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Emerging Conflicts and Planning Issues

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URBAN AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE WESTERN UNITED STATES
EMERGING CONFLICTS AND PLANNING ISSUES

PHILIP SHAPIRA AND NANCEY LEIGH-PRESTON

A set of five factors that characterize economic and developmental change in America and the Western United States is identified. It is argued that the West has become fully integrated into the national economy and the forces of change in the region are primarily national rather than regional. We then discuss a series of policy-relevant problems, issues, and conflicts that emerge from these economic forces within the West. Finally, we discuss what these forces of change imply for planners in the years ahead. It is suggested that planners need to move beyond the traditional reactive mode of planning to one that actively seeks to generate more progressive forms of economic development in the region.

The American West has traditionally been viewed as economically and socially distinct from the rest of the United States. This has been particularly true in popular culture where the Western region has been seen as a frontier, an area of opportunity where the problems of the older Northeast, Midwest, and South can be escaped. Yet, while in many respects the development experience of urban and rural areas in the West has been distinct, we believe (to the extent it was ever the case) that the West can no longer be seen as separate or isolated from the rest of the country. The key problems and processes of change now affecting the West are fundamentally similar to those affecting the nation as a whole. Understanding the broader forces underlying these problems and changes is essential if planners are to focus their efforts and increase their effectiveness in pursuing progressive and more equitable development within the West.

Recent research has, in fact, tried to grasp the nature of growth in the West in the

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In this article, the West is taken to comprise the Pacific states (Washington, Oregon, and California) and the Mountain states (Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Nevada, Utah, Colorado, Arizona, and New Mexico).

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context of a general analysis of regional development in the United States (Weinstein and Firestine, 1978; Fox, 1978). This article seeks to build upon such existing work, first, by reexamining how developments in industrial and economic structures are changing both rural and urban areas in the West. In this reexamination, we pay particular attention to the interaction of sectoral and technological changes with patterns of spatial development, including shifts from urban to rural locations. Second, we explore how these changes are tied to the emergence of critical conflicts and issues that planners in the region now need to consider and address. Third, in light of these developments and emerging issues in the West, we will look at the capacity of planning to respond, an examination that will question whether the current approaches and tools used by planners are adequate for the task. We will argue that because the forces shaping the West are neither isolated nor specific to the region, planners must look beyond their spatial and professional boundaries and seek broader alliances and new approaches if they are to pursue effective solutions to the problems generated by the development process.

THE CONTEXT OF CHANGE

Analysis of economic change and development in the West has to be tempered by a recognition of two factors: its physical characteristics and its particular historical context. In a physical sense, the sheer geographical size of the region, the scarcity of water, the ranges of climate and topography, and the possibilities for agricultural and mineral development have always influenced the character of development in the West. Similarly, Western economic development has also been molded historically by such factors as its late industrial and political development in relation to the East, the absence of slavery (in comparison with the South), struggles over land, the special role of California (to use McWilliams' [1949] phrase, "the Great Exception"), and the key role played by the federal government in stimulating economic growth.

Two examples illustrate how the special physical and historical characteristics of the West continue to effect particular patterns of economic development in the region. First, large areas of land in the West are held in public ownership—a legacy of the importance of government intervention in the region's development. These public lands have played a significant role in shaping economic and land-use development patterns in many Western States. Second, natural resource availability in the West has been a vital element in the development of numerous communities, especially in the mineral-rich Mountain States, but also in the Pacific Northwest (lumber).

However, while natural and physical factors still play a role, they do not directly control patterns of development in the West. As subsequent sections of this article illustrate, the contemporary process of economic development in the West is increasingly independent of the region's traditional natural and physical resources. Decisions about development in the region, about when and in what way economic activities will occur, are determined primarily by a broader set of factors, such as national and international market conditions, the structure of industry, developments in the work process, and changes in the relationship of capital and labor (Markusen and Schoenberger, 1981).

Thus, the physical and natural resource characteristics of the West continue to provide the specific terrain with which contemporary changes interact, just as earlier historical and economic structures provide a context for current economic developments. However, as the West has become fully integrated into the national and international economy, the leading factors now influencing patterns of economic change and development in the region are less intraregional or regional-specific and more related to a series of broader developments currently affecting the U.S. economy. These broader developments, which have increasingly characterized economic change throughout the United States since the 1960s, might be summarized as follows:

1. spatially uneven growth and change; despite major reversals in historic patterns of growth between urban and rural areas in the United States, development patterns are markedly uneven, both within the nation and in the context of international development;
2. fundamental shifts in relationships between and within economic sectors, including the movement away from goods production and toward service-performing activities, as well as increasing business concentration and centralization within individual sectors;
3. increased polarization, segmentation, and inequity in labor markets;
4. new technological developments, which have changed (or are changing) the nature of work in many instances, as well as increasing the capacity to relocate certain production and service activities;
5. slow aggregate economic growth and poor productivity performance; even though some sectors and spatial areas have seen rapid growth, the U.S. economy as a whole (in comparison with other advanced economies) has been performing poorly.

This particular way of categorizing and analyzing change is not without its problems. Other formulations can be substituted or added, of course. And the five developments/processes already listed are not self-contained—they all interact with each other. For example, changes within the technical process of work mean that often different kinds of jobs are required, and this has implications for labor market and occupational structures. Nonetheless, for the purposes of this article, this schema is useful in allowing a more careful examination of the components of change. In the following sections of the article, a fuller explanation is provided of the five developments and their impact on the West. Subsequently, there is an examination of how these developments have led to the emergence of critical problems and conflicts, which planners need to address.

