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Planning in the 1990s: An International Agenda

Peter Hall

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Coming to Oxford, most of you must have been ruminating on what you have seen out of various moving windows. Those of you who flew in, especially from the Atlantic, may have been impressed by the overwhelming greenness of the landscape, in which even the bigger cities appear as very small blobs; the green belts are alive and well down there, maintained by a highly professionalized planning system and backed by millions of Nimby voters. And, as you came from Heathrow by train or bus or car, you will have already sensed the tensions on the ground: between the deep-set desire to preserve the quality of the southern English landscape, and the apparently inexorable pressures for growth, that come from the steady outward movement of affluent people and the relocation of jobs. If you came by car or by bus, you may well have experienced the gridlock on the M25, which is not very different from the gridlock on the A86 or the Munchener Ring or the I-495 or the I-680 or any other metropolitan beltway in the more dynamic parts of the world. If you came on the train through Reading, you will have glimpsed the M4 high-tech corridor and the spectacular office growth that has made that town, once a sleepy part of Thomas Hardy's Wessex, the third major office center in southern England.

But in between, you will have passed through miles of lush countryside dotted with delightful villages: certainly more delightful, if only because more sanitary, than when Hardy wrote about them in *Jude The Obscure*. The people in them no longer wear smocks, and they no longer labour in the fields; they commute, sometimes long distances, to high-tech and business service jobs in the neighbouring towns and cities. In the last 30 years, England has returned to the pattern of the Middle Ages, when the wealth and the power were concentrated in the south. The great northern cities, literally monuments to the Industrial Revolution, took a terrible battering in the great deindustrialization of the 1970s and early 1980s, from which they are only now recovering.

What you have not yet seen, unless you chose a highly individualistic or even eccentric route, is the other side of the coin. Even places like Reading and Oxford contain their pockets of depriva-

tion, usually public housing estates–projects, in American parlance–on the urban fringes, not very visible to the tourist eye. But London contains concentrated areas of deprivation, above all on its east side. SERPLAN, the South East Regional Planning Conference, calls that side the Lozenge of Deprivation; in it, even at the height of the 1980s boom, local area-based unemployment rates rose as high as 30 percent. This area corresponds uncannily to the so-called Victorian manufacturing belt of London, which geographers distinguished a quarter of a century ago. Now it is a shadow of its former self. And the same area contained large concentrations of goods-handling service activities, like the London docks and railway freight yards, which have similarly suffered massive contraction or closure.

In the 1980s London has been going through a massive process of restructuring, out of manufacturing and into what my colleague Manuel Castells calls the informational mode of development; but in the process its manufacturing and goods-handling functions, once massive, have declined as precipitately as any of the better-known examples in the north of England or central Scotland. The result, again hidden to most casual visitors, is a new redefinition of a contrast that is centuries old: on the one side, there is the west of London, the part that since the 17th century has contained the City of London and the Royal Palaces and Parliament and the homes of the rich, and that now also contains Heathrow and the M4 corridor and the desirable commuter towns of the Thames Valley; on the other, there is the East End of Petticoat Lane and Jack the Ripper and Limehouse and the docks, that now also contains whole areas of deprivation and environmental degradation, stretching perhaps 20 or 30 miles downstream of London Bridge. And, during the middle and late 1980s, one of the longest and strongest periods of growth the British economy has known, that contrast if anything grew.

There was of course an exception, known to planners the world over: the regeneration of the London Docklands. It was the outcome of a partnership between a public urban development corporation and private capital, and it has transformed more than eight square miles of wasteland into a third city of London, surrounded by new housing that caters for almost every income bracket. Some people love it, some people have always hated it, and some feel a bit of both. The really important point about Docklands, whether you are for it or against it, is that it did demonstrate that a substantial part of a British city could be economically and physically transformed within an astonishingly small time, less than a decade. More than that: it actually reversed the tide of history, which for more than three centuries had made London's western fringes the zone of desirable advance, the place wherw everyone wanted to be, and its eastern fringes a zone of regression and discard. In London, the east is suddenly fashionable.

