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Special Issue on Melbourne Regional Plan : The entire space of this issue is devoted to the controversy around the Melbourne regional plan, because the principles underlying this controversy are of great importance for any big Australian city. The contributors, Ruth and Maurie Crow were official "objectors" to the general concept of the plan, and the report that they review here is the one which deals with their "objection" (amongst others).

Following issues of "Ecoso Exchange" are planned to carry articles news items and comments from other States as well as Victoria. Held over to the next issue is material received from contributors on Newport (Vic.) powerhouse, Wollongong pollution, Australian forests and Concorde costs.

### RE-SCRAMBLED PLANS FOR MELBOURNE

#### 15 Years of Ecological Disaster Adopted

1. Government freezes life-styles
2. Restricted concepts of MMBW
3. Radical alternatives not examined
4. Regional plan adjustments (for Melb. readers)
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#### (1) Government Freezes Life Styles

The Victorian Government had an historic opportunity to make the Melbourne regional plan an instrument that could contribute to the solution of the major issue of our times: the ecological issue. Disappointingly, the Hamer government is not making this happen, but has rubber-stamped recommendations from the Melbourne regional planning authority that do not make it happen.

The general pattern of Melbourne's future growth for the next 10 to 15 years has been suddenly crystallised within one week at the end of March 1974 into a pattern that will prolong and even accentuate the car way of life. The Victorian Government has endorsed recommendations from the Tweedle-dee and Tweedle-dum reports—one report is by the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works (the regional planning authority, MMBW); and the other by the Town & Country Planning Board (TCPB) which reviewed the report for the Government.

(The MMBW report called "Report on General Concept Objections 1974" is available from the MMBW, 625 Little Collins St. Melbourne, price \$3, and the TCPB report "Review of Report by MMBW---etc" is obtainable from TCPB office, 235 Queen St. Melbourne, price 50c.)

The daily press, which typically sees planning decisions through the spectacles of the land developers, headlined the significance of the Government's decisions as "The land the State will Freeze" and then broke down this concept explaining that the Government had no intention of freezing prices by acquiring the 116,000 acres designated as "Investigation areas" all around Melbourne, but only intended to "dampen" prices in these areas by a variety of devices.

Whichever word is used, "freeze" or "dampen", the tragedy of the decision is that it will universalise suburbia, freezing lifestyles, to fit /

fifty foot frontage with the car as the dominant mode of transport. Thus the proposal is, in essence, to use an already out-moded urban design served by an out-moded form of transport.

The Board has rejected the only really radical alternative of one linear corridor design with rapid transit and has thus lost the opportunity of using a combination of urban design and modern transport technology which could have decisively defeated the dominance of the car and created conditions for human participatory activity that would reduce the alienation and isolation which is all too familiar in our car-based suburbs.

The M.M.B.W. plan is for Melbourne to be developed in six different directions with green wedges between. There will be increasing compulsion for cars and trucks to be used for transport from one corridor or satellite across the green wedges to another corridor or satellite, and the further out the corridor grows the greater this compulsion.

For several days before the release of the plan the press headlines rumoured that the developers would be greatly disadvantaged by the scheme. But just how much is the developer to be disadvantaged?

The M.M.B.W. has no room in its new thinking for early action by any acquiring authority to buy up land, design it properly and lease or re-sell it at reasonable prices, still less any community involvement in such a process. Instead it is overcome by a brave new hope that the Urban Development Institute of Australia (the big developers organisation) is prepared to "group into consortia and finance sewerage, water supply, drainage and electricity services" or even plan complete development including housing education, social and other facilities!

The Board's rescrumbled plans provide for long term "deferred development zones". These are prize tracts of land within "investigation areas" that are to be selected for the purpose (see Map 1 attached).

For the short term prizes, "urban zones" are shown on "Plan 2" on page 24 of the M.M.B.W. Report. These are scattered all around Melbourne, just as are the more distant "investigation areas". (See map 2 attached)

There is to be some further extensive subdivision in the Yarra Valley to the west of Lilydale in the short term, but beyond Lilydale in the corridor there is no "investigation area" proposed, so that there is some long term possibility of sparing some of the Yarra Valley in its upper reaches. This is a minor comfort to be tempered by disappointment that, despite the statement of Planning Policy for the Yarra Valley opportunity has not been taken to put a stop to speculative subdivisional operations for the next decade even in this favoured area.

There is also to be "staging" of development and works to be co-ordinated through the State Planning Council and an attempt to co-ordinate State and Government policies, which would all be to the good if the policies were good in the first place.

The new presentation of future growth, however, whether short term or long term or whether undertaken completely by the big developers for profit or by community enterprise, is in essence the same as the Bernard Evans' plan of a radial and geographically "balanced growth" around the Central Business District of Melbourne.

It is the same plan in essence as the original framework set by the then Minister for Local Government, Mr. R. Hazmer in 1967. He proposed then to both the M.M.B.W. and the T.C.P.B. green wedges between radially located corridors and/or satellites. This was confirmed as Government policy in 1968.

So the present proposals are very well supported ... but very wrong. They could have been regarded as good thinking in the 1950's in the days before the deleterious social impact of the car style of life was understood and before the global ecological problems including exhaustion of precious resources was understood.

In the 1970's these older habits of thought are not only outworn, they will be disastrous if pursued for the next ten to fifteen years as is now proposed. Fifteen years development in the wrong direction, with the wrong life style is a heavy burden to place on the shoulders of the next generation.