Uneven Spatial Development

In recent decades, the directions that spatial development have taken in the United States can be characterized in two ways. First, both people and jobs have shifted out of the older regions of the North (the frostbelt) to the South and West (the sunbelt). From 1970 to 1979, the Northeast and North Central regions experienced a *net* outmigration of over 3.6 million people, of whom 2.1 million went to the South, and 1.5 million went to the West (Bureau of the Census, 1980a). And, from 1962 to 1978, the South and West jointly added 7.3 million more jobs than the Northeast and North Central Regions (Haren and Holling, 1979).

The West (as part of the sunbelt) has gained a disproportionate share of these additional people and jobs. From 1950 to 1980, the West's population grew by 110.3%, compared with 60.4% in the South (the North Central region grew by 31.7% and the Northeast by 24.0%, USDA, 1981). During the 1962–78 period, the number of jobs in the West grew by 81%, compared to a national increase of just under 54% (Haren and Holling, 1979).

In fact, in the post-1945 era, the West has been the fastest growing region in the United States, although the general slowdown in the nation's rate of growth is now slowing down the overall pace of development in the West.

The second major direction of spatial development has been the increased importance of nonmetropolitan areas in the overall economy. Indeed, in the 1970s and 1980s, there has been a reversal of the pattern of overall population stagnation or decline that many rural areas have experienced since the turn of the century. From 1970 to 80, the USDA (1981) reports that the population increased at a higher rate in U.S. rural and small town communities (15.4%) than in metropolitan areas (9.1%). The nation's nonmetropolitan areas have also seen major increases in jobs. Nonmetropolitan employment increased nearly 15% faster from 1962 to 1978 than it did in metropolitan areas (Haren and Holling, 1979).

One particularly strong source of nonmetropolitan growth has been new manufacturing employment. During the period from 1962 to 1978, 1.8 million manufacturing jobs were added in nonmetropolitan areas, compared with about 1.4 million in the metropolitan areas. In other words, of all the manufacturing jobs added to the U.S. economy during this period, 56% went to nonmetropolitan areas (which had just 30% of all manufacturing employment at the start of the period in 1962). In contrast, the metropolitan areas received only 44% of the additional manufacturing employment (although these areas had 70% of all manufacturing jobs in 1962). Most of the additional manufacturing jobs in metropolitan areas developed in the 1960s. During the 1970–78 years, metropolitan manufacturing fell by over 500,000 jobs. Nonmetropolitan areas, however, continued to gain manufacturing jobs during the 1970–78 period, although at a somewhat slower rate than in the 1960s.

Compared with the other three major regions of the country, the West has had the highest metropolitan growth rates over the postwar period. However, the West has experienced a slowdown in its rate of metropolitan population growth—from 47.6% during the decade 1950 to 1960 and 28.4% from 1960 to 1970, to 21.2% from 1970 to 1980 (USDA, 1981). The slowdown in metropolitanization is most apparent in the Pacific states. Nonmetropolitan areas in the Pacific states are now seeing the fastest rates of population increase. In the Mountain states, metropolitan growth proceeded rapidly in the 1970s, faster, in fact, than the rate of nonmetropolitan growth. Arizona and Nevada were the leading Mountain growth states in terms of the rate of both metropolitan and nonmetropolitan population increase.

Developments in the spatial allocation of growth can also be seen by examining the experience of the West's major cities. In the 1950s, seven major metropolitan areas (Los Angeles–Long Beach–Anaheim; San Francisco–Oakland–San Jose; Denver–Boulder; Phoenix; Portland; San Diego; and Seattle–Tacoma) accounted for 67% of the West's population increase. These seven metropolitan centers accounted for 69% of the West's population growth in the 1960s. However, from 1970 to 1977, the share of population growth taken by the seven metropolitan centers declined to 42%. Nonmetropolitan areas, however, increased their share of regional population growth from 10% in the 1950s and 8% in the 1960s to over 28% in the 1970–77 period. Medium-to-small metropolitan areas (under 1 million people in 1977) saw their share change from 22.5% in the 1950s to 29.6% from 1970 to 1977 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1980b: SMSAs defined as of 1978).

However, although the West has seen growth because of both regional and nonmetropolitan shifts, the emerging pattern of development has also been uneven. There are many parts of the West, including many of the region's rural areas, which are at the leading edges of economic growth. At the same time, other areas in the region are economically stagnant or, indeed, are experiencing quite severe economic decline. Similarly, where there is growth, as in numerous Western rural areas, it has become clear that not all groups share equally in the accruing benefits. In short, within the overall process of change affecting the whole region, development is quite uneven between particular areas and groups. This uneveness and inequality adds considerably to the generation of issues and conflicts facing planners.

The disparities in development within the region are well illustrated by current patterns of employment change. In a number of rural towns in the Mountain states, there has been rapid energy boom-town development (Markusen, 1978), while the in-migration of skilled professionals has led to new employment generation in several rural counties of Northern California (Bradshaw and Bakely, 1981). At the same time, there are substantial rural areas in the region that are currently in an acute state of economic depression, for instance, the lumber-based rural communities of Northern California, Washington, and Oregon.

There are also disparities between the two major subregions within the West. The Pacific region, which saw an annual change in manufacturing employment of 4.7% from 1950 to 1965, dropped to annual change averages of 1.9% from 1965 to 1970 and 1.0% from 1970 to 1977. The Mountain states, on the other hand, went from an average annual manufacturing jobs change of 4.9% (1950–65) and 5.1% (1965–70) to 2.1% during 1970–77 (Jackson, 1981). Both subregions have seen slower rates of increase in manufacturing employment, but the slowdown has been sharper in the Pacific subregion. The growth industries of the 1950s and 1960s in this subregion, industries like aerospace, automobiles, rubber and plastics, metalworking, and electrical goods have undergone a major restructuring in the last decade. Job growth has slowed, plants have been closed, and work has been transferred.

