

growth of the whole urban area and inspire the detailed operations of each municipality's local Planning Board. In 1944 and 1945 a City Planning Board had produced a splendid basic plan for the whole metropolitan area but no stimulating leader came forward to win the allegiance of the whole group of municipalities to this plan. Of the twelve suburban municipalities only the Township of Etobicoke, in the most rapidly developing west-end sector, has completed a plan and this does conform with the proposals of the 1944 metropolitan plan. However at this late hour some order may yet be salvaged from the chaos; the provincial Department of Planning and Development has provided an adequate Planning Act and there is a latent awareness of the need for community planning which could be aroused by imaginative planning authorities and citizen organizations. Perhaps the key factor in this situation will prove to be the lack of any more improved and serviced building land on the circumference of the city; this is now bringing the insurance companies into operation, under new national legislation, to finance the development of land for new neighbourhoods. At this larger scale of oper-

ations for land improvement there is an opportunity to plan street patterns, land use and recreation areas in a manner which could not be accomplished while development operations were sealed down to the level of the small speculative builder working on a few adjoining lots.

The Situation Briefly Stated

Greater Toronto met its post-war housing crisis quite unprepared. Its building industry was not organized to produce at the required volume of 5,000 units a year, having been accustomed to an average production of only half that amount. The community possessed neither the authority nor the administrative machinery for providing the low-rental housing which is the major requirement in any period of housing shortage. And Greater Toronto had not equipped itself with the necessary planning instruments by means of which a housing programme can be made into an orderly process for creating beautiful, healthy and efficient communities rather than an unorganized scramble in which realtors, jobbers and speculative builders get the better of their customers, the community present and future.

Action for Planning

By ALLEN H. ARMSTRONG

WE need not be experts in any field to dislike the visible products of the past century of town building. But do not the specialists agree in increasing measure on the technical causes of these unsatisfactory results? Have we not an ever growing file of corrective schemes in almost every town hall? The solid results are what count, however; and it cannot be said that we are now able to shape our physical com-

munities any closer to our needs than were our forefathers. Municipal problems go on piling up; and planning experts will sooner or later be exposed as wasters of vast amounts of paper and time, unless three-dimensional proof somehow appears that a better mode of town-building is really in use.

A century and a half of industrial development has led to productive capacity sufficient for much larger populations—both within the cities and beyond them. We have organized better to make things than to make general enjoyment of those things humanly possible. We are in the habit of improvising.

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our over-riding industrial instrument, the city itself, by countless unrelated decisions. This way of city-building has robbed millions of townspeople of biological necessities that their forefathers took for granted: space for free movement, verdure, sunlight, fresh water. These essentials were a few generations ago "as free as the air they breathed"; for a grave portion of urban people even clean air itself is no longer free. Such necessities have to be sought with elaborate gadgets or by deliberate and expensive expeditions out-of-town. A good part of the city's folk are committed instead to live in shadowy places, to breathe polluted air, to forget that the visible spectrum is not all mud-gray. These penalties leave scars, even on the tough posterior of the property market. It was the broader implications of these disabilities that led in the thirties to such gloomy compendia as Jose Sert's *Can Our Cities Survive?*¹

The paradox of community planning is that we know we don't like what we have done; we think our experts know how it could be done better; yet we just don't seem to get any closer to doing it. The biggest cities are the worst offenders against visible order—both in themselves and in the impact of their fashions on smaller places. Yet big cities are peculiarly the fruits of our industrial culture. According to Lewis Mumford "in 1800 not a city in the Western World had over a million in population." Now there are about thirty such "megapolises."²

There are romantics among us who would turn the clock back, who would disperse our cities across good (or bad) agricultural land, or who would confer on themselves autocratic powers to put things right. It shows our deep-rooted shame in our cities, when intelligent individuals declare instead for industrial paucity or a kind of political tyranny.

Clearly the central problem is rather to create cities as instruments for greater industrial efficiency and greater personal freedom—to achieve and maintain physical order in our surroundings by sustained consultation among ourselves. We must of course delegate specific problems to groups of specialists whose competence we believe in, and whose work will be subject to public review; but the work of the specialists is in vain unless it earns sustained public support, preponderant enough to ensure its continuing realization round about us.

