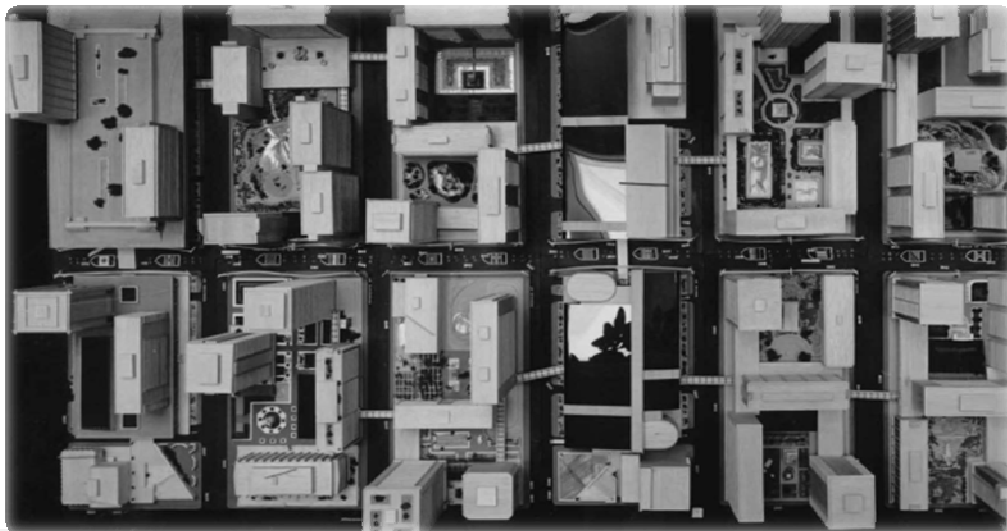


CITY PLANNING AS IDEOLOGY AND PRACTICE

Ten Speeches by Dr. Earl A. Levin



Edited with an introduction by Michael Dudley



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DR. EARL A. LEVIN

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Michael Dudley

The Institute of Urban Studies
University of Winnipeg



THE UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG

THE INSTITUTE OF URBAN STUDIES

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About the Author

Earl Levin was born in Winnipeg in 1919. He worked in the field of planning for over forty years – about half of that time in the public sector and an equivalent length of time in the private sector. He served as a planner at the municipal, metropolitan, provincial and federal levels of government as well as in private consulting practice and as an academic. He was on the staff of the first Planning Department established in the City of Vancouver; a planner with Central (now Canada) Mortgage and Housing Corporation in Ottawa; the Director of Planning for the province of Saskatchewan and Secretary of Provincial Planning Appeals Board; Vice-President of Murray V. Jones and Associates, Urban and Regional Planners in Toronto; Director of the Planning Division of the Metropolitan Corporation of Greater Winnipeg; Director of the Winnipeg office of Damas and Smith Ltd., Engineers and Planners and Director of Corporate Development of that firm; and President of his own consulting firm of Earl Levin Consultants Inc., Urban and Regional Planners. Levin also worked for a brief period for the London County Council in London, England and for the Basildon New Town Corporation in Basildon, Essex, England.

Levin's first post-secondary enrolment was in the University of Manitoba, Faculty of Arts and Science. He switched to architecture before completing the final year in that program. After the first year in architecture he enlisted in the Canadian Forces and served overseas during World War II in the north-west Europe theatre of war and attained the rank of captain. After the war he returned to the University of Manitoba and obtained the degree of Bachelor of Architecture. He went to London, England in 1950, to do post-graduate studies at the School of Planning and Research for Regional Development. He completed the course successfully and was awarded the Diploma of the School of Planning (it did not grant degrees). He then returned to Canada in 1952 to take his M.Sc. degree at the School of Community and Regional Planning, University of British Columbia. In 1993 he was awarded a Ph.D. by the University of Manitoba for his

doctoral thesis “City History and City Planning: The Local Historical Roots of the City Planning Function in Three Cities of the Canadian Prairies”¹.

Because of the variety of his appointments and roles Levin was involved in a wide range of planning projects and activities. Among these are the preparation of official and general development plans, downtown plans, land-use and housing studies, amalgamation studies, annexation studies, studies for residential and industrial development, research park feasibility studies, design for a new town in Saskatchewan, drafting zoning bylaws and land-use regulations and numerous other planning and development projects. Places for which these projects and activities were carried out include cities such as Toronto, Hamilton, Windsor, Winnipeg, Regina, Saskatoon, Edmonton, Calgary and smaller centers such as Pembroke, Owen Sound, Brandon, Estevan, Weyburn, Melville and remote centers in northern Canada including Churchill, Fort Smith, Great Whale River, and Inuvik. Levin also prepared studies and reports for Aboriginal communities including the Sabaskong School study for the First Nations band at Nestor Falls, a development plan and commercial site study for the band at The Pas, the Neeginan proposal for the Aboriginal community in downtown Winnipeg and the Ta-Mi-No-Sah study of job-creation and social development programs for native people in Manitoba.

Dr. Levin was involved in strategy and policy planning for municipal, provincial, and federal government departments and agencies. He was a member of the Task Force on City Government to advise the City of Edmonton on reorganizing its system of governance; a member of the Special Cabinet Committee on Reorganization of Local Government in Greater Winnipeg (i.e. amalgamation of the twelve local governments); and a member of Manitoba’s Commission on Targets for Economic Development. He prepared a report on Residential Conversion in Canada for Central (now Canada) Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

His academic appointments included Professor and Head of the Department of City Planning at the University of Manitoba and Senior Fellow of the Institute of Urban

¹ Available at the Institute of Urban Studies Library.

Studies at the University of Winnipeg. He also held a term appointment on the faculty of the School of Community and Regional Planning at the University of British Columbia.

Dr. Levin moved to Victoria, B.C. in 1993. During his stay in that city he served for nine years as a member of the Board of Directors of the Fairfield Community Association. He also served for the full term of six years as a member of the City of Victoria's Advisory Planning Commission. He was also a member of the city's special Planning Advisory Committee on the redevelopment of the Fairfield Centre/Mount St. Mary Hospital site – a major redevelopment project in that sector of Victoria. In 2006 Dr. Levin's wife passed away in Victoria and he moved back to Winnipeg to live in retirement with his son David and his son's family.

Editor's Note

By Michael Dudley

As the Librarian at the Institute of Urban Studies it has been my distinct pleasure over the past few years to work with Dr. Earl Levin on the establishment of an Archive of his personal papers, and, more recently, in the selection and publication of these papers in this volume.

While Dr. Levin's thoughtful writing remains in much the same state as it was originally presented between 1965 and 2008, there were some alterations required. The most obvious changes relate to the fact that these essays were composed and delivered as speeches, and oftentimes contained references to the events at which they were delivered. These passages have been largely excised. Also removed were several examples of repetitive content, where Dr. Levin had re-purposed material from one speech to deliver to another audience or venue.

The one major piece of editing in the book was done to two particular essays, "Some Reasons for Urban Decline" (pp. 29-42) and "Metro Winnipeg: A Study in the Dilemma of Metropolitan Area Government" (pp. 44-57). While they stood quite well on their own in their original form, when placed adjacent to one another as they are here it was apparent that each contained a great deal of material that was much more relevant to the other essay than to themselves. Together, Dr. Levin and I selected paragraphs and entire pages of material from each to swap over. While not strictly speaking historically accurate the results are, we feel, much more satisfying in terms of the arguments being presented.

It should be further noted that, while many of these arguments, themes and issues in the essays are still relevant in the 21st Century, this collection is clearly focused on urban Canada and the Canadian planning profession in the 1960s, 70s and 80s. Some of Dr. Levin's more extensive passages quoting then-recent municipal data have been removed,

but there has been no attempt on my part to update his writing in terms modernizing in any way the references to the urban conditions he describes.

The dates and locations for most of the speeches are indicated, but in three instances this information was no longer completely available, nor could Dr. Levin recall it. We included the papers regardless.

Because part of the value of these essays is the extent to which they illuminate the evolution of planning thought in general, and the thinking of one urban planner in particular, they are also best understood and appreciated as a product of the years in which they were composed. As such, some of the references (to “Negroes,” for instance, or the absence of gender-neutral language) may strike modern ears as politically incorrect, but these remain unchanged.

Finally – and perhaps most significantly – the essays presented here are but a sampling of Dr. Levin’s work. They were selected by myself and in consultation with Dr. Levin from among his papers for their thematic unities and interconnections, not because of my own assessment of their superiority over his other writing. I would therefore leave it to the library patron and researcher to explore further into the Dr. Earl A. Levin Archive to make their own determinations; these choices are but an invitation. (For a complete list of the contents of the Archive, please refer to the Appendix [page 175]).

Acknowledgements

Many people helped make this book a reality. First, thanks are owed to Dr. Jino Distasio, Director of the Institute of Urban Studies, for supporting this project through its long genesis from Dr. Levin's original donation of his papers in 2007 through to the publication of this book.

The organization of Dr. Levin's Archive would not have been possible without the dedicated efforts of Mrs. Shermin Huq, who indexed the contents of the files and assisted in their organization, enabling the launch of the archive in March of 2008 (see Appendix).

Once the idea of a publication took root, there was a major barrier to overcome: the papers were, of course, *papers* dating from a pre-digital era. The selected essays were scanned and converted into editable digital files, but were filled with a great many recognition errors that needed to be carefully identified and corrected. For this we are extremely grateful to University of Winnipeg student Joe Wasylycia-Leis, for so effectively carrying out this time-consuming task.

Once the papers were translated and readable, a great deal of further work went into editing and proofreading them. Thanks go to IUS Publications Coordinator Michelle Swanson and Research Associate Matthew Havens, who each went over the manuscript to make further corrections. Finally, we thank Research Associate Fereshteh Moradzadeh for her eye-catching cover design and layout!

On a personal note I would like to thank Dr. Levin himself, who was very much a partner on the project, reading and re-reading the several iterations of the manuscript and making many helpful suggestions.

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Introduction

If politics is the art of the possible, then city planning – which is entirely dedicated to exploring practical and feasible possibilities for human settlements – must by necessity be very political indeed. While the term “planning” evokes for many a detached technocratic bureaucracy fulfilling an advisory role for government, the act of creating, adjusting, removing from or adding to the urban environment always involves intervening in the relations between people and place, and between people and their neighbours. As such, it is a political act, one which all too often inspires anxiety and hostility. In recent years the politicization of planning has become such that it seems like every new proposal becomes the target of irate neighbours and protesters. At its extreme this tendency has in the United States manifested in self-identified “tea party” activists equating Smart Growth planning with an insidious international conspiracy to deprive Americans of their freedoms².

It’s important to remember though that urban development controversies are but a symptom of a wider condition: Polarization has become a matter of course. In an era of 24-hour news cycles, Websites, blogs, chat rooms and texting, the sheer volume of public discourse – to say nothing of the pace at which it occurs – holds an inverse relationship with its reasonableness and quality. The present media environment allows people to inhabit virtual echo chambers in which like-minded ideologues reinforce each other’s preconceptions and biases, and vilify their opponents. On a host of pressing issues ranging from climate change to urban sprawl, the discourse surrounding the natural and

² See Mencimer, S. (2010) The Tea Party Targets... Sustainable Development? Mother Jones. November 18th 2010 <http://m.motherjones.com/politics/2010/11/tea-party-agenda-21-un-sustainable-development>

built environment has certainly fallen victim to this tendency, as insular “pro” and “anti” camps wage war over terms like “sprawl”, “sustainability” and “growth.”

It is therefore all the more refreshing and illuminating to turn to the writings of Dr. Earl A. Levin and discover a time in which debates on such issues were not devoted to the knee-jerk vilification of opponents, but to the establishing of context and the construction of reasoned argument; when speakers could invest the time necessary to develop complete thoughts and communicate them in full, knowing that their audiences had the patience and the capacity to understand them. We see in the following pages how public rhetoric was once, to paraphrase a well-known figure from popular culture, “an elegant weapon for a more civilized age.”

Of course the age from which these speeches originate was one of dramatic and violent changes in civilization. Besides the effects of rapid urbanization and environmental degradation, Dr. Levin was also keenly aware of how the transformations of the 1960s – the riots, the Vietnam War, the civil rights movements – were affecting cities.

For more than three decades, Dr. Earl A. Levin brought extraordinary eloquence to his musings concerning Canadian cities and city planning. Facing audiences unacquainted with the hyper-short attention spans common to our intensely multimedia age, nor hobbled by the tyranny of PowerPoint, Earl Levin was wont to speak on an impressively wide range of topics, at great length and on a regular basis: one week he could be heard discussing urban renewal, then two weeks later the subject would be housing, the week after, the nature of the planning process.

Yet through these speeches we see several enduring themes which still resonate today. Foremost among these is the limitation of the planning function as a role outside of municipal governments. He sought tirelessly to dispel the notion that planning departments can be conceived of – or function – as politically viable entities on their own, but that planning needed to be fully integrated within governments. Absent such integration, plans are very likely to go unfulfilled. In his 1980 speech, “What is Planning?

Who is the Planner?” (pp. 103-122) he states,

“A plan is not merely an idea; a plan is an idea and an action to carry out that idea. If there is no action, then in my view there is no plan; there is only an exercise in wishful thinking illustrated by pretty pictures.”

He also wrote extensively about the state of cities and the anachronistic way in which cities are governed and funded in Canada. In a 1969 speech, “Some Reasons for Urban Decline (pp. 29-42), he observed,

“There can be no doubt that amongst the most serious obstacles in the way of achieving a viable urban environment is the anachronism of the constitutional arrangement and allocation of responsibilities, powers, and resources, amongst the three levels of government.”

Unfortunately, these observations are still accurate and timely forty years later: Canadian cities are still without a real “new deal for cities” commensurate with their national, economic and social significance. Perhaps the currency of his thinking is most evident in the 1983 speech “The Planning Function in the Future City” (pp. 135-149), (delivered at a conference which hosted Alvin Toffler as a keynote speaker), in which he discusses the impact of economic recession, the end of cheap oil and the need for greater localization – essentially articulating the “transition” ethos years before the “Transition Town” movement would emerge in the U.K.:

“Energy will not again be as cheap as it used to be; resources will continue to be depleted and therefore will become increasingly costly, and increasingly costly to extract. [This] suggests that the easy affluent world of the throwaway product, and of built-in obsolescence, and the profligate exploitation of natural resources is gone, and that many aspects of the conserver society may well emerge as the everyday facts of our national life in the foreseeable future. [With] the conservation of energy and other resources, the increase in the political power of local groups, the loss of admiration for the “big,” whether it be big buildings or big cities or big corporations, or big automobiles, or big anything, and the replacement of that ideal by preference for the “small,” the local, the decentralized, we may well see some basic changes in the way in which our cities are built as well as in the way they are planned and governed.”

These are just a few of the themes and ideas you will discover in these papers. The collection presented here can only offer a snapshot of the extent and depth of Dr. Levin's thoughts on Canadian urbanism and the planning function. However, to present what we feel are some of the key recurring themes in his work, we have grouped the papers into three parts.

In Part One, Dr. Levin considers the "Past and Future of the City," focusing on the state of Canada's cities in the 1960s and how planning might affect those conditions. Part Two explores "The Past and Future of Winnipeg," in which, reflecting on his experience as the Director of Planning for the Metropolitan Corporation of Winnipeg, he describes the complex issues facing what was at the time a remarkable experiment in urban governance. In Part Three, "The Past and Future of City Planning," Dr. Levin's principal thesis is given its most compelling treatment, as he outlines his vision for a planning profession that is, as he puts it, both "conceptual and creative." The collection concludes with Dr. Levin's thoughts on planning, delivered at the opening of the Archive of his personal papers at the Institute of Urban Studies in 2008.

The reader will surely observe that it is in those papers related to Winnipeg that we see a synthesis of Dr. Levin's thought, where his notions of city form and function and the role of the planner are given the freest reign. For anyone interested in the history and development of Winnipeg, these papers offer particular pleasures. Dr. Levin was clearly passionate about this city, and some of his ideas (like turning North Portage Avenue into a forest park) were – and indeed still are – radical and controversial. But he never lost his focus on turning downtown Winnipeg into a destination of wonder and delight, a task which is only now, in the early years of the 21st Century, beginning to bear real fruit.

Back in 1968, in his speech "Winnipeg: Downtown or Downhill?" he would offer a vision for the city that, for sheer insight and poetry, matches any of the contributions made by a host of more famous urbanists:

"Our downtown...should be a city within a city, with all the

variety, choice, stimulation, wonder, gaiety, pleasures, ideas, experimentation, opportunities and human richness that can possibly be crowded into its relatively narrow streets, because really that's what cities are all about."

Indeed, this would make an admirable mission for any city, and one can but hope that cities like these can be realized. Yet such may require that we all take a step back from some of our own cherished and polarized positions and recognize that discourse, like cities, best flourishes when there is, as Dr. Levin's writing demonstrates, "variety, choice, experimentation and opportunities."

Michael Dudley
Institute of Urban Studies,
University of Winnipeg
December 2010

Part One: The Past and Future of the City



Business, Balkanism and Blindness (1965)

An Address to the Session on “Fundamentals of Planning - Implementation”
Joint A.S.P.O. - C. P.A.C. Conference. Royal York Hotel, Toronto, April 27th, 1965.

Our program this morning calls for a discussion on the “implementation of planning proposals.” I find something ironically appropriate in the fact that it is as complicated and difficult to carry out planning proposals as it is to find a good, simple, basic-English word to describe that process. I have a strange reaction to the word “implementation.”

For some inexplicable reason I can't avoid thinking that it is one of those telescopic words made up of parts of two other words, like “brunch” which is a combination of “breakfast” and “lunch.” I think of the word implementation as being made up of the words “implements” and “plantation”, and it always brings a picture to my mind of a plantation which is operated by the use of modern farm implements and machinery instead of by hand labour; and I can visualize a conversation between a young lady and her family about her boyfriend's prospects, in which her mother asks “What does he do?” and to which she replies “His family is very well-off; they own one of those big modern implementations.”

Still I suppose it might have been worse. We might have been asked to talk about the “effectuation of planning proposals,” and I don't know whether I could have been equal to that task. “Effectuation” is in the same class as the word I once heard used to describe the fact that a project manager had been fired from the job. The personnel manager reported that the corporation's undertaking in South America had been “deprojectmanagerized.”

One morning at breakfast my wife and I were discussing some fine points of diet, and she

said “I thought you had decided to cut down on your calorie intake?” to which I replied “Well I have. Didn't you notice that I haven't eaten any bread?” “Yes,” she replied, “but you've just eaten that piece of cream cake leftover from yesterday.” “But it was just a little piece of cake,” I countered. To which she replied “With that little piece of cake in effect you ate four slices of bread.”

When the sound of the phrase “effect you ate” fell upon my ears, my breakfast was finished. I told my wife that the word “effectuate” is a serious bit of planning vocabulary meaning “to carry out.” When I got home that night she greeted me with the reminder that I had forgotten to effectuate the garbage that morning.

Well, whatever word we use, the problem of realizing our planning proposals remains an obstinate one. We have developed an extensive inventory of devices for helping us to transmute our planning ideas into the brick and mortar of reality. But somehow

“There are elements in our culture which are hostile to the whole concept of planning.”

what we actually achieve on the ground is nearly always only a pale shadow of the bright promise of the original concept. In spite of our warehouse full of zoning bylaws, building bylaws, official plans, master plans, tax incentives, urban renewal statutes, and all the other instruments of prescription, coercion, prohibition, persuasion, and seduction that we have to help us create beautiful and efficient cities, our cities seem to continue to grow more ugly, and to function less efficiently. I am sure that all of us in our more detached and contemplative moments have had the distressing experience of this insight; for my part, I know of no city in this land which is winning the struggle for beauty, economy, convenience, pleasure, dignity, and all the other attributes we are striving to provide in our urban environment. Like most of us, I have thought about this problem, looking for a simple explanation to illuminate it, and a magic formula to solve it; and I have come to what is probably the same obvious conclusion as most of us: the problem is intricately complex, and there is no simple prescription which can solve it. I have come to the conclusion that all the regulations for land use control, and all the bylaws prescribing the

nature and the form of development, its location on the site, its height and bulk and what may or may not be done within and around it, and all the legislative instruments designed to enable us to carry our plans into effect, are only part of what is required to realize fully our hopes for the city. Perhaps even more than these, we require a change in some of the basic attitudes and institutions of our culture which are amongst the most serious obstacles of all in the way of carrying out our planning proposals.

I am suggesting that there are elements in our culture which are hostile to the whole concept of planning, and that the obstructive and subversive influences of these elements are particularly damaging because we do not recognize them as negative forces. They are not organized into a movement opposed to planning; they are not overtly directed against planning. They are simply the effects of our normal attitudes, our usual way of thinking and feeling and doing; and because they are so much a part of our cultural norms, we do not realize that they stand in the way of carrying out some of our fondest plans for the improvement of our cities.

The more familiar instruments and machinery for planning, such as master plans, zoning, and capital budgeting and so on, are only as effective as our social attitudes allow them to be; indeed the very nature and type of regulations and devices which we choose to employ are in large measure determined by the general convictions and customs of our culture. It seems to me therefore that any discussion of the measures we normally employ in the planning process would be quite incomplete without some consideration of the less generally recognized kinds of obstructions to that process which I have suggested exist at the very heart of our cultural attitudes and relationships; and with your indulgence I would like to devote my allotted time to a very brief examination of these matters.

The kinds of things I have in mind are subtle and numerous, and not easily isolated for a clinical examination. But in thinking about them I found myself unconsciously setting up categories or headings which vaguely described their characteristics, and under which, in a highly generalized sort of way, they could respectively be classified. I ended up with three such categories: their names are Business, Balkanism, and Blindness; and I would

like to develop my views for you in these terms.

Under the heading of Business, I would include all those elements in our society which place the values of the market above all other values. Let me hasten to say that I am not speaking here as a moralist, or even as a social critic. Many voices are being raised today against what they denounce as the moral degeneracy of our times - the pervasive attitudes of hucksterism, of commercial expediency and opportunism which have penetrated even into the most sacred and private corners of our lives. I am not here adding my voice to that chorus. I am merely suggesting to you, as a simple fact of life, that there is a fundamental antagonism between the short term interests of the market place, and the long term needs of the community [and] a conflict between the short term interests of investment capital and the long term requirements of the community for housing.

We are probably all aware of the fact that there has developed in the very last few years an enormous demand for apartment accommodation. This demand is not localized but is being experienced even in the relatively stable cities of the prairies which are the traditional strongholds of the single-family, owner-occupied home. There is no shortage of money for these buildings and they are springing up across the country in their thousands. Unfortunately, many of them are shoddy in construction and inept in design; they are a blight on the townscape and a mockery of any reasonable conception of a decent residential development. In one city with which I am familiar, a very large tract of land has been covered with apartment blight even before the development is finished. The construction meets the minimum building standards, and the minimum zoning requirements. Nevertheless, the buildings are crude in design, slipshod in construction, and brutal in their siting. There is no soundproofing in the structures and no landscaping on the site, nor is there any room for ultimate landscaping. When enquiries are made as to why the development is so crude, the answer is basically that the speculative developer couldn't afford to build anything better. He had to realize his 15% return, because if he had to accept anything less he would be better off putting his money into some other investment which didn't involve as much risk and as many headaches. Now I am not suggesting that these are not sufficient reasons from the developer's point of view.

Certainly he has a right to look after his own interests. I am suggesting however that they are not the interests of the public; indeed they are opposed to the interests of the public, and they subvert the public's plans for the development of the city as a good place in which to live. When the municipal planning authority designates an area on its master plan or its zoning map as an area for apartment development, I know that the picture in the mind of the authority as to how that area should look when the prescription of the bylaw is filled, is in such instances vastly different from the development which is actually put in place.

Is there then no way to resolve this conflict? In the symbolic terms of the illustration I have cited, must we accept the third rate solution of our

“We have simply not cared very much about what kind of cities we have been creating.”

urban problems because of the interests of the investment market? I'm afraid that the answer to that question must be “yes” as long as the public is unconcerned about the kinds of cities it lives in, and sees no need to challenge the values of the market in the light of its own immediate as well as long-term stake in those cities.

And this brings me to the second heading of my discourse - Balkanism. By Balkanism I mean the failure to see the whole city, and the failure to see beyond the present moment; the habit of looking at everything in the city as though it were not a part of the city at all, but rather an isolated event, or even perhaps an event occurring mainly as part of one's own private and immediate world. The speculative builder sees his apartment block simply as a profit on his investment; the corporation sees its office building as the centre of its business activities; the hot dog vendor sees his stand as a means of livelihood; the traffic engineer sees the city in terms of traffic movements and desire lines; the city engineer sees it in terms of sewer and water services; and even the city council sees the city mainly in terms of tax revenues and mil rates. Almost no one sees it as an organic whole, with each part functionally dependent upon the other; and almost no one thinks about the changes in the nature and function of the city in the future or even in the foreseeable future - which result from their actions in the present. I suggest that until

most of us see the city in this way it will continue to be very difficult to carry out our best plans for its growth and development.

Planning is not city beautification; nor is it the construction of projects such as housing, or highways; nor is it the application of bylaws and regulations for the control of development. It is not merely any of these things, and it is something more than the sum of all of them. It is a living process - the process whereby the wishes and preferences of the homeowner, and the shopper, and the business corporation, and the motorist, in fact all of us who in our roles make up the community - become transmuted into the physical form of the city. We may not be conscious of it, but the stores and homes and apartments, and streets and bridges and all the other structures and artifacts of our physical environment reflect in very large measure the values, prejudices, and aspirations of our citizens. We get to a very high degree not only the kind of city we deserve, but the kind of city we want. The deterioration of the city as a living environment during this century I think is a fairly faithful reflection of the fact that we have simply not cared very much about what kind of cities we have been creating; or else it is a reflection of the fact that we have only been concerned about some very limited aspect of city development and haven't been much concerned about what happened in the rest of the huge and complex world of urban growth. Like the Balkan states of Europe before the First World War, we believe that our own small and distorted microcosm represents the entire universe.

Our failure to see the city in these terms is not merely a failure of insight, but also a failure of eyesight. Very few of us actually see the objects and artifacts which make up our physical environment. We move through our surroundings only half aware of what they really look like. There is now a considerable amount of experimental evidence establishing this point. It might of course be argued that this is a great mercy, because if we were acutely aware of what we have made of our cities, the anguish would be too much to bear.

There is some question as to whether the visual deterioration of our cities is the result of our lack of sensitivity and our bad taste, or whether we have been beaten into a state of

aesthetic apathy and debasement by the constant onslaught on our senses from all quarters of modern life. Whatever the case may be, the evidence indicates that in terms of our visual perception of the environment, we are virtually blind, and it is this Blindness which I would like to comment on briefly under the third heading of my remarks.

The visual quality of a city I believe to be its greatest attribute; but this notion is not a common one here in North America. We admire the city for its size, its wealth, its industries, its athletic teams, its food and entertainment, sometimes for its artists, and even for its cultural achievements, but very rarely for its civic beauty. Nor do we make much effort to create beauty in our cities. The closest most communities get to it is in the annual campaigns to Clean Up, Paint Up, and Plant Trees. This sort of cosmetic application has of course very little to do with urban design. But even the professional stewards of civic beauty - the architects and town planners, make relatively little contribution to the townscape. The fact is that the participation of the design professions in the creation of our communities is astonishingly limited. The number of structures designed by architects is a pitifully small proportion of the total volume of buildings that make up a city; the vast bulk of our environment is created by people with little or no training in design. This has become part of our normal way of doing things; we see nothing very wrong with it and raise no objections to it. It is a very apt illustration of the qualities of our culture which I have lumped together under the heading of Blindness.

I have tried to identify a number of elements in our culture which I think constitute very serious, even if generally unrecognized, obstacles in the way of good planning. I would like to conclude by suggesting one or two devices which might help us overcome the problems which I have briefly and perhaps inadequately identified under the headings of Business, Balkanism and Blindness.

It seems to me that the conflict between private expectations and public needs which I have symbolized by the word Business should not be impossible to resolve. We are constantly re-defining the relationships between the private sector and the public sector of the economy, and constantly revising our definitions of the natural sphere of operation of

each. We have long ago agreed that it is quite acceptable for the public to provide those goods and services which the private sector is unable or unwilling to provide. In the circumstances represented by the illustration I cited earlier about the speculative developer of apartment blocks my suggestion is that he should be encouraged to put his money into a different type of venture, and that a public or quasi-public development agency which can operate on a relatively lower rate of return and with a relatively longer time horizon should be made responsible for the creation of a better kind of residential environment.

There is nothing really new in such a proposal. The device of the public development corporation is a common one in the building of new towns abroad; and in our part of the world the design, financing, and operation of low rental housing is entirely a matter of public action. Even in the economic housing sector, public financing and insurance are well established practices. I am suggesting that the public responsibility in every area of the creation of our environment - not merely housing - be recognized and acted upon, where the private developer cannot provide a development of a satisfactory standard.

It is obvious, I think, that any such machinery can only be possible if it is acceptable. There must first come into existence a general attitude of society which places a great value on the nature and quality of the city as a living environment. This will require a quiet revolution in our views of

“We have been beaten into a state of aesthetic apathy and debasement by the constant onslaught on our senses from all quarters of modern life.”

both ourselves and our cities. We will have to become aware of our cities as a living environment, and of our relationship to it. We will have to assimilate, as part of our cultural bone and marrow, the notions that we are now an urban society; that the city is our natural habitat; that in order that we may survive in that habitat it must be made beautiful and convenient and comfortable and economic, and everything else that is necessary for the proper conduct of human affairs; and finally that it is possible for us to

endow our cities with these qualities.

To help in the cultivation of these new attitudes I suggest two devices. One of them is already in existence, and I am referring to such citizens' movements as the American Society of Planning Officials, and the Community Planning Association of Canada whose work in stimulating the public's awareness of the physical environment, and awakening its interest in the planning of that environment is one of the most important instruments we have in this struggle. We must extend these discussions and draw into them all the elements that are involved in or concerned with the creation of that environment. It is only through such discussion that we can arrive at a common understanding of goals for our cities and common agreement on measures to achieve them. I regard this work as of the same order of importance and utility as zoning bylaws and master plans and all the other implements we have for carrying out plans; and in the long run I think it will be more effective.

The other necessary device I suggest is that of formal education. It is becoming clear that if our urban environment is to be refashioned in a way which will serve our present and future needs more satisfactorily, there must be undertaken a program of public education in the perception of the environment.

Educators in recent times have been extremely sensitive to the changes in our society and to the need to adjust educational programs to meet those changes. The new curricula in mathematics, science, languages, and so on are evidence of their awareness of the changing world. However the whole field of education of the visual sense is still virtually ignored. The development of an understanding of the visual arts, and indeed the cultivation of the whole faculty of visual perception is still regarded as either something effete and degenerate, or else a wanton and sinful waste of time.

Such an attitude was perhaps not seriously damaging in a frontier society. In those circumstances it may even have been possible to derive a measure of self-righteous satisfaction from attending to the serious problems of life first and leaving such frills as art and culture to the older centres of civilization. In today's circumstances we retain such

obsolete attitudes at our peril. We are now squarely up against an environmental challenge of the first magnitude; and in this case the environment is not the natural environment of our frontier but our man-made environment of today and tomorrow. If we are going to be able to tolerate the intensified urban life which is now evolving, then we must start looking at our cities as something which can be purposively fashioned and molded. I suggest that the place to start looking at them in this way is in our elementary schools. I think that an understanding of the city in the terms I have been discussing and the ability to perceive the urban environment as a full visual experience must be one of the objectives of formal education in an urban society. In the same way that we include instruction in civics, history, mathematics, English and so on as part of the basic school curriculum, so must we include instruction in the nature of the city and in environmental perception.

In my view, the two or three basic measures which I have indicated are planning devices in exactly the same sense as official plans, urban renewal schemes and all the other procedures and techniques which we normally consider as the proper machinery of planning. Indeed, to the degree that we can succeed in heightening our awareness of our environment by these basic measures, we will render superfluous all that other cumbersome and complicated apparatus we now find necessary for the implementation of planning proposals.

The Urban Community: Its Collective Problems (1968)

Address to the Saskatchewan Summer Institute of Public Affairs, Yorkton, Saskatchewan, August 15th 1968.

The theme “The urban community: its collective problems” suggests that there is something which can be identified as an urban community, and that the members of this community suffer from certain problems in common. It seems to me that there is considerable ambiguity about the meaning of the word “urban,” and therefore serious doubt about the validity of the notion of an “urban community;” moreover, I am quite certain that the great variety of places commonly described as “urban” do not share the same kinds of problems.

One of the most frequently heard observations about Canada is that we are now an urban people. According to the 1966 Dominion Census, about 74% of Canadians live in urban centres, and 48% of Canadians live in what are referred to as major urban centres or “big cities” - the 19 centres which have 100,000 people or more.

The fourth annual report of the Economic Council of Canada has some interesting things to say about urbanization in Canada. For example, during the decade 1941 - 51, Canada outstripped nine other industrially advanced countries (including the U.S.A., Britain, Italy, France, Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, Australia and Sweden) in its rate of urban growth. The Council also claims that the end of urbanization in Canada is not yet in sight. By 1980 it expects that there will be just over 25 million people in Canada. Of these, 80% will live in urban centres, and about 60% will live and work in about 29 major urban

centres. The report of the Council also predicts that about one third of all Canadians at that time will live in the three largest urban complexes - Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver.

In spite of these impressive figures however, it can be argued that Canada is still a long way from being an urban society. It must be remembered that the concept of “urban” as used by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics, is based upon the standard of 1000 people: if a community has 1000 or more people it falls within the category of “urban” and the “big city” category according to the Bureau is a community of 100,000 people or more. These standards in themselves provide an extremely revealing insight into the nature of the Canadian conception of the nature of urbanism.

Recently the CBC ran a television show which was produced originally for the BBC dealing with the experiences of an Indian who returned on a visit to his place of birth in India after having spent 17 years in England. One of the early sequences in the film shows the protagonist on the train as it speeds toward his home town, reflecting on his life and wondering how he will react to his home town after such a long absence. During his train of thought, which is made audible to the viewing audience, he keeps repeating the idea “and now, after all these years I am returning to this tiny village where I was born.” It turns out that the “tiny village” of his birth has a population of 12,000.

This is a very significant fact when one considers that a community of 12,000 would be somewhere between the fifth and seventh biggest city in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia; it would be the third biggest city in Newfoundland, the second biggest city in Prince Edward Island, and the biggest city in the whole of the territories of the Canadian north.

The fact is that Canada is a nation of small communities, and the urban standard of 1000 persons adopted by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics would hardly register as a hamlet in any of the world's densely populated countries, just as the Bureau's standard of 100,000 as the qualification for “big city” would hardly admit such a community into the

category of “town.” As for the Economic Council's predictions for the year 1980, even if they are realized and one third of all Canadians will at that time live in the centres of Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver (which even today may with justification be described as “big cities”), two thirds of the Canadian population will still be living in relatively small communities. The importance of this fact must not be minimized because it has much to do with the nature of our settlements, and the kinds of problems which beset them.