Restructuring is evident in newer industries in the Pacific subregion, such as electronics, with important implications for spatial structure. In the 1950s and 1960s, the leading center of the industry (Silicon Valley in California's Santa Clara County) saw remarkable increases in employment and population growth. But in the 1970s and 1980s, as Silicon Valley has become increasingly congested, and as products and labor requirements have changed, semiconductor production has tended to be shifted elsewhere in the region, especially to facilities in New Mexico, Utah, Oregon, and other Western states. The electronics industry has also shifted jobs to other areas of the country (Texas and North Carolina), as well as overseas. The jobs that have been shifted out to other areas have usually been the more routinized, lower-paid production jobs, while headquarters, research, and management jobs have concentrated in Silicon Valley (Saxenian, 1981).

It has been argued that the shift of new industrial activity in the United States away from traditional centers to newer areas (like nonmetropolitan communities) can be explained by developments in manufacturing product cycles (Norton and Rees, 1979; Erikson and Leinbach, 1979). As production develops, a mature stage is reached where there is little technical innovation and the work process becomes routinized. It then becomes feasible to geographically move production to areas where cheaper, less-skilled labor is available. Paradoxically, the plants that are shifted to these low–labor-cost areas are often capital-intensive (because they tend to embody efficient technology). In general, the product cycle explanation works well in accounting for the industrial growth of the South, where in both urban and rural areas branch plants (as in textiles, electronics, and light manufacturing) have been established to exploit available supplies of less-skilled labor. Invariably, the workers employed have been nonunionized, and often they have been female workers drawn into the labor force. Increased corporate and conglomerate ownership, together with developments in technology and transportation, have facilitated this process (Moriarty, 1981).

In the West, the product cycle explanation needs to be modified somewhat because the region is both a generator of innovation and a user of existing technology. Unlike the less-skilled labor used in the South, the industries making the greatest contributions to the employment developments in the West have often required higher than average proportions of skilled and professional workers. These workers have typically been imported, in part explaining the substantial migrations of population to the region (Mollenkopf, 1980). This is particularly true in the Pacific states (especially California), which have a history of industrial and economic development going back comparatively further than the rest of the West, a process begun in part by the initial isolation of the Pacific region from the Northern manufacturing belt and the need to develop mining and milling equipment (McWilliams, 1949). The role that the West Coast continues to play in industrial incubation and the development of highly skilled research, development, and production activities is evident in sectors like electronics (Silicon Valley) and aerospace (Seattle). There are also accompanying and well-developed centers of commerce and finance (San Francisco and Los Angeles), as well as key educational institutions (the University of California and Stanford), which have been integral to the fostering of new business and industrial development. Furthermore, the Pacific states also have had strong union traditions and have never been low-wage areas, in comparison to the South. Thus, although a part of the sunbelt and a receiver of substantial amounts of growth, the Pacific region has quite a different development history and economic function than the South.

In the Mountain States, however, the picture is quite different. Four of the states—Nevada, Arizona, Utah, and New Mexico—are "right-to-work" states, and most of the states have far less of an industrial base and tradition. Industry, including electronics and machinery, has found it profitable to relocate certain aspects of their production processes to some of these Mountain States (as well as to the South and overseas). Industrial capital has also shifted to the Border Area, the zone stretching across the border between Mexico, California, Arizona, New Mexico, (and Texas). U.S. plants have located just across the border to utilize relatively cheap Mexican labor to perform routine assembly and production tasks (Hansen, 1981). More complex tasks and management functions have remained on the U.S. side of the border. Developments along the border present perhaps the most explicit illustrations of how contemporary industrial change has led not just to a new spatial division of labor, but also an *international* spatial division of labor. Importantly, this international division of labor has had repercussions extending far into the West itself. In Arizona and California (especially in Los Angeles), Chicano labor from across the Mexican border has been drawn in to perform the worst, least well paid, and most unskilled work now required in both the manufacturing and service sectors.

In several ways, therefore, the spatial form of economic development affecting the West has been uneven. In an aggregate sense, development has been uneven when the relatively fast rate of growth in the West (and South) is compared with that of the North. There has also been a marked uneveness in development across the frontier with Mexico in relationship to development in the Western U.S. border states. Within the region itself, there have been important differences in the contemporary pace and character of development in the Mountain States when compared with the Pacific States. Moreover, there have been differences between and among metropolitan and nonmetropolitan areas. As we shall see, the various contrasts and differences generated through the uneven process of spatial development lead to the simultaneous generation of conflicts and planning issues.

Sectoral Changes

The fundamental spatial changes that have affected the United States and its regions have been paralleled by major sectoral changes in the relative importance of different economic activities in the economy. These sectoral developments are the second major feature of contemporary economic change affecting the Western region.

In 1962, the goods-producing sector of the U.S. economy (manufacturing, construction, and mining) accounted for 36.5% of total nonfarm employment, while service-performing activities (trade, services, finance, insurance, real estate, and government) accounted for 56.5%. By 1978, the U.S. goods-producing sector had fallen in relative size to 29% of total employment, whereas service-performing activities had grown to 65.3% of all jobs (Haren and Holling, 1979). Agriculture, which as recently as 1960 had employed 8.3% of the total U.S. labor force, occupied only 3.4% of all workers in 1979 (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1980).

In sectoral terms, the West has seen even more of a shift to service-performing jobs than has the rest of the nation (71% of the West's employment is in service-performing jobs, compared with 65% nationally), while comparatively fewer (5 percentage points fewer) of the West's workers are engaged in goods production than in the U.S. as a whole. The service-performing sector of the West grew more than 27% faster than the rest of the nation's over the 1962–1978 period and, within the region, has been responsible for the creation of the largest amount of new employment. The leading sources of new service-performing jobs have been trade, government, and business and personal services, respectively. An important portion of this new growth has been generated through recreational and tourist development (Nevada, Northern California, and Colorado) and through increased numbers of people retiring in the region (Southern California, Arizona). These developments have undoubtedly helped to create new jobs in service-performing activities such as trade, restaurants, hotels, and health-care.

