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The new urban planning in America

Melvin M Webber

Dr Burns has asked that I review some of the more salient changes that are currently reshaping the conceptions, the objectives and the methods of urban planning in America. In his Presidential address last month, he was calling for a closer tie between the activities of town planning and social planning. I should like to respond to the question he put to me in the context of the imperative he expressed in his address. I do so because one of the important current events in America is the rise of a new urban-planning activity, oriented to planning social development, that is paralleling the more established city-planning activity, oriented to planning land development.

Because I am so poorly informed with respect to British town-planning thought and practice, I shall restrict my comments exclusively to the assignment Dr Burns has given me. My account will be rigidly limited to the developments that are emerging in America. But before turning to a review of these events, I must first describe some of the societal and conceptual contexts in which they are happening. I must also explain the distinction I have drawn.

The urban crisis

Those of you who were on the TPI tour this past summer and those of you who have access to the American press have surely been struck by the prominence that urbanism has attained on the roster of national policy issues: The President recently said flatly that 'No domestic task facing this Nation today is more demanding or more urgent than reclaiming the corroded core of the American city'. Numerous members of the Congress have voiced similar declarations, and there have recently been several long series of Congressional hearings into what is commonly billed as 'the crisis of the cities' or sometimes as 'the urban crisis'. The national press has been self-consciously filled with commentary and news coverage of urban-development topics. Civic and business organizations have also recently discovered the city, and their agendas are featuring debates and organizational efforts that direct their energies to problems localized there. Research-and-development groups, which only a few years ago were fully devoted to military and space-exploration enterprises, are now allocating some appreciable proportions of their intellectual

resources to urban problems. Even in the most tradition-bound academic institutions, new research institutes and new educational programmes are cropping up by the dozens each year. Somehow, after a full century of rapid industrialization, after a full century of rapid and large-scale city-building, after a full half-century of organized city-planning activity, suddenly, during the past few years, urban and city policy issues have been moved into the forefront of the national consciousness and, more important, into the forefront of the national conscience.

We must obviously ask why. What's changed? What has happened to have provoked so intensive a response?

Surely the physical problems of the American city are no more severe now than they were in the past. However decrepit our slum housing, it is physically superior to the slum housing of prior eras. However polluted the air, at least in places like Pittsburgh, it's now far cleaner than it used to be. However congested the highways, the quality of city transportation is vastly greater than it was at any time in the past. However sprawled the suburbs, they provide a far superior quality of residential living for a larger proportion of the nation's population than at any time in history.

To be sure, increasing proportions of a growing population have become city dwellers, as the farmlands have become depopulated and as the nation's economic life has become city-based. It now appears likely that as much new city-plant will have to be built during the next 35 years as has been built during the whole of the nation's history, and that will certainly tax our capacities for intelligent management of resources. There is no question but that the sheer scale of future city building poses new kinds of problems that call for an intensive land use planning effort and for explicit national policies. And yet, these concerns are not at the bottom of the current national debate on 'the urban crisis'. At best, future growth has been a peripheral issue in the discussions. No, the 'crisis' is seen as focused on the present-day issues, not the long-term ones. Moreover, it is being seen as an issue in social and human development—that is, as an issue in urbanization—rather than in city building. And that may be the most positively hopeful mark of the current deliberations.

The distinction I draw is a crucial one, for so much of the popular, professional and political commentary has been muddied by the Americans' conceptual confusion between the two meanings of the term 'urbanization'. John Friedman recently drew the distinction as sharply as anyone has. He put it this way:

The term urbanization is commonly used to refer to two quite different processes, the one leading to the evolution of a spatial settlement system (i.e. to the growth of the towns, cities, and metropolitan areas), the other to the evolution of a social-cultural system (i.e. to the growth of an urban society). . . .

It is essential to hold these two meanings rigorously apart, even though it is recognized that social structure . . . interacts with spatial form. It is an essential distinction, because there are cities that are not wholly urban in the socio-cultural sense, just as there are urban populations that do not live in cities.¹

This latter phenomenon is, indeed, one of the more telling signs of the changing ecology and the changing character of American cities. Rising proportions of culturally rural Americans are occupying the highest density sections of the largest metropolises, while rising proportions of the culturally most urbanized Americans are occupying the suburbs and the abandoned farms of the exurbs. The American metropolis is turning inside out, as the metropolitan centres become the habitat of the cultural ruralities and the metropolitan outer fringe become the habitat of the literary and television crowd, the corporation executives, the university professors, and the R&D élites.

In the comments that follow I shall sharply distinguish between these two meanings of urbanism: I shall use the term 'city' to refer to the physical/spatial settlement (usually the metropolitan settlement), and I shall use the term 'urban' to refer to the societal system marked by the peculiar kinds and styles of work, the special cognitive and societal processes, and the particular constellation of technologies that have come to mark the modern era we've called 'civilization'.

It has only recently become necessary to separate these two meanings. As the commonly noted commonality of the Latin roots suggests, civilization has been the

changing—that the city and urbanism are no longer coincident. Cultural urbanization is becoming detached from the city. As Kenneth Boulding has so insightfully described it, it now looks as though the age of civilization is coming to an end, being supplanted by a far richer culture whose territorial base is the world, rather than the city.² Let me elaborate a bit.

In American, pre-industrial, small-town society, the spatial extent of social organization closely coincided with the spatial extent of the physical settlement. The society, the economy, and the polity of the pre-industrial, small town comprised primarily those persons and institutions that inhabited the town place; social intercourse and trade were largely limited to exchanges among town neighbours.

With the rise of industrialization in America in the mid-19th century, we entered upon an era of city-building of unprecedented scale. Industrialization and city residence went so closely hand-in-hand that demographers have been able to use numbers of manufacturing employees in the labour force as indices of city scale and percentages as indices of cultural urbanization. The secondary employments (in Colin Clark's sense) comprised the major growth sectors of the national economy; goods-manufacture and goods-handling became the sources of employment and income for large segments of the cities' labour force; the industrial city became the dominant locus of social and political organization. Although the goods were shipped out to all parts of the nation and the world, few city dwellers had direct and frequent contacts outside their city or metropolitan area of residence. During the last half of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th, the city and metropolis were the important organizing structures for social, political, and economic life. The metropolis was the centre of a hinterland which supplied it and which it, in turn, supplied.

