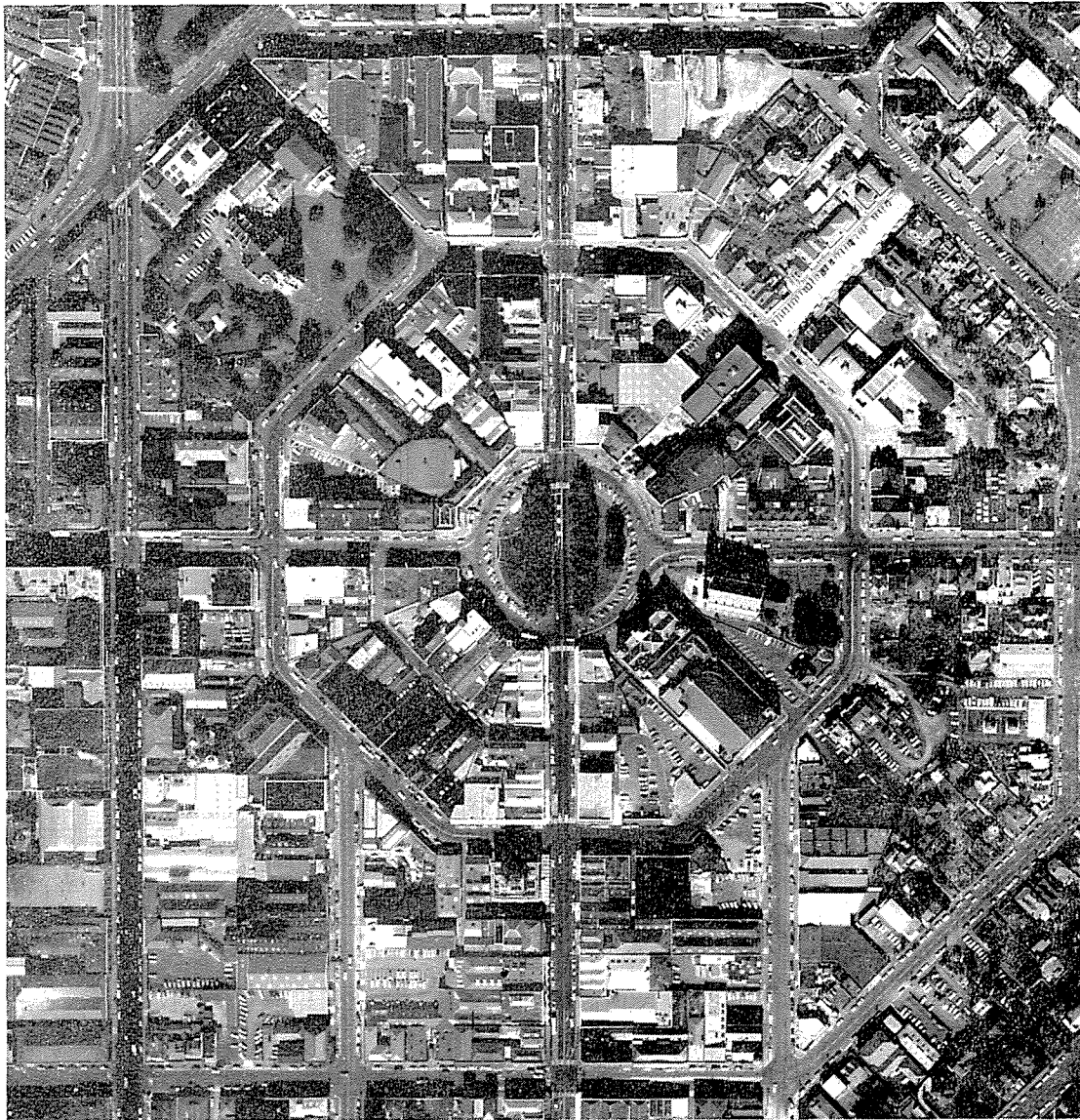


TOWN PLANNING QUARTERLY/12





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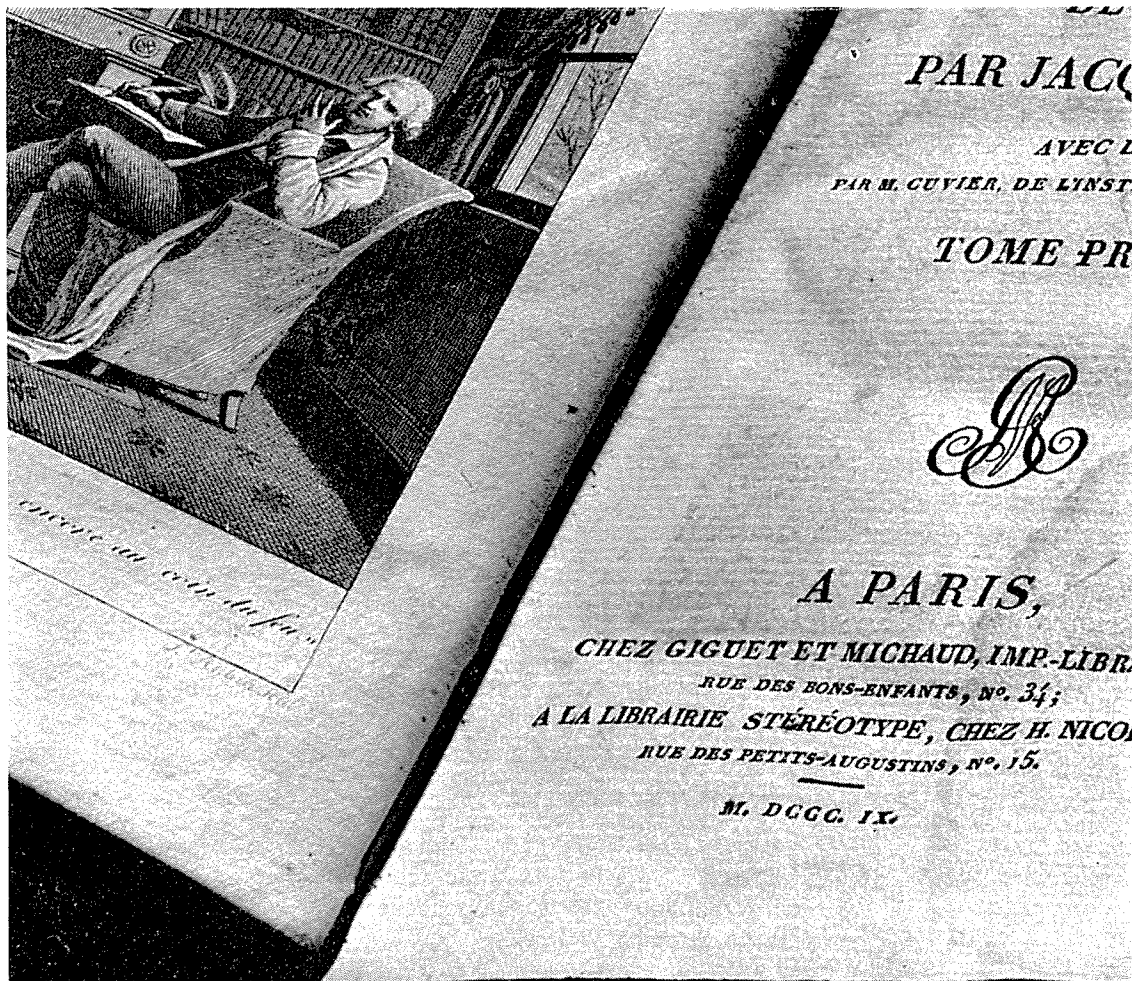
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FACT & OPINION

An editorial notebook

Wanganui tries it on

Planning by public participation, even with the procedures of public notice, objection and appeal, too often relies on largely hypothetical arguments about what could or could not happen if a particular proposal were adopted. People treat their hunches as facts. In very few areas do planners have sufficient practical or experimental evidence to know what could happen when they pursue a course of action that has never been undertaken in that situation before; this is most of the time.

In some cases it is quite impractical to "try it on" before the event, the working model would cost as much as the real thing. This type of uncertainty is something with which we are learning to live. The occasions when opportunities are available for genuine experiments occur with greater frequency than the planner's ability to see them or to take advantage of them.

W. D. Ross, in an article in this issue, describes an experiment that was put on trial in Wanganui in May this year. No one would pretend that such an experiment will reveal all the repercussions that will flow from this cheap and speedy rearrangement of the traffic pattern, but it will allow a more reasoned approach to more permanent changes. It will be of more than passing interest to hear later of the results of this exploration.

Greener grass

Discretionary power of councils always cause concern: to councillors, the public, planners and lawyers. But, it seems, so do rigid and inflexible

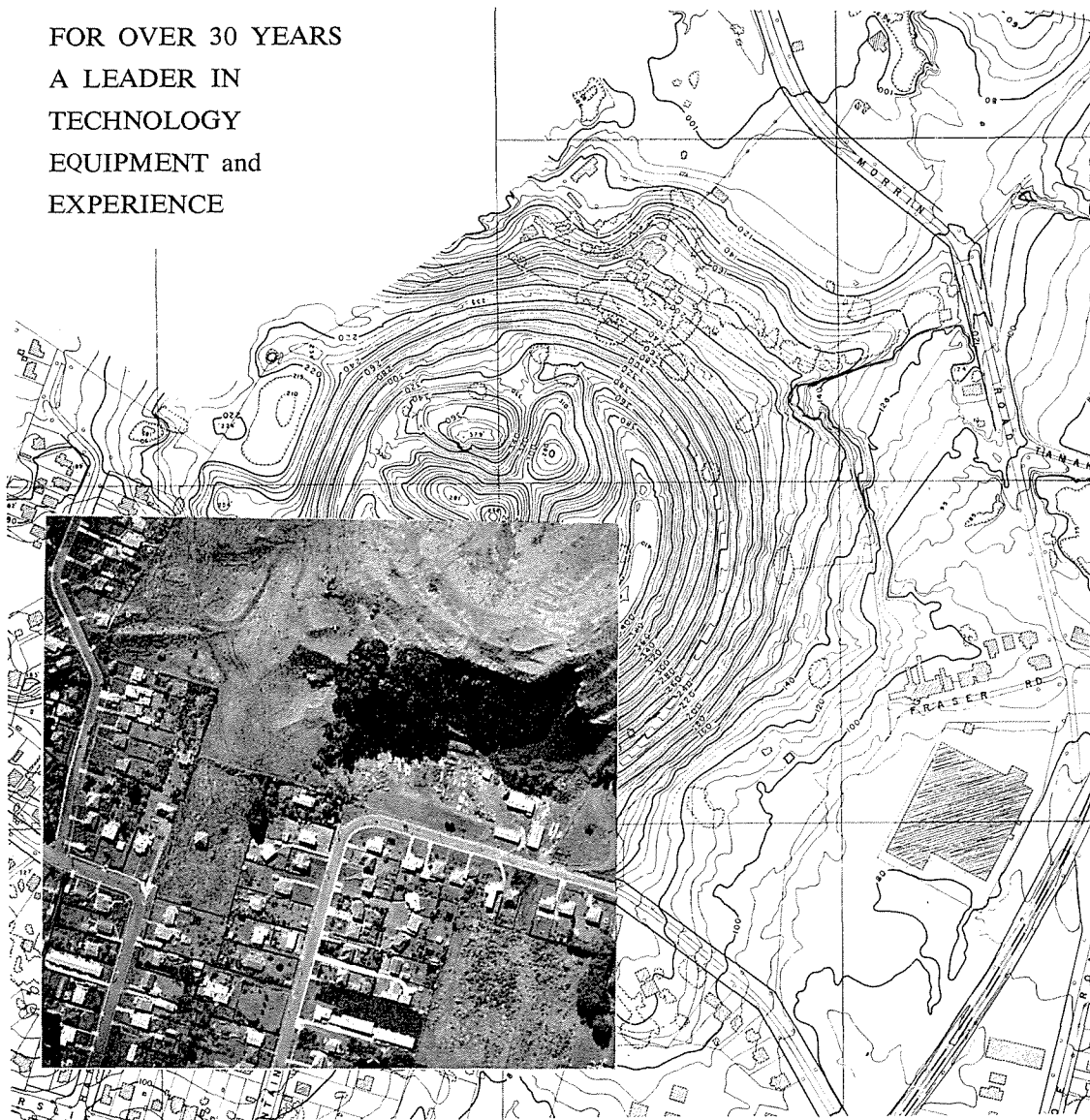
controls. Those who operate in a system of "plasticity" clamour to be controlled more rigidly, and vice versa. In the regrettable absence of any assessment of the results produced by the New Zealand version of planning wisdom we must look elsewhere for signposts and warnings.