It is not possible to be precise and clinical in describing the various kinds of urban communities in terms of their size categories. And yet there seems to be a very direct relationship between the nature of a community, and particularly the type of problem which is characteristic of it, and the size of that community. Generally the types of problems which we read about in the literature on urbanism these days are typically the problems of the very big city - the city of over one million people, although some of these problems manifest themselves in communities of half a million, and some even in communities of one quarter million. Communities of 100,000 people have much more in common with those below them in size than they have with those which are greater. I like to think of these phenomena as occurring on a series of plateaus, each plateau comprising a different size range of cities with their attendant characteristics and problems. I am not suggesting that there is any scientific validity in this observation. I am simply describing to you a phenomenon which I seem to have discerned empirically over a period of about fifteen years of close involvement in and analysis of urban phenomena. It seems to me that there are four of these major plateaus. The first consists of communities of up to about 100,000 people; the second consists of those between 100,000 and five hundred thousand; the third between five hundred thousand and one million; and the fourth consists of those places with over one million people.

Further differentiations can probably be made amongst communities greater than one million in population. But I don't think that any Canadian community has as yet moved out of the first plateau in the over one million category, and these further differentiations need not concern us here.

In addition to the differences attributable to size, there are also differences attributable to location. A community of about 100,000 in Saskatchewan, such as Saskatoon, is quite a different place from its counterpart in Ontario - say a place like Kitchener-Waterloo. Kitchener-Waterloo is even quite different from Fort William-Port Arthur, even though their sizes are fairly similar and both are in Ontario. Fort William-Port Arthur seems to have more in common with Saskatoon than with Kitchener-Waterloo.

What I am suggesting is that there is no such thing as a universal urban community of the kind implied in our discussion theme. There are at least four categories of urban community, and their characteristics and their problems are vastly different from each other.

Places with up to about 100,000 people I consider small communities, and have the problems typical of small communities. Yet these characteristics prevail in communities of up to about 250,000. In general terms, their problems are the problems of slow growth, small population, inability to compete with the large centres and the lack of an adequate revenue base to finance the services for which they are responsible. In the main their economic problems are the result of their narrow and limited economic base; this is particularly true of the small prairie centres. Their main social problems arise out of the rigid limitations imposed by small populations; and the main physical problems lie in the field of housing, the destruction of the physical continuity of the community by the railways and the general lack of urbanity in the environment.

As a community grows beyond 100,000 towards the half-million mark, the problems change markedly, and become problems which are the result of the decentralization of development, and the proliferation of suburbs. It is not until about the half-million mark is reached however, that the problems of decentralization become full-blown. Between 500,000 and 1,000,000 problems of congestion and traffic circulation become the acute issues; and over a million the problems of the "conurbation" and the "megalopolis" are dominant, which is really an acute form of all the problems that have emerged along the way, plus a number of others which had previously not been experienced. These latter

types of problems lie not only in the area of the physical environment, but also and perhaps even paramount, in the area of social or behavioural phenomena.

In general terms however, I take it that the urban problems which are referred to in our discussion theme are the same problems as are dealt with in the current literature on urban problems, and these in the main are the problems which have been created by the automobile, which has made possible the large-scale decentralization of our cities, and the emergence of a new industrial technology which has made possible the massive movement of people from the countryside into our cities.

Before the coming of the automobile the city was fairly tightly drawn; its perimeter was clearly defined; the distance from the centre to the perimeter was relatively short; and the central area was the real and only hub of the business, entertainment,

“We have not developed the capacity to see or to perceive the urban environment with the same degree of empathy as we do the natural environment.”

cultural and government life of the community. A profile drawn of the city at this stage of its development would show a peak at the centre and a rapid falling off from the centre in all directions towards the hard line of the perimeter. This conical form represents the classic form of the city; it also symbolizes the relative stability and order of urban society at that time.

The automobile, along with the other changes in technology and in values, made it possible for housing to be extended almost without limit into millions of acres of new land at remote locations from the central city. But almost equally important was the decentralization of business and places of employment. These were initially such activities as manufacturing, wholesaling and retailing. Now the trend is being followed by offices; and the high-rise apartment block, which at one time was considered exclusively a downtown phenomenon, is today, particularly in the bigger centres, perhaps

even more a normal component of suburbia than it is of the central area. At the present time the process of movement out from the centre is continuing, and the suburban areas generally are proliferating. Although suburban living provides some advantages such as the opportunity to own one's own home, and to enjoy living at low densities of development with relatively large amounts of open space, it also has some serious disadvantages. Generally it takes a long time for a suburban area to come to maturity, with its full complement of local improvements such as street paving, street lighting, landscaping and so on. In the meanwhile, life usually must be led in circumstances of muddy surroundings, of lack of trees, and of general barrenness and monotony, until the final improvements are all in place.

Perhaps more important than these disadvantages is the fact that very often there are no shopping facilities or other services close at hand, requiring a special trip by automobile or bus every time something is required at the store, and in most instances even a bus service is not available. The journey to work also requires an automobile trip, sometimes lasting anywhere from half an hour to an hour, because it is unusual that much employment opportunity will be located within easy reach of a suburban residential subdivision.

Finally, most of the families living in any given residential suburb are more or less of the same age and class. This creates a social uniformity which has its own problems. Baby sitters are often not available, life in the area has little color, variety or stimulation; older people, poor people, "different" people are rarely encountered, and children grow up without the benefit of the excitement and stimulation which are found in areas of greater diversity.

The personal or family disadvantages of the suburbs are often matched by those in the public or municipal sphere. Local governments frequently find it almost impossible to provide adequate municipal services to these suburban residential areas because of the great cost involved. Densities of development are so low, and often the new suburb is so far out beyond the last existing development, that the cost of extending sewer and water

services, schools, roads, police, transit, power and other services is extremely high. Since the area has little or no industrial or commercial assessment, these services must be paid for out of residential taxation, which has a limited taxable capacity.

Decentralization has radically changed the traditional form of the city. It has not changed it so completely or so successfully however, as to create a new urban environment fully compatible with the needs of contemporary urban living. The central area is still an important place of employment and of shopping for many suburbanites; it is also the most common place of residence for the poor and the aged.

In the very early years of city growth, the central area was the fashionable part of town, and the affluent and important built their homes in or near the centre of urban life. With changing times, domestic service became more difficult to obtain; the stately mansions more difficult to maintain, and with the departure of children, less desirable as the homes of their founders.

The suburban municipalities however, became responsible for the provision of schools and all other required municipal services but had only the residential property tax to draw upon, which is not as productive of revenues as business and industrial taxes for financing these services.

On the other hand, the reverse was often true. Industries moved out to the suburbs because they could not expand in their downtown locations, or because changing technology required more land for the new industrial processes, and land was both available and cheaper in the suburbs; the employees of the industries continued to live in the central city. The burden of servicing the population then fell on the city while the greatest source of municipal revenue, the industry which employed the central city's people paid its taxes to a rural municipality which was very likely to be in a position where such revenues were far beyond what they required to serve their small rural population.

The kinds of problems created by the process of decentralization are: tremendous congestion on the roads between place of work and place of residence, particularly at peak hours; vicious competition between suburban municipalities (as well as between them and the central city) for revenue-producing industrial development; depopulation of the central business district with the resultant contraction of the tax base of the central city; loss of vitality and attractiveness of the downtown, but no compensating attraction in the suburbs; extension of urbanization over the countryside, often at the expense of valuable agricultural land such as the Niagara fruit belt; costly extension of roads, of sewer and water services, and of schools, which make possible further suburban proliferation which in turn demands further extension of services; fragmentation of the structure of government into a myriad separate municipalities and other local government jurisdictions, each quite inadequate to perform the task of governing the new urban complex; lack of variety and “richness of mix” in our residential suburbs; vast expenditures on highways and streets to carry the flow of automobiles which seems to be self-defeating inasmuch as the more street capacity which is created, the more vehicle use is seemingly generated with no apparent improvement in the congestion of traffic, but with enormous consumption of land for highway purposes.

These problems are the problems of big cities, and are absent or only dimly felt in the smaller urban centres. It is unlikely that any community of less than a quarter of a million people is much distressed by such difficulties. Perhaps one or two of the many listed will be found in cities of smaller size but it would be extraordinary to find them all in the smaller urban centre. Even in the larger centres, it is most unlikely that all of these phenomena would occur together in a community of much less than half a million people.

As suggested earlier, Canada is a country of relatively small communities. The problems of urbanization described above are therefore not the most common problems; and in some regions of the country they are hardly problems at all. For most places in the Maritimes, in Quebec, on the prairies, and in British Columbia, apart from the one or two metropolitan centres in these regions, the problems are those of the slowness or the

absence of growth rather than rapid growth and vast decentralization. It is true that all urban centres are growing, and the largest centres are growing most rapidly. Even growing as they are, the smaller centres suffer by comparison with, and indeed because of, the larger centres.

Smaller cities find it very difficult to attract new industries, new investments, new talent and new people with new ideas. Because of this they even find it difficult to keep their own native young people who leave the town of their birth to seek the employment opportunity, the excitement and the challenge of the larger metropolitan areas, which seem to be attracting most of the urban talent and resources of the country. The unfortunate thing about this phenomenon is that the smaller centres will find it increasingly difficult to provide and maintain a high level of urban services, and to provide continuing employment at satisfactory wages for their citizens.

The costs of local government services have rocketed over the last few decades. Particularly the costs of roads and of education have grown so burdensome that most local governments are finding them impossible to finance. The growth of the tax-base has nothing like kept pace with the growth of costs, which has meant that the property tax has had to bear an increasing and crushing burden of local government financing.

In view of the great difficulties which trouble our cities, one might well ask why it is that such vast numbers of people continue to flock to them. One of the principle reasons is of course the economic one. Industries continue to locate in the urban centres because of the economic advantages of such locations, which means that here is where the jobs are found. Wages are consistently and absolutely higher in the city than in rural areas. And wages can buy more in the city. The range of goods is wider; the types of services are more varied. Beyond that, the individual has a very wide choice in matters of very personal concern. Employment opportunity is greater, experiences are more diversified, and the demand for personal talent and ability is almost insatiable. The individual can be caught up in public and group activities or he can remain virtually anonymous if he chooses. Entertainment, stimulation and excitement are available in great variety and

abundance. The city is where the ideas and the opportunities are. That is why, in spite of the enormous problems which now beset our larger urban centres, they continue to draw our people from the farms and the smaller centres; and the larger the city the more powerful seems to be its attraction.

I said at the opening of my remarks that the various categories of communities have few, if any, problems in common. But they do have some problems in common and amongst these are problems which arise out of our way of looking at the world and of doing things which arise out of our way of life. Our system of land ownership for example is one of the most serious problems facing our cities, felt most acutely in the bigger places, but also felt in the smaller centres. Because urban land is held in small parcels by hundreds of thousands of separate owners, and is regarded as a marketable commodity, from the sale of which every owner expects a handsome profit, it becomes virtually impossible to put together suitable sites for large scale and economical development in the right locations, and the cost of serviced land constantly rises.

Another and related problem is the fact that we regard speculative profits in land as legitimate profits which should accrue to the landowner, in spite of the fact that it is the investment by the public in sewer and water and power services, in streets, in schools and parks, which gives to that person's land its added value.

Another problem is our land tax structure which penalizes good quality and high cost development by exacting from it a higher tax than from poor quality and low cost development. One of the iniquitous results of this practice is to reward the slum landlord with a very low tax rate on his slum properties.

We all share the problem of our attitudes to the city. We have a whole inheritance which is anti-urban, and the various aspects of this anti-urban culture manifest themselves in a great variety of ways. One of the great common deficiencies in this area is that we have not developed the capacity to see or to perceive the urban environment with the same degree of empathy as we do the natural environment.

Another very serious difficulty it seems to me is the gradual erosion or attrition of the sense of community or collectivity. Our society is so organized that to spend large sums on personal satisfactions in the private sector, mainly through the consumption of manufactured commodities is a virtue; but to divert money from this pursuit to the public sector for parks, playgrounds, civic embellishment and beauty, borders on the irresponsible if not the criminal.

And finally we all share the common problem of the vast inertia of our institutions. We can't change our social and political arrangements

“[We] now live in a physical-technological environment which is far too complex and important to leave to the politicians to control.”

fast enough to keep pace with the changing world of knowledge and technical capacity. It was of course Aristotle who said “men come together to live; they come together in cities to live the good life”. That was in the fourth century B.C. and here we are, almost 2500 years later, discussing the very same proposition, and what's more, discussing it in the very same terms! This is perhaps a tribute to the greatness of Aristotle's mind. But it seems to me that it is even more a commentary on the inertia of everybody else's. Aristotle conceived of the life in the city as essentially a political drama.

I would like to suggest to you that this view is an essentially anachronistic one. I am not suggesting that the struggle for power does not go on in our cities. But I am suggesting that it doesn't really matter a great deal which group has the power because they will all make the same mess of the city.

I am suggesting that the big city has now become so complex that to assume that its political power configuration will determine its effectiveness as an environment in which to live is to be perhaps not 2500 years out of date, but certainly at least 50 years out of date. I think that we can only begin to solve our urban problems if we regard the city not

as a political arena, but as an artifact - something which man has created out of an amalgam of many things, but which can and must be moulded and fashioned and manipulated in the same way that we do all of our other technological artifacts. Not that we can entirely forget that man is a political animal, but rather that we must somehow learn to reconcile this fact with the fact that this political animal now lives in a physical-technological environment which is far too complex and important to leave to the politicians to control. We need a change in emphasis from the political to the technological problems of the city.

In conclusion, let me say that apart from the problems of environmental perception I don't think that any city in Saskatchewan has any problems which couldn't be solved if they had enough money to finance their local government responsibilities. "The urban crisis" is, I think, something of a misnomer in the Saskatchewan context. There are problems here of course. But as I tried to suggest earlier, they are the problems of the small communities, and I think they could be dealt with quite successfully by some re-arrangement of responsibilities and revenue sources between the local governments and the senior government.

Some Reasons for Urban Decline (1969)

An address to The Conference on Law and World Affairs, University of Toronto
November 21st, 1969.

There is a widespread and growing conviction that the cities of this continent – certainly the largest cities, and perhaps of other continents as well – are becoming unfit for human habitation. Many informed and knowledgeable observers say that we are now witnessing the breakdown of urban life in the great urban centres of the United States. It seems to me that the evidence supporting this view is very persuasive. Moreover, and alarmingly, the breakdown is not confined to the cities of the United States; similar symptoms are now in clear evidence in some of our own cities here in Canada.

It is a mistake to attribute what is happening in the American cities solely to the racial conflict. The whole dreary inventory of urban pathology – environmental pollution, traffic congestion, housing crises, crime, violence, neuroses, mental breakdown, as well as the slums and the ghettos – is of long-standing record, and of widespread and indiscriminate incidence. It is not merely a chronicle of the consequences flowing from the Americans' insane attempt to dehumanize the Negro, but is a reflection of our incapacity to adjust to the contemporary city. The quality of urban life is deteriorating seriously; it will continue to deteriorate and the deterioration will spread through our largest urban centres, and perhaps will even infect our medium-sized centres as well, unless we can accomplish a massive transformation in the major institutions and attitudes of our culture. Time is running out, and unless this transformation can be accomplished soon, we may well witness the collapse of urban society as we now know it. Let me

indicate to you the things which I think are involved in the decline of the urban condition in the contemporary world.

Firstly, it is important to understand that the city of today is unlike anything known before in history. The city of the past was relatively small, had a clearly defined perimeter, was relatively stable in size, and was simply

“We have failed to make the changes in our attitudes towards the city, and in our social and political institutions, which are absolutely necessary if the city is to continue to be the normal dwelling-place of mankind.”

differentiated in its functions; its population was immobile both physically and socially; and the influence of science and technology was limited in the extent to which it determined the affairs of the population as a whole or of the individual. None of this is true of the contemporary city. The city today is enormous in size; its boundary is blurred and smudged, and simply disappears in the proliferation of suburbs miles away from the centre; it is growing at an explosive rate; it is extremely complex in its functions; its population is highly mobile both physically and socially; and it is completely pervaded by the most sophisticated electronic and machine technology the world has ever known. We, however, have failed to recognize that the city has changed in these ways, profoundly, from its historical form and function; and we have failed to make the changes in our attitudes towards the city, and in our social and political institutions, which are absolutely necessary if the city is to continue to be the normal dwelling-place of mankind.

Few of us, even amongst those most intimately involved in urban affairs, give much thought to the city as a city. Most people merely react to the minutiae in their immediate environment. They are enraged by the noise of the very late party next door; they are exasperated by the traffic snarl; they are delighted by the appearance of the park on a summer's day; they may even be proud of some handsome public building. But rarely do

they comprehend the city as a whole. And even on those rare occasions when the city is comprehended as a totality, it is generally thought of as the inert, merely physical and artificial background against which people carry on the activities, much like the painted backdrop in a theatre.

I prefer the term “ecostructure” because it makes the point that the city is created by man, and differentiates it from the natural environment or “ecosystem” of the biological scientist. Like any other environment, the city has a profound influence on the habits of its inhabitants, on the behaviour of its groups, and on the psychology of its individuals. And conversely, the thoughts and actions of its citizens have a determining influence on the nature and appearance of the city. We cannot do anything to the city without by that act doing something to ourselves, as a group, and as individuals.

Unfortunately we have failed to understand this fundamental relationship with the city. We do not comprehend our place or our role in the ecostructure. This, I suggest, is one of the major contributing causes to the decline in the quality of our urban environment. In order to deal with urban problems and policies, it is necessary that there be an attitude towards, and an understanding of the phenomena of urbanism. Such an attitude, and such an understanding are as yet only at a rudimentary stage of development amongst most of us, including the city-dwellers and the members of our urban governments.

Our failure to recognize the nature of the contemporary urban environment may in significant measure be due to our massive rural bias. The fact is that we Canadians do not really like cities, we do not understand them, and we are not at home in them. We prefer the country, and our accommodation to the urban does not stretch very much beyond the small town. We still hold the strong and widespread conviction that the family farm represents the best possible way of life, and that the simple virtues of an agrarian society are man's highest moral achievement. And we carry these attitudes into our cities and even into the seats of government of our cities. The arts still have a genuine appeal to only a very small section of the population, and the idea of spending money on the public embellishment of our cities still seems to most of us a wanton and frivolous waste. It is

therefore not surprising that we have the greatest difficulty in adjusting ourselves to the enormously increasing demands of a constantly intensifying urban-technological environment.

In the area of government institutions, perhaps the most inert and damaging is the anachronistic constitutional proposition that there are only two levels of government, the Federal and the Provincial, and that the city is merely a creature of the Province and has only residual powers and responsibilities. The absurdity of this proposition becomes obvious when one realizes that twenty times as many people live in the city of Toronto as in the Province of Prince Edward Island, or that the cities of Montreal, Toronto, and Vancouver together have twice as many people as the three Prairie Provinces taken together. There can be no doubt that amongst the most serious obstacles in the way of achieving a viable urban environment is the anachronism of the constitutional arrangement and allocation of responsibilities, powers, and resources, amongst the three levels of government.

For eighty years, these respective roles were practiced, and were accepted as the normal way of government in this country. But gradually some profound changes were taking place in our society which were to destroy the effectiveness of that traditional pattern of authority and responsibility. The invention and application of new technologies, changes in demographic trends, the decay of traditional values, and other powerful forces deep-seated in society produced economic and social changes which transformed the world and which still continue to work their revolutionary effects.

Amongst the most palpable and large-scale changes was the emergence of the great metropolis [and] a corresponding decrease in the size of the rural population. The population of Canada has virtually moved from the countryside into the city. This great shift in the population has created severe pressures for the development of land and the provision of services. More than that, it has shifted the focus of national economic and social dynamism into the major urban centres. The cities are now the place where most of us live and work, where most of our material wealth is produced, where most of our ideas

and beliefs are created, where most of our aspirations are located. But the problems are no longer merely the simple housekeeping problems of a century ago; they are no longer merely the problems of providing municipal services to property. Certainly the problem of services has remained and has become more intense with the growth of demand by a rapidly increasing population. But a whole new generation of problems has appeared.

With the cities' new roles as regional and national economic generators, the economic problems which beset us both regionally and nationally have a profound interrelationship with the economy of our major population centres. When the economy of the metropolis is in trouble, the effect is felt throughout its entire regional hinterland, and even throughout the nation. Reciprocally, when national economic forces are unfavorable the effect is felt in the very marrow of urban life.

Economic problems have their correlative social problems. So have physical and environmental problems. Poverty, unemployment, alienation, disorientation, loss of personal identity, apathy, hostility, tension, crime, and harassment, are some of the personal and social illnesses from which the inhabitants of the city suffer. There are also great difficulties in transportation, housing, environmental pollution, urban blight, congestion; and we are profoundly disturbed by doubts about the validity of our values and aspirations both as a society and as individuals. Most of these problems have always beset mankind. But in the new metropolis of our industrial technological society, they have assumed a character and dimension which did not exist before and which in effect makes them a new species of problem. The fact that they are now referred to as "urban" problems is an indication of their identification with the city in a way which did not occur in the past, and which indeed could not have occurred.

The people of the city identify these problems with the city because the city is the milieu in which they experience these problems directly. They are poor in the city, they are unemployed in the city, they are alone in the city, they feel powerless in the city against the overwhelming force of the anonymous and hostile "they" whom they sense to be the men who wield political and economic power in the city. If the roads are congested, if

their housing is inadequate, if their taxes are high, it is the government of the city which is to blame, because that government is the nearest to them, and is the most visible. They turn to their city government for solutions to these problems.

The city government, unfortunately, can be of little help in these matters. These issues have little to do with housekeeping, and the provision of local services to property. For the most part they are issues which can only be dealt with at the level of social and economic policy, and the responsibility for such policy still rests with the federal and provincial levels of government.

This is perhaps the most intractable aspect of the urban dilemma. The governments which have the power to deal with the problems of the cities are farthest removed from the cities and have the least political sensitivity to them. Each level of government has a genuine interest in city problems, but the constraints of the constitution not merely limit the nature and extent of their involvement, but even determine the way in which each one views the problems. As a result there is ambiguity of jurisdiction and role over every urban issue and all levels of government are seriously impaired in their capacity to act.

The federal government understandably sees the problems of the cities from the viewpoint of its own particular policies, so it approaches the question of housing from that particular direction. It is responsible

“The governments which have the power to deal with the problems of the cities are farthest removed from the cities and have the least political sensitivity to them.”

for the equalization of regional disparities in our federal system, so the cities are seen from the viewpoint of their potential role in the achievement of those goals. It must take a national overview of all issues affecting the welfare of the nation, so it sees cities as comprising a national urban continuum rather than as unique entities, each with its own characteristic problems requiring unique solutions, and accordingly it creates a federal

ministry of urban affairs to develop urban programs on a national scale and operating within a national framework of terms of reference and regulations which cannot be other than self-defeating.

The federal government conscientiously avoids becoming directly involved in the affairs of the cities because under the British North America Act that is the prerogative of the province. This statutory constraint however does not prevent the federal government, in seeking to carry out its own statutory responsibilities, from initiating a wide variety of city-oriented programs. Such programs must necessarily be indirect in their route to the cities, and cannot be designed to meet the specific needs of any particular city. For these reasons, federal urban programs are often controversial, and always cumbersome, slow to develop, difficult to implement and only marginally effective. Beyond these reasons, the federal government's remoteness from the cities - physically, statutorily, bureaucratically, empathetically, and because its major priorities lie within other aspects of national life - makes it impossible for the federal government to have any real insight into the nature of the city and its needs, or to develop any appropriate basis for its urban programs.

The province still sees its role as the policy-making authority for the area under its jurisdiction, including the cities, and still sees the city's role as merely that of housekeeping, or in any event still believes that the city has the statutory power and the financial capacity to deal with those responsibilities which they have delegated to it and which are its proper concern. Unfortunately, the responsibilities which have been delegated to the municipal level of government are no longer adequate for the task of running the city. Moreover, it is a measure of the inadequacy of the municipal capacity to manage its affairs that the property tax – virtually the only source of municipal revenue - is no longer capable of raising sufficient revenues for even the traditional services and housekeeping responsibilities of municipal government. The cities have neither the statutory powers nor the financial resources to cope with the demands of city government, and it seems unlikely that the provinces will readily agree to convey to them a greater measure of either because that would diminish both their own political power and their financial capacity.

It is understandable that the provinces would want to preserve their own position in the sphere of provincial jurisdiction under the provisions of the British North America Act. They undoubtedly have the best motives and are persuaded that only in that way can equity and justice be brought to all areas under their authority. The fact is however that the provinces, like the federal

government are remote from the cities. Their point of view is turned away from the cities, and it is in their political interests (and indeed consistent with their inner persuasions) to be seen to be concerned about the non-

“City problems cannot be solved by provincial governments; they can only properly be dealt with by city governments, but of course, only if those governments have the powers which are necessary.”

urban sectors of provincial life. But in our contemporary world the great issues of provincial life are urban. The metropolis is the milieu in which are generated the major forces, both creative and destructive, which have an enormous impact throughout the whole of the provincial hinterland. Clearly, the difficulties which beset our metropolitan areas cannot begin to be solved until this fact is recognized, and the necessary authority and resources are vested in the governments of those areas. City problems cannot be solved by provincial governments; they can only properly be dealt with by city governments, but of course, only if those governments have the powers which are necessary. At the present time, those governments do not even have the powers necessary to deal with the traditional housekeeping chores of the city.

Most city councils also still see their role as merely that of housekeeping, providing the traditional municipal services. Urbanization has occurred so rapidly, and the changes it has brought to the cities have been so profound that not only have our political and social institutions been unable to adjust to them but even our perception of the new urban world has been bewildered and unable to keep pace. Not many members of city councils understand the nature of the contemporary city; not many realize that the government of

the city requires policies and programs of a kind which traditionally have not been the city's responsibility, and which the city still cannot undertake; not many perceive that the exasperation and disaffection of their constituents is simply the result of that hiatus between what needs to be done in the city and city councils' powers to do it. Indeed the constituents themselves do not perceive the nature of the dilemma. There is amongst Canadians a deeply rooted identification with the wilderness and the frontier, and a corresponding lack of empathy with the city. It is not surprising therefore that there is little understanding amongst them or their political representatives of the nature of the city and how it affects their daily lives, or that there is no sense of urgency to change conditions so that the city can be made a more satisfactory place in which to live.

The traditional roles of the three levels of government have not left any real policy-making functions to the municipal level, even though there is often reference made to the policy-making role of municipal councils. As a result policy functions and administrative functions are hopelessly confused in most municipalities, and few city councillors recognize the difference between them. Councillors become intimately involved in administrative matters and think they are dealing with policy. The administration is often forced to become involved in policy matters because the council does not regard these matters (particularly if they are in the area of long-range development concepts) as of great political consequence. The frame of reference within which municipal government has functioned from the beginning, makes it almost impossible for a member of city council to regard seriously any issues outside of housekeeping services, and to have a longer time horizon than the next municipal election. Unfortunately, the urban reality has evolved far beyond those limits, and is now beyond the reach of the urban governments.

It is not likely that satisfactory means of managing our large urban areas can be found within the framework of our present constitutional arrangements. The federal-provincial conferences on the constitution which have been held at fairly regular intervals over the last number of years, have so far not even recognized the question of a constitutional amendment giving the metropolis a new status. The admission of municipal representatives as observers to the conferences was regarded as a great break through,

even by municipal officials. Perhaps it was. But it is a long way from the status and powers needed by the metropolis if it is to begin to deal effectively with the real problems of urban life. Probably nothing short of the status and authority of the autonomous city-state will be sufficient. Only in this way can enough resources be mustered and devoted not simply to the solution of the day-to-day problems which beset the city, but to the creation of an urban environment which is truly fit for human habitation. Only in this way can the city sit down with the other levels of government, as more-or-less equals, to discuss the issues in which all three have an interest.

At the present time the prospect for the creation of the autonomous city-state, even for the largest centres (say those of half a million or more inhabitants) seems extremely remote, if not impossible. Yet if the largest centres were to band together and work out a strategy for asserting their claims and defending their interests, expressed perhaps in the form of a manifesto and a program, they might be able to bring about changes which would enlarge their powers and resources for dealing with what are now essentially problems of the large-city scale of settlement and the urban way of life.

At the level of detailed, day-to-day operations, a number of sacred institutions and devices have outlived their usefulness, and we have not yet been able to effect the necessary adjustments either to remove them as impediments or to restore them to a useful and creative role in shaping the contemporary city. These are our system of holding land, our system of real property taxation, and the legal techniques for land use control, particularly the zoning by-law.

Our attitudes towards government generally do not help matters. The widespread view, for example, that government should not acquire land for long-range development purposes, is a very serious restriction of the capacity of government to cope with the problems of rapid and large-scale urbanization.

Another inhibition of public action is the still firmly entrenched tenet of our political philosophy that mere regulation and surveillance are the proper limits of public

participation in the creation of the environment, and that the private developer, working within the established framework of the private enterprise system, and pursuing his own best self-interest will, by that very process, produce what is best for society as a whole. Today, in the context of the contemporary world, such views are naive and archaic. The private entrepreneur pursuing his own self-interest has in fact produced the environmental mess in which we are now floundering; and the notion that “enlightened self-interest” is identical with the public interest appears as the superficial fantasy of a younger and perhaps more innocent era.

The role of both private enterprise and government in the creation of the urban environment must undergo some pretty radical changes if we are to salvage and preserve the city as the proper milieu for human life. I think that there is really only one way in which that salvation and preservation can be accomplished, and that is through the long-range planning of urban development. In that planning process, private enterprise and public enterprise will have to work out new relationships and the basic meaning and objectives of the planning function will have to be clarified. Planning can no longer mean merely the conceiving of ideas, the production of reports, and the exercise of the zoning power. There are two aspects to the planning process – the conceptual and the implemental: the formulation of proposals, and the carrying out of those proposals. But these two aspects cannot be separated. It is only when they proceed together that you have planning. Plans without action are merely day-dreams; actions without plans are merely chaos. Our greatest challenge is how to bring these two components together in a continuing comprehensive program to achieve long-range objectives for the preservation and improvement of our cities.

In much of the current discussion of urban problems there seems to be the underlying assumption that there is a specific pathology which afflicts all cities, and that this affliction is amenable to some universal treatment and cure, like aspirin or penicillin.

There follows from this proposition the corollary that if only the proper research can be carried out, all the baffling secrets of the still largely unknown world of urban epidemiology will be unlocked, and there will be discovered the specific prescription for restoring our cities to a condition of health and vitality. Perhaps this is an exaggeration, and the prevailing view of urban issues is not really so simple.

But the general terms in which urban issues are discussed, the recurring use of phrases like “the urban crisis,” do suggest that there is a tendency to lump together all the difficulties experienced by cities into a single category called “urban problems,” and to assume that these problems are all characteristic of and held in common by all cities, and by that very fact, that they are amenable to the same solution. “The urban transportation problem,” “the urban poverty problem,” “the urban housing problem,” are a few of a long list of problems in which the adjective “urban” is a kind of common denominator, reducing all the illnesses to a common pathogen, and linking all the cities together in a community of suffering. The creation of a federal Ministry of Urban Affairs³, it will surely be acknowledged, is based at least in part on the assumption that the difficulties experienced by the cities of Canada are amenable to some sort of universal systematic therapy which can be administered from a remote diagnostic and treatment centre according to a specific prescription, and which will cure Moose Jaw and Montreal alike of their urban afflictions.

Such of course is not the case. One need only recall the federal government's urban renewal policies of the mid-sixties to recognize the error of this viewpoint. There are in fact no universals. “Urban Affairs” as a description of a class of events which are constant and the same in their nature and effect wherever they may be found, is misleading. The similarities are strongest and most apparent at the broadest level of classification, but become quite sharply differentiated as one descends from that general level into underlying layers of peculiar local conditions in the individual communities.

“Transportation Problems” refers to the issues involved in moving people and goods (and

³ This Federal Ministry existed between 1971-1979.

messages) between various locations. But these problems are quite different in say Venice than in New York. “The housing crisis” refers to the critical shortage of housing accommodation, but there is a world of difference between the problem in Weyburn and in Toronto. Nor are the differences merely those of size or physical conditions; the particular economic, social, and political configurations of the community are perhaps the most important determinants of the way in which its problems manifest themselves and of the specific measures necessary to deal with them. And to those determinants can be added the personalities and outlooks of the individuals in positions of political and economic power. Each city is unique; the problems which affect it are really quite different from those of other cities and must be dealt with in terms of each one's specific and peculiar characteristics.

“Regional government” is regarded as a solution to the problems arising out of fragmented political authority. This solution was suggested for the sparsely populated rural society of Saskatchewan fifteen years ago, as it is now being applied in the densely populated, highly urbanized society of Ontario. But there is virtually nothing in common between the two other than the superficial similarity of the attempt to centralize certain decision-making powers at the municipal level of government. In the sense that the intent in both cases was to consolidate these fragmented powers and vest them in a single authority having jurisdiction over a certain geographic area, they may presumably be described in the lexicon of political science as “regional government.” However in the sense of the actual role and responsibility of the authority, the problems to be dealt with, the process of government, and the economic and social context within which each would operate, they have very little in common.

It is simply a quirk of our conceptual processes which uses the same description for these two really quite different arrangements: the name is mistaken for the thing it represents; and it is a defect in our understanding of urban problems which leads to the prescription of “regional government” as a solution of these problems at two such very different levels of economic, social and political organization.

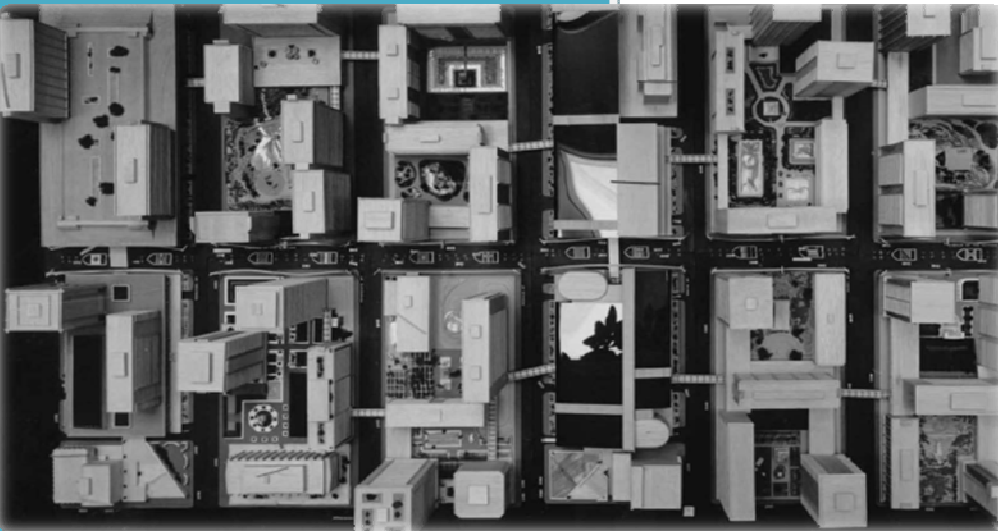
Perhaps the point is self evident, and the foregoing argument has been excessively

labored. It is however an extremely important point, and merits emphasis – even at the risk of being excessive - in the context of this discussion. The danger of thinking in terms of universals such as “The urban problem,” “urban renewal,” or “regional government” is that it suggests universal solutions. The simple lesson of this text is that although fragmented government powers and jurisdictions, and very rapid rates of urban growth, and severe pressures for development underlie, even as a common substratum, the troubles of many cities, the solution to these problems must vary from city to city. What is appropriate to one community is simply not relevant to another; what works in one place will not work anywhere else in the same form.

