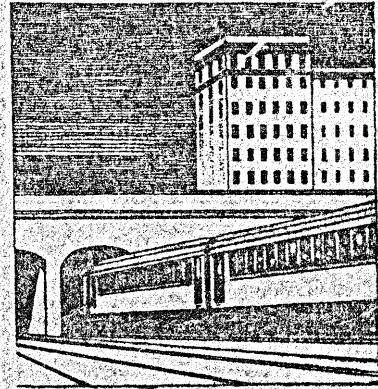
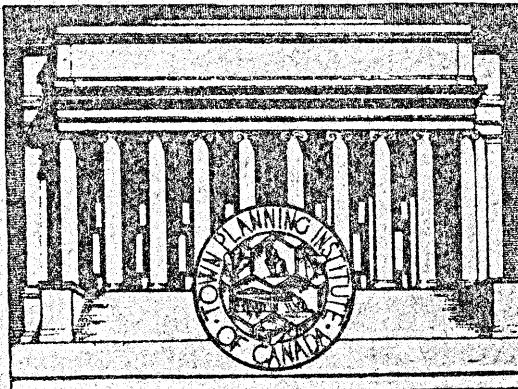


TOWN PLANNING



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Editorial Committee:—Alfred Buckley, M.A., Editor, University Club, Ottawa, Canada; Noulan Cauchon, City Hall, Ottawa; J. M. Kitchen, Secretary-Treasurer, City Hall, Ottawa, Canada.

TOWN PLANNING

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Town planning may be defined as the scientific and orderly disposition of land and buildings in use and development with a view to obviating congestion and securing economic and social efficiency, health and well-being in urban and rural communities.

GREATER LONDON REGIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE IV.

A GREEN BELT AROUND LONDON

Careful readers of the report of the Greater London Regional Planning Committee will not fail to note the development of a powerful philosophy of planning, which promises, by its inherent reasonableness and economic soundness, to convince all who have a genuine concern for public welfare of the necessity of new and more scientific methods for controlling the uses of land, and, second, to modify and ultimately overcome that stolid opposition to intelligent planning which has nothing to support it stronger or wiser than inherited custom and narrow concepts of private and individual advantage to be obtained by the jungle methods of urban and suburban development commonly in vogue.

Consider for example the two principles laid down in the plea for regional treatment of large metropolitan areas, where suburban disorders repeat themselves without end, and everywhere, under present conditions of development—subdivision of land for all kinds of mixed uses; no concerted provision for recreation; no co-ordinated plan for road paving, sidewalks, water supplies and sewerage, with eventual incorporation of such suburbs into the larger city and the taxation of city dwellers for the cost of reconstructing these planless suburbs.

The report states:

- (c) That were the whole of the lands around a town in one ownership, it would be to the interest of the owner, in order to realize the full value of his estate, to make just such a plan as that which the town planner seeks to prepare for the city region, and that this remains equally true where there are many owners, if those owners are regarded collectively.
- (d) That for this reason, the transference of building value, resulting from planning or from restrictions forming part of a planning scheme does not justify claims upon the planning authority for compensation, but is a matter for adjustment among the owners; that such adjustments should be organized by the planning authority, which

might be authorized to make a contribution to the compensation fund, to ease the adjustments and provide a margin for covering genuine differences of view as to the amounts payable in certain cases.

It will be seen that the (c) section leaves for the moment the general plea, that the planning of a regional area would be an immense contribution to public welfare, and is directed specifically to land-owners as a collective body of citizens. The arguments is that the land-owners as a body would benefit by a regional plan, as well as the whole community. Section (d) is an answer to what many will consider as an insuperable difficulty in planning a large area where land is in possession of a number of owners. The proposed way out is a pooling of ownerships with a view to equitable redistribution of values as exemplified in the German Lex Adickes (set forth in our June number) and successfully carried out in a limited way in the re-plotting schemes in Vancouver. Section (d) is a statement of belief that, where necessary for planning purposes, re-plotting, pooling and redistribution of lands are entirely practical, and that without cost to the planning authority beyond a contribution for administrative purposes. Otherwise values could be adjusted among owners, with the planning authority as organizer and referee. These principles are developed in connection with a memorandum on open spaces wherein it is proposed to secure a green belt around the London region, for playing fields and open spaces covering 206 square miles, at the cost of approximately £9,792,000.

CITY EXPANSION

The time seems to have come when the social scientist has to answer the question whether large cities shall go on expanding indefinitely by sporadic building development with extremely little provision for recreation needs or for that contact with country life which is essential to body and spirit. The British Minister of Health called together a Greater London Regional Planning Committee and demanded from them an answer to the question whether it is possible to direct the growth of London to particular spots

and areas by the establishment of deliberately planned new towns, satellite towns, and whether London should be provided with an agricultural belt to constitute a dividing line between Greater London and the satellite towns beyond this area. Dr. Raymond Unwin's memorandum on open spaces is an answer to the Minister's query. It is eminently worth studying by all who see the immense social and economic reaches of the planning philosophy.

In the London region there are housed between 8 and 9,000,000 people, on an area of 2,000 square miles, constituting a network of vested interests. The planning or replanning of such an area might well present an insoluble problem, were it not for the fact that a planning mind has been created in London by 30 years of experiment and education in planning philosophy. As the report shows, legislation is still inadequate to meet the needs of the situation but the legislative authorities are slowly yielding to public pressure and the London report will probably be largely influential in convincing the authorities that the great aims of the Committee cannot be realized until larger powers are given.

OPEN SPACES

The basic problem is to secure a better distribution of population and industry throughout the region, but intimately connected with this is the problem of preserving an adequate proportion of land free from building development from which to provide playing fields, garden allotments, and open spaces of all kinds. The reality of this need will be recognized by every resident in or visitor to Ottawa who sees every available playing space crowded with players throughout the summer months. Any public representative who cannot see the health and social economy of playing fields for the young life of a town or city ought to be replaced by the electors at the earliest opportunity. It is significant that the London report deals first with this matter as a problem of special urgency.

Dr. Unwin is under no illusion concerning the difficulty of his green belt proposal. All land is assumed to be potential building land when any question is raised of securing it for public enjoyment, though owners of large estates who desire open spaces for their own enjoyment often deny such premise with considerable animation. But the transference of land from private owners to public uses raises at once the question of compensation, except in the cases of gift by socially minded people. Dr. Unwin's business is first to state the social need for open spaces and playing fields, and then to consider how these spaces may be acquired. Already statistical work has been done with regard to the first phase of the problem. A survey of open spaces and playing fields in London has already been compiled by the London County Council, though it deals with but 19 percent of the London region under survey by the Regional

Committee. The National Playing Fields Association also reported in 1927 in an endeavour to indicate the amount of playing space required for every 1,000 of the population. It was estimated that out of every 1,000 persons between the ages of 10 and 40, 500 would be potential players of games. Of these 500 it was thought there might be 150 who did not care to play games and perhaps 150 who could afford to pay for their accommodation in privately provided grounds. This would leave 200 persons for whom publicly provided grounds would be necessary. It was thought that 7 acres of ground would be the total space needed for every 1,000 of the population. It is stated that at the First Garden City, private playing clubs and public playing fields occupy 14.5 acres for every 1,000 of the population. Public playgrounds occupy 3.1 acres per 1,000 of the population and there is a strong local demand for extended facilities. The National Playing Fields Association suggest that all local authorities should provide a minimum of 5 acres of public open space for every 1,000 of the population. The London County Council suggests 1-8 of the land, in the somewhat crowded and limited area dealt with, should be reserved for public open spaces. At present the playing space in the public parks of London amounts to 1-4, whereas 4-5 is regarded as a necessity. Dr. Unwin thinks that playing space should be treated as a separate problem and not confused with public parks. He argues for 7 acres of playing fields for every 1,000 of the population in the Greater London region and 1-10 of the region for open spaces or parks.

REGIONAL IDEA

It is obvious that the opportunities for supplying both kinds of need are least in the centre and increase outward. It will be necessary to concentrate valuable resources on the acquisition of playing fields in the centre rings and rely on the outer rings for the larger open spaces. And here the regional idea emerges. Adjoining municipalities will be asked to co-operate in providing open spaces for the city's need and the old-time suburban isolation of management and rigidity of municipal boundaries should undergo some needed transformation. In the London region it is estimated that an average of about 4 square miles each year has been taken up by building operations. Dr. Unwin estimates that the process of absorption of the suburbs, with only 5 houses to the acre and 4 persons per house, would represent an additional population of 12,800,000 in the next 200 years. The extent of open space still required for the present population of the area covered by the London County Council Report, if all provided within this area, would occupy 2-3 of the land still remaining undeveloped. Such location of open space is clearly impracticable. The open space must be sought in the wider region dealt with in the Com-

mittee's report, or the congestion of London will go on indefinitely. The population of London is increasing at the rate of about 66,000 persons per annum. On the basis taken this represents a new demand each year for 460 acres for playing fields. The plan of Greater London would need to reserve 63 square miles for playing fields, additional to those now in use, and about 143 square miles for parks and open spaces. But the area to be planned covers 1,846 square miles and the population to be satisfied nearly 9,000,000. The object would be to secure such areas, not for immediate development as playing fields, but to insure their reservation for public uses. If these lands had to be purchased to secure their reservation most of them could be used as at present or put to uses to secure an income. It is pointed out that the present sporadic development often spoils 10 times the amount of land it uses and some means should be found to reserve lands for public uses, while it is possible.