## (2) Restricted Concepts of M.M.B.W.

The M.M.B.W. report groups all possibilities for future growth into five alternative "strategies".

### Strategy

- No.1. Decentralisation. "Stabilisation of Metropolitan population at a specified maximum level located within area now available for urban development ... emphasis on decentralisation.
2. Re-development "Large scale redevelopment within the present urban area, re-direction of growth to north and west with major development in corridors.
3. "Demand" Planning. "Preserve population and structures in present urban areas with new development in corridors, distributed according to demand and services economies".
4. Linear City. "Concentration of development within a single corridor towards the Latrobe Valley includes high speed transport and activity centres".
5. Commuter Settlements "Major urban expansion through small scale estate development isolated from the urban area is in a dispersed pattern".

(Note: All wording above is quoted from M.M.B.W. report except the underlined headings which have been added for clarity and ease of reference).

The implication of these five strategies in relation to various criteria are then set out in five columns. The M.M.B.W. criteria are grouped under "Physical Infrastructure". "Environmental" and "Economic and Social".

This approach sounds very comprehensive and business like, yet the M.M.B.W. concept of "environmental" nowhere rises much above the level of concern for urban impact on the surrounding non-urban country side: or the extent of redevelopment in the urban scene itself; or the "management" of pollution.

There is no indication anywhere that the M.M.B.W. acknowledges the need to adopt a goal that will establish global ecological stability or understands the part that regional planning can play in this. As a consequence the M.M.B.W. report does not deal with such a key question as the rate of use of fossil-fuel resources. And so it follows naturally that there is no mention of the paramount need to select an urban transport pattern which requires the least energy and which therefore, incidentally would cause the least pollution.

In Part B ("Recommendations") the word "ecology" does not rate a mention. In Part C ("Research and Development") "ecological disruption, resource depletion, and threatened life styles" are said to be the consequences of population and economic growth (p.33). Then there are two sentences: "It is necessary to have regard to the implications of population and economic growth and resource management in a world as well as a national context. It is within such a context that strategies for Melbourne should be developed." (p.34). This sounds promising. What follows, however, has nothing to do with Melbourne's contribution to the world ecological problem.

Discussion of ecological and resource issues is skillfully turned into a discussion of population growth, in only one aspect, namely migration. Then the rate of economic growth (i.e. total growth) is said to depend upon migration, a matter of Government policy. This turn of argument therefore skillfully evades any discussion of the advisability of reducing economic growth and expenditure of energy per head, whatever the level of migration.



At the end of the argument which starts with ecology, it is revealed that what the M.M.B.W. is really concerned with is the likely size of Melbourne's population to be planned for. The M.M.B.W. is obviously quite unconcerned about immediate ecological imperatives concerning nursing energy resources applicable to Melbourne (pp.34 & 35).

This becomes apparent when in framing one of the "objectives" amongst a promising "grocer's list" of headings, it is expressed that there should be a "higher living standards associated with increasing affluence" (p.31. If the M.M.B.W. really had through going ecological consideration at heart, it could have phrased this objective, instead, as a "higher living standards associated with stabilised or reduced energy consumption per head".

The M.M.B.W. attitude is poles apart from what the State Government's attitude is supposed to be. The Premier, Mr.R.Hamer, in his budget speech on 12/9/'72 said: "The very real consideration for the future is how far the community is prepared to go, given a lead from the Government" (our emphasis)" and how much material advance it is prepared to forgo, to preserve and conserve the world we live in. The quality of living, and the endeavour to preserve the very ability of man to live, must become increasingly the concern of all people and the Governments". (Hansard, p.174)

The M.M.B.W. concept of "social" is no less restricted. A concept of "interaction" is produced which has nothing directly to do with intense and satisfying experience with other people around some selected activity.<sup>1/4</sup> There is no consideration of how to complement an objective of reducing energy per head through "interaction" based on non-consumerist behaviour.

Instead "Interaction" has been devised as a concept of ease of access (mainly by private car) based on present travel trends. Hence there is no mention of a concept of deliberately clustering of people-intensive activities together in the suburbs, to maximise opportunity for activity. In the M.M.B.W. report "life style" seems to be confined to the single aspect of density of houses or flats. There is no hint of understanding that "life style" should be measured by the extent to which people relate to other people ~~with or~~ without travelling ...and preferably without travelling) as well as the quality of that relationship. The M.M.B.W. has not yet grasped the fact that absorbing participatory activities are the only effective substitute for both consumerist accumulation and relatively aimless travel. The word "interaction" as used in the report has very little to do with making it possible for people to reach their full stature as social beings.

So again and again throughout the M.M.B.W. Report we read the words "social, economic, and environmental". It may be an advance for the M.M.B.W. to recognise that social welfare, community and environmental "amenities" should be "built in" to all urban developments by a management approach to planning. However we should not have any illusions that the words "social" and "environmental" as used by the M.M.B.W., bear any resemblance whatever to any attempt to conserve energy or set out to change life styles in any sufficiently fundamental fashion that could ensure that energy per-head is reduced.

Turning to the five strategies, note that the first (decentralisation) and the last (dispersed commuter settlements) are "out" for the period immediately ahead. The first, because it could not have any substantial effect for 10 to 15 years; the second because it is too extravagant a solution.

Strategy 2. "Redevelopment and forced concentration on the west and north" is the original Bernard Evans - Hamer scheme promulgated by the M.M.B.W. Hamer in 1968 when announcing the Bolte Government planning policy then "envisaged", "a population increase of 500,000 by redevelopment of the inner<sup>1/4</sup> suburbs", and Bernard Evans wanted development to west and north to better centralise the central business district within the metropolis.

