

opening statements. III (

COMMITTEE III - COMMENTS BY THE HONORARY CHAIRMAN

1. Congratulations on the quality of papers are made.
2. All underline the seriousness of the global situation, based on depth studies and broad-reaching intellectual awareness. This alone would have justified committee III's existence.
3. Nevertheless, the unity of the sciences has not yet been achieved in our field of the physical environment.
4. The social scientists have presented admirable papers as though observing phenomena through a microscope, or the window of a spaceship; and, after analyzing the facts and studying the trends, have made cautious, although in some cases alarming, predictions.
5. The physical planners (including myself) have failed to make their professional case, although Galantay, Leaker and Mackay go some way towards it.
6. In order to balance the social science case, the physical planning case should have been presented in some form such as this simplistic summary:
 1. When applied, traditional town planning methods succeeded in the past in creating the basis of many fine cities - examples are Paris and Washington (centres).
 2. The industrial revolution created a new kind of western society, based on industry and commerce. It was also based on a freedom of sectoral initiative, which provided incredible technological advances on the one hand, but a new scale of urban disorder accompanied by widespread poverty, ill health and other ills, on the other.

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3. The physical planners and their supporters, observing the chaotic and rapidly expanding environments, found a number of outstanding spokesmen at the turn of the century. The concepts of Geddes, Howard, Unnin and their colleagues, formed the basis of a deeper and more comprehensive approach, which endeavored to meet the new scale and complexities of urbanization.
 4. As Britain was the first industrialized country, it was natural that early attempts were made to apply the concepts. Raymond Unnin and others, faced with the world's first metropolis of London, prepared plans for a new kind of planned city with massive decentralization to planned new towns. Howard had already initiated a new towns movement to realize them with initial experiments at Letchworth and Welwyn.
 5. The next country to endeavour to apply such concepts was the U.S.A. where a powerful group of thinkers, such as Mumford, Wright, Adams, Stein, and others were putting the case for adoption in the much larger canvas of a continent. An earlier distinguished American Planner, James Burnham, had prepared a noble plan for metropolitan Chicago, but it was based on the acceptance of metropolitan growth. The Later plans for New York were, first a somewhat similar metropolitan plan by Adams and colleagues, and second a fundamentally new kind of plan at Geddes' regional level - the plan for New York State. Unfortunately none of these plans proved to be publicly acceptable at the time, as traditional sectoral forces proved to be too strong.

6. Nevertheless, the planning movement in the USA developed rapidly with the New Deal, Government reports outlined proposals for a continental scale plan and integrated regional developments (the world's first) and out of this thinking came the world's greatest example of regional planning and development in the T.V.A. This period also saw attempts to create planned new towns, only one of which, (Greenbelt), proceeded part way, and some fine prototype planned suburban neighborhoods, such as Radburn, which have had a significant international influence.
7. Towards the end of the 1930's a wide spectrum of public concern was felt in Britain about the national environment. This led to a Royal commission on the distribution of the industrial population.
 1. The report diagnosed a serious situation in that the metropolis of London was continuing to grow over much of the best agricultural land and was attracting both wealth, industry commerce and population from the rest of Britain. The other metropolitan areas, too, had serious problems, which only a major strategic planning initiative could resolve.
8. The report, which appeared after the outbreak of World War II, was followed by two others; one basically on land values, and two on rural land use. Taken together, they offered a fine brief for a physical planning movement.
9. This duly took place during and after the war. The metropolis of London had two integrated plans prepared for

it by Abercrombie, the Greater London Plan and the County of London Plan. In brief they proposed (1) a massive decentralization of population and industry, (2) a green belt to stop continuing suburban sprawl, (3) planned new towns beyond the green belt, and (4) comprehensive planned redevelopment of the chaotic and decayed inner areas.

1. "Barlow" 1. Uthwatt 3. Scott

- 10. Using this, and other case studies, the government passed legislation accordingly. Under the 1947 town and country planning Acts all land was subject to planning control and all local government agencies had to prepare physical plans for their areas.
- 11. A new ministry for physical (town and country) planning was formed, with an agency to implement the Greater London Plan. The green belt was established, and eight planned new towns commenced. All are now completed, and although subjected to criticism, have largely succeeded in their objectives, particularly as they demonstrate how complete communities can live and work in good quality environments. Britain has now 30 new towns which all demonstrate good living conditions, and demonstrate the success of physical planning.
- 12. The Greater London planning concept was adopted by other metropolitan cities, such as Stockholm, Moscow, and Prague, and more information is required of their progress.
- 13. It is obvious that the metropolitan cities in developing countries have different problems from those in developed countries, and much more drastic action is required. A

number of papers have described the problems well, but have not emphasized the urgency and the level of planned action required.

14. Somehow, like Ghana, the countries concerned must prepare strategic physical plans at the national level, which would place priority action on the improvement of villages and small towns. This is the only way of stopping the flood of migrants to the metropolitan cities and which makes any realistic planning for environmental improvement impossible.

With all the valuable material presented, but with little time, the committee might consider whether the resolution of metropolitan problems should first be discussed within a broader ecological framework, as suggested in my paper. It might then consider briefly what attempts have been made in the past to resolve such problems and endeavour to find out why and how they succeeded or failed. The special problems of metropolitan cities in developing countries could be considered, and finally some general conclusions may emerge. Globally, there is not too much time.

Percy Johnson-Marshall

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