QUESTION OF COMPENSATION

In the possible acquisition of the required lands Dr. Unwin has to face the awkward question of possible claims for compensation for what are called "prospective building values". If large tracts of rural land could be bought on the basis of current revenue the problem of acquisition would not be difficult; but the progress of regional planning is liable to be held up by claims for compensation on account of prospective building values. The regional authorities would neither wish to acquire these fictitious values nor destroy them, but taking the region as a whole, would locate them rightly in relation to necessary open lands. This claim of determining the uses of land in the interests of public welfare has been already further established in law, both in Europe and on the continent, by zoning. Regional planning will need to be endowed by law with a similar right before it can make much headway. The traditional claim that the land owner has a right to do what he likes with his own, irrespective of public welfare, had broken down before the necessities of urban life, even before zoning was established and the legal principle that ultimately all land belongs to the Crown that is, to the nation, and that the private owner is owner only by the sufferance of the nation needs to be further emphasized in order to place regional planning on a working basis. The right of expropriation in cities proves that this is the real law. All the same, "where land is taken over from the present owners for public and the revenue is extinguished or transferred from those owners, it is clear that they must be compensated for the loss of income; and there is but small room for difference of view as to the approp-

riate amount" if present revenue only is concerned. But when fancy and speculative values are attached to rural lands required for public enjoyment, on the ground that they may acquire building values, claims for compensation on these grounds are very difficult to assess. And they may be wholly unreasonable and predatory. The expectation of development may take place elsewhere and may not take place for many years. And even if the prospect of building development is good, the owners of such lands have done nothing to earn the values they expect to reap.

Moreover the limits of prospective building land by the designation of certain areas as open land for public enjoyment would enhance the value of the remainder and then, too, public improvements in the shape of recreation facilities and parks would also enhance the value of the remaining lands. This fact is already recognized in the assessments for taxation. The reservations of land as open space does not tend to arrest building operations but rather to quicken and stimulate them. As we have already quoted, Dr. Unwin points out that if the whole of the land around a town were in one ownership, the owner would, as the best means of realizing the full value of his estate, make just such a plan as the town planner seeks to prepare for the region. He would allocate certain areas for building and would not allow sporadic development to take place anywhere. He would allot certain areas for public uses to establish the attractiveness of the whole.

Thus Dr. Unwin establishes the principle that the reservation of land from building in the areas under consideration and the creation of attractive open spaces will not diminish and may even increase the total increment accruing to the whole body of owners.

But what of the individual owners who may find that their lands are expropriated and their prospective values annihilated?

Preparatory to an answer it is remarked that the regional authority does not acquire these speculative building values because it does not need them; it requires the land for open spaces in the interest of public health and social well-being. Further, by designating certain areas as building sites, and reserving others from building operations, it is increasing the value of the building sites and of those lands already in use as building sites. The regional authority should not be asked to pay twice over for the land it needs and should not be asked to pay for what it does not need at all—that is, prospective building values.

LEX ADICKES—POOLING OF LANDS

The way of compensation for the individual owners whose land is expropriated is in the pooling of

land values—according to the German method known as the Lex Adickes, by means of which those who lose by the provision of open spaces are compensated by those who gain. The British Minister of Health informed the Regional deputation that he doubted if owners would agree to this. But the increasing use of this method in Germany—where the mentality of land-owners may be supposed to be much the same as in England—seems to prove that a little social education, and a little insistence on public rights by means of new legislation, have overcome this difficulty.

Planning is being held up because land owners are asking to be paid twice over for the disturbance in their ownerships. They are accepting increments in values as a consequence of public improvements and are demanding compensation for the prospective values of the land appropriated—which might never be realized by normal processes of development or might be indefinitely delayed. Dr. Unwin thinks that the German way out of the difficulty is just. It does not bleed the community or do injustice to the land-owners. It effects a redistribution of values and benefits, claimed as rights under the present system of land-ownership but really created by the community. The German method concedes land-value increments to the land-owners—to a reasonable degree, but not to an unreasonable degree. A little training in social justice is making the method widely acceptable in Germany. And it seems to be the only way out of a difficulty that otherwise makes regional planning so terribly expensive that rapid progress is impossible.

The cogency of Dr. Unwin's argument will be seen in the following excerpt:

"It is desirable to make the proposition here put forward quite clear. There is no question of taking owners' land without proper payment; nor is there involved any proposal to deprive owners of the increment in value which accrues to land when it is subject to building development. Proposals having such effect would raise entirely separate questions not involved in this discussion. The position is simply this: Town and Regional Planning Authorities, if they are to be able to distribute development so as to maintain a proper relation between building and open space, must be in a position to define the areas on which development may take place, and equally the areas which are to be reserved from such development. Seeing that such reservation does not diminish the total amount of building increment, it should not call for compensation from the ratepayer for loss of increment.

"Compensation for the loss of privilege the extinction of which automatically benefits the remaining holders, occurred in somewhat similar circumstances in connection with the reduction of the number of public houses. In this case the remaining houses

contribute according to their value to a fund out of which the compensation is paid to those whose licenses are abolished. Similar arrangements might be made in connection with land from which the prospect of possible building development is excluded, in the general interest of the public and to promote good town development."

"If the course here advocated be accepted in principle, the particular method which could most conveniently be adopted for making the adjustment between owners who gain and those who lose by any redistribution, is a matter as to which it is desirable that the owners and their advisers should be given considerable choice as they are mainly interested. If those who have the duty to award the compensation, have to allocate a like amount in benefit, there is every inducement to be fair to both parties.

"While it is claimed that the transference of building value, resulting from planning or from restrictions forming part of a planning scheme, does not justify claims for compensation from the planning authority, but is a matter for adjustment among the owners, it is recognised that the authority on account of their action should assume responsibility to see that such adjustment is made, and must therefore be empowered to approve any voluntary arrangement, and in default of an adequate agreed scheme, to make and enforce a suitable adjustment to be approved by the Minister of Health.

"As the gain will generally at least balance the loss, theoretical justice does not seem to call for any contribution from the planning authority. It might be well, however, that they should be authorised to make a contribution to the fund to remove any sense of hardship, to ease the adjustments, and to provide a margin for covering genuine differences of view as to the various amounts. The circumstances will vary very greatly. There may be cases in which all the land affected will be in the hands of a few owners, who might prefer to settle the matter themselves. There will be others involving interests so numerous that the planning authority will have to undertake the adjustment after fully consulting the owners. For this reason it is desirable that elasticity as to method should be maintained."

COST

Dr. Unwin has a valuable section on the estimated cost of the "Green Belt". A diagram shows three imaginary belts of open space at distances of 10, 14 and 20 miles from Charing Cross, each half a mile wide.

We quote his concluding paragraph:

"This estimate, however inexact the assumptions on which it is based might prove to be, sufficiently represents the position to demonstrate the importance of finding some means of adjusting prospective building value, other than by purchase of the lands at their market price. For if the scheme here proposed

could be adopted, not only would nearly half the total sum required (£4,832,000) be found by the owners of other land to which this value would be transferred, but as to the other part (£4,960,000), immediate purchase would be required only for such land as might be needed to meet present realised need and demand for open space or playing fields. If, however, present purchase of these lands should be deemed expedient, then the revenues derivable from them would nearly suffice to finance the transaction, seeing that they would be purchased at prices based on those revenues. In either case the proposals here made, if they could be adopted, would enable the 206 square miles of land to be promptly protected from sporadic building, and reserved permanently to meet the needs of London for playing fields, pleasure

resorts and other purposes, and would enable a green girdle of open spaces to be bound around this great City at an immediate cost, which, spread over the area, would be but little burden. The existence of this girdle would enable future needs for playing fields and open spaces of all kinds to be promptly met, as the demand became effective, at the cost of paying only the value of the revenue derived from the land."

It must be said that necessary condensation of Dr. Unwin's argument for presentation here has somewhat bruised its value. Students of the problem may secure a copy of the report by mail at the small cost of 5s. 6d. by writing to the publishers, Knapp, Drewett & Sons, 30 Victoria St., Westminster S. W. 1. London.

International Conference on Town Planning and Housing at Berlin

The extent to which town planning sociology has entered into the counsels of the nations of the world may be illustrated by some notes on the preparations for the Conference at Berlin next June.

At this conference something over thirty nations of the world will be represented. In recent years Canada has had no representation. The Town Planning Institute is not in a position to finance the attendance of delegates, and the governments, provincial and federal, have, so far, shown no disposition to send Canadian representatives to these important international congresses when held in Europe.