Having emphasized that point however, one must nevertheless point out with equal emphasis, that there is indeed a malaise from which all metropolitan centres suffer in common, and which underlies the surface symptoms of urban pathology. That common malaise is not found so much in the problems themselves which beset the cities, but rather in the cities' incapacity to deal with those problems.

On the evidence so far there seems little grounds for optimism that we can effectively manage our metropolitan areas simply by adjusting the organization of the urban government or by changing the mechanics of the system. The fundamental change which is necessary is a twofold one. On the one hand we as a people must become more urban in our attitudes and outlook; we must recognize the fact that the city is the only feasible habitat for mankind in the contemporary world and we must want to commit the necessary resources and effort to make the city a fit place for human habitation. On the other hand the city must acquire a very much greater measure of autonomy and power so that it can set about solving its own problems, because as long as the effective power and initiative remain with the federal and provincial governments, it is not likely that the appropriate attitudes or the necessary resources will be devoted to the task of salvaging the city as a decent place for men to live, or even to the somewhat more modest objective of simply the efficient management of our metropolitan areas.

Part Two: The Past and Future of Winnipeg



Metro Winnipeg: A Study in the Dilemma of Metropolitan Area Government in Canada (March 1973)

Location of delivery unknown.

In the decade following the Second World War, Greater Winnipeg consisted of sixteen municipal jurisdictions. During this period the growth rate of the metropolitan area averaged about 3% per year. This is quite a modest rate compared to what other cities were experiencing during the same period, even if certain component municipalities of the Metropolitan Winnipeg conurbation were growing at quite remarkable rates: Fort Garry for example grew by an average of about 16% per year during that ten year period. Had Greater Winnipeg been under a single municipal government, the pressures of growth might have been handled without undue difficulty since the overall rate of growth was not so excessively high as to be beyond the capacity of a community of over four hundred thousand people. The problem was not in the rate of urbanization, but rather in the community's incapacity to deal with it; and that incapacity lay in the fragmentation of authority and division of jurisdiction amongst sixteen separate municipalities.

The history of Greater Winnipeg during that period is one of inter-municipal rivalry and non-cooperation. Badly needed transportation arteries and trunk sewer and water services could not be provided to the growing municipalities because agreement could not be reached on the sharing of costs and responsibilities. Nor was it only on the question of major traffic arteries and underground trunk services that there was division. Every municipality tried to outdo the other in the attraction of industry in order to broaden its tax base. Every municipality pursued its own development objectives, and directed its zoning bylaw to that end. There was no uniformity in land use control regulations, or in building regulations, and development of any kind was difficult to manage within such a system. There were inequities in taxation and services: much of the new industrial tax

revenues went to suburban municipalities, while much of the burden of social welfare costs fell upon the central city.

In 1960, the provincial legislature of Manitoba enacted the Metropolitan Corporation of Greater Winnipeg Act, and it was

“Every activity of a municipal government is in fact a planning activity.”

hoped that the creation of a two-tier metropolitan structure of government would overcome the difficulties which frustrated effective municipal government in the Winnipeg area. That hope was not realized. Certainly the metropolitan government achieved some notable successes within the limits of the services for which it was responsible. Under the Metropolitan Winnipeg Act, the metro council was responsible for the major street system, trunk sewer and water systems, major parks, planning and zoning, the public transit system, and a number of minor functions such as emergency measures and mosquito control. In the area of major streets, trunk services, and major parks it was extremely effective - perhaps the most effective municipal government in the history of Winnipeg. It developed and operated one of the two or three most successful public transit systems in Canada. It produced and was committed to one of the most progressive and imaginative downtown development plans in North America. But it only lasted for ten years and then was replaced by another municipal structure. It is still much too early to tell whether the new form will be any more successful or lasting than that which it replaced. The durability of the present form of municipal government in Winnipeg is of course largely a matter of provincial government discretion; but if its success will be measured by how effectively the needs of its citizens are satisfied, then it too is probably doomed to failure.

When the Metropolitan Corporation of Greater Winnipeg was created in 1960, Metro Toronto had already been in existence for about five years. The problems of providing municipal services and of equalizing tax revenues and municipal cost burdens in Winnipeg had reached an exacerbated condition, and this was undoubtedly due to the

fragmentation of municipal authority and jurisdiction. There also can be little doubt that the solution which was devised by the government of Manitoba was strongly influenced by the Toronto example. At that time, the concept of regional government was enjoying a great vogue amongst political theorists, and the fresh achievement of metropolitanism in Toronto, under the vigorous leadership of Fred Gardner, could be pointed to not only as the living proof of the theory, but as a trail-blazing revolutionary solution to the problems of big-city government.

Perhaps the two-tier system, with considerable power and autonomy still retained by the second tier of local municipalities is an appropriate form of municipal government for a metropolitan area with a population as large as two million people. It cannot however serve as a model for a relatively small community of four hundred thousand; particularly not when that community's difficulties arise mainly out of the condition of multiple jurisdictions and split authority.

The Metropolitan Corporation of Greater Winnipeg Act did little to resolve the problems of fragmented authority. The concept underlying the Act seems to have been that there are certain functions which are "metropolitan" or "inter-municipal," in character and others which are local in character. Obviously such a distinction, if it can be made at all, is a function of size; it cannot be meaningful in a very small village of several hundred people, for example. At what point it begins to take on meaning, if at all, is presumably a matter of judgment. Moreover, the validity of the distinction must also rest upon which functions are identified as "metropolitan" and which as "local."

It can be argued that the distinction was not appropriate in the Winnipeg situation because of its size and character. Historically there had grown up in the area a multiplicity of municipalities; and with the passage of time, each became strongly entrenched in its position, parochial in its outlook, jealous of its powers and vain about its identity. But physically, economically, culturally, and in every other way, they were all really only one community suffering common problems, enjoying common fortunes and sharing a common destiny. The powerful differences which separated them were of course

political, and what the Metro Winnipeg Act attempted to do was to recognize and preserve those political differences while making a gesture in the direction of the issues of their common interest. This it tried to achieve by distinguishing between responsibilities which were “metropolitan” on the one hand and “local” on the other. Even if the distinction were valid in the context of the size of Greater Winnipeg, it failed in terms of the responsibilities it allocated to the respective tiers of government.

The distinction between major roads and minor roads can be made theoretically; in fact it often is made, and serves some useful purposes. Operationally however, major roads and minor roads form a single transportation system. To divide political and administrative responsibility on the basis of the possible theoretical distinction jeopardizes the system and creates operational difficulties. The same is true for underground services systems and parks and recreation systems. Nevertheless, these systems can be divided in this way and each part put under a separate authority and the systems can still function somehow, although at a very low level of effectiveness. The “planning system” cannot be divided in this way and function at all. Planning is nothing more or less than the making and carrying out of policy. The formulation of a municipal plan of development is nothing more or less than the formulation of a policy for guiding the development of that municipality. The responsibility for such policy must remain undivided, if there are several levels of municipal authority, each with significant powers to make and carry out policy, then planning becomes virtually impossible.

In the Metro Winnipeg situation, the legislation attempted to separate planning from other municipal responsibilities. This was perhaps inevitable because “planning” was thought of as being something apart from the municipal council's normal day-to-day responsibilities in the guiding of municipal affairs (this distinction of course is not peculiar to the Metro Winnipeg Act but is a common one throughout the municipal world), and these day-to-day responsibilities were thought of as being “local” in character and therefore belonging exclusively and inalienably to the area municipalities.

The fact however is that “planning” is the very essence of the local government

responsibilities, and to think of that function as something apart from local improvements, street layouts, land subdivision, public works programs, tax revenues, industrial development, development agreements, welfare programs, employment programs, education etc., is to misunderstand the nature of the planning function. Every activity of a municipal government is in fact a planning activity, simply because it is part of the process of formulating and carrying out municipal policy. The Metro Winnipeg Act through the statutory and organizational framework which it prescribed, attempted to make the distinction between the “planning” responsibility and the other municipal responsibilities, and allocated the one to the metropolitan level of government, and the other, what were considered local responsibilities to the area municipalities.

In practice, it is impossible to separate what is of metropolitan concern and what is of local concern, and retain a coherent planning function. In a unitary form of government, with only one council, that council is by its very nature responsible for the whole spectrum of municipal

“It is naive to expect that the preparation of a ‘plan’ on paper can constitute a pattern or guide for development without the power to ensure that the pattern will in fact be followed.”

functions, and the distinction between “planning” on the one hand, and say, a local improvements bylaw on the other is merely academic, or at best merely an administrative convenience; there is no actual separation of authority for these activities. Such a council can not only conceive a long-range plan of municipal development, but can exercise a very great deal of authority to ensure that it is carried out. In the Metro Winnipeg situation it was almost impossible even merely to conceive a plan of development, let alone carry it out, because it was inevitable that the proposals of such a plan would intrude into the area which the local councils felt was their area of exclusive jurisdiction, which assumption in very many instances, was of course correct, because of the two-level allocation of powers.

A plan is not merely an idea; it is an idea and an action to carry out that idea. The authority for the one must have jurisdiction over the other, or the whole planning process becomes simply a battle of attrition to wear down each other's power to resist. It is over-optimistic to expect one government to carry out the proposals of a development plan which has been prepared by another government of similar status; and it is naive to expect that the preparation of a "plan" on paper can constitute a pattern or guide for development without the power to ensure that the pattern will in fact be followed.

The zoning bylaw is not capable of providing that power. Zoning control is limited in its capacity to ensure conformity with a development plan. It is essentially a negative instrument capable only of regulatory or policing control over the private development of individual building sites. The zoning bylaw says nothing about the nature or pattern of streets, the siting of specific projects, the timing of development, the density of population, the place or composition of public housing, and other similar matters which are the substance of a development plan.

Even more important than the traditional "planning" powers are the powers to control activities in the public sphere, and to initiate and undertake development. Metro Winnipeg had no authority to co-ordinate the capital works program of the area municipalities, and it could not undertake the most important of all the developmental activities of local government-housing and urban renewal.

This splitting of the planning function weakened the whole structure of planning in the metropolitan Winnipeg area. Indeed it made it virtually impossible to plan. The fact that the metro council was able to produce and embark upon a development plan for downtown Winnipeg was due almost entirely to the fact that the provincial government was prepared to participate in the construction of a downtown convention centre. The province had no commitment to the downtown plan as such. Fortunately, the convention centre was conceived as the catalytic agent which would energize the plan; and it proved to be just that⁴. Had the government of Manitoba not been interested in the convention

⁴ The Winnipeg Convention Centre was built in 1975.

centre, probably nothing would have happened of any consequence in the form of downtown development.

The history of the metropolitan Winnipeg development plan is an illustration of the degree to which the effectiveness of planning in the metro area was reduced by the division of local government authority. In 1964, a development plan was produced by metro, pursuant to the Act, which attempted to set out in some detail, proposals for the development of the area municipalities. The plan met fierce opposition and had to be abandoned. The significant aspect of this episode was the fact that the opposition came not only from private land-owners who objected to the anticipated effect on the value of their property, but from the councils of the area municipalities who saw in the proposals a threat not only to their jurisdiction but also to the economic and political advantage of their own municipalities. It is of course inevitable that some areas will benefit more than others from the random distribution of good fortune through the operation of the market mechanism and the accidents of chance. It is also inevitable that some areas will be favored more than others in the control of development through a development plan; not every part of a metropolitan area can be the select and exclusive residential enclave of the wealthy; not every part can be the downtown business district; not every part can be the vigorous and expanding industrial sector. It must be acknowledged that some parts of the metropolitan area could expect certain advantages over others as a result of the proposed development plan.

Yet, that is not the point. What is relevant here is the fact that, although opposition to such plans is also frequently encountered

“A plan is not merely an idea; it is an idea and an action to carry out that idea.”

in municipalities with a unitary form of government, the plan in those instances represents the intended policies of the council, and if it is attacked, it is attacked by private interests who object to its proposals from the private owners' or developers' point of view, or from the point of view of some citizens groups or action group or other

special interest group. The plan however represents the point of view of the elected representatives of the citizens; the official point of view; the council's consensus as to what ought to happen to the community. Objections can be resolved because the proposals represent the intended policy of the governing body and provide a clear-cut basis upon which to negotiate; the alternatives are usually manifest and lie between the private citizen's rights on the one hand and the long-term public interest on the other. It is possible in this circumstance, through the devices of negotiation, persuasion, exhortation, and finally the power to enact, to arrive at an operative plan of development. This was not possible in the metro Winnipeg situation, where a great measure of development policy and political power remained with the area municipalities. It was, in that circumstance, impossible for a plan to represent the policies of the governing body; there was no single governing body, and a consensus was extremely difficult if not impossible to achieve. If, for whatever reason, the municipalities opposed a development plan, then unless the province was prepared to impose it through ministerial prerogative, the plan could not be established.

But perhaps the greatest failure of the metro Winnipeg experiment was in the area of housing and social policy. These functions were simply not provided for in the Metro Winnipeg Act. As a result the initiatives remained with the area municipalities, and in the ten years of the metropolitan form of government only about 350 units of low income family housing were constructed in Greater Winnipeg, and there was no creative policy of any kind formulated in the field of social development or the urban economy.

The blame for the inadequacy of the Metropolitan Winnipeg Act of 1960 must of course rest with the provincial government of the time. The Act, and the decade of metropolitan government which followed it are a clear indication of the woeful failure on the part of the provincial authorities to understand the nature and function of the contemporary metropolis; They took their cues from the Metro Toronto experiment (the introduction of a Municipal Board with "planning jurisdiction" - an idea formerly alien to Manitoba - is a case in point) and from the fashionable ideas of regional government prevalent at the time, and they created a structure of government which was doomed to fail because it

could only deal with the most superficial aspects of urban life - the major trunk systems. The provincial authorities failed to understand that the gut issues of the modern metropolis are not merely those of the physical infrastructure systems and the method of delivering house-keeping services; they also failed to understand that they themselves held the power to deal with the essential problems of the city but did not see themselves in that role, and could not understand that they had not conveyed the necessary power to the municipality.

Their most abject failure however lay in the fact that they did not even enter into a creative or meaningful dialogue with the metropolitan authority on a strategy for dealing with these matters. In fact, they held the metropolitan council at arm's length, or else ignored them completely, and refused to become involved in these urban issues.

In spite of its obvious shortcomings, the metro Winnipeg two-tier structure might have survived had it not been for the unremitting attack on the metropolitan government by the area municipalities, particularly, the central city. There can be no doubt that the corrosive hostility of the area municipalities, under the leadership of the City of Winnipeg brought feelings throughout the metropolitan area to a state of exasperation. The exacerbated feelings of frustration and abrasion produced by the conflict between the two tiers of government finally moved the province once more to reorganize the structure of municipal government in Greater Winnipeg.

On January 1st, 1972, the City of Winnipeg Act 1971 came into effect. It introduced a number of new elements into the city's organization. It established a council of fifty members and a mayor selected from amongst the council. (For the first council however, the province reversed the requirement of the Act, and the mayor was elected at large). The Act provided for only three standing committees - Finance, Works and Operations, and Environment. It also provided for an Executive Policy Committee and a Board of Commissioners, none of which had existed before, but the most unusual feature of the Act is the Community Committees.

The city is divided into thirteen committees, the boundaries of which correspond to the boundaries of the thirteen municipalities which formerly comprised the area municipalities of metropolitan Winnipeg (the number was reduced to thirteen during the period of metropolitan government).

Each of these communities is divided into a number of wards, with each ward containing about 10,000 people. (This theoretically ideal size of ward had to be quite radically adjusted in one or two instances). There are fifty such wards in the city, and each ward elects one member to the city council. The elected members of the wards which together comprise a community are known as the community committee. One of their main responsibilities is to “supervise the delivery of services” in the community which they represent. The Act also provides for the election of resident advisory groups to advise the community committee.

The retention of the former municipal boundaries in the form of the communities, and the role of the community committee to “supervise the delivery of services” was obviously more than accidental, or even a simple matter of sentiment or convenience. It was an attempt to retain the political divisions which have prevailed in Metropolitan Winnipeg, in the same way that they were retained under the Metropolitan Corporation of Greater Winnipeg Act. There was obviously a sharp division of opinion amongst the members of the government, as between those who favored total amalgamation of all the municipalities, and those who favored the retention of the existing municipal structure. The City of Winnipeg Act is in fact a compromise between these two points of view, and the division of opinion is obvious throughout the whole of the statute. It is also obvious that the historic problem of local political retrenchment and parochialism has not been resolved.

A major concern of the government in creating this new municipal structure was to ensure easy access by the public to its elected representatives, and public participation in the process of government. To this end they reduced the constituency of each elected member as nearly as possible to 10,000; to this end they also created the community

committee and the resident advisory group mechanism.

Political accessibility is a currently fashionable notion amongst political theorists. It stems of course from the very real and tragic circumstances of the black ghettos of America whose people from their first arrival in chains on this continent have been dispossessed and disenfranchised. Nor has the condition been limited to the blacks. Significant enclaves of the poor of all colors have found themselves out of the main stream of life in urban America. This circumstance has produced, amongst other important historical events, the urban activist movement, part of whose agitation has demanded a share of political power for the urban poor.

As with so much which occurs in the United States, this movement and its ideas was embraced by Canadians with almost no modification for the different Canadian conditions. Certainly no allowances seem to have been made for the very different characteristics of Winnipeg. Lack of political access or representation may possibly be important issues in some cities in Canada. If it was an issue at all in Winnipeg, it was a very minor one, far down in the order of priority of necessary municipal reforms. Winnipeg had many failings and shortcomings, but access by the public to its political representatives was not one of them, nor was the breadth of its political representation. It is interesting that so much concern of the government should have been focused on this relatively marginal issue, and that so much of the City of Winnipeg Act should have been built upon the premise of the community committee and the proportion of its members to their constituents; it is particularly interesting in light of the fact that the historic problem in the Winnipeg situation was political fragmentation and parochialism which set one part of the community against the other and seriously impaired effective government in the area.

It is of course very questionable whether the accessibility to representatives or the effectiveness of political representation is a function of the numerical ratio of constituents to representatives. And even if it were, it is very questionable whether there is any special merit in the selected constituency size of 10,000. The provincial legislature itself has

fifty-seven representatives for a population of about one million - a ratio almost twice as great as that chosen for the city council - but this does not seem to suggest to the provincial government that the number of seats in the house should be doubled. It is altogether likely that the provincial government has quite misjudged the reasons for public apathy towards municipal government. The inaccessibility of the councillor due to the large number of people he represents is not a persuasive explanation. A much more probable reason is that the public knows that the municipal government cannot deal with the issues that affect it most acutely, and therefore has simply turned away from the city council as a means of solving their problems.

At the present time, the characteristic constitutional incapacity of the municipal government to deal effectively with the ills of the city is compounded by the inexperience of the Winnipeg city council. About one third of the council has never held municipal office before. The remainder has had experience only in the former small area municipalities, or in the City of Winnipeg, none of which was organized in any way remotely resembling the organization of the new city. The issues with which they dealt were of necessity local and small-scale and administrative in character. They are simply unequipped to deal with the issues of a city of half a million, or to know how to adjust to the role of the administration in such an organization. Much the same is true of those from the former City of Winnipeg.

Beyond these difficulties, the members of the council have brought with them into the new city, the parochial attitudes and hostilities and vendettas of the past, with the result that after more than a year in office the government of the city is still floundering, no leadership has emerged, and no decisions have been made on any of the major issues facing the city. With the passage of time and the maturing of the new government, many of these defects no doubt will be remedied. Until that happens however, great patience and forbearance must be exercised by all who are involved in or affected by the affairs of the city.

Structural flaws have also begun to emerge. The executive policy committee is not

performing any executive role and is not dealing with policy. The reasons for this are becoming apparent. Under the Act the Environment Committee is responsible for all matters affecting the environment, which really means that any issues of a policy nature, which the executive policy committee might be expected to embrace, are considered by the Environment Committee as their particular concern and responsibility. The Act does not make clear what in fact the responsibilities of the various committees are, and so the Environment Committee has delineated for itself a role which the Executive Policy Committee might have been expected to perform. On the other hand, the Executive Policy Committee has no staff resources directly at its disposal, other than the Board of Commissioners. The Board however is overwhelmed with the minutiae of day-to-day administration and badly needs its own direct staff resources. Moreover no sign has as yet emerged which might indicate that the Executive Policy Committee is moving to assume its proper role.

As already suggested, it is still too early to tell just how effective will be the present form of municipal government in Winnipeg. But there are already indications that the resident advisory groups are not working as had been hoped; accessibility to the council is not better than it was before - some think it is not as good; the effectiveness of citizen participation does not seem to have been improved; and the efficiency of government, if anything, is worse because the process of government is much more cumbersome and decisions take much longer to be made.

All of this of course may be due simply to the fact that the government is still very new, and it will take some time yet before the whole machine gets into proper working order. Some allowance must certainly be made for this fact. However, it can also be argued that the changes which were made by the City of Winnipeg Act are merely mechanical changes which deal only with superficial aspects of urban government. The really profound requirements for effective government of the metropolis have not even been touched - the statutory powers to formulate the necessary policies and programs, and the financial resources to carry them out. The present provincial government in enacting the City of Winnipeg Act, 1971, has failed to understand the nature of the metropolis and its

relationship to it, as badly as the previous government had failed to understand these things when the Metropolitan Corporation of Greater Winnipeg Act was established in 1969. And it seems unlikely that the new government of the City of Winnipeg will be able to meet the needs of its citizens more effectively than did the metro government which it replaced.

While the lack of power, both statutory and fiscal is common to all our metropolitan areas, the right people operating the right system can of course bring some measure of effectiveness to municipal government, even if it is only of a superficial kind. Other cities may in fact function fairly well at that superficial level under a two-tier structure; some form of community committee organization may be just the thing for achieving a nice balance between centralization and decentralization. And in other provinces the pressures of urbanization may have produced a high degree of sophistication about urban matters in the members of the provincial government.

The understanding which emerges from the 1960 and 1971 attempts to reform municipal government in Winnipeg, however, is that changes in the system are of little consequence. The best system in the world will fail if it is not founded upon an adequate power base and if the wrong people are operating it; and the worst system will work admirably if it has the necessary resources of power and the right people are operating it.

Winnipeg: Downtown or Downhill? (1968)

Address to Downtown Business Association, Annual Meeting, Marlborough Hotel, April 23rd, 1968.

Whoever it was who first described Winnipeg as “The Gateway to the West” was a man of modest expectations. He could have added “and the East; and the South; and all the other points of the compass.” A gateway is a place through which people pass on their way to somewhere else. And in recent years, the growth of Winnipeg relative to the other major urban centres of Canada would have justified a wider latitude in that early commentator's description of our city.

It would be very easy to recite a long list of gloomy statistics purporting to show that this city is heading downhill, and is accelerating towards the bottom where it will hit with a bump, and fall apart. The statistics are available - they've been published in the newspapers and in scholarly reports. And if I were to repeat them here I would simply be joining the local chorus singing what seems to be quite a popular song in this city. But I won't burden you with that gloomy recital, not because I want to be polite and spare your feelings, but because it simply isn't true. If you think about it for a moment, I'm sure you must come to the same conclusion. The fact of the matter is that Winnipeg is really here to stay. When a community reaches half a million in population it takes a great deal more than short-term and ambiguous statistics to conjure it out of existence. And can anyone seriously contemplate a future Canada without a major and vigorous urban centre between Toronto and Vancouver, or even between Toronto and Calgary?

Let me suggest to you that the relatively modest performance of Winnipeg in the last decade and a half is a cyclical phenomenon and represents the period of adjustment between the great expansion this city experienced in the first half of this century, and the period of new growth which lies ahead.

The rapid expansion recently experienced by Calgary and Edmonton represents a phase which Winnipeg has already gone through. We are simply at different phases in the growth cycle. Indeed, there are already signs appearing that those cities are approaching a plateau in their growth rate; and I believe that I can see signs that Winnipeg is approaching the point where it will leave its present plateau and move into a new phase of the development process.

On what do I base this optimistic view of Winnipeg's future? I must confess that it is based largely on intuition, but on intuition which arises out of three rather more tangible circumstances. The first of these is the impression I have of a return of confidence in Winnipeg as an area for investment. In the eighteen months since I have been here, I have detected a changing mood in the community. There seems to be a much greater confidence and buoyancy of spirit in the community at large than there was when I first arrived; and this is probably only one aspect of what I see as a much improved, and growing, ability of Winnipeg to attract new development and investment from both local and outside sources.

The second reason for my optimism arises out of the number of enquiries that we have had in the Planning Division at Metro, concerning proposed development projects. In the last few months, there has been more interest shown in prospective downtown projects than over the last two or three years combined. Projects which have been announced include the C.N.R.'s proposals for the 90 acres of their East Yard, and the Fort Garry Hotel; a 200-room 20-storey hotel for the site where the Lyceum Theatre now sits at Smith and Portage; an 18-storey nine-million dollar structure for the Bank of Montreal at Hargrave and Portage; a 30-storey apartment block near Central Park; an apartment tower at Donald and Broadway; a combined cinema centre, parkade and hotel at Smith and

Ellice; a 24-storey apartment tower on Assiniboine; and a number of others about which there has as yet not been any official announcement. I would be less than honest with myself, and with you, if I said that these projects by themselves would set off a renaissance of the downtown. But if combined with certain other necessary measures in the public sphere they could have that impact.

Finally, I think Winnipeg is on the verge of a new phase of downtown activity because other cities have gone through very

“Mere size cannot make a city great; and explosive growth can tear apart the very fabric and fibres which hold an urban community together.”

similar experiences to ours: a phase of vigorous growth, then a dormant period lasting for as much as twenty years, and then a break-through to a new era of growth. Perhaps the Richardson's Lombard Place is just the breakthrough our city has been waiting for; perhaps it, together with the other projects I have indicated, will really send us into the next dynamic phase of our development.

Let me not however create the impression that we are really in great shape, and that we need only sit back and be carried inevitably and smoothly out of our present situation into a new era of growth by the inexorable working of some natural and benevolent law. We do in fact have some very serious problems and it is going to require heroic measures if we are to achieve the kinds of things we want for our city in time for those of us sitting here tonight to enjoy them.

The truth is that Winnipeg is at a low point in the growth cycle, and we have been sitting in this trough for some years now – perhaps as many as ten or fifteen years. It is possible that we could sit here for another 15 years and even longer; it is even possible that in relative terms we might never climb out of it and recover our expansive position of the first half of this century. If the condition in which we have found ourselves in recent years is regarded as satisfactory: that is, if it is felt that our prevailing level of per capita

incomes, the value of our production of goods and services, our public revenue and expenditure ratios, the quality of our services such as transportation, health, recreation, education, etc., the growth of opportunity for personal development and achievement, our ability to attract energetic and creative people, and all of the other criteria, by which the excellence of a community must be measured – if these are considered as satisfactory, then there is no problem and we need not be concerned about any special measures or policies. We could probably continue along our present course for a long time and hardly perceive the very gradual attrition and decline, the slow descent downhill to a position of dullness and mediocrity as a third-rate community.

If on the other hand it is considered that our condition of the last decade or two is not satisfactory, and indeed contains within itself the potential for the most serious consequences if allowed to continue into the future, then we must exploit to the fullest possible advantage every opportunity, and we must even create new opportunities, for changing the course of these events. I have indicated to you the reasons for my optimism – I believe that there are very strong signs that we are about to experience a surge of new development. I have serious doubts that by themselves these can work the kind of change which I have suggested is necessary. But if we can support and extend and supplement these with other kinds of action and policies, then I am sure we can trigger a renaissance not only in the central business district but in our entire metropolitan community.

One of our most serious problems is the problem of confidence. We seem to have lost much of the confidence of the investment community which we once enjoyed, or at any rate, other places seem to enjoy a greater measure of their confidence. Not that we are not getting development – we are; and we are getting it at a rate which in other circumstances might be regarded as quite satisfactory; but which in today's world of fierce competition and furious activity looks as though we are standing still. During the last ten years, over twenty major structures were built in our downtown; something better than two per year. That really shouldn't have to be regarded as a dismal performance. But Edmonton in the last five years built over forty structures, a rate of development many times higher than ours. In a highly competitive society, this seems to us very much like abject failure on our

part; in a value system which is built on the values of the world of business and commerce, we accept this comparatively low “sales volume” as evidence of our inferiority; and pretty soon we believe that everything about us is inferior; and moreover, we do a pretty good job of persuading everybody else that this is the case.

I think we make a very serious error in applying the highly special values of the competitive business world to our urban community as a whole. We must be very careful to distinguish between the words “greatness” and “bigness,” and between the words “expansion” and “explosion”. Mere size cannot make a city great; and explosive growth can tear apart the very fabric and fibres which hold an urban community together. I personally regard it as a blessing that Winnipeg is neither gigantic nor explosive. Undoubtedly our average growth rate of 2.84% per year over the last 15 years is not spectacular; it has not been of that order which is necessary to create a prime area of investment interest in the post-war period of violent expansion and feverish development activity. But it has certain advantages. Perhaps the greatest advantage flowing from our modest growth rate is the fact that our land costs have not yet rocketed out of this world, and the pressures of development have not yet reached a pitch where we have lost all sense of proportion and balance; and we are still in the position to think about what kind of community we want to make of Winnipeg, and to be able to do something positive about carrying out that wish. None of these things can be said about the giant metropolises of this continent which are expanding at rates which one might otherwise perhaps regard with envy.

The growth of metropolitan Winnipeg during the last twenty years or more has occurred virtually in its entirety in the outlying municipalities. Between 1941 and 1956, the central city grew by about 14%. Charleswood in the same period grew by about 111%; Fort Garry by 140%; St. James by 74%; Assiniboia by 67%; West Kildonan by 113%; and so on. During the ten years between 1956 and 1966, the central city grew by less than 1%, actually declining by more than 3% during the last five years of that period. The suburbs, however, continued to flourish, Assiniboia growing by nearly 290% during that ten-year period; North Kildonan by 134%; Fort Garry by 50%; Charleswood by 43%; St. Boniface

by 45%; and so on – nearly every suburban municipality making very substantial gains while the central city's growth declined in both absolute and relative terms.

The decline in the central city's population was paralleled by losses in other sectors. Winnipeg lost some of its downtown manufacturing and wholesale industries, it lost some of its financial institutions, and it even lost some of its downtown retail strength.

Today, we have a downtown where the rate of new investment and

development is comparatively very low; where as much as one-third of the land area is vacant or in surface parking lots; where a further estimated one-half is in small enterprises in one or two storey structures; where the loss of resident population is not matched by new residents coming in; and where the general atmosphere of abandonment and dereliction is such as to inspire very little confidence in the investment community in the future of our central business district.

“The character and personality of a city are epitomized and presented to the world by its downtown; the image of a city is the image projected by its central business district.”

The reaction of many people to the decline of the central business district is “so what?” Is the shift in the location of investment from the centre to the suburbs something which is of concern to anyone other than the downtown businessmen? In those cities which have a unitary form of government, does it really make any difference whether the assessment is located in one place or the other; and surely, in Winnipeg, with its metropolitan form of government, the process of decentralization – at any rate from the area municipalities' point of view – is if anything a trend to be welcomed.

These views are dangerously short-sighted and could have the gravest consequences if pursued to their logical conclusions. Let me say categorically that the future of Metropolitan Winnipeg depends to a very great degree on what is going to become of the central business district; and this means not just the future of the City of Winnipeg but

equally that of the area municipalities whose stake in the central business district is as great as the central city's.

Why is the future of the downtown of such crucial importance to Metropolitan Winnipeg? The answer is a simple one – because the character and personality of a city are epitomized and presented to the world by its downtown; the image of a city is the image projected by its central business district. Who has ever heard of Neuchatel, or Poissy? – but the Eiffel Tower and the Arch of Triumph and the Champs Elysees conjure up immediate visions of a Paris which is gay and beautiful and elegant; and who has ever heard of Brixton or Bethnel Green – but Piccadilly Circus and Leicester Square and Buckingham palace immediately bring to mind the ageless charm of London's west-end which somehow has the power to absorb and transmute even the swinging moods of Chelsea into its mellow blend of the past and the present; and Jamaica and Kew Gardens are merely suburban stations on a Long Island railway line, but the skyline of Lower Manhattan is probably the best known skyline in the world. I can assure you that outside of Winnipeg, St.Vital, Charleswood, and Old Kildonan are also unknown; nor can they, or any other suburban municipality, create for Winnipeg the image which it so desperately needs. Winnipeg must build a character and an image which will command confidence and admiration if it is to attract the type and magnitude of investment which will enable it to continue to occupy a place among the major cities of Canada. Such a character and such an image can only be created in the downtown.

The issue at stake here is not so much whether we will remain the number four city in the hierarchy of Canadian cities, but whether we can continue to improve the quality of our urban life. The question of growth and size is meaningful only in so far as it is related to the growth of personal opportunity and the enrichment of life which that growth makes possible. I am not persuaded that these ends are served by the explosive growth rates of the multi-million population cities. I think that a more satisfactory rate of improvement can be accomplished by much more modest growth rates, and by much smaller communities. But growth is certainly required; investment is certainly required. Without them we will be unable to build those facilities which are necessary to house our

activities, or to attract and hold the people with the talent and skills and energy and dedication who are absolutely fundamental in building the kind of community we desire. In order to attract that investment and those people, we must become much more attractive than we are. I suggest to you that such attractiveness can only be created in the downtown of our city.

If we can create the type of downtown I am talking about, its impact will be felt throughout the whole of the Metropolitan complex. The development of a highly imaginative and exciting central area will attract new people and new investment, not only to Winnipeg's downtown but to the suburbs as well. Everybody shares the character and reputation of a city's downtown, and everybody benefits if that character and that reputation have the power to charm and excite and attract not only new people, but new investment, new ideas, and new activities. That is why I have suggested that the future of Metro as a whole will depend in large measure on what happens to the central business district.

Our downtown should be full of people of every type and station, of every shape and description, rich and poor, young and old, smart and dowdy, because only people can endow any enterprise with life and with value. It should be full of things to see, to do, to enjoy, and to buy, because that's what a downtown is for. It should be easy to get to, and having got there it should be comfortable to move about in. Moving about downtown should be such a delightful experience as to make one reluctant to leave. It should be a city within a city, with all the variety, choice, stimulation, wonder, gaiety, pleasures, ideas, experimentation, opportunities, and human richness that can possibly be crowded into its relatively narrow limits because really, that's what cities are all about.

There is a prevailing view in Winnipeg that the downtown can look after itself; that is to say, that the downtown will be developed or redeveloped entirely by private enterprise through the normal mechanism of the market, without any assistance or intervention on the part of public enterprise. In the face of the historical record, this view seems to me to be over-optimistic if not completely illusory. Even the very many recent enquiries

concerning development projects, although they indicate a much greater and more active interest by the private sector in downtown development, cannot by themselves accomplish the task that is necessary to revitalize the central business district.

