

whether the Tariff Board would be equipped to deal with them in addition to its regular work. It is particularly important that there should be some body which can hear cases and issue a report when publicity is the only intended sanction and neither prosecution nor tariff reduction is planned. If such cases are not brought before a tribunal but are merely dealt with in a report prepared by the Commissioner, then the Commissioner is acting as both prosecutor and judge. On principal this is highly undesirable.

With all these considerations in mind, the best solution would seem to be to create a special Court or Board before which the Commissioner can bring all his cases, irrespective of the form of sanction that is proposed, the body consisting of men competent to consider the economic implications as well as the legal aspects of the case. It has been suggested that this would raise constitutional problems, for it is argued that such a body would have to determine

what is a fair and reasonable price for a product, and all previous legislation designed to give to a federal organisation the power to determine prices has been declared unconstitutional. The function of this Court or Board, however, would not be to declare that such and such a price is a fair price, it would be to decide whether under prevailing conditions such and such a price does or does not represent an "unreasonable enchancement" and whether the limitation of competition involved in creating price stability is or is not an "undue limitation" of competition. If the price were judged "not unreasonable" there would be no guarantee that such a verdict would still be given in a few months' time if basic conditions in the industry had changed. In other words, the whole purpose of this body would be merely to give effective and realistic meaning to words that already exist in the Combines Investigation Act and Section 498 of the Criminal Code, legislation which has already been declared to be constitutional.

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## Community Planning in Canada

By JOHN BLAND

THE idea of community planning already has passed the preliminary stages of growth in this country. It is now generally accepted as a "good thing," and appears to be well on towards the next stage, that of being considered a "necessary thing." It is recognized in the National Housing Act of 1944, which allows a thirty year amortization period for buildings in a planned area and a twenty-five year period for other buildings. This admits a calculable monetary value in town planning and in the last five or six years nearly every city in Canada has taken steps to develop a town plan for itself. It is a good time to take stock and consider the value of our

methods, the extent of our progress, and the future of this work in our country.

In the first place what is meant by community planning? I use this term in preference to town planning because it is broad enough to include rural areas as well as towns and cities. By it I mean the systematic investigation of conditions, trends and resources in order to provide a basis for broad plans of development. Such planning covers the physical aspects of our communities—the use of land chiefly. There are in addition, social and economic factors which must not be ignored if physical planning is to be valid. The planner takes these things into consideration in drawing up a master plan.

In Canada the procedure has been the employment of a town planning consult-

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ant, who has set up an office in the city in question, arranged for assistants, assembled the required information, and drawn up a set of proposals. These proposals include in most cases, traffic regulations, zoning plans, slum clearance and rehousing suggestions, and proposals for parks, playgrounds, and other recreation. Taken together with the information on which they are based, they comprise a revealing and useful master plan.

This procedure has varied in a few cases. Montreal for instance, has a permanent town planning office and staff. Winnipeg has employed a group of local experts who are fortunate to be considering not only Winnipeg itself, but also neighboring municipalities.

With all this town planning activity in Canada we have cause to congratulate ourselves. These developments should mean that our cities will be healthier, more efficient and more pleasant places for the next generation. There are however, a few questions which I should like to raise. It, is of course, too soon to judge the effect of these new master plans, and I would not pretend to criticize them without an investigation of each city individually. In the overall picture of planning in Canada however, I believe there are a few gaps.

Our larger cities are in a position to engage a town planning consultant or to set up a permanent department. Our small towns, villages, and our rural areas have not been able to do this, and as a result no careful investigation into the problems of planning rural areas has been made. Regional planning in the sense that I have described, has not been touched in Canada to date. Provincial departments have charge of highway development, but local problems of efficient communication are left to chance. Rural slum clearance has not been tackled. Although we know such slums exist we are not sure exactly where they are, or what caused them. The economic growth of the countryside, and the physical evidences of such growth, and the integration of countryside with towns and cities are proper planning projects.

British planners with their emphasis on regional development, have gone further in this respect than we have done.

This omission in Canadian planning may be overcome in various ways. A group of counties or municipalities within a region might combine to set up a planning office. The provincial governments have much information already, and could assist immeasurably by providing planning advice and assistance for small municipalities from a provincial office.\* Or again, the planning officials of large towns might be invited to include in their investigations the rural hinterlands of their urban areas. Different parts of the country will reach different and suitable solutions to this problem. My purpose is to point out that this omission is being made.

### Continuity

A planning axiom which I would like to emphasize with regard to town planning already being undertaken in Canada is the need for continuity. Many of the master plans that I have had an opportunity of studying have been drawn up to serve as a guide for development possibly for twenty or thirty years, without specific suggestions for revision. Where a permanent planning department has been set up, this, of course, does not apply. In administering the master plan the department is in a position to keep their surveys up to date, and to make changes in the plan when they become necessary. Where there is no permanent planning department the information on which the plan is based, must be reviewed at regular intervals if the plan is to be useful and not actually a hindrance. It is impossible to foresee all factors bearing on the physical pattern of the city. Economic changes may cause it to grow or to decay. The advent of the private aeroplane will influence its form. Atomic energy may have an effect before thirty years are up.

