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Special Issue
AUSTRALIA

SIX AUSTRALIAN PLANNERS

ROBERT FREESTONE, UNIVERSITY OF NEW SOUTH WALES
GUEST EDITOR

In his 1981 bibliography of planning history studies, Tony Sutcliffe recorded a strong biographical tradition, with over 140 studies cited, most tending to the uncritical, even eulogistic. He attributed the relative strength of the tradition to the somewhat immature state of planning history, the accessibility of the genre, and the cult of the heroic planner.[1] Interest in and development of the biographical strain has nonetheless continued, belying Sutcliffe's prediction that maturity and the mopping up of the major figures would lead to a decline with only minor figures and "anonymous contemporary planners" remaining. But it is clearly still possible to tell the story of interesting lives in an instructive manner and critical new studies have helped redefine the genre in productive ways, setting individual life-paths against broader canvasses of social, economic, political and physical change. And there have been a number of major book-length studies.[2]

Biography can work at several levels: as the life-history of an interesting person, the evaluation of a creative contribution, and commentary on the evolution of professional and design milieux.[3] A biographical perspective can break free of individual lives to explore general influences, limitations and impacts of planning ideas and institutions, if not also address central theoretical questions. With the invariably more complex relationships of theory and *praxis* revealed through detailed analysis, a richer understanding of planning's meanings and outcomes is possible. Ultimately, biography in planning history can "reveal the myths of our profession in human terms".[4]

A focus on the life and work of indivdual planners is an established strand of Australian planning history.[5] The proceedings of the first Australian planning history conference held in 1993 represent the first focussed collection of biographically-inspired papers.[6] The six papers assembled in this special issue of *Planning History* were first presented at the 1993 Sydney conference. They appear here in corrected and revised versions as a sampler of Australian research into both the broad currents of, and eccentricity within, the "progressivism" of the early town planning movement and the maturation of professional planning ideology after the second world war. The six papers are split between pre- and post-war figures.

John Fitzgerald (1862-1922) has already been the subject of one article in this journal (Vol. 10, No. 3, 1988). Here, drawing on parallels to the progressive movement in America, Stefan Petrow looks synoptically and sympathetically at his career as the leading political supporter of town planning reforms early this century. The darker side of progressivism's emphases on efficiency, organisation and order is revealed in Elizabeth Teather's fascinating cameo of George Augustine Taylor (1872-1928) and his partner Florence Mary Taylor (1879-1967). Focusing on the Castlecrag development in Sydney, James Weirick explores the radically different social and planning agenda of another husband-and-wife team, Walter Burley Griffin (1876-1937) and Marion Mahony Griffin (1861-1961).

Renate Howe's public life of F. Oswald Barnett (1883-1972) really records the transition from the era when progressive "amateur" social reformers dominated the debate on housing and urban reform to the period of dominance by professionals. Drawing on their book, *Vital Connections: Melbourne and its Board of Works 1891-1991* (1991), Tony Dingle and Carolyn Rasmussen deal with one of those professionals, the engineer E.F. Borrie (1894-1968), who found himself chief planner of metropolitan Melbourne through the 1950s. The final study is Barbara Norman's account of the early career of the architecture-trained Peter Harrison (1918-1990), chief town planner of Canberra through its "golden age" of development from the late 1950s.

These six papers obviously make a collective contribution to the factual record. But more importantly than this, like the best biography they actually take planning history beyond individual lives towards exploring the more general impacts of ideas and institutions, suggesting research hypotheses, revealing contradictions and new nuances, and inviting debate.

NOTES

1. A. Sutcliffe, *The History of Urban and Regional Planning: An annotated bibliography*, London, Mansell, 1981.
2. See for example: R. Beevers, *The Garden City Utopia: A critical biography of Ebenezer Howard*, London, Macmillan, 1988; G.E. Cherry, *Pioneers in British Planning*, London, The Architectural Press, 1981; G.E. Cherry and L. Penny, *Holford: A study in architecture, planning and civic design*, London, Mansell, 1986; D.A. Krueckeberg, *The American Planner: Biographies and recollections*, New York, Methuen, 1983; H. Meller, *Patrick Geddes: Social evolutionist and city planner*, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1993; D. Miller, *Lewis Mumford: A life*, New York, Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1989; M. Miller, *Raymond Unwin: Garden Cities and Town Planning*, Leicester University Press, 1992; J. Schwartz, *The New York Approach: Robert Moses, urban liberals and the redevelopment of the inner city*, Columbus, Ohio State University Press, 1993; M. Simpson, *Thomas Adams and the Modern Town Planning Movement: Britain, Canada and the United States 1900-1940*, London, Mansell, 1985.
3. G.E. Cherry and L. Penny, *op. cit.*, vi.
4. D.A. Krueckeberg, 'Between Self and Culture or What are Biographies of Planners About?', *Journal of the American Institute of Planners*, Vol 59, p.219.
5. G.E. Cherry, 'The Australian Planner', *Planning History*, Vol 15, No 1, 1993, pp.53-54; R. Freestone and A. Hutchings, 'Planning history in Australia: The state of the art', *Planning Perspectives*, Vol 8, 1993, pp.72-91.
6. R. Freestone, (ed.) *The Australian Planner*, Environmental Planning and Management Series 93/1, School of Town Planning, University of New South Wales, 1993.

NOTICES

Editorial Notice

The Editor would like to thank Robert Freestone and his colleagues for their contributions to this issue of *Planning History*.

Conference Convenor

The International Planning History Society's new Conference Convenor is Dr. Vilma Hastaoglou-Martinidis. She is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Urban and Regional Planning, School of Architecture, University of Thessaloniki, Greece. She has a Degree in Architecture and a Doctorate in Urban Planning from the University of Thessaloniki. She has also studied urban sociology and has a Diploma from the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales in Paris. She has participated in several research projects in the fields of urban sociology, urban rehabilitation and urban history in Greece. Dr. Hastaoglou-Martinidis is currently engaged in research work on the evolution of Thessaloniki and other northern Greek cities during the inter-war period.

She has published several books and numerous articles on contemporary and historical issues in city planning and on housing problems and has edited special issues of international journals on similar themes. She has been invited to lecture in Poland, Portugal and the United States.

Besides being an active member of the International Planning History Society, Dr. Hastaoglou-Martinidis is also a member of the European Association of Urban History Teachers and the Greek Section of the International Committee for the Conservation of Industrial Heritage. She is also on the management board of the Hellenic Planning and Urban History Association. The latter, in association with the International Planning History Society, will be organising a conference on 'The Planning of Capital Cities' in Thessaloniki between 31 October and 3 November 1996. Vilma Hastaoglou-Martinidis has been nominated as convenor for this conference.

The Urban History Association Prizes 1994

Recipients of prizes awarded by The Urban History Association in its 1994 competition for scholarly distinction include:

Best dissertation in urban history, without geographic restriction, completed in 1993: Thomas W. Hanchett, 'Sorting Out the New South City: Charlotte and Its Neighbours', University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1993. (Thomas W. Hanchett is the Andrew Mellon Postdoctoral Teaching Fellow in South Studies at Emory University.)

Best scholarly journal article in urban history, without geographic distinction, completed in 1993: Marci Sortor, 'Saint-Omer and Its Textile Trade in the Late Middle Ages: A Contribution to the Proto-Industrialization Debate', *American Historical Review*, 98 (December, 1993), pp.1475-1499. (Marci Sortor is an assistant professor of history at Grinnell College.)

Best book in North American urban history published in 1993: Carl Abbott, *The Metropolitan Frontier, Cities in the Modern American West* , University of Arizona Press, 1993. (Carl Abbott is professor of urban studies and planning at Porland State University.)

Victorian Britain: One Culture or Two? Leeds Centre for Victorian Studies, 17-19 July 1995.

An interdisciplinary conference on aspects of urban and rural life in the Nineteenth century will be held at the Leeds Centre for Victorian Studies, Trinity and All Saints College, Leeds between 17-19 July 1995. The conference will consider whether or not the culture of Victorian Britain was unified and coherent, or was fractured between rural and urban communities. Topics include: social relations, health and medicine, gender issues, literature, music, photography, costume, agriculture, industry, leisure and religion. Keynote speakers include Professor F.M.L. Thompson, Professor J. Lucas and Dr. A. Howkins.

For further details and booking forms contact: Angela Regan, Secretary, School of Humanities and Cultural Studies, Trinity and All Saints, Brownberrie Lane, Horsforth, Leeds LS18 5HD, UK.

International Communal Studies Association Fifth International Conference, 'Communalism - Contribution and Survival', Yad Tabenkin, Ramat-Efal, Israel, 30 May - 2 June

The crisis in the Kibbutz Movement in Israel is arousing much interest in the conference and its subject: 'Comunalism - Contribution and Survival'. The organisers hope that the conference will be a forum for discussion and a source of inspiration for research that will propose answers for the survival of the communes at the present time and strengthen their contribution to society. They believe that the generation that has witnessed the failure of communism needs the message that the communes have to offer.

The International Communal Studies Association also publishes a Bulletin. For information write to: Yad Tabenkin, P.O. Ramat-Efal 52960, Israel.

***Planning History*: Back Issues**

Paul Vining of Wyn Thomas and Partners has a complete set of *Planning History* that he now wishes to dispose of. Anyone interested in purchasing them from him can reach him at: 21 Wingfield Road, Whitchurch, Cardiff CF4 1NJ, UK. Tel.: 01222 613073 (home), 01222 398681 (office).

JOHN DANIEL FITZGERALD: PLANNING AS PROGRESSIVE REFORM

STEFAN PETROW, UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA

John Daniel Fitzgerald was a prominent publicist for the early Australian town planning movement and its most influential political insider.[1] In June 1922 John Sulman, the pre-eminent Australian town planner, wrote that Fitzgerald was held in great esteem for "the most valuable work" he undertook for the New South Wales Town Planning Association, "work which cannot be overestimated and rendered still more effective by the high position you held as a Minister for the Crown".[2] More recently Leonie Sandercock called Fitzgerald one of the "fathers" of town planning in Australia.[3] This paper will summarise Fitzgerald's views on town planning as social reform in the light of a set of ideas known as Progressivism which developed in America around 1900.

An Overview of his Life

Fitzgerald (Fig. 1) was born at Shellharbour, New South Wales in 1862 and died in 1922. He had a varied working life, being at various times a compositor, unionist, journalist, politician, and lawyer. His political fortunes were mixed. In 1891 he was elected as a Labor Party member to the Legislative Assembly but was formally expelled in November 1893 for refusing to vote according to party diktat. Fitzgerald remained in the political wilderness until he rejoined the Labor Party in 1909. He became Labor Party president in 1915-16, was appointed to the Legislative Council in 1915, and was vice-president of the Executive Council until July 1919. After his expulsion from the Labor Party in 1916 for supporting conscription, Fitzgerald held key ministerial posts, including Health and Local Government, in the W.A. Holman National government. Fitzgerald was a reformist politician, who sought "social and political improvements by democratic, knowledgeable, alert and concerned professionals" inside and outside of government.[4] Experiencing a poor upbringing as did many other Irish Catholics, Fitzgerald always fought for the underdog. He became an extremely cultivated man with strong links with all the major artistic, literary, and musical figures in Sydney.

Fitzgerald's interest in cities was triggered by a visit to London in 1890. There he met a leading socialist member of the London County Council, John Burns, and visited East End slums, noting the similarities with Sydney. In 1893 Fitzgerald was appointed a commissioner to the Chicago World Fair, where the theme of the vital "need of design and plan for whole cities" and urban beautification stimulated his imagination.[5] Fitzgerald acquired impressive knowledge of town planning developments by further overseas trips to Britain, Europe (German developments particularly impressed him), Asia, and North America, voracious reading and numerous personal contacts. He gained practical experience of urban government by serving on the Sydney Municipal Council 1900-1904, when he agitated for slum clearance and re-housing.[6]

Fitzgerald published his views on cities and town planning in *Municipal Statesmanship in Europe* (1899), *Greater Sydney and Greater Newcastle* (1906), and numerous articles in periodicals and newspapers. In addition he gave countless speeches to public bodies and presented evidence to most of the major enquiries on the government and improvement of Sydney. In 1913 Fitzgerald was a member of the Royal Commission for a Greater Sydney and was foundation vice-president of the NSW Town Planning Association. His contribution was recognised when he was made chairman of the first Australian town planning conference in Adelaide in 1917 and the second in Brisbane in 1918.

Figure 1. John Daniel Fitzgerald. (Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales)

Progressivism and Town Planning

While acknowledging the diverse international influences on Fitzgerald's thought, we can analyze his ideas in terms of Progressivism. Progressivism developed as a response to America's rapid transition from a rural to an urban, industrial society.[7] Industrialisation had created and intensified social ills such as poverty, poor housing and overcrowded cities, all of which had repercussions for social stability and health. Progressives demanded that governments abandon the laissez-faire principles associated with nineteenth-century liberalism and extend their activities into all spheres of American life to protect the welfare of citizens. They placed great "faith in the power of an expert bureaucracy to apply technological and scientific skills for the betterment of all society".[8]

Harmony and cooperation between all classes should be fostered by the government to overcome the impersonal industrial environment and make the nation strong. Organisation could achieve efficiency, order, and progress. Efficiency, a key concept for Progressives, meant being "imbued with purpose, and bending every nerve and skill to that purpose".[9] Wasted resources were anathema. The emphasis on cooperation, applied science, organisation, and efficiency permeated the major components of Progressivism: scientific management and welfare capitalism; eugenics and health reform; conservation, the back to the country movement and, above all, town planning.

For Progressives, the city was the microcosm of the nation, where all the evils they decried were found. The town planning movement "symbolized the Progressive infatuation with efficient social organization".[10] Town planning would ensure control over the growth of cities and alleviate poverty, relieve congestion and overcrowding, and improve health. Efficient municipal government, staffed by experts, such as engineers and town planners, was required to achieve their goals.

Let us now turn to Fitzgerald's ideas. He believed the city was "the home of the race" and "no effort and no expenditure must be spared to make it a beautiful" and "a highly organised and splendidly efficient instrument of civilization".[11] He adopted Burns' definition of town planning as the "conscious ordering by cities of their social, economic, and civic growth, expressed in architectural form".[12] Like all Progressives and all town planners, Fitzgerald did not intend to change the economic or social order but he did want to ensure that all classes enjoyed a decent standard of living. In 1914 he wrote that the ideal of town planners:

> is the highest which can animate the human mind. It is nothing less than to create conditions which will produce a higher type of human being - a superman - superior to the man of today in his physical, mental and moral attributes, in his capacity for creating wealth, and in his power to control his own destiny and enhance his own health and happiness.[13]

The type of men involved in town planning, "that strange co-operative and international brotherhood", were, according to Fitzgerald "not mere dreamers or enthusiasts".[14] They were experts in their fields, who were endowed with a touch of practical humanitarianism. They included architects, artists, surveyors, engineers, sanitarians, eugenicists, landscape gardeners, sociologists, and municipal experts. But they also included businessmen, house agents, land experts, and builders, whose economic and political interests might not be the same as the first group. As Fitzgerald was a Labor man, they would not be his natural allies, but town planners needed their support or at least their acquiescence. In true Progressive fashion, Fitzgerald wanted this elite body of experts to transcend their party political and sectional ties and to apply their special skills to overcome the problems created by rapid urbanisation. If they combined, Fitzgerald believed town planning will secure "greater results for the workers and their families, and bring higher hopes to the nation, than any other reform now appearing above the horizon". For Fitzgerald, town planning had two main interrelated themes: reform of municipal government and environmental improvement.