The activities of Brisbane City Council with respect to subdivision approvals, use of land and buildings approvals and other like approvals and permits has been the object of a commission of inquiry set up by order in council in the state of Queensland. The commission was Mr. A. L. Bennett, QC, and hearings took place before him between October, 1966, and March, 1967, on a total of 45 days. The commission's report was completed in April, 1967. The document (Report of the Brisbane City Council Subdivision Use and Development of Land Commission, Government Printer, Brisbane) sets out the findings of the commission and a summary of the matters brought before it. The report will certainly be of great interest to New Zealand planners and planning lawyers.

To select points at random from the 2059 paragraphs of a 102-page document would be a dangerous exercise, but the commission finds no merit in situations where there are the elements of inequality, hardship, delay and injustice in the imposition of conditions. It also finds that zoning should be not so much a matter of restriction, with consequent monopoly and often unnecessary denial and prevention, as a matter of separation of activities which are incompatible.

The report highlights two features, the difficulties and dangers of operating conditional use procedures as a way of life and the need for

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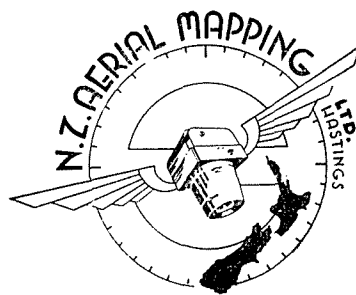
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Drive-in rhubarb

One of the harder tasks of being a human being is the need to see and be aware of the dangers of a situation before it happens. This ability to constructively link apparently unrelated events and draw warnings from them is called (by some) planning. Not Planning, just planning.

The publication of Bulletin Number 11, Roadside Stalls in Rural Zones, by the Ministry of Works Town and Country Planning Branch and the provisions relating to the control of advertising in the Auckland City Council district scheme review are two recent events which have no obvious major significance and only a remote relationship. It is probable, however, that they are evidence of more than just a particular sort of writing on the wall.

Both are examples of legitimate attempts to extend and strengthen the powers of town planners to control (or is it guide) the environment in which we live.

The provisions of Section 18, Town and Country Planning Act, are clearly wide enough to allow planners to exercise their powers in and on behalf of almost every aspect of human activity in towns. Those other professions and groups who are helping to guide (or is it control) society are rapidly becoming aware of the scope of planning power. If something "undesirable" occurs in their "field" it can be corrected by the actions of the planners through the exercise of "proper" planning control.

Now that Christopher Alexander has helped to make some planners aware that "cities are not trees" but highly complex systems of inter-related items it should be obvious that it does matter **where** control of undesirables is exercised. If a basic lack of discipline in one area of society results in a harmful situation arising because of actions in another area it is doubtful if harsh corrections in one, the other, or even both, will produce the desired effect. What harsh and over-restrictive correction to one aspect alone does produce is a general disrespect for the group applying the restriction. There is the danger that applying restrictions for others will bring the town planners into disrepute.

On this issue the roadside stall provides food

for thought. There is no doubt that the development of roadside stalls along our main highways is a problem. It seems that people can neither be trusted to provide reasonably for the safety of those purchasing their products, nor can they properly site their buildings or correctly draw their signs. The bulletin suggests eight points which should be controlled to better secure these and other things. It is clear that the matter of traffic movement is the prime concern. Yet it seems from the evidence put forward in the bulletin that even when most of the suggestions are complied with there is still a danger and inconvenience to the users of the highway. The simple problem seems to be that retail sales of produce are bad in rural areas. To forbid it would work as badly as "the prohibition." To control it leaves us with some planning controls and little gain in safety.

There are two niggers, at least, in this woodpile, the vendor and the purchaser. The first encourages the second to perform dangerous acts on the highways, the second allows himself to be distracted from his responsibility as a driver of a car. As long as drivers allow their attention and their judgment of a dangerous situation to be distracted there will be accidents on our highways. When the roadside stalls are rubbed off the planning maps drivers will continue to find things to distract them.

Planners must be sure when they are asked to control whatever it is that it is entirely within their sphere of interest and that other sectors cannot contribute to a more reasonable solution. The link with the ACC review? The grounds for the control of advertising are traffic hazard through driver inattention.

Civic Trust, Auckland

Aucklanders have just formed a civic trust similar to the Christchurch Civic Trust mentioned by Peter Beaven in this issue.

Civic Trust, Auckland, will hold its first public meeting on Sunday, August 4, at the Ellen Melville Hall. Annual membership fee is one dollar.

The planner and the press (a case history)

The following is the most recent of similar newspaper extracts relating to the same topic and the same authority.

December 7. In a lengthy article dealing with the principles of financing a transportation plan the press quoted from a section of a report prepared after much research and discussion among councils and published by the authority on the previous day: "Road authorities should establish property funds now to enable equitable and early property purchase."

February 1. Reporting on a paper to a conference which commented on the New Zealand Town Planning Act the press quoted an officer of the authority as saying: "The Act suffers from a serious omission of terms of reference for determining compensation to owners aggrieved by planning schemes and this administrative weakness has discredited good planning proposals."

February 5. The officer is reported on returning from the conference: "Councils in the area have been too slow to adopt a positive land purchase policy for major road improvements . . . land purchase is the one outstanding direction in which road planning . . . could be speeded up and improved. Unless owners of land were paid in due time, road construction must be delayed (and) this very thing was happening in Australia. Asked

where the money should come from (the officer) said it was not for him to say — although it was obvious it must come either from rates or by way of loan . . . people must be prepared to meet this responsibility."

February 6. A councillor is reported: "It is all very well for (the officer) to say that the councils have been too slow in deciding to buy property . . . I notice he says the finance of these matters is no concern of his, but it is of very real concern to local bodies. . . . First things must come first. I am all in favour of planning ahead, but someone has to consider how much can be spent on these schemes."

February 8. Editorial comment under the heading "The Planner's Mind": "This has become the age of the professional planner, and unfortunately for the ordinary man his rights and interests are not the first consideration in the preparation of grandiose, long range schemes which may never be implemented. The philosophy of the planner is frankly revealed (by the officer) when he said that finance was no concern of his. (The councillor) was fully within his rights in administering a sharp rebuke. . . . Sometimes the planning is done in secret, but the news leaks out, residents are alarmed. Property values fall and the security of a man's chief asset, his home, is in jeopardy. Much that the authority had done is of lasting benefit to the city, but somebody must be continually on the alert to see that the planners keep their feet on the ground."

Comment

And so yet another word joust passes; it could be from any metropolitan area in the world where the headlong collision between citizen participant and planning expert is exaggerated and misunderstood.

In this case the primary interest of the authority and its officer was in terms similar to those used in the editorial — "to ensure the security of a man's chief asset, his home, in consideration of his rights and interests and incidentally avoid the discrediting of good proposals which are immediate (i.e., the next ten years) and had withstood economic feasibility studies and which were not, as inferred by the editor, long-range schemes which may never be implemented."

Further, both the councillor and the editor were aware of the original report and were in posses-

sion of the programme proposals. These are not normally sought by members of the public who naturally leave their presentation to their elected representatives and the press.

Relations with aggrieved property owners are generally good; this is illustrated by the fact that only one compulsory acquisition in 2000 is taken to court and also in the experience of officers handling these matters.

Why the collision?

How is it that the relations between planners and the councillor and editors of the press are so bad? This is not peculiar to one city — politicians and whole councils have been displaced on the “planning hot potato.”

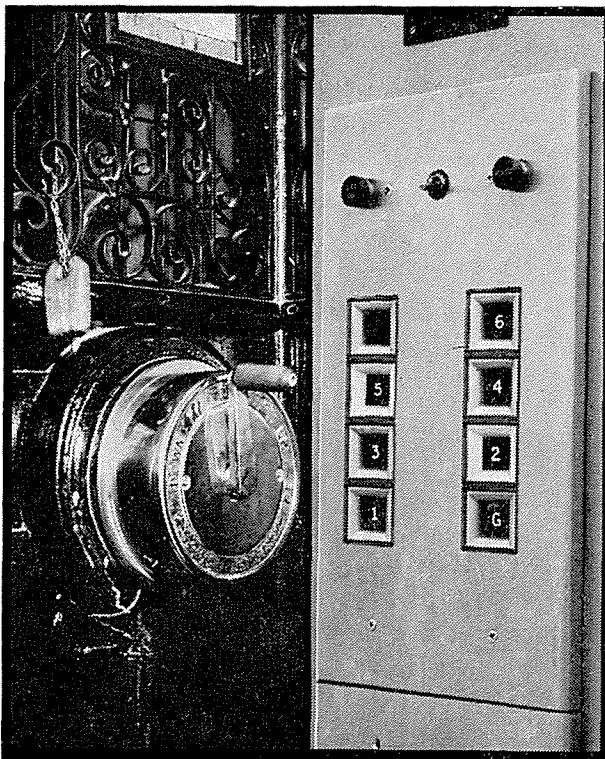
As recently pointed out at the Canadian conference “People are the City,” to plan involves faith in the need for a better future. Unlike conventional religion however there is no salvation in planning, only a slightly better or worse city which will be judged by an unknown future generation of in-migrating citizens.

The editor and the councillor are of course engaged in the exciting daily activity of present metropolitan life. The problem is how can the planner (in the absence of immediate epidemic, flood, traffic jam, slums, disaster) establish relations with these important public spokesmen and wrench them back to the reality and commitment to plan. If the councillor is to do first things first surely this is to plan. The New Zealand citizen, both corporately through the 1953 legislation and individually through personal interest, accents this necessity and obligation.

The need is not for public relations, but for support of the need to plan by persons who move in public places. This shortcoming is likely to remain the major restraint to planning and the advocacy of plans.

The above mentioned Canadian conference adds “a warning that ‘The People’ are frequently misled by mischievous and jealous influences so that they do not perceive the big scale events on which the safety and future of the city really depend.”

Perhaps a long range Scheme for Planning Advocacy should be prepared — at least the scheme would be brief, but the preparation of the codes of ordinance necessary to effect the scheme might defy the skill of even the most experienced planning officers.



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Public participation in planning

In my last article I tried to show that the end results of English planning are not generally the sort of living we want in New Zealand.

Due to the complex class structure of England and the crowded island conception, English town planning has become specialised and complicated, out of reach of the ordinary man. Its language has become over-complex, verbose. It is an entirely technical subject beyond the understanding of ordinary people. Very few English people feel any involvement; it is all left to Whitehall except for a little preservation argument.

