - have to pour water in to flush and water must be carried from yard. No closets in house. No bath or shower.

Note: A "Peppertown" picture appears on wall of Housing Authority office.
MR. TAXPAYER

Here are the facts showing YOUR LOSSES on Jordan Park Housing Project No. 1, which will be doubled, if you vote yes on Tuesday:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amortization Payment</td>
<td>$44,591.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management, Including Salaries, etc.</td>
<td>4,780.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State and County Taxes</td>
<td>13,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Taxes</td>
<td>12,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities, (Gas, Water and Electricity)</td>
<td>11,330.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Expenditures, Including Repairs, Maintenance, and Replacements</td>
<td>8,910.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Fees, Including Telephone, Telegraph, etc.</td>
<td>2,160.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current and Reserves for Vacancy and Collection</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Losses</td>
<td>1,120.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>725.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Janitor Service</td>
<td>705.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Activities</td>
<td>185.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exterminating Rodents and Other Pests</td>
<td>115.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>$99,621.00</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Possible Collections Per Year</td>
<td>37,382.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net Loss Per Year</td>
<td>$62,239.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you vote yes and extend this project you will double this loss, making a yearly loss of $124,478.00, or a total loss of $7,468,680.00

Seven Million Four Hundred Sixty-Eight Thousand Six Hundred Eighty Dollars IN A PERIOD OF 60 YEARS!
New Deal for St. Petersburg's Negroes

Better Homes Already Assured 242 Families

And Authority Is Asking $750,000 More to Build Houses for Another 212 Now Living in Miserable Shacks

St. Petersburg, the City Beautiful of Florida, boasts of its fine homes, waterfront drives, pier, happy people. But, like other cities, it says little about its negro population and the miserable, squalid shacks in which many live. Even the people who live here and hire the negroes to work about their homes know little of Methodist Town, Pepper Town and other sections where poor living conditions, especially during a time like the recent storm, are often intolerable.

With this thought in mind, one cannot help but hail what the St. Petersburg Housing Authority, the city, and the government are doing out in Jordan Park. There a $1,065,000 low cost negro housing project already is under way and should be completed by spring. And already an application for an additional $750,000 loan to develop the 11 remaining acres in the tract has been filed.

Now come with The Times Photographer and see for yourself.

This unusual aerial view shows the extent of the present development of the Jordan park site which will provide modern sanitary housing for 242 of the estimated 2,100 negro families in the lower income brackets and qualified under the housing law to make application for better living quarters. The proposed extension for which the $750,000 government loan is sought would provide an additional 212 units, or in the opinion of housing authority, more nearly meet the needs in coping with a serious shortage of negro dwellings. It was estimated yesterday by authority officials that at the present time there are practically no quarters available. If a negro family is ejected or for any other reason loses its present living quarters they can find no others. The letters A, B, C, designate the three sections in the project according to their nearness to completion, as shown on the progress chart below.
Jordan Park Site, 9 July 1939

Jordan Elementary School
Looking south towards a “buffer zone” between Jordan Park and white neighborhoods.

Jordan Park Site, 8 August 1939
Jordan Park Site, 8 August 1939

Older structures in the background
Jordan Park Site, 12 August 1939
Jordan Park Site, 15 September 1939
Jordan Park Site, 15 September 1939
Jordan Park Site, 15 September 1939

22nd Street South Business District
Part of Delegates to Convention of Florida Housing Authorities 12/12/39
Jordan Park Site, April 1940

JORDAN PARK PROJECT
FLA-2-1
ST. PETERSBURG, FLORIDA.
From east of Administration Building Looking Southwest.
April 1940
Moving into Jordan Park
Former Administration Building, now the Dr. Carter G. Woodson Museum
JORDAN PARK

BUILT BY THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF ST. PETERSBURG, FLORIDA WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF THE UNITED STATES HOUSING AUTHORITY

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

JOHN M. CARMODY       NATHAN STRAUS
ADMINISTRATOR OF THE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE
FEDERAL WORKS AGENCY U. S. HOUSING AUTHORITY

ST. PETERSBURG HOUSING AUTHORITY
WALTER G. RAMSEUR, CHAIRMAN
E. B. ELLIS, VICE-CHAIRMAN
R. G. BLANC     A. M. WING     W. K. CLEGHON
EMIL A. NORDSTROM, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

THE GROUP OF ST. PETERSBURG ARCHITECTS
HENRY L. TAYLOR, A. I. A., CHIEF ARCHITECT
ARCHIE G. PARISH, ASSISTANT CHIEF ARCHITECT
CARL N. ATKINSON, A. I. A.

E. L. HADLEY
H. H. DUPONT      P. F. KENNARD, A. I. A.
C. W. FULWOOD, JR., A. I. A.

W. R. STULTS       PRENTISS FRENCH
MECHANICAL ENGINEER LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT

CONTRACTOR
I. E. MILLSTONE CONSTRUCTION CO.