Fitzgerald held that the ideal city could be achieved through an efficient system of government. Sydney had been poorly governed and the result was in 1907 "a city flung down in a crazy mass, formless, inorganic, a maze of slums ... its commercial centre crowded and embarrassed and choked by the narrowness of its planless thoroughfares".[15] Apart from the Sydney Municipal Council, representing the twelve inner wards of the central core, there were forty suburban councils. In addition to these elective municipal councils existed a number of non-elective or partially elected bodies usurping municipal functions. Divided control caused unnecessary duplication of services, resulted in competition between the bodies instead of the mutually beneficial Progressive policy of cooperation, and meant there was "no coherent plan or organization to guide them in one steady direction".[16]

In 1909 Fitzgerald became a founding member of the Greater Sydney League to bolster his campaign for the establishment of a united and centralised council. Fitzgerald wanted the Greater Sydney Council to control a wide range of services, seeing municipal ownership as "co-operative ownership".[17] The profits of municipal enterprises were shared with consumers by reducing prices and thus minimising class differences in material terms. A Greater Sydney Council would improve the administration of public health.[18] This concern for public health was a crucial tenet of Progressive thought. Racial efficiency had to be maintained at all costs to ensure the wealth-producing capacity of workers. In 1914, in a lecture on the government of Sydney, Fitzgerald told the Chamber of Commerce that "a healthy citizen is the best workman, he is more contented, he creates more wealth and does it more continuously. He is no burden upon his fellow citizens".[19]

After he joined the Legislative Council, Fitzgerald failed in 1915 and 1919 to have Greater Sydney Bills passed. The Local Government Act 1919 was Fitzgerald's greatest municipal reform. The Act provided for the establishment of county councils.[20] Two or more councils could combine resources for a specific purpose such as electric lighting or to deal with common problems. The Act was part of an educative process to show the councils of New South Wales "by a practical illustration ... what they can do if the law allows them to co-operate" to improve services for their constituents.[21] Creating a municipal system of government run along the business principles of efficiency and economy was the aim of Progressives.

Fitzgerald thought town planning could improve the urban environment in two ways. One was to provide more parks and recreational areas and the other to

provide better housing for workers. Providing a comprehensive system of parks raised issues such as health, social stability, and conservation that were important to Progressives. Parks provided country conditions in the midst of city life which was of inestimable value for the health and stamina of the race. Fitzgerald saw parks as "the centre of communal life".[22] All citizens, irrespective of their class, could enjoy as one the fresh air, the scenery, and attractions like games and music that a modern park should offer. If city residents occupied their leisure time in such pleasurable pursuits, the incidence of crime and other social diseases would be gradually reduced (an exaggerated view of the social benefits of parks). Sydney contained many areas of unoccupied land, filled with trees. As the city grew provision of more park spaces should be organised along scientific lines. The beauty of Sydney could be enhanced by a wall of forests around the outskirts of the city and by lining streets with flower beds and rows of trees.[23] As a Progressive, Fitzgerald asserted that to conserve "the status quo of prodigal nature" was the most noble task of statesmen.

The centre of Fitzgerald's interest in town planning was providing better housing for workers. Decent housing was at the core of what to Fitzgerald the social reformer constituted a reasonable standard of living. He was appalled by the crime, immorality, and poverty associated with the slums dotted throughout the Greater Sydney area. Fitzgerald was particularly worried by the effect of slums on the health of women and children because of the implications for the future "physical and moral condition of the race".[24]

Eugenics was a controversial Progressive cause. Fitzgerald refuted the determinist hereditarian view of eugenics that the race could be regenerated by mating men and women of perfect health and intellectual ability if they lived in slums.[25] But if the children of degenerate males and females were placed at an early age in a decent house in a garden village, were given abundant recreational opportunities, proper nutrition, if the mother was given proper medical care during pregnancy and if the father worked shorter hours, then their offspring had "a better chance of being physical supermen and superwomen than the offspring of eugenic half-gods living in a bad environment". Moreover, Fitzgerald believed that "the first step in making Sydney a City Beautiful is to grapple with the slum problem".[26]

Fitzgerald did not accept the fatalistic argument that slums were a permanent and incurable by-product of laissez-faire urbanisation. Positive action by civic bodies, in conjunction with the State government, could prevent the growth of slums. Fitzgerald saw rehousing slum-dwellers as analogous to re-afforestation. In a well-governed country forestry laws prevented trees from being cut down without planting new trees. Similarly in an ideal municipal system slums would be replaced with the type of housing found in garden cities.[27] Having read Ebenezer Howard's book, *Garden Cities of Tmorrow*, Fitzgerald wrote that "if a great city can be transformed into one vast park without impairing the utility for business purposes ... so much the better for the health, comfort, and aesthetic enjoyment of the citizens".[28]

Howard's garden city at Letchworth particularly impressed Fitzgerald.[29] It was marked off into zones, each confined to a particular function. Encircling the town was a zone of fields and open country, the green girdle, upon which encroachment was prohibited. Speculation in land, which often led to misuse of this important resource, was eliminated because the city community owned the land. Fitzgerald also praised two modifications of the garden city - industrial garden villages and garden suburbs. On a smaller scale they embraced all the advantages of the garden city and could be more easily applied to existing urban conditions. Fitzgerald was smitten with the Port Sunlight garden village built by the English businessman Sir William Lever. Industrialists like Lever, wrote Fitzgerald, espoused "a practical statesmanship which deals with the creation and conservation of an effective human life". They realised that a happy worker, living in decent housing provided by his employer, would strive "to develop his wealth-creating power to its highest efficiency [because] he is made a shareholder in the results". This kind of welfare capitalism helped harmonise class differences between employers and employees, a desideratum of all Progressives.

In 1912 Fitzgerald was given an opportunity to put precept into practice when he was appointed chairman of the New South Wales Housing Board. The Housing Board's major brief was to build a model garden suburb, which became known as Daceyville, on land at Kingsford, five miles from Sydney. Daceyville, Fitzgerald said, was "a small experiment in eugenics" because the high standard of housing would improve the health and the "moral rectitude" of residents.[30] Opposition to public housing schemes and criticism of the Housing Board for inefficiency stunted the growth of Daceyville, which never realised its potential.

Simultaneously with his agitation for better housing for workers, Fitzgerald, as a member of the Holman government, pushed for town planning reform. In October 1918 he secured the appointment of a Town Planning Advisory Board of seven experts headed by John Sulman.[31] It advised the State government on sites for housing schemes and municipal councils on street alignment and beautification. In October 1919 a Town Planning Bill introduced into the Legislative Assembly did not progress further than the first reading but the Local Government Act contained important town planning provisions. These provisions, he enthused, guaranteed the "orderly arrangement in advance of the growth of towns and cities".[32] Councils were empowered to plan Sydney "so that we shall have our factory zones, our residential zones, our shopping zones, and our recreational zones".[33] If a municipal council declared a district to be a residential zone, then a commercial service like a gasworks could not be built there. Councils were also empowered to regulate the density and types of accommodation within the residential zone. Zoning benefited workers but also real estate agents and businessmen seeking to maintain the value of their property. While not all that he wanted — greater compulsion for councils was a dire omission — the Local Government Act was a notable advance and the culmination of Fitzgerald's efforts for the town planning movement.

Conclusion

Progressivism, like town planning, can be characterised as "a movement of the established and possessing classes, seeking to save society from its excesses".[34] To be sure workers would benefit from progressive reforms like town planning. They would receive better housing, improved health, and gain access to varied communal facilities, but there was no mention of fundamentally altering the distribution of wealth. Even a compassionate social reformer like Fitzgerald accepted this limitation. In his town planning and other writings he tended to place the national welfare ahead of sectional interests like workers and businessmen. But doubts about his motives remain. Too often after 1900 did Fitzgerald speak of the need "to conserve and enhance 'wealth-creating capacity'" and "to resolve class conflict in the interests of 'industrial peace and progress'",[35] Too often his emphasis seemed to be on first securing order and efficiency and only then dealing with injustice and inequality. His message had a utopian ring that attracted few businessmen and even fewer workers.[36] Without wider public and political support, town planning only achieved piecemeal success before the early 1920s and was not the engine of social reform that Progressives like Fitzgerald had envisioned.

NOTES

1. For Fitzgerald see S. Petrow, 'John Daniel Fitzgerald 1862-1922: The Life of an Australian Progressive', unpublished B.A. Hons thesis, University of Tasmania, 1978; *Australian Dictionary of Biography (ADB)*, Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 1981, vol. 8, pp.513-515; and R. Freestone, *Model Communities: The Garden City Movement in Australia*, Melbourne, Nelson, 1989.
2. Sulman to Fitzgerald, 20 June 1922, Dixson Library, Sydney, DL.MS Q261, pp.387-89.
3. L. Sandercock, *Cities for Sale: Property, Politics, and Urban Planning in Australia*, Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 1977, p.82.
4. *ADB*, vol.8, p.514.
5. R. Lubove, *The Urban Community: Housing and Planning in the Progressive Era*, New Jersey, Prentice-Hall, 1967, p.9.
6. S.Fitzgerald, *Sydney 1842-1992*, Sydney, Hale and Iremonger, 1992, p.222.
7. L.L. Gould (ed.), *The Progressive Era*, New York, Syracuse University Press, 1974.
8. M. Roe, 'The Establishment of the Australian Department of Health: Its Background and Significance', *Historical Studies*, Vol. 17, 1976, p.184.
9. M. Roe, *Nine Australian Progressives: Vitalism in Bourgeois Social Thought 1890-1960*, St. Lucia, University of Queensland Press, 1984, p.11.
10. R. Lubove, *The Progressives and the Slums: Tenement House Reform in New York City 1890-1917*, Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh University Press, 1962, pp.214-15.
11. *Sydney Morning Herald*, 27 December 1913.
12. J.D. Fitzgerald, *The Science of Town Planning: Its Universal Application*, Sydney, Town Planning Association of NSW, 1914, p.4.
13. *Ibid*, p.3.
14. *Ibid*; J.D. Fitzgerald, 'Town Planning and the Workers', *Building*, 12 November 1914, pp. 69-73.
15. J.D. Fitzgerald, 'Sydney: The Cinderella of the Cities', *Lone Hand*, May 1907, p.58.
16. J.D. Fitzgerald, *Greater Sydney and Greater Newcastle*, Sydney, NSW Bookstall Company, 1906, p.20 and pp. 26-30.
17. *Ibid*, pp.133-34.
18. *Ibid*, p.98, p.100 and p.160.
19. J.D. Fitzgerald, 'The Past and Future Government of Sydney', *Building*, March 1914, pp.69-70.
20. *New South Wales Parliamentary Debates (NSWPD)*, Vol. 75, August 1919, p.138 and p.136.
21. *Ibid*, Vol. 76, September 1919, p.1245.
22. J.D. Fitzgerald, 'Parks and Open Spaces', *Lone Hand*, June 1907, p.196.
23. *Ibid*, p.201.
24. J.D. Fitzgerald, 'The Citizen and the Slum', *Australasian Catholic Record*, 1909, p.29.
25. Fitzgerald Papers, Sydney, DL.Q89/93, p.48.
26. J.D. Fitzgerald, "Sydney Slums: Picturesque and Pestilential", *Lone Hand*, September 1907, p.567.
27. Fitzgerald Papers, Sydney, DL. MS.146, p.12.
28. Fitzgerald, *Greater Sydney*, p.124.
29. J.D. Fitzgerald, 'Town Planning and City Beautification', *Lone Hand*, May 1914, pp.390-91.
30. *Sydney Morning Herald*, 5 January 1914.
31. Freestone, *Model Communities*, pp.201-2.
32. *NSWPD*, Vol. 76, September 1919, p.993.
33. *Ibid*, Vol. 75, August 1919, p.137.
34. Roe, *Nine Australian Progressives*, pp.12-13.
35. R. Freestone, 'The Australian Garden City: A Planning History 1910-1930', unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Macquarie University, 1984, 128.
36. J.D. Fitzgerald, 'New Cities for Old', *Property Owner*, 11 April 1921, pp.1-2.

GEORGE AND FLORENCE TAYLOR: PROTOFASCISM IN THE 1920S

ELIZABETH KENWORTHY TEATHER, UNIVERSITY OF NEW ENGLAND

This paper summarises the evidence that George and Florence Taylor, prominent advocates of town planning in NSW after the establishment of their journal, *Building*, in 1907, had fascist views and connections. It briefly outlines the social and historical context which gave rise to such views and, at the time, rendered them acceptable to many influential people. It suggests that one aspect of fascism — militarism — may have been particularly significant in the development of the planning profession and its philosophy and practice in New South Wales.[1]

The Taylors: early town planning enthusiasts

George (1872-1928) and Florence (1879-1967) Taylor married in 1907 (Figs. 1 and 2). Florence had served five years as an articled draftsman with the Sydney architect E.S. Garton. She was a highly competent businesswoman and an effective journalist, and made her way with determination into elite Sydney society in the 1920s.[2] She continued editing *Building: Lighting: Engineering* (a monthly), *Construction* (a weekly) and *The Australasian Engineer* long after George's death. George, in his early years, trained as a builder's apprentice and survey draftsman. Later he became well known as a cartoonist, and developed serious interests in the design and practical applications of aircraft and of wireless. When the Great War broke out, he left Florence to shoulder the bulk of the responsibility for most of the journals that he had founded after 1907, while he contributed his expertise in mapmaking and wireless to the army. He wrote prolifically, including several short texts on town planning.[3] George campaigned vigorously against the Departmental Board's modified plan for Canberra, and organised a petition of architects and engineers throughout Australia demanding the implementation of Walter Burley Griffin's plan, under Griffin's supervision. The Taylors were instrumental in establishing the Town Planning Association of NSW in 1913. *Building* offered George and Florence an influential forum from which to air their views on all aspects of town planning after 1907.

Fascism in NSW during the Great War and after

A brief description of fascism defines it as "an anti-democratic, anti-liberal political movement [which] played heavily on fear of Communism and Socialism [and] which evolved into a system of tightly regulated national industrial and economic policies".[4] The interest in fascism that typified European, American and Australian intellectual circles in the first decades of this century represented a backlash against the rise of the Labour movement and its successful entry into national politics. Property-owning Australians were exceedingly fearful of policies that might be introduced by democratically elected Labor governments. Union membership was swelled by the expansion in the economy as a result of the war. The Australian Communist Party was founded in 1920, militant unions campaigned to form the One Big Union that would overthrow the government and eliminate the power of big business, and the Russian Revolution demonstrated the potential power of the proletariat. Fear of a communist revolution in Australia, however ill-founded, was very real.

Figure 2. George Taylor. (J.M. Giles, George Taylor: A Biography, *Sydney, Building, 1957)*

Figure 2. Florence Taylor. (J.M. Giles, George Taylor: A Biography, *Sydney, Building, 1957)*

With democracy discredited, in their opinion, many influential members of society saw in fascism the hope for an orderly, progressive and patriotic society. Brigadier-General G.R. Campbell, writing in the monthly journal of an organisation established in NSW in 1920, the King and Empire Alliance, argued, referring to the Italian Fascisti, that "their ideals and their actions and the result of them are well worth study by us in Australia at the present time".[5] The Fascisti, he pointed out, had restored law and order where necessary and regarded the Nation as "greater than any form of Government"; their hostility to the red flag was second to none. Military men such as G.R. Campbell were particularly incensed at the unruly nature of postwar Australian society.

The King and Empire Alliance was one public manifestation of fascism; Eric Campbell's New Guard was another. The New Guard comprised groups of men organised in paramilitary cells throughout Sydney and some country areas in the later 1920s.[6] However, there was another paramilitary organisation known as the Old Guard, which Moore's research has shown to have been more widespread and potentially far more powerful than the New Guard.[7] It seems to have had the tacit support of senior officials and politicians at state and federal level during the twenties and early thirties, and Moore assembles evidence that it was poised to take over the government of NSW in the event of Governor Game not dismissing the NSW Labor Premier, J.T. Lang, in 1932. The Old Guard was a secret army with the aim of protecting propertied interests in the country and the city. Such were the manifestations of fascism in NSW in the interwar years, and the Taylors were either involved or on the fringes of such movements, as will be shown.