The challenge now, for planners both in the British government and in the local authorities, is how to seize that point and make it the start of an even larger and bolder transformation. SERPLAN last year published a new strategy for the South East, in which they called for the development of the entire Eastern Thames Corridor, below London, in order finally to rectify the historic east-west imbalance. The Secretary of State for the Environment, Michael Heseltine, endorsed that approach in principle in a speech in March this year. So we have a happy situation where the central government and the local authorities actually agree on the main lines of a strategy. The only problem is how to do it.

The 1980s: Superboom Decade

How to do this is going to be a problem, because in the last two years the world has changed. The 1990s, we can now see, are about as different from the 1980s as could be imagined. During the middle and late 1980s, the main theme for planners all over the western world was coping with the impact of growth. And the reason was plain to see: from Berkshire to Cheshire, from Yvelines to the Alpes-Maritimes, from Hessen to Oberbayern, from New Jersey to central Florida, and from New Hampshire to the San Francisco Bay Area, ordinary citizens everywhere were experiencing the consequences of explosive growth, and they did not like them. They were seeing gridlock on the daily commuter journey, worsening air congestion, summer water shortages, deteriorating basic public services, and above all escalating house prices. These were the daily litany of the media from one place to the next; the only irony was that most people in most places thought that it was only happening to them.

Gripped by the hassle of everyday existence, few ordinary middle-class citizens spared much thought for a very different problem: that of the deprived minority who would have given anything they had–which wasn't of course much–to share these woes of affluence, but were totally excluded from them. Only when the expression welled up in senseless acts of violence–in British cities in 1981, in isolated but well-publicized incidents in New York during the late 1980s, in Paris and Brussels within recent months–did the great majority become conscious that there were other people out there, whose lives were so different from their own that they might well live in another country altogether. As, indeed, for all purposes they did and do: the seminal work of the Chicago sociologist William Julius Wilson has shown clearly that in the United States, economic restructuring and what one can only call black flight–the outward movement of middle-class blacks to the suburbs–has left behind pockets of concentrated disadvantage in the cities, from which–trapped in ghetto schools and a culture of unemployment–there is no apparent possibility of escape.

Europe, I think, is only just awakening to the fact that it has a similar problem in its cities; and it is probably a quarter-century behind the United States in taking any steps to deal with it. The fact is that the present predicament of the American urban underclass is the outcome of 25 years of relentless efforts to eliminate racial distinctions in education and in employment. It demonstrates just how hard is the road that Europe is now about to travel.

But the world I have just described is the world of the 1980s. The concerns I have been describing were the concerns of the last decade, though many of them clearly persist into the 1990s. There is, however, a new agenda, and it is this that I now want to address.

The New World of the 1990s

The basic fact is that the world economy is now in recession. The great 1980s boom, as no one here in Britain needs reminding, is over. And that is not a uniquely British problem; arguably Britain was first into the recession that now seems to be gripping so much of the advanced industrial world, and may perhaps be the first out of it. And, for the first time, recession is attacking ordinary middle-class people who thought that their white-collar jobs were immune. Americans have got used to seeing newspaper and television pictures of unemployment lines featuring not the gaunt blue-overalled workers of the 1930s, but impeccable grey-flannel-suited professionals. Part of the reason, withouat doubt, is the long-expected, long-delayed achievement of productivity advances through information technology in the service sector. Another part is a shakeout from the explosion of speculative takeovers in the last years and months of the 1980s boom. Anyone who remembers Schumpeter shouldn't be in the least surprised; this is the classic manifestation of his secondary wave, which comes just before the big recession hits. You can see an almost classic illustration of it in the print media; I wonder how many of you have recently discovered that the firm that took over the firm with which you signed your last book contract has just abandoned its academic list and is about to sell it to someone else; there is a veritable holocaust now taking place in the publishing industry, and it is representative of what is happening right through the informational service industries.