The largest increases in service-performing jobs have occurred in the West's metropolitan areas. Trade, services, and finance, insurance, and real estate accounted for over 60% of the net new jobs in the Western cities from 1962 to 1978. Importantly, however, these same sectors accounted for just under 51% of net new nonmetropolitan jobs in the West over the same period. Service-performing activities, notwithstanding the important debate about nonmetropolitan industrialization, are thus the leading sources of new jobs in the West's rural areas, too.

In accordance with national trends, the West has become relatively less dependent on agriculture. In 1950, 188 counties in the Mountain states and 61 counties in the Pacific states received at least 20% of their income (proprietors' and labor) from farming. In the period from 1975 to 1977, only 67 Mountain counties and 23 Pacific counties depended on farming for more than one-fifth of their income (Hoppe, 1981). These changes are, in part, related to technical advances in agriculture that have released people from the land (and the West has been particularly prominent in agricultural mechanization). In addition, the growth of nonfarm employment in rural areas has far outdistanced farm employment as a source of income.

A further form of sectoral change has been the shift in power and control that has continued to occur within and across industries and economic sectors (including agriculture). In 1960, for example, the 200 largest Fortune industrials controlled 54.5% of all U.S. mining and industrial corporate assets and 44.7% of sales. By 1977, the largest 200 had 62.4% of mining and industrial assets and 66.6% of sales (U.S. Department of Justice, 1979). The extent of this corporate centralization is indicated by statistics that show that 79% of new manufacturing jobs generated in Western branch plants between

1969 and 1976 were controlled by corporations located outside the West (Birch, 1981). Comparable figures were 84% for the South, 41% in the North Central region, and 47% for the Northeast. Although the West has a proportionately large service-performing sector, 68% of new Western service jobs in branch facilities were controlled by firms headquartered outside the region, compared with a figure of 25% for the South. Although the West does control a larger share of its new trade branch facility jobs (45%), these figures suggest that when multiplant firms do create new jobs in the region, more often than not those jobs are going to be controlled by firms headquartered outside it.

The sustained growth in corporate concentration and centralization shares a relationship with uneven spatial development, as well as with sectoral and occupational change. On the one hand, corporate control has also become less localized and more concentrated in the major business centers (Dicken, 1976). In the West, this has stimulated the development of key business and financial centers like San Francisco, Los Angeles, Denver, and Phoenix. This, in turn, has given rise to increased numbers of professional, clerical, and service workers in these cities (Mollenkopf, 1980). At the same time, the concentration of business activity in major regional, national, and international corporations has enhanced the capacity to shift economic activity, particularly in manufacturing, across the Western region (and elsewhere).

Labor Market Polarization

The restructuring of employment and economic sectors in the United States has been associated with an increasing degree of segmentation and inequity in labor markets. Many of the new jobs that have been created in the economy in both the frostbelt and sunbelt have been low-wage, low-skill jobs (Harrison and Hill, 1978; Perry and Watkins, 1977). These jobs frequently induce high turnover rates, present few opportunities for career advancement, and generally are nonunionized. Often, these jobs have been located in the service-performing sector of the economy, although many have also been added to manufacturing, including electronics production. These jobs have been disproportionately allocated to women and racial minorities (Gordon, 1979).

The growth of "bad" jobs in the economy has been coupled with two further labor market developments. First, the growing employment sectors in recent decades have provided many higher-wage, higher-skilled (in some cases, higher-credentialed) professional, managerial, and technical jobs. Second, the industries that have been heavily hit by plant shutdowns and restructuring tended to provide reasonably well-paying, stable, blue-collar jobs (as in steel, automobiles, shipbuilding). The emerging picture of the contemporary labor market is thus one that is increasingly segmented and polarized—a labor market with a vanishing middle (Kuttner, 1983). In other words, large increases in low-paid, low-skill service jobs, smaller increases in more highly regarded "good" jobs, and a relative dearth of traditional middle-range blue-collar occupations (Rothschild, 1981). This polarization within the labor market reinforces economic and social inequity and is the third characteristic of contemporary U.S. economic growth.

The West has been deeply affected by these labor market developments, indeed, the region has probably led the way in these changes. As we have seen, the West has had a relatively larger increase in service-performing jobs than other regions. This development is reflected in the occupational composition of the West's labor force. In 1976, the largest occupational groups in the region were: clerical workers; professional, technical, and kindred workers; service workers; and managers and administrators. Compared to the

U.S. as a whole, Western employment was less represented (−4%) in the operative category and slightly more represented (+2%) in the upper white-collar groups of professional, technical and kindred workers, and managers and administrators. But, as has just been suggested, the high proportion of Western employment in services is not necessarily an entirely benign development. The West has seen substantial increases in employment in consumer services (retail clerks or waitresses) and in business services (including typists and clerks). Such jobs tend to be at the bottom end of the wage structure and present few opportunities for self-development or career growth (Stanback, 1979).

Technological Development

The fourth feature of contemporary economic change—sustained technological development—is, in a sense, embodied in all of the characteristics of development already discussed. Technological developments in transportation, telecommunications, and computing, together with the growth of large corporations, have facilitated the capacity to relocate certain production and service activities across the space of the country. Technological progress does not necessarily have to intensify uneven spatial or social development; however, the way the business sector has applied technology has usually increased uneveness. For the West, this point is well illustrated by the uneven spatial restructuring of the electronics industry in California, previously mentioned.