Commenting on the widespread sympathy for fascist views during these years, Roe notes that "Fascism, in its pristine form, was not that synonym for evil which both reality and rhetoric later made it".[8] It seems important to ask how the evolving attitudes to fascism were absorbed into ideas about planning's role in Australia in the interwar years.

The social and political views of the Taylors

A detailed analysis of the full range of George's and Florence's writing would yield much more than the initial survey made for the purposes of this paper. George's views may have altered during the twenties; Florence retained some strongly conservative views to the end of her life.

In 1915, George serialized in *Building*, and later published as a novel, *The Sequel: What the Great War will mean to Australia*.[9] Discussing *The Sequel*, Roe comments that "ultimately [Taylor] was to show as clearly as any Australian that progressivism could take fascist colouring".[10] The novel is a vehicle for expounding his opinions about the directions in which Australian society seemed to be heading at the time. The central issue in the novel is the confrontation between Humanism (the Socialist movement and parties) and unnamed opposing forces. When the Humanists take over European governments after the defeat of Germany, they demonstrate the incompetence of democracy when it is not led by its natural leaders, who, in Taylor's view, are the capitalists who have succeeded because of their natural ability and initiative. Australian society succumbs passively to this form of domination. Taylor evades constitutional issues. Only economic, not political, organisation appears to be significant in the new, postwar age of *The Sequel*. Capitalist rule is benevolent: "the capitalists knew the value of human flesh and nurtured it".[11] The twin principles of "Organisation and Co-operation", "a similar system that had led them to power on the battlefields of Europe", underlie the Syndicalists'"grip on society and the economy, instilled into the Australian character by "the perfect organisation that military training gave, and the intense co-operation the call of the blood demanded".[12]

Taylor's admiration for the military led to his search for a man with military experience to lead the country.[13] He had for many years admired the architect, Charles Rosenthal (Fig. 3), having met him in various contexts before the war, when their mutual interests in wireless, aviation, music and membership of the militia, as well as their overlapping professional fields, had

MAJOR-GENERAL SIR CHARLES ROSENTHAL, K.C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., V.D., M.I.A., F.R.I.B.A., F.R.V.I.A., *Immediate Past President*

Figure 3. Sir Charles Rosenthal. (Architecture, *vol.16, no.14*)

Figure 4. Cover, King and Empire. (Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales)

brought them together. Although Rosenthal was away from Australia from 1914-1919, their acquaintance was renewed on Rosenthal's return, because Taylor edited the weekly journal of the NSW branch of the Returned Soldiers' and Sailors' Imperial League (RSSIL), and Rosenthal joined the RSSIL executive. Rosenthal began a three year stint as President of the NSW Institute of Architects in 1923. The fact that Rosenthal and Taylor were well acquainted is significant, because Rosenthal was the dominant personality in the King and Empire Alliance. Figure 4 gives a little of the flavour of the Alliance.

D.H. Lawrence may well have used Rosenthal as the model for Ben Cooley, the 'Kangaroo' of his novel, written while Lawrence was staying at Thirroul on the NSW coast in 1922. Darroch's and Moore's research indicates that Lawrence revealed in this novel a network of paramilitary cells that, in real life, may have been organised behind the facade of the King and Empire Alliance, but that were kept a close secret.[14] Moore refers to this "secret army" as the Old Guard. Taylor may well have known about this, but there is no evidence of his involvement, if any.

It is intriguing that Taylor has a character named 'Cooley' in *The Sequel* and that, so far, researchers have not been able to find a source for Lawrence's use of this name, although many names used in Kangaroo were borrowed by Lawrence from locations he visited and people he met. Did someone - maybe Rosenthal - lend Lawrence a copy of Taylor's *The Sequel* ? Did Lawrence find a copy in the library he is known to have used at Thirroul? Or is it a coincidence?

Much of *Kangaroo* is autobiographical and reflects not only Lawrence's experiences of, and reaction to, encountering a protofascist organisation in NSW, but represents his passionate internal debate on the issues involved. The portrayal of Cooley is powerful and fascinating, and it is tempting, although entirely unsupported by hard evidence, to see it as at least strongly inspired by Rosenthal. There is more research to be done analysing Cooley's views on how Australian society should be organised, and comparing them with those of Taylor. There are some interesting comparisons, particularly in the compassionate concern about those, especially children, living in poverty.

Florence's views need close scrutiny too. Her biographer, Giles, attributes blatantly undemocratic views to her: "What we need is less governing by the parliamentarians and more by a single Governor with better mental balance and power to act like Macquarie...".[15] However, Florence's connections with fascist organisations are clear. She organised a women's auxiliary for the New Guard in 1929, enrolling 500 women "in an enthusiastic and partly militant ceremony".[16] It seems that Eric Campbell, the New Guard's commander, was a personal friend. The

women's auxiliary petered out after the debacle at the opening of the Sydney Harbour Bridge, when the New Guardsman, de Groot, was unseated from his horse while slashing the ribbon ahead of the Premier, J.T.Lang. It seems that the New Guard's discomfiture was, in the long run, greater than that of the Premier. Again, further analysis of Florence's writings are needed. Both she and George were fervent supporters of White Australia, and an illustration (Fig. 5) of a slim young woman in diaphanous draperies in the margin of Florence's book, *A Pot-Pourri of Eastern Asia*, about her voyage to China and Japan, carries the caption: "Tall and Graceful, The White Race".[17]

Discussion

Planners and planning enthusiasts who supported fascist lines of thinking in the first three decades of the century did no more than reflect the ethos of the times. Three streams of thought need to be mentioned here. First, there is the conviction, so clearly expounded in Lawrence's *Kangaroo*, that democracy could neither produce nor accommodate the wise leadership needed by western societies such as that of Australia. Secondly, alongside such disillusionment was the class view that "property and respectability conveyed a moral right to rule".[18] Thirdly, the "cult of the expert" is yet another world view that challenges assumptions about democracy as a rational basis for organising society. Planners were particularly likely to be attracted by this attitude. Sir John Sulman wrote: "One competent expert will produce a better scheme in less time and at less cost than any board or combination of representatives".[19]

The failure of planners to place the issue of resources, and therefore politics and social reform, at the heart of their burgeoning 'discipline' around the turn of the century (despite the lead from Ebenezer Howard) has, arguably, aborted their attempts to establish an profession independent of sectarian politics and founded on a discrete philosophical integrity. As Sandercock puts it, "the triumph [was] of the related view of planning as a technical, administrative task rather than as an essentially political process".[20]

It was the first two or three decades of this century that saw this crystallisation of views about town planning. They were decades of intense debate and action on a political level. In horrified reaction to the trend towards fascist sympathy, many artists and writers turned to using their creative talents quite deliberately to oppose fascism and to express their sense of menace and social crisis.[21] Where did individual members of the town planning movement stand in this era of turmoil in values?

Refusing to offer a definition of fascism, Hayes deals with several key themes.[22] I will conclude by discussing one of these: militarism. Planning has long been riddled with militarism, both in its ideas and practice, and in its personnel. In terms of personnel, Sir Charles Rosenthal was far from unusual in being a military man in a planning-related profession in Australia. In Britain, the situation seems to have been different.[23] Taylor listed nineteen men in architecture and related professions serving in the militia in Australia in 1910 and recognised that there were more.[24]

The penetration of planning by militarism has major implications. The original Garden City concept of social reform stands in antithesis to values brought by militarism. Planners with militarism values through a socialisation process - and this could include women - could not be expected to sympathise with those who believed that people were equal. Spontaneity and delight as central principles of design would need to take second place to order and efficiency. To such people, peace was to be maintained by a high degree of arms and readiness, not by a grass roots process of social reform, as envisaged by Howard. What is more, military men had chosen, and were trained, to uphold the social order, not reform it. Indeed, many were to offer their lives in the Great War to defend the status quo, and after the war Rosenthal, among others, was prepared to continue in this attempt by both formal and informal means.

Figure 5. "Tall and Graceful, The White Race" (F. Taylor, A Pot-Pourri of Eastern Asia, *Sydney, Building, 1935)*

Another implication of militarism for the directions taken in Australian planning concerns the attitude of planners to women's roles in society. Even today, the military establishment is notoriously chauvinistic in its attitudes to women in the military. It may be that we should be looking at the penetration of militarism into Australian planning culture in order to explain the failure of planners to perceive the fundamental restructuring of gender roles that has slowly but relentlessly taken place this century — a failure that is blatantly expressed in Stretton's first edition of *Ideas for Australian Cities*, published in 1970.[25] This is certainly an area deserving further research.

The disillusionment with democracy expressed by Lawrence and Taylor indicates that the intelligentsia and professionals were seriously considering alternative ways of organising British and Australian society in the twenties and thirties. A state managed by some form of dictator would have brought planning into its own. The academic economist, Professor Robert Irvine - whose views were well to the left of many town planning enthusiasts - proposed an executive called the Bureau of National Efficiency with a General Staff, "para-military in structure" and comprising "efficiency experts, capable of defining the general interest and equipped with power to override opposition".[26] It is interesting to compare this concept with Stretton's vision in 1970: "metropolitan planning must one day be integrated as the land use and communications branch of central economic planning ... the 'chief planner' will have to be the premier".[27]

It seems that planning as a discipline is involved in trade-offs on a large as well as a small scale, affecting its philosophy as well as its practice. Its original trade-off, in which it abandoned any quest for a role at the heart of political decision-making at the level of the state, was an inevitable outcome of the failure of those such as the Taylors and Rosenthal to bring about the political context in which views such as those I have loosely referred to as "fascist" could be incorporated into town planning philosophy and practice. Further examination of planning practices and personnel in the 1920s and 1930s is needed to clarify whether planning, in the years before the Second World War, could ever legitimately claim "traditional planning's posture of political neutrality".[28]

NOTES

I am grateful to Martin Auster for drawing my attention to some useful published research. Emeritus Professor Russel Ward, Chris Cunningham and Dr R. Haworth have also read and commented helpfully on this paper.

1. A longer version of this paper is published as E.K. Teather, 'Fascism and Australian town planning propagandists: some implications', *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, Vol. 40, No. 3, 1994, pp. 335-50.
2. F.M. Taylor, Personal Papers 1907-1967, Mitchell Library, Sydney, ML MSS 1853/5. See also J.M.Giles, *50 Years of Town Planning with Florence M.Taylor, O.B.E.*, Sydney, Building, 1959; R. Freestone, 'Florence Taylor: The lady town planner of Loftus Street', *New Planner*, December 1991, 12-13; and Kerwin Maegraith, Personal Papers, Mitchell Library, Sydney, ML MSS 4944, which contains a typescript of a biography entitled 'The Taylors of Loftus Street' compiled in collaboration with Florence Taylor.
3. M. Roe, 'George Augustine Taylor: 1872-1928', *Nine Australian Progressives*, St. Lucia, University of Queensland Press, 1984, pp.185-209, is a comprehensive account of George Taylor's life, writing and views. Taylor's books on town planning were: *Town Planning for Australia*, 1914 and *Town Planning with Common Sense*, 1918, both published in Sydney by his own publishing company, Building.
4. Banner Press, *New College Encyclopedia*, New York, Galahad Books, 1978.
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6. K. Amos, *The New Guard Movement 1931-35*, Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 1976.
7. A. Moore, *The Secret Army and the Premier*, Kensington, New South Wales University Press, 1989.
8. Roe, *Nine Australian Progressives*, p. 6.
9. G. Taylor, *The Sequel: What the Great War will mean to Australia*, Sydney, Building, 1915.
10. Roe, 1984, *Nine Australian Progressives*, p.191.
11. Taylor, *The Sequel*, p.143.
12. *Ibid.*
13. This is discussed by M. Roe, *Nine Australian Progressives*, pp.199-201. In *The Sequel*, Taylor comments that Australia needs a "commercial Kitchener".
14. R. Darroch, *D.H.Lawrence in Australia*, South Melbourne, Macmillan, 1981.
15. Giles, 1959, *50 Years of Town Planning*, p.76.
16. K. Maegraith Papers, op. cit., Ch. 8, p.7. See also Chapter 4, p.4.
17. F. Taylor, *A Pot-Pourri of Eastern Asia*, Sydney, Building, 1935, p.38.
18. R.W. Connell and T.H. Irving, *Class Structure in Australian History*, Melbourne, Longman Cheshire, 1980, p.287.
19. Quoted in L. Sandercock, *Property, Politics and Urban Planning*, New Brunswick and London, Transaction, 1990, p.59.
20. Sandercock, *Property, Politics and Urban Planning*, p.7.
21. D. Craig and M. Egan, 'Decadence and crack-up; literature and society in the 20s and 30s', in S. Knight and M. Wilding (eds), *The Radical Reader*, Sydney, Wild and Woolley, 1977, pp.11-35; D. Carter, 'Documenting and criticising society', in L. Hergenhan (ed.), *The Penguin New Literary History of Australia*, Ringwood, Victoria, Penguin, 1988, pp.370-389.
22. P.M. Hayes, *Fascism*, London, Allen and Unwin, 1973.
23. G. Cherry, *Pioneers in British Planning*, London, Architectural Press, 1981.
24. G. Taylor, 'The Nation Builders. A review of the work of Charles Rosenthal, Architect and Soldier', *Building*, September 1910, pp.34-41.
25. H. Stretton, *Ideas for Australian Cities*, Adelaide: Orphan Books, 1970.
26. Quoted by Roe, *Nine Australian Progressives*, p.261.
27. Stretton, *Ideas for Australian Cities*, pp.226-27.
28. R.W. Lake, 'Planning and Applied Geography', *Progress in Human Geography*, Vol.16 No. 3, 1992, pp.414-21.

BEYOND THE GARDEN SUBURB: THE MYTHOPOEIC LANDSCAPE OF CASTLECRAG

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In Australian planning history, Walter Burley and Marion Mahony Griffins' Castlecrag has long been recognised as a significant, if idiosyncratic garden suburb.[1] Aerial photographs reveal the remarkable nature of the Griffins' achievement in the context of Sydney's suburban development. Almost half a century after the first subdivision of the Castlecrag estate, despite departures from the original concept and many incidental depredations, the Griffins' fundamental pattern of contoured roadways, forested bluffs, protected creeklines and continuous foreshore reserves still stood as the only considered response to Sydney's harbour setting.

Castlecrag was designed in various stages and partially completed by Walter and Marion Griffin (Fig. 1) in the period 1920 to 1935. As an experimental alternative to Sydney's conventional suburbia, Castlecrag was more than a polemical gesture — it was a poetic conception, so highly charged with imaginative content that it continues to transcend its reality as a romantic retreat for the bourgeoise. The significance of Castlecrag therefore resides not so much in its status as a garden suburb than in the fundamental source of its imaginative power - the complex fusion of modern and anti-modern thought which distinguished the life-work of the Griffins. This fusion of contradictory impulses was apparent in the Griffins' artistic expression at the time they entered the Canberra competition in 1911.[2] By the 1920s the collision of opposing tendencies had become evident in the Griffins' social project at Castlecrag. The critical turn from an aesthetic play upon opposites to an inner tension in their social vision was of the result of the extreme difficulties the Griffins experienced in their attempt to implement the Canberra plan.