The administrative machinery for community planning may be analogous to that already familiar in securing the general welfare in matters of health, quality of goods, education, prices, employee remuneration and recruitment, or traffic movement. The common weal in a complex industrial framework is served by countless administrative and judicial processes; physical planning means the establishment of corresponding processes for the orderly development of our fixed assets upon the land. It is just these consultative processes that we have lately fought to maintain and extend. Failure to extend them now to matters affecting our physical environment can only mean for us and our children continuing frustration and unnecessary inroads of squalor, disease and violent death—in Canada as in every urban-industrial country.

In the development and spread of planning ideas, voluntary groups have led. This democratic evolution had proceeded from the benevolent paternalism of Robert Owen through the "garden city" conception (circa 1900) of Ebenezer Howard, Raymond Unwin and Barry Parker. We owe an understandably important debt in planning ideas to Britishers, for they have seen the evils of the industrial city longest.³ In 1947 they have gone a step further with the passage of the Town and Country Planning Act; the measure has been mistakenly

1. Harvard University Press, 1942; based on data collected before 1939 by Congr s Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne.

2. *Culture of Cities*, p. 225.

3. Blake's "dark satanic mills" were contemporaneous with Jefferson's concern for "the good of the many".

reported as socialist in inspiration—actually it builds upon recommendations made by pre-war and war-time committees chaired by Sir Montague Barlow, Lord Justice Scott and Mr. Justice Uthwatt (and these were coloured by proposals developed in Chamberlain's Birmingham). The intricacies of the new British Act must be omitted here; but its dependence on popular support has been stressed inside Parliament and out. Speaking on Third Reading of the Bill last May, the Minister of Town and Country Planning said in part:

I realize that in the last resort, the task which this Bill is designed to secure can only be successfully carried out if the functions of town and country planning are understood and accepted by the general public . . . The business of town and country planning must be to reconcile conflicting claims on the use of any particular piece of land. Town and country planning must also recognize that some uses of land which are necessary for the welfare of the community, will not be carried out at all unless the community undertakes the task.⁴

The British promoters of garden cities and town and country planning now have as their non-technical organ the Town and Country Planning Association. The leaders of this group have eloquently said why we must regard planning as Everyman's affair; the Chairman of their Executive (who is this fall visiting North America) recently had this to say:

If we are to get good towns under the new planning—as we never did under non-planning or authoritarian planning—I see no solution except a far greater understanding of the problem by a much wider portion of the public. If there is a public reasonably educated in these affairs, which are their own affairs primarily, then it will be possible for planners to satisfy it—though in my opinion there will be need for constant reminders to the experts, by bodies like the Town and Country Planning Association and by other agencies of opinion, of what the public wants.⁵

British evolution in democratic planning ideas has been reproduced in miniature in Canada, from the pre-ordained and arbitrary layout of land company towns like Goderich, Ontario (1827) through the formation of upperclass Civic Improvement Leagues after the Chicago Fair of 1893. An impressive international assembly of town planners took place at the University of Toronto in May, 1914. A group of professionals, the Town Planning Institute of Canada, was maintained between the world wars. To spread and supplement the experience of professional planning groups, a non-technical body, the Community Planning Association of Canada was formed at a conference in Ottawa in June, 1946.⁶ The Articles of Incorporation of the Association give as its object "to foster public understanding of, and participation in, community planning in Canada."

The Association celebrates the first anniversary of its founding this October in Montreal with a National Conference on Community Planning. Here CPAC members from Halifax, Victoria, and a score of communities between, first meet face to face, to learn from British and American leaders of citizen planning opinion, to make recommendations in the planning field to federal, provincial and local governments, and to formulate a program of activities for provincial Divisions and local Branches of the Association to pursue in concert.⁷

In its first year the Association has produced a monthly bulletin, *Layout for Living*, and has provided displays, films, speakers, reading-lists and other information on physical planning in Canada and abroad for a wide variety of organizations as well as for its own membership. Several small cooperative housing areas in Canada have been illustrated, for instance; and the third issue of the broadsheet included a fairly complete

6. Proceedings of that Conference are available from the Community Planning Association of Canada, 56 Lyon Street, Ottawa.