The International Executive has, however, devised a plan by which this country may have representation, so far as contributory papers are concerned, but the success of the plan will depend upon individual initiative on the part of the Canadian town planners.

The two main subjects of the conference will be:

- (a) The Abolition of Slums.
- (b) The Traffic Problem in relation to Town and Regional Planning.

The international executive is inviting Canadian town planners to prepare papers on these subjects, even though the authors may not be able to be present. The incentive to such voluntary labour, to busy men, would have to be measured by writers themselves. The desire to have Canadian thinking represented at such an important world conference may perhaps prove a sufficient incentive. Again, some of the higher motives that send men to serve their country in time of war are not unknown in town planning ranks. The emphasis of honour may yet come to be placed on those who do constructive thinking in the direction of a less barbaric civilization than is yet apprehended. The International Town Planning Congress has nothing to do with the rat-

ting of swords and may be driving quicker to a better world civilization even than the League of Nations—held so pathetically in leash by military megalomaniacs. Beyond these considerations, any contribution that is accepted as of sufficient value for international discussion will be printed months in advance of the conference for international circulation, in three languages.

The incentive to attend the conference will be obvious. The conference will be a liberal education in world thinking on housing and town planning problems. Delegates will be the beneficiaries of hospitalities and carefully-arranged provisions for their needs such as private tourists could not possibly expect.

The executive of the Canadian Town Planning Institute is therefore inviting Canadian town planners to contribute papers on the subjects noted, to be in the secretary's hands not later than November 5. It is possible that more than one paper on the different subjects will be accepted by the international executive, if the treatment be sufficiently diverse and valuable.

In the communication to our honorary secretary the organizing secretary of the Federation writes:

The papers should deal firstly with conditions and experiences in the country of the author and secondly with suggestions and opinions. Authors should keep strictly to the subject as outlined in the synopsis and should not deal with general aspects of housing and town planning.

The papers should contain about 3,000 words and should be typewritten in one of the congress languages, viz., English, French and German. A summary of about 400 words in one of the congress languages should accompany (or precede), the congress paper. This summary will be translated

by the Bureau of the Federation into two other languages.

Please send papers in DUPLICATE, summaries in TRIPLICATE.

This statement may be taken as an invitation to the Canadian membership generally to contribute Canadian papers. If papers are received by the secretary they will be at once transmitted to the organizing secretary of the Federation for valuation.

Synopses of instructions to authors are as follow:

THE ABOLITION OF SLUMS

"It is not proposed to deal with this subject merely from the point of view of removing people from bad houses and placing them in good ones. The slum problem has many aspects and can only be finally solved by a comprehensive policy. Groups of unhealthy houses or single unhealthy houses have to be demolished or made healthy. Areas that have been cleared of houses must be replanned. The evicted persons must be rehoused. Sanitary and housing laws must be put into force and town planning measures adopted so that the site may be used to the best advantage and recurrence of the evil avoided.

The study of the problem involves consideration of the methods already adopted or to be adopted in dealing with existing slums. For example, what is the procedure for declaring a house unfit for habitation and for ensuring its rehabilitation or demolition? What is the procedure for dealing with the three main types of slums, e.g., (a) areas where all the houses are beyond repair, (b) areas where some of the houses are beyond repair and some are in reasonable repair or could be put in condition, and (c) individual unhealthy houses in an otherwise good area? Is compensation to be paid in respect of the buildings demolished (a) where the property is itself unhealthy, or (b) where the property is sound but stands amidst slum property and it must be demolished to secure a complete scheme of reconstruction? If a local authority does the demolition can it expropriate the land and if so under what conditions as regards valuation, e.g., is it valued as land for housing or at the highest commercial value? What building or town planning restrictions may be imposed on the cleared area? To minimise compensation payable, is it reasonable to estimate the life of a property which itself is in good condition but is situated in a slum area? How far does rent restriction hinder the improvement of existing house property? What scope is there for private enterprise with reference to the abolition of slums? Small ownerships may hinder a comprehensive scheme of improvement; is it better to consolidate ownership by purchase by the municipality or is pooling and redistribution of ownership practicable in the case of built-upon land.

The replanning of the area, not only in relation

to the immediate neighbourhood but also in relation to the general town plan is also a question of the greatest importance. Then there is the problem of re-housing the evicted. Should they be re-housed on the same site or in another part of the town? And how far is it possible to synchronise demolition and re-housing? In what circumstances are cottages preferable and possible for re-housing?

The prevention of slums raises the question of the origin of slums. Is it the same in all kinds of towns, old and new, large and small? How far can prevention be effected by dealing with the question in its early stages, particularly in small towns and villages. What town planning and zoning measures are necessary for the prevention of slums? Would the zoning of residential areas, (a) to prevent their being used for commerce, (b) to secure that a reasonable proportion of each site is kept permanently free from buildings, help to ensure that houses are kept in habitable condition?"

THE TRAFFIC PROBLEM IN RELATION TO TOWN AND REGIONAL PLANNING

"Traffic in relation to planning has two main divisions (1) The planning of a town or region to prevent needless traffic, (2) The provision of the best facilities for necessary traffic. The latter has three aspects: national, regional and local.

Modern inventions have revolutionised methods of transport but instead of alleviating congestion have added to it. Many of our towns were built before these modern inventions were known and have therefore to be replanned for new conditions without losing their original character. Town extensions and new towns have also to be planned in accordance with these traffic conditions. This raises the question of which type of town development is most suitable for the present day, to meet the requirements of industry, commerce and social welfare. There is the method of (a) the highly centralised great towns such as London, Paris, Berlin, New York, or (b) the idea of the central town with development radiating from it, the "rays" of development being separated by open spaces, or (c) the idea of development by satellites, each satellite being a self-contained unit separated physically from the central town. A system of traffic and transport routes that is suitable for one type of development would not be suitable for another type.

There are four main kinds of traffic, viz. (1) Main line railways, (2) Suburban railways and tramways, (3) Omnibuses, motor vehicles and general road traffic, (4) Air transport. Consideration has to be given to the functions of each of the different methods of transport, their suitability for particular circumstances and the extent to which they can be co-ordinated. For example, how far can main line railways be economically utilised for outer-suburban services? Should suburban railways, 'buses and

trams follow approximately the same routes as main line railways? Should trams and omnibuses be utilised for long distance journeys, or should they act as feeders?

To what extent can air routes be defined, what are the requirements as to aerodromes and landing fields, their number, surroundings and access to them?

Water transport has not been included among the four main types of transport because it is usually a localised rather than a general problem but wherever it exists its connection with transport on land needs most careful consideration.

One detail in connection with roads is the extent to which main trunk roads should be kept solely for the use of long-distance motor traffic; building being forbidden on their frontages.

The object of the papers and discussion is to endeavour to arrive at a conspectus of the whole problem of traffic and transport in relation to town and regional development; to make clear what are the present conditions at certain important centres; how these present conditions have changed during the last 30 years; what increase of each kind of traffic is to be expected in the future; what will bring traffic into relation with the effective, healthy and pleasant functioning of human life."

THREE MONTHS EXHIBITION

The conference next June will not be confined to the mere presentation of papers or even to extensive discussion and publications of the papers. It will have the background of exhibition display, of unique and most valuable character, of international achievement in town planning and housing.

From May to August there will be a great Building Exhibition in the Berlin Exhibition grounds, which cover an area of about 50 acres.

The following statement has been issued to the members of the Federation throughout the world. The Canadian Town Planning Institute is a member of the Federation. Members of the Institute intending to be present are asked to advise the secretary, who will be glad to supply the necessary credentials.

INTERNATIONAL TOWN PLANNING AND HOUSING EXHIBITION

The Federation have accepted with much pleasure the invitation of the Magistrat of Berlin to hold the XIIIth Housing and Town Planning Congress in Berlin in June 1931.

From May to August 1931 there will be a great Building Exhibition in the well known Berlin Exhibition grounds, which occupy an area of about 50 acres. The total floor space of the various halls is 55,000 sq.m.

The Exhibition will be divided into the following five main parts:

Modern Construction Work (Bridges, Roads, Large Buildings etc.).

The Modern House.

Modern Building (Building materials and Methods, Carrying out building work, Mechanical appliances etc.).

Building and Construction for Agricultural Needs.

International Housing and Town Planning Exhibition.

The International Town Planning and Housing Exhibition will be in three sections. Two will consist of German housing and town planning exhibits, the third will be an International Section consisting of housing and town planning exhibits from countries outside of Germany. The Federation have accepted the invitation of the Exhibition Committee to co-operate with them in the collection of the exhibits for the International Section.

As far as possible the German exhibits will illustrate progress from 1900 to 1930, at it is during these last three decades that there has been such a welcome revolution in housing and town planning. It is proposed to regard 1900 as „Yesterday“, „belonging to history, and 1930 as „To-day“. By contrasting „Yesterday“ with „To-day“ it is hoped to evoke a vision of „Tomorrow“.