The Griffins' entry in the federal capital competition must be recognised as the supreme expression of their design ideas and political ideals. Inspired by Henry George, Thomas Jefferson and the progressive politics of the Chicago City Club, they set

Figure 1. Marion Mahony Griffin and Walter Burley Griffin in the garden of their Castlecrag home, c. 1930. Photographer, Ruskin Herbert. (C. Peters)

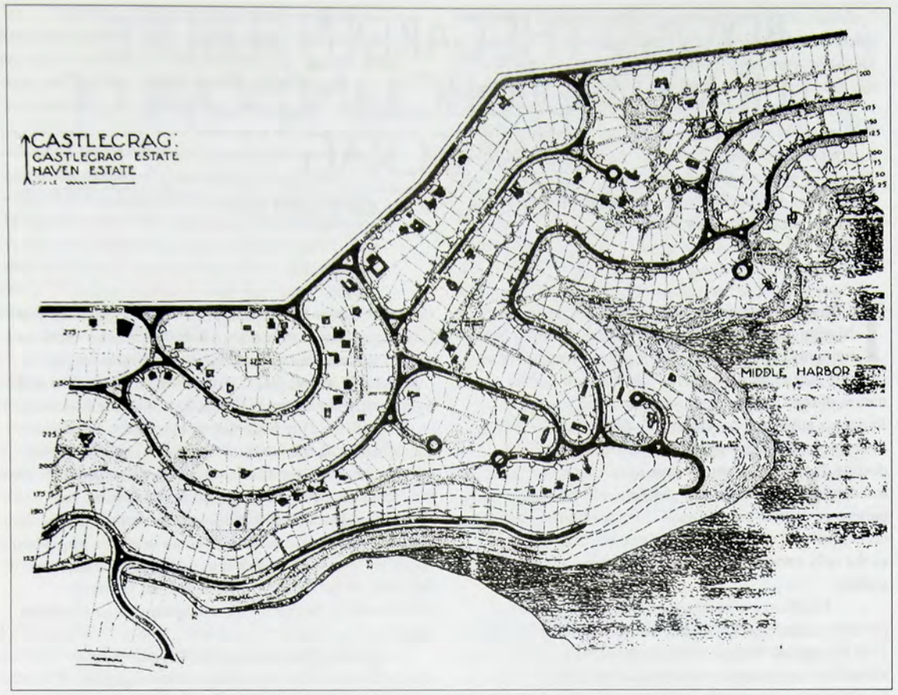

Figure 2. Plan of Castlecrag and Haven Estates, c. 1932. (Edgar Dean papers, National Library of Australia)

out to give physical form, tangible reality to a new nation which they believed to be in the vanguard of democracy. After he had been declared winner of the competition, but before crossing the Pacific to see the site or experience the society he had imagined, Walter confidently described Australia as

> a vast potentially productive undeveloped insular continent with a people cherishing the highest standard of human rights, with no dire poverty or political corruption ... a democracy already in the vanguard of political progress setting a standard for the entire world in its struggle against private monopoly and exploitation.[3]

However, within a year of moving to Australia, Walter and Marion had drastically revised their opinions. They had begun to experience an orchestrated campaign of opposition to every aspect of their Canberra Plan. The bureaucratic and political battles which Walter, in particular, had to fight were a great shock to them. Caught in a complex web of jealousy, intrigue, indifference and misunderstanding played out against the social hysteria of Australia during the First World War, their faith in Australia as a rational, modern society was fundamentally shaken.

In 1920, after a seven year struggle, Walter was forced to sever all connection with the city and the departmental officials with whom he had battled so long took charge. These "administering authorities", he subsequently observed, proceeded to violate his "aesthetic social and economic principles in almost every act."[4] Yet Walter and Marion Griffin remained committed to Australia. They turned their distinctive talents to highly significant but somewhat smaller scale projects than Canberra — most notably, the development of Castlecrag. In the process the social dimension of their work changed in emphasis from a concern with abstract ideals to a quest for authentic experience — a personal journey which would take them from the progressive program of Henry George to the spiritual world of Rudolf Steiner, a journey from modernism to a strangely compelling anti-modernism.[5]

The creative tension between these two tendencies can be seen in every aspect of the Castlecrag venture (Fig. 2). The system of contour roads was a supremely rational solution to the problem of subdividing the precipitous sandstone terrain. In horizontal and vertical profile, the roads were engineered to perfection. Sweeping around the contours, they were designed for effortless motoring, the quintessential experience of modernity. Yet in cross-section the roads were narrow, confined to cliff tops, ledges and cuttings incised in the living rock. As such, they were much more evocative of a pre-modern world, much more a series of timeworn traces like the mountain roads of feudal Japan which were their principal inspiration.[6]

Walter named the roads for parts of a medieval castle The Parapet, The Rampart, The Bastion, The Citadel, The Bulwark, and so on; all peculiarly appropriate in relationship to each other and to particular features in the rugged topography, and all inspired, like the name 'Castlecrag' itself, by the estate's crowning sandstone outcrop, long known in the district as Edinburgh Castle. Here an exercise in placemaking and image-building equal to any in the modern world of marketing was linked through a series of distinctly anti-modern associations, with fortifications, strongholds, and the savagery of siege warfare — concepts barbarous in the extreme and far from remote to that generation of Australians. Fussell has documented the corrosive force

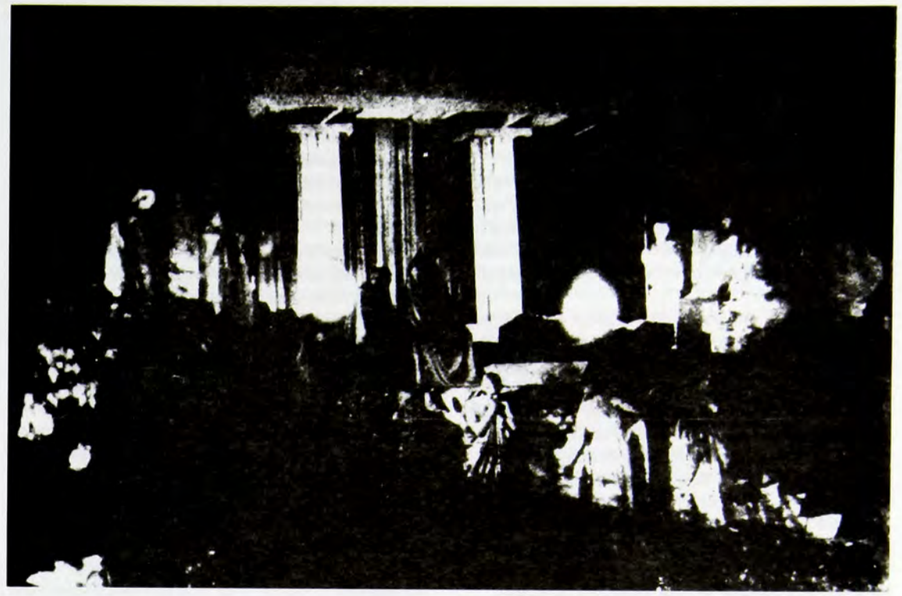

Figure 3. Production by Lute Drummond and Marion Griffin of Iphigenia in Tauris, *Haven Amphitheatre, Castlecrag, Easter 1935. (Weirick Collection)*

of irony which has characterised literary expression and everyday language since the horror of 1914-18.[7] In the context of suburban Sydney in 1921, Walter's system of road names was essentially double-coded, setting an anti-modern dream against the modern condition of uncertainty, insecurity and alienation.

The domestic architecture at Castlecrag was similarly double-coded. Walter's houses were uncompromisingly modern in their siting and orientation, modular plan forms, efficient kitchens, floor slab construction and flat roofs; modern too in their use of reinforced concrete, patented building systems, picture windows, built-in furniture, sun-trap courtyards, skylights, roof gardens and integral garages. Yet these modernist devices were combined with a mode of architectural expression distinctly primitive in its deployment of rough-hewn masonry, earth-pressing walls, crystalline structural members, suppressed columns, tunnel-like entrances, massive lintels, hooded windows, strange castellations and exaggerated voussoirs. The Griffins seemed to want to revert to deep archetypes - the cave, the temple, the redoubt. In these elemental houses fused with nature, Walter and Marion challenged conventional notions of suburban status, comfort and domesticity. Instead they proclaimed another set of values based on individuality, theatricality and the rejection of materialism.

In the 1920s and 1930s, Castlecrag was the domain of the modern family: servantless, committed to causes and broadly-based interests, involved in play-readings, discussion groups, contemporary dance and cooperative child care. Older children ranged free in the bush. The adults, somewhat eccentric in their ways, tended to be artistic and intellectual, free-thinking if not bohemian, with a propensity to defy the conventions of marriage and the norms of gender relationships. Yet in the Griffins' day, the small human dramas played out at "The Crag" could be compared to the heightened experience of the human condition contained in the extraordinary productions of Greek tragedies, Medieval mystery plays and mystical fairy tales, mostly staged in the bushland amphitheatre on the ancient cycle of solstice and equinox (Fig. 3). Again the modernist tendency towards the new, the rationalised, the transparent, a social reality freed from illusions, was countered by a return to the archaic, the elemental, the deeply mystical. The theatre of life in Castlecrag was poised between the experimental edge of modern experience, "the refusal to seek limits ... to continually reach out ... to go always beyond, beyond morality, beyond tragedy, beyond culture",[8] and the search for recurring archetypes, primal experience and reintegrating ritual, "a vein of deep religious longing, an unfulfilled yearning to restore infinite meaning to an increasingly finite world".[9]

These characteristics of Castlecrag as a place and as a community projected the Griffins' venture far beyond the established norms of real estate development, even though the enterprise was not immune from premature subdivision, inadequate servicing, ambitious advertising and outright boosterism. Castlecrag's magical qualities also projected the Griffins' scheme beyond the norms of garden suburb design, despite the fact that precedents and parallels abound.[10] Some of these schemes provided direct inspiration for the Griffins, others may be seen as significant parallels to the Castlecrag concept, but none match the fusion of ideas which distinguish the Sydney enterprise. The history of land development, planning controls, middle class suburbia and utopian colonies is only partially relevant to our understanding of Castlecrag. As a concept and as a physical reality, Castlecrag has to take its place in the history of that highly-charged but problematic inheritance from the nineteenth century, the *Gesamtkumstwerk*, the total work of art.

From Wagner to Diaghilev and the *Ballets Russes*, the integration of the arts served as a compelling metaphor for unalienated, organic experience.[11] Totally modern in both its organisation and insistent presence in contemporary culture, this aesthetic movement was nevertheless infused with archaism and primitivism, carrying with it the assumption that "the further one goes back - historically, psychologically, or aesthetically - the simpler things become; and that because they are simpler they are more profound, more important, and more valuable".[12] This analysis of primitivism in modern art applies with equal force to the built form and social space of Castlecrag.

When Walter was invited to speak on Castlecrag at the New South Wales Institute of Architects in 1931, he chose as his title 'Toward Simpler Homes', and in his address sought insight into "the inner imaginings, inspirations and intuitions" of individual consciousness, taking as his example the primordial act of Building the Hut, the primitive home which "embodies...conscious, purposive simplicity." Rejecting intellectualism and materialism, as forces which had "doomed the beautiful, exclusive cultures of the past, of east as well as west", he argued that "the new departures ... in sculpture, painting, music and architecture" could not develop from any rationalising process. Instead he advocated

> a subtler relation with the creative forces, whose most generally available expression is the wonders of nature. If we use, and at the same time conserve, these elements by living intimately with them, not only economically, but emotionally and impulsively, their inclusive harmony offers a common basis for the universal cultures to come ... houses should not be allowed to dominate, but should subserve the landscape.[13]

This inclusive aestheticism, with nature as its inspiration and *leitmotif*, transformed the process of suburban development into an orchestrated artistic production.

The Griffins were able to initiate this ambitious program because they had secured the freehold of an extensive tract of relatively undisturbed harbourside bushland on three peninsulas. Walter had been granted overall control by the shareholders who invested in his land development company, the Greater Sydney Development Association (GSDA), and through force of personality, the experience the Griffins had gained in architecture, landscape architecture and community development over more than twenty years was brought directly to bear on the new opportunity.

Griffin's freedom of action was guaranteed by the controlling interest he was granted in the GSDA. Formed with a capital of thirty £1000 shares, the investors consisted, for the most part, of Walter's friends and political supporters whose faith in his abilities had survived the seven year battle over the implementation of the Canberra plan. The group included King O'Malley, the most effective backer of Griffin's vision for the federal capital during his term as Minister for Home Affairs; the Reverend Cheok Hong Cheong, leader of Melbourne's Chinese Community; Julius Grant, theatrical entrepreneur; Agar Wynne, a former Postmaster-General, Roy Lippincott, Griffin's brother-in-law and fellow architect; Malcolm Moore, the engineer who had developed the machines for Griffin's patented concrete block system; Basil Parkinson, Melbourne solicitor and Single Taxer; and two Sydney architects, George Thomas and F.G. Biggs. This group readily agreed to Griffin holding three special shares with ten times the voting rights of the remaining ordinary shares. Peter Harrison observed, "This arrangement would not normally be entertained by a prudent investor, but it is indicative of Walter's charismatic qualities that otherwise hard-headed businessmen, politicians and professionals each subscribed one thousand pounds to enable him to pursue a dream."[14]

Walter's own investment was not inconsiderable and he would subsequently plunge Marion and himself deeply into debt in an attempt to purchase lands adjoining the GSDA estate. However, to the extent that the Castlecrag venture was a total work of art, the GSDA shareholders were effectively Griffin patrons. A number of them took advantage of the opportunity of securing a free lot in the first subdivision on the condition that they constructed a Griffin-designed dwelling. This helped establish the distinctive character of the new suburb from the start. As these houses were available for rent, and the early residents were drawn from the Griffins' circle of interesting friends, the distinctive social character of Castlecrag was also established from the very beginnings of the new community.

In 1921, the GSDA lands were relatively inaccessible. Proposals to build the Sydney Harbour Bridge had lapsed during the First World War. They were revived in 1922 but it would be a further decade before the Bridge was completed. On the North Shore, there was no tram or bus route within a mile of the estate and motor car access was far from direct via the distorted grid of arterial roads laid over the broken terrain. Perhaps the most appropriate way to approach the Castlecrag peninsula was the most circuitous and leisurely of all, by water. The picturesque foreshores had long attracted picnickers, campers and fishermen. The landscape was typical of the sandstone plateau country of the Sydney region, rising steeply from the shoreline in a succession of forested terraces and monumental cliffs, a landscape of dramatic but subtle beauty dissected by streams and waterfalls, caverns and rock ledges. The indigenous flora, dominated by the sinuous forms of eucalypts and angophoras, consisted of a profusion of species, described by Griffin as

> the richest in the whole world ... evergreen, ever flowering, lacking all weedy characteristics ... and possessing the utmost subtlety of colour variations not only in foliage, but in twigs and bark, with open decorative structure and picturesque outline, embellishing rock formations of the most exquisite natural carving and waterways of every character, from waterfall to land-locked reach and open beaches.[15]

This landscape inspired Griffin's most distinctive design innovation, the attempt to create a suburb in which the built elements would be entirely subservient to the natural bush. The most significant landscape resources, the creeklines, cliffs, waterfalls, ancient trees, wildflower glades and foreshores, would be protected in a generous system of interconnected reserves and internal community parks. Elsewhere, the roads and houses would be kept small in scale, built from concrete and native rock, carefully sited to protect views and to disappear beneath the eucalyptus canopy. In one cleared area on the ridgetop this was impossible,

but Griffin carried out a campaign of landscape restoration to bring this area back from its devastated state.

The idea of living intimately within the natural forest was unprecedented in the Griffins' work, certainly at the scale of the Castlecrag venture. Philosophically this idea had clear links to Emerson, Thoreau and the American environmental movement, and there are some physical indications of the concept amongst the Griffins' early projects and built works. Before their move to Australia, both Walter and Marion had been involved in the design of individual summer homes in the northern woods of Illinois and Michigan, very much in the spirit of Thoreau.[16] Griffin had also designed a small group of forest cabins, and a contoured road system to service them, as part of the Allan Ravines scheme in Decatur, Illinois - a summer resort for the employees of a manufacturing company.[17] The most impressive community design of Griffin's American career, the Rock Crest/Rock Glen subdivision in Mason City, Iowa, anticipated some of the architectural qualities of the Castlecrag scheme, such as the fusion of powerfully primitive forms with dramatic formations of living rock.[18] However, the landscape works at Mason City involved the restoration of a highly modified site rather than the integration of built form with an indigenous forest. The Eaglemont subdivision in suburban Melbourne, which dates from the early years of the Griffins' Australian practice, incorporated a system of interior parks on the same principle as those later included at Castlecrag.[19] However, Eaglemont occupied former farmland rather than an extensive stand of undisturbed forest.

