

# **m** **abitat**

**WORLD SETTLEMENTS:  
PERSPECTIVES**

**PANORAMA  
DE L'URBANISATION  
MONDIALE**

# habitat

Volume 19, nos. 3/4, 1976

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Habitat is a bi-monthly publication of Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation, and is listed in the Canadian Periodical Index. Second class mail registration number: 1519. Opinions expressed by the authors are not necessarily those of CMHC. All communications should be addressed to the Editor, E.H.Q. Smith, or the Associate Editor, Thérèse Aquin, at CMHC, Montreal Road, Ottawa K1A 0P7. ISSN 0017-6370

Habitat, revue bimestrielle de la Société centrale d'hypothèques et de logement, porte le numéro de recommandation d'objet de deuxième classe: 1519. Les opinions exprimées par les auteurs des articles ne sont pas nécessairement celles de la SCHL. Toute correspondance doit être adressée au rédacteur en chef, E.H.Q. Smith, ou à la rédactrice adjointe, Thérèse Aquin, à la SCHL, Chemin de Montréal, Ottawa K1A 0P7.

Barbara  
Ward\*



“ . . . to try to grasp everything is to risk grasping nothing. The entirety of the human condition certainly escapes the statistician. It probably escapes the poet. So whatever is written about our habitat must submit to being incomplete.”

“Today, with almost four thousand million beings on the planet, the added thousand million has taken only fifteen years. This rate of growth means that in the first decade of the next century, a whole new world, equivalent in numbers to this one, will be piled on top of the present level of population. Further ahead, the predictions become even more fantastic.”

“If we take ‘urban’ as the adjective to qualify settlements of more than 20,000 inhabitants, throughout most of human history at least ninety percent of the people have lived not in cities but in hamlets, villages, or at most in small towns.”

“By 1950, there were seventy-five ‘million-cities,’ fifty-one of them in developed regions, twenty-four in the developing world. Today, the developing nations have pulled ahead. They contain 101 such cities, out of a world total of 191. By 1985, the million-city will have jumped from 11 to 273 in less than a century—and 147 of them will be in the less developed lands.”

“To seek analogies for change on this scale, one has the obscure feeling that only the distant billennia of geological time can provide any adequate concept of the scale of upheaval.”

“We should hear, if we were listening, the mutter of the approaching storm.”

“The great Hebrew prophets—from Isaiah to Karl Marx—have called on man ‘to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the enslaved go free . . . sharing your bread with the hungry and bringing the homeless into your house.’ ” Isaiah 58:6-7.

“The rights of the downtrodden, the duties of the fortunate, the value and dignity of the poor, the harsh condemnation of irresponsible wealth, these are judgments and energies inherited from Western man’s Biblical tradition—inherited even when betrayed—and in our own day this tradition either colors the imagination, troubles the conscience, or at least perturbs the complacency of all mankind.”

\*Quotations from “The Home of Man” used with the kind permission of the author and her publisher, McClelland and Stewart Limited.

“When we try to establish even the minimum physical conditions of a worthy human existence, we confront the widest possible spectrum of uncertainty. For one thing, there are inescapable differences of climate and culture—Arctic housing tells us nothing about tropical standards, or Mediterranean radiance about the midnight sun. Diet, uses of energy, patterns of worship, work and play partly and rightly reflect a vast and precious variety of cultures and social purposes. But we can perhaps accept an irreducible minimum—another ‘inner limit,’ this time the limit of physical well-being, which human society transgresses at its peril and which must include food, energy, shelter, and the training and work required to secure them.”

“To take these high abstractions down to a more homely level, we can note that in the crucial area of food, the average North American eats some 1900 pounds of grain a year, all but 150 pounds of it in high protein food such as the products of cattle and poultry. So does the Soviet Union, though with a higher proportion of bread. It is perfectly possible that, for largely sedentary peoples, this diet is as dangerously overgenerous as the 400 pounds of grain eaten by the South Asian is manifestly too little.”

“... today the two-thirds of the world’s peoples who live in developing countries consume fifteen times less energy, on the average, than do the citizens of developed societies.”

“A third of the municipalities of Latin America have neither sewage systems nor piped water. The proportion in the Indian subcontinent and parts of Africa is higher still. The open drain down the main street, the contaminated well at the corner crossing—these can be the ugly symbols of man’s habitat in energy-poor societies.”

“The degradations continue downward in degrees of squalor, from a family to each room (the figure for eighty percent of the people in Calcutta), to four families to a room, to tarpaper shacks, to shift-sleeping in literally makeshift beds, to no rooms or roofs at all and thousands sleeping on the pavement.”

“Various U.N. surveys put the number of houses that need to be built to keep up with growing numbers and repair the worst evils of the past at over forty-seven million units every year.”

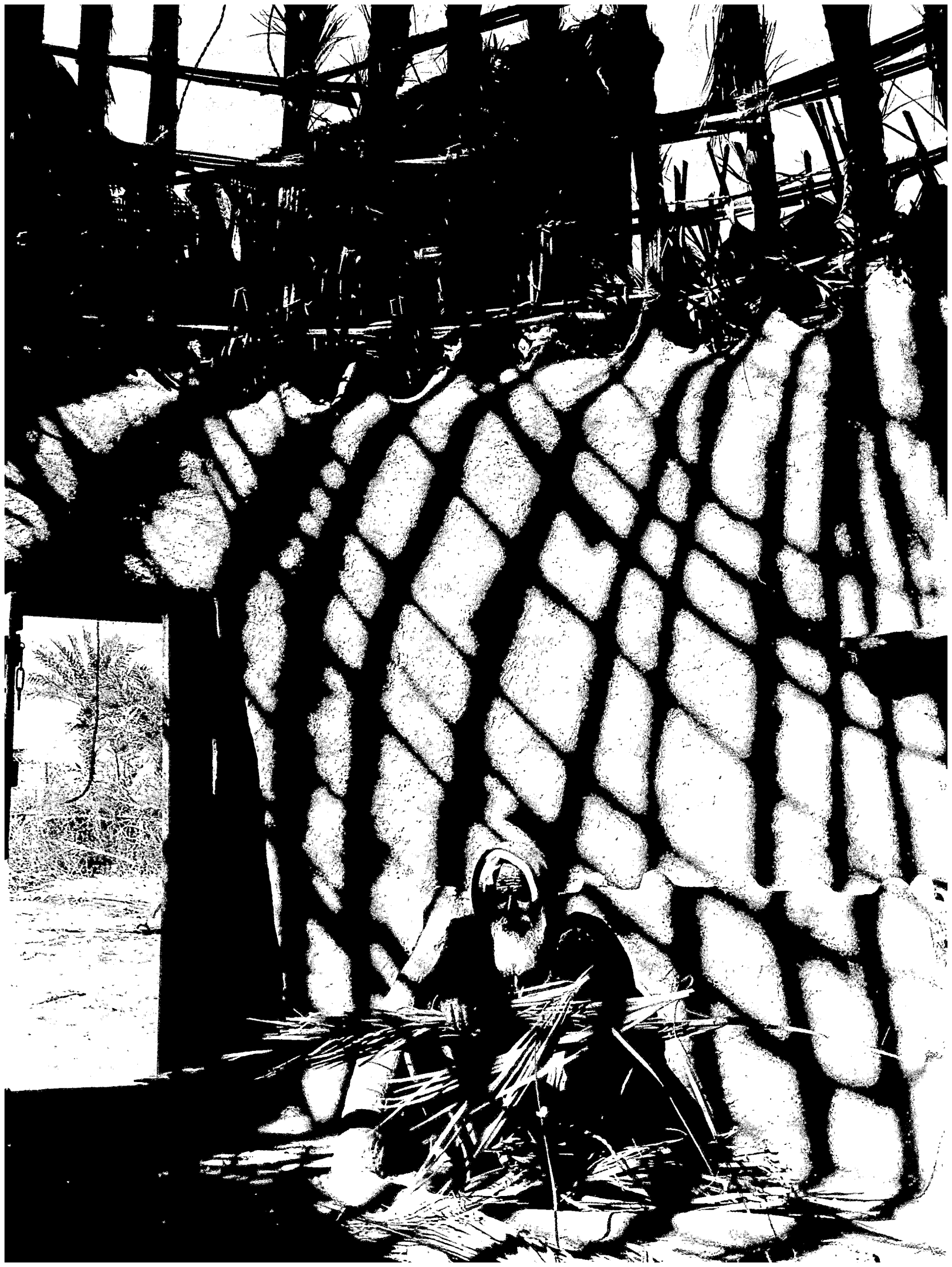
“Mankind is in fact engaged in a kind of race for survival between the inner and outer boundaries of social pressure and physical constraint while the doubling of the world’s peoples and emergence of a half-urban world takes place in only four decades.”

“But cities must be built not for economics alone—to build up the property market—not for politics alone—to glorify the Prince (in whatever form of government). They must be built for people and for the poorest first.”

“And in this new intended order, the limits on material resources and on the environment must, for the first time, be recognized as fundamental challenges and constraints. The settlement by design, the settlement for people, the conserving and enhancing settlement—these are the priorities suggested by the convoluted and interdependent revolutions of our time.”

“If it seems difficult, almost by definition, to grasp the full scale and implications of the problems raised by the human habitat, it seems virtually impossible to do so if they are caught in these changing contexts, this whirling kaleidoscope of interlocking and contradictory forces, needs, aspirations, and risks.”

“The demographic flood is potentially so damaging precisely because it is a flood; in other words, an unmanaged, unintended, disorganized rush, pellmell, into the new urban order. But what this suggests is not further confusion but the opposite intention—a fully human one—to grasp the meaning of the phenomenon and produce urban settlements not by chance but by some measure of design. The first pointer is thus away from building the city by chance and toward the city built for human purposes.” □



# To Build So All May Grow

BY JEAN VANIER

I have visited many parts of the world over the last six years, helping found the small communities of L'Arche. These communities are there to create families for those handicapped people who have none or who, for one reason or another, cannot live with their parents. L'Arche welcomes mentally handicapped men and women, those rejected from their homes, locked up in asylums, confined in hospitals or other institutions.

I have seen mentally handicapped people in vastly different situations; in the slum areas of Sao Paulo or Calcutta; in the psychiatric unit of Tegucigalpa, Honduras. I have visited small villages in Kerala, India, and in the Ivory Coast. I have visited the black wounded areas of Cleveland and the poor areas of Mobile, Alabama. I have visited people in large institutions in Canada, and I have shared with lepers of India in their little huts in Bangalore. I have lived for a few days with men in prison.

All this has taught me that environment is important. How can a handicapped person discover his humanity in the depersonalized situation of an institution? How can a man rediscover his positive capacities if he is continually confronted by the mirror of an environment which tells him he is evil or that he is mad?

Reflection upon housing and environment is vital. The colour, the shape, the size of a house or a "living" room can encourage human growth, giving a positive self-image, stimulating and calling forth deep qualities of love and light in the person dwelling therein. On the other hand, an unfit housing environment can accentuate the darkness, the fears and the hates hidden in our being.

The child, conceived in the womb of his mother, spends nine months there. He finds his next environment in the arms of the mother and his cot, then his room and the house with all the family. This environment should help him grow in security and peace enabling him to become

a complete human being by eliminating fears and fostering a positive self-image. Man, to grow spiritually, intellectually and emotionally, needs knowledge and light. He needs techniques and science and, above all, an emotional space where he really feels at home, where his heart is at ease, where he can be himself, a truly human person.

A child will sense very quickly whether the house has been built to create a happy home, to stimulate interpersonal relationships and the meetings of people; or whether it was built for the family to appear powerful, more successful than the neighbors, as a prestige kick, a status symbol, a way to lord it over others.

Environment can stimulate in our heart either the desire to give and to share and to be compassionate, or the desire of the ego to dominate, to subjugate others, to possess as a sign of our "greatness."

All of us are a strange mixture of light and darkness, good and evil, love and hate, trust and fear. The powers of evil and darkness in us are those which incite us to seek riches and domination over others. These are the desires to enrich our ego by possession, urging us to prove we are superior to another without seeing others as people. Thus we crush, we hurt, we exploit and we wound those around us, those who are our neighbors, our brothers. Or we are unable to see their wounds and their needs. We close ourselves up in our fears and our need for security. We refuse to share.

The latest World Bank figures show that the mean income of people in developing countries is \$116 per capita. In some rich countries, (U.S., Switzerland and Sweden), it is over \$6,000. Each year the gap between these figures grows. The economies of richer countries are, necessarily, geared to expansion. For them, it is expand or die. If people do not possess more, year in and year out, they are frustrated and dissatisfied, whereas the economy in poorer countries is much more

static. And so the poor daily get poorer and the rich, richer. And frequently the wealthier countries are being enriched by, or use as the basis of their economy, matter and products from poorer countries.

The world is shrinking because of the rapidity of communications and transport and because of a certain unification on a political and economic level. Our window may look out onto the backyard, but many have another window inside their house—the TV screen—which opens up the whole world.

Seventy-five percent of the world's population lives at or below the poverty level while a small elite hide themselves behind the prison bars of their own comfort, too frightened to venture out and touch the reality of the world.

How long can this gap between poor and rich continue to grow without provoking some sort of an explosion, be it the explosion of anger coming from the poor, frustrated and hungry, or the explosion of the consciences of the rich, confronted by world hunger and catastrophies, and finding themselves unable to do anything about it?