The Hamer government changed its tune on the massive redevelopment scheme in the face of resident opposition.

The M.M.B.W. compliantly followed, and shifted from Strategy No.2 to Strategy No.3 "Demand Planning". With careful Public Relations wording, this is presented as the obvious popular choice. An example of such tendentious P.R. is the heading to strategy 3 "Preserve population and structures in present urban areas". The same headline could be used for Strategies 1, 4 and 5 as well! It seems that words were carefully chosen to make this strategy sound the most sensible and small "1" liberal as compared with the other strategies.

But, "demand" planning for regional land-use design is just as much non-planning as "demand" planning for the 1969 Metropolitan Transportation Committee Plan was for transport. The "trend" ecologically speaking is definitely bad and must be consciously planned against.

The only really radical alternative is Strategy No.4, the linear City into Gippsland. Three objectors put forward this concept. The Town and Country Association, Mrs. Margot Nicholls and the Crows. The case of the Crows will be dealt with as it is more radical and thoroughgoing than the other two objectors. (The Crow's case is contained in book "Plan for Melbourne, Part 3 - one corridor of participants - not seven corridors of power". Price \$3.00 available from authors 52 Victoria St., Carlton, 3053).

### (3) Radical Alternatives Not Examined.

The M.M.B.W. Report goes to considerable pains to demolish the Crow plan not on one or two grounds, but on every possible ground. A perceptive reader who had not studied the Crows case would conclude from the M.M.B.W. report that the single corridor idea was completely worthless on every score.

Yet the fact is that the Crow plan has not been examined at all.

It is made to appear that it has. The heading to Strategy 4 (see above) seems to be the Crows' plan. The words "Crow" or "Crow and others" appears several times through the M.M.B.W. text in this section in particular. But nowhere are the Crows' ideas analysed.

True, the services of scientists, and economists have been sought by the M.M.B.W. and their findings are gathered into "attachments" at the end of the report. Although these "attachments" may appear to be about the Crow plan, none of their papers address themselves to the essence of the concept of the Gippsland corridor as envisaged by the Crows, so their "findings" on linear city concepts (where they are mentioned) are not what they seem.

Space does not permit a full description of the Crow plan here, nor a full description of the elusiveness of the MMBW Report. It is however, possible to outline some of the principles underlying the Crows proposals and to show how these were ignored in the Board's examination of their case.

For the rest of this article the words "M.M.B.W. Report" will refer to the 1974 "Report on General Concept Objections" (see above); and the words "The Concourse Case" will refer to the case expanded in the Crow's book "Plan for Melbourne, Part 3". This word "concourse" has been chosen to highlight the fact that the M.M.B.W. whilst understanding the physical aspects of the Gippsland corridor, i.e. its linear shape, and rapid transit, fails to grasp the social aspects. "Concourse" is defined by the Crow's as "deliberate voluntary involvement around a common purpose" by a group of people arising out of which a "collective" begins to form. And, by "collective" is meant that, "since there is a common purpose there begins to develop, a spirit of each contributing as best she or he can, some with highest skills, others with humble offerings, but all with a quickening appreciation of each other, all developing a more elevated concept of their aims, and with it, incidentally, an increasingly more effective impact on the 'tone' of 'ethos' of the community generally". This objective to overcome alienation is the reason for proposing within the concourses a clustering of all people - intensive activity to facilitate "concourse" as so defined.

Issues the M.M.B.W. Ignored.

(1) Energy Expenditure for Transport.

The Concourse Case: asked the M.M.B.W. to assess the difference in energy expenditure of a linear corridor with rapid rail transit versus radial design.

Note, the Crow's linear corridor (unlike the T.C.P.A. or Mrs. Nicholl's case) is deliberately designed to eliminate the need for the private car in most work-a-day situations, by a combination of the following -

(i) Local very "mixed" and highly urban centres at each interchange would have high density in the "core" area and medium density in the "heart" around each core, so that there would be more people living or working within a short walk of the interchange.

(ii) The core and heart would be car-free and very compact and served with shuttle mini-bus (or more modern public transport) from the edges of the corridor to the interchange, so that those living in the outer, lower density areas would have no advantage in taking a car for the short journey to the interchange.

(iii) The rapid transit would have no super-highway to compete with it and would be, say, three times faster than the car, thus disadvantaging the car for any long journey since the linear shape of the corridor would directionalise all transport thus robbing the car of its superiority for multi-directional journeys.

(iv) The mixed assortment of workplaces, learning places, and facilities for leisure-time activities in the heart and core could make local employment and enjoyment more attractive thus requiring less travel for many people.

(v) Those who did have to commute to other centres in the corridor would not need a car on alighting because all people-intensive activities would be found around the interchange of their destination.

The Concourse Case argues that the radial design, by contrast, compels the use of the car and truck. Since the hearings of the Crow's objection figures for Melbourne suggest that private cars average  $2\frac{1}{2}$  times more energy than public transport "Some Systems Concepts for Urban Planning" by J.F. Brotchie, Division of Building Research, C.S.I.R.O., Melbourne, p.10. Estimate by R.Schmidt).

The M.M.B.W. Report does not deal with this at all.

(2) Energy Expenditure for Consumerism.