The Castlecrag concept is therefore unique in the Griffins' *oeuvre*. Over time the idea of living intimately with the Sydney bush did prove difficult to sustain. After Walter's death in India in 1937, the development of the suburb departed radically from his ideas and some of the ecological consequences of bushland development, such as rampant weed invasion, seem to have been unanticipated by him. Yet in European Australia, the dream of being at one with nature has never had such a powerful expression as the Castlecrag experiment of Walter and Marion Griffin. The source of this mythopoeic power seems to reside in the dramatic tension between the modern and the anti-modern which was so characteristic of Castlecrag's physical qualities and social space. Ultimately, Castlecrag must be understood in terms of a certain set of wish-images and utopian visions ranged against the reality of housing production in the modern world. This is the condition which Walter Benjamin has described, in which the new turns back upon the primal past:

> To the form of every new means of production there correspond images in the collective consciousness in which the new and the old are intermingled. These images are wish-images. In these there emerges a vigorous aspiration to break with what is outdated — which means, however, with the most recent past. These tendencies turn the image-fantasy, which gains its initial stimulus from the new, back upon the primal past. In the dream in which every epoch sees in images the epoch that is to succeed it, the latter appears coupled with elements of pre-history — that is to say, of a classless society. The experiences of this society, which have their store place in the collective unconscious, interact with the new to give birth to the utopias which leave their traces in a thousand configurations of life, from permanent buildings to ephemeral fashions.[20]

NOTES

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3. Walter Burley Griffin, letter to King O'Malley, 12 January 1913, in Australia, *Commonwealth Parliamentary Papers*, No. 346, 1914-1916, p.5.
4. W.B. Griffin., 'The Outdoor Arts in Australia', *Advance! Australia*, 1 May 1928, p.207.
5. For Griffin's Henry George connections, see: 'Australia Capital City', *The Public*, (Chicago). 31 May 1912, p.507; 'Walter Burley Griffin: Single Taxer and Social Reformer', *Progress*, (Melbourne), 1 September 1913, p.1-2. The Griffins were introduced to the work of Rudolf Steiner in Sydney in the late 1920s. Marion formally joined the Anthroposophical Society in 1930 and Walter in 1931. See M.M. Griffin. 'The Magic of America', Vol.IV, The Individual Battle, 168-169, and Membership Files: Marion Mahony Griffin, 57/1930, 29 September 1930, and Walter Burley Griffin, 66/1931, 1 September 1931, Allgemeine Anthroposophische Gesellschaft Sekretariat, Dornach, Switzerland.
6. W.B. Griffin, 'The Modern Architect's Field: Its limits and discouragements', *Australian Home Builder*, November 1923, p.38.
7. P. Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1975, pp.3-35.
8. D. Bell, 'Beyond Modernism, Beyond Self', in *The Winding Passage: essays and sociological journeys 1960-1980*, Cambridge, MA, Abt Books, 1980, pp.279-280.
9. T.J. Lears, *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the transformation of American culture 1880-1920*, New York, Pantheon, 1981, p.58.
10. Some of these include America's first planned

garden suburb, Llewellyn Park in Orange County, New Jersey laid out in the 1850s and notable for its romantic, escapist atmosphere; and the many suburban designs produced by the Olmsted office which displayed an impressive mastery of contoured roadways and integrated open space systems. Other precedents include the ambitious schemes for Palos Verdes, California and Coral Gables, Florida which in the 1920s, succesfully achieved aesthetic control over development: The Doheny Ranch project designed by Frank Lloyd Wright for the Sierra Madre Mountains of California, indicates a parallel approach to the dramatic fusion of architecture and landscape. There are also affinities between Castlecrag and the Theosophical community of Katherine Tingley at Point Loma, Southern California, renowned for its exotic architecture, luxuriant landscape and the extravagant theatricality of its open air productions.

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13. W.B. Griffin, 'Towards Simpler Homes', *Architecture*, August 1931, p.172.
14. Harrison, *Walter Burley Griffin*, viii, pp.1-3.
15. Griffin, 'Towards Simpler Homes', pp.172-73.
16. G.C. Manson. *Frank Lloyd Wright to 1910: the first Golden Age*, New York, Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1958, pp.129-30.
17. M. Griffin, 'The Magic of America', Vol.II, The Federal Battle. 50a-50d. A copy of the site plan, dated 5 March 1911, is located in the E.M. Nicholls Collection, National Library of Australia, Canberra.
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F. OSWALD BARNETT: SOCIAL REFORMER AND PLANNER

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F Oswald Barnett was one of the most significant figures in Australian housing and planning in the 1930s and 1940s. He was essentially a Melbourne man, convinced that well-planned suburbs provided the ideal urban environment. Barnett played a leading role in a campaign for slum reclamation in Melbourne, a campaign which led to the establishment of the Housing Commission of Victoria.

Barnett (Fig. 1) was "born poor" in 1883 in Brunswick, a Melbourne working class suburb. The Barnetts were Wesleyan Methodists and attended the large Methodist Church and Sunday School in Sydney Road. The influence of this active congregation remained with Barnett throughout his life and was especially evident in his firm and thoughtful Christian belief, commitment to social reform, and faith in the value of self-improvement.

Through determination and part-time study, Barnett by the 1920s was a dapper accountant, happily married with a young family and living in the eastern suburbs of Melbourne. Yet the "boy from Brunswick" was dissatisfied with his comfortable life. After visiting the ragged schools and missions of the "back slums" of central Melbourne, Barnett anguished over the dichotomy between life in the slums and suburbs. His response was to enlist the support of the Young Men's section of the Methodist Church Laymen's Missionary Movement in rescuing children from such appalling living conditions. The idea for the group to take as its particular task the establishment of a Babies' Home to care for neglected babies and to provide for their adoption into Christian families seems to have come specifically from Barnett and in 1929 the Methodist Babies' Home (MBH) was opened in South Yarra.

His early theological and social imperatives also shaped his later ideas and activities. He wrote that the establishment of the Babies' Home was "youthful Christian faith in action":

> The Cause, the saving of the slum baby, inspired the youth of the Methodist Church, enabling them to put their spiritual ideas into actual practice for the benefit of little babies, otherwise condemned to live in a slum environment, often of a viscious or immoral nature. The change of environment worked miracles.[1]

Although his later analysis became more sophisticated, he retained a strong belief in the influence of environment and in the value of a scientific approach to social problems, the injustice of the existence of slums and suburbs in cities, and the desire to relate his Chrisitian belief to social action.

Barnett's subsequent involvement in the slum abolition movement and the establishment of the Victorian Housing Commission owes much to his experience in establishing the Babies' Home. But he soon realised that his initial response to Melbourne's poverty was seriously flawed:

> There was a grave limitation to the saving of babies in the slums. When a baby living in a slum has parents who were moral and wholesome the Court would not consent to commit that baby to a Babies Home.The only practical solution was to lift the whole family out and place it in a decent home, and then demolish the slum they left.[2]

The Unsuspected Slums

The plunge into depression, especially severe in Melbourne's inner city, demonstrated that a more comprehensive approach to poverty was needed. As well, Barnett, ever the enthusiast for self-improvement, had enrolled at Melbourne University, studying as a mature age student under Professor Douglas Copland in the Faculty of Commerce. Barnett's thesis on the economics of slums was published as *The Unsuspected Slums* in 1933. It was based on a study of families involved with the inner suburban Fitzroy Methodist Mission and revealed Barnett's continuing concern at the relation between "slum mindedness" and poor housing. There was also, however, a growing recognition of the structural causes of poor housing, especially on the influence of unemployment and casual employment on the poverty and vulnerability of families.

In the mid-1930s Barnett's Slum Study Group represented the main focus for social reform and housing professional groups in Melbourne and was an important reform coalition in the slum abolition campaign. The group met in Barnett's office and discussed the latest books and reports, mostly from Britain, on slum abolition. The Group included representatives of the Brotherhood of St Laurence, the Town and Country Planning Association, the Melbourne Ladies' Benevolent Society, the YMCA and YWCA, and the Jewish Philanthropic Association. Barnett also gained the support of Keith Murdoch and the Melbourne mass circulation afternoon paper, *The Herald*, for the slum abolition campaign.

As a result of this pressure, the Victorian Premier appointed Barnett to a Housing Investigation and Slum Abolition Board (HISAB). The Report of this Board in 1936 was a pioneering piece of social research in a country which had relied on Royal Commissions and public service reports as a basis for legislation. The HISAB Report was based on research on households in inner city areas of Melbourne identified as "slum pockets". The research was initiated by Barnett and drew on his MA thesis.

The HSIAB Report was used to build support for the establishment of a public housing authority. This was a radical recommendation given that the State government had no role in housing regulation and provision and had no desire to undertake one. The Board's recommendation reflected Barnett's priorities and his belief in the positive and protective role that governments should play in society. It was a recommendation that had to be fought for; there was

little support for such an authority within the State government while the Trades Hall Council and the Australian Labor Party favoured housing schemes run through the State Bank.

The Report reflected Barnett's concern at the slums and suburbs dichotomy in Melbourne. It compared social conditions in the inner suburbs with those in middle class suburbia, especially in terms of differences in income, infant mortality and juvenile crime. It recognised the fundamental importance of unemployment and casual employment in explaining poor housing as well as the role of absentee landlords in lack of maintenance and the charging of high rents to powerless residents. Despite later developments in social science research, the Report remains as an important source of information on inner city living conditions in the 1930s and one of the most significant and influential social surveys in Australian history.

Barnett at the Housing Commission

The link in the evolution of Barnett's thought through the 1930s was his belief that all children had a right to a sound and healthy home environment. He developed the Babies' Home "rescue and adopt model" to one of the total relocation of the slum family to a healthy, well-designed living environment and also planned for the re-revelopment of the old slum neighbourhoods. These were the aims of the Housing Commission of Victoria (HCV) established in 1938, with Barnett as deputy chairman. The early work of the Commission involved the rehousing of families in garden city environments and building of inner city estates. The work of the Commission was innovative in terms of dwelling design and site planning. Some of Melbourne's best architects and planners worked for the HCV in this period.[3]

Barnett's ideas on low-income housing were further developed as a result of his experience with the HCV. He moved from his early views on slum reclamation and the re-housing of families in garden city environments to the building of large scale housing estates. Despite some adverse experiences with the HCV showcase estate at Garden City in Port Melbourne in terms of resident satisfaction, Barnett remained convinced that the development of well-designed suburbs of low-income housing was the ultimate solution to slum housing.

From 1941, Barnett became increasingly involved in changing the HCV from a slum reclamation authority to an estate developer. The HCV was responsible for the planning and building of estates related to industrial development in the outer northern and western suburbs of Melbourne and in regional Victoria. The Commission pioneered the large scale prefabrication of housing in the post-war period, especially concrete housing, which was used to build villa houses and walk-up flats on the new estates. By the end of the war, the HCV had emerged as a major urban planning and housing authority.

Figure 1. Frederick Oswald Barrett. (Ecumenical Housing Inc)

The new order

Barnett's ideas influenced post-war ideas of housing and planning. He actively promoted the HCV as a model for other State governments and the Commonwealth, which was turning its attention to the problems of inner city housing and solutions to the anticipated post-war housing shortage.

The HCV was the most advanced and experienced of the State housing authorities and had carried out the most extensive of the pre-war housing projects. Walter Bunning, executive officer of the Commonwealth Housing Commission which was established in 1943 to investigate the housing needs of post-war Australia, thought the HCV had "carried out the best and most extensive of the pre-war projects in its demolition and building campaign". He believed the practice of the HCV in buying large areas of land near industrial employment, subdividing and building under large contracts and adjusting rent to tenants' incomes, was the way to go in the post-war period.[4] The Victorian housing legislation and experience was an important contribution to the federal body's deliberations and recommendations.

Barnett's *Housing the Australian Nation* (1942), written with W.O. Burt, a fellow HCV commissioner, set out the achievements of the HCV and promoted it as a model.[5] His *We Must Go On: A Study of Planned Reconstruction and Housing* (1944) with Burt and Frank Heath, was a call for centralised planning of economic development, urban infrastructure and housing and argued for strong central planning not only to create pleasant living and working environments in the post-war era but to ensure a more equal and fair society. Barnett made a significant contribution to the post-war debate through these books, produced at the height of war-time restrictions by what for any other author would seen an unusual combination: the Left Book Club and the Methodist Book Depot.[6]

In Australia post-war reconstruction had a rather different agenda than in Europe, where it was closely related to the rebuilding of cities horribly destroyed by war. Post-war planning was equated with aspirations to improve the Australian standard of living. The reconstructionists believed that this objective could be achieved through: the centralisation and coordination of planning; the decentralisation of housing and industry; and neighbourhood planning.

These reconstructionist objectives were the basis of all Barnett's publications in the 1940s. *The Poverty of the People of Australia* (1944), written with A.G. Pearson, advocated the establishment of a Central Planning Commission that would oversee the nationalisation of industry and land, and guarantee a living wage for all. The book attacked the capitalist system arguing that "only the establishment of a classless society based on the principle of cooperation and goodwill will enable us to have life in its fullest and highest sense". *We Must Go On* advocated a more moderate Commonwealth Planning Authority to which State Planning Authorities and Regional Committees would be responsible.

We Must Go On was described by the planner Sidney Luker as "an inspiring book".[7] The authors argued that town planning should deal with more than maps, vistas, lay-out and architecture. Modern planning must be related to social and economic development and have as its main priority human beings and their welfare. The book included chapters on economic planning, planning for social services and financing reconstruction. The book concluded with an extensive bibliography and recommendations for a regional, State and national planning structure.

At the State level, Barnett envisaged a high degree of cooperation between Victoria's statutory infrastructure authorities; he was instrumental in the early post-war period in the establishment of a Central Planning Authority (CPA) representing these bodies and chaired by the Minister for State Development. The CPA assisted the HCV in developing housing estates related to industry in the metropolitan area and regional Victoria. The largest project undertaken by the infrastructure authorities was the building of large housing estates in the Latrobe Valley related to the development by the State Electricity Commission (SECV) of new power stations and the expansion of brown-coal mining. The HCV and SECV joined in 1946 "to explore the possibilities of developing the region on a planned basis".

The Latrobe Valley plan was to be based on the American model of making the primary school the centre of neighbourhood units with no house more than half a mile distant from the school.[8] Barnett believed that neighbourhood units should be built around "the three Cs": church, culture and commerce. He argued that they would promote national efficiency in the post-war period especially by providing a planned environment essential for the development of harmonious family life. In the urgent rush to meet the need for post-war housing, schools and community centres were not built on HCV estates. Nor were the ecumenical churches, envisaged by Barnett as fundamental to community development and an expression of the desire of the denominations to work together to establish the Kingdom of God. Large mass-produced housing estates were a far cry from the plans for neighbourhood units in *We Must Go On*.

So how much other 'modern planning' as advocated in *We Must Go On* was achieved? The Commonwealth State Housing Agreement of 1945 enabled the Commonwealth to influence housing policy through negotiating grants to the States but was a far cry from the centralised planning authority envisaged by the reconstructionists.[9] In Victoria, the Central Planning Authority had demonstrated the value of infrastructure coordination but by 1946 it had ceased to be an effective body as old rivalries re-surfaced at the end of the war. Nor was the considerable decentralisation of housing and industry in Victoria in the 1940s accompanied by the regional planning structure envisaged. Barnett and Heath were naive in terms of their expectations that State and local governments would accept transfers of power and massive re-organisation. Indeed in 1945, the Victorian government removed planning powers from the HCV and established a Town and Country Planning Board as an advisory planning body. Without resources and enforcement powers, this Board failed to be an

effective planning body and in 1947 the task of preparing and implementing a metropolitan plan was handed over to another infrastructure authority the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works.