These patterns are changing very rapidly now, as the nation is entering upon the post-industrial, post-civilization, stage of development. The major growth sectors of the economy are now emerging in the tertiary and quaternary occupations—in the distribution-and-service industries. Since sometime in the mid-'fifties, more Americans have been employed in these occupations than in the goods-producing ones. During the period 1947 to 1966, when total employment went from 58 million to 72 million, there was virtually no increase in goods-producing employment; the net increase was in services!³ The most dramatic growth is in the knowledge industries—in education, research and development, the management of information and intelligence, the arts, the technologies, and the policy sciences. Knowledge is replacing raw materials as the major inputs into the economy, and it may even supplant money as the prime source of status and wealth. The universities and the R&D establishments are becoming the growth nuclei for

transportation and communication are dramatically reducing the spatial barriers to interaction, with the consequence that persons and firms in virtually all parts of the nation are able to maintain intimate associations. The levels of occupational specialization are increasing rapidly, with the consequence of ever-increasing interdependency and—when combined with the distance-shrinking effects of the new transportation and communications systems—ever-increasing integration of industries, institutions, and social groups from all parts of the nation. Specialization, interdependency, and integration are the signal traits of societal urbanization. I read the historical trends as continuing, one-directional movements along each of these dimensions toward ever-higher scale urbanism.

One effect of these movements has been to reduce the rôle of the localized city-state and to create in its place a nation-state. After a 200-year history of regional differences, supported by firm home-rule political traditions, American society is becoming an integrated national urban society, bound together by a national economy and a rapidly nationalizing polity.

The pace and scale of the knowledge explosion and of the transportation-communication advances (themselves major generators of this revolution) are likely to increase further in future decades, inducing still further prominence of the quaternary occupations and still further integration of the national urban society. The future extension of this trend to encompass a larger world urban society already appears probable.

I expect that in the setting of rapidly expanding knowledge, rapid technological development, and rapid change in the scale of the society-economy-and-polity, cities will no longer supply the organizing bases of urban society. Already the numerous intellectual élites operate within the larger national urban system, and their numbers are rapidly rising. It is already apparent that many of the problems that have become manifest in city locations are neither peculiar to nor resultants of their city locales. Although they have been given the label 'city' problems, it is now becoming clear that they are, rather, the problems of a society in transition—a society that is racing headlong into a new era, which, despite the names we use, is likely to make the society and its problems largely independent of the city.

The high rates of unemployment among central city residents will illustrate the change I refer to. In the absence of accelerated growth in the national economy, without new kinds of occupations suited to the available skills, and, perhaps, without new substitutes for work, it is unlikely that the current high rates of unemployment will be appreciably reduced. There are but few means available to the municipalities for generating expansion in the regional and national eco-

to automation and the reduction of unskilled jobs; and, of course, there is virtually nothing they can do about the work ethic. The causes of unemployment lie outside the city; they are functions of the larger systems of which cities are but subsets; the triggers for economic growth are typically national and international ones; and so, too, are the determinants of the culture of work. No. Unemployment is not a city-type problem, even though it is mostly manifested in cities; and its confrontation cannot be left to municipalities.

(If you here think I present an absurd example, you would find it interesting to review the format of the typical Anti-Poverty Programme, which is attacking unemployment in the municipal and neighbourhood contexts. I suggest that here is a clear example of inadequate analysis combined with semantic confusion that has gone to shape a critical governmental activity.)

Perhaps you are saying that it's also a semantic trick to retain the urban label for the emerging post-industrial society. I agree that it certainly does make for confusion. But I do so because our language does not yet have words for this new phenomenon and because, even though there is a big change under way, the emerging society is a direct lineal descendant of the passing one. I do so, also, because the current debate in America around the 'urban crisis' is now turning onto the right questions, and the term is acquiring the societal meaning, in vernacular usage. Congressmen, academicians, and even the journalists are coming to understand that the current urban crisis is primarily one of societal transition, particularly for those of low-income and under-class status who are being left behind in the race toward the post-industrial age.

There have of course been many prophets of the secular changes under way in American society. A growing number of historians, technologists, scientists, and clergymen have been seeking to explore the alternative futures that lie ahead and to identify their implications for government policy and for the several population groups that will be affected by it. But, significantly, those who have been most influential in awakening the national consciousness have not been the intellectuals or the students of the future. They are the thousands of under-educated and under-privileged Negro-Americans who have recently struck out in revolt against the emerging social order.

The demonstrations of the past 5 years on the issues of civil rights laid the basis for the national War on Poverty, for the Model Cities Programme, and for the redirection of national attention from a preoccupation with affluence during the 'fifties to a new concern, during the 'sixties, for reducing poverty in an affluent setting. The Negro-Americans who have been sitting-in, marching, and now rioting have succeeded in calling attention to the plight of those Americans who have

These are not exclusively Negro-Americans, of course. The large numbers of Mexican-Americans, Puerto Ricans, American Indians, and the more-numerous Caucasian poor share the Negroes' environment of deprivation and despair. The others have not been as vocal, to be sure; but the similarities of their rôles, status, and prospects suggest that the issue we face is not one of race. As Martin Meyerson once put it, 'if all Negro-Americans were suddenly to turn white, not much would change'. Rather than race, I believe, the issue is one of disparate stages in human development and in societal development. At a time when the scale of the society is rising rapidly—that is, when the processes of cultural urbanization are accelerating—a large sector of the nation is out-of-phase and being left further and further behind.

Now, perhaps we can suggest an answer to my original question. The national debates were initially sparked and then focused upon the city because so many of the pre-industrial groups are localized in the high-density centres of the large metropolitan areas. Because we still record many of our statistics against a geographic base, the numerous indicators of their difficulties were reported as 'centre city' statistics, rather than as statistics about specific groups of people. The data recorded the highest incidences of crime, delinquency, drug addiction, broken families, illegitimate births, and the rest. In accord with the doctrine of physical environmental determinism, many jumped to the too-easy conclusion that these were the cities' fault. Then, more recently, when the city centres became the locales for open riot and when the rioters struck so aggressively at the physical plant of the city, many again indicted the city for the problems. A great many officials in key positions are still operating under the illusion that the complaints of the vocal Negro-Americans are complaints against the city. I say this is an illusion, because it is only slightly true—that, however dissatisfied they are with ghetto housing, ghetto isolation, deficient transport to employment, inadequate schools and medical clinics, and the rest, their fundamental dissatisfaction is with their status in society and with the deficiencies of opportunity. It is the discouraging prospect that neither they nor their children may ever get out of that status; or, even worse, that their prospects will further dim as the pace of post-industrialism leaves them stranded.