7. An outline of the Conference will be available on request from the office of CPAC in Ottawa.

4. Rt. Hon. Lewis Silkin in *Hansard*, May 20, 1947.

5. F. J. Osborn in an address reprinted in *Town and Country Planning*, XIV: 56, p. 176.

list of federal, provincial and local government planning reports published in Canada.⁸

How effective this information has been, in the absence of any antecedent or parallel effort by other agencies in most areas, it is impossible to know. The Association never supposed the job would be easy, but a recital of the difficulties met in trying to do it may help to overcome them. In general, people seem to be distraught and disinclined to believe in any long-term constructive program: to-day's black headlines impair our vision. In particular, the projection of constructive ideas on the physical development of our Canadian communities is attended by its own difficulties.

The Association is at the time of writing being guided by a provisional Council; these gentlemen (there were no ladies nominated by the initiating institutions) are aware that on many issues they have no clear mandate from the growing membership. The Association is on a "shake-down" course between tempting alternatives: it can become a producer of informational materials in its special department of citizenship, but without an effective force of field volunteers, in which case it may be producing in the same kind of vacuum as were some branches of the War-time Information Board a few years ago. Yet a "membership drive" by CPAC, without precise orientation, is likely to end in just another Mutual Admiration Society. A modest membership, all of whom are promoting in their own communities a clear set of common aims, is probably the best beginning. In its way, the Association is engaged in a branch of adult education, which proceeds best by the widest possible sharing of responsibility for

concerted action; the attendant problems are shared by all voluntary groups endeavouring to widen interest in public affairs.

The work of the Community Planning Association is also fraught with other hazards: its information to be useful must be specific, yet reference to real cases is not easy—too many Canadians know too little of their country. (Most Britishers, in contrast, know enough about the County of London to appreciate the problems presented in the film *Proud City*.) There is little sound critical writing on the work of Canadian professionals in fields linked with planning, possibly because our professionals are not secure enough in their position. If to get a point across, one must refer to a familiar city, yet must restrain comment on the solution offered there, one soon slips into performing the functions proper to that city's public relations office.

In planning matters, Canadian city halls are likely to shirk their responsibility to keep their citizens posted on their own schemes; I think a local authority establishing a planning staff should devote at least 15 or 20 per cent of the available appropriation to the information of its local constituents in the nature and results of its unfamiliar work. A local planning authority should also consider how soon some socially urgent component of its scheme can be finished in three dimensions. No public body can expect to be supported indefinitely in obscurity, on blind faith that it will do something some day. There are far too many cases where public officials knew what they should do, but lost the chance because nobody made the effort to tell John Citizen what was at stake—until too late. CPAC will never eliminate the need for local planning information and demonstration; but the Association may hope to make it more intelligible.

There is one specific case which may be expected to interest enthusiasts in every part of Canada: the planning of

8. Graphic summaries of many of these reports appeared in the *Journal* of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada for November, 1946 (Vol. 23, No. 11). That *Journal* is expected to review the work of the Vancouver Town Planning Commission in its issue for September, 1947. For a summary of the only report to emanate to date from the National Capital Planning Committee (Ottawa) see *Layout for Living* No. 6 (August, 1947) published by the Community Planning Association of Canada, Ottawa.

the national Capital. (The announcement of the consultant's appointment did so.) Yet beyond a certain point, illustrations from the Ottawa example—assuming that substantial data will become available—are likely to be regarded in the rest of Canada as no concern of theirs; Canadians have yet to acknowledge that the efficiency of their capital (and of all their major cities) is of national importance.

A concrete problem of universal interest is the planning of housing areas. But recitals of logical desiderata in laying out residential areas must begin by showing how families of average means can *afford* shelter in these desirable places; otherwise such "should-be" recitals have an objectionably dream-like air. And discussion to-day of the economics of housing often produces—among adherents to either camp—reactions more emotional than rational. Those who, like CPAC, would gain support for planning must face that blast: we must before long come to realistic conclusions on the housing problem, since about nine-tenths of the private land in every community is composed of house-lots. Planning talk is of little use, unless we have some way to build (and pay for) dwellings on so large a part of urban land. Housing seems to the writer the likely sector in which to foster primary interest in coordinating urban development. The notion that we have much to learn about how to produce housing is now accepted by the Canadian people as a whole.