One spectacular expression of this is the end of the construction boom. The construction industry, especially in the commercial sector, always tends to act as an exaggerated multiplier of underlying trends in the industries which it serves. The result, in every major office city in the world, is now a huge surplus of prime office space. In the City of London alone, according to a report last summer, there were nearly 8 million square feet of uncommitted office space; for central London the total was over 10 million. Pessimists say that these surpluses will be sufficient to serve all possible demands down to the end of the century. Similar huge surpluses have been reported from key American cities. Similarly, we are unlikely to see a resumption for some time of the pressures for major retail development which were so characteristic of the boom years. I suppose the good part of the news is that the recession spells far fewer conflicts between growth and preservation; we shall not see so many of those vast schemes for new retail or office parks in the London green belt, which have brought such anguish to the planners in southeast England. And, as we have seen for nearly two years in southern England and for a year in northern California, it also spells considerable relief for house buyers—even if it brings near coronary arrest to potential house sellers. It is a breathing space, in which planners in particular can take stock.

If now we ask, what are the implications of the recession for public policy, I suppose we must start by taking the attitude that business cycles are an apparently inevitable part of the capitalist economy as far back as we can recognize. Capitalists, including developers, take risks and some of them will incur losses. But there is a new problem: as we have all seen, the 1980s have seen the emergence all over the world of new forms of partnership between public and private agencies in the development process. Some of the leading examples have been truly spectacular mega-developments: in London's Docklands, the developers of Canary Wharf—the biggest single office development in Europe, designed to house nearly 50,000 workers—contributed close on half the cost of a new London underground line designed to serve the site. The same developers contributed extensively to the public coffers, especially to provide affordable housing throughout the city, as part of the complex deal that created Battery Park City, a luxury housing development next to the World Trade Center in New York City. In Los Angeles, the Red Line of the new Metro system is wholly posited on the notion that developer contributions, based on high-density zoning along the subway corridor, will carry much of the construction costs.

Less spectacularly, but in aggregate even more importantly, California and other American states have been exerting contributions from developers for mitigation of development impacts. A couple of years ago, the National Association of Home Builders and the American Planning Association reported that so-called impact fees were being levied in Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Minnesota, Nevada, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Texas, Utah, and Washington. Local communities persuade developers to cough up a package of fixed fees in order to mitigate growth pressures on roads, sewers, fire service, parks, and swimming pools. In California, these fees have even covered provision of child care facilities. Of course, they tend to get passed on to new home buyers, and so become a tax imposed by existing residents on new arrivals. California now requires that a local government must establish a "nexus" between the fee, or other exaction, and the development that is supposed to pay for it.

The alternative, very widely used in California, is a Development Agreement, or Planning Agreement in Eastern Atlantic English. California's law on the subject was passed in 1980, nearly a decade after Britain's 1971 Act. It gives the developer certainty in return for guaranteed provision of facilities such as roads or low-cost housing. Little used at first, it was used on an increasing scale during the 1980s as local authorities–faced with unprecedented growth pressures and strapped for cash because of 1978's Proposition 13, which effectively (to use British parlance) rate-capped them –resorted to fees on a bigger and bigger scale. At the last count, there were more than 500. One Californian expert, William Fulton, has called them "the institutionalization of development fees."

Now the point is that such arrangements were extremely typical of the 1980s. And they tended to grow in scale and importance as developers sensed the possibility of mega-profits from mega-developments and were willing to contribute a share of those profits, sometimes a considerable share, to the public purse. Whether you welcome these developments, or whether you join David Harvey in condemning them as an excrescence of post-modernity, there is no doubt that the public-private mega-development was the major urban innovation of the 1980s. There were precursors in past history, like the Barbican in London and Hotorget in Stockholm and La Defense in Paris, all of which date from the 1950s, but only in the last decade have they become general. The reason for this, simply, is the scale of the shift from the industrial to the informational mode of development, which has triggered an urban transformation equally momentous to the first industrial revolution in Manchester, Lille, Essen, Lodz, or Lowell; huge tracts of land have been recycled from industrial and goods-handling functions to informational ones.