In addition to advances that facilitate shifts in production, the character of work itself has, of course, been continuously subject to technological change and deskilling (Braverman, 1974). Technical developments in the work process have been seen throughout the Western region, for example in the mechanization of agriculture or in the dismantling of the traditional printing trades in a city like San Francisco. In recent years, it has seemed that jobs in both factories and offices are becoming increasingly vulnerable to new technologies. Currently, secretarial and office work throughout the West, but particularly in the major corporate centers, is being changed by new technology and broken down into component parts such as word processing, data management, etc. If estimates that more than 45 million U.S. jobs are vulnerable to automation during the next twenty years are correct (Business Week, 1981a), then technological change in the work process is likely to become a still greater issue in the West in the future.

Poor Aggregate Economic Performance

At the same time as the United States has seen uneven spatial development, major sectoral changes, increased labor market polarization, and continued technological change, the economy has been performing increasingly poorly in overall terms. For example, manufacturing productivity, which grew at an annual rate of 2.4% from 1965 to 1973, slowed to just 1.2% growth annually during 1973–80 (Business Week, 1981b). Over the last two years, productivity has actually fallen. This poor performance is reflected in income figures. From 1968 to 1978, real gross family income grew only by 9%, compared with 41.9% over the 1958–1968 decade (Blumberg, 1980:92).

Although the West has seen rapid growth compared with other regions of the U.S., in recent years its performance has dropped. The slowdown in the rate of growth has been greater in the Pacific States than in the Mountain States. Undoubtedly, the reasons for the slowdown are more national than regional in character. While this particular article is not the place to discuss these reasons, it is important to recognize that the aggregate decline in both the national and regional rates of growth and productivity increase has major implications for the Western region and its planners. Poor economic performance increases the vulnerability of jobs in the region to international competition and also intensifies the problems facing the public sector. Increased fiscal pressures are usually placed on government when there is an economic slowdown, making it harder to maintain levels of public expenditure. Such fiscal pressures are evident among state and local governments throughout the West. Furthermore, as discussed in the next section, an overall climate of poor economic growth adds to the resource constraints of planners in tackling regional conflicts and issues, as well as adding to the political problems inherent in trying to resolve social, economic, and spatial inequities.

PROBLEMS, ISSUES, AND CONFLICTS

We have seen that there is a series of broad interrelated forces that are shaping development in the West. But these forces have not affected all areas or population groups equally. Development and growth has been uneven, leading to the inevitable emergence of problems, issues, and conflicts. This section identifies these problems and discusses the implications for policy and economic-development strategies. Several major problem areas are defined, including: problems generated through growth and uneven development; problems of declining areas related to industrial restructuring; issues generated by sectoral, occupational, and technological developments; and the pressures generated by slower aggregate growth in both the region and the nation.

Problems of Growth Areas

Although the overall rate of growth in the West is slowing down, growth is still occurring. Moreover, the character of this growth is quite uneven, leading to the development of many problems of concern to planners. These problems can be analyzed at three levels: local problems of growth; regional problems; and international problems.

Local Problems of Growth. Propertied interests, organized business, and most elected officials usually view growth favorably. However, growth often poses significant problems for the receiving areas and sections of local communities. Since much of the growth in the West is occurring in areas that are not yet highly urbanized (although they may be on the fringes of existing urban centers), the ability of these areas to respond to growth and to plan their growth in a rational way is frequently limited. Often, the receiving areas are small, less densely populated municipalities (at times, they are unincorporated areas) that do not have the capacity to meet the demands for public services generated by increased in-migration and economic development. In boomtowns, the growth in local government revenues typically lags behind the establishment of large-scale energy developments or industrial plants. Boomtown developments also tend to give rise to severe environmental problems.

Rapid growth is also being generated in some other parts of the region through other kinds of development. For example, Placer County, California, is experiencing major adjustment problems as it tries to respond to the in-migration of electronics plants, while even nonindustrial growth, such as the movement in of retired people now affecting many Western communities, can create problems of public service delivery.

Of course, it is necessary to maintain a realistic perspective on the overall size of the growth problems affecting small city and rural communities. Between 1970 and 1976, 3,000 people moved into Summit County, Colorado, leading to a doubling of the population. On the other hand, in Orange County, California, the population increased by an average of 3,000 every 29 days over the same 1970–76 period, a growth rate of just over 17%. But while in absolute terms the rate of growth in a rural area like Summit County cannot compare with urbanized Orange County, the relative *per capita* impact is greater for the rural residents. For instance, per capita local government expenditures rose annually by an average of 15.5% in Summit (1972–77), compared with 8.1% in Orange County (Coelen, 1981).

Another aspect to the issue of growth has been the strong emergence in the West of "no-growth" forces. These forces have organized recently around such issues as the MX missile in Arizona and Utah; mining in the Mountain states; and the Peripheral Canal and the protection of forest and agricultural land in Northern California. The intense struggles generated by such conflicts over the use of space have been seen by some in terms of local self-interests versus national interests (Thurow, 1980). However, while this is true in certain cases, the local conflicts are increasingly reflections of broad national conflicts over the character that development should take in the United States. The implication for planners is that these conflicts should be seen not so much as battles over space (which suggests that there might be spatial solutions such as locating elsewhere), but as symptoms of much deeper divisions among different economic and social groups over the direction of economic development (in which case, alternative policies are needed).

Regional Problems of Growth. In addition to specific local problems, the pattern of growth in the West raises issues and conflicts from a regional planning perspective. The location of growth is typically not where it is most needed, which intensifies inequity and leads to concerns about cost-effectiveness. For example, the electronics industry is expanding production facilities in rural (or, at least, semirural) Placer County in California. Workers will need to be drawn into the local labor force to support production, and investments in housing and other infrastructure will need to be made to support the workers. On the other hand, Oakland, with both an existing industrial infrastructure and large amounts of surplus (often minority) labor, receives very little growth in high technology employment. Similarly, depressed rural areas like Siskiyou County in Northern California or in rural Oregon and Washington (where structural and cyclical changes in the lumber industry have lead to measured unemployment rates of around 25%) also have seen very little new growth.