Half of all English housing is built with subsidised central government money, for renting by local authorities and an elaborate planning machinery has grown up to handle this. Enormous, and for the most part uninspired, reinforced concrete buildings have been erected in which each dwelling is only part of a large structure, inflexible and immutable. The tenants have to adapt as best they can.

Complicated layouts are designed which become all too often dreary monuments. Planned rigidly

with the socio-economic facts known at the time, they take so long to build because they are comprehensively big that they inevitably go out of date. I believe that a new type of planning must rise in which there is a natural relationship between the citizen and his house, and beyond to the city — of which he must be proud.

Between the citizen and his city in New Zealand also, lie technical and legal planning procedures which are difficult to understand.

In my last article I discussed only four subjects of the eleven listed as being ones which the ordinary citizen can discuss openly and which I believe are the true basis of a type of planning we could be proud of. Set out below are my comments on the remaining topics.

Country zones

Crowded England has always looked through class-structured eyes at the countryside as the domain of the rural aristocracy. Our present system in New Zealand of urban fences and fear of sprawl springs largely from this attitude, and therefore prohibits the natural selection of ideal building sites that our free choice society requires.

Because the land around many of our cities is the most fertile, we are emotionally frightened to use it for housing. It is becoming clear now that new techniques in agriculture are increasing production and far offset any tiny loss of productive land which the free choice of sections for housing would cause.

I believe we ought to look at the land as having six main purposes, and we should find which of the six purposes take priority for each piece of land under consideration. The purposes are (1) living, (2) primary production, (3) work, (4) transport, (5) recreation, (6) government. This way of looking at land use enables everyone to discuss what they really want to do with our common heritage.

Travelling through highly populated Kent in England, an enormous village population is tucked into the folds of the hills, the wide green fields accentuate the undulations of the land, and railways and motorways are sunk below the fields or disappear behind dense belts of trees. All built objects show the art of concealment, intricacy and surprise: the true elements of man-made landscape.

Preservation

We haven't any historic towns or splendid palaces, but I am suggesting we ought to agree through public discussion on a wide range of agreed historic or natural surroundings which need preservation.

Often around the perimeter of our cities are tree clumps, shelter belts, even useful old farm buildings, pleasant river stretches, coasts and beaches. We need to locate, identify and preserve these amenities in their various ways so new housing development can make use of these resources. A lively satisfying community life is enormously helped by continuity of surroundings and variety of environment.

For a start all the old stone buildings in Christchurch should be listed for preservation because they carry the decoration of past architectural styles. The old Provincial Buildings in Christchurch are finding new use as a children's music centre, due to the efforts of the local Civic Trust and of the School Orchestra Committee. The children, after a week at a standardised school, are enriched by spending Saturday making music in this marvellous old building.

Buildings and social activities, in fact much of life, become inevitably standardised in a welfare state, and this has surely contributed to mental ill health and social boredom.

By preservation I really mean retaining variety and complexity which mostly means adding to the familiar things around us. I grew up during the depression when the suburb of Papanui was full of gaps, little farms, unused land — a perfect playground of diversity and excitement; there was no need for expensive toys. We are too organised today. When everything fits perfectly, people become neurotic and it costs the state money.

Regional characteristics

This is an obvious factor, but very important if we are to arrive at the complexity of individuality in our towns.

Each one of the four main cities has a different landscape and building tradition. To make people aware of this precious heritage it is probably necessary for local civic trusts to photograph and hold exhibitions and list and codify the best environments in their area. The waterfront bush areas and wide estuaries influence

Auckland. The harbour, bush-clad steep hills and strong winds influence Wellington. In Christchurch the flat plains, heat and winds need avenues of trees for protection and housing layouts giving strong focus and identity.

Motorways or major decisions

American mathematicians and computer experts who have been exploring complex social problems like slum removal, mass transportation and city centre redesign are finding that human problems have little of the cool logic of mathematics, and they never stay still.

The philosophical implications of modern social systems are crucial and not capable of systematic analysis. Indeed it may be that systematic scientific analysis cannot be applied to the institutions which democracy has evolved, because they are really irrational systems. In this situation sophisticated measurement data and technique tend to construct a world separate from human life.

Our New Zealand economy has a limited capital resource for big city reconstruction programmes, total demolition or comprehensive rebuilding. The little spare money we have goes to build motorways to give us the greatest democratic freedom of all — mobility and choice.

Grand gestures

We have also in New Zealand freedom of discussion and accurate political consensus. So far we can measure traffic flow on a motorway in a simple manner and public opinion on these straightforward facts has said by consensus "go ahead" for new motorways in all four main centres.

My point is that there is nothing wrong with these and similar imperfectly measured but publicly agreed upon "grand gestures" provided that these three rules are followed: (1) Consensus of public opinion that the situation is politically ready. (2) The preservation situation is fully understood by the community. (3) An efficient administration to ensure minimum wastage of capital and land left unused for too long.

I believe that this system of consensus planning major structures in the city region is more accurate and has less likelihood of failure than any measurement techniques suggested in America, and furthermore it is more democratic.

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Sections and streets

Around the village centres I wrote about in my last article we need a greater variety of house plans and section sizes, offering wider choice.

Older suburbs grew in a natural way, winding around rivers, with clumps of trees and high and low hedges which obscure the way ahead or open up new views. Buildings in old towns like Akaroa have windows right on the street or deep courtyards. It is time that the developers realised that they insult our intelligence by assuming that every section must be the same size with similarly placed houses down similar straight streets. We should state average densities of people per acre and within this allow a much wider range of section and size.

Most important a separate title should be readily available for self-contained or separately occupied dwellings — this would give tremendous new scope for design. In hills or steep valleys special layouts must be allowed, with varying access methods and layout treated as a special case.

There is an increasing number of houses built without front fences; others being built with high walls. In both these situations it makes little difference where the house is on the section.

Finally, a new idea is proving enormously successful in Britain and provides housing of great variety and social usefulness: the Housing Association. Over 700 part-time voluntary associations have sprung up in Britain as a result of the 1965 Housing Act, to build low cost homes by co-ownership. They are formed by eight or more people, ideally each drawn from different professions connected with home building. The government approve the people concerned and advance the first stage money. Great variety is allowed, one-third of funds are provided by government and two-thirds by conventional lending agencies. The co-owners rent or buy from the association. Repayments are long term, up to 40 years, and the whole system is providing a break through in new original housing design. It seems to me a useful idea for urban renewal and a possible way for city councils to lend money to rebuild and repair dilapidated properties near the city centre, rather than pulling them down and erecting rentable blocks of "planned" flats.

City centres

In the City of London 500,000 people arrive and depart each day down narrow streets and through tiny alleys and courtyards; it is a pedestrian, intricate world with an amazing capacity for people. Around its edge are the great railway stations. Only 5% of the great throng of people in Piccadilly and Regent Street have come by car, its attraction overcomes all difficulties of public transport.

In Norwich the old twisting medieval core is being progressively pedestrianised into a beautiful, complicated shopping centre — and trade expands by up to 10% as the parking buildings are erected alongside.

The alternative to these traditional city centres is to rebuild the city centre with comprehensive concrete structures taking an agonisingly long time to plan and develop, thereby causing planning blight and only finishing up like the more efficient suburban shopping centres, with rather the same institutional effect. Also, they don't attract people unless enormous efforts are made to distort natural relationships.

The Canterbury Arcade in Auckland, between Queen Street and High Street, was an attempt to do what is possible on a restricted site, to make a complex interesting place for pedestrian shoppers, and by so doing point out the best thing to do in the city in an organised process. It is a question of not wasting space — intensifying and creating a great central, colourful and mysterious complex, a real centre after the open, empty suburbs: something really desirable at the end of the motorway.

The South Bank Cultural Centre of London, including the Royal Festival Hall, is a series of windy terraces and exposed walkways with concrete substructure for cars. Nearby in Waterloo Station the glass-roofed train concourse is sheltered, lively with people. Kiosks for everything and a conglomeration of bars and shops fitted into its Victorian brick arches — a better sort of city.

Civic trust

Every citizen has a right to a well-planned community. This is not easily attained today; specialisation and centralisation make it difficult. Yet history shows that the best communities developed where interest and enlightened citizens

shared in planning development.

The Christchurch Civic Trust gives an interesting lead to the sort of public participation we in New Zealand may expect in the future. Beginning in the traditional way of most amenity societies (over an argument about a motorway through a park), the trust developed to provide informed public opinion on complicated planning matters.

The trust really wants to maintain continuity of history and do everything possible to enrich our lives. It has launched a campaign to buy a large 19-acre estate as a public garden; initiated the idea of bringing out Professor Buchanan; has drawn attention to and preserved many historic buildings or details in the city; sits on various local organisations, and lectures and takes part in many other activities which may be controversial but keep alive the public's interest in its surroundings.

Duncan Sandys, chairman of the UK Civic Trust, said: "If the public show no interest in planning those who make the decisions will lose interest too." The result would be more of the monotonous environment we have today.

All the subjects I have discussed can be openly talked about in common language among every interested citizen. They list the things people must ask from planners and authorities. Planning is not a private language, or an obstruction, nor is it capable of exact measurement, it is a natural relationship between people, their city and their region.

The journey to work in Auckland — some economic factors

The factors affecting the journey to work in the modern metropolis are both diverse and complex. The purpose of this article is to examine some of the more important factors affecting the journey to work in Metropolitan Auckland in 1963. In this study large scale statistical analyses are used to uncover the general factors affecting commuting in Auckland. A subsequent article will examine and test the hypotheses suggested by this large scale analysis.

In the past a number of rather widespread misconceptions concerning commuting in the metropolis have been disseminated by both popular and professional writers. Among these are the idea that the journey to work has become unbearably long and expensive for the residents of metropolitan communities, the idea that public passenger transport is clearly a less expensive mode of travel than the private car, and the idea that the journey to work can be "explained" by a mathematical analysis of the rent and travel costs of various workers. This article will examine, in the light of accurate and detailed information, these concepts as they apply to Auckland. It is hoped that some of the facts presented here will cause at least a few students and critics of the modern metropolis to pause and reconsider some of the popular misconceptions.

□ Professor Dahms, formerly of the University of Auckland and now at the University of Guelph, Ontario, previously contributed on this subject in TPQ 9 & 10.

Metropolitan Auckland is New Zealand's largest metropolis, having an area of 179 square miles and a population of almost 500,000 in 1961. (The term Urban Auckland is used to refer to the area defined by the New Zealand Census. Metropolitan Auckland is the slightly larger area defined for a transport survey.) Its population density is only 2505 persons per square mile. Its areal extent of some 32 miles from north to south and 24 miles from east to west places it among those urban areas that have been described by planners as "sprawling." Auckland possesses an efficient and comprehensive passenger transport system, but at the same time has a low (4.3) ratio of persons per car. The metropolis embraces a wide variety of residential areas, as well as diversified commercial and industrial enterprises. It is large enough to exhibit the characteristics of a modern metropolis, but small enough to be studied without undue difficulty.

Methods and sources of data

The writer had access to three major sources of information on the journey to work in Metropolitan Auckland. Statistics on travel time, population density, percentage Maori, occupation and income were derived from unpublished statistical subdivision tabulations of the New Zealand census of 1961. Information on the distance and direction of commuter travel, the mode of commuting, the sex of commuters, the income-occupation classification of commuters and the distribution of commuters was extracted from a comprehensive transport survey conducted in Auckland in 1963.¹ The writer prepared computer programmes which tabulated the necessary information from the transport survey data cards. Whenever possible information from the transport survey was cross-checked against that from the census to ensure that the statistics were reliable and complete.