Technicians have taught us how to get to the moon and, even more amazingly, to return from it, but we still haven't learnt how to organize the world into a place where all men can have the opportunity to grow in human dignity. We still do not know how to persuade those with possessions to share their belongings and capacities with those in need. The desire to possess quickly sends man spiraling upwards onto a pedestal from where he disdainfully looks down upon those who are not of his so-called calibre and class. He seeks to expand his self-image in his power over people and his feelings of superiority. Those "little" people—the weak, the sick, the depressed, the poor—are not seen as brothers and sisters to be helped and, especially, to be loved, but rather as inferiors to be despised.

Peace in our world can only come if we stop grabbing, competing, struggling, exploiting, seeking to dominate and, instead, start sharing with people, not just on the local level but also internationally. Otherwise, we are all condemned to more and more complex and destructive wars and the creation of more and more expensive and destructive armaments.

Is it possible for our hearts to be opened up to a love of people and especially to a universal love and justice? Or will we allow fear and insecurity to condemn us forever to "national defence," one tightly knit group confronting other tightly knit groups, all hoping their armed force will eventually stabilize the race of armaments?

We all know that the effective and emotional equilibrium of a child depends in great part upon his relationship with his parents during the first years of his life, and upon the love or the tension that exists in the family. If there is hate between the parents, the tension and anguish will deeply wound the little child and push him into insecurity. We know also how family prejudices and fears are quickly inculcated into the little child who imitates father and mother.

Is it possible to construct houses which are not just status symbols, places of luxury, of riches, of comfort, where the individual ego is inflated but rather places of warmth and of love where the human heart can grow in inner security and peace? From there the child, nurtured in the warmth of the family, growing in interior force and trust, can go forth into the world not to prove by his "success" that he is someone, but to share a way of life, a warmth of heart and understanding. He can go forth to share and to serve his brothers by helping them find a way of life conducive to real human growth.

A house cannot be a place of defence or a status symbol, but rather must be a place from which, with outstretched arms and hearts, we are called forth to share

with our less fortunate brothers and to create a united and peace-loving world, to build together a new world where concern and compassion are the foundation of all human and technical progress, a new world where all men are considered as brothers, children of the same God.

A house is not a place to hide and find refuge from other people, but a place where sharing begins and from which sharing must overflow. A house is a place of meeting. We are thus called to make of our towns and cities extensions of our homes and hearts, places of human growth where fear diminishes and trust is accentuated. A city can be planned to comfort and support its weaker citizens, the old and the handicapped, and to enable them to find suitable lodging and work. As such, town planning is of vast importance: the marketplace, the church, the places of recreation can help people to meet—or the traffic and the skyscrapers can make of the city a place of fear.

Is this utopia? A wild dream never to be realised, a dream in a world of hate? Hatred will kill us unless each of us begins today to open the windows of home and heart to others; unless we also begin to build a world, through architecture and city planning, where men and women will recognize the beauty in each other and begin to share.







# Tailles des villes du Tiers-Monde

- Limites
- Possibilités
- Problèmes

PAR  
PAUL BAIROCH

## Les limites du développement urbain et de la taille des villes

Des civilisations antiques à la révolution industrielle, le développement urbain a pris des formes très diverses et a été caractérisé par des progressions et des régressions parfois très importantes. Mais deux limites majeures demeuraient présentes partout et toujours. La population urbaine ne pouvait pas dépasser une certaine proportion de la population totale et les villes ne pouvaient pas dépasser une certaine taille du point de vue démographique. Ces deux limites étant essentiellement la conséquence directe de l'importance relative du surplus agricole.

L'importance relative de la population urbaine était déterminée par celle du surplus agricole; ces deux ratios ne pouvant être, à moyen terme, que des équivalences presque parfaites. En effet, il est impossible, sur le plan pratique, de concevoir que dans un ensemble économique clos, l'importance relative de la population urbaine – c'est-à-dire, en simplifiant, celle de la population ne produisant pas d'aliments – soit sensiblement plus forte que l'importance relative du surplus alimentaire des agriculteurs. Si, par exemple, dans un cadre économique donné les ménages d'agriculteurs ne produisent en moyenne que 10% de plus de nourriture qu'ils n'en consomment, la population urbaine ne pourra certainement pas dépasser les 12 – 15% de la population totale. C'est dire que l'importance relative de la population des villes ne pouvait pas dépasser en pratique les 20 – 25% de la population totale jusqu'à la révolution industrielle. Certes, dans certains cas – et il s'agit alors uniquement de petites nations commerciales du type traditionnel, c'est-à-dire jouant surtout le rôle d'intermédiaire commercial pour une région beaucoup plus vaste – ces limites pouvaient être sensiblement dépassées en raison des ressources exceptionnelles. Mais il s'agit là de sociétés ne représentant qu'une très faible fraction de la population des régions concernées. L'ensemble des Pays-Bas, par exemple, ne représentait que 2 – 3% de la population européenne au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle; et ce pourcentage ne tient pas compte de la population des pays hors d'Europe qui étaient la source d'approvisionnement en produits d'échanges; auquel cas on tomberait bien au-dessous du 1%.

Cette même importance relative du surplus agricole, combinée avec les coûts des transports, limitait la taille maximale des villes à quelque 500 000 – 600 000 habitants. Si l'on postule pour un pays ou pour une région une densité de 20 habitants au km<sup>2</sup> (c'est-à-dire celle de l'Europe sans la Russie au début du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle) et avec un surplus agricole de 25%, l'aire d'approvisionnement d'une ville d'un million d'habitants représente, sans tenir compte des coûts des transports, une superficie de 200 000 km<sup>2</sup>; soit cinq – sept fois la superficie de pays tels que la Belgique, la Suisse, le Danemark ou les Pays-Bas. Ou, si l'on préfère, une superficie voisine de celle de la Grande-Bretagne; ou encore d'un hexagone de 280 km de

rayon dans lequel il n'y aurait aucun autre centre urbain si petit fût-il.

Les très grandes villes (disons de plus de 500 000 habitants) sont essentiellement une caractéristique de l'urbanisation liée à la période post-révolution industrielle. C'est-à-dire liée aux possibilités nouvelles découlant de la technologie issue de cette révolution. Il s'agit surtout de la technologie agricole qui a accru dans de fortes proportions (3 à 5 fois dans le premier siècle de cette révolution) le surplus alimentaire par actif agricole et de la technologie des transports qui a réduit dans d'énormes proportions (de 10 à 25 fois) le coût réel du transport. Certes, on peut retrouver, soit dans les civilisations occidentales, soit dans celles de l'Asie, quelques exemples très limités de villes ayant atteint, voire dépassé, cette taille avant la révolution industrielle. Mais il s'agit alors uniquement de capitales ou de métropoles de très grands empires. Il s'agit notamment de Rome, Paris, Londres, Constantinople, Pékin et Bagdad (et peut-être encore deux ou trois autres villes) qui, au moment de leur apogée, de plus ou moins longue durée, ont eu une population de l'ordre de 500 000 à 1 000 000 d'habitants et parfois même un peu plus. Or, dès 1910, on peut relever dans la seule Europe (à l'exclusion de la Russie), c'est-à-dire dans un sixième de la population mondiale, quelque vingt-cinq villes de plus de 500 000 habitants et quatre villes de plus d'un million d'habitants. (Les chiffres de population des villes qui seront fournis ici s'appliquent à une définition de la ville assez élargie, à savoir celle qui correspond en général à la notion de zone métropolitaine; c'est-à-dire la ville proprement dite et les régions avoisinantes (banlieue ou non) ayant des rapports directs avec la ville proprement dite. On pourrait qualifier aussi cette définition d'agglomération au sens large de ce terme.) On peut, avec assez de certitude, avancer qu'aucune ville n'a dépassé avant la révolution industrielle une population de 2 millions d'habitants (et probablement même pas de 1,5 million); or, dès 1860, Londres dépasse les 3 millions d'habitants, pour atteindre les 7 millions avant 1910. Et, avant que n'éclate la première guerre mondiale, on compte en Europe cinq villes de plus de 2 millions d'habitants (Berlin, Leningrad, Londres, Paris et Vienne). Et, dans les autres pays développés, on comptait encore deux villes de plus de 2 millions d'habitants (New York et Chicago).

Bien entendu, la poursuite des progrès techniques – et non seulement dans le domaine de l'approvisionnement des villes, mais également dans ce qu'on peut appeler la technologie urbaine (transports urbains, distribution de l'eau, systèmes d'égouts, etc.) – va permettre, dans les pays développés, l'extension du phénomène d'urbanisation et du processus de croissance de la taille des villes. Londres dépasse les 8 millions d'habitants vers 1928. Mais, à ce moment, Londres n'était probablement plus la plus grande ville du monde; sa place lui avait été ravie vers 1925 par New York; celle-ci dépassera les 10 millions vers 1930 et les 15

millions vers 1965. Et, vers 1975, on peut estimer qu'il y a dans les pays développés quelque quatre-vingt-dix villes de plus d'un million d'habitants, dont onze de plus de 5 millions.

Cette expansion du nombre et de la taille des villes dans les régions développées a été évidemment concomitante avec un rapide développement de l'emploi industriel et cela surtout jusqu'aux années 1930-1940. A partir de cette période, la progression des emplois dans les services a été plus rapide que celle des emplois dans les industries.

### **Le Tiers-Monde, un système dérégulé: une explosion urbaine sans surplus agricole et sans industrialisation**

Au cours du XIXe siècle, alors que l'Europe et les autres pays développés enregistraient la mutation de la structure urbaine que nous venons de décrire, un processus pratiquement inverse caractérisait une grande partie de ce qu'il est convenu d'appeler aujourd'hui le Tiers-Monde. Avant la colonisation, on peut considérer que, en raison d'un ensemble de facteurs qu'il serait trop long d'exposer ici, mais parmi lesquels il faut citer la plus grande taille moyenne des pays, et les types de production agricole, la structure urbaine du Tiers-Monde était caractérisée par l'existence de très grandes villes. Cela était notamment le cas de l'Asie. Ainsi, vers 1600, on peut estimer que l'Asie, environ trois fois plus peuplée que l'Europe (avec la Russie), avait quelque sept – neuf villes de plus de 300 000 habitants, dont trois – quatre de plus de 500 000 habitants, alors qu'à la même époque, l'Europe n'avait aucune ville de plus de 300 000 habitants. Vers 1800, ces grandes villes étaient probablement moins nombreuses. Et, vers 1900, la situation de ce continent avait peu évolué dans ce domaine, la colonisation ayant entraîné dans cette région – et notamment en Inde et en Chine – un processus de désindustrialisation.

Mais, dès le début de ce siècle (et même plus tôt en Amérique latine, mais la problématique de cette région est très spécifique), on note l'apparition d'un phénomène nouveau qui va s'accélérer à partir de 1920-1930. Il s'agit de l'inflation démographique qui va assez directement entraîner une véritable explosion urbaine, mais une explosion urbaine sans soubassement économique. En effet, comme nous l'avons vu, alors que dans les pays développés l'expansion urbaine du XIXe et du XXe siècle a eu comme base essentielle un accroissement de la productivité agricole et un processus d'industrialisation, l'inflation urbaine du Tiers-Monde peut être caractérisée comme une urbanisation sans surplus agricole et surtout sans industrialisation. Entre les années 1930 et 1975, la productivité agricole n'a pratiquement pas progressé et l'industrialisation – qui avait régressé ou stagné de 1930 à 1940 – n'a pas réalisé des progrès susceptibles d'expliquer l'ampleur de l'urbanisation.

En Europe continentale, le taux d'urbanisation est resté inférieur au pourcentage de population active dans l'industrie manufacturière jusqu'en 1890 environ; c'est-à-dire jusqu'au moment où le pourcentage des actifs engagés dans l'industrie manufacturière dépassait les 18%. Ce n'est qu'à partir de cette période que le taux d'urbanisation dépassa celui de l'industrie manufacturière et, progressivement, l'écart entre ces deux taux s'élargit. Or, dans les pays sous-développés, ce stade a été franchi à un moment où le pourcentage d'actifs dans l'industrie manufacturière était inférieur à 9% (entre 1930 et 1940). Et, en moins de 30 ans, l'écart entre ces deux taux a atteint les 100%; en Europe continentale, cette évolution a pris plus de 80 ans. En 1970, le taux d'urbanisation du Tiers-Monde était celui de l'Europe (sans la Russie) vers 1900; mais l'Europe avait alors une proportion d'actifs occupés dans l'industrie manufacturière plus de deux fois plus forte que celle du Tiers-Monde en 1975.

### **Le Tiers-Monde: une prolifération de très grandes villes**

Cette explosion urbaine s'est traduite par une augmentation extrêmement rapide du nombre et de la taille des villes. La tableau no 1 permet de suivre cette évolution pour l'ensemble de ce qu'il est convenu d'appeler les pays en voie de développement à économie de marché; c'est-à-dire, grosso modo, le Tiers-Monde sans la Chine.