An increasing number of officials and commentators are coming to this interpretation now; and, as I've noted, the 'crisis in the cities' is thus being redefined as a 'crisis in urbanization'—urbanization in the societal developmental sense. That is a reformulation of a potentially powerful sort. Its growing acceptance has led to the beginnings of a new kind of urban planning in America, aimed toward a national policy for future urbanization—toward easing the transition into the post-

serve as the organizing concepts for the planning effort. Human development and societal development can. It is this focus that marks the new efforts.

The beginnings of social development planning

The origins of the new development-planning activity in America are numerous and diverse, but the many intellectual streams are now flowing together from what were once unconnected paths. New public and private agencies are being formed, and old ones are reorganizing in an effort deliberately to generate social innovation and then to manage the resulting programmes. Universities are re-examining their curricula, seeking to supplement the established professional training formats with new multidisciplinary mixes, to accord with new conceptions of the system's structure and processes. The outcome of the current stirrings is by no means apparent, and I cannot present a very clear portrait of the future shape of the activity. Let me instead simply record some of the current events that are contributing to it.

The policy sciences: I believe that the most important event is the redirection of contemporary science and technology upon the very problems accompanying urbanization that the sciences and technologies themselves helped to generate. The fantastic explosion in the sciences during the years since the war has been largely responsible for the advent of the new knowledge-oriented industries, the new demands upon the educational systems, and, indeed, for the rise of the national urban system itself. In numerous and subtle ways, the knowledge explosion has been propelling society into the post-industrial era, but until recently the societal repercussions of the new sciences and the new technologies were regarded as outside the ken of the scientists and technologists who were behind it all.

Now, that is changing very rapidly. The urban-development field has become a prime target for the aero-space industry, for academics from a wide array of disciplines, for the nongovernmental research-and-development corporations that have come to symbolize the emerging era, and even for such seemingly removed agencies of government as the Department of Defense and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

The tenor of the change was nicely characterized for me by an executive from IBM who said, 'In the 'fifties it was clear that our big market was in inventory systems for retailers and manufacturers. Now our big market is obviously tied to the supply of urban services.'

You'd undoubtedly be amazed to see a roster of American corporations that are saying the same thing; they include virtually the entire spectrum of industrial giants in almost every field imaginable. Some of

market for new products. (For example, some are themselves going into the new town business; others are looking toward new hardware systems for housing, utilities, transport, and communications.) But in addition to that, many of the sophisticated executives are viewing the social issues of urbanization as critical ones for the future development of the nation. They are out to protect their considerable interest in the nation, of course; but their interest is by no means merely self-seeking and protective in the mercantilists' sense. It is rather that a set of problems and opportunities lie exposed that need to be attended, and they are responding to them with remarkable responsibility and liberality. To be sure, their response is also marked by a remarkable mixture of arrogant self-confidence and naïveté; but their capacities for contributing are not as strange as they might first appear. Many of these firms have invented ways of getting their own organizations to innovate—of so structuring themselves as to foster creativity among their staffs; and this is a learnable art which they are now prepared to teach to government. The array of powerful theoretic and methodologic innovations that were initially developed in the context of corporate and military planning, as prime examples, are turning out to be highly generalizable. Planning, conceived as a generic process of decision-making, has been carried forward most rapidly in the setting of the Pentagon, NASA, and the private corporation; and these concepts and methods are now being diffused to other fields.

I refer to the work you are familiar with in operations research and management science, decision theory, organization theory, systems analysis and systems design, and simulation. For several years, of course, some of these ideas and methods have been applied to land use planning efforts, most notably in conjunction with the large-scale metropolitan transportation studies. But it is now becoming possible to apply these innovations to social development and human development planning as well.

Integral with these developments, and equally important, has been the emergence of a new-found interest among the economists in the problems of urbanization. As the science of valuation and resource allocation, economics has always been a potentially powerful contributor to a theory of planning and to an operational procedure for planning. In recent years, as attention has been turned upon the economics of public enterprise and as new activity has been stirring in the welfare economics field and the new urban economics field, these latent promises are being fulfilled. As one result, we are all learning how to think about the trade-offs among competing programmes, how to measure costs and benefits, and how to go about formulating investment strategies for human development and societal development. To say this is not to say that we know very

with the scale of effort that is now emerging, we are learning very swiftly—both the economists and the rest of us are learning.

The sociology of urban life and social accounts: At the same time as the systems analysts and the economists have been discovering the city and urbanism, the sociologists have been inquiring anew into the processes of social life; and the political scientists have been examining the processes of politics. The volume of work is by now quite considerable; and, as our level of understanding has been rising, the questions being asked are getting sharpened. In turn, the questions are informing a new and intensive effort to construct a set of national social accounts that might supply sensitive indicators of social well-being. These are conceived as quantified measures, paralleling the older national-income accounts, to serve as continuing monitors on the state of welfare among the various population groups. Just as the GNP account keeps a current check on the productivity of the national economy, so too would the social accounts monitor such matters as family stability, children's performance in school, conditions of physical and mental health, and access to opportunities. If such a national accounting system should become operational in the near future (and the prospects are reasonably good), we shall then have appreciably improved our capability for systematically *evaluating* the effectiveness of the various social development programmes and thus have a feedback mechanism for *modifying* on-going development programmes.

Perhaps the more significant event, however, is the underlying change in the self-perceptions of the social scientists' rôles. There appears to be a growing acceptance of John Dewey's dictum that 'the true purpose of knowledge resides in the consequences for directed action'. Even the sociologists and anthropologists are coming to play an active rôle in policy-making and action, with the consequence that both policy and action are certain to be far better informed.