The Concourse Case argues that, apart from saving on fossil fuel for transport for the above interconnected reasons, the participatory type of life where local citizens of all ages would find attractions in their own or neighbouring local centres, would help combat the present trend to increasing consumerism and aimless travel now often regarded as recreation. The effect of such in-built social opportunities would be to reduce energy per head, not only because there would be less energy used in transport to places of recreation, but even more importantly because the human relationships that would flourish would not depend on the personal acquisition and consumption of goods. The Crows argue for this anti-consumerist life-style.

The M.M.B.W. Report does not deal with these proposals.

(3) Enrichment of Life by Participatory Activity.

The Concourse Case argues that the random, scattering, instant-mobility attributes of the car way of life tends to break up stable social activities which people need in order to feel they "belong" in a particular community.



They argue that copious provision for voluntary participatory activities interspersed with mixed retail, commercial, industrial, residential and entertainment right in the best more frequented locations of the urban centres would help supply a feeling of satisfaction and indentuity. An essential condition for such centres to flourish is an enlightened social policy.

The M.M.B.W. was asked to have sociologists assess the likely social effect as between a Gippsland corridor deliberately organised for such human size urban attractions as against the accepted type of suburbs planned for in the radial corridors.

The M.M.B.W. does not deal anywhere with these radical proposals. In their report the sociological problems are confined to those of "structural unemployment, income polarisation and social dysfunction" and particularly apply to deprivation of some parts of the region such as the western and northern suburbs as compared to others (see below for further comments on this).

Issues the M.M.B.W. Evade.

(4) "Interaction" Between "Activities".

The M.M.B.W. sponsored three C.S.I.R.O. scientists....Messrs. R.Sharpe, R.F.Brotchie, and P.A. Ahern who used what they call their "TOPAZ" model. TOPAZ is short for "Technique for the Optimum Placement of Activities into Zones". The model, they explain, "identifies an urban system to be allocated to a series of zones to maximise an objective of overall benefit less cost of interaction between activities together with the benefit less cost of establishment of activities over a set of time periods".

They state "only two activities are considered namely 1) residential development of an average density of 25 people per gross hectare (10 people per gross acre) - 2) industrial and commercial development at an average density of fifty workers per gross hectare (20 people per gross acre)(p.6) ... "each zone is assumed to be homogeneous in character"(p.6a). The residential "activity" includes, for the authors, "local shopping, local commerce, local education". In addition "the interaction between activities considered are the flows of people for work, residential and industrial trips together with flows of goods from industrial to residential areas. The levels of these interactions have been extrapolated from a 1964 survey carried out by the Melbourne Transportation Committee"...(p.7)

In other words, the authors are dealing with the familiar "zoning" into "residential" V "industrial", the familiar homogeneous low density outer suburban housing and the familiar "extrapolated" transport mode prediction starting from a point in 1964 where cars were already predominant and are assumed to increase per family in the future.

The Concourse case objects that the separate zones only partially fit their model since the Gippsland corridor plan provided "mixed zones" (with E.P.A. control) where at the interchanges industrial commercial, retail, recreational and educational facilities are integrated and so the "flow" would be quite different. Main trips would be by pedestrians towards the urban centres or short shuttle journeys from lower density residential areas on the edge of the corridor to the interchanges; moreover, such longer "flows" as were required would be "flows" along the corridor to similar mixed centres where pedestrian-power would suffice for the compact car-free centres.

Naturally if one simply tries to extrude life-as-is into a long car-based homogeneous low-density, traditionally-zoned corridor there will be less "interaction" as the TOPAZ researchers and the M.M.B.W. claim; especially when interaction with the present  $2\frac{1}{2}$  million present built up area of Melbourne is included (as it is)!

It is not surprising that since the M.M.B.W. have apparently given these assumptions to the TOPAZ researchers (see TOPAZ papers pp.5 & 6) that they



get back a damning picture "major constraint in choice of life styles, minimum pressure for change in current life style..." "High cost of interaction for people and activities". Just the very opposite to the Gippsland corridor proposals presented to the M.M.B.W.! These provided for maximum opportunity for interaction of activities with a minimum of travel for industrial, whitecollar, or professional workers, secondary students, elderly people and housewives to inter-relate in the local centre either for purposes of work or participatory activities or both. The whole concept is designed to encourage such "interaction".

There is no need to be opposed to the TOPAZ-type efforts or any other attempt to simulate urban systems. But the computers cannot print out the Concourse-type of proposals for "interaction" based on diametrically opposed basic assumptions which are fed into a model where the very words "interaction", "flow", and "activity" hardly mean the same thing, so different are the life-styles envisaged.

If the Concourse corridor plan is to be subjected to modelling then interaction within a linear corridor along (as well as interaction between the corridor and the present metropolis) should be projected far into the future because the longer the corridor grows the more effective public transport and participatory activities would become. Also to be taken into the model should be the longer-term proposals for "restructuring present Melbourne" (Plan for Melbourne Part 3 pp. 106 to 121). Accessibility is meaningless if you are already there.

#### (5) Cost of Interaction.

The M.M.B.W. damns the linear corridor in a Table (p.87 M.M.B.W. Report p.23 TOPAZ Report) which shows that the "Frankston and Berwick extended corridor", although it has the lowest land cost, the lowest services cost and comparable building cost, has an "interaction" cost, as compared to the M.M.B.W. radial "base solution" cost that is so high that the total of this semi-linear solution is almost the highest cost of all possible variations.

The Concourse case contests these results. They merely prove that the Concourse case has not been examined.

Since the extrapolations used by TOPAZ are based on the 1964 Metropolitan Transport Committee relationships, no consideration has been given to a completely different form of transport and urban system that could radically alter the "costs" factor.