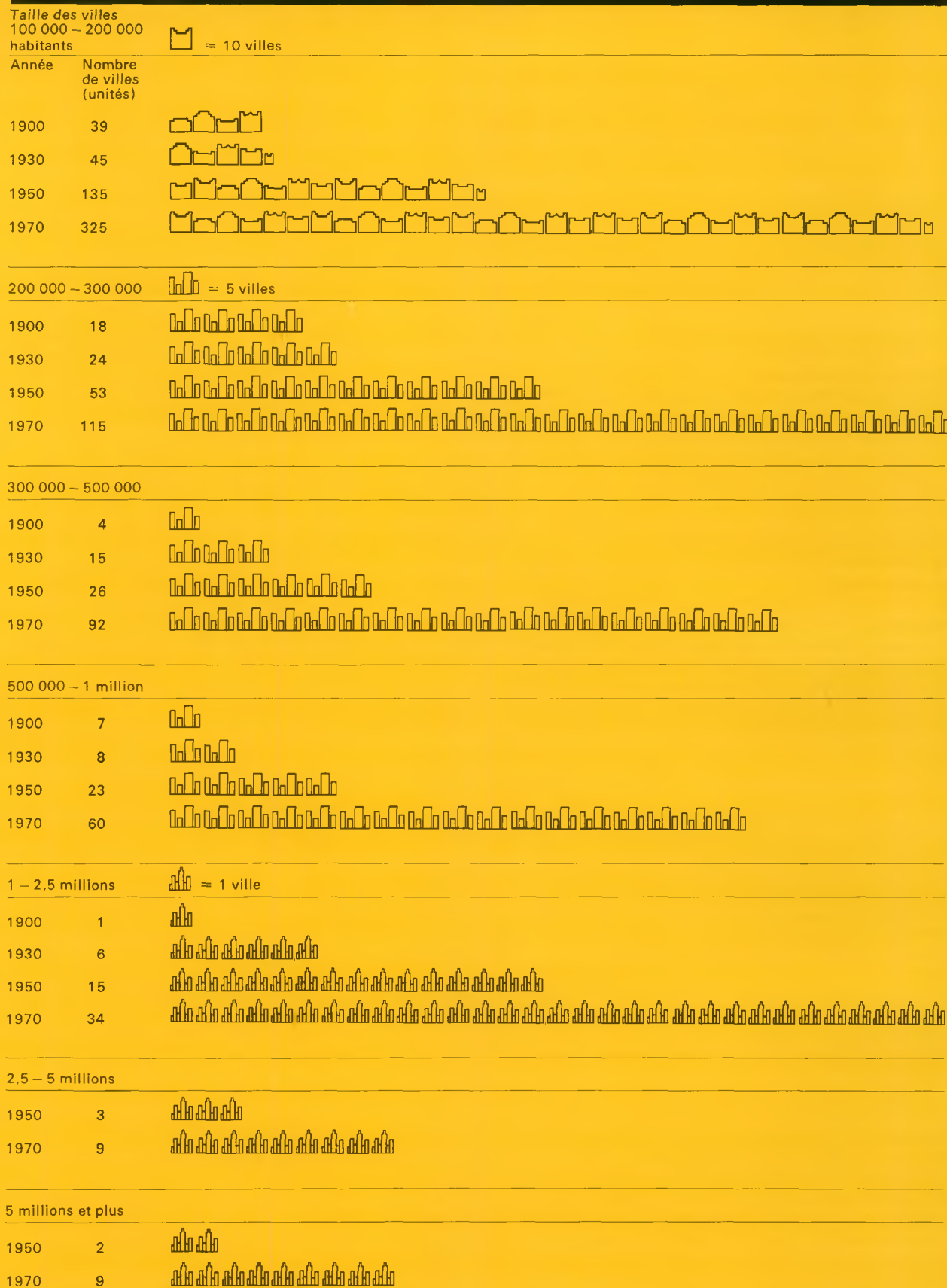
De 1900 à 1970 le nombre de villes de plus de 100 000 habitants a passé de quelque soixante-dix unités à environ six cent cinquante; et la population de ces villes de 17 à 300 millions d'habitants, c'est-à-dire que celle-ci s'est accrue de 4,1% par an et même de 5,5% de 1930 à 1970. A titre de comparaison, notons que, pendant la phase de croissance la plus rapide (de 1850 à 1910) la population des villes de plus de 100 000 habitants en Europe a progressé de 2,6% par an.

Parallèlement à cette augmentation rapide de la population de l'ensemble des villes de plus de 100 000 habitants, on a assisté à une concentration de cette population dans de très grandes villes. Le Tiers-Monde (sans la Chine), qui ne comptait qu'une seule ville de plus d'un million d'habitants en 1900, en comptait quelque cinquante-deux en 1970 et probablement quelque soixante-cinq en 1975. Ceci implique que, en 1970, quelque 41% de la population urbaine (définie comme étant celle qui habite les agglomérations de 20 000 habitants et plus) vivaient dans des villes de plus d'un million d'habitants et 52% dans celles de plus de 500 000 habitants.

Cette évolution a concerné l'ensemble des régions du Tiers-Monde avec cependant des rythmes sensiblement différenciés. En règle générale, durant ce siècle, le développement des grandes villes a été plus rapide dans les régions relativement peu urbanisées que dans celles relativement plus urbanisées. C'est

**TABEAU 1**

Répartition par taille des villes (a) de l'ensemble des pays en voie de développement à économie de marché



- a) villes selon la définition de zones métropolitaines
- b) définie comme étant celle habitant les agglomérations de 20 000 habitants et plus

Sources: D'après Bairoch, P., *Taille optima des villes, emploi et développement économique*, à paraître.

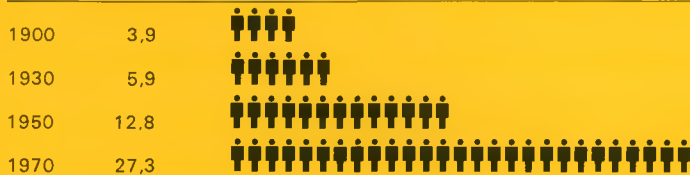
Note: Le faible degré d'arrondissement des chiffres n'implique nullement une marge d'erreur correspondante.

Taille des villes  
100 000 – 200 000  
habitants

 = 1 million d'habitants



200 000 – 300 000



300 000 – 500 000

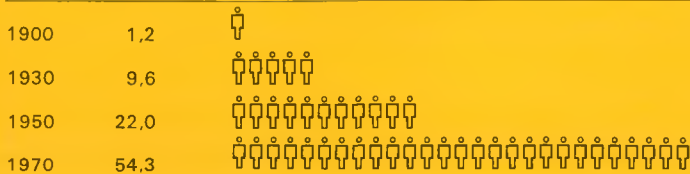


500 000 – 1 million



1 – 2,5 millions

 = 2 millions d'habitants



2,5 – 5 millions



5 millions et plus



	Population totale	Population urbaine (b)
1900	635 millions	39 millions
1930	805 millions	61,9 millions
1950	1086 millions	140 millions
1970	1763 millions	369 millions

en Afrique que l'évolution a été la plus rapide; le nombre de villes de plus de 100 000 habitants s'est trouvé multiplié par 25 de 1900 à 1970 (voir le tableau 2). Cette évolution est encore plus rapide pour la seule Afrique Noire, car les cinq villes de 100 000 habitants et plus que comptait l'Afrique vers 1900 étaient toutes localisées dans le Maghreb et en Egypte; et, en 1930 encore, on ne comptait que deux villes de plus de 100 000 habitants en Afrique Noire. Malgré le caractère récent de ce processus d'urbanisation dans cette partie de l'Afrique, cette région comptait déjà, en 1970, quelque quatre-vingt-quatre villes de plus de 100 000 habitants, dont sept villes de plus de 500 000 habitants. Mais toutes les villes de plus d'un million d'habitants se trouvent localisées dans la partie nord de l'Afrique et, par conséquent, sont largement la résultante d'un processus d'urbanisation très ancien auquel s'est adjoint le phénomène classique d'inflation urbaine des régions du Tiers-Monde.

En Amérique latine, l'évolution historique et notamment les migrations européennes du XIXe siècle ont conduit à des niveaux d'urbanisation relativement élevés dès le début de ce siècle. Ce haut niveau d'urbanisation et le caractère spécifique de la distribution par taille des villes de certains pays d'Amérique latine (types de villes primatiales) ont entraîné une très forte concentration de la population urbaine dans les très grandes villes. En 1970, sur un total de 98 millions d'habitants vivant dans les villes de plus de 100 000 habitants, 34 millions étaient concentrés dans les villes de 5 millions et plus. La taille moyenne de ces très grandes villes était de 8,5 millions en 1970 et probablement proche des 10 millions en 1975 (il s'agit de Buenos Aires, Mexico, Rio de Janeiro et São Paulo).

La structure par taille des villes d'Asie était encore marquée au début de ce siècle (et jusqu'au milieu de celui-ci) par la structure urbaine traditionnelle de cette région (voir plus haut). Jusqu'aux années

TABLEAU 2

Répartition par taille des villes (a) et par région des pays en voie de développement à économie de marché

Taille des villes (habitants)	Nombre de villes (unités)					
	Afrique		Amérique		Asie	
	1900	1970	1900	1970	1900	1970
100 000 - 200 000	3	57	5	86	31	182
200 000 - 300 000	—	29	4	30	14	56
300 000 - 500 000	1	22	2	21	1	49
500 000 - 1 million	1	8	2	21	4	31
1 - 2,5 millions	—	6	—	10	1	18
2,5 - 5 millions	—	—	—	2	—	7
5 millions et plus	—	1	—	4	—	4
Total	5	123	13	174	51	347

Taille des villes (habitants)	Population des villes (en millions)					
	Afrique		Amérique		Asie	
	1900	1970	1900	1970	1900	1970
100 000 - 200 000	0,49	7,94	0,60	12,05	4,22	24,28
200 000 - 300 000	—	6,95	0,83	7,45	3,07	12,91
300 000 - 500 000	0,35	7,87	0,70	7,85	0,49	19,12
500 000 - 1 million	0,63	5,26	1,76	14,51	3,01	19,84
1 - 2,5 millions	—	8,95	—	16,58	1,22	28,72
2,5 - 5 millions	—	—	—	5,50	—	26,24
5 millions et plus	—	6,00	—	33,95	—	25,05
Total	1,46	42,97	3,90	97,89	12,00	156,16

Population totale	130,00	330,00	65,00	284,00	435,00	1 123,00
Population urbaine (b)	—	51,00	—	114,00	—	204,00

a) villes selon la définition de zones métropolitaines

b) définie comme étant celle qui habite les agglomérations de 20 000 habitants et plus.

Sources: D'après Bairoch, P., *Taille optimale des villes, emploi et développement économique*, à paraître.

Note: Le faible degré d'arrondissement des chiffres n'implique nullement une marge d'erreur correspondante.

1930, le développement des villes de plus de 100 000 habitants a été relativement lent; leur nombre passant de 51 à 61 entre 1900 et 1930 et leur population de 12,0 à 18,2 millions d'habitants, soit un taux annuel de croissance de cette population de 1,4% contre 3,2% pour les villes africaines et 3,9% pour les villes d'Amérique latine. Par contre, de 1930 à 1950, la population des villes d'Asie a connu une croissance plus rapide que celle des villes des deux autres continents. Mais, à nouveau, de 1950 à 1970, l'Asie a enregistré une plus faible progression de la population des villes de plus de 100 000 habitants. Et, actuellement, en Asie comme dans les autres continents, la concentration de la population urbaine dans les grandes villes est très élevée.

Cette concentration aura tendance encore à s'accroître dans les prochaines décennies dans l'hypothèse d'une absence de mesures de forte ampleur pour contrarier cette tendance. Or, c'est là que réside un problème extrêmement grave car touchant l'essentiel du mode de vie. Il est plus que probable que, dans de telles villes, la vie urbaine implique des contraintes et des nuisances beaucoup plus graves que dans des villes de taille plus faible. Éliminer, ou en tout cas réduire les nuisances dues aux très grandes villes implique des dépenses très importantes que ne permet pas le niveau de vie de la quasi-totalité des pays du Tiers-Monde. Dans le cas des pays développés, les très grandes villes ne sont apparues qu'à un moment où le développement économique était déjà très avancé. Aussi avons-nous comparé le niveau du produit brut par habitant des pays développés au moment où leurs plus grandes villes avaient atteint, pour la première fois, les 3 millions d'habitants avec ces mêmes stades pour les pays du Tiers-Monde. Dans les pays développés ce stade a été atteint généralement quand le produit brut par habitant (traduit en dollars et prix des États-Unis de 1960) était de l'ordre de \$1 100. Par contre, dans les pays en voie de développement, ce stade a été atteint vers les \$150–\$200. Certes, il faut faire intervenir ici la taille beaucoup plus grande de certains pays du Tiers-Monde.

#### **Les nuisances des grandes villes**

Dans le cadre de cet article il n'est pas question d'effectuer une analyse tant soit peu approfondie du problème de la taille optimale des villes (P. Bairoch, op. cit.) Ici il s'agit tout simplement de relever, d'une façon succincte et très schématique, les aspects négatifs les plus importants qu'impliquent les grandes villes, disons, dans ce cas, les villes de plus de 500 000 habitants.