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\*This has been done in Nova Scotia in 1944 and 1945

These are extreme examples, but even the building of a new factory can cause a certain road to bear a larger load of traffic than it was designed to carry under the master plan. Enough of these small inaccuracies will soon invalidate a plan. Thus where a city does not maintain a permanent planning office, a town planning consultant should be engaged possibly every ten years or less, depending upon how quickly conditions are changing. This periodic investigation is particularly important in establishing the natural trends of development, which cannot be ignored in an efficient master plan. This need for continuous planning will inevitably make itself obvious and be met. In many cases it is already an accepted principle. I urge that it be expressed in all master plans, so that it will be fully recognized by city councillors and taxpayers alike.

### Research

The third requirement for the healthy development of physical planning in Canada is research and standardization of methods. The Dominion Government under the National Housing Act of 1944 has provided some funds for this purpose. Planning is a very young profession and still leans heavily upon the older professions of law, architecture, civil engineering, surveying and to an increasing extent upon economics and sociology. The useful contributions from these fields of knowledge need to be sifted and integrated for the planning profession as a whole. This is accomplished in planning schools in England and the United States, which employ specialists in the different fields to lecture to students and thus make significant material available to them. Until there is a school for community planning in Canada, a professional journal might serve this important purpose.

In addition there are many possibilities for original research in this new science of planning. There is the problem of the shack town for instance—what causes it, where do the people come from and go to, and what, if any, social organiza-

tion do they have? What is the effect of the pedestrian upon traffic and upon land values? To what extent is traffic delayed by pedestrians and to what extent is it important for shops to be on a pedestrian route? These are examples which have aroused my curiosity. Every man working in the field of community planning has undoubtedly similar questions in his mind. Out of such research in this country will come a distinct awareness of Canadian problems, and a standardized set of methods for solving them.

Recent planning activity emphasizes the need to revive the Town Planning Institute of Canada which has been inactive since the depression. A professional organization is required to maintain standards, and to ensure the public of a thorough and efficient planning service

### Outlook

Planning is developing rapidly in Canada. There is an awareness of the advantages of planning, and a consciousness of problems such as blight and traffic congestion which must be met by planning. With these forces behind it the continued development of community planning is assured.

At McGill University a small committee is exploring the ways and means of academic training for community planning. During this winter meetings of men on the university staff and friends in the I. L. O. have brought a surprising amount of unanimity of opinion to this complex problem. Planning has been discussed from the point of view of the economist, geographer and architect. The engineer, sociologist and administrators have yet to be heard, although they have contributed at each meeting.

Community planning is not the job of one man and no single set of disciplines is adequate for a planner. The actual production of a plan, the detailed scheme of action, may require the architect and engineer, but the policy and the choices which precede the blueprint are the concern of the economist and the adminis-

trator, while the sociologist is the one familiar with the constantly acting forces of custom, opinion, habit and attitude which often look so easy to change and prove so tough.

Community planning broadly concerns all of the arts and sciences. On the national level, the economist and administrators have the field. On the local level, the architect, landscape architect and engineer have the equipment needed to do the work. In the region, the

geographer and the sociologist have the techniques of knowing what's what.

The committee is inclined to consider an undergraduate course in community planning unsuitable and that a graduate course would be better. Next year some foundation for a graduate course will be laid. Three fellowships for graduate work in community planning at McGill may be available for students who have obtained their bachelors degrees in any one of a variety of fields related to planning.

## Social and Economic Aspects of Home Ownership

WALTER C. VOSS\*

HOME ownership involves many factors which most people give little thought. In the first place it is important to consider the economic status of the prospective home owner. Generally classified we have three income groups in the United States and these fall into the following categories of annual income. Based upon 1945 estimates, the number of families whose income is less than \$2000 aggregates about 47 per cent of the total. Those families whose annual income is from \$2000 to \$5000 comprise about 33 per cent of the total. The upper third comprises only 20 per cent of the families whose income is in excess of \$5000.

Each of these groups face quite different economic problems. When one approves the general rule that no one should invest more than two to two and one-half times one's annual income in shelter, it is readily seen that home ownership is definitely circumscribed by the practices and techniques available in the construction industry. The capacity of the industry to produce housing within

the reach of all groups has been questioned and undoubtedly we are not now able to reach the lower third and there are grave doubts as to the ability of the industry to build houses for all of the middle third. The upper third have always been provided for, as these families are able to pay for the hand-to-mouth, one-at-a-time wasteful practices of site fabrication and erection. This overall situation is probably the most damaging indictment which one could level at the industry of a country which has the capacity for coordinated production and which has just proved to the world that it can do almost anything if it really wishes to.

A second economic factor which bears an inescapable relation to home ownership is continuity of employment,—in other words, security of income. Our economic cycles of run-a-way prices, pseudoprosperity and demoralizing depressions have gradually instilled such fears in the minds of our people that they are unwilling to involve themselves in an investment which may cause them untold misery should a depression strike. For these reasons it would seem that any proposal for our approach to home construction should consider the question of continuous employment.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Walter C. Voss is head of the Department of Building Engineering and Construction Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge Massachusetts. Data on insurance and for the calculation of financial information used in the article has been collected by Miss Roberta Kohlberg, a senior at the Institute.