I want to argue that this is one of the major dilemmas for planning in the 1990s. At the start of this present decade, we can see all over the cities of the developed world a much cloudier prospect for such hugely ambitious schemes. The completion of the London Docklands Development Corporation's work in the Royal Docks is stalled because the original developers have pulled out. In San Francisco's Yerba Buena Center, developers are trying to renegotiate agreements. Elsewhere in the world, mega-mega developments are still planned or actually under way: on the Tokyo, Osaka, and Kobe waterfronts, at Massy-Palaiseau in the southwestern suburbs of Paris, and–perhaps most spectacular of all–the Multi-Function Polis in Adelaide, Australia. But, given the dependence of all of them on massive private investment, I think that it may take time to see developments on the ground.

Yet the basic shift powering these developments is far from over, and may well continue for another half-century; as a re-reading of Schumpeter's magisterial *Business Cycles* will soon remind us, the recession we are now experiencing is a blip on the screen of history, albeit intensified by momentous world changes like the end of the Cold War and the economic transformation of Eastern Europe. You might, I suppose, compare it with the years of recession after the end of the Napoleonic Wars and the Treaty of Vienna. I don't mean by that to suggest by that that here in Britain we can expect a Peterloo, still less a Cato Street Conspiracy; but I do recall that those same years saw early experiments in railroads that led in the 1820s to the Stockton and Darlington, not to mention continued technical experimentation in an industry that culminated in the 1820s with Roberts's self-acting mule and Neilson's hot blast process for smelting iron. And those developments truly guaranteed the transition from the agrarian to the industrial age.

Laying the Infastructural Base

So what we need to do is hold steady through a few difficult years, and to redeploy all those underused resources in the construction industries of the world, so as to literally lay the foundations for the coming informational age. And, in doing this, we should be combining sectoral-structural planning with national-regional planning; we want to use those crucial investments to shift the patterns of informational activity from places where they will do less good, to places where they will do more. One hundred and seventy years ago, on the threshold of the industrial age, no one had that freedom. It wasn't just that governments were committed to Adam Smith-like laissez-faire; some, like the French and Prussian governments, were on the contrary wedded to state intervention in basic matters like railway building. It was that they were geographically constrained. Neilson's hot blast could be used only where there was blackband ironstone, which meant central Scotland. Roberts' mule could be employed only where there existed an infrastructure of textile production, which meant Lancashire. In the informational age we are not constrained any more in the same ways, because information can move almost effortlessly and costlessly.

What does matter now is more the accumulated agglomeration economies of existing global cities, plus what can only be called the effect of imagery. London competes with Paris and Frankfurt on the European scale, and with New York and Tokyo on the global scale; their competitive advantage can be subtly changed through forces that affect the exchange of information, like the quality of advanced telecommunications infrastructure, the range and frequency of direct international air connections, and–the new factor–the networks of high-speed trains which are just beginning to be set in place. And within these cities, public-private partnership can actually alter the entire image of a sector of a city, as the French have done at La Villette and are about to do at Massy, or the Japanese are doing along the Tokyo waterfront. In other words: our freedom of action is now much greater, but to achieve change does require a new kind of very large-scale coordination between public and private capital, allied to imagination as to the limits of the possible.

Here in Britain, we have two such tasks. The first, within the southeast corner of England, is to try to build on the momentum established in the London Docklands, and to create that new pole of growth, which I spoke about earlier, to the east of London. This will have to depend on the creation, in the heart of this eastern Thames Corridor, of a symbol which will establish the symbolic significance of London's role in the new Europe. That is why the decision on the route of the High Speed Train route, from the tunnel into London, assumes such critical significance. It is as fully fraught with consequences as was the decision, 48 years ago in the middle of World War II, to establish London's first airport at Heathrow. No then one saw the true significance of that decision, for everyone was too concerned with even weightier matters. Even Patrick Abercrombie, writing his historic Greater London Plan, did not appreciate it: he only thought that the reservoirs, which you still see today next door to the airport, would be useful for seaplanes. This time, we are a little better prepared.