"Travel" is the basis of "interaction" in the TOPAZ model yet a tremendously accumulating quantity of "interaction" between people could be proceeding without ever appearing as "travel". The blossoming of a fragile "concourse" into a stable "collective" would escape TOPAZ measurement altogether.

The saving of the costs of a full freeway network for present Melbourne would have to be off-set against the establishment... costs of rapid transit and the interchange structure in the Gippsland corridor, and this is not mentioned in the TOPAZ papers. The freeway network could well be the more costly. But in any case when it come to costs, initially the corridor is likely to be more costly because of the costs unavoidably associated with a systemic reorganisation of the style and structure of the city.

Once established, however, unit costs should fall because everything gets back onto a more human scale. But this would not be evident by averaging costs over the period 1970 - 2000. Maybe by 1980 or 1990 and onwards, the linear city could prove by far the "cheapest" even in traditional economic terms, let alone ecological terms. But even if

this effect did not occur until 2010 it might still be worth waiting for because of the social and ecological advantages.

6. "Environmental Impact" Test.

The M.M.B.W. say that it is preferable to channel development into corridors that would penetrate into areas of "lower ecological significance"; therefore, the corridors should be to the west and north, and not south-east where all the natural features are better (p.44)

Admittedly it is right to conserve really choice places for recreation, such as the Yarra Valley, or the Dandenongs, but it is ridiculous to say that of all the land that lies around Melbourne in every direction it is sensible to deliberately select the least attractive land for human habitation. The west is described in the 1954 M.M.B.W. report as a "flat windswept and barren plain, more suitable for industrial than residential use".

A single corridor into the Latrobe Valley would not exactly be blazing a trail through virgin bush, because, almost all the land is already affected by pastoral or agricultural development.

If the M.M.B.W. means that it is the weekend or holiday excursionist into the bush who will be making such an adverse impact, then it is the car rather than people that is responsible for the damage. The Dividing Range and the South Gippsland Ranges are already easily within car distance for anyone who cares to make the trip from Melbourne.

But, typically, the M.M.B.W. fails to deal with the effect of more urban, participatory life-style in a structured corridor and how such new opportunities for human activity would lessen the inclination for people to want to escape every weekend through using the car to get away from the boredom of suburbia. Nor is there any consideration by the M.M.B.W. of the feasibility of reduction of car travel for excursions and holidays by means of an efficient public transport system to serve holiday and picnic resorts, that are less suburbanised and more attractive than the present ones.

(Cont. next page)

(7) Vulnerability of Westernport

The M.M.B.W. reports that there is a special Environmental Study proceeding on the question of the impact of urban development within the Westernport catchment and another Task Force making a "south-eastern study" of the general area.

This Task Force includes the Cities Commission, T.C.P.B., M.M.B.W., and Westernport Regional Authority. The worry regarding Westernport is that the waters in the Northern part of the Bay have very little movement; therefore any pollution would not easily be washed out to the ocean.

The Concourse Case acknowledged that there is this environmental danger. (It is acknowledged by the Crown in Plan for Melbourne Part 3 at page 13 where it is stated "especial care, at a cost, would therefore have to be taken to ensure high levels of pollution control in the country to the north of Western Port which drains into it.")

The costs of controlling pollution into Westernport would be counterbalanced by lower costs of pollution control for the Merri, Plenty and Lilydale corridors, all of which drain into the Yarra and, as the M.M.B.W. admits, the development of these areas would lead to anti-pollution costs and heavy flood-mitigation costs.

(8) Unsightly Quarries

The M.M.B.W. have discovered a novel reason against developing in the south-eastern corridor. Since construction materials, including stone, clays and sand would be taken away from hilltops there would be ugly "perceived environment".

The Concourse Case had not thought of that! But surely, to avoid such a disaster, construction material could be brought by rail transport from the west ~~and the north~~, where quarrying is from holes rather than from hills. In any case, the amount of quarried material would be greatly reduced if railed transit served the corridor, thus eliminating vast quantities of materials otherwise required for freeways and roadways.

(9) Income Polarisation, Structural Unemployment and Social Dysfunction

The M.M.B.W. Report includes a paper, "The Economic Consequences of Alternative Strategies" by F.M. Little and R.L. Gardner (p.56). This provides some useful material, and draws the conclusion that increased job opportunities for the less skilled and less educated will need to come from an accelerated expansion of the personal services sector of tertiary activity. From this it follows that it is in a centralised urban life style that the demands for urban recreational and personal services are likely to be generated most readily...as a consequence the income polarisation and associated dysfunction minimised. In the light of this implication, it is suggested that the M.M.B.W.

"should not pursue a course of internal decentralization by means of linear city development, as this would tend to maintain the present decentralised suburban form which is inimical to the desired growth of a broad-based service sector of employment".

The Concourse Case can merely say that it seems the authors of this paper had not been given a copy of Plan for Melbourne Part 3. Here they would have read the case for "highly urban local centres" in a linear corridor especially designed to achieve the very conditions they advocate!

These authors, like the C.S.I.R.O. scientists ( R. Sharpe, J.F. Brotchie and P.A. Ahern), have simply extruded the dispersed outer-suburban pattern of development into a linear form and, naturally, they find that it does not fit!

Incidentally, if new communities in the linear corridor are gradually becoming more urbanised, then the sum total of urban-type activities for the whole metropolis will be increasing. The local activities under such conditions will feed the central C.B.D. activities which would not necessarily decline but would be complemented.