Dans le domaine de la pollution (aujourd'hui très à l'ordre du jour et à juste titre), il n'y a pas de doute que la taille optimale des villes est proche de zéro. Toutefois, il apparaît sans conteste que les nuisances (pollution de l'air et bruit) deviennent très importantes au-delà des 500 000 habitants et encore davantage au-delà du million.

Les problèmes de la congestion et du trafic s'aggravent considérablement, eux aussi, au-dessus du

demi-million d'habitants. Et, dans ce contexte, le faible niveau de vie du Tiers-Monde constitue un frein sérieux aux solutions technologiques qui s'avèrent indispensables.

En général, l'accroissement du coût des terrains avec la taille des villes conduit à une situation très défavorable dans le domaine du logement pour les grandes villes. Situation défavorable qui prend toute sa signification dans l'ampleur croissante que prennent les bidonvilles dans le Tiers-Monde.

Les données concernant la criminalité par taille des villes ne sont pas très nombreuses pour le Tiers-Monde. Cependant, il est plus que probable que la situation y est voisine de celle qui existe dans les pays développés. Cela implique une aggravation assez sensible de la criminalité avec la taille des villes. Criminalité qui trouve d'ailleurs une partie de ses raisons d'être dans les niveaux très élevés du chômage qui caractérisent les villes du Tiers-Monde. Chômage qui touche surtout les jeunes.

A tous ces aspects négatifs il faudrait encore ajouter des éléments liés à la climatologie urbaine, laquelle dans les zones tropicales ou semi-tropicales prend des aspects très négatifs dans les grandes villes; ceux liés aux coûts élevés d'infrastructure et d'administration; et d'autres aspects moins importants mais non négligeables. Tous ces aspects négatifs ne sont pratiquement pas compensés par des facteurs positifs ou, en tout cas, par des facteurs positifs jouant sensiblement au-delà du niveau de 500 000–700 000 habitants.

De 1975 à l'an 2000, la population urbaine de l'ensemble du Tiers-Monde (y compris la Chine) passera de moins de 800 millions de personnes à quelque 2 100 millions. C'est-à-dire que, pendant ce quart de siècle, il s'ajoutera aux villes du Tiers-Monde une population de l'ordre de 1,2 milliard d'habitants, soit grosso modo une population qui était celle de toutes les villes du monde entier vers 1970. Or cette population urbaine mondiale résultait d'un processus d'urbanisation plusieurs fois séculaire, pour ne pas dire millénaire. Devant une telle augmentation, il serait plus que souhaitable qu'une attention sérieuse soit portée au problème de la taille des villes où se fixera cet accroissement de population. Et il est extrêmement peu probable que l'évolution technologique de ces prochaines décennies réduise sensiblement l'inconvénient des très grandes villes. Elle risque plutôt d'en réduire les avantages comparatifs. □



# Urban Poverty in the Developing World

BY ROBERT S. McNAMARA

A Profile of its Dimensions

An Outline for Action



## The Scope of the Problem

To understand urban poverty in the developing world one must first understand what is happening to the cities themselves. They are growing at a rate unprecedented in history. Twenty-five years ago there were 16 cities in the developing countries with populations of one million or more. Twenty-five years from now there will be more than 200.

How has this happened? Fundamentally, of course, it is a function of population growth. But it is more than just that. For though the total population in the developing world is increasing by about 2.5% a year, the urban population is growing at nearly twice that rate. Half the urban growth is due to natural increase, and half is due to migration from the countryside.

What this means is that some 400 million additional people have been absorbed into cities, through birth and migration, in a single generation—something wholly without parallel. In contrast, the developed world urbanized at a leisurely and less pressured pace at a time when its national populations were growing very slowly, at only about half a percent per year.

Thus, at current trends, over the next 25 years the urban areas will have to absorb another 1.1 billion people, almost all of them poor, in addition to their present population of 700 million.

Life for the urban poor today is unspeakably grim. Though they spend up to 80% of their income on food, they typically suffer from serious malnutrition. It is estimated that half the urban population of India is undernourished. Up to 15% of the children who die in Latin American cities, and up to 25% of those who die in African cities, are needless victims of malnutrition.

Now what do these figures imply?

They make it certain that the cities of the developing world are going to find it incredibly difficult to provide employment, and minimally decent living conditions, for the hundreds of millions of new entrants into urban economies which are already severely strained.

An even more ominous implication is what the penalties for failure may be. Historically, violence and civil upheaval are more common in cities than in the countryside. Frustrations that fester among the urban poor are readily exploited by political extremists. If cities do not begin to deal constructively with poverty, poverty may begin to deal destructively with cities. It is not a problem that favors political delay.

## The Underlying Causes of Urban Poverty *Employment*

To comprehend the pathology of poverty in the cities, one must begin with an analysis of the employment opportunities of the poor.

Employment in the urban areas of the developing world is a function of an economic dualism that is widespread. Two sectors coexist side by side. One is the organized, modern, formal sector, characterized by capital-intensive technology, relatively high wages, large-scale operations, and corporate and governmental organization.

The other is the unorganized, traditional, informal sector—economic units with the reverse characteristics: labor-intensive, small-scale operations, using traditional methods, and providing modest earnings to the individual or family owner.

In the modern sector, wages are usually protected by labor legislation and trade union activity; in the informal sector, there is easier entry, but less job security and lower earnings.

Though jobs in the modern sector may be more desirable, as a practical matter they are often beyond the reach of the poor. They require literacy, experience and a level of training the poor find difficult to acquire; and in a labor-surplus market, employers can afford to insist on exceptional qualifications.

Even more important, the growth of employment in modern manufacturing and distribution lags considerably behind both

From an address to the Board of Governors, World Bank Group, used with kind permission of the author.



the growth of its output, and the growth of the urban labor pool: output has increased 5 to 10% per year, but employment rose only 3 to 4%, while the labor pool was growing at a rate of 4 to 5%.

Though it is true that as the formal sector expands it tends to generate some indirect employment in the informal sector, it can also eliminate jobs there on an alarming scale. At the cost of \$100,000, for example, a corporation may set up a plastic footwear plant, with only 40 employees, that can displace 5,000 traditional shoemakers and their suppliers.

High population growth rates and massive migration to the cities have swollen the urban labor pool. But the capital-intensive nature of the modern sector has kept openings for additional workers down. In some developing countries, manufacturing techniques have already become so mechanized that an investment of \$50,000 to \$70,000 is often required to create a single new job.

Given, then, the limited potential of the formal sector in most developing countries to absorb labor, it is not surprising that the informal sector is a critical component in urban employment. It provides, for example, nearly half of all the jobs in Lima, more than half in Bombay and Jakarta; and over two-thirds in Belo Horizonte.

And yet, the fact is that governments tend to view the informal sector with little enthusiasm. They consider it backward, inefficient and a painful reminder of a less sophisticated past.

It is true that economies of scale are important in some activities. But it is not true that all small-scale enterprises are uneconomic. They can frequently operate at acceptable cost levels when costs of labor and capital are measured correctly, and when production operations are broken up into individual processes and products. In the production of many types of food, clothing, and furniture, and in construction, transportation, assembly, packaging, repairing and service activities, small units can compete effectively.

But government prejudice against the informal sector frequently gets translated into public policies which give undue advantages to big firms: unrealistically low exchange rates for capital imports, special tax exemptions, high minimum wages, underpriced public utilities and subsidized interest rates. All of these measures favor the large and capital-intensive firm over the small enterprise, and have the net effect of reducing the employment opportunities of the poor.

#### *Public Services*

These discriminations against the poor are compounded by limited access to public services. There are heavy biases in the design, location, pricing and delivery of such services.

Though most cities, for example, have expensive modern hospitals, the poor usually do not have access to them. They are largely reserved for the rich minority, even though the privileged have less incidence of illness than the poor. Nor is it surprising that the poor are so often ill, considering the squalor in which they must live. Frequently they have no public water supply or sewerage services whatever. And they often have to pay up to 20 times more for water supplied by street vendors than do middle and upper-income families for water piped by the city into their homes.

#### *Education*

But if the poor are denied equitable access to water, sanitation and health, they fare equally badly with education. Many of their children receive no formal education at all simply because they live beyond a feasible distance to the nearest school. Thus, though half the total population of the capital of one African country lives in the slum areas, all of the schools, with one exception, are located elsewhere in the city. The result is that the primary school enrollment is only 36% in the poor areas, but 90% throughout the rest of the capital.

Children of the urban poor, although often in the majority, very seldom reach

secondary school, much less a university, despite the fact that public expenditure per student for secondary and higher education is up to 20 times the expenditure on primary education. This means that education—in theory a powerful force in equalizing opportunity—in fact often reinforces, rather than reduces, existing economic disparities.

In a typical Latin American city, for example, workers with primary education earn 37% more than workers without education, and workers with secondary and higher education earn 40% more than workers with only primary schooling. Denying adequate education to the urban poor, then, is simply synonymous with denying them opportunities for higher incomes.

#### *Public Transport*

Public transport is another vital service the poor are often without. Their incomes are so low they can rarely afford it. And even if they could afford it, it often does not exist in the peripheral areas of the city where they generally must live.

While the wealthy drive their cars, and the moderate-income workers ride the bus, the poor walk to work—frequently as much as two hours each way. Such distances are a penalty both to their energy and to their earnings. And as the cities grow larger, so their commuting grows longer. Studies indicate that in a city of a million, the poor's average journey to work is three miles; in a city of five million, seven miles.

In city after city of the developing world, the streets are growing congested with private automobiles, and the city councils are pouring over blueprints for elaborate subways or expressways. But little if any of this heavy investment will ever benefit the poor. It will only drain away resources that might be used to help them become more productive.

#### *Housing*

The deprivation suffered by the poor is nowhere more visible than in the matter of

housing. Even the most hardened and unsentimental observer from the developed world is shocked by the squalid slums and ramshackle shantytowns that ring the periphery of every major city. The *favelas*, the *bustees*, the *bidonvilles* have become almost the central symbol of the poverty that pervades two-thirds of the globe. It is the image that is seared into the memory of every visitor.

But there is one thing worse than living in a slum or a squatter settlement—and that is having one's slum or settlement bulldozed away by a government which has no shelter of any sort whatever to offer in its place. When that happens—and it happens often—there remains only the pavement itself, or some rocky hillside or parched plain, where the poor can once again begin to build out of packing crates and signboards and scraps of sheetmetal and cardboard a tiny hovel in which to house their families.

Squatter settlements by definition—and by city ordinance—are illegal. Even the word squatter itself is vaguely obscene, as if somehow being penniless, landless and homeless were deliberate sins against the canons of proper etiquette. But it is not squatters that are obscene. It is the economic circumstances that make squatter settlements necessary that are obscene.

This, then, is the profile of poverty in the cities. It is not the profile of an insignificant minority, nor of a miscellaneous collection of unfortunates, nor of a fringe group of nonconformists—but of 200 million human beings whose aspirations are identical to yours and mine: to lead a productive life, to provide for those they love, and to try to build a better future for their children.

They differ from us in only two respects: in the inhuman burden of their problems; and in the unjust disparity of opportunity they have to solve them. It is development's task to reduce that disparity. Let me, then, suggest at least the broad outlines of a strategy to deal with urban poverty.

### **A Strategy to Reduce Urban Poverty**

Though the dynamics of poverty in the cities differ substantially from those in the countryside, the key to dealing with them both is fundamentally the same. What is required are policies and actions that will assist the poor to increase their productivity. Primarily this calls for measures that will remove barriers to their earning opportunities and improve their access to public services.

The following are essential steps governments should consider in any comprehensive program:

- increase earning opportunities in the informal sector;
- create more jobs in the modern sector;
- provide equitable access to public utilities, transport, education and health services;
- and establish realistic housing policies.

The fundamental consideration underlying such a program is the reassessment of the role of the cities in the development process. Let me begin with that, and then turn to the others in sequence.

### **The Role of Cities in the Development Process**

We need to remind ourselves what the role of cities in development really is.

Cities are, of course, many things, but essentially they are an instrument for providing their inhabitants—all their habitants—with a more productive life. They are not primarily collections of elaborate architecture, or of city planners' theories perpetuated in stone. Even less should they be thought of as sanctuaries of the privileged, who wish to put a decent distance between themselves and the masses of the rural poor.

Urban poverty can be cured nowhere in the world unless cities are thought of as absorptive mechanisms for promoting productive employment for all those who need and seek it. In the past 25 years in the developing countries some 200 to 300 million individuals have benefited at least marginally by migration, and since even at their unacceptably low levels of income

they have been more productively employed in the cities than they would have been had they remained in the rural areas, the national economy itself has benefited.

This is not to make a case for wholesale migration from the rural areas. It is only to recognize that poverty will persist in the cities until governments decide to increase their capacity not simply to absorb the poor, but to promote their productivity by providing the employment opportunities, the infrastructure and the services necessary for that purpose.

Now specifically how is this to be done? Our understanding of so complex an issue is limited, but at least it is possible, on the basis of what we do know, to identify policies and actions that could have a significant impact on the problem.

Any realistic strategy must place emphasis on increasing the earning opportunities of the poor in the informal sector.

### **Increasing Earning Opportunities in the Informal Sector**

The employment problem in urban areas is not simply "jobs" in the conventional sense but rather the level of productivity and earnings. There is relatively little open unemployment among the urban poor. Without some kind of a job, they simply cannot eat. But they are often prevented from increasing their earnings by a combination of market forces, institutional arrangements and public policies which confer privileges on the large, well-established firms and which penalize the informal sector.