Fortunately Auckland was established only in 1840 and accurate historical records (as well as field evidence) of its growth and development are available. It has therefore been possible to undertake detailed historical studies of the growth and evolution of Metropolitan Auckland. The relationships among the original site, original areas of industry, commerce and transport routes were carefully examined. Close correlations between the areal distribution of workers of varying socio-

economic characteristics and the distribution of employment were observed. Needless to say, changing transport technology has modified these relationships over time. The end results of these changing relationships may be observed in the morphology and dynamic associations existing in Metropolitan Auckland today.

Because of the limitations of space, the historical development of commuting in Auckland cannot be discussed in this article. Nevertheless, all statements concerning this community's past and present transport, the distribution of its workers of varying socio-economic characteristics and the distribution of its places of employment, are based upon an exhaustive analysis of the growth and development of Auckland since 1840.

The cost of commuting

The cost of commuting is a major factor in the choice process which finally determines a person's mode of commuting. If a family cannot afford a car, its members must rely solely upon public transport, or upon rides with others for commuting. On the other hand, some families can afford two cars and have few worries about the cost of owning or operating them. Between these extremes are the majority of people who must consider the operating and capital costs of the car, but who in most cases are able to afford some type of vehicle whether or not it is used for commuting.

Unfortunately the situation is not the same for all families having similar or even the same incomes. Different people have different values and therefore spend money in various ways. Although the capital cost of even a small car (£753, Table 1) must necessarily loom very large in the budget of a Freemans Bay (median yearly income £768) family, some of them do indeed own new cars. Many unable to afford a new car purchase a used model and with it the concomitant problems of doubtful reliability, possible expensive repair bills and high running costs. 2 Any car in reasonable condition costs upwards of £300 (shown by personal inspection of used car sales establishments), and even this is a major expenditure for a family on a yearly income of, say, £600.

There is ample evidence that the majority of persons who do own a motor car consider only minimum running costs when calculating the price of a particular trip. 3 They assign depreciation,

TABLE 1: ESTIMATED COSTS OF OPERATING TYPICAL PRIVATE MOTOR CARS IN AUCKLAND

Running Costs (in pence per mile)	Small Car Under 1000 cc	Medium Car 1000 cc to 2000 cc	Large Car Over 2000 cc
Fuel	1.10	1.54	1.75
Oil	0.03	0.03	0.03
Tyres	0.38	0.51	0.65
Minimum Running Costs	1.51	2.08	2.43
Repairs & Maintenance	1.93	2.13	2.29
Depreciation	1.91	2.23	2.36
Total Running Costs	5.35	6.44	7.08
Standing Charges* if driven 10,000 miles per year	1.33	1.44	1.59
Overall Cost per mile	6.68	7.88	8.67
Gross Capital Cost	£753	£970	£1226
Less Tyres and Tubes	35	40	47
Net Capital Cost	£718	£930	£1179

* Annual Licence, Third Part Insurance, Warrants of Fitness, Garaging, Interest, Comprehensive Insurance.

Table Adapted from New Zealand Dept. of Transport, Car and Truck Operating Costs, Wellington, 1965.

repairs and standing charges to the general household budget on the assumption that the car is a necessity of modern life and would be owned even if not used for commuting. No amount of argument will convince them that it costs them 8 or 9 pence per mile to drive to work, rather than the 1 or 2 pence per mile they pay for gasoline. Because this is a fact of modern metropolitan life, the most realistic comparison between car and public transport costs is one between costs per mile based on **minimum** motor car running costs. This is the economic basis on which most commuters will make their choice.

Tables 1 and 2 present the costs of commuting by bus and car in Auckland. Fares used are those of the Auckland Regional Authority Transport Division, which carries some 68 per cent of Auckland bus commuters. 4 It is the largest public carrier and offers the most comprehensive

service in Metropolitan Auckland.

It should be noted that long term, unlimited bus passes are available at reasonable rates. To one dependent upon bus transport because of economic circumstances, these should be most attractive, and would certainly be far more economical than commuting by private car. On the other hand, the **minimum** costs of commuting in a car with less than 1000 c.c. displacement are lower than all but the 11-section concession ticket or bus pass costs (Fig. 1c).

Another factor must also be considered in this comparison. If a paying passenger is carried, car costs are reduced by half for the owner. Further savings may be realised by carrying two or more passengers. The average number of occupants in cars used for commuting in Metropolitan Auckland is 1.3, so this method of reducing per person costs must be recognised in any comparison of costs. 5

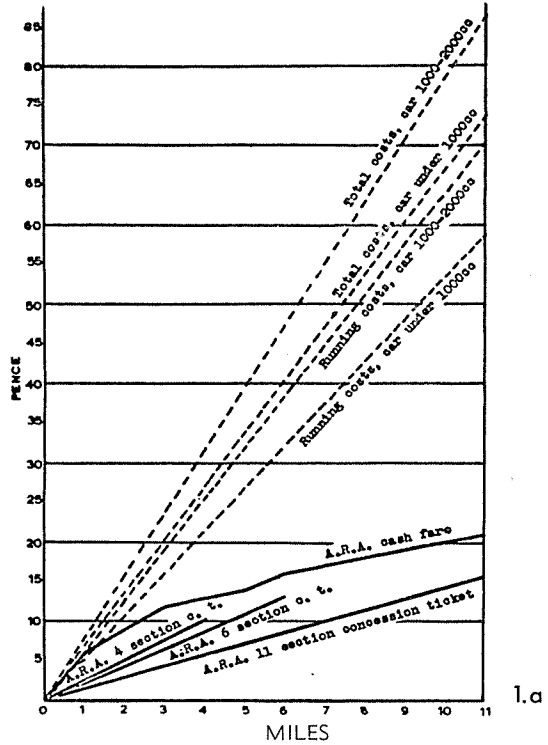
Figure 1 a, b and c illustrates some of the possible cost comparisons that may be made. If one person is commuting by car and considers either running costs or total car costs per mile as the true cost of commuting, it becomes apparent that the car is very uneconomical at any distance when

TABLE 2: AUCKLAND REGIONAL AUTHORITY TRANSPORT DIVISION BUS FARES, JAN., 1965.

Concesn. Ticket	Pence per mile	Unlimited Bus Passes	
One Section*	4.2		
Two Sections	3.5		
Three Sections	3.1		
Four Sections	2.6	6 day	7 day
Five Sections	2.3		
Six Sections	2.2	3 months	£7/10/0
Seven Sections	2.0	6 months	£13/15/0
Eight Sections	1.8	1 year	£25/10/0
Nine Sections	1.7		£8/ 5/0
Ten Sections	1.5		£15/10/0
Eleven Sections	1.4		£28/10/0

* Sections are approximately one mile in length. In the case of the Auckland Regional Authority and all other operators, the first section is the most expensive and there are no free transfer privileges. This means that a person who changes vehicles pays a higher fare than one completing a trip of equal length on one vehicle.

Computed from Auckland Regional Authority Bus Fare Schedule, January, 1965.



compared to the bus (Fig. 1a). If these costs are considered correct, and passengers are carried and pay on the basis of total or running costs, the competitive position of the car becomes immediately improved (Fig. 1b). Now only long bus rides cost less per person per mile and the small car carrying two paying passengers has a distinct economic advantage over most bus fares. Since the one-way work trip of 50 per cent of Auckland commuters is four miles or less, this fact assumes great importance. 6 Many of those who can afford small cars and choose to carry passengers find this method of commuting much less expensive than travelling by bus.

As indicated previously, most commuters consider neither running costs as defined in Table 1 nor total costs as the true costs of commuting. They consider only **minimum** running costs (fuel, oil, tyre wear) as legitimate charges against the commuting budget. When this is the case the car becomes extremely attractive indeed for work trip transport. Even the largest cars are slightly cheaper to operate per mile than corresponding bus fares for trips up to four miles (Fig. 1c). With one passenger it is less than half as expen-

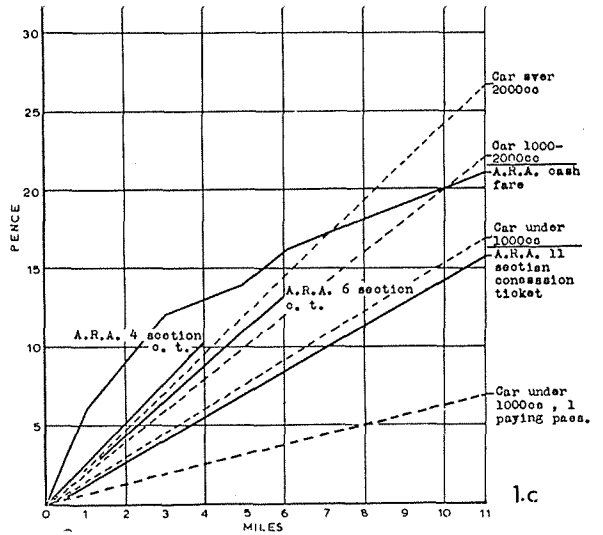
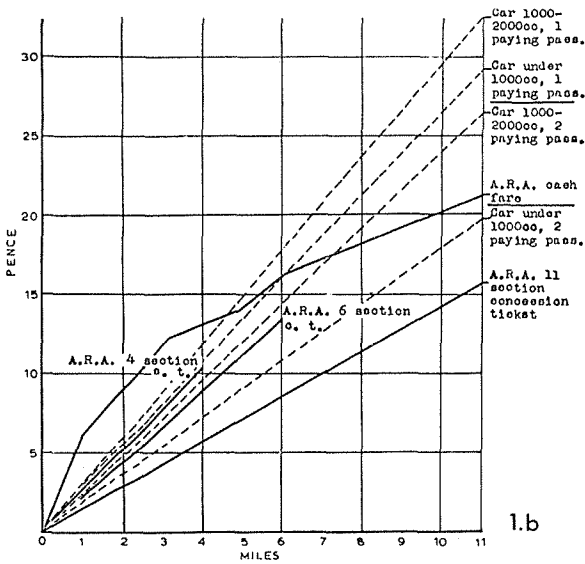


Fig. 1:

- (a) Bus and car commuting costs per person, 1965.
- (b) Bus and car commuting costs per person,

- running costs only,* 1965.
- * Fuel, oil, tyres, repairs, maintenance, depreciation.
- (c) Bus and car commuting costs per person, minimum costs only,* 1965.
- * Fuel, oil, tyre wear.

sive to commute by small car as to ride by bus, even for eleven miles. Eleven miles is the maximum one-way work trip for just over 95 per cent of Auckland's commuters and the approximate limit of Regional Authority bus service on any route. 7 Fares for longer trips on private bus lines are somewhat higher per mile than Regional Authority rates. All this adds up to very extensive car commuting, by those in middle income brackets, and to the possibility of the use of the car by some of the poorest if they are prepared to carry two or three passengers and share costs.

It should be noted again that the lowest income groups will probably have to consider total car costs, and certainly capital costs, before choosing the car as their mode of transport. This means that all that has been said about relative costs assumes less and less importance as incomes diminish, until the point is reached where there is no choice open, because there is too little money with which to purchase a car under any circumstances. With the availability of time payments, however, this point is seldom reached.