Futurism: One reflection of the new utilitarian image of social science is the recent spurt of interest in the future. Scientists have always argued that the test of a theory's goodness is its capacity to predict well, but most social scientists have been professionally disinclined to think projectively. But now, when political leaders, governmental officials, and corporation executives are pleading for help from the social sciences—when academics are being brought into high councils and participating in high-level decisions—this too is changing. One expression of that change is the phenomenal rise in the study of the future.

Building on the work of the *Futuribles* group in France, the forecasting techniques developed in such places as the RAND Corporation, the new work in

tuturist and Utopian traditions that have surrounded city planning and social reform, there are by now several dozen formalized groups devoted to this exploration. Men of all sorts of professional backgrounds are contributing to the current attempts systematically to explore alternative future histories—to conjecture about the courses of future technological and social change, to try to predict the consequences of alternative governmental policies, and to attempt to lay out alternative developmental strategies and tactics.

These four lines of development—in systems analysis, in the urban social sciences, in social accounting, and in futurism—are now converging. One effect is for the several streams to reinforce each other and then to become indistinguishable, just as the professional origins of the contributors are becoming indistinguishable. Another effect is to spawn a new breed of planners and to make the idea of planning both understandable and acceptable. This is a significant development in America, for the planning idea had not previously caught on there; indeed, planning was once thought to be an alien idea. By now, that view is rapidly disappearing; and planning is acquiring the status that the priestly arts once enjoyed. Its current culmination is PPBS, a set of techniques that is drawing all these converging lines into a formalized governmental planning process.

PPBS is shorthand for the Planning, Programming, and Budgeting System that was devised at the RAND Corporation and then installed in the Department of Defense to rationalize military programme-planning. The successful applications to defense planning led President Johnson, two years ago, to order all departments of the federal government to adopt the system. In turn, federal grant-making agencies are encouraging local and state governments to adapt it for their own use. The consequence at the moment is that literally thousands of civil servants in virtually all avenues of governmental activity are scrambling to become planners. It will of course be a long time before they succeed; but the current activity is leading them inexorably, I believe, toward a planning-type approach to policy-making and action.

PPBS calls for the governmental agencies explicitly to assert the goals of their various programmes; to identify alternative programmatic routes for accomplishing those goals; to estimate the costs of each alternative programme route; to measure the probable effectiveness of each programme-alternative for accomplishing the goals; and then to construct their budget proposals in programme language and upon the bases of these cost-effectiveness determinations. This is, of course, the essence of the planning idea and the planning method. The things that are new here are the availability of systematic and formalized analytic methods for making these estimates and then the institutional acceptance

spectrum of federal agencies.

I expect that the most positive effects of the current effort will be to force agencies to say *why* they are doing what they are doing and then to force them empirically to test whether they *are* accomplishing what they have thought they were accomplishing. By structuring their programmes into mission-oriented (that is, goal-directed) programme-bundles, they are being encouraged to examine the functional relations among their once-separate programmes and then to look for overlaps and trade-offs with other agencies' programmes that are assertedly out to accomplish the same ends. The method holds out the promise that optima can thus be sought at higher levels in the governmental programme structure—that an economizing framework can be erected for building an investment strategy with higher pay-offs than before. It also promises to promote a new degree of openness in government by promoting a new self-consciousness and explicitness in setting priorities.

Already the thoughtways that attend this sort of economizing approach to planning are being absorbed by officials who recently were inclined to the more segmental, *ad hoc*, disjointed-and-incremental approaches. For example, health planners are beginning to ask how healthy their patients are. Instead of asking questions about standards of services and about work-efficiency on the *input* side, more and more of them are asking questions about consequences for clients on the *output* side. This is, of course, the first principle of systems analysis and systems design. They have traditionally used such efficiency measures as numbers of patient-day-visits per physician or number of beds per nurse. They are now asking about the *effectiveness* of their investments in different programmes, with pay-offs expressed as deaths prevented or illnesses cured or forestalled. They are even beginning to ask what can be done to promote *positive health*.

Similarly, instead of asking how many pupils are being accommodated by the schools, educators are beginning to ask what their graduates' earning capacities are likely to be if they follow one curriculum or another. In turn, planners oriented to the larger system are looking for trade-offs between health services and education services, and so on through the spectrum of governmental investments.

I've a strong hope that PPB is going to encourage bureaucrats to look to the welfare of their clients, because PPB forces pay-off questions and because their budgets are going to be based on demonstrations of probable effectiveness in accomplishing the client-oriented ends. I recognize that this would comprise something of a revolution in bureaucratic practice, but I'm none the less placing my bets on a shift in this direction.

The synthesis of a client-orientation and an output-oriented economizing framework is so important because many governmental programmes have traditionally

an efficiency effect and a distributional effect—that is, it affects the over-all workability of the subsystem it acts upon, but it also has the effect of redistributing the costs and benefits among subgroups in the population. For example, a highway cost-benefit analysis in the States typically measures the aggregate costs and aggregate benefits. If one highway alignment shows a higher benefit/cost ratio in the aggregate than another, that alignment is judged to be preferable. Within the traditions of engineering efficiency, that determination is a reasonable one, for the engineer is necessary a suboptimizer.

But it ignores the distribution of costs and benefits among the competing sectors of the population. If one non-user group pays much of the costs and another user group receives much of the benefits, the sum is not zero, even though total costs may just equal total benefits. It matters in a political economy who pays and who profits.

Despite the claims that are sometimes made to the contrary, it has too frequently been the middle-class groups who have profited and the lower-class groups who have paid. Indeed, much of the controversy that has surrounded our freeway-construction programme and our urban-renewal programme can be traced to precisely this distributional consequence. Some part of the current clamour within the Negro community today is expressing dissatisfaction with the distributional consequences of past governmental projects and programmes. In the din of the Negro Revolt, that issue can no longer be dealt with as a straightforward technical matter to be left to administrative staffs of public agencies. The issue has now been raised to the top of the domestic political agenda, and the reverberations are being felt in the programme-planning office of every department of the federal government.

Aggregative efficiency of a subsystem can no longer be the test of a programme's goodness. Increasingly now, the criterion is whether the deprived groups will be receiving compensatory benefits. The output budgets that will be coming out of the present PPB work will have to be decomposed to reveal the distribution of outputs to the population subgroups so that this test can be made.

