expand until they become universal, all developing as the unforeseen consequences of a public housing project.

Secondhand Houses

IN SOME RESPECTS, a "slum" is like a used-car lot. A "slum area" offers a supply of second-hand housing of the kind which satisfies a need until such time as a person can afford and wants a better home.

For purposes of illustration, let us assume that a more or less typical house may be suitable for occupancy over a period of 80 years from the time it is new. Assume further that the builder or original purchaser lives in the house for 20 years, and then sells it. He might reasonably expect to sell a 20-year-old house for about 75 per cent of the replacement cost of a new building. If the next resident occupies the house for 20 years, he might then sell it for roughly half the replacement cost. And a 60-year-old house might sell for about one-third of the replacement cost.[1]

In other words, if a family can afford only so much for housing—say $10,000, or the carrying costs on that amount—then one alternative would be a new home of small size. An-

[1] Roy Wenzlick and Co., *Appraisal Bulletin,* Vol. XXII, No. 2, January 21, 1953, and *As I See,* Vol. XXII, No. 11, March 17, 1950.

other alternative would be a used house with relatively more living space. It seems reasonable to let each family decide how best to balance newness against cubic content in their own choice of a home.

The point is that a typical dwelling does house a succession of different families during the life of the dwelling. And as a rule, it costs less to buy living quarters in a used house than in a new one. This explains why so many of us go through our lives always living in secondhand houses. And this is no cause for shame.

We do the same with automobiles. A Federal Reserve Board study reveals that in 1951, five out of eight purchasers of passenger cars bought secondhand vehicles. About a fourth of all cars in use today are more than ten years old. Those who want a car, but feel that they cannot afford a new one, patronize the used-car markets. As a consequence of this market method of distribution, nearly two-thirds of all families in the United States do own automobiles. And of the remaining families, many do not own cars simply because they do not want them.[2]

Socialized "Charity"

LET US ASSUME, however, that 5 per cent of all families in America are car-less because they

[2] *Automobile Facts and Figures,* 1952, pp. 14, 37.