With rising standards of living and the advantages of speed, comfort, flexibility and prestige offered by the car, it will become more and more

important as a method of transport in Auckland, in many cases at the expense of public transport. The economic advantage of the public carrier in certain circumstances still provides a choice for many, but the indication, both in New Zealand and in North America, is that this choice has narrowed considerably and will continue to do so. 8

Income and mode of commuting

The analysis of comparative car and bus commuting costs suggests that those in the lowest income groups would be most likely to commute by bus, or to carry passengers in their cars. To facilitate an objective test of this assumption, all commuters in the sample were classified according to the median income of their occupation. 9 By distributing the median incomes of all occupations it was possible to group individual commuting statistics by quarters of median income. In subsequent tabulations, statistics describing commuting by those in the second and third quarters of median income are combined, but upper and lower quarters are presented separately (Table 3). This ensures a clear distinction between the most widely divergent income levels and eliminates any confusion that might arise from attempting to

**TABLE 3: SUMMARY OF COMMUTERS RESIDENT
IN METROPOLITAN AUCKLAND BY MODE OF
TRAVEL AND INCOME LEVEL, 1963.**

Sex	MALE					FEMALE					
	Mode of Travel	Total	Car Driver	Pass	Bus	Other	Total	Car Driver	Pass	Bus	Other
Income Level:	Upper Quarter of Median Income										
No.	16,208	14,418	1790	4,690	667	831	458	373	373	40	
% by Sex	75.2	66.9	8.3	21.7	3.1	66.8	36.8	30.0	30.0	3.2	
Income Level:	Middle Two Quarters of Median Income										
No.	41,600	34,945	6655	14,428	2716	2,174	1,188	986	1,407	146	
% by Sex	70.8	59.5	11.3	24.6	4.6	58.3	31.9	26.4	37.8	3.9	
Income Level:	Lower Quarter of Median Income										
No.	11,004	8,318	2686	9,271	1197	11,684	5,043	6641	17,717	1232	
% by Sex	51.3	38.7	12.5	43.2	5.6	38.1	16.5	21.7	57.8	4.0	

Source: O - D Origin Tabulations, 1963.

apply this analysis to those with similar incomes. The use of median incomes in this classification ensures a very conservative economic grouping of commuting statistics.

Graphs are presented to illustrate the percentages within each income group commuting by various modes of transport (Fig. 2). The "other" modes referred to in these graphs comprise rail and ferry trips. Percentages for this classification are small, remain relatively constant at all income levels and will therefore be ignored. Rail and ferry commuting will subsequently be discussed for areas having these facilities.

The preference of those in the top income groups for the car when commuting is strikingly illustrated by Figure 2. Sixty-seven per cent of males in the top quarter of median income drive to work, but only 39 per cent of those in the bottom quarter do so. Although absolute female percentages are lower, differences between the groups are almost as great. For both sexes there is a clear and positive relationship between income level and the use of the car for commuting.

The negative relationship of bus riding to income level is just as pronounced as the positive relationship of car use. Bus rider percentages rise sharply as income declines. The percentage of

males in the bottom quarter of median income riding on the bus to work is twice that in the top quarter. Female bus rider percentages are higher than those for males at all income levels (Tables 3, 4), and they also rise as income decreases. These relationship indicate that the cost of the journey to work is a major factor influencing choice of transport for commuting in Auckland.

Male car passenger percentages increase in the lower income groups, whereas those for females decrease. The male correlation may be explained by the economic necessity of the poorest car drivers to share costs, but the female situation is not as simple as that.

There are 5.1 per cent more female car pas-

**TABLE 4: SUMMARY OF COMMUTERS RESIDENT
IN METROPOLITAN AUCKLAND BY MODE OF
TRAVEL AND SEX, 1963.**

	Male		Female	
	No.	%	No.	%
Total Car	68,812	67.6	14,689	41.3
Car Driver	57,681	56.7	6690	18.8
Car Passenger	11,132	10.9	7999	22.5
Bus	28,389	27.9	19,497	54.8
Other	4,579	4.5	1418	3.9
Total	101,781	100.0	35,604	100.0

Source: O - D Origin Tabulations, 1963.

sengers than drivers in the lowest income group. Obviously some of these females must ride with male commuters. Over 85 per cent of female commuters have occupations in the bottom quarter of median income (Table 3). We may assume that their areal distribution is almost the same as that of the total female work force, simply because they comprise the majority. If this is so, most of the "surplus" car passengers in this group may be expected to ride with upper or middle income males. Low income males tend to be concentrated in a few areas (around the centre of Auckland and in Devonport) and are few in number. Furthermore, there are few car drivers among them. On the other hand, upper and middle income males comprise about 80 per cent of male commuters, of whom over 60 per cent drive cars. The vast numerical superiority of males in these groups and their fairly uniform distribution means that there is an extremely high probability that they carry most female car passengers not riding with other females.

If these relationships hold true, female car passenger percentages in any area should vary directly as male driver percentages. This means that a disproportionately high number of female car passengers will originate in upper and middle income areas, but that few will come from low income areas. Conversely, there should be exceedingly large numbers of female bus riders in low income areas, simply because there is a smaller probability of obtaining a car ride.

If valid, these relationships have important planning implications, especially where female labour is required. The potential labourshed of any factory could be determined from a study of routes, income levels of residential areas and the type of job to be filled. An employer offering will-paid jobs for skilled workers could expect to attract labour from high and middle income areas in all directions. One requiring low-paid unskilled workers would have to rely for most of his labour upon low income areas near bus routes which pass close to his factory.

The obvious correlations between income and mode of travel comprise but part of a subtle and intricate mosaic. To say that low income males are forced to carry passengers or use public transport to reduce work trip costs is probably true, but it is an over-simplification. A person's income

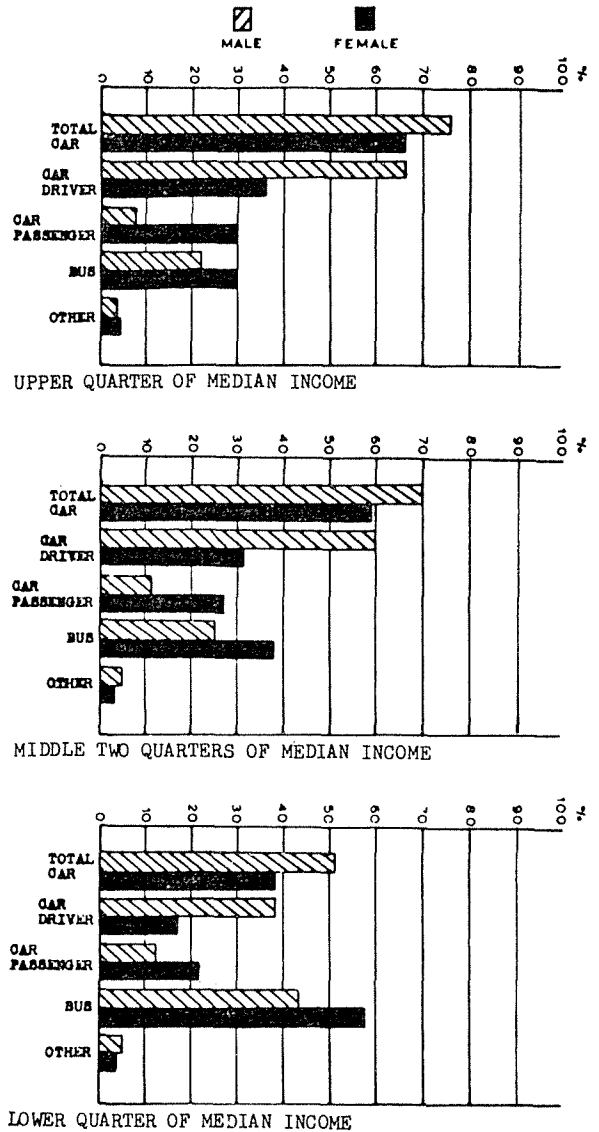


Fig. 2: Mode of travel by income group.

also influences his choice of residential location, his attitudes toward using public transport and his judgment of the relative value of time and money. The convenience and availability of public transport vary throughout the metropolis, and this too will affect the commuting habits of all income groups. The extreme complexity of these inter-relationships is self-evident. Only an examination of each factor in isolation will ultimately bring order out of apparent chaos and finally reveal the basic rationale.

(to be continued)

W. D. Ross

People & planners: are they compatible? — some Wanganui experiences

References:

- 1 De Leuw Cather & Co., Report on a Comprehensive Transportation Plan for the Auckland Regional Authority, San Francisco, 1965. All data from this survey will be acknowledged as "O-D (Origin-Destination) Origin or Destination Tabulations."
- 2 New Zealand Department of Transport, Car and Truck Operating Costs, Wellington, 1965, p. 7.
- 3 F. Bello, "The City and the Car," in *The Exploding Metropolis*, New York, 1958, p. 57; H. S. Lapin, *Structuring the Journey to Work*, Philadelphia, 1964, p. 148; New Zealand Department of Transport, p. i; W. Owen, *The Metropolitan Transportation Problem*, Washington, 1956, p. 143; L. Wingo, Jr., *Transportation and Urban Land*, Washington, 1961, p. 61.
- 4 O-D Destination Tabulations, 1963.
- 5 6, 7 Ibid.
- 8 Owen has shown that in the United States car ownership has increased faster than population and will probably continue to do so for the next two decades; pp. 39-41. Since 1945 the rate of increase in the number of cars registered in urban Auckland has been more than three times the rate of increase in population; Unpublished New Zealand Post Office Statistics, 1945-1964; New Zealand Census, 1945-1961.
- 9 The Origin-Destination Survey was based upon interviews at 15,000 dwelling units; a sample of 1 in 10 throughout the metropolitan area. The expanded sample accounted for 137,385 commuters, or 85.6% of the commuters tabulated by the New Zealand Census of 1961.

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Because Wanganui is small and has a slow growth rate the city's planning problems and planning climate have a particular character. What seems to have happened in Wanganui is what could be expected: the community and their planners (in the wider sense this includes members of the town planning committee) have established and maintained a surprisingly close personal relationship. They talk to each other; argue, discuss, compromise or disagree, while the council, without abrogating any of its authority, warily watches from the sidelines before settling the issue when the pros and cons become clear and a decision necessary.

The planning section of the council has always been small, a planning officer with one or two assistants. So the planning officer is usually the public's contact with town planning, not a planning department as such. It is obviously easier for one or two individuals to deal with all the planning inquiries and still remain human, than it is for officers of a larger department who must appear to rely more on an independent written set of principles or standards (code of ordinances).

With a small staff the shortcomings of any plan or its supporting code can be quickly recognised and adjusted. The feedback of experience seems so much easier than would be expected in a departmentalised planning office.

Town planning in the smaller city can become more and more identified with the task of the planning officer as an individual rather than as a function of the council's town planning department. The main accomplishment is the removal of the image of town planning as just another task of a group of faceless bureaucrats lodged in the council's offices; the ubiquitous and omnipotent "they" who invariably say no, and say it in such a way that people are either mortified by their apparent ignorance of the English language or infuriated by incomprehensible official jargon.

In Wanganui succeeding councils have at first tolerated and later encouraged their planning staff to be in close contact with all sections of the community. This policy, of course, brings obligations and responsibilities which don't cease at 5 p.m. or on Fridays, for many contacts with various groups must be at evening meetings, or by visits to businessmen or individuals. In all these

contacts the emphasis is not on **what** the code of ordinances say or what "town planning" requires, but **why**. And after eight years as planning officer I do know just how demanding this idealistic approach is. It is, I believe, the only way to find out if the code or plan makes sense in practice.

When questioned about a planning requirement I used to have a compulsive urge to "go for my code" or "the Act." But now the first aim is to keep the discussion on everyday, even colloquial terms; I refer to the code if I must, but **with** the inquirer "Let's see what the book says," in a tone suggesting that it's just as much a burden for me as it is for him, which of course it is.

