

ALDERMANIC REVENUE PLANNED AS BASIS FOR NEW LAWS TO PROTECT TENANTS

President Smith, Acting on Request of Evening World, Calls For Resolution to Start Action Against Profiteering Landlords.

Acting upon the request of The Evening World, Aldermanic President Alfred B. Smith this morning laid plans for a sweeping Aldermanic probe of the entire rent situation in this city. Every phase of higher rent situation in the five boroughs will be investigated.

Assistant Corporation Counsel Nicholson informed the Aldermanic President that the City of New York, through its Board of Aldermen, has a right to investigate the rent situation. This power is granted in one of the sections of the Home Rule Law, enacted in 1915, which provides that the board may not only investigate "any matter of public concern," but that it may further issue subpoenas compelling witnesses to present themselves and produce records.

Accordingly President Smith directed Bernard L. Shlenker, his personal examiner who has been investigating the rent situation, to draw up resolutions calling for an Aldermanic inquiry. These resolutions will be submitted to the Democratic and Republican leaders of the Board of Aldermen who are to be asked to confer with President Smith in his office Monday afternoon. There isn't the slightest doubt but that the leaders will heartily agree to the inquiry. Practically every Alderman in the city has been appealed to for redress by constituents whose rents have been outrageously increased during the last year or so.

The inquiry may last weeks and the wealthiest and the humblest property owners will be called. Speaking of his resolution President Smith said: "The Home Rule Law says the Board of Aldermen may investigate all matters of public concern. That is a pretty sweeping provision, but high rents are just now as great matters of public concern as any other phase of the high cost of living. If the Board of Aldermen goes into this probe at all it will go to the very finish. It will spare no one who is guilty of profiteering, no matter who may be."

"There isn't any doubt but what the revelations of a thorough inquiry would form the basis for legislation that would protect all classes of renters against dishonest landlords. It must not be construed that those who believe there should be an investigation regard the general run of landlords as profiteers. Such is not the case. An inquiry will decide who are fair and who are not fair."

In this proposed action New York City will be following rapidly in the steps of Congress, which has just assumed supervision over the District of Columbia. The national legislators have fixed the exact income tax on property based upon a fixed valuation with due allowance for depreciation, insurance, etc.

The most important provision of the law curbing the Washington rentals is as follows: "Sec. 10.—That all persons letting real estate shall be required to keep books of accounts of all tenancies to the inspection of the Rent Administrator or his authorized agents, showing the rents charged and paid, including the names of the tenants or owners of the premises, and the amount of the taxes and assessments thereon, the cost of reasonable repairs and maintenance, insurance, light, heat, water and elevator, and other services, when furnished, as well as a proper allowance for depreciation or non-occupancy. No item shall be considered by the Rent Administrator in fixing the rent of property which does not appear in such accounts."

HIGHER RENTS ASKED TO MAKE UP LOSS IN OFFICE BUILDING INCOME
Landlords Insist They Are Not Profiteering—Would Welcome Rate Fixed by Congress.
New York landlords claim they are not profiteering. They say costs of all kinds are rising faster than rents and that their net income average smaller than the before-war totals. They call this unjust because the returns from other forms of investment average higher than they did before the war. In other words, while the

purchasing power of money has decreased as the result of war inflation, the income from their investments also has decreased. As a result of this, the estates, institutions and investors generally whose sole income is derived from real estate rentals find their available means reduced from 50 to 60 per cent.

In proof of the prevailing condition, President William T. Ropes of the New York Building Managers' Association, in co-operation with the Real Estate Record and Guide, obtained operating statistics for the past year from ten big office buildings in the district south of City Hall. The figures up to the spring renting season were:

	1918.	1917.	Per Cent Increase
100 Broadway	\$2,287,000	\$2,000,000	14.35
100 Wall	1,200,000	1,100,000	9.09
100 Nassau	1,000,000	900,000	11.11
100 South Street	800,000	700,000	14.29
100 West Street	700,000	600,000	16.67
100 North Street	600,000	500,000	20.00
100 East Street	500,000	400,000	25.00
100 Centre Street	400,000	300,000	33.33
100 South Street	300,000	200,000	50.00
100 West Street	200,000	100,000	100.00
Total	\$6,287,800	\$4,000,000	56.72

Office buildings, to which the foregoing table refers, employ much labor and wages have increased twenty-five to fifty per cent. in the last few years.