According to private sector balance sheets, this inequitable allocation of resources is justifiable and quite logical. However, on a public balance sheet, which seeks to take the total costs and benefits into account (tangible and intangible, social and economic, and public and private), this allocation is less desirable. The dilemma for planners is how to overcome this uneveness in the allocation of growth; this dilemma has become more acute as the aggregate rate of growth in the region diminishes. Because jobs are scarce, private capital is able to play off communities and states against each other, making it difficult to develop really effective policies to balance growth.

International Problems of Growth—the Border Region. The West contains three of the four states (California, Arizona, New Mexico) that, with Texas, make up the Mexican-American Border Region. The Border region has been characterized as an area of underdevelopment in the U.S. equivalent to Appalachia.

Distilled in the Border region are the major disparities which exist between third-world and advanced industrialized countries. The urban agglomeration of San Diego–Tijuana exemplifies this dualism. The gap in per capita income between the U.S. and Mexico is larger than that of any two bordering nations in the world (Hansen, 1981). The new international division of labor is nowhere more evident than in the Border region, and this division is fostered by the Mexican government-established *maquiladora* (assembly plant) program. This program, combined with U.S. Tariff codes, enables American manufacturers to assemble products across the border utilizing cheap Mexican labor and to take advantage of lowered duties and transportation costs not much higher than those they would pay in the U.S.

Some of the issues of concern in the U.S. portion of the Border Region are: overt discrimination against Hispanics; poor schools; ineffective federal programs; and undocumented aliens. High rates of domestic unemployment in some Border labor markets have been attributed to the way U.S. firms use significant numbers of Mexican commuters and undocumented workers. Unemployment rates of Mexican–Americans are particularly affected by competing Mexican labor. At the same time, local economies dependent upon the expenditures of Mexican commuters and in-migrants suffer when there are peso devaluations (Hansen, 1981).

The planning problems of the Border Region are clearly immense. Because these problems result from forces beyond the U.S. portion of the region's control, local or even state level efforts to solve them cannot be very effective. Rather, national, indeed, binational, action is needed.

Industrial Restructuring and Economic Dislocation

Many of the West's basic industries are currently in trouble (lumber, auto, steel, aerospace). In California, nearly 150,000 jobs were directly lost in about 1,400 plant closures from the beginning of 1980 to May 1983 (Shapira, 1983). The Northwest states (Oregon and Washington) have been severely affected too. Even the industry the West helped establish, microelectronics, is shifting its production facilities to lower-cost areas. Thus, the West, long the nation's leading growth region, is now facing substantial problems of industrial decine and restructuring. Indeed, on a regional level, closure rates in the West have been virtually the same as in the Northeast (Bluestone and Harrison, 1980). A portion of the job losses in the West, particularly in the Pacific States, are cyclical and a function of deep recession. However, it is also clear that the recession has presented an opportunity for structural change within industry, and it is doubtful whether all the jobs now being lost in the West (especially in the Pacific States) in sectors like auto, steel, rubber, lumber, light manufacturing, and food processing will ever be regained. It should be added that for many communities in the West such as Oakland and parts of Los Angeles, industrial decline is not new. Such areas have already seen a sustained erosion of their industrial base as capital has been shifted to other areas in the West and elsewhere.

Industrial restructuring is a difficult issue for planners to cope with. Traditionally, planners have been land-use oriented and unfamiliar with the process of economic development. Furthermore, the two strategies that planners have typically pursued when they have tried to generate economic development are by no means satisfactory for the task involved. On the one hand, the usual approach that planners have taken to try to create jobs is through an industrial attraction and marketing strategy. However, in an overall era of slow growth, it has become increasingly difficult for planners in the more distressed areas (both urban and rural) to attract industries to their communities. As noted earlier, technical change and the growth of large and powerful corporations have made it easier to relocate many production jobs. In a sense, all communities have become hostage to these developments. Since large firms are often looking for new areas with low labor costs, nonunion environments, and pliable workforces, those communities that already have a history of industrial development (and the associated organization of labor) are somewhat less desirable to corporate decision-makers. Additionally, even when some large corporations are attracted to expand in a community, it is often found that the jobs offered are less desirable and less well paid than those jobs lost in previous local plant shutdowns (Harrison, 1980).

The second strategy that planners, particularly in recent years, have pursued, is to try to create jobs through local small business development. Unfortunately, this too has its problems. Research (Teitz et al., 1981) has indicated that much of the new growth in small business employment in California is a consequence of sectoral shifts away from manufacturing (which tend to have larger firms) and toward services (which tend to have smaller firms). These new small-business jobs are typically unstable. Researchers in other locations have made similar findings, and have also emphasized that many of the jobs in small business are less well paid (Gordon, 1979). It is thus extremely hard for a local small–business-development program to overcome the loss of good manufacturing jobs. Even when effective small business development programs are established (and questions have to be raised about the effectiveness of most small business efforts), it is difficult to make a really substantial impact on job creation. This is not to say that local small business development efforts are not worthwhile, but simply that in themselves they are not sufficient.

Perhaps the major difficulty with both industrial attraction and small business development strategies is that they do not really attack the roots of the problem of economic dislocation. The destructive elements of free capital mobility are not stopped, nor are sufficiently substantial alternatives put in place to retain and develop important basic jobs. At the same time, the ability of economic development planners to do more than simple business attraction and small business development is constrained by a lack of capital resources, political support, technical ability, and the fact that the planners tend to work locally when the root problems are generally nonlocal in cause. As economic dislocation increases in the West, these deficiencies are likely to become even more apparent.

