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I.4I. 7I

Port Phillip Authority!

"Beta" contributed three articles in Irregular number 40 (The Environment Protection Act, the Western Port Steel Works Act, and the Land Conservation Act). This issues he writes on the Port Phillip Authority.

Whilst it is interesting to learn that a master plan for development of Bay foreshores is being prepared, it is disturbing to find out that the Port Phillip Authority is hampered by not having a budget of its own from which to finance urgent works.

I would like to put forward some suggestions, as to how the Authority and its work can be improved.

The Authority has a consultative Council, 9 members are representatives of government departments and public authorities. There is one representative of organisations "having a special interest in the Port Phillip area" and there are four representatives for all the bayside municipalities.

My contention is that the consultative council should give broader representation to the municipalities and to the organisations having a special interest in the Bay, that these representatives should make the decisions rather than public servants whose role I believe is to advise, not rule. If by this means the public is encouraged to participate in decision-making it will more readily contribute the necessary finance and will look after the work done on the foreshores.

The master plan is said to be for "the development" of the Bay foreshores. I wonder if this means the provision of bigger and bigger car parks and more high-class restaurants at the expense of the plant and wild life which is so precious to the balance of nature and as a place for busy suburban dwellers to relax in.

In this regard I think that before the master plan is adopted it should be put on display in each bayside municipality and in the city so that suggestions and objections may be made by the public.

There are 39 foreshore committees of management which operate around the Bay. They have very differing policies, but they could be made very effective in bringing forward the wishes of local people. At the same time, they would have to co-operate in the master plan when it is finally adopted.

The matter of finance for the Port Phillip Authority could probably be handled in several different ways, for example, direct Treasury grants or allocations of the revenue received from foreshore rents and motor car parking.

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2.4I.7I.

The English National Parks System .

England's concept of a national park is of a region put to the most complex multiple-use by contrast with Victoria's closed reservation and limited public areas.

In the "Age" 28/12/'63 Professor John Turner described "The Peak District" "It is a park put to the most complex multiple-use" He describes it as an area about 40 miles by 24 miles at its widest point, governed by county councils with all development under the benevolent authority of a joint planning board of 27 representatives. Eighteen are appointed by local government bodies and the remainder by the Minister of Housing and Local Government.

"The Peak District Planning Board has its own technical department and planning officer. It does not prevent development, but it prevents it from ruining an area which is likely to give pleasure and relaxation to millions of people for years to come. Half the population of England is within 50 miles of its mainly natural boundaries. Within the D. N. P. country men still carry on their old avocations. The only sufferers are the land speculators and jerry-builders, who, here as elsewhere, mistake liberty for licence."

Professor Turner revisited the Peak District National Park about a year ago and he returned even more convinced of the need of the application of its principles to the Yarra Valley, Dandenongs and Mornington Peninsular.

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3.4I/ 7I/

The Bushlands Magna Carta

This Magna Carta was presented to a public meeting at the Palais Theatre, St. Kilda, on Sunday October 26 1969. by the Save Our Bushlands Action Committee. We are including the Charter in this issue of Irregular because both this Irregular and number 40 have mainly been devoted to articles on environmental problems.

"There is just one hope of repulsing the tyrannical ambitions of civilisation to conquer every niche on the whole earth. That hope is the organisation of spirited people who will fight for the freedom of the wilderness" Robert Marshall.

"The Charter "

1. Freeze action on all alienation projects immediately until full consideration can be given to the potential of the land for nature conservation.
2. Considerably strengthen the national parks authority by providing increased funds, increased staff and more positive direction;
3. Provide for an urgent investigation to indicate areas suitable for dedication as national parks and wild life reserves, employing for this purpose talents already available in the community (Universities, scientific organisations etc) until such time as the work can be carried out by the strengthened national parks and wildlife authorities.
4. Reserve as parks and wildlife reserves the greater part of Victoria's existing 9. million acres of uncommitted Crown land together with such other areas as may have value for conservation;
5. Provide that the establishment and revocation of national parks and wildlife reserves be by Act of Parliament only.
6. Institute a system of public notification for all proposed changes of land use on Crown lands which threaten nature conservation values, and provide for the holding of public enquiries in the event of objections to such proposals.
7. Make sure that an adequate amount of unpolluted water reaches Victoria's swamps, and creek beds and the public right of access to water frontages is protected.

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4/4I/ 70.

Some Trade Union Resolutions.

