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Sotsgorod

The Problem of Building Socialist Cities

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THE LOCATION OF BUILDINGS

The placement of the separate buildings in the living zone is also of significance. To begin with, the illumination of the interior of edifices by sunlight is mandatory, especially in view of the criminal practice—not only in the big capitalist countries but also here among ourselves—of placing buildings in such a way that there are many areas, including living spaces, which get no direct sunlight at all.

Nonetheless, it must be said that there are many projects (Stalingrad, for example) where our planners deprive whole sectors of sunlight and, at the same time, have the effrontery to call them “socialistic.” Needless to say, it is a fine kind of socialism that deprives a worker of the sunlight!

Therefore, it is **essential** to demand that **all dwelling houses, if there are two rows of apartments, be placed along the meridian (from south to north), but if**

there be only one, it should then face south or south-east. The disposition of living dwellings helter-skelter must not be allowed unless the “offshoot” (i.e., running east to west) has one row of dwellings facing the south and in addition the “offshoot” does not shade the dwellings situated behind it.

Besides this, **no construction should be permitted** (including baths, corridors, toilets, etc.) **which does not get some sun every day.**

We must also **categorically eliminate the disgraceful congestion in the layout of buildings that is the rule in cities.** In general, it would be more correct to lay out buildings in one line, leaving in front of their windows forest, field, or water. If conditions are such that traffic requires that the transparent facades of parallel rows of buildings face each other, then a wide free space should be left between them of no less than 75–100 m (depending on the size and height of the building).

The usual argument against such placement is that it would complicate and make more expensive the social services in the community. It must be said, however, that this is far from being so. **By laying out the buildings in one line we will not lengthen the pavements, water pipes, sewers, and electric lines but will actually shorten them.** This is due to the fact that we will then have a single unbent line which will make unnecessary the innumerable offshoots common at present.

In parallel rows of buildings, we can run the sewer, water, and electric lines along and under the houses rather than through the streets as now, intersecting the houses roughly in the middle of their sides.

Finally, **it will be necessary to end the practice of combining in the same building so many diverse installations for different services.** For example, the inclusion of stores in dwelling houses infests them with rodents, etc.; it sharply increases the cost of the store and hastens eventual deterioration of the building; placing nurseries and kindergartens in dwellings breeds epidemics among children; the building of cinemas will dirty the residences and expose them to fire, etc., etc.

The most that should be accommodated directly in dwellings are libraries and study units, and these should be only for the use of the residents.

It goes without saying that the installation in living quarters of productive activity of any kind, except perhaps the very lightest (for example, laundries), should not be allowed under any circumstances.

