THE SPACES OF PUBLIC HOUSING
Prospects for a Subversive Socio-Spatial Dialectic

by

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ABSTRACT

The essay examines the local public housing scene in light of the work of American geographer
Edward Soja's *Postmodern Geographies, The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory*
(1989), as well as French Marxist philosopher Henri Lefebvre's *The Production of Space* (1974,

Besides presenting an alternative perspective of spatial production in public housing, the
discussion looks at how the capitalist mode of productions has "commodified" these spaces of
housing, and thereby in the process possibly undermining the process of "nation-building"—
ironically an objective of public housing in the very first place.

The prospects for a "subversive socio-spatial dialectic" as spelled out by Soja as well as
Lefebvre are hence examined by looking at this inherent contradiction between spatialisations
of capitalist imperatives and nationalistic objectives.

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