At a recent conference of the Amalgamated Engineering Union a number of resolutions were passed on planning matters.

Some Trade Union Resolutions ...continued.

Space does not permit the recording of the full text of the resolutions but the following extracts will give an indication of them.

Environment and Pollution..... "Conference believes that only strong pressure from the people will ensure that the provisions of the Conservation Bill are properly enforced..... Conference states that Branches should continue to rigidly pinpoint local sources of pollution and to develop community action against them.

... "Believing prevention is the best cure, we call on the Commonwealth Council and the A.C.T.U to take up this matter urgently with the Federal Government, to demand a Federal Enquiry by experts not influenced by big business monopoly interests, and immediately take steps to implement the findings of such an enquiry with insistence on uniform State legislation based on these findings, with heavy penalties against those who cause pollution."

Urban Renewal....."Conference declares the Urban Renewal Bill in its present form to be an iniquitous piece of legislation. Conference states that it can have no faith in the Housing Commission as the Urban Renewal Authority because of its past record.... Conference declares that the role of the Housing Commission must remain what it was originally formed to do.; That is to erect low cost housing for those on lower and fixed incomes who are unable to afford high rents or to buy their own houses."

Melbourne Transportation Plan A long resolution on this proposed an alternative scheme mainly based on "public transport being made sufficiently attractive and large car parks developed near or over train terminuses and selected railway stations."

The Plan is criticised "The basic assumption in the Plan can be stated thus; the committee has looked at the needs of each individual traveller as an individual and has not taken into account, sufficiently at any rate, the needs of the community as the prime social factor."

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5/4I/7I/

An Appeal from South Australia.

The Town and Country Planning Association of South Australia has circulated a petition to scientists, technologists and economists.

The petition first states.

1. The resources of planet Earth are finite.

2. The capacity of the environment to renew resources that are used up and to repair the damage caused by the exploitation of those resources is limited and decreasing.

After amplifying these two points it then states...

"We therefore urge those who guide Australia's future to investigate;

1. the population that Australia can support over the long term and its relationship with standard of living.

2. the details of a balanced economic system, i.e., a system in which productivity (and consequent environmental damage) is balanced against the capacity of the total environment to maintain itself. With gross national product set by environmental limits, increase in material standards of living must follow decreased population or adoption of less damaging productive processes.

3. the social changes of all kinds necessary to achieve and maintain the patterns outlined by 1. and 2.

"For biological and ecological reasons civilisation based on the present western technology cannot survive much longer. Careful forethought and a willingness to embrace fundamental change are necessary if civilisation is to survive at all. Australia's opportunity to examine and implement these fundamental changes before it is too late may be unique. The responsibility is great and the task urgent"

6/4I/'71

Did You Miss It ?

Quotations from articles which have recently appeared in newspapers, and periodicals, and from Hansard.

Kerang Flour Mill Closed. Mr. Broad, M.L.A. for Swan Hill, quote from Hansard March 2, 1971 (page 3848)

"I wish to inform the House, with some dismay, of the sudden closure of an important decentralised industry in Kerang. After operating for only two months, the flour mill owned by Robin Hood Flour Milling Company sold out to the Flourmillers Association, which has paid off the fourteen men and, within two days workmen have been busy removing the milling machinery.

"The Kerang Borough Council, acting under legislation recently enacted by this Parliament, advanced an amount of \$33,000 to assist in starting this industry, in which the Division of State Development has also played a part. The district felt something really worth-while had been started..... The closure of the flour mill has made a joke of the Kerang Borough Council's efforts to establish a worth-while decentralised industry..... I should like the Government to closely examine the circumstances of this failure."

Rural Towns More Costly than Cities. Dr. John Paterson comments on a 60 page report that he has prepared for the Premier's Department.

(Age 27. 3. '71) "What the study has proved is that big cities are less expensive when it comes to providing services compared with country towns. It does not suggest anywhere that decentralisation is uneconomic. On the contrary it points to economics of scale which can be achieved."

The article reports the most important findings.

Unit expenditure on water supply and sewage services were about \$4 in Melbourne compared with \$8.50 per person per year in the country

: Police services were \$5.50 per person in Melbourne as against \$7.50

: Overall costs of urban services in Melbourne come to \$71. a year a person as against \$17 for eight country centres

: Local government administration and garbage disposal were the only two areas in which country centres did better than Melbourne.