In the two German sections it is intended to show not merely a collection of plans and models of schemes already carried out but also to illustrate present day housing and town planning problems and how they are being dealt with. The Exhibition will be built up on the basis of a systematic treatment of the different subjects, each of which will be in the hands of the expert whose name appears in the programme. The greater part of the Exhibition will be devoted to what is being done at present and giving an indication of what should be done in the future.

As public welfare must necessarily be the guiding principle in dealing with housing and town planning and as the basis of urban development schemes is economic, all of the various aspects of these questions dealt with in the Exhibition may be grouped under the one heading "Town and Regional Development, Urban Economy and Public Welfare."

No definite programme will be issued for the International Section but it is hoped that the countries participating will contribute exhibits illustrating some of the characteristic features of their own housing and town planning schemes. It is also hoped that they will give special emphasis to the more difficult problems that confront them and that their exhibits will deal with subjects indicated in the German programme.

short-circuit the trade of the neighborhood. Business streets often were depressed. Chaotic conditions became unbearable in every great city. Private restrictions were the only recourse, and these were not usually employed to protect apartment, business or light industry districts. They often expired in fifteen or twenty years.

In 1913 Greater New York, after five years of preparatory work, let the contracts for the dual rapid-transit system. This was designed to distribute the population and relieve congestion. Five men, of whom George McAneny, then President of the Borough of Manhattan, was the leader, started the idea that building regulations might be invented that would supplement the purposes of the great rapid-transit plan by helping to distribute the population. In July, 1913, Mr. McAneny secured the appointment of a Heights of Building Commission, and one year later of a Commission on Building Districts and Restrictions. Those two city commissions during a period of three years developed the first comprehensive zoning plan of this country. It went into effect July 25, 1916, and remains today substantially the same as when passed.

Most lawyers and many prominent judges declared during the period of the preparation of the New York zoning ordinance that the courts would not uphold such an invasion of private property rights. Many property owners considered the whole effort to be merely a passing fancy, while others favored any legislation that would make a talking point for the sale of land and buildings during the slack period of war time. The situation was so precarious that the Zoning Committee was organized to keep the new law from the scrap-heap and to make the idea of comprehensive zoning known to other cities. It was feared that, if Greater New York was the only city to make this intimate use of the police power, the courts might annul zoning because it was not widely adopted. St. Louis, Newark and Yonkers were among the early cities to adopt zoning. But all was not smooth sailing, for zoning received severe court setbacks in Missouri, New Jersey, Illinois and Georgia. At one time it looked as if every state along the Atlantic from New Jersey to Alabama would declare against zoning.

The Court of Appeals of New York in the Lincoln Trust Co. case in 1920 upheld the zoning plan of the city, saying that the regulations so far as reasonable would be held by the courts to be within the scope of the police power. It is hard to realize today what relief and courage this decision brought to those who for seven years had worked to establish police power zoning.

After the Lincoln Trust decision, zoning began to spread even more rapidly than before, especially in the Middle West. The Department of Com-

merce under Secretary Hoover put out the standard zoning enabling act, which helped amazingly. But the hostile states became even more hostile. Then in 1926 came the great decision of the United States Supreme Court in the Euclid case, upholding comprehensive zoning all along the line. State after state reversed its position. New Jersey put itself in line by passing a constitutional amendment for zoning. Practically all the states adopted enabling acts. The last report of the Department of Commerce gives 874 zoned municipalities in the United States. Zoning has become almost as much a matter of course as a fire department or a public school system. The constitutionality of zoning is no longer questioned anywhere. Singularly enough it has become of age within the identical life span of *THE AMERICAN CITY*.

There are other articles dealing with such topics as municipal parks, recreation, highways, sewerage, water supply, smoke abatement, swimming pools and other factors in city planning and it is noteworthy that city planning, twenty years ago regarded as an intruder in the realm of city government tends more and more to be recognized as the master science to which other applied sciences are contributors. The writers of these articles report astonishing social progress with commendable dignity and restraint. They reveal an American Legion of thinkers and idealists with a patriotic intelligence not dependent upon military accoutrements making a better world for those other multitudes of men and women who must do the hard work of the world with little opportunity to modify its harshness and dullness and they raise the hope that sometime history will make less to-do about military victories and squabbles and play its searchlight on the makers of a better civilization.

For twenty-one years *The American City* has been writing this kind of history. In countries where successful and significant journalism sometimes receives national recognition we suppose the editor of *The American City* would henceforth be known as Sir Harold S. Buttenheim.

What we see in the introduction to the memorial number is the forecast of another twenty-one years programme. As follows:

"Great cities have existed in the civilized world for two thousand years and more, but the great cities of the past have been agglomerations. Today we are looking at our cities—and even our metropolitan regions—as institutional entities. They are regarded as having a natural history. It is now appreciated that to function properly they must be intelligently planned and organized. To this viewpoint the last two decades have made generous contribution.

Perhaps the most significant current movement, one belonging almost entirely to the period since this magazine was established, is the development of city

planning and its hand-maiden, zoning. No longer regarded as genteel interest in public esthetics, city and regional planning is seen to have a deep economic and social significance. Eight hundred and seventy-four cities, towns and villages have zoned their areas, and planning commissions are more or less busy in some seven hundred communities.

The science of municipal administration has emerged during this era. The council-manager plan of city government is the latest, if not the last word, in municipal organization. The trained administrator is replacing the ward boss's selections in city departments. Side by side with this emphasis on improved organization and technique have gone developments in public budgeting and auditing that hold the key not only to substantial economy, but to improved organization and efficiency.

With each passing year more is asked of our city governments. The last twenty-one years have been an era of new things. The automobile, the motion picture, the radio, and the airplane have brought many changes to American life. This period has been particularly dominated by the automobile, just as the next similar period is likely to be dominated by the airplane. The automobile, growing since 1909 from about 300,000 to 27,000,000 in registration, has brought effective demand for better street and highway paving. This is easier to clean, and great strides have been made in municipal housekeeping, including not only the collection of municipal wastes of all kinds, but their economical and sanitary disposal. Streets are also better lighted, so much so that many of our cities are likely soon to prohibit the automobile headlight on their well-illuminated thoroughfares. The motor vehicle has brought with it the parking problem and a distressing toll of accidents and death.

With the shorter work-day and work-week, and the continued migration from the farms to the cities, have come greater needs for public provision for outdoor play and for quiet communion with nature—needs in the meeting of which inspiring progress can be recorded. Growth and congestion of population have also brought to our fire and police departments increased problems which are being met with added efficiency and freedom from "politics." Another effect of our pyramiding populations has been the reaching out farther and farther for adequate water supplies, and greater attention to their proper purification and sterilization.

The cities of America have many tasks before them. City planning calls for bolder handling than has yet been attempted—with much greater emphasis on spaciousness of development and on departure from horse-drawn tradition in street and highway design, than has yet become general. Housing remains a challenge that few cities have had the courage to face. Public health is making steady advance but much remains to be done, while only the merest beginnings have been made in adequate

programs of street and highway safety. Perhaps the most encouraging sign in these and other fields of municipal endeavor is the growing appreciation of the importance of trained technicians and administrators. With more of such officials in command, the public-utility problem also, which has long plagued municipal and state authorities, can be more boldly faced, with increased confidence in the city's ability to serve itself.

The achievements of the years 1909 to 1930 have been substantial. It is encouraging to feel that *THE AMERICAN CITY* has shared in the progress that is recorded in the series of articles which follow, and in some measure has helped to promote it. One criticism that is sometimes, and fairly, leveled against municipal government is the failure to consolidate experience. The absence of national or state control, the failure to treat municipal administration as a career, have been in part responsible. *THE AMERICAN CITY* aims, in part, to offer the answer. It has endeavored during the first twenty-one years of its existence to make available for all the best that was being done everywhere, thus helping to apply to municipalities and counties the philosopher's dictum that if we can do everywhere what is now being done with success somewhere, the world will be remade."

We must not convey the impression that *The American City* is a city planning magazine as such—thought the American city planning movement has been reflected in its pages during the last two decades and has become almost preeminent in importance. But a multitude of other subjects finds expression and illustration. Mr. Alfred E. Smith, late Governor of New York State, explains the outlook of the new Housing Association of New York. If there is a new snow-plough invented, its picture and functioning will be found in *The American City*. You find a discussion on the zoning of miniature golf courses in the present number and learn that there were 25,000 in operation in the United States last August, representing an investment of \$125,000,000.

HOUSING IN NEW YORK

"The sagging foundations of a Greenwich Village rooming house collapsed with a roar early today and the timbers crashed in upon 12 sleeping tenants, killing five and seriously injuring seven.

"Two of the dead were women.

"Within a few minutes after the crash, which reverberated through the winding streets of the neighborhood, police and firemen were lifting the dead and injured from the debris.

"Preliminary examination indicated the collapse was caused by undermining of the foundations during the demolition of four buildings adjoining the rooming house."—*Press Dispatch*.