1939-1940
$750,000 Housing Extension Virtually Killed By Council Action, Says Chairman

(See Editorial on Page 6)

City council yesterday decided that any further extension of the Jordan park negro housing project would be conditioned on the clearing of Pepper and Methodist towns, and Chairman Walter G. Ramseur of the housing authority said that council action has "virtually killed the housing program in St. Petersburg."

The council unanimously adopted this report of its special committee, George Hopkins, Robert J. McCutcheon and Oliver William Hewitt:

"It is the opinion of the committee that before the city enters into the proposed co-operative agreement with the housing authority that the authority work out a plan to clear, in co-operation with the city and private property owners, the areas known as Pepper Town and Methodist Town."

In presenting the report, Hopkins said:

"The committee has considered this proposition from every angle. We have not been swayed by the opinion of individuals or groups of individuals."

The extension project would cost about $750,000 and the money is available from the federal government. A $300,000 labor pay roll is involved. Proponents of the extension claim that if St. Petersburg council rejects this money, the federal housing authority will merely turn it over to some other community.

Ramseur's statement that council action has virtually killed the housing program in St. Petersburg is a point where the water has been disconnected. Twelve available water taps are located in yard areas and six others on porches of the houses, according to the report. The houses are too close together to afford proper air and ventilation, the report concludes.

Two Complaints Made

E. S. Wood told council that "negro shacks" are being moved in close to the white area in the vicinity of Eighteenth street and Fourteenth avenue south. On Woods' demand that this be checked, City Attorney Carroll Runyan said the city is without authority to "segregate as to racial living or ownership of property." He suggested that zoning changes could be made that would require single family residences on lots with a minimum area of 50 by 100 feet.

Mrs. James Booth, representing the Fruitland Heights Community club, requested council to take action to "stop the spread of negro habitation in the direction of white areas."

Council referred both complaints to the city manager for investigation.

City's Agreement With U.S.

Thirty-seven hundred negro families in St. Petersburg live in 3,303 dwelling units, a shortage of 400, the housing authority says.

When the housing program was started a survey showed more than 3,000 negro homes were substandard. Today about 2,700 are still sub-standard, but the new secured loan that it would construct 188 additional housing units at Jordan park and later asked the city to enter into a second co-operative agreement for completion of the project.

There was talk of legal action to halt the city from allowing the authority tax exemption and
Estimated Development Cost
Jordan Park
July 15, 1940

Contract Costs
Contract with city for paving, utility mains, sewers, etc. $20,507.80
Additional contract with city to cover cost of larger gas meter $840.00
Contract with I. E. Millstone Construction company for construction, landscaping, sidewalks, yard lights, etc. $64,594.42
(Note: Cost of dwelling units alone $596,101.76; administration and service buildings, $24,000.00; balance for site improvement work)
Gas ranges $9,089.00
Gas refrigerators 19,331.80
Replacement contract, Refrigerators 729.00
Gas water heaters 9,911.97
Space heaters 4,583.60

Other Costs
Land
Purchase price of land $66,106.65
Cost of acquiring land, including survey of site, appraisal of property, title examination, legal services, closing, condemnation suits, legal expenses, obtaining options, recording fees, relocation of site occupants 11,429.68 77,536.33
Architectural and Engineering Costs, including architects' fees, architects' travel, borings and test pits, construction inspectors, and extra blueprinting 48,142.76
Non-Dwelling Equipment for project (office, shop, community and playground equipment, etc.) 5,000.00
Pre-Occupancy Charges, including cost of tenant selection and operating deficit for first year 9,700.00
Administrative Costs, including salaries, legal services and expenses (not in connection with land), travel, rent, furniture and fixtures for authority office, supplies, printing, communications service, advertising, fiscal and other fees, etc. 35,861.01
Carrying Charges. Interest during development 30,564.95
USBA Services, including construction adviser and his office maintained during construction period, auditors, inspectors and other representatives 9,015.00

Total development cost $945,487.64
Plan to Clear Methodist Town by Trade For Site Near Jordan Park Is In Offing

Land Swap Would Be on Even Basis With City Moving Present Houses to New Area, Meeting Told

A plan to clear Methodist town, largest central city negro area, through a trade with the city of property there for. an equal amount of land on the south side in the vicinity of Jordan Park is being discussed among a group of owners of negro property. Councilman Robert J. McCut- before city council within a week.”

Clearance of this area together with Pepper town on the south side was one of the conditions council’s housing committee set up before it would agree to recommend to council consider-ation of a pending co-operation agreement under which 198 housing units would be added to the Jordan Park project. This was the basis of a report filed with council a week ago.

There was no comment last night on the proposed plan.
WEBB'S CITY, ST. PETERSBURG, FLORIDA. WORLD'S MOST UNUSUAL DRUG STORE

"DOC" WEBB

Early 1960s
3rd Avenue Business District
3rd Avenue Business District Today
22\textsuperscript{nd} Street Business District Today
Housing for Negroes Is a Major City Problem

By CAL ADAMS

The words — segregation and discrimination — have taken special meanings for Negroes since the U.S. Supreme Court rulings outlawing them, especially in public education and transportation. Nearly every Negro is now aware of these historic rulings and is unwilling to adopt the usual “wait and see” policy advocated by those who desire to keep Negroes from attaining first-class citizenship.