The downtown business community itself, not only here in Winnipeg, but in every city in North America, has been very troubled by the decline of the downtown and has looked for ways to reverse the trend. Many of the answers they have come up with have been merely gimmicks – face-lifting of premises, free parking, give-away programs, and even, dare I say it – pedestrian malls – none of which has provided a successful and lasting solution to the problem. Nor is it surprising that these have failed. They have dealt with only symptoms and superficialities, and have not touched the underlying basic causes.

I suggest to you that the problems of the downtown business community are not going to be solved by such devices; and the development of downtown Winnipeg to achieve the objectives I have indicated cannot be accomplished by retail and commercial investment alone, nor indeed can they be accomplished by action exclusively in the private sector. In the circumstances in which Winnipeg finds itself today, there is only one way to salvage the downtown, and to create the type of image there that I have been discussing, and that is to bring relatively large numbers of people back into the downtown, to live there as permanent residents.

A large resident population would guarantee the flow of investment in retailing, services, and other commercial activities, as well as in recreation facilities and public amenities, to meet the needs of that population. A large resident population is virtually the only way in which such development can be stimulated on a sufficient scale to make a significant impact on our downtown, and to create the kind of community we need. We do not have enough activity and capacity in our commercial sector to depend on it alone to do the job for us. Other places may have. Toronto and Montreal may be able to count on vast investments in new office and other commercial space in sufficient measure to fill all the available land in the central area. Winnipeg cannot. But we can count on people who require housing. We can count on a continual, ongoing demand for housing as far ahead

as we can see. It is this fact upon which we must build our plans for the downtown; and it is the activity created by such an undertaking upon which we must count to stimulate the interest of the investment community, and to bring the other types of investment and development into the city, which will enable us to maintain and extend the high quality of our urban life.

In some very important ways, this limitation of ours is an advantage rather than a disadvantage. In those cities where there is a high level of activity in downtown commercial development, the downtown is merely that – a commercial centre, a place of employment. Outside of working hours it has very little activity or vitality, and very little organic connection with the life of the rest of the city. Our circumstances provide the possibility of creating a downtown which is in effect a city within a city, with all the life and activity of a true urban centre, not just during working hours, but at all times of the day and all seasons of the year. We can build our new town not in the dormitory suburbs, or in the remote countryside, but in the very heart of our community if we can attract enough of our expected new growth of population to live in the central core of the metropolitan area.

How many people are we talking about, and what is the area referred to here as the downtown? I am talking about the area which is contained by the C.P.R. tracks on the north and the Assiniboine River on the south, and by the Red River on the east and Sherbrook St. on the west. This is a large area – about 1,400 acres – and contains much more than what is usually thought of as the “core” of the downtown. But it is the area within which our “downtown” types of activity are now located – and incidentally this gives some indication of the tragic way in which we have dispersed and dissipated our central area resources, and why our downtown has such vast empty spaces – and it is the area within which it is appropriate to mount the kinds of programs necessary to give us the kind of downtown we want. I suggest that in this central area we must try to achieve a minimum resident population of 100,000 over the next couple of decades. At the present time, about 30,000 people live there. Metro Winnipeg can expect to gain about 280,000 new people over the next twenty to twenty-five years, at its present rate of growth. If we

can manage to attract 25% of that number – just ¼ of Metro's expected increase – to live in the downtown instead of the suburbs that will add about 70,000 to the present number, and the minimum target of 100,000 will be reached. If more people can be attracted, so much the better; but a gain of 70,000 seems to be a reasonable minimum figure.

My thesis is a very simple one. I am saying that Winnipeg needs a higher rate of investment and development to maintain a satisfactory standard of amenities, services, and personal opportunities. At the present time other cities seem to be more attractive to investors than we are; in terms of current usage, Winnipeg is not where the action is. In order to catch a bigger piece of the action, we have to arouse greater interest amongst the members of the domestic and foreign investment community. I believe that Winnipeg is capable of arousing such heightened interest. Over the next twenty or twenty-five years Winnipeg can re-construct itself, can create for itself a new and attractive personality which will draw to it a steady flow of development capital, can maintain its position as a major metropolitan centre of Canada, can offer a continuing improvement in the quality of life to its citizens; and can do so without an unforeseen and miraculous explosion in its rate of economic or population growth, but on the basis of current growth rates, simply by developing a central area which commands confidence and admiration; and it can do this by using a greatly increased downtown population as a catalyst which can start all the other things going.

Nor do I think it will take that full term of years to get the other things going. I believe that as soon as the flow of people back into the centre becomes established, and recognizable by a steady rate of residential construction, other developments will follow automatically; and this could occur in a relatively short period of time.

The question might well be asked at this point: “how can we get 100,000 people to live in the downtown when everything is going against it, and when in fact people today, and for many years past, have been moving out of the downtown?” This of course, is the key question and my whole thesis stands or falls on the answer. In order to reply to that it is important to understand why the centre is being emptied and the suburbs are growing.

Four general factors may be identified as the determinants of the decline of the downtown.

The first and most important of these is the factor of cost. Very simply, the cost of land is higher in the downtown than it is in the suburbs and so developers build houses in the suburbs and sell them to people at lower cost than they could in the downtown. Pretty soon there are a large number of people living in the suburbs, large enough to constitute a market for fairly substantial investment in retail and service establishments and in a situation of modest growth such as Winnipeg's, this must inevitably express itself in a reduction of that type of investment in the centre. The problem of cost also involves the differential in cost between single family dwellings and apartments, and the cost of land assembly, all of which operate in favor of suburban development as against downtown development.

The second factor which is identified in some quarters is that of taxes. It is suggested that the property tax structure as we now have it not only penalizes downtown development as opposed to suburban development but even that it has diverted investment capital from the central area of Winnipeg to that of other cities. I must admit that I do not at present have the statistical evidence to either support or refute this proposition. It is a matter however, which is included in our present research program.

The third factor generally identified as inhibiting downtown development is that of statutory restrictions. In the main, this refers to the requirements of the Zoning By-Law, which it is alleged have had an inhibiting effect on downtown development. There are in my view no grounds for this allegation in respect of non-residential development, although there may possibly be some argument in the case of residential development. We are now taking steps to remove from the Zoning By-Law the inhibitions which affect residential development in the downtown.

And the fourth impediment obstructing downtown growth is generally identified as prevailing customs and institutions. By this is meant the prevailing attitudes and powers in both the public and private sector, and the effects of their investment and location

decisions on the downtown. Among these other inhibitors in the category of institutional customs and powers, must also be included the fact that up until now people have preferred single family dwellings to apartments, and single family dwellings simply can't be built downtown; they take up too much room and the cost of land is too high. That preference is now changing; 65% of new housing starts in Winnipeg for the last couple of years have been in the form of multiple dwellings, as compared with 35% in single family dwellings. This year to date the ratio of multiples is even higher – nearer 70%. The change reflects not merely a change in taste, but also a change in the whole structure of housing economics resulting from the fact that the cost of serviced land, even in the suburbs, is increasing, and from the fact that the property tax is being required to bear an increasing and staggering burden of public service costs. Incidentally, if I may interject a footnote at this point, the approval of condominium legislation by the Provincial Legislature this session will make it possible for people to own their own suites in an apartment block instead of renting, and may reinforce the movement towards apartment living.

Also in this fourth category must be included the understandable reluctance of the private developer to risk any investment whatever in housing, in the existing dereliction and shambles which is our downtown. Why, indeed, should anyone build an apartment block surrounded by parking lots or blighted rooming houses in the downtown, when he can get exactly the same, or an even better return on his investment, with much greater assurance of tenancy, in a more attractive part of the city?

“The question of growth and size is meaningful only in so far as it is related to the growth of personal opportunity and the enrichment of life which that growth makes possible.”

The answer to the question, “how do we get 100,000 people to live downtown?” is then a very complex one. It will require an enormous amount of effort, the cooperation of a very

large number of persons and groups of people, the use of legislative and administrative machinery which perhaps have not been employed very often here in Winnipeg; and the creation of the right “climate” or circumstances within which these things can happen.

The first and most fundamental requirement is a consensus of opinion on the need for revitalizing the downtown. Without this, the problems may well be insuperable. Particularly necessary is the acceptance by the area municipalities of the principle involved and their agreement not to obstruct the implementation of such a policy. This should in fact not be a problem at all because it surely must be recognized by the outlying areas that in the long run it is in their own best interests to have a strong and attractive metropolitan centre.

It may well be, however, that the most tragic consequence of our present Metropolitan structure of government is that it prevents us from recognizing what is in our own best interests. The balkanization of our community into a multiplicity of small jurisdictions works in a number of ways to prevent us from thinking and acting as a unit. Firstly, it turns our attention away from our primary problems which are those we share as a single metropolitan community, by concentrating political attention on those issues which are local; secondly, it makes it virtually impossible to achieve any effective co-ordination of policy or coherence of program for dealing with our primary problems, because of the fragmentation of responsibility; and thirdly, it prevents us from undertaking many basic projects of comprehensive development because of the dispersal of our revenue sources and the impossibility of mustering the financial resources of the entire community for concerted action.

We pride ourselves on our ability to achieve “total community involvement” and we have fully demonstrated that ability on many occasions. This is a magnificent quality and indicates that there is a solid basis here for community achievement. But we must remember that events like the mass support of the Pan-Am Games⁵ are grass-roots phenomena which take place outside of the institutional framework of government. They

⁵ Held in Winnipeg in 1967.

are events which occur outside of the context of political jurisdictions and government authority. The kind of action which I see as necessary in the downtown is not of that nature; it seems to me that it must happen within the institutional framework of our formal Metropolitan system.

But perhaps I am wrong. Perhaps much of it can be achieved by a popular ground-swell of citizen action, by a wave of grass-roots total community involvement which will move on an entirely different level from the formal political structure of Metro. Perhaps I am even being unnecessarily apprehensive about the position of the area municipalities. Perhaps it seems just as anomalous to them and to everyone else as it does to me that this point should be raised as a contentious issue. Perhaps there is a universal recognition of the fact that in terms of their relationship to the downtown, all the components of Metro Winnipeg are one community, with a direct common interest, and the point does not require any further elaboration. I notice a great number of “perhapses” in that last set of propositions.

The second requirement is a clear idea of what it is we want to do in the downtown – we must have a plan of action. The first step in that direction has already been taken with the establishment of the Metro Development Plan⁶. The Plan now approved by the Minister is a general statement of objectives and policies; we must next work out our ideas in much greater detail. And there is a whole firmament of bright ideas which could add lustre to our downtown.

For example, why not build part of our zoo and our flower conservatory downtown? Why shouldn't we have a conservatory and an aquarium, and an aviary right in the heart of the central business district? Also, why should they have to be laid out in the traditional way so that the exhibits are displayed in a linear series and the public must be shepherded in file past them, like so many inspectors on an assembly line? How much more attractive it would be if, for example, the conservatory were simply a floral setting for a restaurant, in which the people employed downtown, and indeed the public at large, could have their

⁶ Released in 1966

lunch or their dinner out, surrounded by a marvelous display of flowers all winter long, and all year round. Why couldn't an aquarium be used as a setting within which specialty shops or even a cinema could function? How much more attractive a travel agency, or ticket office, or other service establishments would be if they were located in an aviary in which the brilliantly plumaged birds were free to fly, but were circumscribed by the new illumination control techniques. Such proposals may require new administrative arrangements between the public and private sectors, but that shouldn't be a difficult problem if it is agreed that the results merit such devices.

And surely the time has now arrived when we must do something about our greatest unexploited natural resource – our winter weather. I use the description deliberately and advisedly, Winnipeg's winters deserve their reputation for severity. They are said to discourage new in-migrants and eventually to drive out natives and long-term residents. They are even blamed for our economic quiescence, and certainly those of us who can, when winter arrives, simply leave for warmer climates. But I truly believe that our winters can be turned from a reputed liability into a proven asset. I think that instead of people leaving Winnipeg for the winter, we can turn it around so that people come to Winnipeg for the winter.

I am not thinking of the attractions of winter sports and recreation; that is not at all what I have in mind. Some time ago I was watching a performance of the ballet, *The Nutcracker*. As you will recall, this delightful ballet is episodic in character. That is, it consists of a series of episodes which really have nothing to do with each other except that each episode represents a stopping place on the journey made by the principal characters of the ballet – the nutcracker that turned into a prince, and Clara, the little girl who turned into his princess. One of the places which they visit is the Palace of the Snow Queen. I suppose it was because I am a Winnipegger, and it was winter outside, but it suddenly struck me as bizarre that anyone should want to visit the Palace of the Snow Queen. I could have understood a yen to visit the palace of the Sun God, or the cave of the South Wind, but what in heaven's name would attract anyone to the Palace of the Snow Queen? In musing over this seeming aberration, it gradually dawned on me that the

reason lay in the fact that in the Palace of the Snow Queen it is possible to enjoy the winter – its whiteness, its crispness, its sparkle, its intensely clear and brilliant atmosphere, its purity, its softness and stillness, without actually experiencing its discomforts. In the sheltered realm of fantasy, it is possible to have the best of both possible worlds. And then it struck me – why shouldn't Winnipeg, or at least its downtown, be like the Palace of the Snow Queen; why shouldn't we create a sheltered world, not of fantasy, but in reality which will permit us to have the best of both realms? Why not create a downtown in which people can go about their daily business – the normal everyday tasks of working, shopping, eating, etc., sheltered from the cold, sheltered from the wind, but in a setting of fantastic ice crystal and snowflake beauty?

I'm not talking about the shelter provided by underground or skyway pedestrian concourses, although these must obviously form some part of the total system. I am really talking about building complexes within which people can find everything they require without having to step out into the brutal winter environment, and yet in which they are constantly aware of the visual pleasures of the winter landscape. I'm talking about sheltered pedestrian walkways joining such complexes and passing through winter gardens in between, in which we place ice and snow sculptures, sun reflectors, frozen fountains, evergreen plants, and beautifully-etched tracery of deciduous branches, all of which can be seen and admired as a setting for our sheltered buildings and walkways.

And why can't we create a winter carnival of some sophistication, including not just a world hockey tournament, but tournaments of the performing arts with international companies participating, combined with trade fairs with a winter theme. And if we want something unique along this line, why not limit the participating countries to those with territories in the northern latitudes, say north of the 49th parallel; a festival of the community of northern-nations, and why not end it with a great indoor-outdoor rally, a vast barbeque, dance, and mardi-gras held neither indoors nor outdoors but both indoors and outdoors at the same time, in the great hall of the Palace of the Snow Queen?

We really have to start to reverse our thinking about the winter. In the design of our

environment – even our clothes, and particularly in our landscape architecture and garden design, we start with the summer condition as our basic terms of reference, and either ignore the winter condition entirely or make some meaningless ineffectual gesture in that direction. It's time we started to think like a northern people instead of regarding ourselves as a Mediterranean people, and give winter its full due – in many instances we should design specifically for the winter condition, and provide for the summer as an adaptation of that basic design. We have not yet even begun to discover and exploit the tremendous potential of our winter environment which lies about us everywhere, from Halloween Eve to April fool's day.

But a plan which is simply a number of proposals on paper without the power to carry out those proposals is not worth the paper on which it is written. It is not a plan at all. It is merely wishful thinking. If we are going to realize any

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of our hopes for the downtown, and the city as a whole, we must have the means necessary to make them happen.

One of the most fundamentally important things which must be done is to create the circumstances in which the cost to the entrepreneur of developing land in the downtown is competitive with the cost of developing suburban land. If it requires the absorption by the public of the cost differential, then the appropriate machinery to achieve such a write-down must be established. The legislation is on the books now; we will just have to provide the right local mechanism for using it.

Related to the land cost problem is the problem of land assembly. One of the most serious obstacles in the way of downtown development is the enormous difficulty of putting together enough property to provide a site large enough to accommodate large scale

projects. Investment capital today is not interested in small projects; the 50-foot lot, and the 100-foot lot cannot command the attention of developers who are looking for the advantages of big-scale development and land in the downtown is held in relatively small parcels by a multiplicity of owners. It is therefore also of fundamental importance for us to create the circumstances under which extensive areas of land can be assembled relatively easily and made available for large-scale development.

I see two devices which may be used to achieve these objectives. On the one hand the device of condominium ownership may make it possible for a number of owners to pool their property more effectively than they can in the present circumstances. On the other hand however, I believe it will be necessary to empower some public or quasi-public authority to acquire these properties, absorb part of the cost if necessary, and make the land available to private developers for large-scale projects.

It may be politically impossible or undesirable for government to have this responsibility. In that case a quasi-public agency must be established to do the job. Such an agency would be non-profit in character. It would have the power to buy and sell property, to own and lease, to develop or to enter into agreements for others to develop, to act as a renewal authority and a housing authority; it would be financed by the sale of mortgage debentures, hopefully to private investors, but its financing would be backed up by the public exchequer; and its objectives would be to stimulate and achieve the development of the downtown in accordance with the official Development Plan. If it were felt necessary to build in a direct provision to ensure the appropriate political responsibility, its board of directors could include the Mayor of the City of Winnipeg, the Chairman of the Metropolitan Corporation, and a member of the Provincial Cabinet.

Such an agency is not a pipe-dream. As a matter of fact, it already exists in very nearly the form I have outlined – I am referring to the Civic Development Corporation, which is right now a statutory body, and which with a few minor amendments could be given the form and the function which I have suggested. This body, by drawing its financing in large measure from private investment and by being relatively independent of

government procedures, although ultimately answerable to government, could operate directly and effectively in achieving the objectives of downtown development. The Civic Development Corporation was created specifically to assist in the development of the Centennial Arts Centre⁷. That project is now complete, and the Corporation has no further role to play in that connection. I am not suggesting that it should now become the body to do the job which needs doing in the downtown. I merely point to it as a precedent. Its presence is the proof that there are no statutory or precedential obstacles in the way of creating the kind of agency which I believe is necessary to break the log-jam of development in the downtown.

One of the most formidable obstacles in the path of the planning process in Winnipeg has been the great difficulty – one might say even the virtual impossibility – of achieving co-ordination of effort or consensus of opinion among the various authorities involved. The announcement by the Minister of Urban Development and Municipal Affairs of the formation of an inter-governmental committee to perform this necessary liaison and co-ordinating function, is an enormous stride forward, and I personally welcome it most wholeheartedly. We now have the beginnings of what could be a most effective component in the total complicated process of planning in the central area. I say it is the “beginnings” because at present it is still a “talk” agency: its main job, as I understand it, is to provide an organizational framework within which the various levels of government can talk to each other about the downtown; and this is excellent. It may even be a “think” agency: in addition to providing a setting for discussion, it may provide the opportunity for some exciting and effective ideas to be worked out in concert by the various members; and this is even better.

But what we must ultimately have is a “do” agency; an agency such as I described above, which can operate as a development agency within the context of a downtown plan. The Minister's committee is at the moment a long way from this condition. Is it too much to hope that this group, appropriately expanded to give it a wider direct representation, will in the foreseeable future be vested with the powers to act in the downtown area in the

⁷ The Centennial Concert Hall, Manitoba Museum and planetarium

same way that the Civic Development Corporation was intended to act in respect of the Centennial Arts Centre?

Another obstacle we must overcome is the reluctance of the developer to come into the downtown because of its derelict condition. We must win his confidence that the downtown is going to be made into an exciting and attractive place, where his investment won't be in jeopardy because of run-down surroundings. If this requires some bold action in the public sector in order to make the break-through, then we must see that such action is undertaken. There are a number of public projects under consideration now which might serve this purpose, such as the weather-protected pedestrian concourse. If this isn't enough, we must undertake others. If the weather protected pedestrian system must be extended to make more of the downtown accessible in this way, then we must extend it. If the kind of Winter garden I spoke of earlier, and the kind of botanical and zoological gardens I suggested would help create the necessary environment, and I believe they would, then we must provide them.

Now that I've mentioned the subject, let me just say something briefly concerning proposals for a weather-protected pedestrian system, about which at the present time there seems to be some sort of public controversy. Protected connections between buildings are, of course, not a new idea. They go back to the earliest records of building. The architectural history of mankind is laced with connecting passages, sheltered walkways, pedestrian concourses, yes, and even covered shopping malls. Milan has had a magnificent mall for nearly a century now. And the idea of protecting pedestrians from the weather in Winnipeg is also hardly a brilliant conception – one doesn't really have to be very bright to see that it would be much more pleasant if people could walk about in the city protected from the winter weather – nor is it a new idea. When I was a student in Architecture at the University of Manitoba 20 years ago, the notion of weather-protected walks was already old hat. We prepared all sorts of designs using this device, under the ground, on the ground, over the ground; and we used to argue furiously over which system had the greatest merit. It's interesting to see that that discussion is still a lively one, and has at long last found its way out of the student design studio into the public

domain. Maybe there is something to be said for student political power after all!

I don't know whether these protected passages will ever become a reality. I sincerely and fervently hope they will, and the sooner the better. But I am quite sure that when they do, they are most unlikely to be either entirely underground, or entirely overhead, or even entirely underground and overhead. Winnipeg's pedestrian system is going to have to exist on three levels – some of it underground, some of it on the ground, and some of it over the ground. All of these components are going to have to be used where each makes the most sense; and the real problem will not be in building the one exclusively or the other exclusively, but how all the complex elements are to be tied together in a single coherent, economical, attractive, and fully utilized system.

We must also have a much greater concern than has been the case to date, about where we locate projects and the effects which such locations have on the downtown. A number of near-disastrous mistakes have been made in Winnipeg in the location of major projects over the years. Decisions about the location of these projects have been taken from the narrowest of viewpoints, although with the best of intentions. But because the over-all implications have not been considered within a wide enough framework, we have lost the full impact which such projects might have contributed to the development of the city. We must make sure that projects are located so that they support and reinforce each other, instead of being so separated and isolated that whatever they may have for generating activity is dissipated and lost.

Perhaps the most important thing that we can do is to maintain an open-minded and experimental attitude in the search for solutions to the downtown problem. Nothing could do a greater disservice, not only to the downtown business community but to the metropolitan community at large, than a rigid and doctrinaire position with respect to legislation, administrative techniques, organizational arrangements, and even objectives for the development of the central business district. An orthodox approach to these matters will be of very little help. If you feel yourselves resisting proposals because they are unfamiliar, or represent a different approach, or require unorthodox techniques, I

suggest that you ask yourselves a simple question: what has orthodoxy achieved in the downtown; what have the normal market mechanism and the familiar ideas, and the customary role and activities of public and private enterprise accomplished in the central business district of Winnipeg up to now? Let the answer to that question determine your attitudes on these issues.

There are certain things that private enterprise can do best, and in these things it must be encouraged to function to the best of its ability; there are certain things which only government can accomplish, and our political leaders must have the initiative and determination to see that these things are done; and there are certain things which can best be achieved through the joint efforts of private and public enterprise, working together in the closest Association, even in partnership, and we must create the conditions under which such joint enterprises can succeed.

The downtown of our city is an organic thing, capable of growth and decline, and capable of being influenced in one direction or another by both public policy and private decisions. So far, that policy and those decisions have not resulted in the healthy growth of our central area; one might even be justified in assuming that they have contributed to the opposite effect. I have suggested that it is possible to reverse the trend, and I have tried to indicate the kinds of actions which may be necessary to accomplish such a reversal. My answers may not be the only ones, or even the most effective ones – although at this moment in time I believe they are, on both scores. But although the means may be disputed, the end is surely beyond question. Winnipeg's survival as a great Canadian city depends upon the repopulation and revitalization of the downtown. Private enterprise has been able to make its greatest contribution to our world when it has been flexible and pragmatic, and has pursued the principle of enlightened self interest. The course of enlightened self-interest may lead you along a somewhat unfamiliar path, but it must lead to the ultimate emergence of the kind of central I have been talking about. Indeed, I suggest that this is the course which all of us in Winnipeg must follow, including the Provincial Government, the City of Winnipeg and the area municipalities, if we want our community to continue vigorous and creative and admirable.

City Planning as Utopian Ideology and City Government Function (1984)

A Paper presented to the course in Theory 11, City Planning Department, University of Manitoba. April 11th, 1984.

For the past three months you have been examining the origins of the planning movement in Canada and the way in which those origins were variously connected with movements in Britain and America at the turn of the century and into the early decades of this century. You have found a linkage between the town planning movement and the public health and housing movements here in Canada, and from these, further linkages back to the public health and garden city movements in Britain, and the city beautiful and zoning movements in the United States. You have also found, I believe, that out of this background the town planning movement in Canada emerged as a movement which held that society generally could be improved through town planning - a movement with rather a limited and specialized following, made up of high-minded members of the middle class and inspired by an urban utopian ideology.

As a utopian ideology, city planning can be discussed and theorized about simply as a system of ideas. The ideas which comprise such a system need not necessarily have any reference to practical reality, nor indeed, for that matter, to *any* aspect of reality. Ideas have their own reality and can exist in their own ideological world. This is why the mediaeval schoolmen could seriously debate the question of how many angels can stand on the head of a needle, and why town planning enthusiasts in the early years of this century could believe that town planning, through the application of science, and

motivated by sound moral principles, could achieve unlimited improvement not only of our towns and cities, but also of our rural countryside and indeed of our entire society.

The view of city planning as a utopian ideology is still a very current one. From this viewpoint city planning is seen as having an identity apart from city government. Nor is this view held merely by the uninitiated layman. It is found among those who earn their living as planners, and very commonly among academics and research workers in the field of urban affairs, and particularly in the planning programs taught in our planning schools. It is not uncommon to encounter the view that city planning exists outside of the context of city government or has only a circumstantial relationship with city government arising simply out of the circumstance that the city is the appropriate location for a city planning movement. This view holds that city planning has its real being in the realm of social ideology or reform, and that its true goals lie in the improvement of the human condition; that it pursues its separate goals apart from those of the city government and shares those goals with city government only insofar as those of the city government accord with its own; that it has its own morality and code of ethics over and above those which prevail in the community and the civic government; and that the “city planner” as part of “city planning” also stands in this same remote relationship to city government.

Most academic planning theory is still based on the view of planning as an ideology. That is why academic planning theory is so frequently indistinguishable from sociological theory or moral philosophy. That is why words like rationality and justice, and equity recur so frequently in the theories of planning, and why the betterment of the human condition is postulated as the goal of city planning. It is this view of city planning as a utopian ideology which enabled a professional booster like Thomas Adams to regard city planning in Canada as seriously defective because it wasn't following the British model, and which led a theorist like Tom Gunton to view the emergence of something he calls Urban Liberalism as a tragic failure of planning which marked the end of any possibility of its achieving social reform in Canada. I believe that none of this really makes any sense at all except in the context of planning as a utopian ideology.

I want to suggest to you this morning that although the historical movements you have been examining in your theory classes did take place, and although the city planning movement initially was an ideological movement which even today still has its adherents, to build theory of Canadian city planning upon these is to woefully misunderstand the nature of the city planning function, and to miss the essential point about city planning in this country.

I want to indicate to you this morning a different view of the city planning phenomenon - a view which perhaps is held only by myself: I haven't come across it anywhere in the academic literature. At any rate it is a view which accords much more

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closely with my own understanding of historical and contemporary events than any of the views I have found in the writings of the established planning theorists.

My view is based on a simple premise: that city planning is essentially the same thing as city government, and the kind of city planning you get is largely a matter of the kind of city government you've got.

I think this is a radically different point of view from most planning theory which is based upon utopian ideology. From the utopian viewpoint city planning and the city planner are seen as belonging to the city planning ideology or movement rather than to the city of which they are an integral part and whose purposes they serve. It is a view most comfortably held where utopian ideology has been transmuted into political ideology, or where planning is taught as moral philosophy or sociological theory. I am not suggesting that city planning as an ideology has no place in the context of other ideologies or theories. On the contrary, that is a point I emphatically want to make. City planning as an ideology belongs in the context of other ideologies - political,

philosophical, sociological, or whatever, and may find a comfortable place among them. I am saying however that as a utopian ideology it is irrelevant to the city government function. The city planning function - let me say the municipal planning function - has been performed by municipal governments since municipalities were first created in this country, and have done so outside of the context of utopian ideology, and independently of planning theory. I am saying that the business of city government is the conduct of the affairs of the city, and the way in which those civic affairs are conducted will vary from city to city, and will even vary in the same city from time to time, depending on the nature of that city and its incumbent government. And the kind of planning which that city will do will precisely mirror the kind of government which that city has. I am saying that city planning cannot have any identity or meaning outside of the context of city government. It is a function of city government and derives its nature from the nature of that government.

I suppose I am also saying that the failure to distinguish between city planning as a utopian ideology and city planning as a city government function makes perhaps the heaviest contribution to the prevailing confusion about the nature and role of planning.

I think that the best way I can approach this argument is to review quickly the way in which the city planning and city government functions have been performed here in Winnipeg over an extended period of time. Winnipeg in fact is as good a case study for this purpose as one could ask for.

The history of Winnipeg can be viewed as the search by the municipal governments in the Greater Winnipeg area for the most effective means of providing municipal services to their citizens, and the gradual extension of the area of centralized municipal jurisdiction to coincide with the expanding area over which unified municipal services and the correlative legislative controls became increasingly necessary. Over the span of its history to the present, Greater Winnipeg has had three different forms of government. Up until 1960, Greater Winnipeg comprised some 20 separate autonomous municipal corporations, lying physically contiguous to one another, but each of them pursuing its

own independent municipal interests. This arrangement had prevailed from the beginning of municipal government in the area, and had been continuous through both the first and second world wars, and was only changed in 1960 with the creation of Metro - The Metropolitan Corporation of Greater Winnipeg. The metropolitan form of government continued until 1971, when the City of Winnipeg Act was passed by the provincial legislature, amalgamating all of the former municipalities of the metro regime into a single unified city. The Act came into force on January 1st 1972 and Winnipeg has had its present form of government since then, although there have been certain changes in the size of the council and the structure of the standing committees and the electoral constituencies during that time.

Throughout the entire period of municipal history prior to 1960, the problems of servicing the population of the Greater Winnipeg area were dealt with by the individual municipal corporations acting independently. On the whole they dealt with them adequately. However, even in the early years of the century there were certain problems arising out of the need to provide certain services to the population, which could not be dealt with by the individual municipality acting alone and which required the joint action of two or more of them because these services necessitated the crossing of municipal boundaries. Chief among them was the supply of water and the disposal of waste. There were also one or two other issues which arose from time to time which could only be dealt with through the joint action of two or more municipalities, and it became the practice to deal with these matters through special agencies and inter-municipal agreements. This practice continued virtually until the creation of the metro government in 1960. Among the first of these special, single purpose agencies was the Greater Winnipeg Water District, established in 1913. This was followed by the Mosquito Abatement District in 1927. Then there was the Greater Winnipeg Sanitary District created in 1935; the St. James-Winnipeg Airport Commission of 1937; the Rivers and Streams Authority No. 1 of 1940; the Metropolitan Planning Commission of 1949; the Metropolitan Defence Board of 1951; and the Greater Winnipeg Transit Commission of 1953.

Apart from these special instances of inter-municipal authority, the development activities were managed by the individual councils themselves. Nevertheless, as the area grew in population and the need for servicing that population became more pressing, the need for some sort of agency to assist councils in arriving at decisions respecting growth and development was felt with varying degrees of urgency over a very extended period of time, and a variety of committees and commissions was created to meet that need.

I don't want to burden you with the details of these various committees and commissions. The main point which they illustrate is that there was a constant search, in the Greater Winnipeg area, for the appropriate means of providing municipal services to a growing urban population, and the persistent attempt by these municipalities to find the appropriate means without surrendering or compromising their own corporate autonomy. They were able to manage this more or less successfully up until 1960, through such mechanisms as the Winnipeg City Planning Commission of 1911; the Greater Winnipeg Plan Committee of 1914; the Winnipeg Town Planning Commission of 1944; the Post War Reconstruction Committee created by the provincial government out of which emerged the Metropolitan Planning Committee in 1944; the Joint Executive Committee of the Winnipeg Town Planning Commission and the Metropolitan Planning Committee, also established in 1944; and the Metropolitan Planning Commission, Greater Winnipeg of 1949.

The main reason why the Greater Winnipeg municipalities were able to manage through the instrumentality of these agencies was because the scale and urgency of the problems of urbanization had not yet reached the point where individual municipalities felt overwhelmed by them, and where the municipal councils could not cope with them. All of these committees and commissions were purely advisory in function and stood apart from the municipal government. They had no legislative or administrative powers (except of course those District authorities created by special inter-municipal agreements). None of these planning committees could deal successfully with issues of development which crossed municipal boundaries, and such issues were becoming increasingly pressing in Greater Winnipeg as post-war urbanization gained momentum.

Nor was it only the jurisdictional limit which made inter-municipal services and development programs almost impossible to carry out. There were also the very limited financial resources which each separate municipal authority could command. Beyond that there was the political jealousy and rivalry among them which was not conducive to co-operation in such undertakings except in situations of the direst urgency.

In spite of the desire and the efforts of the individual municipalities to seek solutions to development problems within their own corporate areas of competence, it was becoming

“City planning as an ideology belongs in the context of other ideologies.”

increasingly clear that the simple provision of basic municipal services within the municipal corporate limits, and development control through the rudimentary municipal zoning measures then in prevailing use, were not enough to cope with the accelerating rate of urbanization in the metropolitan area. Obviously some way had to be found to provide regional services, and to manage regional growth more effectively. In 1955 the provincial government appointed the Greater Winnipeg Investigating Commission to look into the matter, and to recommend measures for dealing with the problem. The Commission’s main recommendation was that a two-tier metropolitan form of government be created for the entire Greater Winnipeg area. In 1960 the government introduced the Metropolitan Corporation of Greater Winnipeg Act which was passed into law by the legislature, and Metro Winnipeg came into being in May of 1961.

Metro Winnipeg was structured as a two-tiered “regional” government, with a Metropolitan Tier, and an Area Municipality Tier, each with its own respective powers and responsibilities. The Metropolitan tier had a council of ten members. The chairman of the council was initially appointed by the cabinet, but after the first four-year term the council elected the chairman from among themselves. The Metropolitan level was given responsibility for those services which were regarded as inter-municipal or “metropolitan” in character. These included planning, zoning and building controls, assessment of property for tax purposes, water supply and wholesale distribution of water

within the metropolitan area, sewage and land drainage, major streets and bridges, public transportation, major parks and recreation areas, civil defence and emergency measures, and mosquito abatement.

The area municipalities were left with the responsibility for those services which were considered “local” in character. These in effect included all those municipal services provided for under existing legislation but not assigned to the metropolitan government.

There was also created under the Metro Winnipeg Act, an “additional zone” surrounding the metro area and extending about five miles beyond the metro boundary, which included all or parts of the nine contiguous rural municipalities. The Metropolitan Corporation was given jurisdiction in this extra-territorial zone over planning, zoning, building, and property assessment for tax purposes.

The record of achievement of Metro is outstanding in the history of municipal government in Winnipeg. This is so not only in terms of its improvements in the area's services and amenities, such as the major street system, public transportation, sewage treatment, water supply, and metropolitan parks, but also in its capacity to govern, to come to grips with issues, to address the problems and welfare of the entire metropolitan area without neglect or indifference to any of its sectors, to make decisions, to formulate and carry out policies.