#### (10) The Deprived

The M.M.B.W. includes a paper (on p.72), "Sociological Aspects of Planning Politics" by R. Surmon. He tackles the problem of social consequences of "polarisation of opportunities such that some people do not have the opportunity to consume goods and community services to the extent enjoyed by people in other favourably developed local government areas".

This condition is typified by the western and northern suburbs. Mr Surmon firmly establishes that "the deficiencies in amenities in existing communities must be made good". He rejects large low-income estates developed by the Housing Commission or private realtors and new low-density sprawl without a total range of services.

He embraces, in brief, the generalised theory that "community concern" and involvement is part of the remedy. He states that social and economic infrastructure should be given more emphasis than planning the physical form.

However, nowhere in his positive assertions nor in the long list of unanswered questions at the end of the paper, is there any suggestion of the effect of corridor or satellite growth on the already built-up area in the north and west. There is no concept which explains why the deprivation of these areas will be lifted up by developments beyond the already built-up area.

The M.M.B.W., on the other hand, puts the case that "well-serviced development at appropriate locations in the north and west may assist in encouraging the retention of population now migrating to the south and east, with possible benefits in terms of establishing a broader range of skills and income groups within the north and west areas".

By the term "well-serviced development" is meant new suburbs built beyond the present suburbs, or even "satellite" development as at Melton.



This conclusion by the M.M.B.W. does not follow from Mr Surmon's material.

In the contrast between the five different Strategies, according to the M.M.B.W. report, the linear solution results in "major extension of... relative deprivation, particularly within northern, western and central sectors". For good measure, what the M.M.B.W. term "city management resources" in a linear city solution would result in "dispersal of city management skills and resources in favour of a south-east corridor, accelerated rundown of financial resources (rateable base) within the northern, western and central sectors."

The Concourse Case is that no attempt has been made to explain how, for example, the presently deprived western suburbs are to benefit from a Melton corridor or a Melton satellite, or how Doveton can benefit from a Berwick corridor. The experience of the past shows that deprived suburbs such as Collingwood and Richmond were not advantaged when Melbourne sprawled east and southward.

The M.M.B.W. report states that there would be a supply of "a broader range of skills and income groups" in the new suburbs or satellites. This may ease the shortage and cheapen the salaries of skilled and managerial personnel of factories and offices in the already built-up area in the north and the west and replace personnel of this character now drawn from the east and south.

However, the benefit from this is a benefit to the employers and not a benefit to those employees who are now resident in the "deprived areas". And it certainly benefits the developer!

In Plan for Melbourne Part 3 there is an analysis of the "Deprived West" and solutions proposed, but neither has been dealt with at all by the M.M.B.W.

#### (11) Choice of Location

The M.M.B.W. claim that if there is new development to the south-east and not to the west and north, there will be less "choice of location".

The Concourse Case is that the obvious answer to this claim is that all planning worthy of the name in cities of hundreds of thousands restricts "choice of location", in the sense that direction is given for new growth for the hundreds and thousands. The M.M.B.W. itself argues for "the least number of corridors", which presumably also constricts "choice of location"!! The proposed "green wedge" pattern severely restricts choice in the M.M.B.W. plan!

This limitation of choices is different from restricting individuals or families from living in any part of present built-up Melbourne they may wish. This choice would still be open to them whether there was a linear corridor or not.

Actually, an individual's choice of range of life-styles (in the sense above described) is even more important than a choice of geographic location, and this the M.M.B.W. does not deal with.

#### A PLAY ON WORDS AS BASIS FOR 10 to 15 YEAR PLAN

The case for the alternative of a linear city with concourses for collectives has been "demolished" by the M.M.B.W.

This has not been done by analysis but by a combination of silence and a play on words which have different meanings so that what is demolished is not the case for a linear development as proposed in Plan for Melbourne Part 3 but some other proposition that bears no relation to the case put.

The M.M.B.W. is unashamedly capable of making the following statement which turns the linear city (with concourses) case on its head: "Internal decentralization by means of a linear city...will tend to extend the present decentralised suburban form" (p.37)! So the two principles on which the M.M.B.W. (at p.22) erects its recommendations for an "interim strategy" to the Government are -

(1) ... "The Government should avoid any extreme strategy which ignores socio-economic consequences" by which, apparently, the linear concourse case is supposed to be excluded because it is alleged (wrongly) to have the consequence of depriving the residents of the western and northern suburbs.

(2) "...it should be decided not to further curtail individual freedom to locate in the metropolitan area wherever desired", by which, apparently, the Gippsland linear concourses case is supposed to be excluded, because it is alleged (wrongly) that individual choice of location for north, south, east or west would be denied and/or it is implied (wrongly) that under the M.M.B.W. plan itself new major urban growth can have freedom of location "wherever desired".

IN FACT, if these really are the "principles" on which Melbourne is to be developed for 10 or 15 years, the Government should commence immediately to implement the Gippsland corridor, because (i) it has far greater "socio-economic" as well as ecological advantages whilst not depriving the west or north, and (ii) it has the potential for a genuine choice by providing a range of life-styles, without depriving any individual or family of their "freedom" to locate anywhere in the present built up Melbourne.

The M.M.B.W. sent its recommendations to the Government. Ruth and Maurie Crow, having no other remedy left, have written to the Minister for Local Government (on 18 April '74) asking that the Government "refrain from making any further decisions and reconsider your Government's decision of 28 March until the Crow plan has been given consideration."