My optimism about the prospects for the PPB system are based partly in faith, partly in some beginning successes in the federal Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, in some hopeful starts in the Office of Economic Opportunity (the agency charged with conducting the Anti-Poverty Programme), and in some beginning work in the new federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). A nation so severely torn by the disparities between its egalitarian credo and the manifest disequalities of opportunity and achievement is going to have to make a concerted effort to narrow the contradiction. The latent power of the plan-

accumulated disparity.

The new Model Cities Programme in HUD, which is just getting under way (albeit with inadequate funds, a slow start, and some other problems as well), could supply an important test of capacities for doing so. The Programme is designed to try to pull together the several developments I've been cataloguing into a coherent attack on the problems accompanying contemporary urbanization.

As you know, the Department of Housing and Urban Development was recently established as a cabinet-level department out of the older Housing and Home Finance Agency. The HHFA had been the executor of federal mortgage insurance programmes; and it had been the distributor of federal grants-in-aid for city-building activities—for public housing, community facilities, urban renewal, and general city planning. Upon being elevated to full departmental status, it was given a new name—and a new mission consonant with the societal meaning of 'urban development' in its new name. The older programmes continue; but the Department is now directly engaged in programmes aimed at expanding the range of opportunities, at improving the social status, and at raising the levels of personal achievement of people living in cities. HUD thus bridges the fields of physical planning and social development planning; but, if it is successful, it will merge them.

When Congress approved the Model Cities legislation, it effectively spelled out the Department's charter. The Model Cities Programme is explicitly aimed at fostering innovation in confronting the social problems of lower-status groups. It specifically calls for experimental efforts to redesign the distribution systems and the content mix of the human and social services, while coordinating them with housing, redevelopment, transportation, and community facilities. Because the focus of the Model City effort is the social well-being of the people, the pay-offs are going to have to be measured in terms of social mobility rather than in units of physical plant installed—that is, again, in output rather than input terms. In this regard, the directives that have gone from HUD to the municipalities and their planning departments have been explicit: recipients of grants-in-aid are being told that the Programme's objective is to improve the quality of urban life for people living at the lower levels of the society, not merely to improve the city. They are being told to focus their design efforts and action programmes on problems associated with unemployment and underemployment, inadequate income, inadequate social and cognitive skills, poor physical and mental health, educational disadvantage, inadequate housing, inadequate physical environment, underparticipation in the political processes, and, above all, with the deficient sense of personal dignity. They are being told to employ the systematic methods of PPB, so that the action pro-

rather than against conformity with professionally preferred styles or professionally specified input standards. And the local executors of the programmes are to search out ways of gaining coherence among the entire range of governmental programmes. By learning how to use those diverse programmes instrumentally in reducing the observed ills, we may then learn how to use them to promote the positive development of these under-achieving groups. If the Model Cities Programmes and other similar programmes can be made to work, if only in modest ways, perhaps we will then have made a small start at the merger of physical planning and social planning that Dr Burns was calling for.

In turn, if that should happen, we may then have established the basis for a national planning effort, directed to confronting the internal problems of a large-scale urban society in rapid change. The numerous road signs I've noted in my summary review tonight make the outlook for national urbanization planning far more real than it has been at any time in the past 35 years. But whether or not a formally structured planning process is installed in our time, I believe it is nonetheless sure that the new intellectual resources and the new institutional determinations make some form of national urbanization planning inevitable. The opportunities are being widely recognized. But more than that, the imperatives raised by the Negro Revolt and by the rapid move into post-industrialism make an intensive effort unavoidable.

The next decade is going to be an exciting time. I shall be pleased if you will permit me to come back 10 years from now to report on how well we will have done.

References

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- 3 Victor R. Fuchs: The First Service Economy. *The Public Interest*, No. 2 (Winter 1966), p. 7.

Professor N Lichfield (PP): When you asked Professor Webber to open this Session I do not think you, Mr President, or any of us, could have known how splendidly he would respond to your own Presidential Address. He has picked up so many of the very forward-looking themes that you put out a month ago and, in particular, he has taken up this question of social development planning, which, we all know, is very close to you in your everyday work and thinking.

With the parade we have had of the forward-looking thinking in America it is quite clear that, having gone over and studied urban motorways, urban centres, urban renewal and traffic models, we have now to go to Washington and find out how they are doing this social planning.

With a paper like this which is specifically

series of questions about the US or turn to the more interesting question: what is there in it for us? This is interesting because we have found that what the Americans are doing today we, somehow or other, are going to be thinking about, or doing better or doing worse, over the next twenty years. Accordingly, I thought I might open the discussion on this question by taking up some of the major themes dealt with by Professor Webber.

First, there is what I might call the 'quintessence' of Webber: the idea that the revolution in communications and transportation has transformed the scene from, as he puts it, the city-state to the nation-region. This is something that we can recognize in this country. I do not know that we have quite the same number of people as in the US who do a day's work three thousand miles away from where they had breakfast, but we have a certain degree of mobility. This, however, is an emphasis on which Professor Webber and I differ, for I think the change is more a matter of degree than a fundamental revolution. Communication has existed in urban centres even in the days of the villages and their markets. It was fantastically transformed by mass transportation and communication but, for all the people who do a day's work in San Francisco while living in New York, or who have meetings by closed-circuit television, there must be a larger number who do what people have been doing for generations: going a relatively short distance to work to return home and sleep.

Secondly, there is clearly change in the economic scene, where manufacturing is going down and services, education, information and communication are growing. Professor Webber is so right to ask us to look far ahead, because we tend not to. It took us a long time in this country, almost a generation, to realize the London problem was not the dispersal of manufacturing industry but the dispersal of offices. If we are going to be any good in this business we want to be with Professor Webber, thinking of trends which are beginning to happen and will transpire in fifteen years' time, and not be solving simply the problems of our fathers, as planners so often do.

Then there is this distinction between urbanization in a city and urbanization as a quality of life. Professor Webber did admit this was something of a semantic trick, and I myself do not think that much can be gained by contrasting the two meanings of urbanization, because they are two different things. You have the city, a physical artifact which has to be built, will wear out, be maintained and be run as a piece of fixed investment. You have the life of the people which, as it were, is independent of where they live. They are closely interrelated, to be sure. Winston Churchill's phrase, 'We shape our buildings and then they shape us', summarizes so neatly this particular phenomenon.