Part of the success of metro in providing services must be attributed to the fact that the capacity and condition of all of the area-wide services systems had fallen so far behind the needs of the growing metropolitan population that simply bringing them up to a merely acceptable level would have represented a major achievement. But in fact Metro went beyond merely the minimum requirements. The Metro council was given area-wide authority over a broad range of services and they brought a high degree of competence, imagination, energy, and commitment to the exercise of their mandate.

In terms of its more traditional planning functions, the two major plans produced by the

metropolitan government were the Metropolitan Development Plan of 1969, and the Downtown Winnipeg Plan of 1970. Neither of these major plans was successful in achieving its stated goals. But this failure is not surprising, even considering the success of the other activities of the metropolitan government. Both of these failed plans were long-range comprehensive plans, and no Canadian municipality can mount such plans successfully. I would suggest however that both of these planning documents were not really relevant to the true planning function of Metro. They were only marginal to the central concern and responsibility of the metropolitan government, and therefore to its true planning task, which was to provide efficient and up-to-date metro wide systems of municipal services, and to manage the growth of the metropolitan area in an economic and effective manner. This they accomplished admirably.

Metro Winnipeg lasted until 1972, when it was replaced by the present unified city government. I believe that the basic reason underlying the change was the growing hostility between the area municipalities and the metropolitan government. When the NDP government came to power in 1969, relations between the metropolitan government and the area municipalities had reached such an exacerbated intensity of hostility that the new government felt constrained to take action. The action it took was to abolish the metropolitan form of government and replace it by a single municipal corporation having jurisdiction over the whole Greater Winnipeg region.

Before introducing the legislation, the NDP government spent about a year investigating the problems of local government in metropolitan Winnipeg, and formulating its ideas about the kind of government it wanted to replace Metro. In 1970 it published a White Paper - "Proposals for Urban Reorganization in the Greater Winnipeg Area" - in which it set out its analysis of the situation and its proposals for the new city.

In general terms the government perceived three main causes of the metropolitan area's difficulties: fragmented authority, segmented financial capacity, and lack of citizen involvement. It proposed to overcome these difficulties first through the unification of municipal government which would provide a single centralized authority and a single

centralized financial capacity, and second through the creation of a system of Community Committees and Residents Advisory Groups, which, it was hoped, would provide a vehicle for effective citizen participation. The two basic principles underlying the concept of the proposed new government were centralization of the administration and decentralization of the political process.

The City of Winnipeg Act was assented to on July 27, 1971, and came into force on January 1st 1972.

This quick review of the history of municipal government in Greater Winnipeg indicates to me that there is an inevitable linkage between the nature of municipal or city government, and the kind of planning it does, and in fact, the only kind of planning it is able to do; and the kind of planning it is able to do has nothing at all to do with planning theories derived from the notion of city planning as an ideology. I view the historical evolution of municipal government in Greater Winnipeg as equivalent to the historical evolution of the planning function in Greater Winnipeg: both of them grew out of and were determined by the demands placed upon them by the residents of the area for municipal services. I can distinguish three phases in that evolutionary process. Two of them are now completed, and we have just entered into the third. The first of these I would describe as City Planning as Basic Municipal Servicing; the second I would describe as City Planning as Metropolitan Growth Management; and the third I would tentatively assign the heading of City Planning as Urban Socio-Economic Programming.

What strikes me very forcibly in this history is how firmly the nature and role of the planning function was in lock-step with the nature and role of the municipal government. The planning function was precisely related to the municipal governments' need and capacity for the planning function at their then prevailing levels of development activity and services programs. The kind of planning that they did was a mirror-image of the kind of government that they were.

During the first phase the pressures of development were light enough for the separate

councils themselves to handle. The planning function was simply a matter of passing and administering zoning regulations and providing basic local engineering services. For this the council itself, or a committee of council, or a locally oriented commission or committee appointed by council was sufficient. The nature of the demands of the residents made it possible for the various municipal corporations to retain their existing identity and autonomy in meeting those demands. No government, indeed no group or corporation or institution will change its role or its form, or surrender any of its power or authority or status, unless compelled to do so. Conditions which prevailed until the end of the Second World War were such as to enable the separate municipal corporations to continue in their established mode while successfully discharging their municipal responsibilities. The planning function in its totality, and quite appropriately, consisted of the local engineering services and rudimentary zoning controls. This was the type of planning which was right and sufficient for this type of government in the prevailing political and developmental circumstances. As we have seen, a number of planning commissions and committees were appointed during that period but they were more in the realm of ideology than in the realm of government. They were purely advisory in nature, and my guess is that their influence on the decisions of the local councils was not great.

As the population expanded however, and as the accompanying problems grew in magnitude and complexity, new solutions had to be found. The solution which emerged in 1960 was the establishment of a metropolitan form of government.

It should be noted that the decade 1950-1960 was one of the most vigorous growth periods in the history of Greater Winnipeg. During that decade the metropolitan area grew by an average of 3.4% per year, which is something of a record in terms of the number of people added since the increase was on a fairly substantial population base. During that decade too, the area was divided into a multiplicity of separate municipal corporations, whose separate powers and finances did not allow them to cope successfully with this unprecedented population expansion. As a result, the adequacy of the municipal services systems in the Greater Winnipeg area declined as the population

grew. By 1960 the prevailing municipal structure could no longer cope. It had become obsolete, and it was necessary to replace it with a new structure designed specifically for the purpose of successful growth management. It was universally believed throughout this continent that the phenomenon of unrestrained growth which had been experienced since the end of the war in 1945 would simply continue on into the dim and distant future.

It must be realized that few if any municipalities in Canada were in a position to accommodate this growth smoothly and as a matter of routine. They lacked the proper staff with the appropriate training; they lacked the proper statutory and bylaw

“Members of city councils would be bewildered if they [were] asked whether they favored rational comprehensive planning over incremental planning, or whether they based their decisions on the principles of utilitarianism, or distributive justice, or advocacy.”

instruments; there was not in place a suitable municipal government structure nor the delineation of the areas of jurisdiction and competence which would ease the absorption of such a massive new population into the regime of the host metropolis. It is understandable then that during the postwar decades there was a great activity of adjustment in the realm of municipal government. New forms of city government were created, such as the metropolitan governments of Toronto and Winnipeg, and the regional governments in Ontario; new ideas were experimented with such as district planning commissions, and extraterritorial jurisdictions; new powers were enacted under provincial planning acts and municipal zoning bylaws; new government departments were created to deal with the new dimensions of urban life.

It must also be recognized that for about three decades following the end of the Second World War city government and city planning throughout the whole of Canada were completely given over to the physical development of the city. This physical development

was simply a function of physical growth contingent upon the growth of the urban population and the urban and national economies.

The driving force in the nation and its cities was the energy of physical and economic growth, and political decisions were molded and directed by that force. Those political decisions and the hard facts of the economics of development are what shaped our cities during this critical period of the urbanization of Canada. Members of city councils would have been bewildered if they had been asked whether they favored rational comprehensive planning over incremental planning, or whether they based their decisions on the principles of utilitarianism, or distributive justice, or advocacy. They would not have understood the meanings of those words, and if they had it is probable that most of them would not have seen any connection between them and their role as decision-makers in the city planning process. It is perhaps not even stretching the point too far to suggest that most city planners during that period would have had the same reactions to those questions.

Urban growth was rampant, and it was regarded as a good thing in itself. There was a universal conviction that growth stimulated the economy and attracted new investment; it increased the sum total of the city's wealth which ultimately found expression in an improved standard of living for everyone, even for the poor, whose lives are less oppressive, however marginally, during conditions of general affluence; it brought new tax revenues to the city's treasury allowing city council the politically advantageous opportunity to expand and improve municipal services, and to undertake new and popular civic projects; it built the high-rise towers recognized everywhere at that time as the symbols of civic success; it heightened the vitality of the city - "the action" was the phrase commonly used - and generated the sense of excitement and sophistication, and the daringly new and experimental life-styles, all of which had become synonymous with the modern, innovative and progressive metropolis.

With this perception of the virtues of growth, and with the normalcy of growth demonstrated and confirmed in the annual statistics of CMHC and the national economic indices, city councillors sat in the council chambers and on planning committees quite

unaware of planning theory and oblivious to questions of planning ideology. Development issues were decided mainly on the basis of political and economic considerations. But the principle of growth and development as the ultimate civic good underlay all council's deliberations, and they did whatever they could in their decisions and bylaws, not only to accommodate that growth, but to attract it. This growth psychology was not merely a big city phenomenon. It permeated every aspect of our national life. The annual increase in the gross national product was watched with the same fascination and satisfaction as the annual percentage rise in the city population, the number of building cranes on the skyline and the annual value of building permits issued. Everyone was convinced that there was no limit to the growth, and that this was just as it should be.

Under these conditions, it is understandable that the major role of city government and city planning came to be regarded as "growth management." The outstanding accomplishment of Winnipeg's metropolitan government was its successful growth management programs which took the form of the provision of a first-class network of services on a metropolitan scale, from sewage treatment to regional parks, from the major streets to the transit system. I have already indicated my opinion that this was in fact also their major planning accomplishment. Their comprehensive long-range metropolitan development plan was a failure, and their Downtown Winnipeg Plan was only partially, and on a very modest scale successful. The reasons for these failures, I suggest are firstly because municipal government generally cannot implement such plans; but the Downtown Winnipeg Plan failed for two other more specific reasons. One was because the public sector cost component of the plan could not be seriously undertaken by the metropolitan council. The metropolitan council's finances were in large measure raised by an impost on the area municipalities. The area municipalities would undoubtedly have been able to resist successfully the increase in their contribution which would have been required. Moreover it is doubtful whether the metro council itself would have seriously considered spending the necessary money on this plan which was not really central to their capital program. One must also recognize the probability that the plan would not have been able to attract the necessary private investment. The second reason is that two

short years after the publication of the plan, metro was dissolved, and the new unified council turned away from the downtown to direct its attention to the suburbs.

In retrospect then, the decade of metro emerges as one in which the growth management of the burgeoning metropolis was the major task of the newly created metropolitan government, as well as of its planning function, which it carried out with eminent success.

Metro lasted until 1972 when it was replaced by the unified City of Winnipeg. I've touched on the reasons for the change, and I've also referred to the two most frequent charges levied against it.. These criticisms are directed against the unified city's failure to make any plans, and the failure of the Residents Advisory Groups.

In order to gain some insight into these failures, one must go back to the time when the Bill for the unification of the city was being prepared. There was within the Schreyer cabinet a division of opinion, not just on the manner in which to proceed with unification, but even, to a considerable degree, on the question of whether to proceed at all. Diffidence toward full unification was felt mainly by those members of the NDP government who had formerly been the mayor or a member of the council of an area municipality, and who felt that their re-election as an MLA would be jeopardized if the government proceeded with amalgamation resulting in the termination of these historic municipalities. Chief among these were the cabinet ministers Saul Miller and Al Mackling, and their view was shared by a number of other government members. Their concerns were of course seriously considered in the discussions of the amalgamation proposals, and one of the results which emerged was the principle of a gradual transition to full, centralized unification with the retention of as many characteristics of the former area municipality organization as possible.

One such provision was that the former boundaries of the municipalities would be retained as the boundaries of the new communities. Another was that the names of the former municipalities would be retained wherever possible as the names of the new

communities. Another was that the new communities would be divided into electoral wards of about 10,000 people each, and each such ward would elect one representative to the new council. This meant that the members of the new unified council would be elected from the old municipal areas, and ensured that, initially at any rate, there would be a large number of former suburban municipal councillors on the city council of the new amalgamated city. Still another provision was that the councillors from the wards of each community would constitute a “community committee” and would supervise the administration in the delivery of services. It was soon discovered that this latter provision was very ambiguous, and in fact could not be implemented in its literal meaning, and it was amended shortly after the unified city started to function.

The resident's advisory groups were intended as the citizens' counterpart to the community committees. It was expected that this

“By 1972 there was very little development [in Winnipeg] and very little for the ordinary citizen to participate in.”

system of citizens' organizations would assist the community committees in the forming of policy and would bring the ordinary citizen closer to the centre of decision-making and allow him to participate more fully in the process of government. It must be remembered that at this time much of the ferment of ideas and emotions generated by the protest against the Viet Nam war and the counter-culture revolt had already spread across the international boundary into Canada. Its influence can clearly be seen at work in the ideas that were introduced by the government's consultants on the reorganization proposal, and in the language of their memoranda and study documents, and even of the White Paper, out of which the Act was fashioned.

It can be argued that a significant part of the Act was really out of context in the Winnipeg situation, and represented a displacement of perception from the conditions in the urban cores of American metropolises, and even in third world countries, to Winnipeg, on the basis of ideological preconceptions. Whether this argument could be successfully defended is a moot point. What is incontrovertible however is that the

residents advisory groups were a failure, and that the council also failed to produce any city plans pursuant to Section XX of the Act.

My view of these failures is that they were inevitable, and could not have been otherwise, given the political structure of the new city, and the economic circumstances in which it found itself as it moved through the decade of the seventies and into the eighties. It was virtually impossible for the city council, made up as it was of an overwhelming majority of suburban representatives, whose only allegiance was to a suburban constituency of some 10,000 people, to be concerned about planning for the city as a whole, and even more impossible for them to be concerned about the central area of the city. Their personal political survival was owed to the electors in their ward, and it was of no advantage to them to pursue or espouse major issues which lay outside their own ward, or which might perhaps present a threat to their own ward in terms of taxes, or physical intrusions, or the loss or deferral of some local recreational or other amenity. It is perhaps the clearest illustration of the point that I have been making that city planning and city government are different aspects of the same function and the kind of planning you get is really a matter of the kind of city you've got. After 1972 Winnipeg was the kind of city in which the idea of comprehensive planning, or of central area planning was meaningless.

But it was not only the political structure which made such planning meaningless. The city's economy was perhaps an even greater factor. During the decade of the fifties, Greater Winnipeg's growth rate was quite respectable at an average of 3.4% per year, and its economy was quite vigorous. The city's growth rate declined steadily from that high. During the sixties it averaged 1.35% per year; and during the seventies it averaged 0.8% per year, and only 0.5% per year for the last half of the decade. The city's economy and its development activity declined commensurately with the drop in the population growth rate.

There is very little need or incentive for growth management in a city which is not growing. City planning during the fifties, as I have indicated was concerned with the accommodation of new growth by means of a municipal structure which was rapidly

becoming obsolete. The Metropolitan Corporation of Greater Winnipeg Act provided a new municipal structure which could effectively make up the shortfall in regional services which had been accumulating, and could effectively manage the growth which the metropolitan area was still experiencing albeit at a declining rate. By the time the City of Winnipeg Act was passed in 1972, the city had come to a virtual standstill. The need for planning - which during the preceding decade was the need for growth management - became a secondary concern. The need for residents' advisory groups to advise the community committees on planning matters was non-existent. The idea of the residents' advisory groups under the Act was conceived as a device to allow the ordinary citizen the opportunity to participate in development decisions. In fact however, by 1972 there was very little development and very little for the ordinary citizen to participate in. Given the political structure of the unified city, and the coincident stagnation in the growth rate, it was inevitable that there would be no interest, or even ability on the part of the council to engage in planning exercises for the city, and no basis for activity by the resident's advisory groups.

Earlier in my remarks I said that I believe we have now entered a new phase in the government and the planning of Winnipeg, and I gave the tentative name of City Planning as Urban Socio-Economic Programming to this phase. My notion here arises out of the fact that the federal and provincial governments have been the major planning and development authorities in Winnipeg for some time now - actually since 1980 or 81. The Core Area Initiative and the North Portage Development Corporation are the evidence of this fact.

The circumstances under which the senior levels of government can become the dominant presence in the city are circumstances in which the local urban dynamic slows down, and there is not enough energy to maintain the city council at a high level of activity and therefore at a high level of presence and prestige. Development is the fuel which feeds the city dynamo. If there is little or no development, the activity and prestige of the city council must decline. Under these conditions social and economic issues become the dominant issues in government, and these issues are mainly under the

jurisdiction of the senior governments. Accordingly they become the high-profile presence in the civic scene, and ultimately they become involved beyond merely social and economic programs, but in programs of physical development, redevelopment, revitalization and city planning in general, which are properly the responsibility of the civic government.

That is what is now happening in Winnipeg. The planning we are getting is precisely appropriate to a city whose population and economy are in a state of near equilibrium - that is to say the planning we are getting is not at the initiative of the city, but mainly at the initiative of the senior governments. That is why there is a heavy weighting on the side of economic and social programs. If our condition of near-stagnation continues, then I expect that the senior governments, through various tri-level programs will continue to determine the city's planning and development programs. The substratum of these programs will be social and economic policy. Under this circumstance I believe that a new relationship must be established between the city and the other two levels of government which will be based on the recognition of this condition. The City of Winnipeg Act is now under review⁸. If the revision does not recognize that the city's role must now be altered quite radically from that of the sixties and seventies then city planning in this city will see a diminishing involvement of the city and of the traditional city planner in the process. The city at present does not have the competence - in the statutory and fiscal sense - to deal with these matters, and the city planners do not have the competence, in the professional and technical sense - to deal with them. The city's position can be altered by statute. The planner's dilemma is more difficult to deal with. But even if the present planners are simply not trained for this new role, this type of planning may well be the kind of city planning in which the city will be engaged. If new and different professional resources will be required, they will be found, and it is irrelevant to say that this is not city planning because it doesn't accord with some theoretical model or some traditional view of that function. It is the type of city planning which will be appropriate to this city in its present and perhaps continuing circumstances of no population growth and of economic equilibrium.

⁸ The City of Winnipeg Act Review process ran from 1984-1986.

What then can one conclude from all this. I offer the following:

1. City planning theory as an ideology lies in the realm of sociological or political ideology or philosophy; it has little if any relevance for city planning as a function of city government.
2. The objective of city planning is not ideological except to the extent to which the objective of city government is ideological. The objective of city government is fundamentally to fulfill the responsibilities and obligations placed upon it by the statutes under which it exists and functions. The objective of the city councillors is to carry out those responsibilities and obligations at a nice balance between the least cost to the taxpayer and the greatest political advantage to themselves.
3. The senior levels of government have been from the outset, and continue to be, much more the appropriate levels of government than the municipal, for pursuing the goals of social betterment expressed in the ideology of the planning movement. Indeed, the city has been from the beginning, and continues to be, quite hopelessly inappropriate for such a role. The linkage of the ideal of social betterment with the instrumentality of town planning as was conceived by the town planning visionaries of the period 1909-1929 was a mistaken perception arising out of a misreading of the nature of city government, perhaps because of an understandable but misdirected enthusiasm for a gripping idea in a period when the nation had not yet become urbanized, and cities were still small and rural in ethos, and the character of their ultimate maturity was still not perceptible. It was also a regrettable historical error because it has not only misdirected the thrust for social reform, but has brought great confusion into the sphere of city planning, from which we still suffer.
4. If city planning were to be enabled to pursue the ideals of the town planning movement, its very nature would have to be changed to allow it to do so. It would have to become much more like the senior governments in its capacity to make policy, in its financial resources, its legal powers, its autonomy, its accountability to its citizens. The city as we have it today can no more behave as the utopian idealists would have it behave, than a donkey can behave like a racehorse. That kind of behavior is simply not within the realm of the inner nature of either.

5. It is too much to expect the province to change the nature of the city. But that is what would be required. And only the province has the power to do it. But even if we can't hope for such radical legislation, perhaps it is possible to work out a new relationship between the province and the city which would make it possible for them jointly to pursue the ideals of social betterment through city planning.
6. At the present time, city planning varies from city to city to the extent that city government varies from city to city. There is in fact no integrating or unifying ideology which binds the planning function together as an independent, cohesive activity or continuum from city to city and which overrides or stands above the great differences in the city government from city to city. In order to understand city planning it is therefore necessary to understand city government. In order to understand the planning function in any given city it is necessary to understand that city – its government, its social structure, its economy, its history, its culture, its leaders. That is why one of the most foolish and dangerous assumptions in city planning is that because a technique or a device, or a measure works successfully in one city it will also work successfully in another. That is also why it is virtually impossible, if not indeed entirely impossible, to formulate a general theory of city planning except as a utopian ideology or as part of some larger encompassing ideology or theory, which as already stated has little or no relevance for city planning as a function of city government.

In the light of the foregoing, the Planning Theory courses should be completely revised. There should be a drastic reduction in the theory of planning as ideology, and a corresponding increase in the teaching of the city planning function as a mirror of the function of city government.

Part Three: The Past and Future of the Planning Function



What is Planning? Who is the Planner? (1980)

Address to the Faculty of Architecture, University of Manitoba, Fall 1980.

It seems to me important that early in the new term there be the opportunity to discuss, in a seminar such as this, questions such as: What is planning, and who is the planner? I think it is important for a number of reasons. There is at the present time an ambiguity about the nature of the planning function and the role of the planner, and since many of you intend to earn your livelihood in this field, it is of interest to you to take every opportunity to discuss these issues, and to sort out in your own minds what it is that you are getting into. Some of you in the senior years may already be quite sophisticated in this matter because of previous involvement. But even you, I believe, should have a continuing interest in these issues because one's perception of them changes with time and experience, as indeed does the discipline itself. Those of you who have not yet had much involvement in these questions will have a fresh interest in the discussion. These issues are of course dealt with elsewhere, in the Theory of Planning, and other background courses. Beyond that, however, some of the ambiguity surrounding the city planning function lies in its perceived relationship to architecture. The fact that the Department of City Planning in this University is part of the Faculty of Architecture is very significant, and indicates that there is the perception of a basic relationship between the two. An occasion such as this provides an opportunity to examine the relationship between architecture and city planning, and students in both disciplines should benefit from a clearer understanding of that perceived connection.

Architecture has been referred to as the “mother of the arts.” Certainly the myriad works of artists and craftsmen which have been produced to enhance and embellish architecture through the ages testifies to the truth of that observation. There is also a prevailing notion that architecture is the mother of city planning. Such a notion is perhaps understandable because the most immediately apparent manifestation of the city planning function is that of the physical form of the built environment. But in fact city planning does not spring from architecture. If there is indeed a close family tie between them, it is probably the other way round - architecture following from city planning. I personally do not view the relationship between city planning and architecture as progenitive. They are of course related, but not causally. Each has its own separate roots deep in the human urge to create and in the dark sub-strata of its particular culture, where the perceptions and the aspirations and the self-image of the society are generated and nourished.

But city planning was not always thought of as an offspring of architecture, nor even in terms of the mere physical form of the city. Nor was it always regarded as a minor function in the administrative process of city government. I wonder how many of you know how very highly esteemed it was at one time; that it once was placed indeed at the very pinnacle of intellectual activity. Let me read you a quotation: “The highest and most noble form of thought is that which is concerned with the ordering of the city, this being true justice and practical wisdom.”

That was the considered opinion of no less a thinker than Plato himself. I am sure that many philosophy professors include among their number those who are admirers of the Greek Idealist. I am not so sure, however, that any of them would agree with that savant's view of the importance of city planning. I can't imagine the Department of Philosophy conceding to the Department of City Planning any position of superiority in the quality or nobility of their thought!

It seems clear to me that Plato was not talking about City Planning as that term is generally understood today. I do not believe that he was thinking in terms of the architecture of the city, or the layout of its street system or its land uses, but rather in

terms of how the government of the city might be ordered, so as to evoke, and to express, and to nourish, the best that was in the hearts and the minds of its citizens. I suggest to you that this is an important idea that lies close to the centre of our contemporary dilemma about the nature and role of city planning, and I shall come back to it later on in our discussion. Based on Plato's view of the matter, and on the evidence which remains to us of the glory that was classical Athens, one might conclude that city planning in the Attica of fifth century B.C. was a deeply politico-philosophical, if not indeed a religious activity; certainly the material form of the city seems to have transcended the marble and limestone of which it was built, to achieve, on the scale of an entire city, the highest expression of the ethos of a people, which since then has only been equaled in isolated instances, and on a limited scale, such as in the great cathedrals of Gothic Europe.

Perhaps it is something of an exaggeration to speak of the unity which exists between the external built environment of classical Athens and the internal psychic or spiritual environment of the entire Athenian population. The majority of the people who lived in Athens had very little to say about what was built in the city; and it is very likely that they didn't feel very strongly one way or the other about it. It must be remembered that the population of Attica in the fifth century B.C. was only about 315,000 and only about 43,000 of these or something less than 14% were citizens. The balance was made up of women and children who didn't count for much in the affairs of the State, and slaves and foreigners who counted for even less. The slaves comprised between 35% and 40% of the population. These figures refer to Attica as a whole which included Athens, Piraeus and Phaleron. The City of Athens itself, which today includes Piraeus and Phaleron as part of its metropolitan area, in the Age of Pericles probably had a population of something around 100,000 with its citizens numbering in the order of about 14,000. Only the citizens had the right, and indeed the responsibility to participate in the conduct of the affairs of the city. Clearly then, the effective control of the city was in the hands of a very small minority of the population, which however, was socially and politically very closely knit, which shared a common ideology and common aspirations, and seemingly a common taste in matters of culture and aesthetics, of architecture, art, drama and poetry, and of city planning.

This point too is important to note because it has a universal and abiding validity - namely that the critical decisions in the planning of cities are made by or on behalf of the individual or group which holds the power in any society, reflects their point of view, and advances their interests. For most of our history the powerful were quite readily identified - the kings and their nobles, the princes of the church, the merchant princes of the Renaissance, the entrepreneurial barons of the industrial revolution, and the multi-national giant corporations of the post-industrial era. It seems almost self-evident that the Piazza San Marco in Venice, and the complex of St. Peters and its portico in Rome, and the Royal Crescent in Bath, and the working-class slums of London's east end in the early 19th century, and Welwyn Garden City and Letchworth, and even the core area of, say, contemporary Toronto, dominated as it is by the glistening towers of the great financial and commercial powers of our day, all reflect the personal or collective taste, the self-image, and the perception of the world, of those oligarchies or hegemonies who ruled their societies at those various times. This is perhaps not surprising. The great majority of the population for most of human history was too poor and too tired, and too ignorant, to care very much about the appearance of the city, or the way in which it functioned, or to be concerned about the fact that it did not embody any of their own aspirations or points of view, if indeed they had any.

Today, here in Canada, as elsewhere in the world, conditions are somewhat changed. Our population is affluent - more affluent and more educated and literate than any in history; we have taken the principle of political democracy farther than any other society in history - certainly farther, much, much farther, than the democracy of classical Athens ever dreamed of; we have virtually instantaneous communication with all corners of the earth; we have unprecedented personal freedom and mobility. Today, more than ever before, we know what's going on. And yet we are unable to create in our cities that sense of enlightened vision, nobility of spirit, and community of purpose which ancient Athens was able to achieve. Indeed, we do not even seem to be able to achieve the functional and housekeeping efficiency which one might expect from an advanced technological society. I assure you that the fault does not lie with the planners. The explanation for the failure must be sought elsewhere. I cannot tell you with any confidence exactly where to look for

it, but I suspect that it lies buried somewhere among our proudest accomplishments. I cannot escape the feeling that those achievements about which we pride ourselves the most, lie at the bottom of our failure as city planners - our size, our affluence, our political democracy, our complexity and diversity, our private enterprise economy, our extraordinary technical skills and apparatus, our ideal of individuality and personal freedom. I suspect that in order to create a city which expresses ubiquitously, and in all its aspects, the ideals, and the spirit, and the aspirations of its people, there must be a strong sense of community among them, a sense of common roots and a shared life, and a common destiny. There is also, probably, the requirement of a powerful, coherent, and integrating set of values and goals held in common, and a certain measure of stability in the society. All of this probably is only realizable in a much smaller and simpler, and more homogeneous population than that of the contemporary metropolis. And clearly, none of it is realizable in a society where the major preoccupation of the powerful is simply the accumulation of capital. Our society may be too diverse, too fragmented, too unstable, too materialistic, too secular, too bereft of the sense of community, and the emotion of reverence, and the vision of the future, to build such a city.

City planning has lost something very precious in its passage from Athens to Winnipeg. The loss is not merely that of the ability to

“City planning has lost something very precious in its passage from Athens to Winnipeg.”

create an entire city which externalizes in material form the inner spirit of the society and to do so with pervasive nobility and beauty; the loss is also that of the identity of the city planning function itself. We today have no common understanding of the nature of city planning. Even among planners themselves there is no consensus about the nature of the planning function or the role of the planner. You may think this an extraordinary state of affairs but it is regrettably true, and I would like to try to explain to you how this has come to pass, and what its implications may be for the building of our cities and for the education of our urbanists.

The present ambiguity and confusion about the nature and role of city planning is of fairly recent origin. Before World War II, the matter was quite clear. City planning was simply that - the art of laying out the city, and designing its buildings and spaces in terms of beautiful compositions. It was urban design, and as such was closely linked with architecture and engineering. The current ambiguity concerning city planning dates from the decade of the 1960's. Like so many of our Canadian institutions, customs and concepts, city planning has its roots in Great Britain, and to get some insight into its current condition in our country, it is useful to go back to certain events which occurred in Britain during and immediately following World War II.

During the 1939-45 war England suffered physical destruction, particularly the cities of London, Canterbury and Bristol. Her economic devastation was perhaps more extensive than her physical destruction. And her social structure, which had been cracking alarmingly since the First World War, was in danger of coming quite apart by 1945. Even before the war was over, there was keen public anticipation of the reconstruction of the nation in the post-war era, and there was an eagerness and a determination to get on with it. In 1945 the British Parliament enacted the New Towns Act, and in 1947 the Town and Country Planning Act, which together provided a good part of the statutory foundation on which the post-war reconstruction would be based. Planning was a living part of the British mentality at that time; it was a real, a tangible presence in the deliberations, the activities, and the legislation of governments at all levels. And planning meant the reconstruction of the nation from the devastation of the war, and the rebuilding of the economic and social structure of the nation which had been cracking and eroding for about a generation.

There was no such devastation in Canada. However, as the war came to an end it became obvious that Canada was experiencing a different, although just as profound an affect: it was becoming urbanized, and at a very rapid rate. Returning servicemen were settling in the cities instead of going back to the farms from which they came; farm populations were moving to the cities; and from abroad immigrants were coming to the urban centres instead of to the land as their predecessors had done before and after the First World War.

Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation⁹ had by that time succeeded the Wartime Housing Corporation, and although its major responsibility was the guaranteeing of mortgages on the single family dwellings which comprised the new and vastly proliferating suburbs of the burgeoning Canadian cities, it was also heavily influential in determining the government's policies in the area of housing and planning generally. The Corporation played an important role in the introduction of planning legislation in Canada, and was directly responsible for the importation of British planners to staff the newly created planning departments of our cities and provinces. Most of them were recruited by C.M.H.C. to work as employees of the corporation initially, but with the expectation that after an initial period they would move out to positions in the planning departments across the country.

The great majority of these British planners had been trained in the great surge of planning schools that had built up with enormous speed and energy immediately after the war in order to meet the almost insatiable demand for planners as a result of the Town and Country Planning Act of 1947 and the New Towns Act of 1945. Most of them were originally trained as architects. By 1952 the first set of Development Plans for the nation's cities, as required under the 1947 Act, was completed, and the first bloom of creativity and enthusiasm and commitment was already fading. Many of these planners responded with new enthusiasm to C.M.H.C.'s invitation. The work they were required to do was almost exclusively in the field of housing and site planning. And indeed that was the nature of "Planning" at that time - the physical design of the new residential suburbs. It is interesting to note that the first planning school in Canada was established in 1947 at McGill University in Montreal, with urban physical design as the focus of its curriculum.

At that time the only candidates eligible for admission to the Town Planning Institute of Great Britain, as well as of Canada and to the planning schools, were architects, engineers, and surveyors. The whole conception of planning was unequivocally that of physical design, layout, and servicing of the city.

⁹ Changed in 1979 to be the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation

In this role, city planning was quite clearly defined, and was applied in a special context - the physical development of the city as a function of civic government. In England, as in other countries of Europe, this was not restricted to the simple provision of services infrastructure; the municipal government was heavily involved in the construction and operation of housing on a large scale, and in the ownership and development of land on a large scale. In this context, the planner, as an official of the municipal government was indeed heavily involved in the planning and development of the municipality, and had a measure of authority in this role which far exceeded anything ever experienced in Canada. It is furthermore important to note that the “planner” was not a hybrid or a mixture in which the identities of the basic disciplines were dissolved and lost in a new identity. The planner was one of three basic types, the architect - planner, the engineer-planner, or the surveyor-planner; each type not only retained its basic identity, but practiced its basic discipline in the wider context of the development of the city as a whole.

It was this perception of the “Planner” and of “City Planning” which the immigrant planners brought with them from Britain, under the sponsorship of C.M.H.C. in the immediate post-war years. It was this

“In planning the city, the needs and aspirations of its people, rather than simply the aesthetics of its architecture or the limitations of its sewer and water system should be the primary determinants.”

perception which was held by the officials of C.M.H.C. who influenced C.M.H.C.'s “planning” activities, and which informed the planning departments and even the legislation which emerged at that particular time in Canada's history. That view of Planning has changed over the intervening years; and it has changed not merely in response to historical events, but perhaps even more significantly it has changed because in Canada the basic ideology which pervades our society and finds overt expression in our political and economic system, does not accept the same degree of public involvement and initiative in building the city as was the case in Britain when the idea of

Planning was brought over from there in the early postwar years. While there may have been in Canada an enthusiasm for city planning, or at least an acceptance of it in those years, it was in all likelihood so because the full implications for public intervention in the economic and other aspects of urban affairs were not well understood. With the passage of time and the attempts to “plan” our cities, the understanding became clearer, and the role of the planner was drastically modified.

In the 1950’s, however, the city planner was still seen as an architect-planner, or an engineer-planner, or a surveyor-planner, that is, as a professional whose role was to lay out the physical dimensions and character of the new urban areas. It was not until sometime about the mid 60's that the perception of Planning changed from that of merely physical design to include the social sciences, the humanities, and other interests. It was at this point that the cloud of uncertain identity began to descend upon the heads of the planning fraternity.

As already indicated, the change in the perception of Planning was due to a number of factors. One of these was the broadening of the parameters of the planning function to recognize and include a great variety of new disciplines and interests. As the realization spread that it might indeed not only be possible but perhaps even make good sense to anticipate the future on a systematic basis, and systematically to order the available resources of a community so as to meet that anticipated future in a way which would satisfy both the expectations and aspirations of the community, and since this sort of planning seemed to be limited to physical planning, but held promise of wider applications and involvements, other disciplines became interested, and began to insist on their inclusion in the planning process. Their claims were difficult to deny. Clearly a city is more than merely a physical arrangement of streets and buildings and landscaping. Human beings - the people of the city - are at least as important as its physical components. In planning the city, the needs and aspirations of its people, rather than simply the aesthetics of its architecture or the limitations of its sewer and water system should be the primary determinants.

