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## tments Near Havo

By Terri Shaw Washington Post Staff Writer

HAVANA-On the out skirts of almost every Latin American city are mile after mile of makeshift shacks, built by the poor who have come to the city seeking

In Chile, these slums are called "callampas," or mushrooms, because they seem to spring up overnight.

On the outskirts of Havana and other Cuban cities a different kind of housing is "mushrooming"-modern sturdy prefabricated concrete apartments.

Like the slums surrounding South American cities, these homes are being built by the people who will live in them. But the material, the blueprints and the work. ers' salaries are provided by the government.

The biggest of these developments is Alamar, where more than 140 white, red, yellow and blue apartment buildings have been built near the Caribbean about five miles east of Havana, More than 140 more 5-and 12-story buildings are in various stages of construc-tion, and the new town is expected to have 150,000 residents.

Enrique Abreu, 51, was one of the first workers to begin building Alamar in 1971. When he and about 30 other workers at the Havana oil refinery volunteered to form a "microbrigade" to work at Alamar, those who stayed behind pledged to handle the volunteers' jobs. In return for supplying a "microbrigade," the rafinery workers were promised a specific number of apartments at Alamar.

One of those apartments

— a small, two-bedroom, fifth-floor flat with a kitchen and bathroom—went to Abren and his wife.

"Before we lived in one room with a wooden divider that I put up myself," said Abreau, a friendly, weathered-looking man with two missing. bottom teeth "There was a small area for the stove and we shared the bathroom with nine other families."

"The old place had cock : roaches and was very closed and stuffy. This one is cool and clean," said Mrs.
Abreu, who suffers from
asthma. The Abres were
allotted their apartment by the workers of the oil refinery, on the basis of their need and their revolutionary merit, a concept that seems to mean their contribution to the so ciety and the many civic and political groups most Cubans belong too. Like other Alamar residents, the Abreus pay a rent equal to about 6 per cent of the husband's salary.

Along with the new housing, the Alamar "microbrigades" have built

schools, day care centers, supermarkets, and amphitheater, a clinic, and a factory that makes furniture to be sold to residents of the

Under construction are more schools, stores and day care centers, another factory and a movie theater with three auditoriums. One of the suditoriums is to show children's films under the supervision of babysitters when their parents are watching a show "unsuitable for minors" in another hall, Abreu said.

A foreign businessman who visited Alamar said the buildings appear well-con-structured, although 80 per cent of the workers had never before done construction work.

Abreu said the ideas of forming the microbrigades was suggested by Prime Minister Fidel Castro in a conversation with a group of workers in 1970.

Construction of new housing was neglected during the early years of Castro's government because most of the government's resources were devoted to providing the essential goods that could no longer be imported as a result of the trade em-bargo initiated by the United States.

The government also concentrated on constructing new schools and hospitals in an effort to strengthen the human resources needed to build the Cuban economy.

Even with microbrigades building houses all over the country, there is still a housing shortage. In his annual July 26 speech this year,



One of the first radical changes made by the Castro government after it took power in 1959 was the "urban reform," which pro-vided that tenants could buy their houses or apartments through small monthly payments to the government,

government inspector who checks to see if new housing fits each family's needs.

Because of the trade embargo and the government's priority on investment in the countryside, housing in Havana and other cities has decayed. Maintenance is difficult since necessary sup-

Castro said: 'Right now be while the government pro spiles such as tools and tween 25,000 and 30,000 vided a pension to the former? paint, are often unavailable bounding units are a being landlords. Now many Cuban a Many of the beautiful, Spanhousing units are; being landlords. Now many Cuban ish colonial buildings of Old spuilt, and it's not shough. It's one-third of what is needed just to make a be ginning.

The while it's hard fits many. Housing a satisfied by the line hard fits many the control their income. It's hard fits many the satisfied by the line hard fits many thousing a satisfied by the line has been provided for Cubans to find a newscore of spartment, the harding ple, so want to thange are that they do have does not make a serious dent in the Lit must be approved by a the reconstruction plan, but a western diplomat said it.

a Western diplomat said it would preserve the most his-toric buildings and replace the others with parks thea. ters and offices.

New housing will be outside the city in places like Alamar, making the inner city a place for work and recreation, but not housing.