NO WAR PROFITEERING HERE, SAY REALTY LEADERS.
"Our investigations show," said President Laurence McGuire of the Real Estate Board and United States Realty and Investment Company, "that New York rents are really on a lower basis than those in any other populous section of the country. Wartime money rates are proverbially high, and surely a 4 per cent return on investment is not exorbitant. Prices of all living necessities have gone up, and it is only fair that landlords should get a fair price for their commodities, as well as other dealers in or owners of living necessities."

Chairman Alfred E. Marling of the Advisory Council of Real Estate Interests, recently elected President of the Board of Commerce, and other realty leaders declared that the general sentiment among large holders and lenders was to prevent all wartime profiteering, but, nevertheless, to protect realty from unfair discrimination because of the city's bonds are regulated by its borrowing power, which in turn is figured from its realty valuations.

Agents for owners of the great mass of uptown apartment houses, such as F. R. Wood-W. H. Dolson Company, Slawson & Holts, Pease & Elliman, Douglas L. Elliman & Co., and Thomas J. O'Reilly, declared to-day that a 7 per cent net income rate, as fixed by Congress as a fair return on realty in the hands of the highly satisfied majority of the city's investors, they could convict any owner of profiteering. They said that such holdings had been selling in the market for several years on practically 10 per cent gross rental basis and that the operating costs, with fixed charges, averaged fully or more than half of the gross, leaving 5 per cent for net return. Investors of the type who get a larger percentage are borrowing much of their capital on mortgage and are thus taking greater chances with their investments, much like margin operators in Wall Street stocks.

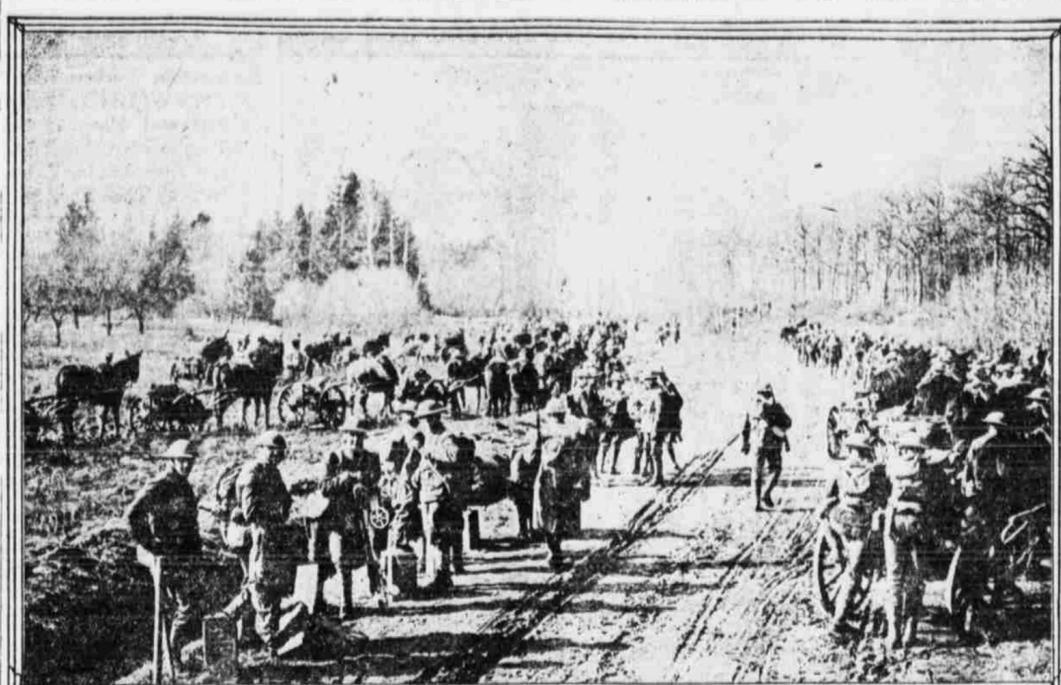
A straight increase of 10 to 15 per cent in rentals would not be owners as much from their properties as they had in years before the war," said Douglas L. Elliman, who handles many of the great low apartment houses along Park and Madison Avenues.