The other task is to complete the regeneration of the great provincial cities of the Midlands and North. These are truly magnificent cities, which during the 1980s have responded in the most remarkable and varied ways to the challenge presented by the transition from the industrial to the informational age. Glasgow last year became European Culture City; Manchester is a major museum centre, on which base it is developing a vigorous tourism industry; Liverpool houses the Tate Gallery North in its rebuilt Victorian dock warehouses; Leeds has become a major centre of the financial services industry; Birmingham, which already houses the National Exhibition Centre, is opening the National Convention Centre. And both Manchester and Cardiff have huge schemes for regenerating their docklands, based on the same public-private partnership concept that was so successful in London.

These schemes too may be slowed by the current recession. But, here again, the job must be to lay the necessary infrastructural foundations for the next private construction boom, which we can confidently expect later in this decade. That means investment in what could be called informational infrastructure, and in particular three things: first, the upgrading of certain provincial airports to make them major international hubs; secondly, the development of a few selected British Rail routes, linking London and the main provincial cities, to become part of the European high-speed network; third, the provision of state-of-the-art telecommunications infrastructure in the cores of those cities, as the Japanese are so successfully doing in Tokyo and Kawasaki and Osaka. That point needs particular stress: the Japanese, who already put in their high-speed train network 27 years ago and are investing in one of the world's most advanced airports in Osaka, are already concentrating their energies on what they call soft infrastructure, and—not only in Britain, of course, but in Europe generally, as well as in the United States—we need to do the same.

Transatlantic Contrasts

But for me, as a transatlantic commuter, that poses an interesting intellectual paradox. There are two outstanding conceptual or philosophical barriers that separate the two groups of delegates at this conference. Both are the products of history. But one is in the course of removal, while the other, I would submit, is likely to remain deeply divisive. The first is the achievement of a continental-scale economic system. The second concerns the role of the state in that system.

In a short article I wrote to commemorate this historic conference, I stated that the most significant point surely came with the admonition from the American organizers to their colleagues. Twice, they reminded us: *Don't forget to obtain a passport!* The point is that, for four decades, Europeans have carried their battered identity documents with them whenever they set out for a weekend drive. Some of them, thanks to the Schengen accord between France, Germany, and the Benelux countries, can at last leave them behind; the rest of us await the historic date, January 1, 1993, when at last we can do the same. The Americans in contrast have become used to travelling across a continent without barriers. And that freedom, long restricted by the tyranny of distance, was effectively realised by the revolution wrought by the jet airplane in the 1960s and 1970s. Today, as visitors find to their surprise, Americans use planes as other people use buses. They fly thousands of miles as casually as they would visit the grocery store. This is not just a matter of deregulation, which has brought American air travel costs down to a fraction of European levels. It is also a function of the seamless web of ultra-efficient telecommunications and computer systems, all designed to make communication almost effortless.

Europe is moving in the same direction. But other barriers—of language, of technology—will remain after the customs posts disappear. Even if eventually the American and European urban systems come to resemble each other more closely, they can never do so entirely, because the basic geography of cities and regions is subtly and importantly different. Europe is still a continent of nation states, within which nest historic regions. Thirty-four years of the European community have done relatively little to modify that. Europeans live in an urban hierarchy which was laid down first by the Romans, and secondly by the Germanic tribes soon after they emerged from the Dark Ages. The great trade routes which connect these towns and cities already existed in the 12th century; they are now followed by the motorways, and soon they will be the lines of Europe's high-speed network.