At about this time too, the social ferment of the 60's was building up to its highest pitch of intensity. The demand for social change which had its origins in the Vietnam war and in the black ghettos of the United States spread to the campuses and even into the streets of Canada. The demands included the demand for grass-roots involvement and citizen participation in the decisions of governments. Planning was inevitably drawn into the maelstrom of social action, and citizen participation became an acknowledged part of the planning mystique. Thus the disciplines and specialties and interests involved in Planning were greatly extended, and the issues which now required consideration in the planning of the city became wider and wider and more and more complex, until they became what they are today; indeed until they became identical with the concerns of the city government itself, in their range and diversity and urgency.

That is the position of Planning at the present time. It has become amorphous; it has lost the narrowness of its definition and the preciseness of its identity. With this loss it has also lost whatever claim to a "profession" it may have had – but it has also gained something. Through the broadening of its concerns, and the inclusion of a whole new spectrum of specialties and interests, including the participation of the citizen at large in what it claims to be "the planning process," it has identified itself completely with the concerns of government, and included in its own ambit all the disciplines and specialties upon which government must now call for advice. In short it has now identified "the planning process" with "the government process."

To have any meaning at all, Planning must now be seen as an integral part of government. Planning is the advisory function of government, just as legislating is the decision-making function of government. The responsibility of government is to make and carry out policies; the responsibility of Planning is to advise government on the making and carrying out of those policies. The prevailing confusion about the city planning function and the role of the city planner arises out of our failure to understand this simple basic truth about the nature of the contemporary city and its government. Earlier in my remarks, when I was commenting on Periclean Athens, I said that city planning was a deeply politico-philosophical if not indeed a religious activity. City planning has gone a

long circuit since that time, and I believe is struggling to become once again something like what it was in the fifth century B.C.; it can never be the same thing again, of course.

For one thing it cannot have serious religious implications or overtones, in a society which is as secular as ours. It has moved closer to identification with the full range of civic government responsibilities than at any time since then. It cannot be thought of any longer as simply urban design, although that physical side of the planning function is still a significant part of it, and indeed is still perceived by some as the major part of it, if not indeed its entirety. The wheel has turned too far for city planning to continue as simply physical urban design, or as architecture applied to the scale of the city. The city plan is no longer cast simply in terms of streetscapes and traffic arteries and grand vistas and beautiful compositions. The contemporary city plan, although it is still cast in terms of land-uses and physical development, is also concerned with the needs of people – families, young people and the aged; it is concerned with poverty and employment, with health and recreation, with present life-styles and aspirations for the future. It is in fact trying very hard to return to Plato's notion, to be “concerned with the ordering of the city,” as he put it, and in the sense that he meant.

Why then can it not succeed? Why do most city plans fail, and why is city planning regarded as merely the administration of land use control and development approval regulations? Why is the city planner regarded in many quarters as merely an irrelevant and obstructive bureaucrat? The reasons are many and complex, but at the heart of it all is the fact that city planning is trying to play the role of advisor on matters of policy to a government which is not really very much interested in matters of policy. City government is not really interested in long range planning, or in commitment to policies designed to achieve long-range goals. City government for the most part sees itself as an administrative body rather than a policy-making body. It sees its role as that of housekeeping rather than governing. It is not surprising therefore, that it sees its staff simply as a housekeeping administration, and what use can it therefore have for advisors on matters of policy? Let me develop this thought a little further.

There are two ways in which city government can be viewed. One is, as I have just indicated, as a housekeeping administration. Its responsibilities in this role are primarily to provide and maintain municipal services - sewer and water, streets, garbage pickup, snow clearing, police, etc. The main responsibility of the elected representative under this concept is to respond to the complaints of his constituents, and to their demand for services. This is the traditional view of civic government, and it is the way city councils have seen themselves and in accordance with which they have conducted civic affairs from their beginnings here in Canada.

The other view of city government is as a government whose role is to initiate policies and programs, and actively to manage the long term growth and development of the city in accordance with those policies and programs. Under the former view the city's role is passive or simply reactive, and the reaction is usually ad hoc reaction to situations of crisis. Under the latter, the city's role is active and interventionist, in the pursuit of its long-range goals.

The cities of Canada all tend to be distributed toward the housekeeping administrative end of that spectrum, although there are some differences in their positions. Winnipeg is perhaps among those cities which are closest to the

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housekeeping administration end of the range; Toronto is perhaps among those which are farther away. The reasons why Canadian cities have these characteristics are not far to seek. They can be found in the constitutional, historical, statutory, and socio-economic circumstances of our country. There are, under our constitution, only two levels of government - the federal and the provincial. Section 92 of the British North America Act, gives the provinces responsibilities for municipal institutions. This simply means that the

provinces can create municipalities if they choose to, and can set the rules under which such municipalities must operate. If the provinces chose not to create any municipalities, we would not have any, but they did exercise their prerogative and did create municipalities and municipal governments.

They started creating them over a hundred years ago, when the population of the country was very small, and most people lived on farms and in the countryside. There were few urban places, and those that existed were extremely small by our present standards and functioned as service centres to the surrounding hinterland. Their growth rate was quite readily manageable through simply housekeeping measures. The powers which the provinces conveyed to them were indeed simply those powers which would enable them to provide such housekeeping administrative services. The higher order responsibilities such as economic and social policies and programs remained with the provinces and with the federal government. This distribution of powers and responsibilities was established at the very beginning and remains with us today, virtually unchanged over the century and more of our history.

However, the nature of our society has changed. We have become urbanized. We now have cities which are not merely larger, but greater by almost any criterion one chooses to apply, than some provinces and indeed combinations of provinces. Our cities have become the dwelling-place of most of our population. They have also become the generators of our economy, and the dynamos of our society, but their role and their powers remain unchanged from what they were in the beginning. What is so very sad about the situation is that city councils themselves still see their proper role as the traditional one. Unfortunately the complexity of the contemporary city cannot be managed on the basis of the traditional role and powers of city government. The provinces are not actively and directly assuming the burden of urban government on the one hand, nor are they conveying to the cities the power and resources they need to do a proper job themselves on the other hand. Indeed the cities do not seem to want any further authority; all they ever seem to ask for is more money. Yet it seems clear that city council needs much more than increased revenues if it is to meet the needs of its people

in the dynamic world of the rapidly evolving metropolis. It needs a clear sense of where it is going as a city, and how it is going to get there. It needs policies and programs which will keep it moving in that direction, and the capacity to change direction when that becomes necessary. It needs a long-range vision and a commitment to that vision, and the legislative and fiscal powers to fulfill that commitment. The housekeeping administrative type of civic government cannot provide any of this. One wonders why such obsolete attitudes persist among city councillors, and again one can only refer to the traditional structure of city government to provide an insight.

Because the role of city council traditionally was simply administrative, the structure of the council was such as to permit it to perform that administrative role and nothing more. That traditional structure is still maintained in most cities. The size of the council is small. Its members are elected on the basis of their own personal appeal. The mayor is elected at large. Office is held for relatively short terms, ranging from one to three years. Typically a member of the council has responsibility for each department of the administration. Elections fought on the basis of platforms or policies or issues are the rare exception rather than the rule. Even when political parties contest municipal elections, they most typically do so without a platform, running on the appeal of the national party from which they are derived, rather than on a platform of policies formulated specifically for the municipal contest. Since voting on council is not along party lines, it is impossible to hold anyone accountable, other than the entire council as a whole, for bylaws which are enacted. Yet it is virtually impossible to encourage or discourage council from pursuing any given course or line of municipal legislation or policy.

In such circumstances it is not surprising that the idea of long-range planning and policy making does not find a warm reception at city hall. It is true that most municipalities pay some sort of lip-service to the development plan, and even have a long-range planning group in their planning departments; but long-range planning does not engage the serious attention of city councillors, and the long range plan of development is not regarded with great respect. The planning function is generally seen as the administration of the zoning bylaw and the processing of applications for development approval.

Let me say that this view of city planning is not universal, and that the role of the city planner is not always simply that of an administrator of land use control regulations. The degree to which the city planner moves out of the area of administration and into the realm of creative policy formulation varies with the character of the city, and particularly with the character of the city council. Where the council takes initiatives, where it is interventionist, and disposed to experiment, and where it has confidence in, and a strong and cordial relationship with its administration, then the planning function can assume its proper policy advisory role. This can happen from time to time, even in conservative cities such as Winnipeg: the ten years of Greater Winnipeg's metropolitan government was just such a case in point. Of course one must also recognize the potential for achievement which lies in the individual planner, because of circumstances and his own personal qualities is able to exert a creative influence even in the midst of a generally unsupportive environment.

However, one must be concerned about the norms rather than the exceptions and one must therefore, be concerned about the general dilemma facing city planning at the present time. As I see it the modern metropolis is becoming so complex and fragmented that unless its affairs can be ordered, in the Platonic sense I have referred to, in accordance with some commonly accepted views and aspirations of its citizens, it may well become quite unmanageable and deteriorate to a condition where it is no longer a fit place to live, as has already happened to some extent in a number of the giant urban concentrations in the United States. This process of "the ordering of the city" is essentially what I regard as city planning, and the dilemma lies in the fact that there is much in the ethos of our society which is inimical to city planning, and much in our institutional habits and practices which stand in its way.

Is there then no prospect of resolving this dilemma? I think there is, within certain limits. In the general context of our contemporary western society I can identify three fundamental characteristics which present the most obdurate and formidable contradictions to the planning principle. One of these is our belief in the virtues of the

free market and our commitment to the principle of private enterprise. The contradiction seems obvious: if the free play of market forces, together with the separate and often conflicting decisions of the private entrepreneurs is the best way to form the future, then the deliberate intervention of the civic government in the determination of the future is anomalous. The second is, I suppose, a corollary of the first, and it is our commitment to the private ownership of land. Again the dilemma seems clear: if the ownership of the land is to remain in private hands, and the decisions about how to develop that land are to be in the main, private decisions, how can civic government really perform the onerous task of “ordering the city?” The third element in the dilemma is that of our loss of the sense of community, which is often referred to as the phenomenon of alienation in our society. Without a strong sense of mutual involvement and interest, a common set of values, and common aspirations, how can we arrive at a common view of our future and the means of realizing it?

Within limits I believe that there are certain things which can happen which would go some considerable distance towards the resolution of the dilemma of city planning. There are two elements among the obstructive institutional habits and practices to which I referred, which I believe, can be altered so as to bring city government much more fully and openly into its proper role of policy-maker, and so as to bring city planning much more effectively into its proper role of advisor to the policy-makers. One of these elements is the traditional structure of city council; the other is the prevailing perception of the nature of city planning and the role of the city planner. I have already given you some indication of the way in which the traditional structure of civic government works against the acceptance by city council of long-range planning as one of its normal and central functions. It seems to me that a basic reason why city councils cannot take this role seriously is because there is no mechanism in place which would require a city government to formulate a platform of civic policies and programs, and to stand or fall as a government on the basis of implementing or failing to implement that platform. It may of course be argued that the city Development Plan does in fact represent a statement of civic policies with a long-range time horizon for its implementation. However, I suggest to you that because of the structure of the traditional city council, no one is responsible

for the implementation of that plan; no one can be held accountable for its abandonment; no one can be censured if council ignores its proposals, or simply shelves it and puts it into abeyance. Such indeed has been the fate of many city development plans.

I am convinced that there is a simple, feasible way of dealing with this particular problem, and that is to introduce a system of political parties as the basis

“[If] no one is responsible for the implementation of that plan no one can be held accountable for its abandonment.”

of our civic government. I don't know whether a political party system would in fact resolve the dilemma of city planning as the central responsibility of city government, but I do believe that without such a system that dilemma is not likely to be resolved at all; it is, I suggest, a condition precedent. I am persuaded of this because it seems to be that only a political party system provides the mechanism whereby platforms for civic development can be formulated based on policies and implementing programs; where the public can choose the platform which most closely accords with their own views; and where a city government can either be returned to power if it carries out its mandate, or be defeated and turned out of office if it fails to do so. I believe that at the civic level, issues can be articulated even more sharply, and more closely related to the immediate concerns of the populace than they can at either the provincial or federal levels; and the choice between various party platforms can be more clearly differentiated. The introduction of political parties into civic politics is incipient in a number of places.

We came within a hair's-breadth of it here in Winnipeg, and indeed are still teetering on the brink of such a move. Some would even say that we already have it, but I would argue that we do not yet have it openly and in the form in which it can be effective. I am hopeful that we shall yet see it openly established and effectively operating here in this city.

The second element of institutional habit and practice which I believe contributes to the

dilemma of city planning, and which can and should be altered, is the prevailing view of city planning and the role of the city planner. I refer to the notion that city planning is a “profession,” and that the city planner is a “professional.” The distinguishing characteristic of a profession is a body of discreet and special knowledge and techniques which are peculiar to that profession, which can be applied directly to the solution of problems falling within the purview of that profession. In that sense city planning is not a profession, and the city planner is not a professional.

The body of knowledge which planning draws upon is by no means special or peculiar to that function. It comes to the planning function unaltered from the fields of economics, sociology, political science, architecture, engineering, medicine and so on. Recognized professions such as engineering and medicine also draw upon other more specialized supportive disciplines. Engineering draws upon structural theory and other special fields of knowledge; medicine draws upon pathology and physiology and so on. It is also a distinguishing characteristic of such professions that they draw upon and integrate the knowledge of these special supportive disciplines into a transcendent body of knowledge which constitutes the basis of their profession, and which is recognized as peculiarly their own. Such is not at all the case with city planning. City Planning does not represent a body of knowledge which transcends that of the disciplines upon which it draws; nor is city planning knowledge applied to the solution of urban problems in a way which is different from that of any of the disciplines from which it draws its knowledge.

It should be remembered that city councils have had experts to advise them on the solution of urban problems long before the city planner appeared on the scene. Engineers, surveyors, solicitors, doctors, solicitors, architects, accountants, were always part of the civic administration and were always asked for advice and guidance in their role as specialists; and it continues to be so. Planners, and particularly in the form of the “master planner,” are very recent arrivals on the civic scene. It is my view that the planner as “master planner” is not ever likely to be consulted by city council on all civic issues. The transportation engineer rather than the planner will always be consulted on transportation problems; the architect rather than the planner will always be consulted on architectural,

yes, and even urban design problems; the social worker rather than the planner will always be consulted on matters of social welfare.

What then is city planning and who is the city planner? I suggest that city planning, in its essence, is nothing other than a special way of looking at and understanding urban problems. It is a synoptic or comprehensive point of view which seeks to understand the problems of the city, as far as possible in terms of their total implications and repercussions: physical, economic, social, political, and long term as well as immediate. Clearly, no single person can master all of the disciplines which are required for a comprehensive understanding of the complexities of the contemporary metropolis. However, if the transportation engineer, and the social worker, and the economist and the other specialists had also been trained to see their particular problems comprehensively, that is, as planners, then their advice to council would be based on a more rounded and long-term consideration of the issues, than it would have been without such training. The planner can never be comprehensive in his technical skills; but he must be as comprehensive as possible in his understanding of the limitations of whatever his special skills may be, and of the consequences of his advice when applied to urban problems. He must also understand, as far as possible the consequences and implications of the advice of other specialists in the making of government decisions and policies.

All of this has important implications for planning education. It suggests to me that city planning is an interdisciplinary function in which there is no "master planner," but in which each member is not only a specialist in a given discipline but has also been trained in the comprehensive approach to problems which came within his discipline. Perhaps this means that the notion of educating people to be professional planners should be abandoned, or else drastically revised. It certainly does not mean that education in city planning should be abandoned: it does suggest that the purpose of that training might be re-examined.

Let me close by saying that although I recognize the confusion which at present surrounds city planning, and the tenuousness of its present status, and the dubiousness of

its professional character, I believe strongly in its validity as an important element in the management of urban growth, and in the contribution it can ultimately make to the salvaging and the refashioning of the city as an appropriate habitat for mankind. City planning is of course powerless to accomplish this alone. Profound changes must occur in our society before city planning can come in to its proper sphere. Society is constantly changing and one must work towards affecting such changes as will improve the quality of urban life. Perhaps in the not too distant future the changes will bring us to the position where city governments will see their central responsibility as the management of the city's affairs so as to evoke, express, and nourish the best that is in the hearts and minds of its people. When that happens city government and city planning will come together in their true relationship, as two aspects of the same function to achieve again “the ordering of the city” in the profoundest sense of Plato's phrase.

City Planning, the Master Plan, and Zoning (1969)

Address to the Canadian Building Officials Association Annual Conference, Fort Garry Hotel Winnipeg, Manitoba April 24th, 1969.

It may come as a surprise to some of you to learn that the practice of city planning goes back a very long way in history. There is strong evidence that the very first real cities created by man, in the valley of the Indus River several thousand years before the start of the Christian era were constructed according to a prepared design; and the magnificent cities of the Incas, and the other civilizations of pre-Columbian America were certainly laid out in accordance with a master plan for their development.

The nature of city planning however has changed through history, and the changes in the nature of the planning function have merely reflected the changes in the city itself. The city throughout history has been relatively small, its area limited, its perimeter hard and well-defined (often by a wall), its population simply differentiated, stable, and relatively immobile, both socially and physically. The objectives of planning for such a city were simple; in the main they were concerned with providing the physical setting for the religious rituals and commercial practices of the community, and with objectifying the magnificence of its ruling class.

City planning today is no longer simple. Indeed, its condition cannot be described in terms like “simple” or “complex.” It would be more accurate to say that it is in a state of confusion. But the confused condition of the planning function in the middle of the 20th century is only a reflection of the confused condition of the 20th century city itself. The

city of today is unlike anything that has gone before it in the entire history of mankind. For the first time the city has become the dwelling place of the majority of the population. The modern city is enormous in size, has no definite edge or perimeter but blurs into suburban development many miles away from the city centre, is wildly dynamic in its rate of growth, is complex and pluralistic in its social structure, and its population is extremely mobile both socially and physically. We have here an entirely new phenomenon, and we are having a very difficult time learning to cope with it. It is this which creates the impression that city planning is something new. City planning, as I have already suggested, is not new; it is the 20th century city itself which is new, and we have not yet found the appropriate means of dealing with it in planning terms. Paradoxically, because of the characteristics of the modern city, the need for establishing some kind of rational order in its development is vital - perhaps even critical to its survival, but because of those very characteristics, that order of development is unprecedentedly difficult to impose.

It has become a cliché today to talk about “the urban crisis.” The news media daily bring us the tidings of the plight of the city – the riots in the streets and on the university campuses, the rising crime rate, the civil disobedience,

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the traffic congestion, the pollution of air and water, the shortage of housing, the alienation of humanity, and the rising costs of everything. To a large segment of the population, and particularly in the United States, “the urban crisis” means the crisis of race, the crisis of the Negro in the ghettos of urban America. I want to suggest to you that the urban crisis has other significant dimensions, amongst which in important measure is the deterioration of the city as a place in which to live, and the deepening incapacity of the government of the city to stop that process of deterioration. The handwriting on the

wall is much more legible in the cities of the United States, but we in Canada would be very foolish to believe that the inscription has no relevance for us. Our own cities, and our own urban society face the same peril as that in which the American cities are now deeply embroiled. In these matters, our Canadian experience often recapitulates that of the United States, but several decades later. If our cities continue to grow as they now are, we are about a generation away from a serious convulsion in our urban life. The question of whether we can survive as an urban society will hang in the balance, and that balance can be tipped by the weight of the nature and quality of the urban environment within which that society must function. In this circumstance, it is of some importance to ensure that the urban environment will continue to provide a framework within which life, both personal and collective, can flourish. This, in essence, is what planning is all about. The objective of the planning function is to try to ensure that the things which we do in and to the city today will not render the city unfit for human life for those who come after us – a consideration which was not extended to our generation by our predecessors; more than that, the concern of planning is to try to ensure that what we do to and in the city today will enhance and embellish and make more comfortable and satisfying, the urban environment for those who will inherit it from us; and even more than that, I think it is possible to say, in the face of the bewilderingly rapid and profound changes which our society is experiencing in the present era, the concern of planning is to try to ensure that what we do in and to the city will allow us, today, to continue to live in it and enjoy it as a place fit for human habitation.

So far our record of achievement is not very comforting. Not that there is a lack of awareness of the problem. There has been for many years now a general realization of the problems which rapid and large-scale urbanization and technological change have created and continue to create. Generally it is believed that the solution to these problems lies in “planning,” but there is a widespread misunderstanding and confusion about the nature of planning. The institutional framework within which the planning function operates is now obsolete. The planning function today, while it is more widely recognized than it ever has been before, and while more is expected of it than ever before, is probably less effective than it ever has been before.

Before attempting to analyze the shortcomings of contemporary planning, it might be useful to describe briefly the nature of the planning process, to put it in the context in which I shall deal with it here.

City planning is an extremely complex technical and political process whereby our cities get built. In its broadest sense that process may be thought of as the sum total of all the activities that go into the creation of the urban environment. This of course

“The objective of the planning function is to try to ensure that...the city today will not [be] unfit for human life for those who come after us – a consideration which was not extended to our generation by our predecessors.”

covers a tremendous breadth of activity and includes almost everybody who has anything to do with the city, from the little old lady who plants geraniums in her window-box to the corporation who builds a skyscraper, to the mortgage houses who finance development, to the civic employee who administers the zoning by-law, to the members of the city council, to the architects, engineers, and professional planners, and all the others who affect the form and function of the city.

All of these people are engaged in a common activity, but they do not share a common goal. They share the activity of creating the city but they do not have a common view of the city which they are creating. Each of them is concerned only with the tiny fragment which has a direct and immediate effect on his personal interests; and indeed, there are enormous areas in which the individual's interests, be he a private or corporate individual, are in conflict with those of other individuals and with society as a whole. None of them sees the total effect on the city which each one's private actions is creating; nor does he care very much. Certainly none of them has any notion about directing his activity in such a way as to produce a given effect on the city of the future.

The purpose of the city planning function in government is to provide a comprehensive understanding of what is happening to the city, to create a common vision of the city

which is desirable, and to try to influence development so that it will bring that desirable city into being. In its simplest terms, the objective of the city planning process is to ensure that everything is in the right place, at the right time, in the most attractive way possible, with respect to the ideal city which has been conceptualized.

There are two aspects to the planning function. The first is the “think” aspect, and the second is the “do” aspect – the conceptual and the implemental. The first includes the functions of information collection, analysis, and the formulation of a concept or image of the city as it ought to be at some specified time in the future. The second stage includes all of the actions which are required to bring that image of the city to reality in the specified time.

The first stage may also be thought of as the technical stage of the planning process, and the second stage may be thought of as the political stage, although this is an

“Professional planners, and all of the others who affected the form and function of the city ... are engaged in a common activity, but they do not share a common goal.”

oversimplification because the planning process in its entirety is a complex mixture of both technical and political components.

I personally hold the view that the technical component is by far the less important element. When all the jargon and the irrelevancies and the pretensions are stripped away, it seems to me that “planning” is revealed more as an attitude, a point of view rather than a specialized technology. It is the point of view which regards, or at any rate, seeks to regard, all problems of development as comprehensively as possible, in terms of both space and time. The planning attitude asks two questions of any development proposal – “What are its effects on and implications for the physical environment today,” and “What effects and implications is it likely to produce in the future?” The techniques which planning uses to answer these questions are largely borrowed from other disciplines, and

are not the most important elements of the planning process. The difference between the planning function and other technical functions lies essentially in the comprehensiveness of its concern, in terms of both space and time, with respect to the development of the city.

In municipal government the responsibility for the planning function is given to the Planning Department, or Planning Division. This Division may be of two types, depending on how the planning function is organized in that particular municipality. If the planning function is exercised through a committee of the municipal council, then the planning department is simply a normal department of government in the same way that the engineering department is, or the parks department, or any other department, and is directly responsible to the city council through the chairman of the planning committee. The planning committee is made up of aldermen of the council.

If on the other hand the planning function is exercised through a Planning Commission, then the planning department is directly responsible to the Commission. In these cases the commission is made up of appointed people, not elected members of council. They are usually prominent citizens with an interest in planning matters. In some instances planning commissions are made up of a mixture of elected and appointed officials. The budget of the commission is provided by the council but they are not part of the council. They have the same status as parks commissions or other appointed commissions in the structure of local government.

The Planning Commission has no executive power; it can only make recommendations to council. Council is under no obligation to accept the proposals of the Commission; and the Commission of course can take a position on any planning issue which is opposed to that of the council; and commissions often do. The Planning Commission form of organization in my view typifies the confusion which lies at the heart of the planning function today. It is essentially an American device, and reflects clearly the principle of “checks and balances” which is so dear to the heart of American political theory. It also reflects very clearly the misconception of the nature of planning to which I have referred.

It implies that “planning” lies outside of the immediate area of interest and responsibility of the city council; the commonly heard remark “keep politics out of planning” is symptomatic of the confused idea that there can be a separation between planning and executive responsibility.

I suggest to you that responsibility for planning cannot be separated from the executive responsibility of government. The body that formulates the plan must be the body that carries out the plan or you simply don't have any planning. You cannot distinguish between the responsibility for sewer and water programs, or street programs, or any other public programs on the one hand, and “planning” on the other hand. All of these programs taken together are in fact what constitutes the basic content of “planning”. This is what I meant when I spoke of the planning concern as being comprehensive in scope. If council is responsible for sewer, and water, and roads and all of the other programs which together make up the infrastructure of the city, then it is by that very fact also responsible for planning, because it is these taken together which constitute the content of the planning function.

The misunderstanding of the planning function is perhaps most sharply evidenced by the place of zoning in the municipal planning process. Zoning is the dominant concern and activity of both the general public and their elected municipal councils. This is carried to the point where in most instances, zoning itself is looked upon as the whole of the planning function. In the minds of most people, and to many municipal councillors zoning and planning are synonymous, and the other components of the planning function, which in many ways are much more important than zoning, are ignored to the point where they sink into near oblivion.

There are many reasons for this, but the main ones are that zoning affects people's property in the immediate present, and what effects people's property has a powerful influence on government, and indeed on all of our social and political institutions. Another reason is that our social and political institutions are no longer appropriate for dealing with the problems of the modern city. The fact is that municipal councils

operating as they do within a framework of obsolete institutions find it very difficult to be future-oriented, but are forced to be mainly concerned with immediate issues. Because of this, municipal councils cannot be seriously committed to long-range planning, but do find a powerful appeal in zoning. The public, too, is not much concerned about plans for the future, perhaps because repeated disappointments have made them cynical about their prospects for implementation, but are very concerned about actions in the present, and their interest is therefore focused on present zoning rather than future planning. Zoning, as you know, deals with the use and development of private property in the immediate present. Yet it is only a part of the planning process, and in present circumstances, is perhaps not the most important part of that process. Because of the rate at which the city is evolving, and growing in size, long-range planning is in my view by far the more important element of the planning process, and should command a far greater share of the attention of the municipal council. I think one would have to say in all honesty that there are very few cities in North America where this is in fact the case.

Before returning to an analysis of the reasons for these discrepancies, I want to say a word about another important confusion in this whole matter of planning; and that is the question of the status and role of the professional planner in the municipal planning process.

Amongst the general public there is a prevailing impression that the “planner” works in some way outside of the machinery of government; that he has a measure of independence of the city council; that he is the protagonist and advocate of the public good – whatever that might be – and in this role frequently finds himself arrayed on the side opposite to the politicians on the city council; that he somehow has the responsibility for making, imposing, and enforcing regulations on the public, and is himself accountable if policies and regulations are pursued or enforced which the public finds distasteful or onerous; and perhaps most important of all, there is the widespread view that the planner invents the social goals which are embodied in government policy, and if the policy proves defective or anomalous or in any way objectionable, the fault is always that of those “damn stupid planners.”

These views are of course thoroughly mistaken. The fact is that the professional planner has no jurisdiction or authority of his own. He is an employee of the municipal corporation, and his role is that of adviser to his council, and administrator of its decisions. It is however true that his role is also to act as a persuader, to try to persuade his council that the ideas and proposals he has formulated are good, and should be accepted and embodied in official policy, and carried out. This matter of ideas being carried out is of the greatest importance. A plan is not merely an idea; a plan is an idea and an action to carry out that idea. If there is no action, then in my view there is no plan; there is only an exercise in wishful thinking illustrated by pretty pictures. In these terms the real responsibility for planning lies with the municipal council; and I don't mean merely the legal or statutory responsibility, but the functional responsibility. The members of the council are the real city planners. It is the council which makes the decisions which determine the basic shape and character of the city, and allocate the money to carry out those decisions. Council not only decides what projects will be undertaken, and how much will be paid for them, but also orders them to be carried out. I suggest to you that this represents the true planning function in government. Indeed, planning *is* government. The two things are synonymous with each other.

This does not mean however that the planner has no role to play other than that of the servant of the council. The truth is that council needs the planner; they rely on his advice, his judgment, his knowledge, his ideas, and, in a sense, even his leadership. The planner also needs the council. Without them he's out of business, because it is only through council that any of his ideas can be realized. Now, why is it that in spite of the growing difficulties of the city, and our great technical capacity to solve problems, and our growing awareness of the urban crisis, and the increasing attention which this situation is receiving, why is it that in spite of all these things, the effectiveness of city planning seems to be declining rather than increasing?

I suggested to you a moment ago that city planning is city government; they are one and the same thing. I suggest to you now that the effectiveness of city planning is diminishing

in our contemporary world in the main because the effectiveness of city government is diminishing. The effectiveness of city government is diminishing because it is caught and constrained within a constitutional strait jacket which is about one hundred years out of date, and which frustrates the effective execution of municipal government responsibilities.

We hear a great deal these days about our constitutional problem. Indeed, it has been described as the most pressing national issue of our times. There seems to be some disagreement however on the precise nature of that issue. In the east it is regarded as the bicultural issue; here in the west it is regarded as the fiscal issue. Let me suggest to you that there is still another issue which is rarely, if ever, mentioned in the context of the constitutional problem, and which in my view is at least as important to the people of Canada as the issues now identified in either the east or the west, and that is the issue of the city as a level of government in its own right.

Seventy per cent of all Canadians now live in cities. Over half the people of Manitoba live in Metro Winnipeg. More than twenty times the population of

“The effectiveness of city planning is diminishing in our contemporary world in the main because the effectiveness of city government is diminishing.”

Prince Edward Island lives in Metro Toronto. Nearly twice as many people live in Montreal, Vancouver, and Toronto as do in all three Prairie Provinces combined. The major metropolitan centres of Canada have far greater problems to cope with than most of the Provincial governments. However, the constitutional structure of one hundred years ago is still the basis upon which local government must operate. The city is still regarded as the residual authority with residual powers and residual resources to discharge its responsibilities. One hundred years ago its responsibilities, too, were residual. Today, they are quite the opposite.

Yet we still govern our cities in almost exactly the same way as we did one hundred years

ago. We still elect our councils on the basis of the old procedures; the sources of revenue for urban government are still the same; the kinds of things on which city government can spend money have changed very little; the kinds of activities in which councils can become involved are almost unaltered; the rules and principles and constraints within which councils operate are still more or less those of one hundred years ago; and most important of all, the public's views of the role of local government is essentially what it was a century ago.

There is little wonder then, that in the context of the complex, dynamic, explosive, urban world of today the planning function, or if you like, the city government function, is having its troubles. It has neither the powers, nor the financial resources, nor the social sanctions which are absolutely necessary for it to do the kind of job which has to be done.

The obsolescence of the existing institutions of municipal government are not the only obstacles in the way of effective long-range planning. There are many elements in our society which are inimical to the principle of planning, but which are so much an integral part of the normal way in which we think and feel and act that we do not recognize them as obstacles, or even as prejudicial to our long-term interests. These run all the way from our system of land ownership to our essentially agrarian outlook on the world. There is however not enough time available to us this morning to discuss all of these 20th century anomalies.

Let me not leave you with a sense of despair. While it is true that the urban world is changing faster than our social and political institutions have been able to change, nevertheless there are some very definite and heartening signs that we may yet be able to make the necessary adjustments before it is too late. For example, [Prime Minister Pierre] Trudeau has assured the Canadian Federation of Mayors and Municipalities that he agrees with the principle of direct municipal representation at future discussions between the Federal and Provincial governments on constitutional matters. This is a long way from constitutional reform recognizing the urban level of government, but it is also a long

step forward from the traditional position. Mr. Marchand¹⁰, too, is proposing something quite revolutionary – he is proposing to change the ground rules of his regional economic assistance program so that the urban centres, rather than the depressed rural areas will be the foci of Federal regional growth policies. This, too, is a long step forward from the traditional position. The Province of Ontario is in the process of creating about a dozen urban-centered regional governments, again a radical break-through in the field of local government.

Even here in Manitoba, the Provincial Government is changing the electoral boundaries so that Metropolitan Winnipeg's representation is increased by seven seats, bringing the number up to 27 seats, this represents 47% of the total number of seats in the legislature. Metro Winnipeg has nearly 54% of the Provincial population, so the gap is narrowing very markedly, and here on the Prairies that is a very encouraging achievement. Everywhere in the country there are signs that we are coming to realize that the traditional revenue resources and financial and legal constraints on municipal government are no longer adequate. The new power of municipal governments to become involved, even in a fairly limited way, as yet, in renewal for commercial purposes is a good illustration of the changes that are necessary, and are in fact beginning to take place. I am confident that we are entering an era in which the status and role of city government will undergo a revolutionary change; its institutional, and indeed constitutional framework will be greatly altered so that it can do those things which must be done to keep the city a fit place for human habitation. We are entering an era in which city government will be given the full powers and resources to provide good city government, which is the same thing as good city planning.

¹⁰ The Hon. Jean Marchand, Minister of Regional Economic Expansion 1969-1972

Some Thoughts on Planning Education (1968)

Date and location of delivery unknown.

Planners in Canada have brooded introspectively over the question “What is Planning?” Ever since the end of the Second World War when the idea of Planning first began to attract broad general interest in this country; and they continue to brood over it today. The question arises again and again in a wide variety of contexts: in articles in the planning journals, in meetings of citizens’ action committees, in public hearings, in conferences of planning school teachers, in academic volumes on planning theory, in student seminars, in the back rooms of city planning departments and the committee rooms of city councils. Although the question is raised on many occasions, and has been pondered for many years both by members of the Planning Institute and by the uninitiated, no generally accepted definition seems to have been found.

This lack of consensus about the nature and function of Planning has had some important affects. It has, for example, been responsible for the continuing controversy over planning education. The arguments over such issues as “core” versus “no core” curricula and graduate versus undergraduate schools, and the planner as specialist versus the planner as generalist, are the direct consequence of the failure to agree upon the fundamental question of the nature and purpose of Planning. Today there are thirteen Planning schools in Canada; they vary widely in their approach to planning education and in their perception of Planning, and this divergence of views and programs is continuing evidence that there is still no general agreement on the matter. The failure to identify what is meant by Planning has also produced serious self-doubts and questions of identity in students

enrolled in planning programs. It has created confusions about the roles of government officials and departments, particularly at the municipal level. It has also contributed to the rejection of the planner by the politician and to the gulf of misunderstanding between the public and the planner, which are common occurrences in city affairs.

In large measure the failure to arrive at a consensus on the nature of Planning is due to the attempt to regard it as a “profession,” that is, as a body of discrete and special knowledge and techniques peculiar to the “planning profession” and having direct application to the solution of all urban problems. The failure to formulate a definition of Planning in the traditional terms of a “profession” does not seem to have led to the logical conclusion - the questioning of the validity of the underlying assumption. Only rarely does one hear the view expressed that Planning is not a profession.