Governments must take steps to moderate the bias in favor of large-scale, capital-intensive production, and turn their attention more positively to small producers, not only in manufacturing but also in transport, construction, commerce and other service sectors.

The informal sector offers the most immediate opportunities of greater productivity for the urban poor. It already, of course, provides the livelihood for the vast majority, and though its earnings are

considerably less than those in the formal sector, its flexibility and ease of entry are an important asset. What is required is that government policy support it, without attempting to standardize it.

The informal sector's great virtue is its responsiveness to opportunity, its high degree of resourcefulness, and its entrepreneurial originality. The understandable enthusiasm of governments to "modernize" their economies must be restrained in their dealings with the informal sector. The point is not to try to transform it into the formal sector, but to support it without undue insistence on regulating it.

There are a number of ways in which governments can assist the small producer and the self-employed.

They can, for example, assure access to credit facilities on reasonable terms. The informal sector usually has very limited access to government banking and credit services. It must rely largely on the urban moneylender, who, like his village counterpart, is responsive but usurious. What are needed are improved banking policies that will make adequate capital available.

This can be done through rediscounting commercial bank loans to small-scale enterprises by central banks; by government guarantees to cover additional risks in informal-sector loans; and by new specialized institutions designed specifically to finance small enterprises. Like the small farmer, the urban informal-sector businessman is usually starved for credit. He does not need it in large amounts, nor does he need it at unrealistically low interest rates. But he needs it without excessive bureaucratic obstruction, and he needs it without procedural delay.

Further, governments can promote mutually beneficial relationships between the informal and formal sectors by reserving land for small enterprises in the vicinity of industrial developments. One effective technique is to establish industrial estates which will provide space neither exclusively to large nor to small industries, but which will deliberately situate firms of all

sizes in close proximity, specifically to encourage economic linkages between them.

Since small enterprises individually have only very limited purchasing and marketing capacity, governments can promote cooperative facilities to lower their costs and increase their efficiency. At the national, regional and municipal levels, government agencies, as well as banks and private firms, can offer technical assistance to the small entrepreneur, analogous to the extension services for small farmers.

Finally, governments can help the informal sector to flourish by the removal of onerous and often outdated licensing and regulatory controls.

Taken together, the removal of biases favoring the modern sector, and the special assistance to the informal sector, can substantially improve the earning opportunities of the urban poor in the informal sector.

#### **Creating More Jobs in the Modern Sector**

But the strengthening of the informal sector need not prevent the continued growth of the larger enterprises. On the contrary, special efforts must be made in many countries to turn their manufacturing enterprises away from the relatively small markets associated with import substitution, and toward the much larger opportunities flowing from export promotion. Korea, Taiwan, Mexico and Brazil, which achieved 15 to 20% annual growth in their manufactured exports in the late 1960's and early 1970's, clearly demonstrated the feasibility of bolstering manufacturing employment with this policy.

Further, the gradual reduction, and the ultimate elimination, of capital subsidies to the modern sector, as has been done in Hong Kong and Singapore, can make both production and service activities significantly more labor-intensive. Even in relatively automated modern factories, substantial labor-capital substitution possibilities exist in such activities as materials

handling, packaging and intrafactory transport. When producers have to pay realistic prices for capital, they not only explore more labor-intensive solutions for each process and product, but tend to use the plant's capacity more intensively, thus creating more jobs per unit of capital.

The first element, then, in the strategy to increase the productivity of the urban poor is to remove barriers to their earning opportunities. The second is to provide them with essential public services at standards they can afford.

#### **Assuring Access to Public Services**

About one-third of the population in most of the cities of the developing world live in slums that are either wholly without or very inadequately served by public water, sewerage, transport, education and housing. These conditions have a seriously detrimental effect on the health, productivity and incomes of the poor.

The urban poor are frequently denied access to public services, not because they don't exist, but because they have been designed or located largely for middle and upper-income city dwellers, and are simply beyond the reach of the less privileged.

The whole question of "standards" of urban services works to the disadvantage of the urban poor for they are often written with middle-class or upper-income orientations, and have little relevance to the situation the poor find themselves in.

Standards are important, but they must be formulated to meet realistic and attainable objectives. If the needs of the poor are to be met within a reasonable time span, public utilities and social services will have to be provided at costs which they can afford to pay.

#### **Water and Sewerage Services**

The single most important factor in improving the health environment of the poor is to provide clean water and adequate sewerage. A commonly used standard calls for cities to supply 200 liters of water

per person per day. Many cities in the developing world simply cannot afford to do that. That is understandable. What is not understandable is that instead of lowering the standard to fit their resources, some cities pipe 200 liters per person per day to individual houses in the affluent and middle-class neighborhoods, but leave 60% of the population—the poor on the periphery of the city—without any piped water at all. The result frequently is endemic cholera among the poor, because they must depend on unclean water from other sources.

Often, all that low-income families can afford are standpipes, but this form of water supply, together with technical assistance in improving sanitation facilities, can have an immensely beneficial impact on their health.

#### **Health and Education Services**

Essential health and education services for the poor are also seriously deficient in most of the cities of the developing world. Health care, for example, is frequently confined to modern and expensive hospitals, when what is needed are small clinics located in areas of the city where most health problems begin: in the slums and squatter settlements. Indeed the whole orientation of health care should emphasize low-cost preventive medicine rather than high-cost curative care. The poor are often ill—and their children often die—but the causes are almost always diseases that could have been readily prevented by a more sanitary environment and simple preventive measures.

Inexpensive health delivery systems can be designed around community-based health workers who can provide the poor with a broad spectrum of simple and effective services: immunization, health and nutrition education and family-planning advice.

The same principle applies to education. What is required are small, inexpensive and informal basic education units, located in accessible areas, and designed

to serve minimum learning needs of both children and adults: literacy and elementary arithmetic, child care, vocational advice and the knowledge necessary for responsible civic participation.

#### **Transportation**

The poor must also be within reach of employment possibilities. This means transport facilities which they can afford. Usually the urban transport available is either too expensive, or does not serve the areas in which the poor live. It is clear that most cities would benefit substantially from a radical reallocation of their transport systems away from domination by the private automobile, and in the direction of public transport that can move large numbers of passengers at low unit costs.

What is needed is a healthy pluralism in transport: buses, jitneys, taxis, motor rickshaws, pedicabs, bicycle paths—whatever is cost-effective and appropriate to the distances involved.

#### **Establishing Realistic Housing Policies**

City governments often congratulate themselves on their subsidized blocks of low-income housing, and the physical structures are frequently impressive. What is depressing is that the so-called low-income housing is almost always too expensive for the poor. Surveys indicate that up to 70% of the poor cannot afford even the cheapest housing produced by public agencies.

Slums and squatter settlements are the inevitable result. Authorities typically strongly disapprove of them: they are illegal; they are unsightly, and they are unsanitary. But too often cities have failed to find any solution—short of demolition—to deal with them. The fact is that the upgrading of existing squatter settlements can be a low-cost and practical approach to low-income shelter. Upgrading legalizes the settlement, provides secure tenure and supplies minimum infrastructure: water, roads, storm drainage, security lighting and rubbish collection. Education and other community facilities can generally be added.

One of the most interesting features of squatter settlements is that though they are inhabited by the very poor, there is a very strong sense of saving among the residents. Out of their minuscule earnings, they save every cent they can. Their great ambition is to have a better home for their families. But they are prudent men and women: they are unwilling to invest their savings in home improvement until they have tenure. That is why squatter settlements are often so ramshackle. Once upgraded projects provide legal tenure, the poor are not only willing to spend on home improvement, but do so with enthusiasm, and remarkable transformations often take place.

The housing that can be provided by upgrading existing slums and squatter settlements is of course limited. A somewhat more costly, but still practical, alternative is the “sites and services” approach. It can provide the framework for improved housing for vast numbers of the poor, particularly if it is planned with adequate lead time.

The city provides a suitable area of new land, grades and levels it, and furnishes it with essential infrastructure: access roads, drainage, water, sewerage and electricity. The land is divided into small plots and is leased or sold to the poor, who are supplied with simple house plans, and a low-cost loan with which to purchase inexpensive building materials. The actual construction is made the responsibility of the poor, who build their houses themselves.

And as communities are more than just housing, sites and services projects include schools, health clinics, community halls, day-care centers, and some provision for creating jobs: land, for example, set aside for the establishment of an appropriate small-scale industry.

Sites and services projects, then, stimulate self-help, and make it possible for the poor to house themselves in a viable, cohesive community with a minimum of public expenditure.

But though this is a highly desirable approach, it often suffers from two constraints: the understandable economic constraint of the availability of the land, infrastructure and building materials; and the less understandable institutional constraint of regulations governing tenure, building codes and zoning restrictions.

The determination of appropriate standards is critical for the poor family's ability to acquire housing. If, for example, standards relating to land use, floor space, durability of materials, quality of finish and utilities were modified to meet low-income household budgets, it should be possible for some 80% of the population in the cities of the developing world to afford much improved shelter with no subsidy at all.

It is also important that reasonable user charges and taxes should be levied on the middle and upper-income consumers of city services of all kinds—housing, utilities, education, health facilities, transport and others—to generate surpluses which can be used to expand coverage of these services, and give the poor a more equitable opportunity to benefit from them.

These, then, are some of the measures that governments should ponder as they confront the growing pressures of urbanization. For the next decade or two—indeed for as far forward as anyone can realistically plan—the urban problem will be a poverty problem.

The urban poor are not simply a statistical inconvenience to planners, a disturbing reminder of what might be possible if they would somehow just go away, a continually disappointing factor in budget allocations because of their chronic inability to pay taxes. That is not what urban poverty is about.

The urban poor are hundreds of millions of human beings who live in cities, but do not really share the good and productive life of cities. Their deprivations exclude them.

It is within the power of governments to change that. □



# Settlement Problems in Europe

BY ADOLF CIBOROWSKI

## — Today and Tomorrow

We Europeans believe that the history of human settlement development on our continent is the foundation or cornerstone for the whole philosophy and experience of human settlements. It started with the Greek city-states and with the Roman military camps. It continued through to the medieval cities with their standards of design, and then on to the achievements of the special composition of Baroque times up to the evolution of modern town planning techniques developed in both France and Great Britain, based on the new town theories of Ebenezer Howard.

Yet, personally, I believe that the major impact on present urban development and modernization in Europe occurred during the last thirty years as a result of the Second World War.

### Europe after the War

Human settlements in Europe after the Second World War were in the following condition. First, there were those countries where the majority of cities were completely or severely destroyed; these included Poland, the European part of the Soviet Union, Germany, some parts of the United Kingdom, the northern part of France and some cities in Italy, Holland and Yugoslavia. In the second group were those countries whose cities were less severely damaged. Thus, in the late 1940's, there developed a division between the countries which had to rebuild or reconstruct their cities, and those whose cities had experienced a regular, continuous process of evolution and development from the beginning of the century.

There was (indeed still is) yet another division between the urbanized and economically developed countries and the largely rural, less developed countries. Simplifying the matter, we could say that the developed countries were those who, in the 1950's, had 2/3 of their population living in urban areas and the remaining 1/3 in rural areas. The second group of countries were less developed and urbanized before the War and, as a result, still

faced the task and challenge of very rapid industrialization and urbanization with the accompanying migration from rural to urban areas.

We then have four different components to the European human settlement picture: the destroyed and undestroyed countries, and the urbanized and less urbanized countries. Of course, the overall picture was a little more complicated as there were combinations of all these different factors.

Although any generalization is extremely dangerous, I think I could risk one additional statement about the post-War European human settlement picture, namely that a number of the countries most destroyed were also those most in need of rapid urbanization and development. This was the case in Poland and Yugoslavia and the majority of Eastern European countries. These countries were hit very badly by the War, yet at the same time were less developed before the War in terms of urbanization level compared to Western and Northern European countries.

It is quite clear, therefore, that in each country the initial thrust of settlement development, philosophy and methodology was very different, and the first answers and approaches were thus different too. I would like to caution, therefore, against viewing Europe as one small country. It is easier to compare the town planning problems of Vancouver with those of Montreal or Toronto than to compare the planning problems of two cities in two different European countries, although the distance may be ten times smaller.

### Planning Challenges

Looking back on the process of development in the past thirty years, and keeping in mind the four basic dimensions of the situation, I would say that we could enunciate three major and distinct kinds of town planning and urban development challenges in Europe. The first is reconstruction; the second is the expansion of existing cities which should be, but is

usually not, combined with the process of urban renewal and rehabilitation. The third is the construction of new towns.

### Reconstruction

When talking about reconstruction, I would like to differentiate between two kinds of destruction—man-made and made by nature. I have mentioned those cities destroyed by war; however, in the past 30 years, there has been a second kind of urban destruction, namely by nature, in the form of natural disasters such as earthquakes. This was the case in Skopje, Yugoslavia in 1963, in the cities of Southern Italy some ten years ago and in the cities of Northern Italy just recently. Earthquakes have also occurred in Turkey, and are a constant danger in many other parts of Europe.