The backlash

Even before the war ended, the political tide was turning against the reconstructionists. In *We Must Go On*, Barnett and Heath answered criticisms of their policies as Fascist plans:

> Our purpose is just the opposite. The State must make the necessary provision to enable each citizen to fulfil his or her own peculiar individual talents to the uttermost ... In fact, to plan to develop every citizen to his highest will bring not only happiness to the individual, but greater prosperity and contentment to the community as a whole. In finding his own salvation each individual becomes a fully developed personality and with all its citizens so developed a nation becomes truly great.[10]

Such arguments could not counter the rising demand for private rather than communal control of productive resources. The backlash against the controls of the war years and the pent-up demand for consumer goods as the nation recovered undermined the plans for the 'new social order'.[11] As Barnett wrote in *We Must Go On*, "we realise that new plans and laws however commendable will not of themselves build a new order ... the slow poison of a greedy materialism will ultimately wreck the grand purpose of the best plans".

In 1948 Barnett resigned from the HCV when it was clear that the conservative State government of the time would not renew his appointment as a commissioner: the reason given was his alleged association with groups sympathetic to the Communist Party. Barnett described himself as a socialist, but "not because of Karl Marx, but because of Jesus Christ" and the Methodist journal, the Spectator, supported him against such "undemocratic" attacks. Nevertheless, the attacks took their toll on Barnett's reputation and business. Now in his sixties, he felt bitterly the recriminations of the cold-war period. As he noted in his memoirs:

> Even now people say 'Well he mightn't be a commo but he's a fellow traveller — he's a socialist at any rate'. If you're interested in the poor and a fair thing all round, you're a commo. It should be said of you, 'Oh, he's a Christian'.[12]

His bitterness did not cause him to withdraw from the interests which had dominated twenty years of his life. He continued his involvement with the MBH and child care and as an interested commentator on housing and urban development issues. He remained a leading Methodist layman and continued to challenge the church "to step into the maelstrom" and take on the politcal and social justice issues of the day from which he himself had been thrust aside.

Conclusion

Barnett has been criticised as a radical communist and as an agent of social control. The inconsistency of many of his ideas — some enlightened for the time and others insensitive and manipulative — make it difficult to develop a critique. Nevertheless, the range of Barnett's interests and achievements make him a unique and important figure in Australian housing and planning history.

Barnett made a significant and important contribution to the debate about planning and housing in the period of post-war reconstruction. He argued for a larger vision at time when planning in Australian cities was at best rudimentary. His insistence on the importance of strategic planning, of coordinating housing and urban development with economic and infrastructure planning and of cooperation between levels of government, still needs to be heeded in Australian planning.

He also made an important contribution in emphasising the social goals of planning and in his focus on communities. Barnett's own career had mirrored the shift away from an Australian progressivism and he was increasingly concerned at the narrow technical emphasis that was associated with planning, warning of the danger "that experts may get so obsessed with the technicalities of planning, that they forget that the main object of planning is to enable the ordinary person to live a happier and fuller life ... The first aim of planning should be to secure social justice for every man, woman and child."[13]

NOTES

1. F.O. Barnett, 'Is it Safe to Adopt a Baby?', 1949, Methodist Babies' Home Collection, Melbourne.
2. F.O. Barnett, 'I Remember', typescript, 1965?.
3. R. Howe,(ed.), *New Houses for Old: Fifty Years of Public Housing in Victoria, 1938-1988*, Melbourne, Ministry of Housing and Construction, 1988
4. W. Bunning, 'The Housing Problem in Australia', in *The Housing Problem in Australia*, Sydney, Angus and Robertson, 1947, p.5.
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9. P. Troy and C. Lloyd, *The Commonwealth Housing Commission and a National Housing Policy*, Urban Research Unit, Australian National University, 1981.
10. F.O. Barnett, W.O. Burt and F. Heath, *We Must Go On: A Study of Planned Reconstruction and Housing*, Melbourne, The Book Depot, 1944, p.10.
11. D.B. Copland, 'The Change-Over to Peace', in D.A.S. Campbell, (ed), *Post War Reconstruction in Australia*, Sydney, Australasian Publishing Co., 1944, p.122.
12. Barnett, "I Remember".
13. F.O. Barnett, 'The Flesh and Blood Aspects of Planning', *Twentieth Century*, March 1948, p.83.

E. F. BORRIE AND THE 1954 MASTER PLAN FOR MELBOURNE

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The Victorian Parliament passed legislation giving the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works power to prepare a Master Plan for Melbourne in 1949. The Board of Works was one of the few broadly representative metropolitan-wide bodies in a city where local government was fragmented into scores of independent municipalities. It had been formed in 1891 to operate Melbourne's water supply and sewerage systems, consequently it had the all-important power to levy taxes or charges to finance its activities.[1] Geoffrey Hutton, regular writer on planning issues in Melbourne's *Argus* newspaper, could only raise very qualified enthusiasm for the legislation. "The State", he wrote:

> has edged its way into planning like a swimmer taking a first dip of spring — first a toe, then a foot, then an ankle. Today, it would be fair to say that we are up to our knees in it, but no more.[2]

It would also be fair to say that it was E. F. Borrie, the man chosen by the Board of Works to prepare the plan, who plunged Melbourne fully into the water.

Victoria lagged behind much of Australia in planning matters in the 1940s. Pressure from the federal government during the war had produced legislation but little action. After the shelving of the Metropolitan Town Planning Commission's visionary plan of 1929[3] as the nation slid into deep depression, public enthusiasm for planning in Victoria had waned. It took the success of war-time planning in Britain and widespread coverage of post-war developments elsewhere to spark a revival of interest. This was soon given a sharper edge by Melbourne's experience of rapid, sprawling post-war growth. Furthermore Sydney, the traditional rival, had its Cumberland County Plan by 1948.

Part of the reason for inaction had been disagreements about what sort of body should exercise planning powers. Melbourne's fragmented municipal government and deep political enmities had frustrated all previous efforts. Progress became possible in the late 1940s because heightened public interest coincided with a period when the Board of Works was riding particularly high in public esteem. It had been recently reformed to include most of the newer outer suburbs, and could claim to be widely representative for the first time in several decades. The relaxed, open leadership of its chairman John Jessop also allayed many of the fears of sectional interests. Few municipal councils had availed themselves of the planning powers granted to them in 1944, and far from feeling their sovereignty was threatened by the Board at this stage, they mostly welcomed the chance to hand over the job to someone else. It is still true to say, however, that the Board was chosen largely because *something* had to be done and the Board was the only credible option. Again Hutton captured the mixed mood of hope and pragmatism that prevailed at the time. He found it:

> hard to get excited about the Board of Works, but [on the other hand] ...not so hard to get excited about an authority which could bring order into the growth of a vast area of Melbourne, preserving its best features from ruin, developing new ones, and planning for the future in terms of good living which would produce concrete results for every householder in every suburb.[4]

Some were concerned that the Board, as an engineering-based body, was not an appropriate choice as a planning authority, but with no more than a handful of planners throughout Australia, this was not a helpful observation. The Board was in an expansionist mood and eager to rise to the challenge.

From an international field of forty-eight applicants the Board chose as its chief planner, an internal candidate, E. F. Borrie, the fifty-five year old chief engineer of sewerage. Borrie (Fig. 1) had joined the Board in 1924 to oversee the establishment of the new department of main drains. Within five years he was promoted to the position of chief engineer of sewerage. In 1941 he had been seconded to the Allied Works Council as Director of Engineering for three years and travelled extensively throughout Australia in this capacity. On his return to the Board of Works he immediately turned his attention to the amplification of the sewerage system, which was stretched to its absolute limits, and to the problems of planning for post-war growth. He was principally concerned to estimate the future demand for water and sewerage services, but two reports prepared by Borrie in 1944 and 1948 on Melbourne's likely population growth and its spatial distribution, provided some of the basic data necessary for any town planning exercise.[5]

Borrie's personal interest in town planning had been developing since before the war. During an overseas trip in 1937 to study sewerage systems, he began to take an interest in city planning more generally. He was particularly impressed by Los Angeles, believing it shared similar conditions and planning challenges to Melbourne. It was this broadening focus that tempted Borrie to apply for the position of chief planner, even though he knew it would be a demanding task for a man of his age. He also perhaps yearned for a new challenge to tackle at the end of his career. Just as there had been grumblings about an engineering body being given planning powers, so there were complaints that an engineer had been appointed chief planner. The Board had faced a choice between professional planning training and local knowledge. Sixty years previously, deference to overseas expertise had brought a prominent English engineer, James Mansergh, to plan Melbourne's sewerage system. Inevitably, Mansergh had relied heavily on the knowledge and assistance of local engineers to prepare

Figure 1. Edwin Fullerton Borrie.

his plan. Ultimately, the system that was built departed very little from that already prepared by the Board's future chief engineer, William Thwaites, but Mansergh continues to get the greater part of the credit.[6] It was also the case in 1950 that any overseas appointment would have to rely heavily on Borrie.

The Board was clearly swayed by arguments such as those put forward by the Victorian Institute of Architects. Borrie would be in "the unique position of knowing the working of local government administration, which is undoubtedly the basic requirement for the success of any town-planning scheme".[7] Borrie himself was confident that he possessed broad knowledge and expertise in a number of critical aspects of planning. More significantly, he stressed that it was "not a job for one man or one profession". He would simply be "the leader of the team".[8] Ultimately that team included an architect, an economist, a surveyor and a sociologist. Although Borrie undertook a course in statistics to extend his skills, he considered "common sense and judgement the main qualifications for a good town planner".[9] Hugh Stretton, an influential intellectual, later described him loftily as one of a rather rare breed "an engineer capable of intelligent thought about social matters".[10]

The Master Plan encompassed land within a fifteen mile radius of the city centre as well as some additional areas to take account of Melbourne's lop-sided growth. The Plan was to be financed with a one-off levy of a halfpenny in the pound, a very tight budget indeed. Because most of the planning positions were only offered on a temporary basis they proved difficult to fill and the commencement of the work was delayed for many months. Eventually a team of about thirty people was assembled and they spent several years "ascertaining the facts" about Melbourne. Hundreds of maps charted existing patterns of land use and volumes of statistics were collected. Where there was no existing data on what were considered to be important questions, the planners were innovative in generating their own. G. J. O'Connor, the economist and sociologist on the team brought in the Gallop Poll Organisation to distribute a questionnaire to over 4000 households seeking "to ascertain the habits, desires, and needs of the people".[11] More than 1200 businesses were also surveyed. Professional bodies, engineers, architects and surveyors, were encouraged to set up consultative committees to comment on proposals. There was close liaison with other public authorities in so far as this was possible. The underlying assumption was that "the accurate interpretation of people's wants ... is fundamental to any successful planning scheme in a democratic community such as ours".[12]

The Plan was ready by August 1953 (Fig. 2). It had a number of basic aims, of which perhaps the most important were: the limitation of the urban area through the use of a rural zone with a minimum sub-division size of 2.5 acres;[13] a rationalisation of future development through a system of land-use zoning, and the reservation of land for future public purposes such as schools, hospitals, and roads. The primary aim of the zoning system was orderly future development. It was not

Figure 2. E.F. Borrie presents the Master Plan to the Commissioners of the Board of Works.

intended to disrupt existing use. The rural zone, popularly known as the "green belt", was placed more or less at the limits of current settlement. Industrial and residential zones were designated with an eye to keeping journey to work times as short as possible and five district business centres were identified at Footscray, Moorabbin, Preston, Box Hill and Dandenong.

At the outset, Borrie had stated his commitment to a flexible plan that could be modified to meet unforeseen circumstances and that his intention was to follow trends rather than lead them; he was convinced that "economic and social factors will determine the overall size, character and needs of any Australian city. A planning scheme can merely provide for such needs in the best possible manner, and, so long as people are free to choose where and how they live, this must continue to be so".[14] In truth there was no legislative basis for doing anything beyond this and it is doubtful if the community was prepared for any major disruption of existing patterns of development.

Even so, there was much in the plan that was radical for the time. Borrie's admiration for American cities led him to accept rather earlier than many that the car would have to be accommodated and that this would radically alter the shape and design of the city. At the same time, his dislike of the ageing inner-suburban housing stock and his belief that central city employment would expand markedly, led him to argue strongly for its replacement with greater density and high-rise housing. His proposal for the redevelopment of the symbolic and administrative heart of the city involved virtually razing eight central city blocks. A ring road would encircle the area and link up with a network of radiating freeways. Finally, Borrie built into his plan a generous formula for the provision of parks, playing fields and other forms of open space. In this he was responding to a powerful and distinctly romantic element in the public pressure for planning, but, like all the more radical elements of the plan, if it involved finance or legislation, implementation would be fraught with difficulty.

The basic themes of Borrie's plan were efficiency and practicality. Borrie was at pains to dampen unreal expectations. The belief that town planning was "merely the creation of the city beautiful was mistaken". It was true that planning would lead to a more beautiful city, but its main purpose was to make the city more efficient, a place in which it would be easier to earn a living and "a better place to enjoy the rewards of labor". "A city must be efficient to prosper". Planning would ensure this by taking stock of present and future needs, developing a "blueprint" based on them, and then enforce orderly development so that "when the time comes works which will be needed to keep the city functioning efficiently can be carried out at the lowest possible cost".[15] This was music to the ears of dwellers in the newer suburbs wading through stagnant water in "heartbreak streets", waiting years for the sewer to arrive, suffering poor water pressure in summer and electricity "brownouts" in winter. Of course, the Plan, however efficient in theory, would not give them these things if the finance for public works was not

forthcoming, but that knowledge would only come with hindsight.

Borrie knew only too well that preparing the Plan was just the beginning. He was conscious that its implementation would be unusually difficult, not only because of the vagueness of the legislation — "little more than window dressing", as the architect, Robin Boyd, aptly described it[16] — but more especially because responsibility for implementation was divided between the Board and the municipalities. This meant, as Borrie explained to the Second Australian Planning Congress in 1952, that "acceptance of the Plan and the possibilities for effective implementation" would largely depend "on the reaction of the general public". Since he also believed that the public press was "probably the most powerful means of influencing public opinion and the best medium for bringing the full facts before the public in their proper perspective",[17] he cultivated the media carefully from the very beginning. Although by nature a reserved man, Borrie adopted the role of publicist with enthusiasm.

It was Borrie's skill in selling his plan to the public generally, and municipal councils in particular, that ensured its adoption and the appointment of the Board as a continuing planning authority for the metropolitan area. The wide consultation involved in creating the Plan had already established much goodwill and commitment. When it was released to the media, the response was uniformly supportive. All the daily papers devoted pages to it and editorials called on the Government to introduce enabling legislation immediately. The *Age* headlines for 11 November 1953 catch the flavour: "Ending a Legacy of Neglect"; "Vision of Progress in City Plan"; "Orderly Expansion"; "Bold Traffic Schemes". Other commentators, such as Robin Boyd, and Brian Lewis, Professor of Architecture at Melbourne University, provided detailed and favourable analysis. Borrie had even gone so far as to encourage international planners, such as Charles Bennett, Los Angeles Director of Planning, to visit Melbourne and comment favourably on planning and the plan. The public pressure which had given the Board the task in 1949 was successfully revived to ensure that this plan did not join the 1929 plan on a dusty shelf.

There was, however, at least one influential voice raised in caution against the wave of enthusiasm for the Plan which is worth noting because it foreshadowed so precisely much subsequent criticism. Joseph Burke, Professor of Fine Arts at Melbourne University, worried about the undue influence of the "car parking school of planning", which, while masquerading as "realist" consisted largely of "efficient transport and sewerage disposal". Such planners, he argued:

> misled the public in representing planning as a short-term investment which will pay its way in 10 years. This is at best a subterfuge for whittling away whatever in the plan will not pay its way in 10 years and thereby wrecking its most vital proposals.