In contrast, the Americans at this conference come here from a variety of different urban systems, laid down by different agencies and individuals: the colonial estuarial port cities of the eastern seaboard; the river transhipment ports and portage cities of the Mississippi and Ohio basins; the Spanish Jesuit missions of California. But fundamental in this mosaic is the huge continental scale and the wide spacing of cities west of the Appalachians, and above all between the Mississippi and the Sierra Nevada, which has no parallel in Europe save perhaps in northern Scandinavia; Siberia offers the only real parallel in the old world. The great regional cities of middle and western America–Atlanta, Dallas-Fort Worth, Denver, Minneapolis-St Paul, Seattle–command territories bigger than many European nations. And, down to the coming of the age of the jet and the interstate highway, these territories were in important respects self-contained. Now, they are tied together by the new means of communication. But technology merely shrinks distance; it does not expunge it. Much of America remains conceptually and spiritually remote from the wider world, in a way that would be unimaginable within Europe.

The Role of the State

This, in part, helps explain the second major distinction. It is that in Europe local decisions, local autonomy, are traditionally subject to central control or at least central accountability, in a way that would seem unacceptable and quite unnatural in the United States. American planning, almost by definition, answers to local concerns. The difference between congested areas of growth–like New Jersey or north central California–and the rest of the nation is really much more extreme than in Britain or France or Germany, just because the nation concerned is so much bigger and the regions concerned are so much more remote from each other. The federal government in Washington, D.C., is a far more shadowy presence than national governments in London, Paris, Bonn, Rome, or elsewhere; partly because in America most planning matters are reserved to the states, partly because even these state governments tend to leave local jurisdictions to their own devices. Neither Washington, D.C., nor the state capitol, intervenes in local policies and local controversies in the way that European governments freely do all the time. The European visitor or immigrant to the United States tends to waste much fruitless time trying to establish where the power and the action lie. The point is that they lie everywhere and nowhere; the European model, essentially hierarchical, does not work there.

Because of that, American planning practice and planning education are bound to be to some degree parochial by European standards. 75 percent of California planning graduates remain within California. That is perhaps an extreme case, for California behaves in practice more like a nation state than an ordinary member of a federal union; but it could be replicated in other populous and powerful states like Texas or Florida. Thus, while of course American planning students and faculty read the national magazines, and though they seek to apply to their own experience lessons learned elsewhere, there is little of the centrifugal effect so obvious in Britain, where mobility within local authorities is so high and where everyone almost instantly knows what is happening everywhere else.

This is underlined by the fact that America has a far weaker and less cohesive government structure. In varying degrees, all European planners at this conference would expect, almost as an article of faith, that there should be some kind of national strategy for regional and urban development. Even in Britain under Thatcher, which went a long way in the direction of minimalist planning, the tradition of regional guidance, coming down from the center, was maintained; the likelihood now is that it will be strengthened. But there is not even the suggestion of such guidance in the United States. True, there have been national *programmes* such as the Interstate Highways under Eisenhower in the 1950s, the Model Cities of Johnson in the 1960s, or the War on Drugs under Reagan in the 1980s. But these have been notably less all-embracing or effective in recent years, and some initiatives–such as Federal Enterprise Zones–have so far failed to fly.

Even at the state level, it is not usually expected that government in America will tell local authorities what to do, though some governments–including unlikely ones, such as Florida–have begun to develop state urban growth policies. Generally, even then, the tendency has been to let different jurisdictions cooperate in informal agencies rather than imposing layers of regional government on them. In California, an initiative by Assembly speaker Willie Brown has so far notably failed to establish state-mandated regional agencies.

The result of these differences is that even when ideas are exported from one side of the Atlantic to another, they may well emerge in different form. In particular, initiatives in America invariably come bottom-up, from the local level; in Europe, they are far more likely to come top-down, from the government. In this regard, it is instructive to compare typical 1980s developments, like urban development corporations and inner-city regeneration, generally. On both continents, cities now increasingly compete with each other for development, rather like rival makes of ice cream or detergent; but in Europe, this competition is far more likely to become a matter of national prestige and national investment, as can clearly be seen in the Paris-London rivalry.