### *The Humanity of Nature*

It is curious that in some ways nature is more humane than man when destroying a city. Both forces—man and nature—are selective in destroying a city. Man selects what is the most valuable, what will most easily paralyze the life of the city. Man, therefore, destroys other human beings first and destroys the best parts of the city, such as its modern industry, city centre and transportation network.

Nature is selective too; it first destroys the less valuable parts of the city which have the lowest level of resistance. Nature never destroys as high a percentage of human life as man does. For instance, in Warsaw, destroyed by man, 85% of the city was ruined, and over 80% of the people were killed. In Skopje, destroyed by nature, 65% of the city was destroyed, but roughly less than 1% of the people of Skopje lost their lives, and you will find these proportions in many other cities.

### *Different Planning Situations*

Therefore, the task of planning for reconstruction and the challenges they present for the planner can be very differ-

ent. In the European cities destroyed by war, the first seed capital to rebuild the life of the city consisted of what were, before the war, the worst parts of the city—the suburbs and the slums. And, likely, they were precisely those parts of the city which were most in need of some renewal and rehabilitation intervention, even before the need for reconstruction. This was the case in Warsaw, in Dresden and even Coventry, where the city centre was destroyed. This was also true for Rotterdam and for many other cities.

On the other hand, in the cities destroyed by nature (such as Skopje and some of the Italian settlements) the weakest buildings were demolished, and the most valuable saved. The seed capital consisted, therefore, of the best parts of the city while many of the weakest and the worst parts were destroyed.

From the social point of view, the planner's task is also quite different. In a city destroyed by war, the planner has more time to develop the schemes for the reconstruction because he is working under the lower pressure of a diminished population. In the cities destroyed by nature, where the whole population remains, there are immediate pressures and enormous demands by the population for the restitution of both roofs over their heads and places to work. This pressure is increased still further because low-income groups live in the weakest and thus most devastated parts of the city and are thus the most vulnerable, while those with the most resources and means can more readily start the process of reconstruction by themselves.

#### *A Tragic Chance for Improvement*

The destruction of many cities in Europe during the War offered at the same time a tragic, yet unique, opportunity for improvement. But looking back on the last 30 years, we must also say that not all the cities and countries of Europe made the most appropriate use of that opportunity.

The extent to which individual countries capitalized on this tragic happening depended very much on their economic condition and on the socio-political motives that developed after the War. The countries with the more advanced elements of a planned economy, if not on a national level then on a local level, were more successful in their reconstruction and improvement programs. Some other countries, by contrast, had to work within rigid limitations, such as former legal or other situations, and thus their freedom to introduce broader or wider improvements was restricted.

#### *The Limitations of Land Tenure*

One of the elements of the city most resistant to destruction or evolution is property or the subdivision of land into properties. Although all the buildings, streets and bridges may be destroyed, the subdivision of city properties remains, along with the loans and mortgages on them. Quite often in Europe all records from pre-War times were destroyed — except for the records of debts on urban properties! And, because property division is the most rigid component of the city, the remaining records in many cases dictated the limits of the possibilities for improvement and reconstruction.

Some countries, therefore, as the very first step toward planning for the reconstruction, undertook to revise both the existing land tenure and the rules and laws related to it. The problems of land tenure were solved in many different ways. Only those cities which undertook the task of revising land tenure, along with its model and structure, were able to introduce totally new schemes for the construction of the new city centres. Coventry, Rotterdam, Warsaw, Stalingrad, Minsk and Dresden were some of these cities. In those cities where there were other arguments or reasons limiting this first necessary step, the reconstruction was more or less the repetition of the pre-War cities.

#### **Expansion, Renewal and Rehabilitation**

The second, and at present most common town planning and urban development challenge in Europe, is the expansion, renewal and rehabilitation of existing cities. Again, the scale and the character of this present challenge depends on the degree to which a country is urbanized and developed.

In the countries with more advanced levels of urbanization, this expansion, renewal and rehabilitation process has been rather quiet and undramatic. The planner and the local authorities have time and sufficient possibilities and means to prepare appropriate plans for healthy expansion of the cities. The best examples of this quiet process are to be found in some of the Scandinavian countries. I have in mind, for instance, the expansion of Stockholm, Helsinki and Copenhagen. This process had a much more dramatic face in those countries in the process of urbanization with a rather high level of migration from rural to urban areas and with a strong need to industrialize.

This second point may also be subdivided because after the War in Europe there were two kinds of countries undergoing high-speed urbanization and migration from rural to urban areas. The first group were the Eastern European countries with planned economies, while the second were the countries of Southern Europe with free market economies.

#### *Planned Economy Countries*

In Poland, we realized that urbanization in the 20 year period after the War would be rapid and result in a shift from a rural to an urban population (55% rural to roughly 60% urban) with a simultaneous population growth from 26 up to 32 million. We were also aware of the risk that if migration and industrialization were not planned for immediately that, of course, the large existing or the reconstructed cities would undergo the greatest growth. We decided, therefore, to incorporate a number of incentives into the national physical de-



velopment plan, the first version of which was announced in 1946-47. The incentives were designed to direct the migration to the secondary cities so as to prevent excessive growth in the largest existing metropolitan areas. This redirection of population through incentives took place in Warsaw, and in Poland as a whole, in Czechoslovakia and to some degree in Bulgaria, Yugoslavia and other Eastern European countries.

In Poland, for instance, in 1975 the three major metropolitan areas of Warsaw, Lodz and Katowice had the slowest rate of growth. Today, Warsaw has the same population it had in 1939, some 1.3 million inhabitants. At the same time, we have speeded up the development of roughly forty to fifty secondary towns and cities, some of which were rather small before the War. Most of these towns have now reached a population of 100,000 to 300,000 inhabitants which, in the present conditions of my country, seems to be the most appropriate and advantageous.

#### *Free Market Economies*

In some other countries, the urbanization process was less successful. Without all the incentives available in a planned economy system, the major flow of new investments and population moved toward the larger existing cities, thus creating an overgrowth. This occurred in cities such as Milan and Rome as well as in some of the biggest Spanish cities.

#### *The Neglected Elements*

In the existing cities, the process of expansion should be interrelated with urban renewal and rehabilitation. In the majority of cases, however, the degree of renewal and rehabilitation was not sufficient.

In some countries, such as Poland and other Eastern European countries, there was not much left to be renewed, of course. What was left, though, such as some parts of the city centre of Krakow and Lodz (so-called Polish Manchester), was modernized at a slower rate compared to the

expansion process. We were so busy with the development of new industries and the overall economic and social development as well as the need to build new housing that we had neither the time nor the resources to develop broader renewal and rehabilitation programs. This was more or less the case in the majority of European cities. Expansion in Stockholm, for example, was much more advanced than the modernization of the city centre, even though Stockholm had one of the most successful modernization programs.

Thus, for the next few years, modernization will probably be the most important task for European cities. This will be important from the social point of view because, as a result of development in the past 30 years, there are sometimes noticeable disparities in living and environmental conditions between the old city cores and the newly developed residential collars around the cities; Madrid, Paris and Rome are examples.

#### **New Cities**

The third kind of town planning challenge in Europe is that of new cities. And once more, the problem of constructing new European cities in the last 30 years has two facets.

#### *British New Towns*

First, the most popular and best known is the British program of new towns, concentrated mostly around London, the industrial areas of Scotland and, recently, in other parts of the United Kingdom. The major reason for the British program was to arrest further growth in the existing metropolitan areas and to develop new satellite towns that would offer better environmental conditions, a better redistribution of population and a more equitable distribution of existing industries and productive capacities.

In my opinion, the British program has been very successful, and I am enthusiastic about British new towns in many ways. Although some people point out the

shortcomings of these new cities, including the social problems of satellite towns, I do not believe that there can be any solution or situation free of all stresses – there is always some kind of trade-off. We trade one stress for another; and in the new towns of Great Britain and in the new settlements around Stockholm we have traded better housing and general environmental conditions for some temporary social stresses encountered by newcomers to an unknown environment.

#### *Polish New Towns*

A second type of new town, designed to act as a new growth pole, has been developed in some of the less urbanized and developed European countries. These new towns were sited and developed because of the location of new manufacturing or other activities near existing natural resources or, in some cases, as in Poland, because of the existing surplus of rural population in other regions of the country.

In Poland we see such surplus populations as one of the country's resources; so, we built new towns in which to locate new manufacturing activities rather than to allow people to migrate unnecessarily to another region and to thus maintain regional disparities. The need to balance the levels of development in different regions was, therefore, one of the important reasons for the creation and development of new towns in those countries undergoing the process of urbanization during the last 30 years.

Our experience indicates that new towns based on existing cities, even though very small, are in fact the most successful and easiest to manage compared to those located in virgin areas.

#### **Different Planning Dimensions**

##### *Social Planning*

When talking about different groups of cities being developed, I would like to point out some very important characteristics which differentiate the tasks and challenges

for the planner. The first one is of a social character.

#### *For a Reconstructed City*

When planning the reconstruction of a destroyed city, the planner is dealing with a well-known population with its traditions, structure and preferences. He must immediately enter into constructive dialogue with the people at the site of the plan. This dialogue is vital because he must convince them that the reconstructed city will not be what they expect; that is, it will not be exactly the same city.

When one enters into such a dialogue, it is quite interesting that the expectations of the population are limited by their past experiences. For instance, on planning for the reconstruction of Skopje, I discovered that each group would express their expectations built on past experiences, and this was shaped in accordance with the living standard of the next higher social group to their own. If a planner wants to improve the city as a whole, however, and he has to change the location of residential areas and working places, then the people are shocked. So, it is very important to explain these changes to them.

From the other side, people have their established traditions; they have their own sense of place. For this reason, when reconstructing a city, very special and careful attention should be paid to the cultural, social and human heritage by reconstructing historical monuments and retaining those elements of the cityscape which are most directly related to the people's sense of self-identification with their city, their culture, their history and sometimes with their nation.

This is the reason why in Warsaw, for instance, we put such enormous emphasis on the reconstruction of historical monuments, when probably from a purely economic point of view there were other priorities.

For a modern town planner, it is impossible to plan only the engineered infrastructure of the city. He is planning a

society, and so he must understand that particular social structure.

In my personal experience, a very important component of the work was always the dialogue with the people of the city. All groups and all ages should be consulted. When talking about the future of the city, I also discovered that one of the most interesting age groups to speak with is the youth, the children in the schools. They are interested in what will happen thirty years from now while we are interested only in two or three years into the future.

#### *For an Expanding City*

Planning for the expansion of an existing city is in some ways the simplest. First, the town planner is dealing with an established population and society which has been quietly expanding and undergoing an evolution in life-style, living standard and social structure. Thus, the planner starts from the existing situation and extrapolates from it. Also, when planning for expansion, the town planner works under considerably less pressure than planning for a destroyed city. The planner does not have hundreds of thousands of people sitting in the ruins looking over his shoulder waiting for him to do something and demanding that tomorrow he have immediate answers to the problems of where to build new housing and how to build it.

#### *For a New City*

The third town planning challenge is that of the new city. Because there is no existing society or structure, the very first questions to answer are what kind of society to have in the new city and then what kind of physical arrangement must be designed to accommodate that society. There is no one to develop a dialogue with, so the planner has the additional responsibility of envisaging the future model and building the new city in such a way that it will correspond with the needs of the newcomers.

We had some very interesting and different experiences in the field of new

towns in Europe. In British new towns, for example, the population came mostly from existing metropolitan areas. The majority of newcomers successfully, and very quickly, adapted to their new environment and built new social relationships.

When the new towns were planned and built as new growth poles, a quite different situation emerged. In this second case, the situation was complicated by the fact that the newcomer was also a migrant from a rural to an urban area and was thus not at all prepared or accustomed to urban living. This meant that the overall scheme and strategy for the development of a new city had to contain provisions for accommodating and training the newcomers to help them adapt to their new living conditions and to the different social structures, rules and demands. In some cases, this adaptation was facilitated by the development process.

#### *Building the New City*

Construction workers are one of the first requirements when starting a new city and new industry. And since the building industry is one particular field that draws its work force from semi-trained or untrained labour, the newcomer from the rural area is first accommodated as a construction worker. Generally, the worker comes to the city alone and lives in hostels on the building site, and here two processes of development occur simultaneously: training in skilled work in a modern technology and training in living in a modern urban society in a new social environment.

After a few years when the first parts of the city and the industry have developed, these same workers switch from hostel to regular apartment accommodation, from single to family life and from working in building enterprises to working in other industries. This is an extremely interesting and valuable process of social advancement and growth which occurs simultaneous with the physical growth of a new town.

### *Architectural Planning*

When planning the technical infrastructure and the architectural shape of the city, the planner's task is once more quite different.

### *In the New Towns*

Planning a new city is in some ways the easiest as the town planner and architect have the broadest freedom, especially in the terms of design. The planner's freedom is limited only by economics and the quality of his vision.

### *In the Reconstructed City*

Sometimes the reconstruction of a city is in fact the construction of a new city based partially on traditions to accommodate the old population. Thus, when we reconstruct a city, we like to improve it and yet retain those portions which have special emotional worth, such as the city's historical elements. These improvements must go in many directions.

Experience in European cities has shown that improvements tend to cut down the density of development and thus the density of population per hectare. I have noticed that, as a rule, when a city was totally destroyed, by either war or natural disaster, and was reconstructed in a planned way with this improvement element, the city area grew three times for the same size population, thus reducing the general density by approximately a third.