Burke was not impressed with the Los Angeles model, a city he believed had already delivered up its soul to car parks and freeways. He was far more impressed by Brisbane Mayor, Sir Raymond Chandler's "inspired" leadership in securing a "green belt" for that city. All the same, he was advocating more, not less, "vision" and he wholeheartedly endorsed the pursuit of public enthusiasm because "good planning is terrifically expensive, and can only succeed if there is a wave of idealistic public opinion behind it".[18]

The climax of Borrie's campaign was the public display of the Plan in the State Library (Fig. 3). A four page news sheet, published to coincide with the exhibition, exhorted people to:

> Make sure your children see the Planning Scheme Exhibition. It is a preview of the Melbourne of the Future, the Melbourne they will know if the plan is adopted.[19]

It was an undoubted public relations success. People flocked to look at the maps and scale models: 1700 on the opening day alone, and more than 30,000 in total. Borrie and his team followed this up with extensive personal appearances at meetings all over the metropolitan area. It was a gruelling schedule, sometimes five nights a week, even for such a notoriously hard worker as Borrie, but it bore dividends. All the political parties had serious reservations about the whole issue, but the groundswell of public support was irresistible.

The Board was made a continuing planning authority to implement the plan and an Interim Development Order to enforce the plan throughout the metropolitan area came into force on 1 March 1955. The plan itself would be subject to a long process of refinement as objections were lodged and Melburnians gradually came to understand the details of planning action or lack of it in their particular area, but the days of totally unplanned urban growth were over.[20] The state had been pushed out into the deep waters of planning with Borrie's Master Plan for a life jacket.

Figure 3. Schoolgirls inspect the Master Plan displayed in the State Library of Victoria, November 1954.

NOTES

1. T. Dingle and C. Rasmussen, *Vital Connections: Melbourne and its Board of Works 1891-1991*, Melbourne, McPhee Gribble, 1991.
2. *Argus*, 17 August 1949.
3. Metropolitan Town Planning Commission, *Plan of General Development Melbourne*, Government Printer, Melbourne, 1929.
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5. *The Future Population of Melbourne*, Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works, 1944, and *The Future Urban Boundaries of Melbourne and the Distribution of Population therein*, Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works, 1948.
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7. *Age*, 25 May 1950.
8. *Sun*, 24 May 1950.
9. *Herald*, 12 December 1964.
10. H. Stretton, *Ideas for Australian Cities*, Melbourne, Georgian House, 2nd ed., 1975, p.208.
11. The questionnaire is reproduced in Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works, *Melbourne Metropolitan Planning Scheme 1954: Surveys and Analysis*, Melbourne, 1954.
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13. Later 5 acres.
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15. *Future Melbourne*, Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works, November 1953, p.1.
16. *Age*, 14 November 1953'
17. E.F. Borrie, 'MMPS: Administrative and Planning Problems', Paper presented to Second Australian Planning Congress, October 1952 (typescript), pp.2-5 and p.8.
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PETER HARRISON: THE EARLY CANBERRA YEARS

BARBARA NORMAN, CANBERRA

Peter Harrison (Fig. 1) often described himself as an "awkward bastard". Bob Lansdown, first secretary to the National Capital Development Commission (NCDC) recently said that he was right about the first, but not about the second. In fact, he was very much loved. However, it was this awkward temperament combined with his obvious professional expertise that made Harrison such an influence on the planning and development of Canberra.

Background

Harrison was born in Brisbane on 21 October 1918 and grew up in Rose Bay, Sydney. He qualified as an architect through night school at Sydney Technical College. During World War II, Harrison worked as a sergeant draftsman in the airforce and after being discharged at the end of the war, joined the Works and Services Branch of the Department of Interior as an Architect. However, in 1946 he moved to join the Cumberland County Council (the first metropolitan planning authority in Australia) as a draftsman to work for Sidney Luker (Chief Planner) and Rod Fraser (Chief Draftsman).

The early planning team at Cumberland County Council was a formidable group with Eric Willis (who was later, briefly, Premier of NSW), Ken Thomas, who founded TNT (Thomas Nationwide Transport) with two semi- trailers, and Bill Andrews, who later became Associate Commissioner and then Commissioner of the NCDC. It was during this period that the Cumberland County Council established the planning principles that were to underpin the metropolitan strategy for the city of Sydney. This included the use of a "green belt" and the notion of properly servicing rural lands prior to opening for development. Harrison regarded Rod Fraser , who became Chief Planner following the death of Sidney Luker, as the "intellectual backbone" of the Cumberland County Council and was greatly influenced by him.[1]

Peter Harrison left the Cumberland County Council in 1950 to work as a valuer for a group of building societies for twelve months, while undertaking a postgraduate diploma course in town planning under Denis Winston at the University of Sydney. During 1950, he became a part-time teaching fellow and was soon promoted to Senior Lecturer after completing his Diploma. Harrison regarded this as the "richest learning period of his life".[2]

Figure 1. Peter Firman Harrison.

While at Sydney University, Harrison organised a host of visiting lectures aquainting himself with many international scholars and accompanied Denis Winston on his tours of Australia. Winston was a major influence on Harrison in his early professional life.[3]

At this time, Harrison developed a keen interest in Walter Burley Griffin and his plan for Canberra. As secretary to the first congress of the Australian Planning Institute held in Canberra in 1951, where he initially met William Holford, he was exposed to critical international comment on the development of the National Capital. In his oral history, he reveals that he originally regarded Griffin's plan for Canberra as "totally incapable of realisation". Harrison relates that it was only after a visit to Leeton, that he experienced a "change of heart". In touring Leeton with Denis Winston, he recalls remarking to Winston that "this has been planned, these residential areas, by someone who knew what they were doing". Then, to an unknowing Harrison, Winston replied that this person was Walter Burley Griffin.[4]

Following this, Harrison began to regularly visit Canberra to examine Griffin's plan on the ground, where he reached the conclusion that Griffin "obviously knew what he was doing".[5] It was during one of these trips that he followed up a call received by Trevor Gibson, the Chief Planner for Department of the Interior, about some plans that had been found. These plans were Griffin's original drawings.

Brave new world

After thirty years of apparent neglect by various Ministers, the development of the national capital was again receiving political attention. The mid 1950s was a time of growth and prosperity and with that came a renewed interest in the planning and building of Canberra.

On 3 November 1954, a Liberal Senator for New South Wales, John McCallum, asked the Senate to appoint a Select Committee "to inquire into and report upon the development of Canberra in relation to the original plan and subsequent modifications and matters incidental thereto". During this inquiry, Harrison made his first mark on Canberra. He helped write the submission from the Australian Planning Institute, developed by a committee comprising Walter Bunning, Roderick Fraser, and Geoffrey Faithfull. As a result of this submission by the NSW Division of the Royal Australian Planning Institute, the Senate Committee reconvened to hear further evidence on the development of Canberra.

Arriving on an 'Auster' aircraft at Canberra, having missed the commercial flight from Sydney's Kingsford-Smith airport, Harrison proceeded to give his evidence. In the Senate Committee's record of evidence, Harrison was critical of the lack of attention given to Griffin's main vistas and stated that "Griffin's scheme depends on landscape architecture as a setting for the public buildings, like jewels in a landscape. It is not an architectural composition but a landscape composition". The Committee concurred with Harrison on the issue of landscape, but differed on the question of architecture: "It does not believe, however, that architecture is unimportant".[6]

The Senate Committee concluded, in part, that "Canberra's development has not been worthy of a National Capital" and that "to relieve this a body should be established with power to take the necessary initiative and to actually make decisions".[7] Prime Minister Robert Gordon Menzies, who by then had developed a strong personal commitment to the development of the National Capital, invited Sir William Holford to examine Canberra's problems. Harrison visited Holford in London during 1957 while on sabbatical leave and discussed his draft report. Holford concluded that Canberra's alternatives were either:

> a) to remain a divided city, with the floodplain as an open wedge between the federal town on the south bank and the municipality on the north — a third element in the group being the industrial town of Queanbeyan just outside the Capital Territory on the east, or
>
> b) to become a unified city, metropolitan in character if not in size, a cultural and administrative centre and a national capital.[8]

Between the years 1956 and 1958, three far reaching decisions were made to: establish a Parliamentary Joint Committee on the ACT; shift the Defence headquarters from Melbourne to Canberra; establish a National Capital Development Commission to "plan, develop and construct the city of Canberra as the national capital of the Commonwealth".

Behind all these major initiatives affecting Canberra's future was Prime Minister Menzies. There is no doubt that his strong political support was critical to the subsequent rapid development of a national capital.

Building the national capital

The NCDC was established on 29 August 1957. The Commission was quickly staffed with leading administrators and professionals eager to fulfil the task ahead. John Overall was appointed Commisioner, with the Associate Commissioner positions being filled by Grenfell Ruddock (architect/planner) and Bill Andrews (engineer). Soon after Bob Lansdown was appointed secretary/manager. Harrison was then approached to join the Commission as Chief Planner, due to his expertise on Griffin and Canberra. Harrison had already visited the NCDC in mid 1958 to provide planning advice when, on his own volition, he prepared an initial scheme for 250,000 people. This was subsequently presented to the October meeting of the National Capital Planning Committee of the NCDC for consideration. Finally, Harrison joined the NCDC in late January 1959 after much negotiation revolving around whether his professional independence was going to be respected, something he fiercely protected.

While the initial focus of the NCDC was on the so-called "Parliamentary Triangle" and responded to Holford's report, it was not long before the Commission realised that the original Griffin plan for 75,000 would not be adequate and so the next task was to develop a revised plan. As Chief Planner, Harrison immediately began to undertake a series of studies for the growth of Canberra. These studies showed the choice lay between:

> the intensification of densities at existing population centres coupled with the extension of the urban fringe areas in the traditional growth pattern of Australian cities; or preserving the open character of the city by limiting the existing population area and forming new areas or residential districts on the surrounding rural areas.[9]

The Commission adopted the latter and, during 1959, produced an outline development plan for 250,000. This plan, under Harrison's guidance, emphasised "garden city", landscape and topography. Importantly, it identified planning principles to be followed in extending the city and established the "neighbourhood" concept for the design of future residential areas. Residential areas were to be planned as comparatively self contained new towns in the open valleys, with crests of hills and ridges to be kept free of development. Major traffic routes would avoid passing through residential areas.[10]

The chief proponents of these ideas were Harrison and the principal outline planner, Keith Storey. The details of the plan for 250,000 were published by the NCDC in 1965 in a report entitled *The Future Canberra*. As Gordon Stephenson has said in a tribute to Harrison: "By the time the Harrison plan for a city of 250,000 people was adopted in 1965, Lake Burley Griffin was in place and for the first time Canberra was coherent." Harrison strongly defended these principles and never more than in the Outline Development Plan for the first major district of Woden. His battles with the Commission and the National Capital Planning Committee are well documented in John Gilchrist's work on Woden-Weston New Town. After nearly twelve months Harrison told the Commission that the "scheme as presented was the best he could offer".[11]

This dispute between Harrison and members of the Committee was finally resolved by Commissioner Overall in favour of Harrison, and the planning and development of Woden was underway.

By 1964-65, Harrison was again focussing on the long term planning of Canberra. In a paper he delivered to a Royal Australian Planning Institute congress he argued that "an attempt should be made to find a 'pattern of growth' rather than a precise plan" and he proposed as one method a series of districts essentially rectilinear rather than radial, an arrangement under which "the city centre and Parliamentary zone need not suffer the pressures of an unchecked build up of central employment of the kind which choked other cities".[12]

Harrison continued to advocate a dispersed pattern of development as opposed to aggregation and delivered a paper on New Towns along these lines at the joint Conference of American and Canadian Town Planning Associations held in Toronto in 1965. During this trip he met Alan Vorhees, an eminent transport planner who specialised in long term transportation studies. An earlier study in 1963, the Canberra Area Transportation Study, had already alerted Harrison to the need for a strategy review, but he had difficulty in

getting at the Commission to accept the need for a longer term plan. Finally, during 1966, the NCDC commissioned Alan Vorhees and Associates to prepare a long term land use transport study for Canberra.

The transport plan that developed out of this work formed the basis of what became known as the "Y" plan. This has provided the strategic framework for the planning of Canberra until this day. It defined "national areas", accommodated growth by a linear system of new towns, established major employment and retail centres in each of the towns and the central area and created a significant open space system. Details of the "Y" plan were later published in *Tomorrow's Canberra* (1970).

Harrison resigned from the NCDC at the end of 1967, two years after Menzies had retired. During the period 1958 to 1968, Canberra had been transformed from a country town to a National Capital with the population growing from 38,000 to 90,000. The key elements of the Parliamentary Triangle were in place, including Lake Burley Griffin, the National Library and the Australian National University, and the development of the new towns was well under way, in accordance with a long term strategic plan. The support of Menzies and the skills of people like Sir John Overall, Bob Lansdown and the chief engineers were essential to these achievements.

Peter Harrison's main contribution, as NCDC Chief Planner, was his ability to take Griffin's original plan and translate those principles into a visionary strategic metropolitan plan that still guides development today. Harrison contributed to all three aspects of urban planning, design and management. In many ways, it was his "ability to transcend these disciplinary boundaries that made him such a successful Chief Planner".[13]

Between 1968 and 1972, the NCDC saw the departure of Harrison to the Urban Research Unit at the Australian National University, the senior engineers, Peter Funda and Clive Price, and finally, in 1972, the departure of Sir John Overall and Bob Lansdown to the National Urban and Regional Development Authority. Harrison spent the next twelve years at the Urban Research Unit which gave him the opportunity to study other planning issues without leaving Canberra. During this period Harrison wrote several articles, completed his master's thesis on Walter Burley Griffin (awarded by the University of New South Wales in 1970) and advised many scholars and authors on planning matters. In 1974, he was awarded the Luker Memorial Medal for services to Town and Regional Planning and in 1982 was made a member of the Order of Australia (AM) for services to Town Planning. He was also elevated to Life Fellow of the Royal Australian Planning Institute and the Royal Australian Institute of Architects.

Reflections

The focus of this paper is on Harrison's early years in Canberra. However, Harrison's contribution and influence on Canberra did not cease then. He spent the rest of his life defending what he believed was in the best interests of the long term development of the national capital. He became very disillusioned with the planning of Canberra and the planning profession during the 1980s. His principal concerns in relation to Canberra were the management of the leasehold system, the "overdevelopment" of Civic, which he believed was contrary to the metropolitan plan of 1984, and the departure from neighbourhood principles in new residential development. During his last years, he became involved in major court cases where he was challenging the appropriateness of the planning decisions. For Harrison, these cases were very demanding and exhausting.

In a letter to Gordon Stephenson in mid 1990, he referred to an "environmental assessment" by the newly created Interim Territory Planning Authority as a "shattering disgraceful document, exemplifying everything that has gone wrong with our planning professionals — looking through the wrong end of a telescope with a blind eye. I have to demolish it. It will take some time." Later that year, after a cold tiring winter, exhausted from both illness and ceaseless campaigning against what he saw as totally inadequate planning decisions, he again wrote to Stephenson on 15 October. He began his letter, "I'm afraid I've run out of steam. After a pretty miserable winter, Spring has finally arrived in Canberra. The dogwood outside my window has an exuberant display of blossom."[14] Peter Harrison died two weeks later on 30 October 1990.

Harrison contributed to and influenced the development of Canberra. As its Chief Planner between 1958 and 1968, he championed Griffin's plan for Canberra and translated the principles of "garden city", landscape and neighbourhood into a metropolitan plan. By all accounts he was an awkward person, but a principled one who provided a necessary "constant" against which many had to argue through rapidly changing times. As stated by Sparke: "Behind the colloquial bluntness for which he was well known, Harrison hid a planning idealist and visionary who cared quite passionately about the National Capital and had, mixed up with it an almost poetical intuition about Griffin's grand design."