Achievement, pedagogical or political, is made at the point where concepts acceptable to specialists on objective grounds coincide with ideas accepted by non-specialists from tradition or force of circumstance. The housing situation may yet give enough incentive for general acceptance of the idea of more systematic community planning. As to specialist concepts in planning, it is beyond the scope of this paper to describe in what degree a corpus of planning doctrine is agreed upon by North Ameri-

can experts. The cardinal difficulty, in studying or stimulating planning, is that urban problems are so complex, and laboratory experience and demonstration so expensive, that much argument must proceed on unproven assumptions, or not at all. Indeed some students question whether a single profession of "master planners" each personifying competence in the ramifications of urban developments, can ever exist. Sound planning doctrine may have to be synthesized cautiously from partial experience in narrower disciplines; the Universities are thus beginning to give teams of able specialists from older fields some experience in the joint solution of urban planning problems.⁹

Planning activity, which the Community Planning Association aims to explain and stimulate, is thus plainly not something susceptible to slogans, but something which requires the simultaneous attention of a whole team of experts to conceive, and of which only future generations will witness substantial results. How difficult an activity to project in non-technical terms! The most eloquent projection is of course to conduct tours of the finished project. The casual observer of some districts of Ottawa, of a few of the War-time Housing projects, or of such a private development as the Wildwood subdivision near Winnipeg, cannot fail to sense that his surroundings have been deliberately designed as a whole. But there is in Canada no accomplished planning on a community-wide scale. A survey a few years ago revealed that although many municipalities had schemes on paper, no municipality had an over-all planning scheme in operation. This survey is now being repeated by

9. See John Merriam Gaus: *The Education of Planners* . . . Harvard, 1943. The Physical Planning Committee at McGill, composed of faculty members in architecture, economics, sociology, political science, geography and other departments is a practical attempt along these lines in Canada. The Committee is at present conducting a study of planning law and administrative practice in the Canadian provinces in cooperation with Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation. Completion of the work is expected by the end of 1947 (see *Financial Post* August 30, 1947).

Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation; a few months from now we should be able to find out what schemes in Canada are going forward with statutory force.

This much appears certain: public acceptance of the necessity of planning will grow as we foot the mounting bills of non-planning. Planning achievement will be limited by the ability of those in the relevant disciplines jointly to match the public acceptance of the planning *idea* with soundly-conceived and precisely-defined planning *procedures*. The time for sound and precise work may be inadequate, for (with all defer-

ence to others in this symposium) our experts on planning in Canada are far from agreement. Inter-professional discussions on planning are still rare.

The hope of the Community Planning Association of Canada (and of similar societies in other countries) is to keep specialists and non-specialists, and those charged by the community with direct responsibility for its government, in touch with each other while they work toward the common goal: the building of the environment in harmony with the knowledge and desires of lay citizen, administrator and expert alike.

Objectives of Community Planning

By S. A. GITTERMAN,

THE difficulties in which our cities find themselves today are well known. Most of them have become large sprawling centres with little differentiation in street pattern between the suburbs and the urban core. The individual has become lost in their vastness. There are few open spaces for recreation, light or air; and to reach such spaces it is necessary to traverse congested roads and highways. Great distances are covered in travelling to and from places of work. Generally, there are too many streets and they do not separate the various types of traffic. High service and maintenance costs and untold traffic hazards are the result. The physical pattern of today's city is not organized to harmonize with the social patterns of twentieth century living.

Is it possible to relieve most of these difficulties and rearrange the physical pattern of our cities to provide, in an economical manner for the social requirements of the individual as well as the group of urban dwellers? In the past,

efforts have been made to solve this problem under the name of town planning. Today it is recognized that broader principles must be applied if a solution is to be found. This requires the co-ordinated team work of economists, sociologists, geographers, architects, engineers, legislators, municipal officials and the people. This co-ordination of effort is called Community Planning.

The governing purpose of Community Planning is to plan and build,—or, more commonly under present conditions, to replan and rebuild—for the material and spiritual well being of those who dwell, work and play in the community, both urban and rural. To achieve this, it is generally recognized that broad aspects must be considered. To-day no community can be considered as a detached entity; all form part of a national and regional pattern. Comprehensive planning cannot be undertaken without thorough knowledge of economic, social and physical conditions of the region in which the community is located. The objective is to take full advantage of all resources for human needs.

In planning for rural areas, towns or cities the community services, such as

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