A GREAT COMMUNAL ENTERPRISE

GREAT BRITAIN'S EFFORT TO SOLVE THE HOUSING PROBLEM

A. G. DALZELL, M.E.I.C.,

President of the Town Planning Institute of Canada.

There is a long history behind the present determined effort of the British people to improve the living, and especially the housing conditions of the common people, which cannot here be related. But going back only as far the middle of the 19th century we find the State definitely committed to the work of removing slums, and philanthropists and great industrial leaders showing by practical examples that good housing was both possible and profitable. In the present century, and especially during and since the war, the need for better housing has not been only the conviction of a few, but through the awakened conscience of a nation has become universal, and has found expression by mandates to every government, whether labelled, Conservative, Coalition, Liberal or Labour, to further the building of homes fit for babes to be born in, women to live in, or men to die in.

THE HOUSING ACT OF 1930

This determination has found its latest expression in the Housing Act which came into force in August of the present year.

In a circular, addressed to local authorities by the Secretary of the Ministry of Health, drawing attention to the provisions of this act the following paragraph appears:

It is within the knowledge of local authorities that many of the working classes of this country live in sordid and degrading housing conditions, the continuance of which is nothing less than a social menace. These conditions are due to many causes, poverty, indifference, lack of better accommodation. The new Act is an earnest of the determination of the Government and the Legislature to do everything possible to put an end to conditions of this kind. For its successful operation it demands the full and hearty co-operation of all local agencies, in the acquisition and spreading of knowledge as to bad conditions, and in forming a sound public opinion to assist the Government and Parliament in putting an end to them. In this work the local authorities must themselves take the leading part, and the Minister is confident that they will rise to the full measure of their responsibility.

The new Housing Act makes it the duty of every local authority, rural as well as urban, to consider the housing needs of their area, including the need arising from slum conditions, and unsatisfactory dwellings; and as often as occasion arises, or within three months after notice has been given to them by

the Minister, to submit proposals for the provision of new homes. In addition, with a view to securing continuity of action, and an adequate volume of new construction, the local authority of every area having a population of more than 20,000 is required during the present year to submit to the Minister a programme of the steps they propose to take during the ensuing five years for dealing with the housing conditions in their area, and for providing new accommodation. A similar programme is to be furnished every fifth year. There is thus no mistaking the determination of the present government to continue the work, so extensively done during the last decade, to provide the people of Britain with homes of a higher standard than many have been used to.

The present Minister of Health, the Right Hon. Arthur Greenwood, has expressed his intention of introducing a fresh act consolidating existing legislation, but the new act itself aims to make good some of the deficiencies of past legislation, which was mainly towards the stimulation of new housebuilding. The new act makes it easier to deal with existing conditions, the removal of existing slums, and the prevention of the creation of new slums by stopping the deterioration of other areas. The act also provides for a simpler procedure by which individual houses may be repaired or demolished, and makes provision for the erection of a distinct type of home greatly needed, small homes solely for the use of aged persons, with the distinct understanding that they shall not be sold, but only rented for this purpose.

Since the conclusion of the war, by the direction and aid of the government, and by the stimulation of private enterprise, a new house has been erected for approximately every tenth family in the land. The British Building Societies have greatly aided private enterprise and the tremendous increase in their membership is decisive evidence of the desire for homeownership. A remarkable feature of the work done through the agencies of local governments is that such a large proportion of the houses are deliberately retained by municipal authorities to be rented and not sold. To get some idea of what has been accomplished by municipal authorities, a brief review of the work done by the corporation of the city of Birmingham may be instructive.

MUNICIPAL HOUSEBUILDING IN BIRMINGHAM

The city of Birmingham has within its municipal limits 43,600 acres, or more than twice the land area of the city of Toronto. It has a population of about 919,000, compared with an estimate of 650,000 for the

Canadian city. Forty years ago, under the stimulating leadership of Joseph Chamberlain, who started public service in municipal government but afterwards became a national leader, the city corporation built 100 houses for working people who had lost their homes through the construction of the new arterial highway, Corporation Street. The British government has always insisted that in improvement schemes which involve the destruction of dwellings, new dwellings must be provided to house as many as are deprived of their homes. This municipal housing was practically all that was done by the city of Birmingham before the war.

With the passing of the Housing and Town Planning Act of 1919, a real start on municipal housing was made. A Housing Department was organised, and commenced to buy large areas of land, some estates consisting of over 400 acres. In July of this year the Minister of Health opened the 30,000th house erected by the corporation, but the present programme provides for at least 6,500 more. That the demand has not even yet been met is shown by the fact that in June of this year the application for tenancies exceeded 31,000.

TOWN PLANNING GOES WITH HOUSING

In the building of this large number of houses it is interesting to note that all old standards have been abandoned, the estates are planned on the most modern lines, and in not a single instance has a rectangular subdivision of land, such as is almost universal on the North American continent, been adopted. The British, as well as most European nations, see no virtue in the rectangular blocks which appealed to the Commissioners of New York over a century ago, but which has cursed that city, and many others, with the most deplorable type of dwelling, and slums which cannot now be equalled in any part of the world, on the testimony of the citizens themselves. Europeans will not stamp a pattern on the ground with total disregard of natural features for the sake of a uniformity which is as deadly as it is dull. They prefer to retain the natural features of hill and valley, dell and dale, to have natural parks instead of artificial squares, and they are not afraid to plan curved streets and diagonal roads, with circular intersections to facilitate traffic movements. In the Birmingham estates no lanes or alleys are provided, and what is so often considered as an outrageous fault, a cul-de-sac or blind street, has been freely adopted, but planned with all proper safeguards, because it so greatly reduces the hazards of motor traffic.

In the disposition of the houses on these carefully planned estates the general spacing is about 12 to the acre, and the usual set back from street line is 20 feet. The houses are however very often grouped in blocks of four or six, and the building line is deliberately broken to avoid monotony. Care has

also been taken to set the houses at intersections of main roads on a diagonal line, thus greatly increasing the angle of vision for traffic. Though ample provision has been made on each estate for playing fields and small parks, and planting spaces at street intersections, the cost of the land, including the cost of street improvements, averages only from \$300 to \$350 per house.

TYPES OF HOUSES

The houses built are of five types, defined as Parlour type, Non-parlour type, Small non-parlour type, Flats, and Maisonettes, so that many varied requirements can be met. In describing these types the figures that are given indicate the average floor area in square feet in the rooms, the first figure denoting the average floor area within the containing walls of the house.

Parlour type (920) contains living room (168), parlour (135), three bedrooms (154, 130, 80) with hall, scullery, larder, bathroom and coal space.

Non-parlour (820) contains living room (180), three bedrooms (150, 123, 71) with hall scullery, larder, bathroom and coal space.

Small non-parlour similar to above, but smaller and some with only two bedrooms.

(621) three bedrooms (112, 88, 62) living room (170)

(620) two bedrooms (146, 100) living room (157).

Flats. Three bedroom type (630) Living room (186) bedrooms (110, 96, 88).

Two bedroom type (537) Living room (168) bedrooms (103, 98).

Maisonettes (362) Living room (168) bedroom (96).

All houses are fitted with electric light, and gas is also provided for heating and cooking. The Maisonettes are partly furnished; the cost of the furniture is included with the rent, and the same becomes the property of the tenant in three years.

TYPE OF HOUSE

Throughout the period of building the costs of construction have varied, and were very high in the earlier years. The more recent contracts give a general average of cost, for house alone:—

Parlour type	4	bedrooms £442. or \$2,610.
	3	£410. or \$2,050.
Non-parlour	3	£328. or \$1,640.
Small ditto	3	£292. or \$1,460.
	2	£270. or \$1,350.

With the advantage of the government subsidy the corporation is able to let the houses at the following rentals. These rentals including the rates (taxes) for all municipal services.

Parlour	15s.6d per week, approximately	\$17.00
	per calendar month	
Non-ditto	11s.4d	12.25
Small do.	10s.0d	11.00
Flats	11s.5d	12.35
Small do	10s.5d	11.25
Maisonettes	6s.0d	7.50
plus	3s.0d per week for three years for furniture which then becomes property of tenant	3.25

This record of the accomplishments of the Corporation of Birmingham whilst outstanding is not exceptional. Other towns and cities have done similar work. At the end of 1927 the London County Council had constructed over 22,000 houses, and had made provision for the erection of 30,000 more. The great work of removing the existing slums, though not now the sanitary and social menace of fifty years ago, will be facilitated by the passing of the new act.

THE RURAL PROGRAMME

The government has declared that the proper housing of the agricultural workers must form an essential element in any progressive agricultural policy. The new act requires county and rural authorities to co-operate in overcoming the shortage of houses, and the removal of unsatisfactory housing conditions in rural areas. The county councils are charged with definite responsibility for this work, and are required to bear a prescribed charge towards the cost.