The serious difficulty is that the rate of change of society is so fast in its human, social and economic activities compared with the rate of change in the fixed plant and infrastructures that go with them. Therefore, we are dealing with two different phenomena that have to be reconciled somehow. We cannot slow up the pace of change in human activity and it is difficult to speed up the pace of city change—here is our basic difficulty.

I was wondering, as Professor Webber was talking, about the forward look in social planning in the United States, on which he placed so much emphasis. When the President spoke last month he was asking for some growth of planning in the social field, of which

reference to the major social planning activities in this country and yet Professor Webber has made such reference to his Government programmes. I am not sure this contrast really stands true. We are, after all, a welfare state and that means something. Even the Americans' best friends would not say they have yet reached that blessed situation. I am wondering whether our apparent lack of social planning is more a lack in bureaucratic coordination of social planning work, and in integrating it with physical planning. We have tremendous social planning, in schools, housing and hospitals, each of which is run well or badly. But perhaps it does not amount to social planning because it is done in some fragmented way. This is the area that we have, somehow, to see coordinated and related to our own work.

Equally well, it might be that this urge in America to recognize that the negro troubles in cities are social and not physical matters is, in a curious way, the urging by city planners of Americans toward a welfare state, for the need is desperate there to develop the kind of social consciousness and social attitudes that we have, since the last war at least, taken for granted here. And there is also the urge there to make progress on another problem with which we are dealing and they are not—the relationships between local and central government, which in America are hide-bound in a way which ours are not.

Thus I have reservations about this picture of our being behind the Americans in social planning. However, if the Americans are behind us in any sense at all we may be sure they are going to catch up at a rate of knots. It may be in twenty years we may be well behind, because they have shown that once they get going they do know how to move!

Then there is PPBS in government: the introduction of what we would call 'rational decision-making'. Everything Webber says as to the logical, orderly way in which Government sets out to make the best decision is surely an accurate description of what we already do here. If you have any doubts you have only to refer to the forthcoming debates in the House of Lords about that little place in Essex called Stansted. It will then be obvious how beautifully organized, rational and careful our Government planners are.

However, I think it true to say our awareness of cost effectiveness and so on is growing, but at nothing like the rate at which it has been developed in the United States. This is something we will follow with interest.

My final point is: what does this mean for town planners and regional planners? I have the feeling that any students here this evening listening to Professor Webber could be thoroughly magnetized and think 'city planning—out; social planning—in'. I offer the serious suggestion that, however critical this forward-looking social planning is—and I believe it is very necessary and important—it still leaves the town and regional planning job to do.

The President indicated last month that he does not visualize a complete merger of physical and social planning, but Professor Webber did say 'merger'. If by 'merger' is meant a coordination between education, health, welfare, social and physical planning, so that each knows what the others are doing in a coordinated process—this must be. But if we are visualizing some 'super' planning, which is a combination of social, physical, political—this is quite unrealistic. It would mean a necessity for the new Leonardo da

Vinci—merging the two that have hitherto been separate. I am not sure that this is a set of planners in this 'galaxy' of planners who are concerned basically with what happens on the ground.

I thus do not see any of this, however grand it is, seriously undermining basically the need for 'physical' planners, provided that we are interpreting physical planning in the sense used today in this Institute, and not as the master city planning in the US, which is about where we were in the thirties. I hope I have provoked Professor Webber to a reply. But even if I have not, I must thank him for getting us all steamed up about his views.

Bruce Goetzman (Associate Professor of City Planning, University of Cincinnati): There is one section of the community that we must take into account when considering planning in America. It is a section that feels somewhat left out of things. I am referring not to the deprived social economic groups, white or negro, but to the middle class, the people who have to pay for it all, or at least think they have to pay for it all. We have to convince these people that the strategies and programmes we are developing will benefit the total community, not individual segments of it.

In the hinterland of America, by which I mean the Mid-Western states, we very often hear the comment 'Well, you really should work for your money', or 'My home is my castle and I want to sell it to the person that I choose to; I don't want to be told who I have to sell it to'. These attitudes may be reactionary from the sociologist's point of view, and probably, as planners, we do not think they are particularly desirable points of view for people to have. But these are people who go to the polls, elect the councilmen and the representatives, and these are the people who hire the planners. If their viewpoints are not taken into account, the social development planning that Professor Webber is talking about can run into difficulties.

Mr J C Holliday (M): As Professor Webber well knows, the development of planning in this country has been mainly in the city planning field: we are now facing the forces of social planning, but we have had our welfare state since the end of the war. 'Planning' is an accepted word, apparently, on both sides of the Atlantic, but still one has to try to define some kind of province for our profession, or see it diffused over the whole field.

I am with Professor Lichfield in believing that there is a job for city and regional planning, for considering the physical implications of Professor Webber's urbanization. I would like to know how he sees these implications.

We have thought this out to some extent on this side of the Atlantic, and have moved to a situation where the physical world of the city plays a big part in planning for society. I would ask the question: does Professor Webber see this as our job, or does he see this profession diffusing its activities much more widely?

Professor Webber: I do not want to become involved in a discussion on professionalism. I refuse to become involved in a comparison of the patterns in the two nations. I would make only three observations about the American scene, with the hope of forestalling a discussion on these themes rather than encouraging one.

First, there are a great many professionals from a wide array of backgrounds moving

focusing their attention upon the physical and spatial development patterns of the metropolitan areas. For some of these, their professional origins were in economics, operations research, engineering, sociology, and regional science. They are nonetheless land use planners. They are doing some of the most sophisticated work in the field, even though they have no formal associations with the city planning profession.

Second, the boundaries around most professions are getting very blurred, just as the boundaries of the academic disciplines are blurring. It is inaccurate nowadays to label the contemporary professionals with the names we've inherited. The best of them are no longer only 'economists,' or 'operations researchers,' or 'city planners,' or whatever. Rather they are men with specific competencies, playing rather specialized rôles, confronting specific tasks with the thoughtways and the methods that originated in a wide spectrum of professional fields. It doesn't really matter what they are called; it matters only that they confront their tasks with disciplined minds, sophisticated techniques, and humane purposes.