Wanganui background

Wanganui City in 1926 comprised an area of 7039 acres with a population of 23,683. Forty years later the area was 7410 acres (now including 760 acres of river), population 35,629. Forty years' consolidation of the original city limits still leaves sufficient space for at least another ten years' development before extensions beyond the present limits are necessary. The population growth rate of 1.37% average annual increase has been for the five years 1961-66 well below the New Zealand average of 2.11%. The growth of the labour force over the same period has been negligible.

There is a widespread concern in the community about the lack of industrial progress and many attempts to do something about it, at local, regional, provincial and national level. The feeling has been deep enough to prompt almost unanimous support for such major regional public works as the high-level dams on the river, the coal-fired power station and currently a jumbo-jet airfield. The city can hardly be called fastidious in its appeal for a slice of the national cake.

The concern for the city's future has been insistent enough to bring about a visit of the prime minister, cabinet ministers and departmental heads to hear submissions from a cross-section of the business and local body leaders. I note these points so that you will be aware that the city has been acutely conscious of its slow growth and realises that industrial growth is its first need and that it has tried very hard to do something about it. The community is socially and politically active even if the city's physical consolidation and ex-

tension is slow.

For a slow growing city the present legislation seems of little help. It appears designed more for the area which is steadily expanding (developing — progressing!) ,while it has less application for an area where consolidation and urban renewal are the more obvious needs. Admittedly the re-planning and reconstruction of any part of an area is mentioned, but even that, ironically, is bracketed. (See Section 18 of the Act.) One has the impression that the Planning Act is a bit like a ship's rudder, of use when you are moving, but useless when you are not.

Those of you who have tried to apply any standards or principles in such a social, political and economic climate will realise how quick some individuals are to try and capitalise on the outlook that anybody wishing to do anything such as establishing a new industry or extending an existing one, should be given every encouragement, better still, the go ahead! Planning principles and development standards are remote intangibles when the demand is for something as concrete as more work, more building, more progress. In these circumstances quality is something which many believe can wait, or can be added later, like a woman's make-up, when the wrinkles show.

In the face of the local economic malaise, recently aggravated by the national business slow-down, and in a community so sensitive to it, one could expect a rough passage for any idealistic planning attempts — in fact the council and its town planning committee have maintained a commendably high standard with only an occasional lapse. I do not think any planning decision aimed at quality rather than quantity has escaped the criticism that “they” are helping to hold back progress.

It is difficult enough selling town planning, concerned as it must be with ideals for the future, without adding to the burden the stigma of “council policy.” (This implies no disrespect for local government.) Town planning will be much more acceptable if it is seen as a policy for the future, worked out **by the community**, endorsed by the council and administered by it on **behalf** of the community.

My belief is that this participation by the public can only be brought about through the planner, not as one of the council's faceless

bureaucrats, but as an identifiable personality who not only talks in everyday English, but is also aware of, and concerned for, the practical and human problems within the community. In short, the public must be able to “get to” him and he in turn must recognise what aspects of their complaints raise issues which come within the scope of town planning. They must be able to co-exist; they must be compatible.

Venture outlined

Against this background I now want to outline what may prove to be a relatively successful venture into public relations and public education by the only method, in my opinion, ever likely to succeed, public participation and involvement.

Late in 1965 the council, in what I considered to be one of its rare lapses from planning prudence, proposed a substantial increase in the area zoned Commercial B — that is the main central city commercial zone. The additional area to be so zoned was $12\frac{3}{4}$ acres (existing Commercial B area 61 acres of which $46\frac{1}{2}$ acres was commercially occupied). This would have produced a main street commercial zone extending a little over 87 chains in length and having a depth each side of the main street of from five to ten chains along most of its length. The details are not really important, although the prospects appalled me at the time and still do. As expected the proposal was in part based on the notion that “more” was “progress.”

Businessmen in the existing commercial area collectively and individually opposed the change at the objection and appeal stages. The local body elections of 1965 enabled a new council and town planning committee to accept gracefully an Appeal Board decision which substantially reduced the extent of the proposed change and which limited the uses permitted in the balance of the area which did complete the change procedure and become commercial — it was previously Residential A.

The real and widespread concern among the businessmen in the established commercial area about the future of that area presented an obvious opportunity to attempt a meeting of the planners (in the broader sense) and the planned.

The objective of the meeting arranged by the council early in 1966 was to give the councillors and planners the opportunity to hear what the

businessmen and professional people thought could be done to improve the downtown area, make it more attractive to prospective client and customer, and what they believed could be done to ensure its commercial future. Frankly I thought the suggestions and discussions disappointing. Only later did I realise that the blame for the meeting's ignorance of planning alternatives lay as much with me as with anyone, although we had arranged a small exhibition of central city redevelopment material.

The more perspicacious among those present suggested that the problems of the area should be handed back to me, its planning officer (note, not to the council). I was to report direct to another similar meeting to be convened again by the mayor. This request was a surprise to me as well as the councillors. It was agreed, nevertheless, that I should be unfettered by past decisions or current council policy. This confirmed what everybody realises, although at times unconsciously — the public dislikes having its future decided by a council department or the council.

Naturally I cannot say with any certainty just what motivated this particular request, nor do I believe it was necessarily complimentary to me — it could have been quite the contrary. The reason, I believe, may have been simply that the businessmen wanted to be involved in the replanning of the central city area. They wanted ideas put to them direct, so that they could assess, approve or reject before they became in any sense council policy.

I did not see this opportunity as the occasion for a university type study project — to look into the future with uninhibited gaze. Some may think I missed a chance, though I have always questioned the value of proposals which you cannot convince the public are practical and financially feasible. I know the often quoted "Make no small plans; they do not stir men's blood, etc.," but often the great plan can arouse the practical man's ridicule. It is easy to overlook the fact that quite modest plans can loom large to the person or community concerned, yet these same "small" plans can transform an existing quite ordinary central area into one of novelty, charm and interest.

The talk was organised on what I imagine to be fairly conventional lines; clarification of the

terms of reference and a look at the general character and main physical features of the central commercial area. This central area was then put in the perspective of the regional, district and city roading network; the existing land uses, land values and buildings were briefly noted and from these came a rationalisation of areas into professional, office, retail, warehousing and distribution service industry and manufacturing, civic or community uses.

This rationalisation was then compared to the district scheme zoning plan. The zoning did not recognise the district grouping of central city uses. For example, the centre of the retail area is quite distinct, containing all the well known national department stores, together with the strongest of the local stores; the doctors and lawyers have their separate localities; similarly warehousing and service industries have tended to group themselves in specific areas. The civic centre is, of course, probably the best known and distinct of all the central city groupings. The most neglected aspects of the central city is its historical heritage.

I will not dwell on these details which must be subservient to my main theme — public or community involvement in planning.

Having ideas about the future form of the central city did not cause any loss of sleep; presenting those ideas in a recognisable, interesting and dramatic way certainly did. Plans, maps, graphs and charts go only so far with the public and that is not nearly far enough. Sketch perspectives and models were essential. I have no aptitude whatever for sketches or perspectives and no time for model making.

The obvious thing to do was to "involve" the professionals in this particular art, the local architects and the drawing office assistants, and this I did. Both private and government architects willingly offered their services and five groups were each given a particular idea to illustrate as they thought best, by sketch, perspective or model. The details of the buildings and the treatment of spaces about them were naturally left to the architect, who in every case had to be satisfied that his particular exercise fitted in properly with the overall concept of the future city. Fortunately, the differences between each group and myself were usually on detail and not on principles, so I

gladly recognised my own limitations and left the detail to them. One valuable lesson for me was to see how quickly the architects were able to make sense and shape from my rather raw and nebulous ideas about buildings.

In selecting ideas for the architects to illustrate I tried to include a cross-section of redevelopment problems likely to arise within about five years in each of the distinct categories noted above. This was the first important concession to realism. The community were generally aware that in each study area old buildings would be demolished and new ones erected within that time. In some cases tentative planning and sketch plans had already been prepared but not made public and in several instances I was able to have the assistance of the developer's architect, who with proper consent was able to develop in full the planning principles applicable to that project.

The study areas included problems of redevelopment alongside the proposed new city bridge; the rebuilding of a major service industry; the problems of riverbank commercial development; the inter-related problems of pedestrian precincts and malls, with parking areas and rear servicing for retail shops, and in one crucially important locality the rebuilding of half a commercial block situated alongside the civic and government centre. Every effort was made to look at imminent redevelopment prospects for well known properties and to relate closely the redevelopment proposal to my idea of the future city.

I was aware that in almost all instances the particular property owner had looked at future building proposals, but I believe always from the viewpoint of his own property and he had probably forced his architect to do the same, by the terms of the instructions given to the latter.

In each study area I supplied one or two photographs of the existing state of buildings. These photographs were large enough (20" x 13½") to assist the draughtsman with his perspective or sketch prepared for the same viewpoint. As usual the perspective or sketch was supported by simple site plans or diagrams. One unexpected bonus from this whole exercise was to demonstrate to the public and councillors the great range of architectural drawing techniques and the spectacular realism possible with a well constructed model firmly based on existing buildings and streets.

The talk and supporting maps, plans, sketches and photographs were well received, gained the usual press and radio publicity and provoked the occasional editorial and letter to the editor. Without being too immodest I was not surprised at this reception; the architects' sterling support almost guaranteed it. But I am suspicious of the real value of this sort of town planning publicity or public education exercise. What was more important was to see how long it lasted and how deep it went.

The talk was given in December, 1966. One of the central features were plans and a model showing how the central core of the retail area could be redeveloped as a pedestrian precinct or mall and how it could be linked at first floor level to the existing civic and proposed government centres. This proposal was by far the most radical of any suggested, yet it caught and held the interest of the community more than any other. This interest persists in two positive ways at least and I am hopeful that as future rebuilding plans become public other dividends will become obvious.

First, a feasibility study is under way by a local group which includes a businessman with premises in the block, an accountant and lawyer on the possibility of rebuilding in the way suggested. The owners of the property, which is approximately one acre in area, have promised to commit no new lease for any part of it until this study is completed — this should be before the end of the year. If this study confirms the financial prospects as hopeful, a local company will be promoted to redevelop the block. The council has taken no part in this particular investigation.

The second and continuing development stems from the demonstration of how a pedestrian precinct could be evolved in this central retail area. The first, and somewhat contradictory move, was to rearrange the existing parking pattern so that at least three times as many vehicles could be accommodated in the street fronting the two blocks concerned. This rearrangement was to be deliberately designed to deter through traffic in this street. Later, as the traffic becomes accustomed to its alternative routes and as servicing and off-street parking is provided with access from the side or parallel streets, the parking in the main shopping area can be systematically reduced and the area converted to a pedestrian precinct, with the addition of suitable street furni-

ture, paving and similar features naturally.

Late last year the chamber of commerce again suggested that the first move in this scheme be given a trial — that is, the rearrangement of the parking with the consequent deterrent to the purely through traffic. The council agreed to study the feasibility of this and particular care has been taken in this study to make clear that town planning implications of any such trial and to ensure the participation of everybody who could be affected.

The feasibility has been and will remain deliberately empirical. The council officers have discussed each facet with those who could be affected, suggestions and comments are noted and a full report with recommendations (and the reasons for them) is then made to council. Three reports have been necessary as the original scheme gradually evolved into something quite different as the criticism of experts and laymen demonstrated shortcomings. All these reports have been made public, to press and radio and to groups particu-

larly involved. In this way the onerous task of the council in determining the relative merits of conflicting aspects of the whole proposal has been borne home to the public too. No radical rearrangement of the central city parking and traffic patterns can avoid causing concern to some and joy to others.