Small Excuse Brings a Big Increase in Rents.
To the Editor of The Evening World: Allow me to commend you on your editorials regarding the profiteering landlords. I am living in a six family house in Hildewood, Queens County. The taxes were raised 35 points last year, which meant in the neighborhood of \$25 to my landlord. He raised the rents on May 1 to the amount of \$78 per year, which I think is very unjust to the rent payers. In fact the majority of the landlords in Hildewood have done the same thing.

A CONSTANT READER.
Brooklyn, May 16.

The Filmy "Heat" Subterfuge of Bronx Landlords.
New York, May 16.
To the Editor of The Evening World: In your column headed "Letters From the People" I wish to make a complaint. The landlords and agents in the Bronx at 1743 Street to Tremont continue to raise their rents to a fabulous sum and have caused much suffering among the families. Wages have not been raised and therefore these families are suffering. The excuse that has been made is coal and the high price of the same. The rent was raised, but no heat to feel comfortable was given. Rents were raised again May 1. No heat is now necessary and now the plea

AMERICAN MARINES MARCHING CHEERILY TO THE FRONT



U.S. MARINES, READY TO MARCH TO THE FRONT LINES.

"To improve the conditions of the property," which the tenants must pay. This is certainly an outrage and should be taken up by The Evening World at once. No one has been laid in by this landlord who promised to do so, and the same thing confronts the people next year. This landlord has threatened to increase the rent in the fall again. I have been a reader of The Evening World for fifteen years. I know of your ability to stop this profiteering and hope this year will start a war on these landlords' at once.

Why Should a Tenant Pay for What He Doesn't Get?
NEW YORK, May 16.
As a renter I wish to thank you for your fairness regarding the landlord and tenant. In opening my own case I can give you first hand information as regards landlordism in New York City. Twelve years ago I moved into an uptown flat, and have paid my rent promptly on the first of each month, in advance. I always have considered it was not equity.

Why should a tenant pay for something he has not got? Does a man get paid before he earns his wages? Or what guarantee has a tenant that, in case of fire or other causes, his month's rent will be returned?

Don't you think that the landlord should meet the tenant and agree to rent being paid on the fifteenth of each month. In my particular case, I am paying in the winter months for steam and hot water. Allowing for last year's difficulty in the coal situation we will admit they were up against it in some instances, but in others they rubbed it in with a vengeance. For instance, where gas was kept burning all day in order to keep the young children warm the landlord was requested, on petition, to pay for the gas consumed. The request was met by an inquiry "How much of the gas bill do you reckon I ought to pay?" On being informed the answer was, "Very well; deduct three dollars, but from now on your rent for these apartments will be three dollars per month more."

As regards the tax proposition, allowing for an increase in taxes, that landlord has a right to add on a \$30,000 valuation \$4 per head on each tenant, four tenants to a floor, six floors to the building, or \$84 a month, making \$1008 a year. Is this patriotic or extortion?

We can also listen to scarcity of buildings, also building materials, labor, etc. This is in all instances, at the present time we have close to 1,000,000 of our younger men in the army who have given up just so much home space. We also have the same amount of men who were eligible for matrimony and selecting 1,000,000 homes, which they have not done. Does this really warrant the Real Estate Trust and its advisers to come forward in "war times" and cruelty to the unfortunate worker who is trying to help his country with a few dollars? I am myself, personally, kept continually grinding, trying to pay a few dollars on Liberty Loan bonds and meet the ever-increasing cost of living. I am not alone in this. Ask my investigators to come into Harlem and note for themselves the temper of the tenants, which may lead later on to trouble, boycott, or worse.

How Rent is Raised on Tenants Running Several Years.
To the Editor of The Evening World: I enclose a fair sample of landlordism as it is to-day. You sign a lease, as your suppose, for two or three years, and then your landlord writes you and says, in effect, "Don't let a little thing like that bother you—It doesn't bother us." We hereby cancel any years after the first year, and here to inform you that your rent has been raised by — so and so much. How's that for him? Then he goes on to say that you must give him an answer by May 15—four months and a half before the first of October—or he will advertise your place for rent and begin to show it to prospective tenants. When I called at the office of my landlord's agents and asked to see where it was stated in the lease that I must give an answer by May 15, I was met with evasive answers. I have read my lease carefully, and can find nothing in it to that effect. June 1 being the time stated, I requested that a letter be written me abrogating the written notice that I must give answer by May 15, and no attention was paid

to my request. And I have been a tenant for four years! "Can you beat it?"
ONLY A TENANT.
Suggests a Blanket Injunction Against Increases.
This rent-boasting carnival at the expense of a much ridden public should be stopped.