## REGIONAL PLAN ADJUSTMENTS

(for Melbourne readers)

Adjustments to the '71 plan include :-

- (1) Deletion of the "Lilydale" and "Merri" corridors, but proposed development instead of the "Plenty" corridor which lies between the two as far as Whittlesea (note: this still leaves a radial design).
- (2) Favoured areas within the remaining corridors to be designated "investigation areas" (see map 1), such portions of which, after investigation, are judged suitable for urban development to be termed "deferred development zones".
- (3) What is left of the original "corridor" to be regarded as non-urban zones set aside to provide an option for longer term decision-making.
- (4) Immediate declaration of "urban zones" in areas all around Melbourne (see map 2). (Note: these closer areas, too, are radial.)
- (5) A positive "staging" plan for all new works and services and with a "management approach" to city development involving co-ordination of all authorities to phase development within the context of a State strategy.
- (6) Amplification of community services and regard for economics of development. Part C of the Report by the Research and Development Department of the Board is peppered with references to the need for a strategy which included "socio-economic factors" or "social and economic goals" which it is acknowledged, in the past "have not been adequately considered".

(Note: turn to the last two pages of this issue for maps 1 & 2).

## TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING BOARD OVERVIEW

The T.C.P.B. takes a rather aloof overview of the M.M.B.W. report for a rescrambled plan for Melbourne. As the Government's senior planning adviser, the Board carefully refuses to commit itself to details, a role no doubt assumed as befitting its senior status.

But it also refuses to advance any strong alternative principles, which, as senior adviser, it really ought to do. After all, Melbourne region represents some 70 per cent of the State's wealth and population.

Admittedly, the T.C.P.B. has the courage to criticize itself by way of excuse, explaining that "...the Board is willing to recognize its own shortcomings in relation to the preparation of State strategies, but these have been imposed by financial and manpower restrictions, not through lack of intention." (p.19)

This is certainly historically correct. The Bolte Government erected the T.C.P.B. into a potentially key position in the State Planning Council in 1968 and charged it with preparation of strategic policies for the whole State. The Government said "plan" and "co-ordinate all State departments and instruments" and simultaneously denied the T.C.P.B. the sinews of planning and co-ordination!

The shortcomings of State and metropolitan planning come back squarely onto the shoulders of the State Government, no matter what shortcomings and T.C.P.B. and the M.M.B.W. might display. This is as it should be, because PR image-making

on the cheap is no substitute for statesmanship. Only a strong State Government, committed to planning, can enforce upon its own Departments and instrumentalities a co-ordinated "management approach" through the State Planning Council.

The T.C.P.B. report in its cautious and veiled terms implies just this in the very last sentence of the report. It makes a plea for the "legislated functions" of this Council" (set up in 1968) "to be implemented".

The T.C.P.B. administers several rebukes to the M.M.B.W. on its report - some mild, one stinging, but all deserved. For instance, it says that the M.M.B.W. "failed to analyse the importance of the C.B.D. in functional economic and, importantly, social terms". The T.C.P.B. also considers that "...the present C.B.D will remain the prime focus for the region but this does not preclude the development of other commercial centres of a substantially larger nature than was anticipated in the 1971 and Interim Reports." (p.17).

(In Plan for Melbourne Part 3, the Crows did, incidentally, attempt an analysis of the C.B.D. in functional and social terms and also, of course, projected district and local centres in similar terms. However, they did neglect to spell out carefully enough the interaction between the C.B.D. and local centres. This relationship should be seen as a complementary one, not a competitive one.) It is disappointing that the T.C.P.B. did not take the opportunity in its report to outline its own concept of the role of the C.B.D. as the central "hub" and the importance of local "hubs" and the nature of the relationship they recommend that there should be between the two. If it had applied itself to this task, maybe the T.C.P.B. would have seen the superior merits of the "concourse" linear idea as against the radial development.

Likewise, the T.C.P.B. rebukes the M.M.B.W. because in its 1971 report, "heavy reliance is placed upon the statutory scheme together with the provision for service facilities"...and "...methods of implementing policies relating to the built environment or rehabilitation zones are not investigated". (p.11.)

(In Plan for Melbourne Part 3 pp.106-121 the section, "Restructuring Present Melbourne" is the Crows attempt to come to grips with this problem. Also, in Plan for Melbourne Part 2 pp.77-122 they have stated their ideas on rehabilitation, and in Part 3 (pp.36-42) they have proposed how to de-segregate the deprived west.)

The T.C.P.B.'s main characterization of the M.M.B.W.1974 Report is that: "In essence no changes to the basic concepts of the 1971 Report are recommended" - only "changes in priorities and the means by which the concepts may be developed" (p.13). It is critical of the M.M.B.W.'s statement that "the single corridor concept they (i.e. some objectors) favoured is in effect only a modification of the Board's multi-corridor concept". (p.11 of MMBW Report and quoted p.13 of TCPB Report). The T.C.P.B. rejoins: "In reality, a single corridor could result in an urban pattern vastly different from the M.M.B.W. corridor pattern. For example, the relationship between commercial centres in the single corridor and Melbourne might not be the same as that in the multi-corridor concept. Transportation modes and networks might also be significantly different. Furthermore it is extremely doubtful whether implementation of a single corridor policy would require stringent measures to be imposed in other areas to any greater degree than the multi-corridor concept, bearing in mind the established trend of population movement to the south-east." (pp.13-14).



