

include the effects of such a charge on groups of rate-payers, on particular classes of property, on different localities, on properties of different ages, on dwellings of various kinds and, of course, the effects on owners and occupiers where they are not the same persons. Further information will then be available for publication by means of an interim report.

Whilst the Association's enquiries will be directed towards means of improving the present system, it appears to the Association that land values reflect the availability of public services of all kinds, and it is not unreasonable to expect owners of undeveloped land to make some contribution towards the cost of such services.

Site-value assessments could be used as the means of collecting annually, for the benefit of local authorities, a sum based on betterment arising from planning uses which are permitted within the terms of the area development plan. The Association submits that an extension to the present rating system to include a contribution to local rate-borne expenditure from owners of undeveloped land would be desirable.

PROGRESS IN THE CARIBBEAN

(Extract from *The Valuer*, Sydney, October 1964)

THE WORK of Mr. J. M. Copes in directing, as

Commissioner of Valuations, Jamaica, a changeover there from land taxation and rating based on capital values to site-value rating has long been of interest overseas.

First considered by the Government of Jamaica in 1956 and on the advice of Dr. J. N. Murray, Chairman of the Commonwealth Board of Valuers, who clarified the major issues and formulated the working basis of the system, the project was begun a year later under the auspices of the United Nations Technical Assistance Administration.

Although today the work of re-valuing the whole island has not been entirely completed, Mr. Copes in a recent letter said that the Jamaican Valuation Department is now fully capable of handling its own problems so that his work there has virtually finished. Moreover, he added, after two elections it appears that the system has gained political acceptance on both sides of the Jamaican House of Assembly.

Some two years ago on his appointment as United Nations Adviser on Rating and Land Valuation in the Caribbean Area, Mr. Copes changed his headquarters from Kingston, Jamaica, to Port of Spain, Trinidad, and last year completed a comprehensive report to the Government of Trinidad and Tobago entitled "Valuation, Land Taxation and Rating."

More recently he visited Barbados, an island of only 166 square miles with a resident population of 246,000, the most densely populated island in the Caribbean with an economy dependent mainly on sugar and tourism. Property taxation there still follows the British system based on "annual values."

To appreciate the difficulties sometimes met in some of

the so-called "emerging" countries of introducing improved administrative methods such as site-value rating, Barbados at present has no survey department nor cadastral maps and no trained valuation staff. Following this visit Mr. Copes has prepared a second report on rating and valuation for the Government of Barbados.

"NON PROFIT" MIRAGE

"UNDER THE HOUSING ACT 1964 the Government is setting up a new central body — the Housing Corporation — to help people who need a house or a flat but who do not wish, or are not in a position, to rent or buy in the ordinary way, and yet cannot expect help from local authorities." These words introduce a small, informative booklet about the Housing Corporation, its role, its scope and its intentions.

The setting up of this Housing Corporation is unaffected by the change of government.

The main duties of the Corporation will be:

(a) to organise cost-rent housing societies and co-ownership schemes, to promote and guide their development and to give the movement wide publicity;

(b) to help the societies in every way, including buying land for them where necessary and giving architectural and other advice; and

(c) to join with the building societies and other financial institutions in providing finance for housing society schemes.

It is envisaged that rents on three-yearly tenancies of homes built under this system will be fixed to cover capital cost and maintenance outgoings. Estimated rents range from £4 to £7 a week, excluding rates, and will depend on building costs at the time of construction and the cost of sites.

What are the advantages of such a system? Advantages to home searchers are these:

In the first place less than the normal deposit for house purchase will be required (probably about £150) because the building societies will accept a joint-risk on all the potential lessees.

In the second place repayments will be low because the period of loan will be extended to forty years for homes constructed under this procedure.

In the third place purchasers under this scheme will enjoy security of tenure for at least the life of the building.

All this must sound attractive, particularly to the young professionals who at present find home purchase a great burden on limited resources in their early working lives. A quick glance at the economic balance, however, throws forward some of the unseen factors. Since the building societies will generally provide two-thirds of the finance they must be quite happy with an arrangement that will provide them with steady interest returns over forty years. Land owners will certainly have nothing to complain about since transactions in land will be at market rates. The individual repayments will cover the costs of the double mortgage (one-third of the mortgage will be financed from government funds at one-quarter per cent