The Planning schools inadvertently contribute to the perpetuation of the myth of a planning profession in a number of ways. Perhaps the most subtle but at the same time the most telling way is by styling themselves as “Planning” or “City Planning” schools or departments. In doing so, they hold themselves out to offer training in “Planning” which carries with it the inescapable inference that they offer education in a specialized field of knowledge peculiar to “Planning” itself. A Department of Architecture or a school of Law does in fact offer such special knowledge and techniques. A Department of City Planning or a School of Planning does not. The courses of the Planning schools are taken directly from (or even given directly by) other disciplines - architecture, engineering, economics, sociology, geography, political science, etc. This is so to a far greater degree than is the case with, say, Medicine or Engineering or Architecture which also draw upon other more specialized supportive disciplines. Moreover, there is a far greater degree of interdependency between these professions and their supportive disciplines than is the case with Planning and its supports. Physiology and Pathology are much more locked into medicine and Structural Design into Engineering than Economics or Demography into Planning. The supportive disciplines of Planning are quite remote from Planning, and would continue to exist with virtually no change in their present roles and character if Planning were to disappear from the face of the Earth. This is not so for the supporting

disciplines of the recognized professions: their role and their nature would change significantly if the profession were to disappear. This suggests that the professions not only give sustenance to their supporting disciplines, but draw upon and integrate the special knowledge of these disciplines into a transcendent body of knowledge which constitutes the basis of the profession. Such is not at all the case with Planning. Planning does not represent a body of knowledge which transcends that of the disciplines upon which it draws; nor is Planning knowledge applied to the solution of urban problems in a way which is different from that of any of the disciplines upon which it draws.

The application of special knowledge to the solution of problems is of course one of the distinguishing characteristics of a profession. In this respect, the Planning schools further contribute to the confusion over the nature of Planning in as much as they fail to recognize the hiatus between what they teach as “Planning” and what is actually practiced as Planning in the Planning Departments of government, or indeed in the private sector. Planning as taught in the schools is future-oriented, and lies mainly in the fields of urban design, the social sciences, and planning theories, or at any rate theories about planning, range from epistemology and moral philosophy to political theory. Planning as practiced in the Planning Departments of Municipal (or Provincial) governments has short term interests, and is mainly concerned with regulation of land use and control of development, and the dictates of political expediency. Furthermore, there is, in the teaching of Planning, the assumption either implied or explicit, that the “Planner” has a primary role in the process of government, sometimes alluded to as “coordinator,” or even “decision-maker.” This is perhaps understandable, since the word “Planner” carries with it the intimation of a specific role, i.e. “one who plans,” and the schools encourage the expectation that the student, when he graduates, will be a “Planner” and perform this particular role: that he will “plan” the city. Moreover, this intimation carries with it the image of a major protagonist - in short, of a “professional.” The fact is that the planner as planner very rarely functions in this way either in government or the private sector.

Municipal governments for their part also contribute to the confusion of the “Planning”

function by including a City Planning department in their administration, thereby creating the impression that this department plans the city, whereas it really deals only with a very narrow segment of planning matters, and some of the most critical areas of city planning do not come under the Planning Department's jurisdiction at all, but are the responsibility of some other department of the city administration, such as transportation planning, engineering services, parks and recreation planning, social services, and others.

The myth of a planning profession is further perpetuated by the planning fraternity itself, which has - or at least some segment of which has - an obvious vested interest in creating the impression that it does have a special body of knowledge peculiar to itself which can be applied to solve urban (or regional) problems. This segment of the planning fraternity has succeeded in establishing legislation in two Provinces - Quebec and Saskatchewan - which recognize the "Planning" profession. However, it is significant to note that even here it is only the use of the title "Planner" which is registered and restricted. Anybody can engage in "planning" activities. The public at large, having no way of determining the validity of the planners' professions accepts them at face value, thereby strengthening the illusion that the Planner does have special knowledge, and therefore special power (since knowledge is power), even though the work of the planner frequently is the clearest refutation of that claim.

The fact of the matter is that Planning is not a profession, and has only the most tenuous connection with professionalism, which is, for the most part, a vestige of an earlier perception of Planning which had been imported from abroad, but is now obsolete, and has always been alien in the context of our Canadian system of urban development.

Furthermore, city councils (and other governments) have had experts to advise them on matters of policy long before planners appeared on the scene. Engineers, surveyors, doctors, solicitors, architects, assessors, accountants, were always part of the civic administration and were always asked for advice and guidance in their role as specialists; and it continues to be so. Planners are a very recent johnny-come-lately on the civic scene. And for the most part, their proper field of concern is seen to be land use control

and development approval. It is true that most cities have a long-range planning group, but long range planning does not engage the serious interest of city councillors, and the long range plan of development is not regarded with great respect. It seems most improbable that the planner as “Planner” will, in the foreseeable future, displace the professional and the specialist in those areas of civic policy where they have customarily been the advisors to government.

What then is the role of the Planner? How can he perform the advisory function of government if government will not consult him? The answer lies in abandoning the notion that Planning is a profession with a special body of knowledge and techniques, and

“We are a credit-card society: we mortgage our future to enjoy present satisfactions. Indeed, the future is held to be both imponderable and threatening, and we turn our minds away from it and obliterate it in the pursuit of immediate rewards.”

accepting it for what it is - simply a special way of looking at problems - a synoptic or comprehensive point of view - which seeks to understand urban (or regional) issues in terms, as far as possible, of their total implications and repercussions: physical, economic, social, political, and long term as well as immediate. The training of planners should have as its objective the development of this point of view and the techniques for revealing the implications of the issues with which government must deal, and the policies which it seeks to legislate.

In these terms the matter of “professionalism” becomes irrelevant, if not entirely meaningless. An engineer can develop a comprehensive approach to city engineering issues as easily as a social worker can to city welfare problems. A Planning school can broaden the viewpoint of an economist or a sociologist as readily as it can that of an architect. On this basis, a Planning school which admits only candidates with an architectural degree is as legitimately a Planning school as one which accepts candidates

from any undergraduate program. And indeed an undergraduate program in planning is as valid as a graduate program. There is however, this caution: that a planner with an undergraduate degree in Planning is not as likely to find employment, or to exercise as strong an influence on decisions, whether in the public or the private sector, as a planner with some basic professional graduate degree.

It is most unlikely that the planner as Planner will ever be consulted by council on all civic issues. The transportation engineer rather than the planner will always be consulted on transportation problems; the social worker rather than the planner will always be consulted on matters touching on social welfare. However, if the transportation engineer and the social worker have also been trained to view their problems comprehensively, that is, as Planners, then their advice to council will be based on a more rounded and long-term consideration of the issues than they would have been without such training. The Planner can never be comprehensive in his technical skills; but he must be comprehensive in his understanding of the consequences of his own skills and his own advice when applied to urban problems. He must also be comprehensive, as far as possible, in his understanding of the consequences of the advice of other specialists in the making of government decisions and policies.

This then is the, first role of the Planning school - to develop in its students a comprehensive approach to and a synoptic view of urban problems, and to prepare them to make recommendations to governments on urban policies from that point of view.

Yet policies cannot be impartial - they cannot give equal weight to all contending sides of an issue. Policies by their very nature must establish the priority or dominance of one aspect or another of such issues. An advisor may try to give impartial advice on the theory that the decision maker will decide which aspect of any issue should be given the dominant weight. And that advisor may possibly even succeed in avoiding any indication of preference of one side of an issue over another. But such a possibility is more theoretical than realistic. To begin with, the advice which the decision-maker seeks from the Planner or the specialist is usually expected to include a recommendation as to the

preferable policy or course of action. Secondly, urban issues are usually contested by several different interest groups, and it is only on the very rarest occasions that equal weight can be given to each. Almost invariably one or the other will be seen as the worthiest. But the recognition of merit can only occur within a value-system or ideology. Without a value-system nothing can be recognized as more valuable than anything else; indeed nothing can be recognized as having any value.

This then is the second role of the Planning school - to develop in its students a value-system or ideology within which he can arrive at an assessment of the relative merits of the various conflicting contentions which surround urban issues, in order that he can make meaningful recommendations to the decision makers.

It must be recognized that these responsibilities of the Planning school are relevant only if its program is role-oriented, that is to say, only if the program seeks to prepare its students for employment in the field of planning after graduation. It is of course possible for a planning program to have no such orientation. In that case the subject matter of the program might be taught simply as a scholarly pursuit or as a liberal arts program much as, say, the Classics, or Philosophy. This is not to denigrate the value of such scholarship. On the contrary the scholarly aspects of the Planning school's program must not be minimized. However, where the approach to urban issues is predominantly that of academic scholarship, then the program would much more appropriately be labeled "Urban Studies" or "Urban Affairs" rather than "City Planning." Even where the program is overtly committed to job-training, the balance between its purely scholarly content and its purely vocational content must be carefully struck so as to maintain the proper sense of scholarship.

The specific content of the program is something which will obviously vary from school to school, depending on such factors as whether it is an undergraduate or graduate program, the background of students admitted to the program, the degree of employment-orientation and others. Where the training of the student for employment is the main thrust of the program, it is clearly preferable, on the basis of the foregoing discussion, for

the Planning school to be a graduate rather than an undergraduate school. Moreover, it is of fundamental importance that each student be directed, in choosing his courses, to build upon his undergraduate specialty. For example a student with an economics background should design his graduate work in planning to increase his skills and knowledge and insights in economics, and should choose as his thesis topic, an issue directly related to economics. However his training in the Planning school must also develop in him the comprehensive viewpoint and ideology which has already been identified as the peculiar characteristic of Planning, and the basic responsibility of the Planning school.

The same is true for a student coming into a Planning program from any undergraduate specialty. The most difficult situation to deal with, in these terms, is that of a student from an undergraduate program in Planning. The undergraduate Planning program equips the student for virtually no employment in municipal government other than in the activities of land use control and development approval. It is this narrow compass of the “planner's” function which is today predominantly the way in which the public, and the city council see the Planner and the Planning function, and which not only seriously limits the influence of Planning but is bringing it into contempt and disrepute as merely an obstructive, bureaucratic, and expensive element in the urban development process.

It is, after all, the urban development process which is the central concern of the planner as advisor to urban government. It is therefore obviously in the best interests of Planning if the advice on urban development is given to the decision-maker by the whole spectrum of specialists ranging all the way from engineering and transportation specialists to political scientists and sociologists who have been trained to see their own and other's specialties from a comprehensive and long-term point of view.

Something must be said about the planner in the private sector. Many planners find employment not with government but with private corporations. If the essential role of the planner is to advise the decision-makers in government, what is his role in the private sector? The planner in the private sector can find himself in one of two possible employment situations. He can either be a member of the staff of a development

company, or of a professional consulting firm. In the former situation his job will be to prepare the technical components of the development his company is undertaking, such as the subdivision layout, or the services design, or the access and parking design, or the market analysis, or some other technical component, and either in addition to that role, or alternatively as his special role, he will be required to carry his employer's development proposal through the approval process at city hall and the public hearings. If the planner is in private consulting practice, his client will be either a government agency or a private developer. If it is a private developer, then his assignment will be very similar to what it would be to an employee of the developer - either the preparation of the technical components of a development proposal or else taking the development application through the approval process or both. If his client is a government, then again his role will be very much the same as it would be if he were an employee - namely, to advise the government on a project or a policy.

In all these cases, the essential role is that of advising the employer or the client. Also in all these cases the advice is modulated by the policy position of the government within whose jurisdiction the project will be developed. Central to all these circumstances is the question of public policy within which context all advice must be given. Clearly then, although one must acknowledge the fact that some proportion of the total number of planners will be employed in the private sector (and the private sector will almost invariably seek the services of a "professional" employee-engineer, architect, market analyst etc.) it is nevertheless public policy which is the touchstone of urban development, and accordingly the central role of Planning can be taken to be the advisory function in government-advisory, that is, to the policy-makers.

The question of a planning ideology is the most difficult with which to deal with because the central concept of city planning is contradictory to the fundamental ideology of our society. At the core of city planning is the notion that a city can formulate a vision of the way it would like to be at some stated time in the future, and through the policies of its civic government can move deliberately and systematically towards the realization of that vision. There is much in our society which is at odds with that notion. Perhaps the most

obdurate contradiction which stands against it is our society's belief in the virtue of the free market and our commitment to the principle of private enterprise. The contradiction seems obvious: if the free play of market forces together with the individual, often conflicting decisions of the private entrepreneurs, is the best way to form the future, then the deliberate intervention of the civic government in the determination of the future is anomalous. We cannot have it both ways. In practice of course we have neither of these in its pure form: our future emerges through compromise and the interplay between these two sets of forces, with the market and entrepreneurial forces almost invariably being the major determinants. Nevertheless, in terms of ideology the contradiction is there, very real, and constantly mocks the basic premises of Planning.

Other contradictions lie in the private ownership of land, which severely limits

“Political ideology must not be mistaken for planning ideology.”

public initiatives in developing the city in accordance with its predetermined goals, and in the virtual impossibility of really articulating a meaningful universal vision of the future city because of the fragmented, multi-nucleated nature of urban society, the loss of a sense of community, and the absence of a universal and sustaining value-system which commands our deepest moral and spiritual commitment. Our most valued possessions are our material possessions – our automobiles and the gold chains we wear around our necks. Our greatest heroes are our entertainers. We are a credit-card society: we mortgage our future to enjoy present satisfactions. Indeed, the future is held to be both imponderable and threatening, and we turn our minds away from it and obliterate it in the pursuit of immediate rewards. And our system of civic government ensures that our city councils will have little interest in policy-making, and less in the long-term future of the city.

Against such contradictions - and there are even more - one may well ask not only whether Planning can have a very persuasive ideology, but whether the whole notion of City Planning can have any validity at all.

In many quarters the query is turned around and the question is “Can our society have any validity at all?” Frequently the answer is “No!” and the consequence is political action which seeks to change or even to overthrow the established order. Political theories and the political action which flows from them are greatly varied and range from notions of the individual conscience and reconciliation with God, to notions of the liberation of the proletariat from its present suppression and exploitation through acts of violent social revolution. Our campuses and our Planning schools are congenial milieus for political ideologies and theories of social change; and so they should be. The university and (in the light of the contradictions between the central theme of Planning and the basic views of society) the Planning schools should be in the vortex of the swirl of ideas on the changes which should be wrought in our society, and how to bring them about. Indeed, in many Planning schools a significant proportion of the student body approaches the entire Planning program from the point of view of some political theory or other, usually some form of Marxism.

But political ideology must not be mistaken for planning ideology. They may have much in common; they may be in close contact with each other over large areas. However, they are different things, and it is important to recognize the difference. It must be acknowledged that the degree of difference will depend on the degree to which the Planning school's program is employment-oriented. If the program regards “Planning” as wholly a scholarly discipline, and views the realm of urban phenomena from a purely academic viewpoint, as concepts and theories, then it is possible that its ideology can mesh very closely with one of the current political ideologies. However, if the program is employment-oriented then the difference is significant. That difference lies in the very simple circumstance that city planning can only be practiced in the context of city government, and that it must be practiced from day to day, in the here and now, and within fairly tightly constrained terms of reference.

City planning, by its very nature, must function within the civic system; it must be part of civic government. If the planner steps outside of that system and actively pursues whatever ideological goals he may espouse, he is not engaged in city planning but rather

in political activism. It would be quite another matter if our system of civic government was predicated on political doctrines and organization but it isn't. The planner's function is to advise the city council on matters which come within his area of responsibility. In advising council on a question of rezoning, say, to permit a shopping centre to be built on land zoned for agriculture, or to permit row-houses to be built on land zoned for single-family dwellings, it is quite irrelevant that the planner may believe that the apparatus of the state should wither away, or that

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the dictatorship of the proletariat should be established by revolution. His responsibility is to advise council on the full implications of the rezoning proposal, and while his political persuasion may possibly influence him to find arguments against the shopping centre, and in favor of the row-housing, such arguments do not constitute socialist, neo-Marxist, or any other kind of political doctrine or ideology.

Nor do they constitute a Planning ideology. A Planning ideology must have a direct organic relationship to the inner nature of Planning; it must come out of its own inner characteristics; the things it values, the goals it aspires to, the issues it is involved with, the role it plays, the limitations within which it must function.

What then is the nature of Planning? It can probably be defined in a variety of ways, but, however it may be defined, it surely must have as the central core of its meaning, the making of arrangements in the present to achieve specific goals in the future; and in city planning those arrangements surely must include the systematic deployment of resources - human, financial, technical, man-made, and natural - which influence the form and

function of the city, in order to reach those goals. Planning then is future-oriented, and is concerned with the husbanding and the deployment of resources in order to reach articulated goals for the development of the city.

The articulation of those goals is one of the most difficult steps in the city planning process. While the dream of “the good life” for all its citizens is our current theme in city plans, such a notion is generally regarded as utopian. The good life not only cannot be provided to everyone, indeed it can scarcely be defined. What is one man's paradise is another man's purgatory. Even if one moves beyond the level of individual and personal preferences and tastes to the question of general standards of well-being, one still must face the seemingly intractable problem of achieving a consensus among a plethora of conflicting interests and irreconcilable aspirations and points of view. The development of ideologies based upon these diverse aspirations and viewpoints is the role of political theory; and the pursuit of their promise is the role of political action. Within the realm of city planning the differences in interests and aspirations among the groups in the civic population must be recognized. It is one of the fundamental responsibilities of government to resolve these differences, and to formulate its policies on the basis of that resolution, however successful or unsuccessful that reconciliation may be. The city planner in advising the decision-makers on matters of policy cannot be unaware of these differences, nor can he entirely avoid sympathizing with one or another of these opposing points of view. Frequently he may find that his sympathies and his viewpoint in such instances are not shared by the decision-makers. Whether or not he bases his recommendation on his private sympathies thereby risking not only the rejection of his advice by the council but also the loss of influence with the decision makers, if not indeed the loss of his livelihood, is a matter which only the individual planner himself can decide. Each occasion will require a new ad hoc decision.

It is this circumstance in which an ideology could provide both a frame of reference for a consistency of orientation, and an affirmation and support of his position. However, given the conflicting viewpoints and the fragmentation of the various interest groups in the population, what goals can planning identify which might form the basis of an ideology

within the system of civic government? The answer must surely lie not in identification with the aspirations of one or another of the various political bodies or special interest groups which divide the population and set one against the other, and destroy the essential community of the city, but rather in the common humanity which lies within all of us and binds us together as human beings not only in the city but on the planet. What are those elements of common humanity, and is it not merely foolish sentimentality to believe that they can provide a context or frame of reference within which the city planner can formulate his recommendations with integrity and consistency?

Human beings have vastly more in common with each other than the differences which divide us. We all share certain basic needs, for example, such as the need for security, for identity, and for stimulation. Within these general categories can be recognized a common need for nourishment, decent shelter, employment, health, education, love, self-respect, status, the acknowledgement of our place in the community, the opportunity for self-fulfillment, the assurance of a rewarding future for our children, healthful recreation and amusement, challenges to our faculties and skills. The list can be extended at length. But, however the list is extended; it comes to the same thing in the end: the ideology of humanism, which, sadly, is held today in disrepute, if not in actual contempt as being mere sloppy sentimentality.

Perhaps it is merely sentimental. But it is this common humanity which not only binds us together, but gives us the goals toward which we aspire, and gives meaning to life. Without being sentimental, it can provide the goals of a Planning ideology. Perhaps ideology is too grand a word. Perhaps it is simply an order of priorities, an oasis on which Planning recommendations can be formulated.

A value-system for City Planning then - let's call it a Planning ideology - which arises out of the inner nature of Planning, is concerned with the future of the city and believes that a vision of the future city can be articulated, and can be systematically approached through the policies of the civic government. That vision of the future city is based on humanistic ideals. If there is to be a future, not only for the city but for the world, then the ideology

must be concerned about the conservation of resources and the preservation of the environment, and the establishment of a healthful ecological relationship between urban man, the environment which he builds, and the natural environment within which his city must exist. More than that, his ideology must enable the planner to make recommendations to the decision-makers which will permit the resolution of conflicting demands over any urban issue on the basis of humanistic considerations. Among other things, this means that where the interests of the deprived and disadvantaged in our society are at stake in an urban issue, that issue should be resolved so as to favor those who are least able to help themselves. Perhaps this is a humanitarian rather than a humanistic principle. If so, then so be it.

The development of such a comprehensive point of view, and such an ideology as has been suggested here, ought to be the major tasks of the Planning schools. The planner who is trained in such a program, and takes employment in a city planning department will

“Where the interests of the deprived and disadvantaged in our society are at stake in an urban issue, that issue should be resolved so as to favor those who are least able to help themselves.”

undoubtedly find that the progress toward the city of his vision will be painfully slow and indirect; chances are that the progress will not even be at all toward the realization of that vision, but in quite another direction. Nevertheless if his recommendations are based upon the principles of the comprehensive view of urban issues, both in space and in time, and on humanistic ideals, and are made with integrity and consistency, they will have an influence. In time they may even turn the decisionmakers in the right direction.

The Planning Function in the Future City (1983)

A paper presented at Futurescan Conference and Exposition, Saskatoon, June 9th, 1983.

I must confess at the outset that I really have no crystal ball in which I can see the future; no precognition at all of how things will function in the city of tomorrow. As a city planner I'm fairly familiar with the urban past, and could talk quite comfortably about the history of the city or the planning function in the contemporary metropolis. But the city of the future is quite another matter. I don't believe that anybody can really see what the future holds, except perhaps on limited issues, and only in the most shadowy, penumbral way, more as a vague feeling or intuition than a clearly articulated perception. I am sure you will agree with me that that sort of dim vision doesn't constitute "seeing" in the proper sense of the word. There are, of course, reports of events foreseen, of predictions realized, of people with special psychic gifts who have the power of pre-cognition, or the ability to read the future in the pattern of tea leaves or in the sequence of turned-up cards. I suppose one makes of these what one will. I have no such gifts, and I wouldn't want you to think that I am about to hold aside the veil which separates us from the future and let you have a close hard look at what lies in store.

All of this however is not to say that one cannot speculate about the future. That's something else again. Speculating about the future is a very common practice - we all do it, about all sorts of matters, from the trivial to the cosmic - and provided it does not contemplate impending events which are painful or threatening, such speculation can be a very enjoyable pastime. Much of it falls into the category of entertainment.

There are those however for whom speculation about the future is not merely an enjoyable pastime but an essential part of their professional responsibilities. Futurists are included among these; so are city planners. None of them however can be certain that his projections will in fact be realized. The record of predictions which have actually come to pass is so poor that it behooves all of us who must make projections as part of our work to be most circumspect and modest about their reliability. Fortunately for many of us, the target date for our projection is usually so far off that by the time it is reached no one remembers what had been forecast for that year, and in any case those original projections have invariably been superseded during the intervening years by new projections pursuing the constantly receding time horizon. Reputations thus are fairly secure, and the high priests of the future can continue their incantations relatively free from the threat of immediate accountability or exposure.

Projection is mostly a matter of trends and probabilities. The reliability of a projection will depend on how correctly the projector can identify the current trends which affect the matter under consideration, and how successfully he can assess the probability of their continuation and the way in which they will change over time. In identifying the relevant trends it is usual to go back some distance in time to trace the affects of those trends as they moved in to the present, and then to try to trace their course in to the future, making allowances for the probable affects of whatever modifying forces one can discern. In general terms this process applies to all projections, whether it be the prediction of the weather or of the next appearance of Haley's comet, or of the next leader of the Conservative Party.

Accordingly, in order to talk about the planning function in the city of the future, we must first look at the contemporary city and its planning function. But in order to better understand the contemporary situation, we must go back some short distance in time to see how the contemporary city and its planning function got to where they are today.

We need not go back any farther than 1945. The end of the Second World War marked the beginning of an extraordinary period in Canada's history. The decades which followed the

end of that darkest and most violent and destructive episode in human history saw a great efflorescence of cities across the whole of Canada. For a considerable period during those years we were the most rapidly urbanizing country in the world. The growth was fed by service men returning from the war who sought new homes in the city rather than on the farms from which they came; by the continued movement of population from the countryside in to the urban centres; by immigration from abroad of people wanting to leave behind the memories of the horrors of the war years and make a fresh start in a new and young country; and by the “baby-boom” produced by the formation of new families in the immediate post-war period. Much of the new growth occurred in the dozen or so largest metropolitan centres, but the smaller places also felt the expansionary pressures of the burgeoning population. The discovery of the Leduc oil field just outside Edmonton in 1947 sparked the explosive growth of Edmonton and Calgary which went on until only about a year ago.

The growth of the population and the rapid rate of urbanization had their counterparts in the world of business and finance, and the development of urban land. The demand for land produced many speculative windfall fortunes; and the enormous entrepreneurial energy which surged through the nation set off an explosion of buying and selling and expansionary merging of many companies, particularly in the realms of development and finance, which pumped up the economy to unprecedented levels. A major contributor to the economic excitement was the fact that for a decade and a half there had been virtually no consumer goods produced. Now, with life settling down to normal peacetime activities, the pent-up demand for such consumer goods was unleashed, and the nation went on a great spending spree, while the manufacturers and suppliers raced their machinery of production to capacity in order to meet the demand. These were heady times. We all were swept along on a tide of business and development energy which constantly mounted, and showed no sign of abatement, and seemed to be carrying us all into a boundless future of wealth and easy living.

Our cities were generally not very well prepared for this deluge. There had been virtually no urban growth for the preceding 15 years. The stagnation which set in with the collapse

of the financial system in October of 1929, was brought to an end by the war which broke out almost exactly ten years later, in September of 1939, but the war depleted urban populations rather than swelling them, and apart from the hurriedly improvised accommodation for the labour force moving in to take up employment in war-production factories and shipyards in those centres where such industries were concentrated, little new housing was constructed. Accordingly, the period from the fall of 1929 to the late summer of 1945, the normal course of population growth, commerce, and urban development was heavily dampened by the Great Depression, and distorted by the Second World War.

When the nation emerged from the agony of that global convulsion and once again took up the peacetime pursuits of raising families and making a living, it was in a world that was drastically different from the pre-Depression world. Perhaps the profoundest difference was that we were

“Energy will not again be as cheap as it used to be; resources will continue to be depleted and therefore will become increasingly costly, and increasingly costly to extract.”

rapidly changing from a rural agricultural society to an urban industrial society, and that our cities were growing at an unprecedented rate and reaching unprecedented size. This rapid and large-scale urban expansion was an unfamiliar phenomenon, and I believe it is true to say that none of our municipal governments was in a position to accommodate it smoothly and as a matter of routine. They lacked the necessary staff with the appropriate training, they lacked the proper statutory and by-law instruments, and there was not in place a suitable municipal government structure nor the delineation of the areas of jurisdiction and competence which would ease the absorption of such a massive new population into the regime of the host metropolis. It is understandable then that during the ensuing decades there was a great activity of adjustment in the realm of municipal government. New forms of city government were created such as the metropolitan governments of Toronto and Winnipeg; new ideas were experimented with such as

district planning commissions, regional governments, and extra-territorial jurisdictions; new powers were enacted under provincial planning acts and municipal zoning by-laws; new departments were created to deal with the new dimensions of urban life.

To their credit, the municipal and provincial governments responded reasonably well to the challenge of these new demands - the demands generated by unprecedented urban growth. Indeed it was this growth, not merely in population, but in the physical dimensions and in the economies of our cities which created the growth ethos of the post-war era, and which determined the goals and expectations, and the general direction of our society. We became a growth-oriented and a growth-directed society, and our major metropolitan centres led the way, with the rest of the country falling in behind and trying desperately, and often stumblingly, to keep up the pace.

The accommodation of this constantly growing population and the contingent expansion of the city's boundaries became the major, if not indeed the sole preoccupation and responsibility of city governments. Councillors were caught up in the expansion fever, development was the overwhelmingly dominant issue in the council chamber, and the processing of development applications, and the provision of infrastructure services for the expansion of new residential suburbs was the major role of the civic administration. Virtually every city in Canada established a city planning department, if they did not already have one, to deal with development applications and to advise the council on matters of zoning, land-use, and development. There was during those years no ambiguity about the planning function, nor about the identity and role of the city planner. The function of city planning was to receive and process applications for development approval, to ensure that the proposed development complied with all of the city's bylaws and regulations, and to advise the council on the implications and possible effects of the proposed development.

Commonly the planning department was called upon to prepare the layouts for new residential subdivisions as well as for central area developments, or at any rate to review the layouts for such developments submitted by the developers. In many instances the

city planning department had the responsibility to prepare a long-range plan for the development of the city, usually with a twenty-year time horizon. Most councillors viewed the planning function as synonymous with the zoning and development approval function, and many continue to do so today. City planners in the 15 or 20 years following the war were drawn from the disciplines of architecture and engineering, and it was common practice to designate them architect-planner or engineer-planner, as the case might be. Most of the city planning concepts and ideas at that time were drawn from the British example, and even much of the British practice and methods was attempted, but the fundamental differences between their centralized and our federal system of government made wholesale adoption impossible. Nevertheless entry into the Town Planning Institute of Canada was modeled after that of the British Town Planning Institute, which recognized only the professions of architecture, engineering, and surveying as qualification for admission. In Canada the role of the surveyor was not as prestigious as it was in Britain, and in any case much of the surveyors skill was part of the engineering profession's expertise, so that there was little occasion to recognize the surveyor-planner in Canada.

The point that I want to make is that up until the 1960's, the city planning function was concerned with the physical expansion of the city in response to the pressures of growth. City councils had exactly the same concerns, and did whatever they could in their decisions and their bylaws not only to accommodate that growth, but to attract it; but the growth psychology was not merely a big – city phenomenon. It permeated every aspect of our national life. The annual increase in the gross national product was watched with the same concern and satisfaction as the annual percentage rise in the city population, the number of cranes on the skyline, and the annual value of building permits issued. Moreover, everyone was convinced that there was no limit to the growth, and that this was just as it should be.

In the 1960's however this view of the world as an inexhaustible storehouse of riches put there to be exploited for the creation of private personal fortunes, and for the creation of mega corporations of global size and power, and for the acquisition of condominiums in

the Bahamas, and yachts in the Caribbean was abruptly and alarmingly confronted by a sudden and angry cry of protest. The voice welled up from the counter-culture substratum of opposition to the Vietnam War, and the widespread pollution and destruction of the environment by heedless industry, and the rising militancy of America's blacks and urban poor and the disenchantment of American youth generally with the values and lifestyles which were dominant in America at the time. It was largely an American voice of protest, but it swelled into a roar which reverberated virtually around the world. Certainly we here in Canada heard its chilling echoes ringing loudly in our ears.

The protest involved more than shouting and demonstrations. Large sections of a number of American cities were smashed and set ablaze. Episodes of violent confrontation occurred again and again. Street rioting was common. Police and protestors met in hand to hand conflict. Lives were lost. Students were shot to death by national guardsmen on a university campus. Black leaders were assassinated. "Burn, baby burn" became a kind of war-chant. Popular slogans and rallying cries like "Power to the People" were raised throughout the land. Demands for "Participatory Democracy" and an end to the war and to the plundering of the planet were heard as a constantly recurring theme in the uproar. And "We Shall Overcome" was sung both as a pledge of commitment to the future and a requiem for the dead.

In the aftermath of the counter-culture revolt, many of the established values and ideas of the immediate post-war years no longer existed; and many were transmuted into new forms and given new meanings. The notion of city planning underwent such a change. Whereas previously the city planning function had been concerned virtually exclusively with the physical dimensions of the city, now concerns about its social, and economic, and political dimensions were finding their way into the considerations of the planners. Whereas previously developers' proposals had been approved by councillors or committees of councils with little or no reference to the public, now wide-reaching public hearings became the practice. Whereas previously the individual or the minority group had only the most restricted access - and in many instances none at all - to the planners and politicians, now advocacy became a common element in the planning function.

Whereas previously development decisions and urban renewal and redevelopment programs had been made on the basis of a narrow range of concerns, now the issues which were weighed in the balance included social upheaval, neighborhood stability, public financial liability, traffic generation, urban economy implications, environmental impact, and almost anything else that seemed to have any relevance whatever, or was raised by anyone wanting to be heard. One of the off-shoots of this basic change was that planning schools in Canadian universities were opened to students from virtually all disciplines and backgrounds, and eligibility for admission to the Town Planning Institute of Canada was no longer restricted to architects and engineers. The designations architect-planner and engineer-planner have virtually disappeared from current usage.

Let me not however create the impression that all of the old issues and attitudes and practices were completely abandoned and replaced wholesale with the new concerns and procedures. As with all social change the process was slow and complex. In many instances the new ideas soon became merely lip-service and the new practices only empty routines. On the other hand some ideas and methods did manage to survive and grow into meaningful elements of the planning function.

Perhaps the most powerful influence working against the more fundamental reconstruction of the city planning function in the period following the counterculture revolt was the continued vigorous growth of our cities and our urban economies during the 1970's. As long as urban growth continued, it was highly improbable that the growth ethos could or would be abandoned or changed. City councils made whatever adjustments were expedient to accommodate the new notions and practices, but essentially their attention was still preoccupied by the expansion of their population, and the construction of new apartment buildings, condominiums, office towers, and spreading suburbs. The long-range development plan served a useful function as the repository where concerns about the social, and economic and environmental aspects of development could be collected and then simply put away on a shelf and forgotten, allowing council to get on with the real business of the immediate growth and development of the city. The ideal of growth is still the dominant goal of city councils

and its pursuit is still the driving force in city government. The city planning function too is still mainly concerned in its day-to-day activities with matters of the physical growth of the city. As I have already indicated however, those concerns and activities now touch upon somewhat wider issues than merely the physical and spatial dimensions of urban phenomena. If one were to make a generalization about the present position and role of the city planning function, it might not be too far off the mark to describe it as the policy advisory function in city government, embracing in its compass all matters with which city government must now be concerned. Many of these concerns are a legacy of the decade of the 60's as I have already indicated.

Well, now what about the future? In my opening remarks I suggested that the only clues to the future which we have are trends and probabilities, and that it is necessary to identify which trends are the significant ones, what is their probability of continuing, and how they are likely to change. I have indicated that the major trend since the end of the Second World War has been growth, and this has expressed itself both as growth in our national economy, and growth of our urban centres and their populations. This trend is of course one of the critical determinants of the future, and on its continued vigor or abatement will depend much of what is in store for us.

At the present moment, growth curves are down very sharply from their levels of the 70's, in all sectors. I am sure there is no need to recite here for you the depressing litany of our current recession - a stagnant economy, a reduced population growth, a declining birth rate, a drained urban vitality - little or no urban population growth, little or no building construction, little or no urban expansion. It's a pretty dismal picture, with which we are all too familiar. Some forecasters say that it will take a long time for us to come out of this recession and recover our vitality - as much as a decade, or even longer. Some say that we can never return to the conditions and life-style which we enjoyed during the 30-odd years which followed the end of the Second World War. Whatever may be the validity of these predictions, it is incumbent upon us to look at a number of trends in the search for some clues to the city of the future and its planning function.