Another aspect of economic dislocation and restructuring relates to the West's heavier than average reliance on service-performing activities. Many service-sector jobs, for instance in eating and drinking or tourism, are unstable and have high turnover rates. However, in the past, there have been certain service-sector jobs, particularly in business services, the public sector, and in activities such as health care, that have been regarded as secure and somewhat recession-proof. This seems now to be less true. Besides the pressure on the public sector to reduce employment, firms in the business sector are increasingly looking to cut office costs and staff. More fundamentally, technological changes are making certain aspects of office work more prone to relocation and restructuring (Business Week, 1981a). For example, a number of corporations in San Francisco are relocating routine office activities to suburban locations in the Bay Area. The West, with its high proportion of such jobs, is consequently more likely to be affected by such changes. The process is likely to add to, rather than diminish, the range of issues facing planners in the region. It seems unlikely that the areas and groups (both urban and rural) most needing additional economic activity will benefit from this; indeed, it is plausible to suggest that the spatial division of labor and its related social inequalities will be further reinforced.

Occupational and Labor Market Changes

We have already seen that major occupational and labor market changes are associated with the industrial and sectoral changes affecting the West. These changes have differentially affected the various groups within the labor force, although no group within the working population (male, female, minority, or nonminority) has been absolutely immune from change. The consequences of these labor market changes pose a number of issues for planners in the West. For example: How can polarization in the labor market be reduced? How can technological change be dealt with? and How can workers affected by economic displacement obtain new jobs without going through the hardships they have to endure now? In general, all of these questions revolve around the inability of the current process of economic development to maintain and generate sufficient numbers of good jobs. If it is not possible to deal with these labor-market issues, it is predictable that increased conflict will arise between different workers and communities over the allocation and reallocation of jobs.

The question for planners is how realistic is it to envisage intervention that can substantially change labor market outcomes. Traditionally, when planners have tried to affect employment issues, they have usually attempted to move jobs to people or people to jobs. These distributional efforts have often been accompanied by labor exchange and training policies to try to move workers into available jobs. In a sense, such policies might be categorized as external to the production process, i.e., they do not substantially intervene in capital allocation, corporate decision making, or the actual operation and organization of the work process. Consequently, these planning policies rarely alter the absolute quantity, or stability of jobs. Yet, it can be argued that increased *internal* intervention in the various aspects of production is vital if real change in employment and labor-market structures is to be achieved. In recent years, there has been an increased appreciation of this argument, and this is reflected, for example, by a heightened interest in using public development finance mechanisms to directly affect the number, allocation, and quality of jobs available. At the same time, given the power of large corporations within the private economy and the current national political trends, it is an understatement to say that it will not be easy to take such initiatives further.

Technological Change and Aggregate Growth Problems

The overall slowdown in the rate of economic growth in both the West and the U.S. as a whole creates a number of pressures and intensifies the problems facing planners. These pressures affect the whole of the region, although because of the uneven nature of development, they impact on various groups, sectors, and localities differently. The groups most impacted on by the slowdown are women and minorities in the Western region who, up to now, have not shared equally in the development process and who face a diminution of the small gains they have made so far.

Slow aggregate growth does not mean that the *pace* of change is slow. Indeed, we have already seen that the rate of economic and technological change in the region is rapid. This raises several problems. For example, the interaction of the rate of change with slow overall growth intensifies political polarization over development. Slow growth (coupled with uneven growth) means that workers, communities, and states are increasingly forced to compete with each other for available jobs. The vulnerability of many traditional jobs to technological change also forces competition between communities to bring in new employment. In this climate, efforts to alter the allocation of jobs, the kinds of technology employed, or the impact of economic activity on the environment are impaired because there are no alternative jobs to the jobs offered. Poor private sector economic performance also affects the public sector by intensifying constraints on resources and by business pressure to reallocate more public resources for its own purposes.

For planners, one effect of poor economic growth has been to weaken their traditional regulatory role. Increasingly, the private sector is placing pressure on the publlic sector to create a favorable business climate. This pressure is now acute in Western states like California or Oregon that are deemed not to have favorable business climates, and the pressure has increased in those states such as Nevada or Arizona that have previously been thought to have a favorable business climate. Consequently, planners are under pressure to reduce what business perceives as unhelpful controls on growth, including environmental protection. Planners are also being pressured to act more as stimulators or marketeers of industry and commerce, in an effort to try to attract employment. These pressures are apparent in both urban areas (where deregulation through enterprise zones is the latest proposal to encourage growth) and rural areas (where attacks on environmental controls have increased).

However, it is by no means clear that relaxations in what many already regard as insufficient controls on business activity will solve the problem of slow economic growth. On the other hand, such relaxations can certainly have negative implications for the environment. Currently, this conflict is becoming sharper throughout the country, but is already acute in the West. The Western region, with its many areas of outstanding environmental quality, mineral resources, imbalances in water demand and availability, and large tracts of public land, now has many ongoing battles where these conflicts between business and the environment are being played out. It is likely that these kinds of conflicts will intensify in the near future. Paradoxically, slow aggregate economic growth does not necessarily reduce environmental conflicts, indeed, it sometimes intensifies them as pressures increase to take advantage of development opportunities that might have been passed over otherwise.

Social conflicts, in addition to environmental conflicts, are also increased by slow growth. Inevitably, conflicts between groups over limited jobs and other resources intensify, particularly as it becomes clear that prior expectations are not going to be realized. Age, sex, and racial conflicts are likely to be deepened in this process. Even those areas within the region seeing faster growth than the norm are experiencing conflict because this growth has been uneven. This is particularly true in the Southwest, where a relatively high proportion of Hispanics have not shared proportionately in growth. The problems of such groups are unlikely to be solved by more of the same kind of growth experienced in the past (since their problems are, in part, a function of previous development).