Having pronounced on how wrong the M.M.B.W. analysis might be on some of the more obvious features of the main radical alternative of a linear city, the T.C.P.B. report meekly "fully endorses" the green wedge policy of the M.M.B.W. and the radially distributed recommended "urban zones" enough for the next 10 to 15 years! That is why it is fair enough to say that as far as the 10 to 15 years program is concerned, the MMBW report and the TCPB policy are Tweedle-dum and Tweedle-dee.

What is the point of the TCPB recommending that there be further studies of "continuous linear growth" (p.23) if it gives the green light to radial growth, so that ecologically and socially Melbourne marches 15 years in the wrong direction? What is the point of the State Government projecting an enquiry on conserving energy "later this year" (Herald 18/4/74) if, in the meantime, in its turn, it gives the green light to a regional plan that might expend for all new growth, say, twice the fossil fuel energy it need to do, because the very design compels maximum car usage and with it the 'car way of life' and consumerism?

The stinging rebuke by the T.C.P.B. is not administered to the MMBW's planning ideas but to its treatment of objectors. It says "...The wording of paragraphs relating to the five possible strategies proposed is strongly biased and the MMBW's preference, while not explicitly stated, is quite clear (p.16); and further "...there are several concept objections which are not directly answered and some of the objectors may well be disappointed with this approach." (p.21)

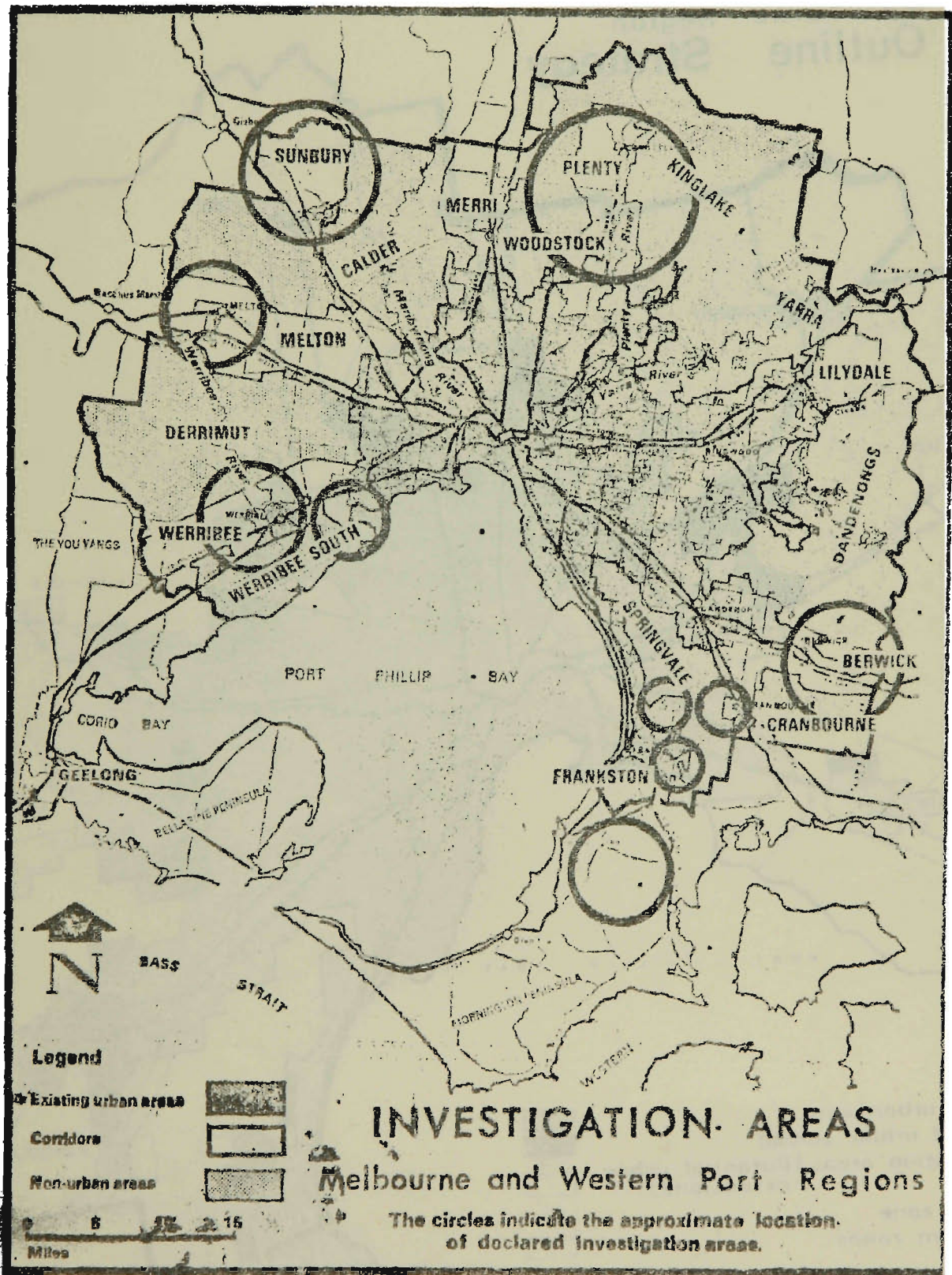
As we have indicated above, so far as the linear concourse plan is concerned, the bias is not confined to the section dealing with the five strategies, but occurs throughout the MMBW Report in a patently systematic way.

Such manoeuvres and cavalier treatment of radical urban alternatives that do have the basis of ecological and social solutions will not stand the test of time.

(For two maps---see pp 16 and 17.)

Agg  
29/3/24

The land the State will 'freeze'



MAP NO 1



# Melbourne Region Outline Strategy