The average poor man has to deny himself of food and clothes to buy Liberty Bonds and Thrift Stamps. He is further called upon to contribute to the work of agencies engaged in ameliorating conditions at the front. This is not more than what is expected of every man in America.

The piker, however, is the man who envelops himself in a smoke screen of seeming respectability, lays down a gas barrage of such nauseating fancies as "taxes, higher cost of labor and material and reduced building construction, then heartlessly taxes his tenants 15 to 25 per cent over last year's high rental, when the upkeep (all expenses) may have only increased five to ten per cent. I suggest that the municipal authorities put into effect, by whatever means at their disposal, a blanket injunction prohibiting all increases until further notice; appoint a committee to inquire into the reasonableness of existing rentals, and be given full power to grant appeals for increases, or where it is determined that present rates are paid up to the passage of the bill or law. This retroactive feature in favor of tenants is, I believe, just.

Here is another golden opportunity for The World to further endorse itself to the hearts of a long-suffering public.
FRANCIS I. BERRY.

U. S. FLYER ADRIFT 4 DAYS WITHOUT ANY FOOD OR DRINK
(Continued from First Page.)
whole time. We suffered from thirst. I had a craving for canned peaches. LAPPED UP RAIN THAT FELL ON PONTOON.

Twice a drizzle came on, wetting the pontoon. We turned on our stomachs and lapped up the moisture, but the paint came off with salt and nauseated us.

"Our limbs grew numb. From time to time the wreckage from torpedoed ships would pass. Once two full-blown cats came close enough to swim for, but by then in our weakened state we knew that we would drown if we tried to get them.

"We did haul in a third tin and broke it open. It was filled with tobacco.

"Every day we saw convoys in the distance and vainly waved our handkerchiefs. We had no signal lights to use at night. Our watches stopped and we lost all track of time. We realized how easy it was for a submarine out there to escape being spotted.

"On Sunday night we spied a mashed light and shouted. The ship heaved and began to circle us. We saw her portlight. She headed straight toward us until within 100 yards. Then, when the crew were visible on the deck of the vessel, she suddenly put out her lights and turned away.

"She thinks we are Germans," said Moore.

"I hope she does," said I. "Then they'll send a patrol boat out to get us. We couldn't be worse off if we were Germans." But no rescue came.

"On Monday afternoon a seaplane came from the east. It was flying only 600 feet overhead along down the channel. It seemed impossible that she could not sight us, for the air was perfectly clear. But she passed straight above without making any signal.

"She flew two miles beyond and came back on her course.

VOIDS RENO DIVORCE THAT LET N. Y. WIFE 'TRADE HUSBANDS'
Court, Giving Frank W. Miner Decree, Scores Action Taken in West.

(Special to The Evening World.)
WHITE PLAINS, N. Y., May 18.—Supreme Court Justice Joseph Morschauser has filed an opinion in the Westchester County Clerk's office in connection with the action for a divorce brought by Frank W. Miner of New Rochelle against Mrs. Francis A. Miner. The Court voices strong disapproval of divorces "made out" in Reno, Nev.

Justice Morschauser says the objection of the defendant to the action brought by her husband is that an absolute divorce was granted to her at Reno, Nev., on Nov. 16, 1916, and the Court makes the following comments: "The plaintiff did not answer or appear in that action. So far as the plaintiff is concerned the divorce in Reno is invalid and has no binding force or effect within this jurisdiction, nor will the courts of this State recognize it for any purpose.

"The defendant on the day that she obtained the decree of divorce at Reno married Henry A. Seibrecht Jr., a resident of this State, the co-respondent named in the complaint herein, an exchange of husbands within a few hours on the same day. The defendant and Seibrecht left Reno on the same day for California, where they now reside as husband and wife, having plaintiff's son with them.