Third, I do not think that policies for urbanization can any longer be formulated around the concepts of land and space exclusively. Although these have been the organizing ideas for the city planning movement in the past, although they are certainly necessary for some aspects of development planning, they are no longer sufficient. We cannot look for the pay-offs of urban planning from the intrinsic attributes of the physical plant or the spatial arrangements themselves. The physical and spatial traits of a metropolis have value only in so far as they work, instrumentally, to affect social welfare. City planners have only just begun to ask the welfare questions in testable form. Despite the great humanitarianism and egalitarianism of the city planning credo, we have seldom subjected our work to the empirical tests that would show whether our works lead to our enunciated goals.

Because the professions are getting so intermixed, I really think a debate on professionalism is not worth our time. We face a large array of development problems that deserve our attention first.

Mr J C Holliday (M): I had no intention of making this a professionalism debate. I was simply asking for a definition of the particular sort of job of work that we do. Most of the people in this room are concerned with social welfare and the urbanization process. The planner has, within that process, a special job and he may move across fields. I was wondering whether there was an activity here that was identifiable.

Professor Webber: Forgive me, Mr Holliday. I really did intend to respond to your question, rather than the one I posed for myself. Yours is far more difficult to deal with.

Yes, of course this is an important activity that needs to be attended to. The physical plant of a city and the spatial deployment of activity-places within the city are influential aspects of the system we are seeking to plan. But to recognize that is not also to suggest that they are the most important aspects—that they are the keystones of the system, as the city planning movement has presumed.

Plans for the physical and locational aspects of the urban system need somehow to be made

more people are trying to find ways of improving our capabilities for increasing the coherence among the multitude of governmental programmes.

I do not expect that the answer will lie in centralized coordination such as might be attempted by a single planning agency in an authoritarian government equipped with strong powers for control. This is not the American context, anyway. Governmental processes are far too complex there, and the plurality of decision centres is far too great ever to permit centralized coordination. Indeed, I would prefer that we dispose of the term 'coordination' and satisfy ourselves with increasing degrees of coherence among policies and programmes.

In the United States today, virtually every line of practice-professional activity is beginning to formalize a planning effort. So far, each of them is limiting its attention to those subsystems it is focused upon, and the planning typically is delimited to programming for the formally organized agency in which it is conducted. Because the various governmental agencies are structured around the variously professionalized groups, each is seeking to find optima for its own set of programmes only. Thus, the health professions control health agencies; the education professions control education agencies; the city planning professions control the city planning agencies, and so on. In turn, each is oriented to those objectives and 'public interests' that its profession rates highest. Health people are inclined to believe that nothing is more important than health; educators put highest values on education; city planners put highest values on good physical environment. So far we haven't had means for making inter-professional (i.e. inter-agency) comparisons of pay-offs, even though we all recognize that some mix of investments in all these activities is necessary. So far we've had to rely upon inter-agency competition and mostly upon the wise judgments of legislators who appropriate funds.

Three important things are now happening that may help us to improve the coherence among agencies' activities. If the PPB apparatus can deliver comparable measures of effectiveness, across agencies, that would help considerably. If the consequential chains of effects of programmes can be more clearly traced, then prospects for mutual reinforcements can be better identified and the prospects for positive feedback of undesired effects can be forestalled. And then, as our understanding of causal relations among agencies' programmes is improved, we are likely to invent more useful conceptions of the urban-system structure and the urban-system's functioning than we now have. I very much doubt that such a reformulation would identify health, education, housing, etc., as the subsystems. They are more likely to cut across profession/agency lines to cluster problems and programmes into more-coherent, goal-directed sets that tie to none of the existing professions or agencies specifically and exclusively.

Such a reformulation of the system would not necessarily (and, in the United States, would not probably) require a formal reorganization of governmental agencies. It is significant that Mr McNamara was able to unify the Armed Forces functionally, while leaving the formal structure of Army, Navy, and Air Force intact.

I am suggesting, Mr Holliday, that land use planning must perform its important rôles in city planning and urban planning by identifying its functional relations to the

activities to those of all other governmental and non-governmental agencies, and, then, by fitting itself into the processes of formulating more-coherent sets of programme-plans that emerge from diverse centres of decision. In that context, city planners, health planners and the rest are going to have to be prepared explicitly to evaluate the effectiveness of their programmes' outputs; and they must also be prepared to accept the trade-offs among programmes.

Mr W G Bor (M): I would like to bring the discussion back to the very real and practical problems that exist in the United States, among them the question of the welfare state and all the corollaries that flow from it, particularly in housing. There is no sustained experience in the United States of local housing, as we know it in this country. Two extraordinary facts emerge immediately: first, there is no viable, cheap system of prefabrication available there; and secondly, however hard you try to reduce the cost of the housing, there is still an enormous gap between the actual cost and the rents which the very poor can afford. Quite clearly the question of subsidy looms large here. This is a field where this country has had some experience and can make a contribution.

Mr L B Ginsburg (M): One of the things that appals me about the United States is the way they are building good, old fashioned, new towns. What I find so fascinating in Melvin Webber's paper this evening is that it takes us forward into systems analysis and other ways of developing ideas, and looks at this in the social field and the organizational and administrative field. But where do we see the parallel in the physical sciences as they affect building?

While Mr Holliday is anxious about the future of the planning profession, most of us concerned with building know that architecture itself is undergoing revolutionary changes. We also know that too many believe the motor car, on the conveyor belt, is more important than the house.

Most of us are worried; we know that, in spite of the work we have done in the physical field, we are not going to house the world easily, if at all, even in the next half century, in decent conditions. We know the only way to overcome our present physical problem is to alter all our architectural concepts.

When will the physical side of planning catch up with the thinking that is going on in the social side of planning? I do not know whether Professor Webber can say anything about this, from the point of view of the scientific advancement of the United States.

Mr Ian Brown: In your other writings, Professor Webber, you have very heavily attacked the orthodox spatial concept of evolving towns and cities. You suggested that this is being replaced by something else: a new sort of spatial disposition. It seems to me you cannot have it both ways.