The council proceeded with this trial, which was held over the period 6th-31st May, 1968. Whether it is a "success" or not may well be unimportant. What it must surely do is demonstrate again that the community can be masters of their own environment and that innovations and experiments are necessary precursors to any improvements in urban conditions.

Wanganui is, I believe, because of its size and strong community spirit, an ideal city for the type of public participation planning which can get things done and get them done even in the absence of the dramatic economic "progress" so often considered essential to urban life in New Zealand.

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Correspondence

A tool with a difference

Sir,

The word "hammer" will drive no nails, nor will the idea of a hammer, and no amount of talking about hammers will help to build a house. It is much the same with another tool, planning. But there is a difference. We all know what a house should look like — what are its functions and how these should be fulfilled — but none of us, politicians, planners or public, understands a city in the same way. We do not know what it should look like, we do not know what many of its functions are, and even of those functions we do know, we do not know how they are to be fulfilled.

It is clear that no one could get away with saying "I have a hammer and I am going to build you a house," if in fact he did not have a hammer, but only some cardboard imitation that he called a hammer. But unhappily, because of our lack of experience, a man can say "I have a plan and I am going to build you a city," and be allowed to try to do so, even though he had no plan at all, but only a cheap cardboard copy.

Eventually, of course, when the city dissolves in the rain, and many a reputation with it,

there will come a time of doubts and questions. The inquisitors and the quidnuncs will decide that cardboard was insubstantial and want to know why it was used.

Retribution — but it will not be confined to people. Planning will come to mean soluble cities and hence be discredited.

If planning is necessary in a democratic society, as I believe it is, then by that fact alone it is a democratic right of the members of that society. Planning is something we don't know too much about — therefore it is the duty of planners and politicians alike to set about learning these things. This will require the expenditure of money and time — particularly time — on a scale not yet seriously considered. It is the duty of planners and politicians to further the understanding and efficacy of planning and it is their duty not to use the word "planning" as a tool of politics, compromise or downright deception. Planning is the tool and it must be developed.

—C. A. Gollop (Auckland)

Help!

Sir,

This letter is prompted by a genuine desire to establish a logical basis for the creation of a proper philosophy and methodology of planning, which, if established, could lead to a far better performance in planning. I hope it is provocative enough to encourage constructive argument that might result in a better general insight into planning.

I ask myself, "Why plan?" But this is a ridiculous question. Planning is a natural process of the mind. We have always planned. No action except involuntary or automatic is taken without premeditation, either conscious or unconscious. What is planning then? Town planning, that is.

Some modern sage was described it as "deciding how much of what goes where, when?" This is a simplification of what is necessarily an action-orientated, decision-making process. The normal process of action relies upon abstraction of past experiences selected as significant on which our decisions for action may be based. Planning is a process then, a process of human thought.

This process, like others of a similar nature, will follow the same pattern of: problem — hypothesis — survey — analysis — plan — implementation — with, of course, the necessary feedbacks. The process will presumably be followed in planning the incredibly complex set of interactions — the city, beginning if you will at the level of particles of air pollutant and going right up to the region or beyond. Some might even consider extension of those bounds. I don't think you can apply single track analytical methods to such complexity.

The city is a fluid web of interactions and it is really necessary to consider them all simultaneously which no existing symbology can do. The ever accelerating rate of change causes further difficulty, making visions of the future even more difficult, and if consideration of

change extends to laws and social mores, the strain on the normative imagination may be incapacitative.

—R. G. Stroud (Wellington)

“An unlikely alias”

Sir,

With reference to the article by Lucifer in the March TPQ:

Isaiah, a noted prophet of some time ago, was sawn up. In the belief that this could not happen in these enlightened times, I say with him: “How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!”

The absolute rejection of contemporary planners and planning, however brief, is the kind of rebelliousness that felled the archangel Satan. Quite apart from the question of Satan’s rightness or wrongness (I am not trying to deny Lucifer his light — but am merely quoting him some history), his position was quite untenable after his banishment, and like any discredited planner, he was powerless. He and his small band may have been ever so right, but without a popular following could not have even enough influence to prevent his name being used as a bogey for small children.

To close, the way in which Satan acquired the unlikely alias “Lucifer” may in itself be prophetic — chance remarks by several people, Isaiah among them, led to this misnomer. Thus the name of a star was consigned to the Devil. It would be unfortunate if his principles were to follow a similar path.

—Hesperus

Reviews

Design of Cities, by Edmund N. Bacon, London, Thames and Hudson, 1967, pp. 296, US\$15.

Design of Cities is a powerful affirmation and redefinition of the role of architecture in planning by a dedicated and humane man who conceives urban design as potentially the ultimate expression of the noblest strivings and visions of society.

The planner has a continuing responsibility to be sensitive to ideas in society, to absorb these into his thinking, to inject his evolving ideas into a democratic planning process, and then creatively reformulate his proposals time and time again in response to “democratic feedback” until he and the community, perhaps, may reach consensus.

This might well form the credo of planners as far removed from physical planning as the sociologist concerned with intergroup tensions, inadequate educational and medical facilities and bad housing, and of the welfare economist seeking to eliminate poverty, chronic unemployment and to improve economic conditions generally. Indeed, it might be central to the philosophy of every planner and of every citizen concerned with the improvement of conditions in our evol-

ing urban civilisation.

Edmund Bacon has been executive director of the Philadelphia Planning Commission since 1949, and he writes not as an historian or scholar, but as “a participant in the recent history of the rebirth of Philadelphia.” He believes that the essential features of the design ideas and the planning process which have achieved striking results in his city can be applied with success elsewhere. Architecture in urban design can become truly “a people’s art” and planning a community way of thinking and behaving.

The reader is taken through a progressive, interlocking, historical unfolding of three central components of urban design behaviour to their convergence and expression in projects for Society Hill, Penn Centre and West Market in Philadelphia. These concern the technical elements of design, the potential power of a “design idea” over a long period, to substantially alter the form of a city, and the necessity for public participation in, and evaluation of, the design process.

Bacon conceives the city as a functional, organic entity, in which lines of movement, focal points and areas of intense development or particular functional or symbolic meaning are crucial to the success of urban design. Here order must be created and maintained; elsewhere there can be much individual freedom of expression.

The emergence and changing forms of design elements are traced through history and the account is integrated by concepts such as “points of tension,”

“shaft of space” and “thrust of force.” The concept of “movement channels” is introduced as a central organising principle; an historic example is the Panathenaic procession to the Athens agora.

Architectural experience is seen as a sequence of perceptions along an habitually used pathway. Movement channels resulted in shared experiences, and the meeting or terminal point of channels becomes a crucial area for design: “a design area.” The essential character of architecture as something to experience and not just to look at is stressed. Urban design cannot be judged purely on technical grounds: its success is dependent on the evocation and heightening of experiences, resulting in group identification, the emergence or recreation of group images and the feeling of an underlying sense of order and unity in the community.

The way in which “an act of will” — a conscious act based on a vision of the future — can initiate a series of changes, congruent with the original idea, over a long period of time, can be seen in Rome. When Sixtus V became Pope in Renaissance Rome the movement channels of the pilgrimage to votive churches were meandering, featureless paths through a visually chaotic, disordered city. Sixtus sought to bring order to Rome, to symbolise its function as the capital of Christendom. During his life little more than the placement of obelisks before some of the churches was achieved. But ideas, such as a connecting framework and the thrust of design influence from these nodes, had been implanted in the minds

of men. The vision of Sixtus came to fruition long after his death, and present day Rome is deeply in debt to his design influence.

The modern city poses very complex design problems, but the ordering principles are derived from the past. Instead of “single movement systems,” we must think of “simultaneous movement systems”: a complicated series of transportation methods, each with different nodes and rates of movement, which produce widely varying space-time sequences of perceptions. The design area is conceived as a “basic design structure”: “the binding together of perception sequences shared by large numbers of people, thereby developing a group image from shared experiences and so giving a sense of underlying order to which individual freedom and variety are related.”

The vast extent of the metropolitan region requires a new scale of image of clearly articulated order and rhythm. The test of a city plan, as in the past, is in its ability to influence change, preserving worthwhile existing elements and providing for the integration of growth into a new organic entity.

A striking and now mature example of “putting the ideas to work” was in Society Hill. The land area was a confused mixture of eighteenth and nineteenth century row houses and other buildings, interlaced by garden footpaths. In the historic centre of the city, and once a fashionable area, it was now in decline and its future was a matter of public concern. On one side was the Schuylkill River, with a river-side expressway adding to design

problems.

There was no early, masterly design solution, which won acclamation and immediate execution. Instead there was “a long and painful search for form,” and then for architectural expression of this form. There was slow progression, with much feedback, the whole process from consciousness of problem to completion of the design solutions taking almost 20 years.

A contemporary image required the imposition of order, with minimum interference with historical buildings, the provision of opportunities for individual expression within this order and simultaneous integration of movement systems, particularly fast-moving traffic on the expressway and the pedestrian movement within the area.

This was achieved by five identical tower buildings, positioned in relation to the thrusts of force, in particular from two structural axes, and forming a perceptual linkage between the pedestrian pathways and the riverside expressway. This was order in the sky. Order on the ground was also necessary; the latter was obtained through the defining and fronting base line of the embarcadero, with uniform rows of trees.

Order in essentials — a basic design structure — had been attained. Within this underlying order there may be individual variety and expression.

Bacon’s commitment to planning as “a viable democratic process” is evident throughout his book. He seeks to convey the human experiential sense and meaning of design ideas and their expression. He feels that the artist very often can convey

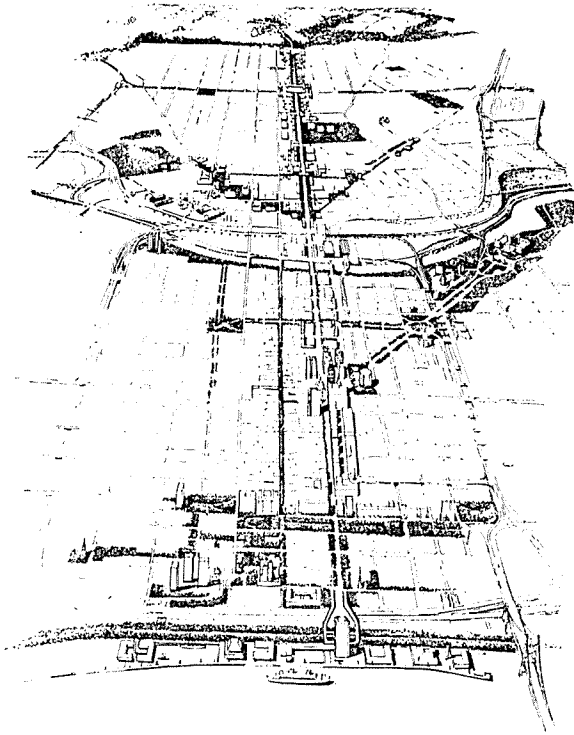
the essential points of design more successfully than the architect. Heavy reliance is placed on the drawings, water colours and words of the artist, Paul Klee, and contemporary etchings used to illustrate design in the historic city.

New methods, in addition to scale models, sketches, etc., need to be devised so that the "architectural image" of a physical plan proposal will convey more adequately the actual experiences of people if they lived with and used the completed project. Such is essential for citizen comprehension, evaluation and decision, and these are necessary to reap the full benefit from "democratic feedback."