There has been, and will continue to be, much criticism as to the methods of the British government in the matter of providing adequate and proper shelter for citizens of the working classes. But this fact is indisputable that the people are being housed better than they ever were before, and better than any other people of any other nation are being housed today. By far the greater majority, probably over 90 per cent, are being housed in single-family dwellings each with its own plot of land back and front, with often the right to the use of other land for cultivation. In contrast to this it is known that over one-half of the annual increase in urban population in the United States is now housed in multi-family dwellings, with no right to individual use of any land at all. And the proportion so housed is increasing every year in Canada.

THE BENEFITS OF GARDENS

The financial difficulties caused by housing schemes in Great Britain are not serious and will be overcome in a few years. The benefits obtained by the new houses are immediate and will last for a century or more. How far-reaching these benefits are who can estimate? By no means the least benefit, and one of the earliest gained, is a tremendous increase in interest in gardening. Many of the new housing estates are rapidly becoming places of great

floral beauty, and also return satisfactory dividends to the occupants in fruit and vegetables. By careful records of ascertained yields on the Bournville Estate at Birmingham, it has been shown that under the intensive cultivation of the small home owner, the land yields seven times as much as it did under the mixed cultivation by small farmers.

It is also certain that this new interest in home and garden has been of great service in checking the restlessness and discontent which is inevitable when there is so much enforced idleness through unemployment. It will also be of benefit in the days which are sure to come when the working week will be reduced to five days, and those of shorter hours than formerly. There is a serious problem to be faced in the near future as to where this leisure time can be profitably spent by the thousands who on this continent are forced to live in tenements, even if the dwelling is designated as Suite 57. Royal Apartments, Broadway Boulevard. Window sills and fire escapes are a poor substitute for a garden, and automobile driving is often the cause and not the antidote for jaded nerves.

Through greed and speculation and lack of community interest much of the land on the North American continent, which in past ages was the refuge of many driven out of the older land by feudal laws and heartless landowners, is now cursed with burdens which the peoples of Europe are casting off. The battle of the people for the right to live under proper conditions will have to be refought on this continent, because thousands are improperly housed. At the present time the leaders are few and there is no rallying cry to attract many. But Britain is showing the way in this, as in many other social reforms, and the splendid example she has set may yet stimulate her sons and daughters afar to follow in her steps.

One of the greatest living British economists, Sir Joseph Stamp has wisely said:

If in the last resort "there is no wealth but life", there is no real wealth but good life, and the saving and shaping of the valuable natural material of good life is the highest form of communal investment.

There are thousands of men, and not a few women, charged with the administration of local government in Great Britain, who have not the qualifications of Sir Josiah Stamp, as political and social economists. But these same men and women are thoroughly convinced that they are making a sound community investment in providing homes, which, as far as the dwelling is concerned, gives the poorest child as good an opportunity to be brought up in a healthy life, as the child of a millionaire. This conviction is shown by the time they give, without remuneration, to the administration of these large housing schemes. The singleness of purpose and

honesty of administration is carried on with the traditions of which the British are proud. The work has not been possible without sacrifice, but, like many things obtained only at sacrificial cost, will bring a lasting reward.

News and Notes

MODEL ZONING BYLAW FOR SASKATCHEWAN

The Director of Town Planning for the province of Saskatchewan has compiled a "Suggested Form of Zoning Bylaw" for cities under 25,000 population, with variants for larger cities and for villages and hamlets. The effective distribution of this document should prove of great educational value to the cities of Saskatchewan. It is an attempt to "consolidate experience"—failure of which is charged by *The American City* against municipal government. The form and norm of zoning are now so nearly settled by a thousand experiments on this continent that the earlier brain fag of every city official who is commanded by a local council to produce a zoning law should largely be saved. Readers who know the history of zoning in the United States will also know the tremendous influence exercised by a small Zoning Primer published at Washington and distributed by the million all over the United States. That issue was a short introduction to the subject and explained in the simplest possible language the justice and common sense of zoning. It did not try to avoid the main issue of zoning, namely the right of a community to designate the uses of private land in the interests of public welfare and civilized living, but set this principle forth in the first sentence: "Zoning is the application of common sense and fairness to the public regulations governing the use of private real estate." It was followed by "A Standard State Zoning Enabling Act" which had the same purpose as this "Suggested Form of Zoning Bylaw" for Saskatchewan under review—this is, to "consolidate experience" or pass on for the benefit of municipalities interested in zoning the experience of other municipalities which had thought the thing through and achieved some satisfactory results.

These documents are often so paralysed with legal phrasing that it is interesting to note the American method of natural language and extreme simplicity. There seems to be a legal convention in Canada that a zoning document must not contain an explanatory preamble for the benefit of the average intelligence and must be prefaced by a fearsome list of definitions of terms. We have always thought that if these tiresome definitions must be used they might at any rate be relegated to an appendix. The American "Standard State Zoning Enabling Act" says simply: "No definitions are included. The terms used in the act are so commonly understood

that definitions are unnecessary. Definitions are a source of danger. They give to words a restricted meaning. No difficulty will be found with the operation of the act because of the absence of such definitions." Our objection to them, or more particularly to the place they usually occupy is that they make the main subject dull and unattractive, just as aggressive pedantry makes a person tiresome and uninteresting.

The public interest in the Saskatchewan model zoning Act will begin on page 7: "For the purpose of this bylaw the City of _____ is hereby divided into six districts." We should like to see the bylaw printed and widely distributed, not only to the officials of Saskatchewan municipalities but to any person in the province interested in the subject. We should like to see it prefaced by a brief statement on the use of zoning—as in the British Columbia Act—and should like to see the long list of definitions relegated to an appendix.

The Saskatchewan Director of Town Planning, Mr. Stewart Young, is doing excellent service in making his office a centre of provincial education in town planning.

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ZONING FOR PRINCE ALBERT—SASKATCHEWAN

The City of Prince Albert has given notice to its citizens that the city council is prepared to pass a zoning bylaw described shortly in the following terms:

A bylaw to regulate and restrict, within the City of Prince Albert, the location and use of buildings, and the use of land; to limit the height and bulk of buildings; to prescribe site areas, the size of yards and other open spaces, and for these purposes to divide the City into districts.

The citizens are given two weeks to examine the proposed bylaw, which presumably is accessible to them in full text, and any written objections are receiving consideration. The chances seem to be that before these lines are in print the bylaw will have been passed. So far as we have noted the Prince Albert city aldermen have decided that zoning has come to stay, because it is a reasonable means for bringing order into the physical development of a city and an excellent way of escaping from the jumble development which has made so many western towns appallingly ugly and uninteresting.

Still, zoning is but the first step in comprehensive planning, as the American cities have discovered, and zoning itself may go wrong if it is not coordinated with a comprehensive plan. Indeed some planners argue that zoning should logically be the last step in planning. Vancouver passed an interim zoning bylaw, as the first step in planning, but spent three years on other essentials of planning before the final zoning bylaw was passed.

EDMONTON TOWN PLANNING COMMISSION

The Edmonton Town Planning Commission was appointed under provisions of the Alberta Town Planning Act in July 1929. It was created in response to a public demand in which the women of Edmonton took a leading part and subsequently the Town Planning Association, a body of progressively-minded citizens to whom the need of a modern plan for the capital city of Alberta had been apparent for several years.

The city council were sympathetic and appropriated a sum of \$2,000 for planning purposes. This enabled the new commission to secure the services of a draughtsman and to embark upon the preparation of surveys preliminary to a comprehensive city plan. Mr. J. F. D. Tanqueray, at that time assistant to the Director of Town Planning in the provincial office, was later appointed secretary-planner to the city and was able to take on the work, with the benefit of experience in the provincial office and previous technical service with the Vancouver Town Planning staff.

In 1930, in spite of drastic economy in most departments, the city council doubled the town planning appropriation, which has made it possible to complete the preliminary studies and make satisfactory progress in major street studies. In the zoning provisions, a building line proposal giving excellent vision clearance at all street corners in the city—a proposal which had to be abandoned in the Vancouver plan pending further education of the real estate interests—has been accepted in Edmonton, due, no doubt, to the intelligent publicity methods of the town planning secretary and the excellent support of the Edmonton Press.

By co-operation of the Press the secretary-planner has published a series of explanatory articles on the first principles and social implications of planning and by this time it seems clear that Edmonton—in close touch with the provincial planning activities and possessing an energetic civic Town Planning Commission, under the direction of a trained executive—has convinced public opinion behind its town planning programme and will not be troubled in the future with the dreary objections of certain business interests which are holding up town planning progress in so many towns and cities in Canada.

In short, the faith of the executive, that if the public mind—not identified with the fate of some particular lot in some particular place—is properly informed on the social and business advantages of planning, reason and public welfare considerations will prevail over that group selfishness of a few real estate interests which has created most of the ugly and expensive problems of modern life—which can only be cured—when they can be cured at all—at the expense of the tax-payer. When buildings wrongly placed have to be pulled down to make traffic

possible and to get breathing room in a city and some semblance of beauty, the tax-payer has to pay the bill plus 20% beyond the fat price demanded, for “disturbance”, when the buildings themselves have been the main “disturbance”.