NOTES

My thanks to John Gilchrist, Sheila Harrison, Mark Peel and Patrick Troy for their comments.

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REPORTS

The Third Symposium of the Planning History Study Group (South Africa)

John Muller, University of Witwatersrand

The Symposium of the Planning History Study Group held at the University of Pretoria in late October 1994, provided a gratifying indication of the growing interest in the study of planning history in South Africa. The Symposium attracted over 30 papers (the previous gatherings in 1992 and 1993 having produced 12 and 22 papers respectively) and included a number of contributions from abroad. The programme was both broad and deep, ranging from sub-continental to suburban studies and from social movements to planning decision making.

The opening session included a message from Gordon Cherry, President of the IPHS, which was read to delegates. The keynote address, by Ilan Troen of the Ben Gurion University of the Negev, analysed the Zionist experience of the transplantation and adaption of European planning ideas. The topic of the transference of planning approaches was carried forward in other papers, including those of Robert Home of the University of East London in England who spoke on British Colonialism and the South African landscape, and of local authors who addressed such issues as the extent of British influence on South African new towns and the impact of Howard's thinking on Garden Cities in South Africa.

In keeping with the general pattern of planning history conferences, a fair number of papers revolved around the growth processes of cities, towns and townships. Cecilia Davison of the University of Zimbabwe provided an analysis of the evolutionary development of Harare and Bulowayo, and Sola Olufemi of Lagos spoke on the morphology of historic Nigerian towns. Local contributions included studies of place-making in towns of Namibia, 19th century town-building practices in the Cape, conservation in Kimberley and the apartheid-inflicted townships of Marabastad in Pretoria and Inanda, near Durban.

Predictably, perhaps, the impact of the apartheid era infiltrated the proceedings in various ways. The issue was addressed directly in a paper on the involvement of planning in apartheid between 1959-1976 and in an other on the language of planning since the 1930s, while presentations on urban social movements and Black homeland development funding placed the ideology in a broader socio-political framework.

The historical dimension of regional planning was reflected in a paper by Derek Gunby of Bulowayo and in others on the Natal Town and Regional Planning Commission, on colonisation in the Orange Free State and on the evolutionary development of a central place system in the Transvaal. A wider geographical context was presented in papers on urbanism in North and South Africa, and on the pre-colonial African towns. Professional concerns were accommodated in presentations on the changing occupational profile of planners and the history of decision making in local planning.

The proceedings of the symposium thus extended across a broad front — perhaps a little too broad, although general opinion inclined to view that an open non-thematic approach was appropriate at this stage in the development of the planning history movement in South Africa. The next symposium will take place in two years, at which time it is likely that some emphasis will be placed on past personalities and previous planning processes.

Xosa development near East London, South Africa, c.1960.

REPORTS

Wye College Centenary
Gordon E. Cherry, University of Birmingham

Wye, Kent, is "England's smallest University town with fine buildings and a profound sense of history; amply providing for residents' needs; enjoying a dry climate, beautiful countryside, and nestling beneath the orchard-rich slopes of the Downs amid such neighbouring settlements as Boughton Aluph, Old Wives Lees and Pett Bottom..." From this bucolic description it is hard to imagine such a settlement providing an institution crucial to the course of countyside planning in Britain this century. But it is indeed the case, and an excellent and lavishly illustrated College centenary history reminds us of the contribution to teaching and research in agriculture and rural affairs conducted there over the last 100 years. (Stewart Richards, *Wye College and its World: a centenary history*, Wye College Press, Ashford, 1994.)

The institution began life as the College of St Gregory and St Martin, established in 1447 by John Kempe, a late medieval political prelate who later became Archbishop of Canterbury. After a chequered history it became a charity school but it closed in 1889 when it ran into financial difficulties. The College land and buildings were purchased by Kent and Surrey County Councils in 1892; two years later it was reborn as the South-Eastern Agricultural College.

What follows is a fascinating story in which many of the great figures in 20th century agriculture and related matters bestride the stage of Wye College. We can read Richard's narrative with profit: what might have been a self-indulgent account of a small and at times inward-looking community, is in fact a window to a world where planning historians all too infrequently gaze — rural land use change and the agricultural industry. Those with an urban orientation begin the century aptly enough with Letchworth and Hampstead as portents of things to come, and the legislation of 1909 which introduced Town Planning Schemes. But there is a different perspective: the setting up of the Development Commission in 1910 gets a much more infrequent mention, but it signalled a new intention by the state to play a significant part in supporting agriculture and influencing rural affairs, from which much was to follow.

The subsequent part played by Wye College in the vicissitudes of national policy has been considerable, and at some points the history of Wye almost becomes a history of agricultural development and countryside planning. After World War I the rural areas were marginalized from public policy, but after the inter-war years, during World War II and immediately afterwards, the countryside moved centre stage. Later, with science and technology reapplied to agriculture, a whole raft of farming and ecological issues formed a new agenda for rural planning. At Wye, the rise of agricultural economics from a position where it had been a very junior partner to biology and chemistry, to one where it became a dominant influence, tells of this transformation graphically. The career of Gerald Wibberley, which brought together the study of agriculture, planning and rural affairs, was of profound significance for British Planning.

The centenary is marked by another publication, also profusely illustrated: *The Natural History of a Country Estate*, edited by T.A. Watt and G.P. Chapman. The Wye College Estate comprises substantial areas of semi-natural habitats, formal gardens and a variety of farm and horticultural enterprises. This provides a context for the interaction between agriculture and nature conservation, ecology and the environment; an ancient setting for the study of contemporary change which has clearly been inspirational.

PLANNING HISTORY

BULLETIN OF THE INTERNATIONAL PLANNING HISTORY SOCIETY

NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

The prime aim of *Planning History* is to increase awareness of developments and ideas in planning history in all parts of the world. In pursuit of this, contributions (in English) are invited from members and non-members alike for any section of *Planning History*. Non-native English speakers, please do not worry if your English is not perfect. The editor will be happy to help improve its readability and comprehension, but unfortunately cannot undertake translations.

The text for PH is prepared by using MacWrite II and the journal is designed in Pagemaker v.4.2. Contributions on disk compatible with this software are encouraged along with accompanying hard copy.

ARTICLES

These should be in the range of 2,000-3,000 words. They may be on any topic within the general remit of IPHS and may well reflect work in progress. Illustrations should be supplied as Xerox copies for line drawings or as good quality black and white photographs where there are half tones. Articles should normally be referenced with superscript numbers and a full reference list at the end.

OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS

Other types of contribution are also very welcome. Research reports should not be more than 2,000 words. They need not be referenced, but any relevant publications should be listed at the end. Illustrations where provided should conform to the above notes. Similar short pieces on important source materials, aspects of planning history practice (e.g. conservation) are also encouraged. Abstracts of relevant publications originally published in a language other than English are requested. They should follow the format in this issue.

NOTICES OF CURRENT EVENTS

These are welcome from any part of the world. Organisers of events should, however, bear in mind that PH is only published three times a year, normally in April, August and December. Please try to ensure that Calls for Papers etc. are notified sufficiently in advance for inclusion. Later inserts are possible, at the time of dispatch, though sufficient copies, folded as required, must be supplied by the event organiser. Nothing larger than a single A4 sheet will be accepted. Every effort will be made to include such inserted news material without cost. However, the Editor reserves the right to charge for such material at normal advertising rates.

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Planning History has a circulation of approximately 400, reaching most of the world's active planning historians, mainly in academic institutions. Publishers in particular will find it a useful way of publicising new books. Advertisements can be carried either printed within the magazine or as inserts. Sufficient copies of inserts must be supplied in good time for despatch. Advertisements printed in the magazine must be supplied camera ready and respect normal deadline times. The usual charge is £50 for up to a single A4 sheet or page. Multiple page inserts will be accepted pro rata.

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- endeavours to foster the study of planning history. It seeks to advance scholarship in the fields of history, planning and the environment, particularly focussing on industrial and post-industrial cities. In pursuit of these aims its interests are worldwide.

- welcomes members from both academic disciplines and the professions of the built environment. Membership of the Society is both multi-disciplinary and practice orientated.

- encourages and gives support to networks, which may be interest based, region- or nation-based, working in the fields of planning history.

- provides services for members: publishing a journal, promoting conferences, and providing an international framework for informal individual member contact.

- invites national organisations, whose work is relevant to IPHS, to affiliate status.

- administers its affairs through an elected Council and Management Board.

The Society was inaugurated in January 1993 as a successor body to the Planning History Society, founded in 1974. Its membership is drawn from several disciplines: planning, architecture, economic and social history, geography, sociology, politics and related fields. Membership is open to all who have a working interest in planning history. The Society for American City and Regional Planning History (SACRPH) and the Urban History Association (UHA) are American affiliates of IPHS.

Members of IPHS elect a governing council every two years. In turn the Council elects an executive Board of Management, complemented by representatives of SACRPH and UHA. The President chairs the Board and Council.

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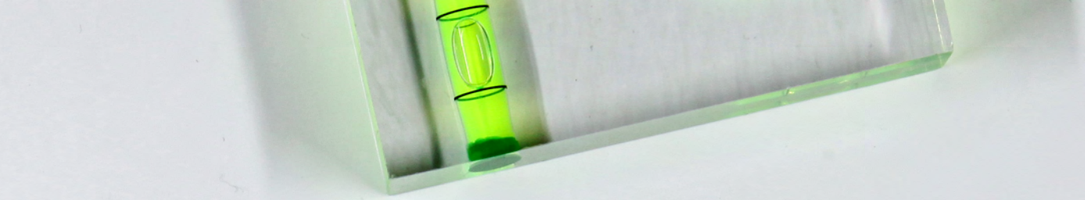

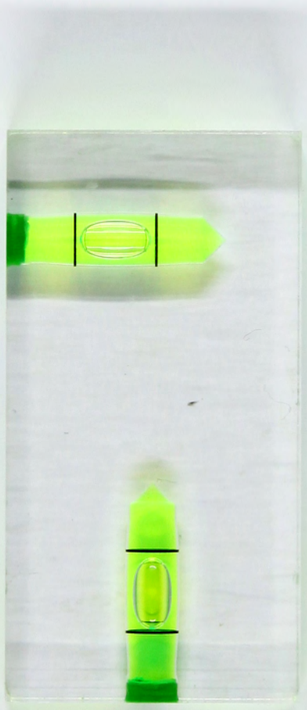


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BULLETIN OF THE INTERNATIONAL PLANNING HISTORY SOCIETY

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Compared with the 1929 Plan, the political and ideological colour of the 1949 Plan was light. The former nationalist belief that Shanghai would hold sway over the Far East (and even the world) was not manifested directly in form and space. The planners produced an embryonic form of modern planning in Shanghai, with western democratic ideas instead of the bureaucratic tradition. The City Plan of Greater Shanghai (1949) represents a great step forward in Chinese urban planning.

Why, under the same Nationalist government were the two plans so different? It was a period of social, economic and political fluctuation. The ideological backgrounds of the two plans were completely different from each other. The conditions of technical preparation in the two phases were also distinct. In the 1940s, many more students studied abroad. They brought back the modern conceptions of urban planning, and encouraged their absorption in China.

Conclusions

The years from 1927 to 1949 witnessed theoretical and practical progress in China's urban planning.The tree of modern western planning theories was transplanted into Chinese soil. A wealth of experience of planning practice had been accumulated in this period, and that experience was still valid after 1949. In the socialist society, the City Plan of Greater Shanghai at least provided one pattern for Shanghai's urban modernisation in the light of up-to-date planning conceptions and techniques.

Although the Greater Shanghai Plan and the City Plan of Greater Shanghai were both drawn up in

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FURTHER READING

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BRITISH LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND HOUSE BUILDING DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR

PAUL TAYLOR, WESTMINSTER COLLEGE, OXFORD, U.K.

Local Government already had functions to fulfil as a result of the pre-war Housing Acts, but the war itself affected the operation of these and, in turn, brought on new requirements during the conflict, as well as raising questions of post-war development. Therefore, the relationship between centre and localities on the eve of war, during the conflict itself and in planning for the future need to be looked at to see if any change is discernible and to judge the success or failure of the local authorities in the playing-out of their role. Whether local government was responding to, or initiating, housing development and the extent to which perceptions and reality were being altered by the impact of war are important issues.

Housing had developed as an area of some importance during the inter-war years, starting with the cry of 'Homes for Heroes' at the end of World War One. It was a subject which aroused much popular concern and interest, with its attendant electoral implications both nationally and locally. One of the key issues revolved around questions of who was to build the houses, along with the extent, if any, of public subsidy, and the question of slum clearance. The Housing and Town Planning Act of 1919 had required authorities to survey housing needs and to build council housed and offered government subsidies to cover the cost, but recession brought the end of the subsidies in 1922.[1] This did not mean, however, the ending of the principles of local-central government partnership, involving subsidies upon which it was based: 'These same principles were to remain the backbone of fresh legislation when the Chamberlain Housing Act of 1923 and the Wheatley Housing Act of 1924 were formulated.'[2]

Under the Chamberlain Act, local authorities could only use subsidies if they could convince the Minister of Health that they could build houses better than private enterprise, and in the six years of the Act's life 363,000 houses were privately constructed and only 78,000 by Councils.[3] The Labour Government of 1924, however, offered a new round of subsidies specifically aimed at local authorities to encourage them to build houses with controlled rents. These were to be further subsidised out of the rates. By the time of its demise in 1933, the Wheatley Act had resulted in around 520,000 new houses, mainly council built.[4] In 1930 the Greenwood Act gave subsidies for slum clearance, while the Housing Acts of 1935 and 1936 laid down standards of room densities in households and, in the case of the latter, obliged councils to give preference to people in overcrowded dwellings. By 1938 the contribution which local authorities were required to make from the rates in respect of flats and cottages for slum clearance and the relief of overcrowding was expected be half the Exchequer contribution.[5]

By 1939 there were twelve and a half million houses in Britain, and 1.3 million of these were Council dwellings, making up approximately 11% of the total housing stock.[6] The inter-war years had seen a marked preponderance of private as opposed to public house building, but the contribution of the latter was not insignificant, particularly after 1931, when the Conservative dominated National Government laid stress on council building to replace slum housing and ease overcrowding. Local authority concentration in this field led to them building 400,000 houses for this purpose between 1935 and 1939. Between 1919 and 1939 the total government contribution to housing, through subsidies, was £212,000,000.[7]

Between the wars, the Conservatives generally preferred private, owner-occupied and rented properties, and were naturally encouraged to so do by speculative builders. Nevertheless, by 1935 housing was taking up 10% of the current expenditure and over a third of the capital expenditure of the local authorities in England and Wales,[8] making it a significant factor on the local political agenda. Even with this outlay it could still prove difficult for many housing authorities to find sufficient land within their own boundaries and many local authorities failed to carry out their full programmes.[9] The local authorities were often reticent in their commitments and reluctant to indulge in wide-ranging programmes because of the political consequences of unacceptably high rate rises. The pressures not to spend excessively were, therefore, strong and the straight-jacket of government finance left the authorities to some extent confined in their activities.

There was already, therefore, a history of central and local government involvement in housing matters by 1939. This has led to the view that "the extent of local authority provision came to be largely determined by the level of central government subsidy available."[10] It has been claimed that central government manipulated the subsidy system to get its way.[11] Certainly the Housing Act of 1938 reduced the subsidy to local authorities for housing and, despite the Local Government Act of 1933 giving them powers to borrow for up to 80 years for housing projects, the need for ministerial sanction for loans remained and Whitehall could hold an inquiry into any loan application that was unusual or controversial.[12] Despite this, mere passivity by local authorities was not the order of the day. They still had powers to initiate, plan and execute schemes such as slum clearance[13] within government obligations and guidelines, and many did so.

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