Much of the tension which exists in other Southern cities is not in evidence here. But leaders are poised and waiting to make these rulings realities through peaceful means. In St. Petersburg, only once have city fathers been called to a court of law since the rulings were made.

‘BOUNDARY LINES’ BROKEN

An interested group tried unsuccessfully to use Spa Pool and Beach. When permission was refused, they filed a federal suit against the City of St. Petersburg and the City Recreation Department. The lower court ruled in their favor but city fathers appealed to the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals and lost. Now the plaintiffs are awaiting the latter court’s order even though the case has gone to the Supreme Court.

Many are prone to believe that race relations are “strained” because of these rulings. However, such beliefs have not been verified here.

PICTURE CHANGES

Fortunately, Negroes and whites have always gotten along better than average in this growing metropolis. Until a few years ago, there was no dire need for expanded housing facilities nor was either race forced to encroach upon the other’s living. This picture has changed somewhat in the last few years.

Populationwise, Negroes here are not keeping pace with the overall census growth. However, within the past five years, the Negro community has crossed several of the imaginary “boundary” lines. The need for more living space among Negroes has caused them to live within a half block of Tangerine Avenue South in a small area. Last year, a Negro businessman purchased an apartment house on Tangerine which has white tenants.

Most of the Negroes who have come to this city have migrated from Georgia, Mississippi and Alabama. Many have come here as employees on street paving or the pipe line jobs. Once the jobs were completed, the migrants remained. This fact, more than any other, has caused the small increase in the population growth.

Probably the most critical situation facing city fathers today is Negro housing. Presently, there are few areas where Negroes may move if they are forced to encroach upon the other’s living. This picture has changed somewhat in the last few years. This action left the families homeless for the most part and no area in St. Petersburg is capable of taking care of them. A check with Jordan Park Housing Project officials revealed that those making applications there must await their turn to be served.

PEPPERTOWN EXAMPLE

The Peppertown situation, yet to be solved, may cause city fathers to realize it was an unwise move to kill the Martin Shores development plan. One person interviewed by this reporter said: “Unless we are able to avert such critical housing situations in the future, Negroes may be living south of Tangerine sooner than we think. We must have room to accommodate our growing population.”

Another person referring to the housing situation said, “In St. Petersburg, we have less space for expansion than any other place in Florida. We are hemmed in and if we are to keep growing with the city, we must have an outlet. The city is gradually moving westward and each time big business...

OVERCROWDED HOUSING CONDITIONS

... have served as the incentive which is encouraging Negroes to purchase homes beyond a so-called “unwritten boundary line.”
Program Started To Kill City Rats

By MARGARET CARROLL

The first stage of a citywide rat control program carried on by the Pinellas County Health Department and the City of St. Petersburg was under way yesterday.

Health Department sanitarian Scott Marshall and John Nicholson, employed by the city, were dusting DDT in the first area of control: Methodist Town from 9th to 13th Sts., 1st to 5th Aves. N. The next area has not been designated.

PROGRAM EXPLAINED

Chief sanitarian A. H. Crenshaw explained the program, being carried out under a City ordinance recently passed, this way:

1. DDT is dusted in vacant lots and areas where rats are known to harbor. This kills fleas on rats. (If rats are killed first, fleas and lice from their bodies seek human hosts). The spraying started Monday and should be complete by the first of the week.

2. Step two is poisoning the rats. This takes from 10 to 15 days because the poison, set out in "poison stations," is slow acting. Crenshaw said the poison is an anti-coagulant and makes the rats literally bleed to death internally. The poison is not dangerous to domestic animals, he said.

3. Collection of debris in the area by city trash trucks.

4. Inspection of the neighborhood and homes to see that all rat harborages are gone. (The rat control ordinance, for instance, states that lumber should be piled on a rack 18 inches from the ground.)

5. If harborages are not eliminated after persons are notified by letter, the house will be quarantined after a specific time. Appeal from the notice can be made to St. Petersburg City Council.

ENFORCEMENT

Today at 3:30 p.m. Assistant City Attorney Carl Linn will explain enforcement features of the ordinance to inspectors who will work in the latter stages of the program.

Most of the inspections will be carried on with those of City Building Department inspectors under the minimum housing code, designed to rehabilitate slum areas. These inspections were recently called off, pending some amendments to the code.

Crenshaw said the department has received many complaints from St. Petersburg residents in all parts of the city about rat infestation.

"We will get to other areas as fast as we can, but it is a time-consuming program," he said. "We have already asked persons in some outlying areas to clean up vacant lots, and eventually the program will be citywide in areas where it's justified."

RAT CONTROL IN METHODIST TOWN

... begins with dusting of DDT to kill fleas on rats by city employe John Nicholson. Nicholson is dusting piles of debris — favorite homes of rodents — and next week will set out poison stations for the rats. Officials said if fleas are not killed first, they seek human hosts after leaving dead rats.
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