After the great fire in London in the 17th century, the merchants insisted on building their stores where they had been before and thus cut off for all time the vista of St. Paul’s Cathedral—in spite of the advice and appeal of Sir Christopher Wren. If there had been an efficient town planning authority at that time, St. Paul’s Cathedral would be at this day the glorious architectural feature closing the whole vista of the Strand.

* * *

PRESERVATION OF NATURAL BEAUTY

The makers of the Alberta Town Planning Act took a leap in humanism by embodying in the definition of the Act the phrase: “Preservation of the natural beauties of the province”—“An Act to Facilitate Town Planning and the Preservation of the Natural Beauties of the Province.” Hypercritical persons might have argued that these two functions were rather widely dissimilar and really demanded two executives. We can imagine Premier Brownlee’s answer would have been: “We want to do those two things; if two executives are necessary, let them be created.” They have been created; a Town Planning Board and a provincial Parks Board and the two functions in one Act seem to be ensuring a wholesome cooperation between the two executives.

The phrasing of the Act is an illustration of the expansion of the planning function. First comes town planning. Confined by city limits it discovers a host of unreached but related problems beyond its sphere of action and discovers the inadequacy of its own function and terminology. Regional planning is born—that is, the planning of a whole region comprising a group of political units whose willing cooperation is necessary for a purpose that will be beneficial to all concerned and a purpose that cannot be carried out without such cooperation. The region is discovered to be the real social unit—for water supply, sewerage, communications, parks, open spaces. Often the city has used up all its open spaces and must depend upon the region for more.

But there is still another function of planning; that is planning for the conservation of natural beauty that needs little from man beyond reverent and loving care and the provision of means of access. And here the province is the unit and here the planning concept is reaching even beyond the region—the preservation of the natural beauties of the province for the enjoyment of the people.

Some day the Alberta Act will be made logically complete: An Act to facilitate Town, Regional and Rural Planning and the Preservation of the Natural

Beauties of the Province, to be cited, perhaps as the Alberta Planning Act.

But the present Act, as we say, is a leap in advanced humanism. It gives enabling powers to those who would break away from the jungle methods of town development and place scientific and social intelligence in power where traffic in land values and jumble building have spoiled urban areas for civilized living and degraded the spiritual substance of communal life. And it goes after those areas of physical beauty which are sheer gifts of Nature to treasure them for public uses before they are ruined by stupid exploitation.

The scope of the Act is not to be confined to city limits or town boundaries but is to reach out to those priceless assets of natural beauty which will be inevitably ruined by private exploitation or used for private gain unless the provincial authorities claim for the enjoyment of the people what rightly belongs to them.

And the insertion of the beauty phrase is a visible reminder to the executive of the Act not to concentrate so completely on urban areas that these priceless gifts of nature be neglected and lost. In Quebec there are natural caves that you may not see without paying tribute to private owners and in New York State there are Ausable Chasms, carved by millions of years of natural excavation, now under private ownership. Some of the loveliest gems of scenery on the British Columbia coast are covered with ugly shacks, and river and mountain scenes are becoming ever more inaccessible, everywhere.

The phrasing of the Act is not to end in pose. The province has appointed a Parks Board to act in conjunction with the Town Planning Board with the duty of searching out these scenic beauties and conserving them for the enjoyment of the people. Several areas have already been registered and reserved and necessary steps are being taken to make them accessible and enjoyable to visitors.

This movement seems to us entirely admirable and worthy of imitation by all the provinces. It is true that most of the provinces have provincial parks—often on a grand scale, but the distribution is often quite defective and hundreds of small gems of natural beauty are either going to ruin, inaccessible or falling into private ownership for permanent alienation or commercial exploitation.

Need it be said that the preservation of beauty for public use has its utilities and its rewards? The satisfaction of those spiritual needs that cry out for beauty as a relief from ugly streets and ugly sounds but also as objectives for the pleasure tour—with all the trade stimulus that touring brings. Every motor tourist would visit a hundred places of rest and beauty every season if he knew where to find them. As it is he finds most of the places he wants

to visit either inaccessible or fenced off with barbed wire.

The National Parks system has won universal commendation and is splendid beyond praise. The provincial parks system is good in many respects but in every province there are hundreds of small gems of natural beauty that should be conserved for public enjoyment. Alberta is leading the way and under an Act that combines the purpose of shaping beautiful and efficient towns and cities with the determination to conserve scenes of natural beauty—before it is too late.

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VOX POPULI V. CITY COUNCIL—WINNIPEG

In any discussion as to whether the newspapers or the city council of Winnipeg represent "public opinion" in regard to the appointment and constitution of a Town Planning Commission we should vote for the newspapers. Sometimes newspapers of different political colour play at controversy just to avoid agreement with "a local contemporary". The journalistic unanimity on this question, in Winnipeg has been unbroken for months, not to say years, and the language of polite persuasion, we notice, is changing for something more direct. This wearisome business should be instructive to other cities taking up town planning policy.

The *Weekly Mirror* has this to say:

The average citizen felt relieved last January when he learned that Winnipeg was to have an independent Town Planning Commission which would survey the whole City with a view to recommending certain improvements, alterations and changes to the City Council in order that Winnipeg might develop as a modern City from both the utility and beauty point of view.

Just as the citizen was gratified last January, so he is disappointed this August. The Town Planning Commission after months of wrangling has returned to where it started, namely a Committee of the City Council, two members at least of which are on record as being opposed to the idea of City Planning.

This set-back to what has been described as the most important thing for Winnipeg to do, is only a temporary one. As has been said before, the appointment and the operation of an independent body of experts is extremely essential if Winnipeg is to be laid out as a city and not laid out here and there to the waste of certain districts and furthermore, the citizens are keenly anxious to have such a Commission appointed and operating. If the present body of Aldermen do not desire to carry out the wishes of the people in this connection, the remedy is in the hands of the people themselves. The next civic election will be held in November and that is the time for the citizens to

make a further change in the personnel of Council. *The Tribune* has tried different "tones". Here is the sweetly reasonable.

The whole question should now be reconsidered in a big way. The by-law fails to meet the requirements of town planning in a large city. The commission it will create will be of the wrong kind; one composed for the most part of members of the City Council aided by a small minority of members drawn from outside.

Experience in other places definitely shows that the greatest benefit can be derived only from a town planning commission in which the City Council shall have representation but whose main initiative and driving force is derived from citizens willing and competent to serve. Which means that the weight and authority of the commission should rest with responsible citizens free from the entanglements and political influences which inevitably surround elected representatives.

Commissions so composed have done valuable work in other cities which the city councils themselves have been unable to perform, because they had not the time, among their multifarious duties, to undertake the necessary studies. The members of these commissions ask for no salaries; they spend no money without the sanction of council. At the proper time and after thorough investigation they recommend to the city council the appointment of an expert to do the necessary technical work. Even then the decision rests with the city council. In short, such commissions are merely advisory bodies of well-known citizens, able and willing to give special attention to special problems which aldermen have not the time to attend to. They appropriate none of the prerogatives of the city council.

The Free Press must have written hundreds of columns this last year or two of courteous and patient argument in favour of an independent commission and the immediate appointment of expert assistance to get the work under way. So long ago as 1913 this was the recommendation of the first town planning commission in Winnipeg. The citizens of Winnipeg know that this is inevitable if a plan for Winnipeg is to be created and they must know that any business firm that took 17 years to wrangle over a necessary change in business method when old methods were proved to be obsolete and ineffective would go on the rocks and deserve to go there.

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"SWEET REASONABILITY" OPERATING IN ALBERTA TOWNS

The town of Cardston, Alberta, we meet for the first time in a press paragraph, but conclude there must be some nice, reasonable, intelligent men in charge, for the paragraph from *The Cardston News* informs us that after a visit from Mr. Zinkam,

assistant to the Alberta Town Planning Director, the town council immediately appointed a Town Planning Commission as a working executive to get a town planning scheme under way. They do not seem to have any intention of spending six years arguing whether a town planning commission is necessary; whether it will grab some of prerogatives of the town council; whether it will make speeches about Paris, London and Jerusalem etc. They seem to think it will be a good thing for the town to have a group of intelligent citizens concentrating on one problem and preparing preliminary reports and recommendations for the council to consider. Alberta has already a larger number of town planning commissions than any other province and a watchful and helpful Town Planning Board at the provincial centre has already justified itself. The officers know where a town planning move is necessary; sooner or later they get there; there is a conversation with the local authorities; perhaps public address from the visitor; a town planning commission is appointed to get things going; there are further conferences with the central office; a zoning by-law is passed and "heaven's first law" the principle of orderly development is established. The officials meet other officials at quarterly conferences and compare notes. A certain wholesome rivalry is created and town planning becomes a conscious policy.