### *In the Existing City*

When expanding an existing city, it is most important to continue the logic of existing road networks and land uses, and not to create a collar around the city which is totally different in character and pattern from the existing city. The expansion of roads, green areas and open spaces must be built together into one system which blends the old and the new.

### *Setting Minimum Standards*

As far as possible, we must avoid creating great disproportions between the old and

new housing and housing conditions which can sometimes occur on the same street. I am not suggesting, however, that new housing must be kept at a low standard, but rather that the old must be improved — and at once.

In some countries where social groups are differentiated by income levels, the problem of how to reflect that in the land use patterns and in the pattern and location of residential housing development is very valid. Also, in those countries where there is a trend toward what might be called social justice, some minimum standard for everybody must be formulated. These standards must be expressed not only in terms of pure water and air, but in the qualities of the environment, the densities of housing development and so on.

### *The Polish Experience*

This problem does not exist in some countries because, although there are different income groups, there is no differentiation of housing conditions. In Poland, for instance, we have a housing standard which is in the process of continuous evolution — in accordance with overall economic development and growth — and is primarily based on biological needs, that is, family size. In such a situation, the problem of where to locate low-income and high-income workers does not exist, because there are similar housing facilities for all.

This low and high-income blending has offered us an interesting opportunity to create a social mix in new residential developments. In the same apartment house, we may have a university professor, an electronics worker and a clerk from the city council, all with somewhat different incomes. We have such examples in Poland in the city of Warsaw and in other Eastern European countries.

We are against so-called worker settlements where the same group of people work eight hours in a factory, live in the same settlement and then meet only each other during their leisure time. We have

found a unified standard of housing facilitates a social mix by allowing, say, a professor to meet a factory worker on the sports field or in the garden. On the other hand, a housing standard differentiated by income levels leads to social disintegration.

### **Thirty Years Past — Twenty-Five to Come**

We may divide the task of European urban development through the past thirty years and to the end of this century as follows: first, the restitution of lost capacities and potentials. This is, of course, related to the reconstruction. Secondly, there is the task related to growth and development which is expressed, for instance, by new growth poles, new cities and some expansion of existing cities. The third task is the growth of cities due to the growing needs and expectations of the population. As the process of urbanization is more or less stabilized now in Europe, I would say that in the next 25 years this third task will be the major one.

### *Population Stability*

Many countries have 80% of their population living in urban areas — probably a healthy percentage in Europe for the next 20 to 25 years. Even those countries still in the process of development will reach this level very shortly and, in general, Europe will be more or less balanced. This means that Europe no longer has the same urbanization problems of areas such as Latin America, Africa or the Far East. Secondly, population growth is declining, and we expect many European countries will have a zero population growth rate within the next 15 or 20 years.

Thus, the only major reason for further growth in European cities will be increased living standards and growing social expectations which will require expansion of cities and further renewal and rehabilitation of the existing urban cores. This process will be more dramatic in some countries than others.

Some of the Scandinavian countries, for instance, already have 0.8 persons

per room in their residential areas and will need additional housing programs only because of changes and evolutions in family life, such as smaller apartments for smaller families. In Poland, on the other hand, where we have 1.2 to 1.4 persons per room on the average, the main task for the next 20 years will be to reach the level of below one person per room. This means constructing in the next 25 years a "second Poland", as it is put by our political authorities, and to double the amount of housing and facilities, without doubling the population.

Thus, the size of the expansion expressed in numbers will differ from country to country, but the general character of the task is now similar.

#### *Modernization, Renewal and Rehabilitation*

Every country has as its main challenge the improvement of living standards and equalization of living conditions between the old and new parts of the cities and between settlements in different regions. In implementing this task, we may once more point out two major groups of challenges: modernization, and renewal and rehabilitation.

In the next years, the task of modernization will be largely directed to industrial parks and manufacturing activities. In the majority of European countries, the industrial and manufacturing sectors will undergo very rapid modernization, and we can use this opportunity to modernize or revise existing industrial land use patterns.

The second major task for the next 20 years will be the modernization of transportation networks. Personally, I expect that the main focus will be on expansion or development of modern mass transit systems. This means less emphasis on private cars and the improvement of private transport with more emphasis on different kinds of modern mass transit systems, such as small electric buses within the central area of the city and under-

ground or overhead rapid transit. We have already noticed signs of this change.

The third modernization task relates to the existing housing stock. Basically, it must involve the following: cutting down the rate of the present densities; introducing some open spaces; throwing away a third of the existing housing stock to create open spaces and new facilities; and modernizing the remainder.

In terms of modernization, housing will be the major problem because housing demand in the majority of European countries ranges from high to very high. The Eastern European countries, for example, still face a very great housing demand.

#### *Industrialized Housing*

Undoubtedly, the production of housing must be standardized and industrialized if we are to satisfy both the mass demand and the right of every citizen to equal housing and environmental conditions. There will be no time, place and resources for individual housing design. If, for instance, in Poland we have to double the amount of housing in the next 20 years, then the architectural features of modern residential areas could become monotonous. As we start to use similar technologies and factories to produce building materials in Warsaw and Krakow, and in Poland and Czechoslovakia, and in Eastern and Western Europe, we start to develop a similar cityscape of new housing development all around Europe and probably all around the world. This is one of the basic dangers with the present development.

There is no ready-made answer to this problem at present. The majority of architectural schools in Europe (and around the world) have trained their architects and urban planners to be creators of individual buildings. We are well trained to design administrative buildings, schools, churches, hotels and the like. We are prepared only by our life experience — not by our professional training — to deal with the problems surrounding the architecture of mass pro-

duction and the landscaping of mass-produced settlements. This is one of our biggest aesthetic challenges.

#### *Unresolved Issues*

There are some very special issues surrounding the expansion of European cities in the next 25 years related to this aesthetic problem of mass production. I would say that the most important issue is the whole dialogue about the quality of life. What is the quality of life in human settlements to be and how do you measure it? What is the interaction or interrelationship between the quality of life on the one hand and the quality of the environment, either natural and man-made, on the other?

#### *A credo*

I believe that a person must find within his settlement the opportunity to satisfy four kinds of needs.

The first need is of a biological nature, that is, a person must be able to survive in the city and to have the opportunity to raise children in a healthy environment. For this, we need good, adequate size housing with appropriate ventilation and heating. We need fresh unpolluted air and water plus a sufficient amount of green space for recreation.

The second need is economic, that is, the continuous improvement of living standards. We must have the opportunity to improve our living standard through such vehicles as better job opportunities. In addition, the improvement of our living standard does not mean, solely, that next year we have more to eat, but rather we have more theatres to go to and more museums to visit. All these things make up our living standard.

The third need is the social aspect. Every human being has the right to participate in and belong to a defined community and to have the opportunity for social advancement. The shape and organization of the city and the facilities within the city must offer their residents all these opportunities.

The fourth need is the most difficult to define; it is related to intellectual and spiritual needs, such as the beauty of the cityscape and its architecture and the opportunity for cultural life.

The city must be designed in such a way as to offer all these things to its people. Therefore, we must protect, develop or improve those existing qualities in the man-made and natural environment which correspond with these four needs, and we must rehabilitate those lost qualities of the environment that relate to all these needs.

In Europe we have placed enormous importance on the reconstruction, maintenance and protection of historical monuments precisely because these man-made parts of the environment satisfy the important intellectual and spiritual requirements for city life and because they give people a sense of place. We have also placed great emphasis on the development of green and open spaces, because the natural environment satisfies the biological and social needs.

#### Concluding Remarks

In closing, I would say that it is quite clear the various countries of Europe have different development, renewal and rehabilitation priorities.

Italy, for example, has placed the greatest emphasis on the modernization of existing stock and protection of the man-made qualities of the environment, such as the very interesting schemes for the modernization and development of Bologna and Venice.

The modernization of the existing urban stock is also extremely important in the metropolitan areas of the United Kingdom and probably will be the major challenge in that country for the next couple of years.

In Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, new development interrelated with the protection of the natural environment and landscape will be one of the major tasks. This should also be one of the major tasks

in Spain and in parts of Italy, particularly in relation to the development of tourism, and tourist settlements and facilities.

The expansion of existing cities will be the leading task for Poland in the next twenty years.

Let us hope that in the future the task of reconstruction will be due only to natural disasters. These we cannot avoid, but we can start to plan cities to diminish the consequences of disasters. Certainly, this factor must be taken into account in the further planning and development of all cities in Europe and in other parts of the world.

These, then, I see as the European problems of the next twenty-five years. They are fascinating challenges for advanced, highly developed countries, to marry history, technology and humanity. □





# Le patrimoine

## MONUMENTAL

aujourd'hui et demain

PAR  
RAYMOND LEMAIRE

Partout dans le monde, on se soucie plus qu'auparavant de la sauvegarde du patrimoine architectural. L'année 1975 a été pour toute l'Europe une période de réflexion sur la valeur de ce patrimoine, d'élaboration de programmes de conservation et de sensibilisation d'une opinion publique insuffisamment informée. Aux Etats-Unis, le 200<sup>e</sup> anniversaire de l'Indépendance est l'occasion de la mise en valeur du patrimoine qui fut le cadre de cet événement. Sous l'impulsion du pouvoir national ou d'organisations internationales telles que l'UNESCO, la Banque Mondiale ou le Conseil International des Monuments et des Sites, de nombreux autres pays de tous les continents élaborent ou exécutent de vastes programmes de remise en état de villes ou de monuments prestigieux. Faut-il rappeler les sites célèbres de Venise, de Katmandou, d'Abou-Simbel, de Philae ou de Borobudur, où de grandes opérations de sauvetage ont été exécutées ou sont en cours ?

Cependant, dans la plupart des pays, le patrimoine architectural est souvent resté le parent pauvre de la politique culturelle. Certes, on assure le maintien des grands monuments reconnus comme l'expression de l'âme de la nation, mais les spécialistes de tous les pays s'accordent pour affirmer que les moyens, tant légaux que financiers dont ils disposent sont notoirement insuffisants. Leur espoir de disposer de ces moyens, indispensables à la sauvegarde, était tenu jusqu'à ces dernières années. Il n'y a, en ce domaine, comme en tant d'autres, pas de grande politique sans le support de la population. Or, l'opinion publique des pays riches, surtout préoccupée par le développement économique et social, ne s'intéressait guère à la sauvegarde du patrimoine – sauf à l'occasion des voyages de vacances – et celle des contrées du Tiers-Monde était trop préoccupée par des problèmes de survie, pour se sentir concernée par la conservation d'un cadre de vie traditionnel, dont la valeur lui paraissait souvent négative parce qu'il était l'image même de leur sous-développement.

Il serait naïf d'affirmer que la situation actuelle est fondamentalement modifiée, mais il serait tout aussi incorrect de ne pas apercevoir les signes annonciateurs d'un changement progressif de l'opinion publique. Si peu de faits nouveaux concernent la sauvegarde des grands monuments traditionnels, par contre une évolution radicale des mentalités caractérise les réactions de la société à l'égard d'un patrimoine auparavant méconnu : les villes et les villages.

Quels faits expliquent l'amarce de cette évolution ? La dimension culturelle du patrimoine – celle qu'on lui attribue traditionnellement – et en vertu de laquelle sa sauvegarde s'est organisée au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle, ne peut, seule, la justifier. Certes, cette valeur reste l'une des attributions fondamentales du patrimoine et la divulgation de la culture ne peut qu'en augmenter la perception. Cependant, il ressort clairement, tant des écrits que de l'action, qu'elle n'est pas le moteur de la sensibilisation actuelle de l'opi-

nion publique ni l'orientation majeure des besoins de sauvegarde. Ce qui motive l'attitude nouvelle à l'égard du patrimoine se situe à un niveau plus profond, plus viscéralement humain que la culture : celui du cadre de la vie et de la perception du temps. Jamais auparavant, dans son histoire pourtant si longue et si diversifiée, l'humanité n'a provoqué de bouleversement aussi profond et spectaculaire non seulement de sa manière de vivre, mais aussi de son environnement. Les liens visibles avec le passé sont altérés, voire effacés. Le cadre traditionnel de la vie est devenu méconnaissable à celui qui n'a pas vécu son chambardement et, même à celui-là, il est souvent étranger. La présence visuelle de la « mémoire » est menacée, sinon détruite et l'homme se sent soudain perdu dans le cadre de sa vie, forgé au nom de contraintes économiques, techniques ou fonctionnelles qu'il a élaborées certes, et qui correspondent de ce fait à la dimension de son esprit, mais ne s'accordent ni à sa sensibilité, ni à son besoin immanent d'échelle humaine, ni aux exigences de son imagination et de son subconscient. Au surplus, pour la première fois et d'une façon dramatique, une rupture brutale et soudaine apparaît entre le cadre de vie d'hier et celui qui, en tant d'endroits, se construit sous nos yeux.