The first major trend we must look at is of course that of population growth. I expect that we will not see again the rate of increase of our urban populations which occurred during the last three decades - in any event, not within the foreseeable future. That remarkable growth was occasioned by the natural increase of population immediately following the war, referred to as the post-war "baby boom," by the migration of population from the farm to the urban centres as a result of the large-scale mechanization of farms, the increase in farm acreage and the reduction of the farming labor force, and the transformation of our society from rural agricultural to urban industrial; and by the immigration of people from abroad wanting to make a new life in Canada, most of whom come to live in our cities.

It is unlikely that any of these population factors will again reach their former levels within the next couple of decades. The children of the "baby boom" have now reached the age where they are forming their own families, but the rate of family formation is lower than that of their parents, and they are having fewer children. Households are smaller, and the demand for dwellings is correspondingly reduced. The rationalization of farm production and the reduction of the farm labour force has probably now become stabilized. It seems unlikely that the heavy migration of rural population to the urban centres will again occur. Indeed there may well be some movement in the other direction. Canada is not drawing the same numbers of immigrants that it once did. Europeans no longer see us as an attractive country for immigration. This may be due in part to the stabilization of European political conditions, and the satisfactory performance of European economies. People are no longer driven to leave. Conversely, we do not seem to be viewed today as the land of youth and wide open spaces filled with nothing but opportunity, as we seemed to have been seen in the past. I can't offer an explanation for this change in attitude. I only know that our immigration rate is down very significantly. Asia and south-east Asia remain potential sources of new large-scale immigration into our country, but it is unlikely that our borders will be opened any more widely to them. Political refugees from Latin America also constitute a potential source of new population, but here too, our gates are likely to remain as narrowly opened as they now are. In the light of these trends and circumstances, it is probably safe to conclude that we

are not likely to see a return to the rapid and large scale growth of our urban populations, and the continued outward expansion of our metropolitan boundaries.

This is not to say that there will be no growth. Of course there will. But I am suggesting that it probably will be modest compared to our previous growth rates, and not likely to fuel the same intensity of development activity. Some cities may experience sharp, short spurts, occasioned by an inflow of people looking for work and seeing there a momentary opportunity, but such surges will not be sustained, and will not be general throughout the metropolitan centres. In this connection one is mindful of the sustained growth of Calgary and Edmonton due to the inflow of population drawn to the plentiful employment opportunities created by the oil boom, and of the recent prediction of the Economic Council of Canada that they would be among the last centres to recover from the present recession.

The size and structure of the urban population are among the basic building blocks out of which any model of the future city is constructed. This material lends itself quite readily to statistical techniques, and future numbers can be produced with some measure of confidence by demographers, even though it seems that there are always unforeseen interventions which change the course of events, sometimes so drastically as to render their projections grossly erroneous. Nevertheless the material is amenable to quantitative analysis.

A trend which is perhaps as important as that of population change, but which is not so readily quantified because it is qualitative in character, is the change in the values held by a society. There is, I think general agreement that we are living in a time of great confusion over values. Moralists, philosophers, theologians, and others who are formally and professionally concerned about these matters recognize that we do not have a coherent and unifying value-system. In an earlier period there perhaps was such a generally accepted system, but it has been battered and eroded and broken for a long time now, so that it no longer has any presence or meaning, and there is no longer any universal basis for making decisions on questions of ethics, or on the right and wrong of

hard day-to-day issues such as those involving, for example, the cost of industrial development on the one hand and the cost of human and environmental well-being on the other. We are told that the old value system has collapsed, or been abandoned, and we have not yet found a new one to replace it. I would suggest however that new values and standards are in fact emerging, and are being incorporated as part of a new view of life and society and the measures which establish their worth.

I think that if one looks carefully, one may discern some gradual but profound changes in beliefs and attitudes where previously there had been merely indifference or utter ignorance. I am thinking particularly about

“The easy affluent world of the throwaway product, and of built-in obsolescence, and the profligate exploitation of natural resources is gone.”

changing attitudes toward the issues of ecology, environmental pollution, energy conservation, indeed conservation in general as an approach to a life-style, and decentralization of population and authority as a component part of the conservation ethic. I have already indicated that many of these values emerged in force during the social upheaval of the 60's; my impression is that they have been gaining strength and currency since that time - slowly perhaps, and with set-backs and over-clouding which have obscured the steady diffusion of these values throughout our society.

Various names and slogans have been attached to the collectivity of these values. The “conservator society” is one such description. The phrase “small is beautiful” has come to symbolize the general ethos of this value system. Indeed there are indications of a growing disenchantment with the ideals of “newer and bigger.” One may find such indications in the spreading interest in the preservation of historic buildings, in the recycling of older residences, in the preference for smaller cars, in the up-grading of the central area and other deteriorated areas of our cities, in the local citizens activist movements which clearly indicate the loss of confidence in the ability of the central government at any level to satisfy the needs of the people at the grass roots level. Energy

conservation has made great strides since the OPEC countries pushed the price of oil beyond acceptable limits; so has the search for and the use of alternative forms of energy. The list of indications could be extended. Some of these trends will carry us on into the future. Some of them are simply fads which will be blown away and disappear with the changing winds of fashion.

The distinction between these two is of course the difference between prophecy and idle speculation. I have already told you that I have no pretention to prophetic power. However, scenarios have been developed by people with a professional interest in forecasting which may provide a context for such judgments. One of the frequently recurring scenarios is that of a future in which we will be significantly less affluent than we were in the recent past. The glum conclusion they commonly come to is that “we will have to tighten our belts.” Energy will not again be as cheap as it used to be; resources will continue to be depleted and therefore will become increasingly costly, and increasingly costly to extract; productivity will not be able to compete successfully with that of other countries, particularly Asian countries which are already emerging as more cost effective in many areas of manufacture; the machinery of our industries is falling into obsolescence; and our industrial relations, in terms of the way we solve our industrial problems through confrontations between industry, labour, and government, are not merely obsolescent, but already obsolete. And so on. This is not the place to recapitulate in detail those rather gloomy predictions of what lies ahead. However, they seem to be taken seriously by serious-minded people, and I suppose one ought to pay them some heed. At the very least they suggest that the easy affluent world of the throwaway product, and of built-in obsolescence, and the profligate exploitation of natural resources is gone, and that many aspects of the conserver society may well emerge as the everyday facts of our national life in the foreseeable future.

With the stabilization, or at any rate the marked decline, in the rate of our urban population growth, accompanied by widespread acceptance of some of the basic principles of the conserver society, such as the proscription of environmental pollution, the conservation of energy and other resources, the increase in the political power of local

groups, the loss of admiration for the “big,” whether it be big buildings or big cities or big corporations, or big automobiles, or big anything, and the replacement of that ideal by preference for the “small,” the local, the decentralized, we may well see some basic changes in the way in which our cities are built as well as in the way they are planned and governed.

One of the basic functions of the city is that of a place of employment. Significant changes in the nature of employment or in the structure of the labour force will ultimately find their expression in the form, function, and governance of the city. Perhaps the simplest illustration of this principle, but also perhaps the most graphic is the single industry town, such as, for example, a mining town on the northern frontier, which springs up because of the discovery of an ore body which can be mined economically. If something should happen to make it no longer economical to mine that ore, and the labour force is drastically reduced or closed down completely, the effects become immediately visible in the physical appearance of the town, in its business activity, in its social life, and in its political posture. A more complex example, but illustrating the same principle can be found in many cities in the north-east Atlantic seaboard of the United States, which grew and flourished first as ship-building centres, then as textile manufacturing centres but which changed quite drastically with the introduction of new types of ocean transport, and with the relocation of the textile industry to the south and south-west. There are numerous other examples, everywhere in the world.

For our purposes this afternoon, the relevant question is: what are the employment trends which will help shape the future city? At the present time, with unemployment figures standing at around 12% here in Canada, and with similar widespread unemployment throughout the western world, it seems somewhat anomalous to talk about trends in employment. One hopes that the definitive trend which will assert itself will be the trend back to work. When that happens, what types of work will people be doing, and how will they affect the future city and its planning function? People who study these matters seem to be saying that the service industries will continue to employ the largest proportion of the labour force, and that electronic automation will proceed at an increasing rate to

provide the basic infrastructure of industry, displacing people who used to do those tasks. It is also expected that robots and similar electronic mechanisms will take over important operations in the manufacturing sector and will play a major role in manufacturing production. All of this suggests the prospect of a period of labour unrest and industrial adjustment during which new employment and production patterns are evolved and, indeed, new life-styles established.

It may well be that if the services sector of the economy and in particular the information processing activity of that sector continues to expand in the direction and magnitude predicted, there will be an equivalent growth in the need for office space. On the other hand, if electronic gadgetry can do the work of several people on any given task, the space requirement might be kept to fairly modest dimensions.

If electronic equipment will in fact displace large numbers of people from the work force, a critical issue becomes that of how people are to spend their time, and indeed earn their living. It is frequently argued that new technology creates new employment. Unfortunately, it is not the same technology which displaces workers which also creates new employment for them. The displaced workers will have to wait for the new jobs to be created. In the meantime of course there could be much human misery and the danger of violence unless alternative employment is found or some other solution is provided to keep people usefully and gainfully occupied. Retraining is often cited as a possible solution to the dilemma, but this implies that there is some employment waiting, toward which the retraining is directed. This in turn implies that technology has been busy producing new kinds of jobs for which a new labour force must be recruited and trained.

An interesting speculation which arises out of this rather unsatisfactory prospect, is that the release of people from the workforce of the large multinational corporations, who are those most likely to install electronic equipment on a large scale and reduce their manpower, together with the ready availability of new production technology, might have a salutary effect. Perhaps out of this combination of circumstances might arise the organization of new enterprises on a much smaller scale than was previously the case; and a corollary of that might be the gradual restructuring of the multi-national

conglomerates, perhaps the significant reduction of the extent to which they permeate and dominate the economy. It is not too fanciful to imagine the extensive decentralization of industry as a result of these two factors - the release of workers from large automated plants, and the general availability of new industrial technology. Nor is it too fanciful to imagine in these smaller, decentralized industries a new form of ownership and management structure, in which the employees themselves are the owners of the enterprise and participate in its management. There are several models of this type of structure already in operation in various countries, and they seem to be operating highly successfully.

It is this emerging trend of high technology - and by that phrase I do not mean only electronics or electro mechanics, but high technology applied to a vast range of human activities - which will work the profoundest changes in our lives, and in our cities. In many cases these new technologies are only just beginning to emerge - biotechnology, alternative energy, food production and processing technology, to name only a few. In many cases the technology is still in the very earliest stages of investigation and has not yet even begun to emerge, but the profound changes which have already been wrought by electronics in the field of communication and our leisure time activities will undoubtedly be matched and even surpassed by the application of the discoveries and inventions of high technology in a great range of other fields of research and development now in progress.

Among the research activities which are now in progress which could have a revolutionary effect on the city of the future are a variety of investigations into the infrastructure systems which not only tie the city together, but which enable it to function as a city. It is of course the people who make the city, but there could be no people gathered together to make the city without the basic infrastructure systems which make contemporary urban life possible - the energy system, the water supply system, the waste disposal system, and the transportation system. Some extremely important research is being pursued in each of these fields. Most of it is quite narrow in focus, isolated within its own special field and unrelated to anything which is going on in the other fields. There

is the potential, in these separate small-scale investigations, for bringing about what may be, in their collective effect, the biggest-scale upheaval in the nature of the city since the invention of the automobile and the elevator. What could emerge from these studies is the independent building - independent, that is, of the services and utilities systems which tie it rigidly to the city. As a corollary of this, what could emerge is the autonomous community which is not tied to any given location or to any other community or city because of the need to be connected to the central services and utilities system, but is free to locate anywhere because these large-scale systems will have been replaced by local, small-scale systems which are as efficient or indeed more efficient than those which are now in use.

There is not the space here to examine in detail the work which is under way in these various fields. In general however, it can be said that progress is being made in solving the problems of providing potable water without trunk water mains; in disposing of solid and liquid waste without a trunk sewer system and a central treatment plant; in supplying energy from local, small-scale sources which are alternatives to the present macro-systems of power grids and gas and oil pipelines. In the field of transportation technology, research is advancing on such a broad front that it is difficult to see what is emerging as the true determinants of what will carry people about in the future. The issues which seem to be in the forefront are the search for a cost-efficient fuel to replace petroleum; the debate over the relative merits of mass-transit and the private motor car; the difficulties of central area parking; the cost of commuting and peak hour congestion. Some of these issues will be resolved by the finding of an alternative fuel, and by advances in transportation technology which are only now in the very earliest stages of research, such as the use of electronic guidance systems for intra-urban vehicle movement, and magnetic levitation and linear induction power for inter-urban travel. Many of the problems of transportation are inherent in the size and structure of the city, and are probably more amenable to solution through changes in those characteristics of the city, than through new modes of transportation, or the application of new scientific discoveries or inventions.

The research which is proceeding on the various components of the infrastructure systems could result in the creation of autonomous communities simply because of the cost savings which might be achieved. Those cost savings would be mainly inherent in the land. Because it is not dependent on piped services, the autonomous community could be located on any land, and could therefore make use of sites which are now rejected because they are not suitable for underground services and utilities. The price differential between that type of land and prime housing land could run into figures which are high enough to make the autonomous location the preferable location by far.

From what I have said so far, the outline of a number of trends and conditions may be identified, which lead to certain conclusions about the city of the future. Again let me say that I am not predicting that this is actually what the city of the future will be like. I am merely speculating on what it might be like if certain trends and circumstances were all to come together. It might be useful at this point to review what we have identified so far. They include:

- stabilization of the size of the urban population;
- replacement of the growth ethic by the conserver ethic;
- decline in the domination of the economy by the multi-national megacorporation and the rise in importance of many small technology-based companies with high proportions of employee shareholding and employee involvement in management;
- decentralization of the city, made possible by the creation of autonomous communities and decentralized employment and industry through the application of technology; and
- a greater measure of political influence at the local or grass roots level as a consequence of the decentralization already suggested and because of the greater confidence by society in the effectiveness of local, direct action.

If the kind of society emerges which has some of the foregoing characteristics, we will certainly be in a different world from the one we knew before. Without urban growth and urban concentration, city governments will have to become concerned with issues, other than those which formerly commanded their full attention. Certainly maintenance and

repair, and the conservation and renewal of the urban fabric will become increasingly important. Perhaps even more important will be the social and political and economic issues which emerged during the 60's, but which sank back into obscurity because of the dominance of the issues generated by sustained urban growth. The planning function will have to switch its attention from the processing of applications for development, and the design of layouts and infrastructure for extension of the suburbs, to these new social, economic, and political issues.

Yet many of these issues are essentially the responsibility of the provincial and federal governments. From what one knows of government, one must conclude that none of them will readily give up any of its power or authority. If these things come to pass, then we could see the provincial governments intruding further and further, and taking over more and more of the work of the city governments. We might ultimately see the role of the city as that of administering or carrying out the social and economic, and indeed political policies of the provincial governments.

Under these conditions, the planning function would shift heavily out of the city government into that of the provincial government. The planning function today is, as I have already suggested, the policy advisory function in government, and its proper area of concern is the same as that of the government it serves. If city government's role changes so that it is merely the administrative arm of the provincial government, which becomes the policy-making body even for matters at the local municipal level, then the proper place for the planning function, that is the policy advisory function, is at the provincial level of government.

I don't want to end on that note. I would prefer to think that instead of the erosion of the role of city government and its planning function, it will be augmented and strengthened. I would prefer to think that as the nature and structure of the city changes, its mandate and its powers will change commensurately, and city government and its planning function will be able to serve fully and adequately the needs of the city of the future. What those changes and needs may be, we can only speculate.

Epilogue: On the Launching of the Archives of the Institute of Urban Studies at the University of Winnipeg (2008)

An Address on the Occasion. March 24th 2008.

Occasions such as our gathering here this afternoon are usually meant as a gesture of recognition of the merit of a person, or an event, or an organization whether in the public sector or in the private sector. The reason for today's gathering is twofold in nature. On the one hand it is in recognition of the contribution of my work to the enlargement of the archive of the University of Winnipeg and on the other hand it is in recognition of the merit of my work which the IUS library bestows upon it by including it in their collection. I am, of course, delighted by this situation of mutual benefits. But there is also another reason for my feelings of pleasure in my being here this afternoon – a more “personal,” I might even say “biographical” reason. As is the case with most professions, my own career as an urban and regional planner was the practical outcome of my basic academic education. That is not to say that all I learned in my academic education was applied directly to the solution of the problems in my professional practice. The concepts and theories I learned academically were not all directly relevant to the problems in my work. Some of my learning has gradually faded into the background as part of my private persona, but some of it was relevant in some way or another to the problems arising in my practice. What I am trying to say is that if I had not had an academic degree I probably would not have been able to pursue the professional career which ultimately has brought me here to be with you this afternoon. Most professions require an academic degree or its equivalent as a prerequisite to admission, and it was here that the first door

into the academic world was opened for me. When I say “here,” I am referring to these general premises, not to the University of Winnipeg as it is here now. My first step into the academic realm was into United College as it was then known. At that time, around 1936, St. John's Technical High School did not have a grade 12. If one completed the eleven preceding grades successfully, as I had, the next step was first year university. But I couldn't afford a full year's tuition costs so I registered as a student in one of the first year courses at United College.

That was my initial contact with the institution. But it opened the door to my life-long professional career. Only on two subsequent occasions (apart from the present one) have I been involved with the University of Winnipeg. The first of these was early in the 1980s when I was appointed as Senior Fellow of the Institute of Urban Studies, and the second was about four years later when I was appointed as Research Associate of the Institute. Both of the appointments were temporary because I had other full-time work.

Our meeting here this afternoon may well mark the close of my academic relationship with the University of Winnipeg. It is doubtful that I will have another professional project for which I will produce a document worthy of inclusion in your archive. If

“The relationship of the occupants of one of the units to those of a neighboring unit is generally beyond the context of the terms ‘city’ and ‘city planning’ [yet] these inter-human relationships are an essential component of city life”

that is indeed to be the case then both the start of my combined academic/professional career and my departure from it would have occurred here on the premises of this academic institution. However there were other institutions which marked the progress of my academic career. It was sometime during my attendance at United College that I decided that I wanted to be an architect. Fortunately, I was able to register as a full-time student in the first year program in the Faculty of Architecture at the University of

Manitoba. At that time the war with Germany was well underway and on the completion of my first year in architecture at the University of Manitoba I enlisted in the Canadian Armed Forces and served in the Northwest Europe theatre of operations until the end of the war. On returning to Canada I went back to the University of Manitoba where I completed my studies and received the Bachelor of Architecture degree.

My experience during the war, however, had a profound effect upon me. Apart from the violence and the dangers of combat I was deeply disturbed by the ruin and devastation of the cities by both the bombs and weapon-fire and the uprooting of the population. The effect of this experience was to shift my focus from the special perspective of architecture to the broader concerns of city planning and rebuilding. In 1950 I went back to London, England to do post-graduate studies at the APRR's School of Planning and Research for Regional Reconstruction. I completed the course there and was awarded the Diploma of the School of Planning (it didn't award degrees). While there I worked for the London County Council on some redevelopment projects in the city and for the Basildon New Town Corporation on their project in Essex. In 1952, I returned to Canada, to the City of Vancouver. There I registered in the University of British Columbia's School of Community and Regional Planning. I completed the program and was awarded a Master of Science degree. And that marked the suspension of my academic pursuits for several decades. But it also marked the beginning of my professional career in planning.

The war did not have the same destructive affect on the cities of Canada as it had on the cities and the urban life generally in England and Europe. But in one particular way its affect in Canada was the same as it was in England. It stimulated a pervasive interest in city planning and reconstruction. Internationally there had always been an interest in urban architecture and landscaping. London, Paris, Rome, Athens, all the major cities of Europe have monumental achievements in these areas of urban design and decoration. For the most part these achievements were the embodiment of the ego and the power of the imperator and the dominant political and economic group which ruled the domain at any particular time, but they did not express or meet the economic or social needs of the impoverished classes in the lower strata of the society. In Canada there was the same

segregation of the working class poor in the city and the impoverished fringe area of farming villages. With the gradual diffusion of the concept of city planning, public awareness of these urban social anomalies began to spread. Governments at the civic, provincial and national levels adopted the new concept of city planning and added a city planning section to their administrations and the demand for planning consultants became widespread. Even among those government bodies which had added a “city planner” on their staff to meet the need for the advice and reassurance of a professional planning consultant was commonplace.

So it was that in the years following my graduation from the University of British Columbia with a Masters degree in “city planning” my professional life was spent continually as a planner on the staff of either a city, or a province, or the federal government, or on a special commission, or committee or board created by one or another of these government bodies, or as a member of a private planning consulting company, or as the president of my own private planning consultancy and Professor and Head of the Planning Department of the University of Manitoba. During those years I was elected as the National President of the Town Planning Institute of Canada; founder and initial Chairman of the Association of Professional Planners of Saskatchewan; and received the Recognition of Services Award of the Manitoba Association of the Canadian Institute of Planners. My tenure as Head of the Planning Department at the University of Manitoba continued for three or four years at the end of which time I decided to create my own private consulting firm and left the University. But that was not the end of the academic side of my career. Several years later I enrolled in the Ph.D. program at the University of Manitoba while still pursuing my private consulting practice. I completed the academic program and was awarded the degree of Ph.D. But it was not a Doctorate in City Planning. The University did not award the Ph.D. in city planning. Instead it was a doctorate in Interdisciplinary Studies.

Whatever the reasons for the University's change in the designation I was very pleased with the new identity because it described more sympathetically and accurately what I had come to regard as a missing component of the city planning concept. In the term

“city planning” the word “city” is commonly understood to refer only to the group of structures built on a particular area of land in which people live and pursue the activities which comprise their lives. The term refers only to the physical structures and their functional relationships to one another. The relationship of the occupants of one of the units to those of a neighboring unit is generally beyond the context of the terms “city” and “city planning.” These inter-human relationships are an essential component of city life and it is these relationships which are the materials of the academic component of the city planning function.

The city planning process has two phases - the conceptual phase and the implemental phase. It is in the conceptual phase that academic criteria have a significant role to play. For example, the subjects of economics and demography are basic considerations in the formulation of the city plan; they are also basic academic subjects. It is in the conceptual phase of the planning process that the realm of academia is prevalent. This is the essential difference between city planning as it is practiced today and a broader humanly oriented practice which does not yet exist but if it did might be termed “urban community planning.” The difference between the two practices would be in their respective value systems. In the city planning ideology today the basic values are financial. They are concerns about the state of the economy, the security and profitability of investment, the efficiency of the functional relationships of the physical components of the plan and the attractiveness of their appearance. All of these are directly related to the monetary value of any development project. In the imaginary urban community planning system the basic values would include those of identity, heritage, and security for the individuals of the community and for the community as a whole. In the preparation of the city plan today it is sometimes the practice for a member of the city's staff to prepare the document but usually a private planning consultant will be engaged for that role. It is normal for the consultants to work with the relevant personnel of the city staff in this assignment. On completion of the document and its submission to the city the consultant moves on to the next engagement. It then becomes the responsibility of the city council and staff to pursue the implementation of the plan. At this point the planning process becomes fragmented.

The original concept presented an image of the city as it might look after a given period of time. But between the time of the preparation of the plan and the projected future of the conceptual image of the city nothing in the city remains static. Moreover, it is not a common practice for the mayor and the city council to be closely involved in the conceptual phase of the process in which the image is created. Usually it is someone from the city staff who works with the private consultant and reports back to the mayor and council on the progress of the work. The mayor and council members usually have other pressing matters to attend to and their participation in the conceptual phase is marginal. In addition, the image of the city produced by that process is an image of the city at some time in the future. In the interim, life goes on and there are developments which do not fit into that future image. This requires amendment of the plan. In the interim period there may have been changes in the council membership and the new members would be unfamiliar with the plan or the process which produced it. The amending process is accordingly complex. It might be simpler if the council had been more closely involved in the conceptual phase but such a demand of their time and attention would not be feasible. Until some way is found to involve the council's fuller participation in the conceptual phase the present arrangement is quite unsatisfactory and produces unacceptable results.

As for the prospect of a more humanly-oriented urban community planning system one must agree that it would be a welcome new approach to the city planning concept. But again one must accept the reality of its remoteness. If and when that ideological concept becomes a reality, the professional consultant with the appropriate academic background will have a central role to play. Meanwhile, the present professional planner with the appropriate academic background performs an indispensable role in the city planning process.

And of course, it is the combination of academic background and professional practice that has brought me here together with all of you to acknowledge the merit of the University of Winnipeg's archive and my good fortune to have been able to contribute to it.

Appendix: Index to the Dr. Earl A. Levin Archive

Scope and Contents of the Collection

The collection is divided into 8 file boxes:

Speeches and papers (3)

Correspondence (2)

Project & Institutional files (1)

Newspaper clippings (1)

Magazines containing articles authored by the donor (1)

Significance:

During his long and influential career in city planning, Dr. Levin was the Director of Planning for the Province of Saskatchewan; Director of city planning for Metropolitan Winnipeg; the head of the City Planning program at the Faculty of Architecture at the University of Manitoba; a Senior Fellow at the Institute of Urban Studies at the University of Winnipeg; and the President of the Town Planning Institute of Canada (now the Canadian Institute of Planners). As both a consultant and a public sector planner Earl Levin was involved in some of Winnipeg's most important planning processes, including Neeginan and the Core Area Initiative.

Collection contains extensive commentary by the donor concerning planning practice.

Restrictions on Access

None.

Custodial History

The archive was donated by Earl A. Levin to the Institute of Urban Studies in the summer of 2007 and ownership was officially transferred effective January 1st 2008.

BOX	FOLDER	DESCRIPTION
1	1	Upper Peace: "The Upper Peace Region"(2 Copies) Speeches 1960: "A Provincial Master Plan" "Zoning and the Small Community" "The Planner, The Council and The Citizen's Organization" "Address to Melfort-Tisdale Health Region Conference" "Some Thoughts on the Planner as Generalist" "The observation that we live in a rapidly changing world..." "The development of potash mines in Saskatchewan has been..." "Professor Oberlander has very kindly..." "Some Thoughts on the ARDA Program in Saskatchewan" "Memorandum on the Concept of a Provincial Plan of Physical Development"
1	2	Speeches 1962: "Comments on the Continuing Committee's Proposals as they affect Community Planning" "Address to Conference of Regional Health Officers"
1	3	Speeches 1963: "Resort Subdivision-Local Responsibilities" "The Possible Effect of Rural Development on Urban Centres in Saskatchewan"
1	4	Speeches 1964: "Address to Symposium on Parks" "Leadership for and Co-ordination of the Planning Team" "Address to Chamber of Commerce" "Some Planning Problems in Saskatchewan" "Technical and Economic Changes: Confronting Small Communities" "Rural-Urban Municipal Cooperation" (2 copies)
1	5	Speeches 1965: "Presidential Address to the Annual Conference of the Town Planning Institute of Canada" "Local Government and Development Matrix" "Urban Renewal" "Business, Balkanism and Blindness"

		<p>“Agriculture and Urban Culture – The Planning Challenge in Saskatchewan”</p> <p>“Address to Chamber of Commerce”</p> <p>“The Restructuring of Local Government: in Urban Rural Areas”</p> <p>“Chairman’s Opening Remarks - Panel on “Focus on Crocus””</p>
1	6	<p>Speeches 1968:</p> <p>“Address to The Winnipeg Real Estate Board: I. C. I. Division”</p> <p>“The Planner, the Lawyer, and the Downtown”</p> <p>“Housing Problems and Housing Policy”</p> <p>“American Marketing Association: The Image of the City, the Downtown Plan and the Commercial Markets” (2 copies)</p>
1	7	<p>Speeches 1968:</p> <p>“Winnipeg – Downtown or Downhill?” (2 copies)</p> <p>“The City, the Campus and the Wrong Revolution”</p> <p>“Citizen Participation in the Planning Process”</p> <p>“The Next Ten Years of Multi – Family Development in Metro” (2 copies)</p> <p>“A Planner Looks Outdoors”</p> <p>“The Urban Community: Its Collective Problems”</p> <p>“Amalgamation and the Downtown”(2 copies)</p> <p>“City Planning”(2 copies)</p>
1	8	<p>Speeches 1968:</p> <p>“A Planner Looks Outdoors”</p> <p>“Outdoor Advertising Association”</p> <p>“Townscape for Tomorrow”</p> <p>“Talk given to Manitoba Regional Group, First Canadian Transportation Conference”(2 copies)</p> <p>“Governing and Financing Urban Areas”</p> <p>“The Urban Community: Its Collective Problems”</p> <p>“Manitoba Department of Education Workshop: B. Present Living Patterns in Canada”</p> <p>“Manitoba Department of Education Workshop: C. paragraph Canadian Urban Environment”</p> <p>“Some Thoughts on Planning and Planning Education”</p> <p>“Problems of Planning in the Metropolitan Framework”</p>
1	9	<p>Speeches 1969:</p> <p>“Public Expropriation for Private Development”(2 copies)</p> <p>“Humanities Association of Canada”</p> <p>“Address to the Society for Crippled Children and Adults”(2</p>

		<p>copies)</p> <p>“Trends in the Downtown”</p> <p>“Apartments in Metro Winnipeg”</p> <p>“City Planning, the Master Plan and Zoning”(2 copies)</p> <p>“Some Reasons for Urban Decline”(2 copies)</p>
2	1	<p>Speeches 1970:</p> <p>“Urbanization and the Structure of Local Government”</p> <p>“Text of Presentation to Investors and Developers Meetings in Toronto and Montreal”</p> <p>“Downtown Winnipeg Plan”</p> <p>“Planning for Posters: A Planner Looks at Outdoor Advertising”(3 copies)</p>
2	2	<p>Speeches 1971:</p> <p>“The Engineer as Citizen”</p> <p>“Durham College of Applied Arts and Technology”(2 copies)</p> <p>“Material for Editorials on Amalgamation”</p> <p>“Discussion of the Report of the Boundaries Commission and the Government Policy Paper”</p> <p>“Address to the Housing Panel: N.D.P. Municipal Policy Convention”</p> <p>“The Place of Greater Winnipeg in the Economy of Manitoba”(3 copies)</p>
2	3	<p>Speeches 1972:</p> <p>“Transportation as an Element in City Planning”(2 copies)</p> <p>“Community Planning and Industrial Development”</p>
2	4	<p>Speeches 1973:</p> <p>“Metro Winnipeg: A Study in the Dilemma of Metropolitan Area Government in Canada”(3 copies)</p>
2	5	<p>Speeches 1974:</p> <p>“The Future of the Central Area”(2 copies)</p> <p>“The Future of the Central Area: Winnipeg Centennial Forum” Transcript</p>
2	6	<p>Speeches 1977:</p> <p>“Lessons from Regional Government”(2 copies)</p>

		“The Urban Communities of Quebec at the Crossroads
2	7	Speeches 1978: “Planning in the Context of Alternative Forms of Government” “The Function of a Downtown Task Force”
2	8	ICEC Seminar, Challenge of the 80’s: “Presentation Political Panel: ICEC Seminar Challenge of the 80’s”(6 copies) “The Political System: The Unicity Legislation and the ICEC’s Performance in Policy Formulation” “Presentation Political Panel: ICEC Seminar, Challenge of the 80’s”
2	9	Speech to Arch. Faculty, 1980 “Speech to Architecture Faculty-1980”(2 copies)
2	10	Speeches 1981: “Urban Planning in Winnipeg: Directions for the 1980’s” “Keynote Address - C.I.P. Annual Conference” “Creative Land – Innovative Land Use Planning: A Summary of the 1981 CIP Conference” “Address to the Transcona Rotary Club: The Core Area Initiative”(2 copies)
2	11	Speeches 1982: “Address – Urban Design Seminar” “Discussion on Planning Theory and Practice”
2	12	Speeches 1983: “The Planning Function in the Future City”(2 copies) “Opening Remarks – Conference on ‘The Planning Gap: Theory VS Reality’ “
3	1	Speeches 1984: “Beyond The Core Area Initiative” “Beyond The Core Area Initiative”(1 st draft) “City Planning as Utopian Ideology and City Government Function”(2 copies) “Comments on the occasion of my Departure from the

		Department”
3	2	Speeches 1986: “Lecture to Artibise’s Class on Winnipeg” “Presentation to GFOA paragraph Canadian Conference”
3	3	Speeches 1986: “Studies in Social History: Canadian Urban Historiography”
3	4	Speeches 1987: “Planning: A Paper prepared as part of Political Studies Course 19.723”
3	5	Speeches 1997: “Municipal Democracy and Citizen Participation”
4	1	Correspondence, Personal, 1960-1965
4	2	Correspondence, 1965-1966
4	3	Correspondence, 1966-1967
4	4	Correspondence, Speeches- Requests and Acknowledgements- 1968
4	5	Correspondence, General, 1968-1969
4	6	Correspondence, Personal, 1968-1969
4	7	Correspondence, Speeches- Requests and Acknowledgements- 1969
5	1	Correspondence, Speaking Engagements- Requests and Acknowledgements, 1970
5	2	Correspondence, Trip to Northern Europe, Sept.18 - Oct.13, 1970
5	3	Correspondence, 1971
5	4	Correspondence, General, 1969-1971
5	5	Correspondence, Speaking Engagements- Requests and

		Acknowledgements, 1970-1972
5	6	Correspondence, Trips and Conferences - General, 1970-1972
5	7	Correspondence, Personal, 1970-1972
5	8	Correspondence, General, 1972
5	9	Correspondence, Roads and Transportation Association, Annual Convention, Oct. 2 – 5, 1972
6	1	University of Manitoba – Head, Department of City Planning
6	2	Victoria Planning Commission
6	3	Plan Canada Article – July 1996
6	4	Winnipeg Core Area Initiative
6	5	Saskatchewan Urban Renewal Studies
6	6	Neeginan
6	7	3rd World Outdoor Advertising Congress, London, England – June, 1972
6	8	Norman Mackenzie Art Gallery
6	9	Institute of Urban Studies
6	10	University of Manitoba – Doctoral Studies
6	11	Curriculum Vitae
6	12	Metropolitan Corporation of Winnipeg History
7	1	Newspaper Clippings – Earl Levin
7	2	Newspaper Clippings – Winnipeg (general)
7	3	Newspaper Clippings – Metropolitan Corporation of Winnipeg
7	4	Newspaper Clippings – Reference Articles
7	5	Reference Articles (misc. materials of interest to Dr. Levin)



**“PLANS WITHOUT ACTION ARE MERELY
DAY-DREAMS; ACTIONS WITHOUT PLANS
ARE MERELY CHAOS”**

– EARL LEVIN



For more than three decades, Dr. Earl A. Levin delivered extraordinarily eloquent speeches concerning Canadian cities and city planning. Earl Levin was wont to speak on an impressively wide range of topics, at great length and on a regular basis: one week he could be heard discussing urban renewal, then two weeks later the subject would be housing, the week after, the nature of the planning process.

Throughout these speeches we see several enduring themes that still resonate today. Foremost among these is the limitation of the planning function as a role outside of municipal governments. He sought tirelessly to dispel the notion that planning departments can be conceived of – or function – as politically viable entities on their own, but that planning needed to be fully integrated within governments. Absent such integration, plans are very likely to go unfulfilled.

Dr. Levin’s speeches remain as relevant and timely as when they were originally delivered.