This is business. If every province in Canada had a similar organization at the centre the Canadian town planning movement would be scampering after those 900 American towns where zoning has been established and not remain so lamentably outdistanced in the race for civic progress. A provincial Town Planning Board is an urgent need in Ontario; Quebec; British Columbia; Manitoba.

A series of short explanatory articles on the provisions of the Alberta Town Planning Act are now being contributed to the Alberta Press by the provincial Director of Town Planning. The following is the fourth of the series :

Article 4.—HOUSING

"One of the principal objects of town planning is to provide desirable homesites. Subdivision regulations and provisions of The Town Planning Act referred to in previous articles have been drafted to accomplish this end. A general regulation is that lots for residential purposes shall be at least 50 feet wide, at least 100 feet deep with a minimum area of 5,000 square feet. In a new subdivision, stores and similar structures cannot be erected in a residential district or zone; adequate streets and lanes are to be provided. The thoughtless and indiscriminate placing of houses on unsubdivided lands without reference to existing or future development can now be curbed. But where there exists a proper community spirit such infractions of the "laws" of

common sense, of community economy, will probably not be considered by intending purchasers or sanctioned by the owner. If, however, through thoughtlessness, through ignorance of existing legislation or regulations these infractions occur, it may mean considerable extra expense to the owner to have necessary surveys subsequently made, or in other cases, to move buildings recently erected.

"In general, residences are to be erected but one to a lot, that lot forming part of a registered subdivision. Any further information may be obtained by writing to the office of the Director of Town Planning, Parliament Buildings, Edmonton."

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TOWN PLANNING DEPARTMENT FOR TORONTO. MR. LE MAY'S APPOINTMENT

Two sensible things have been done at one stroke by the Toronto city council. On September 25 a City Planning department was created and Mr. Tracey D. le May was placed at the head of it as responsible officer at a salary of \$6,000. And this by nearly unanimous vote of the council.

For something like twenty years, as city surveyor, Mr. le May has been relating his work to a definite city planning concept, taking his limitations with philosophic humour, but arguing steadily for something better and bigger in city planning method and philosophy. He has been aware, as too few of his fraternity seem to be, of the social implications of surveying and engineering when related to a scientific concept of comprehensive planning.

Mr. le May's confreres in the city planning field have long been hoping that his work in Toronto would find some decent recognition. One alderman at least seemed to understand what has been obvious to Mr. le May's associates in the Town Planning Institute. "It will give Mr. le May a free hand," said Alderman Cameron. Now a free hand to a good man is a good thing for the body politic, while it may be an infernally bad thing for the same body when exercised by a Tammany boss. The newspaper states that Mr. le May as city surveyor has been "under the assessment commissioner", which seems an illogical classification, quite aside from personnel. It is gratifying to note that one alderman "moved that the new department head be not under the Works Committee—meaning, we suppose, that Mr. le May should report in future to the city council direct. This was defeated but the gesture shows increasing respect for the function of the city planning "chief" as well as confidence in Mr. le May.

City planning has brought with it some new concepts of civic economy and civic development, and the man who has got these ideas into scientific correlation should not be frustrated by too much red-tape control. Statistics do not tell us how many towns—and businesses—have perished and are perish-

ing for lack of ideas. The North Vancouver *Review* laments the fact that one third of the city's land has drifted into city ownership by tax sale and so on. Yet German towns rejoice whenever a piece of private land comes into city ownership. They know what to do with it and do not allow it to "revert" any more to private ownership. One city owns about 84% of its area and is considered "happy among cities". North Vancouver seems to need a city planning department, with a "chief" who knows what to do with the city's land. Some lamentable mistakes have been made in the development of North Vancouver.

Academically it is always a question for debate whether a city planning advisor has the better chance of doing something worth while as a complete stranger to the city, with no local affiliations and only a problem in social science before him, or a man who knows the city from border to border, but may also know some dark places in local politics and get a little timid in these gloomy regions. The question cannot be answered *a priori*. Success following either method may depend very much upon the man selected and thus may not properly become the occasion for a doctrine. Outside specialists have come and gone and left a plan and taken their fee and when the dust had settled the local authorities have been willing to sell the plan to the lowest bidder. On the other hand, there are towns and cities where the permanent technical officials have shown themselves destitute of the social sense that sees in city planning a super-health measure and movement and a means for creative beauty on a large scale, as also a platform for industrial experiment, adventure and progress. Whose imagination is never inflamed or illumined by the relation of "public works" to the happiness and well-being of multitudes of men and women, present and future. Such men do not see the humanist significance of city planning and should not be entrusted with its responsibilities. In such cases it would seem to be better to bring in a new mind—if one can be found which has met similar problems many times and knows how to apply the modern science of city planning to age-long problems in the quickest and most efficient way.

But there are many technical officers in Canada who have studied their local problems in the light of modern city planning and have the right social outlook—together with complete knowledge of the geography of their area. But their "masters"—the city councils—will not give them a reasonable chance. Avent, city surveyor of Winnipeg, is praised by his masters, but he is made a tenth member of a weak and inexpert town planning commission and apparently expected to do all the routine work as city surveyor and plan Winnipeg at the same time and at the same old salary and status!

Toronto has done better than this. It has created a city planning department ("city planning and

surveying" is needlessly long and is not scientific, since city planning postulates surveying). It has appointed one of its own men, who knows what the work implies and has the right social outlook, as chief of the department and in raising his status has also given him a decent salary.

Toronto should have done something like this years ago; but it has always had a large, gladiatorial city council and therefore could only do the minimum of work—in the maximum of time.

Mr. le May knows all about the need for a Regional Plan for Toronto and Environs. Perhaps some day a plan for the Toronto Region will appear on the council table.

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CREDIT WHERE CREDIT IS DUE

The Chairman of the North Vancouver Town Planning Commission, Mr. Alfred Huggett, issues occasionally, by grace of the local Press, some definitions of the function of town planning which strike us as first rate—in educational content and masterly condensation. They are not signed. We guessed at the authorship in our June issue and guessed wrong. Our press cuttings show us that other journals have appreciated these definitions and have quoted them freely—but with wrong authorship. We express regret and quote them again—since good things bear repetition.

What Town Planning Does

1. It segregates certain residential areas from business and industrial aggression and thereby establishes restricted areas for residences known as first-class.

2. It defines areas for major and minor industries, wholesale and retail businesses and for three classes of residences.

3. It determines or suggests at least the orderly survey for, and the establishment of transportation and water-front development.

4. It plans for the systematic planning of what is known as the "Major Street Plan," creates distributor streets and makes a study of transportation problems.

5. It works for the best interests of the City and by so doing works in the best interests of all the citizens.

6. It aims to make a city really "Beautiful" by the cultivation of parks, boulevards, streets and public school grounds along sane and practical lines.

7. It seeks to prevent the recurrence of the many expensive mistakes in the past by adopting truly scientific methods in town or city planning or re-plotting.

8. It seeks to determine a "Civic Centre" and to create the foundation for cultural activities to the good of the whole community.

9. It is the greatest socializing factor in modern

movements, for it touches every phase of community life and cultivates desire for the aesthetic.

10. It aims to make conditions in industrial and commercial areas not only of practical and economic value, but such as will enable the worker to do his or her best.

11. It undertakes re-plotting and re-contouring of a town or city—from its original plan to meet the growing needs of modern transportation.

12. Town Planning is a real science; its function is to assist the authorities in any community to plan to re-plan for the public benefit; and to visualize the needs of coming years.

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MONTREAL MOVING FOR AN EXPERT COMMISSION

The Mayor of Montreal recently called a meeting of various civic organizations with a view to the creation of a permanent Town Planning Commission. A committee was appointed, consisting of Alderman Trepanier, S. Fortin, Percy Nobbs, Noulan Cauchon and Raoul Lacroix to consider an appropriate constitution for such a commission. The Committee's report has been presented to the Mayor. We understand that the prevailing idea is to create a commission of experts who will not only know what should be done but will also know how to do it. After many many years of discussion and abortive commissions Mayor Houde seems to have decided that the planning of Montreal must be undertaken in a business-like way and that the job must be undertaken by trained experts who will waste no more time in getting a plan under way.

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SMALLER CITY COUNCILS

A sensible move has been initiated by an Ottawa controller, Mr. C. J. Tulley, to reduce the number of city alderman by half. It is proposed that the citizens of Ottawa be asked to vote on this question at the next civic election. If the proposal pass the city council and reach the voters there should be little doubt as to the result. The halving of numbers would probably mean the doubling of efficiency and the halving of cost. Ottawa is still without zoning law, after five years of "consideration."

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THE MASSACRE OF THE INNOCENTS

A total of 13,998 children were killed or injured in New York, in street accidents, during 1929. Yet there are city aldermen still asserting that city planning is a fad or something that can be well-enough done by a committee of non-technical aldermen in their spare time, and that the assistance of competent local students of the problem must be rejected because these are "outsiders"—that is not members of the city council. Winnipeg city council is about twenty years behind its mandate in city planning because it will neither do the work itself or let anyone else.