"Bloody Greedy" Developers. Mr. R.A. Gilling, President of Royal Australian Institute of Architects. (Australian March 24, 1971)

"We are concerned that developers and 'package dealers' are doing things without thought of the environment or paying lip-service by rock gardens or trees.... The Federal Government should accept the matter of responsibility for urban redevelopment"

Mr Gilling announced plans for the R.A.I.A. to set up a national alliance of architects, town planners and landscape architects to serve as a pressure group for total environment planning.

City Developers Mr. R. Hamer M.L.C. Minister for Local Government (Age 3.4. '71)

In this article Mr. Hamer announced that private street developers who damage the existing environment will face curbs under amendments to the Local Government Act. Mr Hamer stated...

"Suburban type road construction in bush areas can be highly damaging to the environment. The amendments embody our intention to bring environmental factors into the range of objections for the first time."

Pool Skills in Urban Planning Mr. G. Whitlam, the Leader of the Federal Opposition (Australian 25. 3. '71) (commenting on Mr Gilling's announcement ... see above)

"It is high time that a national framework of urban planning was established, and specific and appropriate planning responsibilities assigned within that framework to the Commonwealth Government, to the State Governments and to regional government. One of the features of an urban affairs department would be the establishment of

Did you Miss It ? continued.

a service organisation upon which planning authorities with slender means could draw for skills of engineers, architects and landscape architects."

Revolution in Architecture by Youth Dissent. Mr. Robin Boyd, President of the Victorian Chapter of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects. (Australian I. 4. '71)

"The new revolutionaries think of traffic control, pollution, slum rents, conservation, housewifely boredom, afforestation, noise control, civic politics and a dozen other kindred social problems as of about equal importance in their calling to the design of buildings."

Controlling Noise Pollution in Flats (From an article written by Christopher Jay "A World of De Luxe, High-Rise Acoustic Slums" in the Financial Review March 9, 1971)

"Because neither the builders nor the architects, currently accept any responsibility for the problem, more than 60 % of the home units constructed in Sydney during the past 10 years are known to be sub-standard in the terms of the adequacy of plumbing noise control..... Soundproofing can be incorporated cheaply as flats are built.... Committees of the Standards Association of Australia are working on general aspects of noise control and committee AK/5 is expected to release a draft standard on noise assessment, with respect to annoyance in residential areas for public review, within about a month."

Noise Pollution from Motor Traffic. Mrs A. Lawrence, a senior lecturer in architecture at the University of N.S.W. (Australian 25.3.71)
"At present in Australia, motor vehicle noise is uncontrolled.....
"Noise levels are increasing at the rate of a decibel a year and motor vehicles are the greatest single cause"

Coin-in-slot Battery Cars. Professor Marco Zanuso of Milan who was visiting Australia for lectures for the Australian Design Institute. (Herald 25. 3. '71)

"A French city in 1972 will try out something new to solve city traffic problems. It will provide tiny coin-in- the -slot battery-run cars for driving around the inner areas, and they will be left anywhere for the next user."

Can Arthurs Seat Be Saved ? Miss Grace E. Fraser Member of the Australia Institute of Landscape Architects. "Trust Newsletter April 1971)
"At least 300 plant species are known to occur on the range (Arthur's Seat) at least 25 percent are specific to the granite soils... There are few areas close to Melbourne where such a variety of vegetation types occur so close together..... gravel quarrying during the past 20 years has extended over scores of acres... Fine bushlands including creeks, waterfalls and fern gullies have been ruthlessly destroyed."

Ecology, Conservation and Politics. Leon Peres, Senior Lecturer in Political Science at Melbourne University. (Search, Oct, 1970)
"Environmentalists, then are automatically interested in the ways governments organise themselves, or in what is often called the machinery of government. They have taken the strongest exception to the particular principle of organisation almost universally adopted, namely organisation by a single purpose department or agency. Most departments working in fields of interest to conservationists are organised in this way. They are responsible either for a single resource, as in rivers, forests, soils, wildlife, and so on or attribute of a single resource as in agriculture, irrigation, health, transport and so on. There is no doubt that this kind of fragmentation causes a great many border conflicts and aggravates ecologically based environmental programmes."

..... "Investigating the City"

The Fitzroy Ecumenical Centre, in conjunction with the Methodist Department of Christian Education intends running a series of seven lectures entitled "Investigating the City". The series will be held at the Centre, 124 Napier St. Fitzroy commencing Tuesday April 20.8pm. For further information telephone Rev. Brian Howe 41.2050,