"So far as we are concerned the defendant is the wife of the plaintiff. The marriage is now about to be severed on statutory grounds. The plaintiff is entitled to the judgment asked for, a divorce in this State."

SOLDIER IS SENTENCED TO 20 YEARS IN PRISON
Lippard Stayed Away From Camp Four Months—Negro Who Slept on Duty Punished.
CAMP DIX, WRIGHTSTOWN, N. J., May 18.—Twenty years at hard labor in Fort Jay, N. Y., and a dishonorable discharge from the army was the punishment of Private Frederick E. Lippard by a court martial.

BREAD CUT HURTS GERMANS.
Physical and Moral Resistance Lowered, Says Correspondent.
AMSTERDAM, May 18.—In some meaning upon the reduction of the German bread ration from 200 to 150 grams a day, the Dutch newspaper "Nieuwspaper" writes: "The physical and moral power of the people for resistance are visibly diminished by these new privations." "The number of swine in Germany now is under 6,000,000 as compared with 12,000,000 a year ago." "Although there are still 15,000,000 cattle their slaughter weight is now only 136 kilograms as compared with 210 a year ago."

AMERICANS SHOW BRITISH COUSINS WHAT BASEBALL IS

Army and Navy Teams Open League Season in London—Sims and Biddle There.

LONDON, May 18.—A history-making battle is being fought on English soil this afternoon.

It is between the Army and Navy Headquarters teams—the first regular league game in England in the history of baseball, the army, the navy or any other history.

Admiral Sims agreed to demonstrate literally that he "has something on the ball" by pitching the first one over. Major Gen. Biddle, commanding all the American troops in England, promises to catch it—if he had not forgotten how. Then the regular ball players were to show the great crowd of Englishers how baseball is played and what kind of fellows they are.

One American, who has been here twenty years, talking to his English partner before the game, said: "I suppose it will be like the game I saw in the Middle Ages, when I witnessed Arlie Latham and the other championship Browns, and spent the afternoon explaining to my girl why the pitcher couldn't hit the bat."

This was the last game he saw, and fate sent Arlie here to perform for him again to-day. Arlie was not playing, but was Hank O'Dayling around the base line.

The British Red Cross and other British charities will receive the entire profits from the Anglo-American League season, in which four American and four Canadian clubs will play a fierce struggle, backed by thirty wealthy and benevolent American business men.

It was rumored that the army team was packed with "ringers." Anyhow, five total strangers arrived yesterday afternoon from a certain aviation centre. They are all ball players who suddenly became attached to the Army Headquarters, which is playing to-day.

RED CROSS WEEK
Special Military and Naval Events Daily.
For daily programme see newspapers.

Street, last night. He was seventy-two years old.

Mr. Martin came to this country from Ireland with his brother, Bernard J. Martin, when he was two years old. When eleven he had to go to work, first as a boy in a law office and later as a street car conductor. He ran away from home to enter the Civil War with the old New York Volunteers, known as Hawkins' Zouaves. After serving in the field for a year he returned later as a clerk to Gen. Dix to handle the draft riots.

He had become interested in local politics in New York, joined Tammany Hall and in 1889 was appointed secretary to Theodore Connolly, Register of New York County. From that he became clerk of the Board of Aldermen in 1872, the first anti-Tweed board.

In the meantime he had risen in power in Tammany Hall, was a district leader and Chairman of the Executive Committee, the friend of Richard Croker. Mr. Martin was made President of the Police Board in 1902, and the following year the Legislature authorized the investigation led by Senator Lexow, into the charges of police graft. Mr. Martin weathered perhaps the most sensational investigation ever conducted in this country. While graft was shown to be the rule in the Police Department, he retained established his entire innocence. Went on the stand as a witness and instructed his lawyers not to object to any questions put to him.

Mr. Martin had a serious quarrel with Charles F. Murphy, leader of Tammany Hall, and was appointed City Chamberlain by Mayor McWilliam upon the death of Peter Keenan. Later he retired from the leadership of the Twenty-ninth, in 1907, and from the chairmanship of the Executive Committee of Tammany Hall. His name had been mentioned as a Mayoralty candidate, but he refused to consider it.

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