Either the way you are organizing cities spatially as a main base concept is wrong, or we have to look to another means of organizing our cities. If there is a spatial difference between the way cities are emerging in the United States now and the way planners have been conceiving of them, then that difference is important. This links up with what Mr Ginsburg was saying.

We need to know what the new spatial

one and say there are new ways of conceiving towns'.

Professor Webber: Mr Ginsburg and Mr Bor both know far more about housing technology than I, and I am certain that I can contribute nothing on that topic.

I do feel obligated to respond to Mr Brown's critical comment, however. He identifies a real and open question we all face: how should cities be spatially structured in a society that is engaged in different kinds of enterprises from those our traditional cities have housed.

Cities built during the industrial age were organized as goods-producing and goods-handling centres—as manufacturing towns. Most of them were also built around a transportation and communications technology that is now being surpassed. We do not yet know how to build a city to match the post-industrial, service society, to serve the knowledge-based industries, and to conform to the newer transportation and communication technologies. Mr Brown is quite right about the essays he refers to: I don't know how the future city should be spatially structured. I am confident only that the effective ones are unlikely to resemble the spatial structures of either the pre-industrial city or the industrial city. At this stage of development, the scientific investigations of land-use patterns have not yet been able to produce adequate tests of goodness—i.e. adequate evaluations of one pattern versus another. Our traditional ideological guides are of virtually no help; they are backward-looking and are certainly not rigorous enough to justify the large-scale investments that will be called for.

A growing number of people are asking this question, however; and some important and original thinking is being generated. Britton Harris is doing some of the frontier work on land use simulation, based upon behavioural market models that trace individuals' locational preferences. In an unpublished paper, Kevin Lynch suggests some very imaginative ideas for widening the accessibility and learning options through physical design.

I mention these two, in part because theirs is among the most important work under way in this field, but also because they both work in the language of land use and spatial structure. And yet, I expect they would agree with me that urban form *per se* is not a very useful language for policy making. Rather than undertake to plan for any particular form, I suggest that we should seek to solve the problems and to exploit the opportunities that are identified. It doesn't matter whether the derivative mapped shape of a settlement is round or square or star-shaped. It matters only that all individuals and organized groups have easy access to opportunities, that they have a decent and amiable setting in which to live, and that their plural objectives be approximated.

As I said before, I think that spatial arrangements have no value that is intrinsic to the forms *per se*. Spatial arrangement has only instrumental value—i.e. instrumental to the accomplishment of nonspatial objectives. Until we have done enough of the hard research that will help us to identify the causal relations between spatial arrangements and societal and individual goals, we will continue to have only personal and professional opinion to support our recommendations for public action. That strikes me as a mighty slender support for so important an activity.

Mr L N Fraser (M): We started to have some sort of social planning in this country after

community and health centres and so forth, where people would come together—for what I believe the sociologist calls 'face-to-face contact'. It costs people nothing to meet in the street, the supermarket or the children's playground; this, to my way of thinking, is social planning.

The educationists and health people want to place their schools and clinics in certain locations in towns and cities. It is true that in this country this tends to be done independently of any coordinated project but, in the end, the planners have to say 'we must ourselves think of this, if no one else does it, and try to make a pattern where these things fit into a reasonable framework'.

What we need, as distinct from what is needed in the United States, is to take the very advanced social planning of our welfare state into the coordinating system of the promoters of development for social purposes.

Mrs Darke: I am surprised at the continual 'physical planning' mentality shown by speakers at this meeting, compared to the 'social planning' mentality that Professor Webber has tried to tell us about. It seems a little difficult to comprehend.

I am surprised at the complacency of people that our welfare services are so far ahead of America's. I would be glad if planners could accept more of Professor Webber's urban planning rather than the city planning, but I am worried that this may become a little paternalistic. One contribution sociologists have made is to show the differing goals of differing groups in society. Herbert Gans in his latest book showed that although suburbia may seem very dull to the cosmopolitan mentality, it is not dull to the lower middle-class mentality living in suburbia.

I am worried that Professor Webber's urban planners are going to fix their own goals for these under-privileged sections of society, such as the Negro, rather than having them realize their own goals, which are different from the planners' goals.

Mr B J Styles (AM): I would call myself a physical planner but am appalled with the concern for physical facts. I believe in technology. We are going to be most successful in our physical planning for the future if we develop the thought processes and conceptual tools for the job rather than our concern with the means of actual development; i.e. if we find the tools for measuring the performance of a settlement, this will get us much further forward as planners than considerations of the appearance of developments which these settlements should ideally take in the future.

It seems to me much of our planning education should follow, perhaps, very much more the lines adopted in business and management studies, i.e. getting over the idea of a thought process and, as a secondary concern, going on to consider the subject matter to which we devote these thought processes.

Professor Webber: Mrs Darke raises a very important issue, one that concerns me very deeply. She is quite right; the middle-class professionals do indeed have a hard time understanding that some people may not like what the professionals like. We professionals tend, in our wisdom, to promulgate our perceptions of good standards; and we've seldom thought it even useful to ask the customers whether they agree.

Mrs Darke's brief comment opens up a large set of critical issues, which I would very much

here I would do so in the context that her comment suggests: I would ask what planning processes and what delivery systems for social services are most likely to accomplish the purposes of the welfare state?

My hypothesis holds that market-type processes are likely to be more sensitive to individuals' objectives than are legislated standards. I suggest this because markets that supply a widely differentiated array of goods and services open a large number of options to individuals, permitting them to make choices against their own sets of values and preferences, however eccentric they may be. Of course, I would also impose some constraints on those markets—constraints to deter self-destructive behaviour and to forestall external costs, for example. I would also want to explore the possibilities for limited collusion, to avoid the Prisoners' Dilemma. I would examine possibilities for governmental incentives as alternatives to governmental restrictions. And I would wish to explore the prospects for pricing governmental services, supplemented by programmes for maintaining minimum family incomes. These are different programmatic strategies from those of the Northern European welfare states. My hunch is that they might be more effective ones.

I should very much enjoy an opportunity to elaborate on the topics I have just mentioned, and I shall be eager to accept Mrs Darke's challenge. When I next have a forum like this one opened to me, I shall endeavour to respond to the critical issue she has raised, for it is a central question for social development planning.