THE CHALLENGE FOR PLANNERS IN THE WEST

This article has sought to demonstrate that contemporary economic change in the West is primarily driven by a series of broad developmental forces. These forces are not unique to the Western region. Rather, they affect all regions, although different regions are impacted in specific ways. The article has illustrated the particular impacts and effects of contemporary change in the West.

We have also tried to show how the nature of economic change in the West underlies a number of critical conflicts and issues that are now facing planners. During this discussion, it has not been our aim to suggest immediate policy options. Instead, we have attempted to focus attention and analysis on the key conflicts and their underlying forces. Nonetheless, it is now appropriate to consider the capacity of planners to address these conflicts arising from the processes of economic change.

Traditionally, the role of planners has been to regulate and manage growth. The analytical approaches and tools of operation of planners have usually been spatial in orientation. Typically, planners have been employed to guide the physical aspects of growth within local communities. This invariably places them in a reactive mode, where they are forced to respond to privately proposed development through regulatory means. In those instances where planners have tried to deal with employment issues, their efforts have usually been to seek to affect the distribution (not production) of employment through moving jobs (or people) across space. The implication of this article, however, is that such traditional approaches are insufficient to deal with contemporary economic change and its problems in the West. First, in many places and sectors within the region, stagnation and decline have set in. Here, growth-oriented planning methods have lost much of their utility. Second, where growth does occur, planners may succeed in accommodating it from a land-use perspective, but the character of that growth presents problems. Frequently, the benefits of growth are not equitably shared, the jobs are poor, and control over the final development is centralized outside of the local community.

The difficulties that planners face in using their conventional tools arise from the fact that the forces underlying spatial change in the West are not themselves primarily spatial in character, but are instead a function of structural socioeconomic changes. As a consequence, approaches that depend exclusively on spatial tools and regulation are going to have little impact on influencing these processes of change. If planners only rely on conventional techniques such as zoning, land-use planning, or building regulation, it will mean that the greatest developmental problems facing the region will fall outside their scope.

The implications for planners of the analysis contained in this article are thus threefold. First, to understand and respond to the character of contemporary economic development in the West, planners must enhance their traditional concerns about land-use and place a greater focus on the economic processes underlying spatial change and the subsequent impacts of those processes. Uneven spatial development has, of course, been one of the concerns of regional and local planners for some time, although they have not succeeded in resolving it (sometimes planning policies effectively promote uneven development). But issues of labor market segmentation and control over capital or new technology are comparatively new to planners. Planners will have to become much more fully involved in these areas in the future, particularly as they increasingly turn their attention toward the creation and control of economic development, rather than simply trying to accommodate the existing development.

Many planners already share an increased concern about the processes and impacts of contemporary economic development. But we are arguing that, as a profession, planning needs to pay more attention to such issues as rapid capital mobility (including both disinvestment and uncontrolled boomlike investment), structural inequities in job access and labor markets, and the effects of sectoral and technological change. To do this, planners need both to understand aggregate macroeconomic, sectoral, and technological developments effecting the broader economy and to become skilled in tracing the influences of these processes to subnational and local levels.

One way planning can proceed here is through an ongoing and more extensive program of applied research into economic development processes and their impact at national, regional, and local levels. This research needs to be translated into planning education curricula to train both future and current generations of planning practitioners. But planners should increase the attention they show to the processes and impacts of economic development not just for the purposes of self-enlightenment or furthering education (although these are both important). More critically, their aim should be to gain understanding for their action—to identify the points and processes of change in the system of development. We suggest that planners use this understanding to address the second main implication of this article—the need to develop new approaches, tools and institutions for development.

This search for new development mechanisms should not be predicated, however, on the pursuit of growth per se. Rather, new approaches need go beyond simple increases in output or employment to focus on achieving a qualitatively different form of development that can narrow divisive socioeconomic differentials, balance urban and rural growth, conserve the environment, stabilize communities, and ensure that new technologies are beneficial in a social as well as in a purely economic sense. In both smaller rural communities and in the larger cities in the West, new initiatives should be targeted to ensure that development benefits those communities and groups where it is most needed.

A key element of the new approach to development should be to stem, or at least to counteract, tendencies towards increased centralization and control of capital and production in the region. This might be achieved through new planning tools to control the mobility and character of the region's capital investments, including plant closure legislation and development planning agreements (where corporations accepting public assistance from state and local governments agree to specific conditions on investments and jobs). Encouragement should also be given to new community and public development institutions that can use powers and resources (such as pension funds) to maintain and create good jobs and reinvestment in key economic activities. In addition, planners should also aid in developing new ownership forms (including cooperative enterprise) and in supporting efforts to make new technology more socially useful.

Finally, planners need to take steps to ensure that all new approaches to development planning are democratic and participatory. Local governments, communities, and workers need to be integrally involved in the process of development planning. This is not just to avoid corporatist tendencies as public sector intervention is increased, but also to help build the political base for new developmental initiatives from the bottom up. There are many positive steps that planners in localities and states in the West can take to help stimulate progressive economic development in the region. But without local involvement, the political momentum to support those steps will be lacking. And without that strong community base, the West's contribution to the further movement necessary to bring about a national consensus for alternative economic development policies will be weakened. Ultimately, those national policies are crucial for new forms of development in the West. As the analysis in this article has made clear, the contemporary forces of economic change are not contained within any one region. Much can be done at state and local levels in the West, but a broader national framework is needed too if new state and local efforts to make the forces of economic change more progressive are to be fully effective.

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