Fundamental Change in Europe

These national programmes will of course increasingly be mediated through European intergovernmental and super-governmental agencies like the European Community or the Conference of European Ministers of Transport. But these are likely to remain highly driven by their national member governments. Perhaps the greatest piece of structurally determinant infrastructure investment of the next half-century, the European high-speed train system, will not be a homogeneous network but rather an amalgam of national schemes built to different levels of technical achievement. It will have effects on the fortunes of cities as great as those of the motorways of the 1960s or the original railways of the 1840s, but the most important will be again to fortify the position of the main historic cities astride the main historic trade routes.

It will also cement the position of what can be called the European heartland cities which lie within the natural radius of the new system, which is about 500 miles. That means the familiar golden triangle first recognized in the 1960s, the extreme corners of which are Birmingham, Milan, and perhaps Berlin, and the natural centre of which is Frankfurt. Within this exists an even more privileged quadrilateral, whose corners are London, Paris, Frankfurt, and Amsterdam, within which free daily travel by high-speed train will be possible. And significantly, the centre of this triangle is Brussels. This will be apparent as soon as the *TGV Nord* from Paris to London, Amsterdam, and Cologne is fully operational in the late 1990s.

East Central Europe is of course the big unknown. Its cities, with the possible exception of Berlin, lie significantly outside any of these charmed figures. And, by an extraordinary historical irony, the Germans have just opened a key section of their contribution to the European high-speed rail network, which–bored at astronomic cost through the *Mittelgebirge* between Hannover and Wurzburg–completely bypasses the cities of next-door Thuringen that so badly need connecting to it.

The result, so clearly emerging in the former DDR, is the emergence of a depressed and peripheralized neo-colonial Europe, having the same kind of relationship to the heartland as did the American south between 1865 and 1955. There, the interstates and the jetports, coming as they did in the decade of Montgomery and Topeka and Little Rock and Selma, finally brought the south back into the American urban and regional system. It may take a similar series of cataclysms, plus a similar programme of investment, to reintegrate East Central Europe. The problem presently is that, as Western Europe enters the era of the high-speed train, it is going to take a massive effort to move its East-Central European neighbours into the age of the motorway. Look at any motoring atlas of Europe, and the former iron curtain is still a startling reality.

America is going to be different. It faces no such problem of enlarging its urban and regional system, unless you count the attempt to create a North American Free Trade area under that heading. But, because of that fundamental difference in geography I mentioned earlier, the role of technology in spatial change is bound to be different there. High-speed trains will not knit the different parts of America together; they will cement intra-regional links, along the eastern seaboard, along the Great Lakes, in Florida and Texas and California. These systems, becoming tighter and more self-contained in themselves, may represent the new regional reality in the United States in the early 21st Century.

The Role of Planning Education

What does that mean for planning education? Here in Europe, as in the United States, the dominant job will continue to be to train planners for jobs in the local context–which, in Europe, is going to mean the national level, as in America it will mean the level of the states. But the intergovernmental level is bound to become increasingly important with the achievement of the single market and with the challenge of achieving a European infrastructural network embracing not only motorways and trains but also the soft infrastructure of information and communication. Though most planning work will continue to be done at the level of the neighbourhood or the city, there will be an increasing need for policy planners capable of thinking and acting at the super-national level. To that end, Europe will need increasing cooperation and exchange of courses and credits between planning schools in different countries. It also demands urgent consideration of a European *grande ecole administratife*, a super civil service college which would provide a common education for the policy planners of the new Europe.

For Americans, it poses an interesting dilemma. The facts of geography and history mean for certain that their system is bound to remain less centralized, more focussed at the state and regional level. That means two dominant interstate systems, based on the megalopolitan regions of the North East seaboard and the southern shores of the Great Lakes, and three self-contained state systems in the mega-states of Florida, Texas, and California. The latter three, I suspect, will effectively continue to fend for themselves, lobbying for their fair share (or even unfair share) of key federal programmes. The others will find a need to cooperate more intensively at a regional level. That, not the achievement of a superarching system for administration and planning, is likely to remain the basic reality. The consequences for planning education I leave you to explore for yourselves.