This is a stimulating book, full of ideas. It comes close to being both a "people's book" on urban design and essential reading for all professionals, architects, as well as those with little formal design knowledge, concerned with the city. As an idea book, it is unfortunate that concepts are not listed in the index.

Valuable insights are injected into the stream of planning thought, and feedback should occur. Parallels in some concepts in other writing, such as Lynch's *The Image of the City*, will be noted by readers. This reviewer finds similarities between Bacon's conception of society and the notion of "organic solidarity" expressed by the early French sociologist, Emile Durkheim.

Design ideas, like religious, political and other ideas, can have a long-term impact, but to attribute their initiation to "an act of will" is hardly sufficient. The urban designer is creating



"This is a broad impression of the evolving design structure underlying the growth and development of Philadelphia. This structure did not emerge all at once, but was laboriously built up, part by part, over time. It presents unity because each of its parts is related to the other by the principles of an organic growth process. The drawing itself, by its own nature, makes it clear that this is not a final form; the stirring of a new growth and flowering is already present. Many additions and revisions will have to be worked out to meet the new pressures of urban growth. These plans must extend across the land beyond the city limits to provide structure and form to the whole region and channels of energy for the expansion of the city. The objective is to achieve, on the part of every citizen, a sense of orientation to a continually enlarging order." — *Design of Cities*.

images and symbols and, as the author tells us, each generation will define these in its own way. Many design structures, such as

Georgian areas in London, have an intrinsic fragility. The toil which has produced Society Hill could be swept away by addi-

tional, unrelated tower blocks. Why are historic squares jealously preserved in some places, such as Savannah, while elsewhere squares of equal or greater design merit turned into caricatures of their past? Bacon has made a unique contribution and it is now the responsibility of geographers, economists, historians, sociologists and others — whether planners or not — to tackle these design-related questions.

Urban design is not a substitute for social and economic planning: indeed one feels sure that the author would agree that the needed broad, inspiring vision of the future must encompass all aspects of urban life.

—F. Henry

Institute affairs

REPORT OF COUNCIL:

The president, Miss Nancy Northcroft, presented the Council's report for 1967-68 to the annual general meeting. Items of interest included:

Membership

Total membership as at April, 1968, was 137. At least 13 full members are known to be resident outside New Zealand. The secretary no longer has an address for R. E. Russell.

University Regulations

Council confirmed that the new regulations which came into force in 1968 for candidates attending the Diploma Course at Auckland would remain a suit-

able qualification for entry to membership of the Institute, subject to the requirements relating to practical experience.

Institute Award

The Institute Prize for the year 1967 was awarded to M. G. Barber, MA, for his progress while attending the Diploma Course at Auckland as a full-time student in 1967.

Standing Committees

A new regulation governing the establishment and functions of committees was adopted. The following items are extracted from the reports of these committees for the year 1967-68.

Education and Membership: A report and recommendation covering practical experience for entry to the Institute was prepared and will be considered by the incoming council.

Publicity and Public Relations: This committee regretted the lack of contribution to Town Planning Quarterly from planners in the main centres other than Auckland and hoped that members could correct this during the next 12 months.

Registration: It was recommended that consideration of the draft Registration Bill, which had been made available to members for comment in September, 1967, should be deferred until reports on the objectives, functions and activities of the Institute and the role of the town planner have been received and considered by the Institute.

Members will be soon invited to submit to a special committee of Council their considerations on the aims, activities and functions of the Institute.

COUNCIL ELECTION

At the annual general meeting held in Dunedin on May 16 the following officers were elected for 1968-69:

President: Miss Nancy Northcroft

Vice-President: P. W. T. Bagnall

Hon. Secretary: N. J. Burren

Hon. Treasurer: D. J. Edmondson

Councillors: J. A. Beard, I. G. Dudding, M. M. Latham, D. G. Porter, D. W. Simsion, I. G. Dunn (immediate past president)

Student observer on Council for 1968-69 is M. E. Jones.

1969 and 1970 Conferences

The 1969 Conference will be held in Auckland; the date and theme to be decided. Any suggestions should be sent to the Conference Committee through D. W. Simsion, Auckland Regional Authority. The 1970 Conference will be held in Wanganui.

MEMBERSHIP

Mr. W. L. Beaumont, District Planning Officer with the Ministry of Works, Hamilton, has been elected to membership.

New Student Members

N. J. Williamson

J. N. Seidel

Resignations

G. F. Bostell

F. C. Basire

Death

The sudden death of A. R. Gillespie of Auckland in March is noted with regret.



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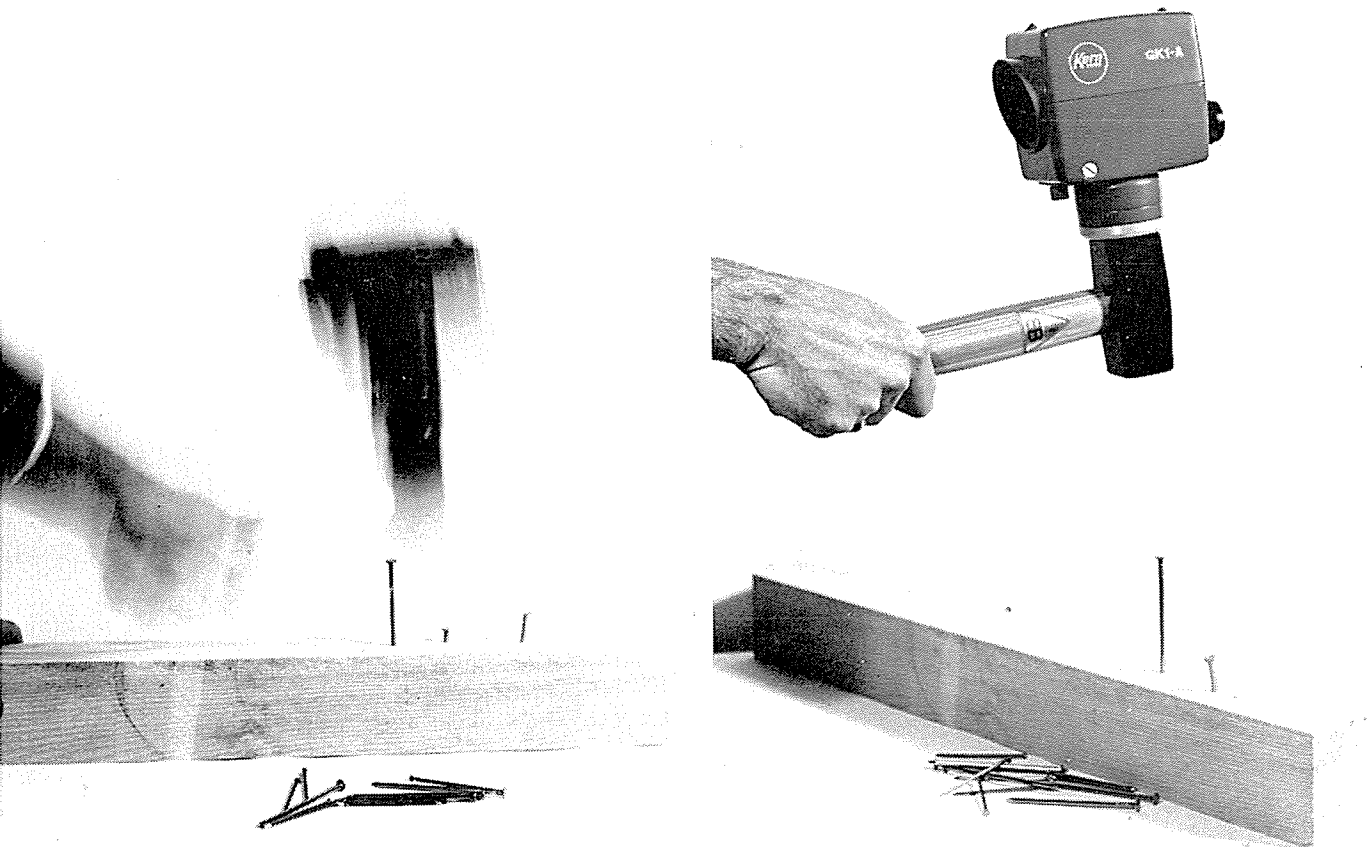
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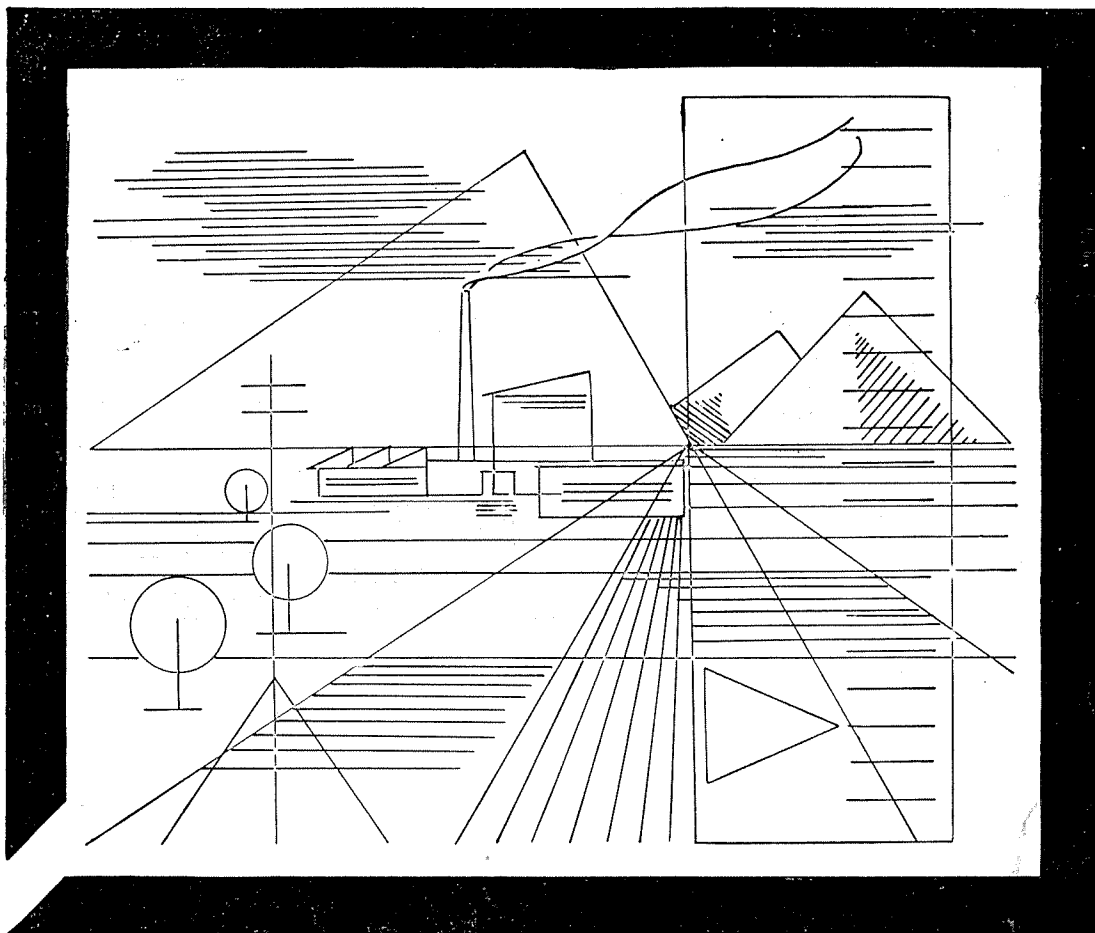
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