Auparavant, le tissu de la ville se renouvelait maille par maille, au gré des besoins individuels ou collectifs, les modifications de son « visage » n'étaient guère perceptibles en une vie d'homme. On y trouvait la permanence de l'environnement et l'expression constante des liens avec le passé qui répondent au besoin non seulement psychologique mais, comme l'a démontré René Huyghe, biologique de l'homme. Aujourd'hui les villes se détruisent et se refont par quartier. Des pans de ville traditionnelle s'écroulent sous les coups des démolisseurs et des immeubles géants les remplacent. Rien de commun entre la dimension, la variété, le charme romantique des rues effacées et les aires bétonnées ou le gazon sur lequel s'élèvent des blocs démesurés et monotones où s'entassent hommes et bureaux. L'individu et la communauté se situaient sans peine dans le cadre traditionnel et se l'approprièrent ; ils se perdent dans la démesure des grands ensembles et ne peuvent s'identifier sans heurts à un environnement si différent de leurs aspirations naturelles. La valeur irremplaçable de la dimension traditionnelle de l'environnement bâti – fruit d'un dialogue millénaire entre les besoins de l'homme et sa créativité architecturale – non perçue à une époque où son existence n'était pas mise en jeu, est apparue brusquement et dramatiquement au moment où celle-ci est menacée, sinon en partie détruite. Les édifices qui la matérialisent ont acquis, aux yeux de nos contemporains, une signification et une importance qui se situent bien au-delà de leur intérêt artistique ou historique. Au-delà d'œuvres d'art et de témoignages du passé, ils sont pour eux l'expression d'une aspiration à un cadre de vie vraiment humain, support à la fois de leur besoin d'un abri



personnalisé, c'est-à-dire «possédé» et identifiable, et de liens sociaux, issus du temps, qui les attachent à leurs voisins.

La notion même de monument a subi, au cours des deux dernières décennies, le contrecoup de cette évolution des idées et des sensibilités. De l'édifice exceptionnel, qui seul était reconnu comme monument, le concept s'est étendu «aux œuvres modestes qui ont acquis avec le temps une signification culturelle» (Charte Internationale sur la conservation et la restauration des monuments et des sites, Venise 1964, art. 1). Les destructions effroyables causées par la deuxième guerre mondiale avaient ouvert les yeux sur le patrimoine «modeste», l'architecture dite mineure, dont tout l'intérêt et l'importance apparaissaient au moment où l'on s'en trouva dépouillé ou sur le point de l'être!

Ce sont cependant davantage les applications tardives des principes de la Charte d'Athènes de 1933, préconisant la «ville fonctionnelle», qui vont être à l'origine des traumatismes les plus profonds. Les énormes besoins nouveaux, nés de l'accroissement inouï de la population urbaine en quelques années, ont posé des problèmes nouveaux que l'on a cru pouvoir résoudre efficacement dans l'optique rationaliste de la Charte. Les résultats sont présents dans la plupart des villes du monde construites ou reconstruites depuis un quart de siècle. Ils sont marqués par le défaut d'inspiration humaniste et personnaliste de la Charte elle-même, mais aussi par l'absence d'approche globale des problèmes, par la spéculation foncière effrénée qui, dans un grand nombre de pays, a présidé aux grandes entreprises de rénovation urbaine. Les décisions «autoritaristes», le «choix du Prince», qui caractérisent la plupart des opérations ne laissent aucune possibilité d'intervention ni de choix aux populations cependant infiniment concernées par un environnement qui était le cadre de leur vie quotidienne. Celles-ci se sont vues expulsées de leur habitat, de leur «coquille» qui, pour n'être souvent ni confortable, ni même conforme aux exigences sanitaires, était cependant le lieu avec lequel elles s'identifiaient, façonné à leurs habitudes et à leur manière de vivre; elles étaient de même arrachées à leur quartier et au groupe social qu'il abritait, ainsi qu'aux relations humaines dont il était le support.

On est devenu conscient du fait que ces villes et ces quartiers anciens constituaient, pour leur valeur d'habitat, pour le «tissu» social qu'ils abritent, une part essentielle du patrimoine que le passé a légué à nos contemporains et dont la sauvegarde importe non plus seulement pour son intérêt historique ou artistique, mais pour ses vertus humaines et sociales: comme antidote contre l'inhumanité de nombreux ensembles nouveaux; comme source d'inspiration d'un urbanisme ou d'une architecture qui demeure à l'échelle de l'homme et accueille celui-ci dans le respect de sa diversité; comme habitat privilégié par l'apport de nombreuses générations qui y ont laissé

une part de leur intelligence, de leur imagination et de leur cœur. La notion de «patrimoine architectural» s'est trouvée de ce fait élargie bien au-delà des limites que la seule signification culturelle lui attribuait. A l'origine, part exceptionnelle du legs culturel, le patrimoine devient aujourd'hui un élément du cadre courant de la vie quotidienne. D'objet d'art à conserver ou à restaurer, on le considère davantage comme un édifice qu'il faut intégrer et adapter aux besoins de la vie – sans lui faire perdre la valeur et l'intérêt dont le passé l'a doté car c'est là l'origine même des qualités spécifiques qui justifient son maintien. Et celui-ci n'est valable que pour autant que l'individu et la communauté qui l'habitent ne soient pas les victimes irrémédiables de l'opération. Dès lors, la politique de sauvegarde s'allie à celle de l'habitat dont elle assure une part substantielle. De seul fait culturel qui, dans les objectifs de l'Etat, la plaçait souvent au rang des besoins accessoires, elle se situe dorénavant parmi les fondements mêmes du bien-être des citoyens.

Le cheminement des idées, ci-dessus esquissé, s'est exprimé dans une série de documents trop longue pour qu'on les énumère ici. En 1964, la Charte de Venise reconnaissait une valeur de monument, c'est-à-dire de témoin dont la valeur justifie la sauvegarde, au tissu urbain. Depuis lors, les nombreux colloques organisés en Europe, à l'initiative du Conseil de l'Europe et du Conseil International des Monuments et des Sites (ICOMOS) ont, sous la poussée des événements et de l'éveil de l'opinion publique, élargi cette notion initiale à la dimension des idées actuelles. Récemment, les Résolutions de Bruges, (ICOMOS, mai 1975) et la Déclaration d'Amsterdam (Conseil de l'Europe, octobre 1975) ont réaffirmé les objectifs sociaux et culturels de la sauvegarde. Dans le Nouveau-Monde, des séminaires patronnés par l'Organisation des Etats Américains et l'ICOMOS ont affirmé que «le sauvetage des centres historiques est un acte social en même temps que culturel et qui doit être intégré à la politique du logement» (Résolutions de Saint-Domingue, OEA et ICOMOS 1974). Dès 1968, à Tunis, l'attention était attirée sur la valeur des médinas et sur la nécessité de les assainir et de les conserver au bénéfice de leur population actuelle.

Enfin, l'UNESCO a repris le problème au plan universel dans le projet de recommandation sur la sauvegarde des quartiers, villes et sites historiques et leur intégration dans un environnement moderne, qui a été soumis à l'approbation de la Conférence Générale d'octobre 1976. «Les villes et quartiers historiques, y lit-on, ont une valeur universelle et irremplaçable par le témoignage qu'ils apportent des diverses cultures et époques passées et en tant que modèles d'un habitat profondément humain». Et encore: «A l'époque où le nivellement des techniques et des formes de construction risque d'uniformiser l'habitat dans le monde entier, la préservation des ensembles historiques peut contribuer émi-

nemment au maintien des constantes culturelles et sociales propres aux différentes nations et dans chacune d'elle servir de base à des créations architecturales authentiques.»

Il serait téméraire de résumer en quelques phrases les nombreuses entreprises de sauvegarde des villes et quartiers anciens qui ont été réalisées ou sont en cours d'exécution dans le monde entier. Il peut être intéressant cependant de rappeler quelques fait marquants.

Faut-il rappeler d'abord certaines villes historiques célèbres comme Venise, Nara, Bruges ou Amsterdam qui, étant situées longtemps à l'écart des régions industrielles, ont dû à une éclipse économique passagère au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle, la conservation de leur structure, de leurs monuments et de leur tissu historique, ceux-ci ayant déjà révélé leur intérêt exceptionnel avant que les causes de destruction qui abimèrent ou détruisirent la plupart des villes anciennes ne les menacent. La première tentative de sauvegarde systématique d'une ville historique est due sans doute à l'initiative de l'homme d'Etat français, Edouard Herriot qui, dès les années 20, s'efforça de réunir les fonds nécessaires à la restauration de la petite cité médiévale de Pérouges, non loin de Lyon. L'objectif était surtout archéologique et visait à reconstituer un cadre de vie médiéval avec ses us et ses coutumes: un musée vivant du passé évoqué avec force par un site urbain exceptionnellement conservé. La même philosophie anime la célèbre restauration de la ville de Williamsburgh, en Virginie, entreprise en 1926 grâce au mécénat de John D. Rockefeller, et la reconstruction récente de Louisbourg au Canada. Durant la dernière guerre mondiale, les destructions massives anéantirent, parfois de propos délibéré, des villes entières, trésors historiques inestimables de pays qui y retrouvaient une expression essentielle de leur identité. Varsovie, Nuremberg, Hildesheim sont de celles-là. Leur reconstruction entière ou partielle, tentant de ressusciter un passé évanoui, est un acte de piété nationale et l'expression du refus de disparaître de son cadre de vie l'évocation permanente de ses racines, le «genius loci».

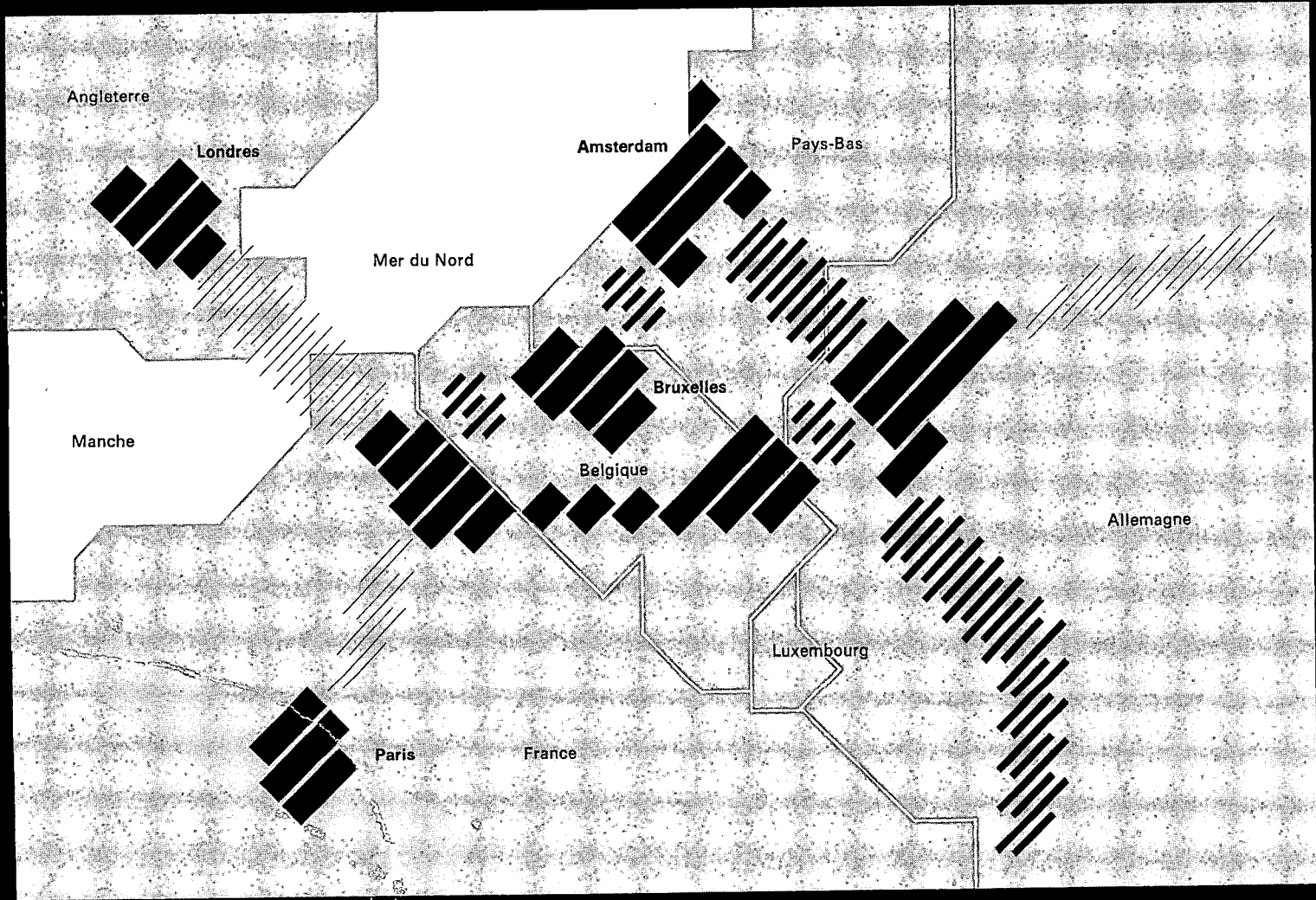
L'essor du tourisme fut dès la fin des années 50 un facteur puissant, mais souvent plus destructeur que favorable de restauration de petites villes anciennes situées dans des zones particulièrement attractives. Certaines opérations remarquables méritent d'être citées, par exemple: les petites villes de Telč en Moravie, de Sarlat en Périgord, de Dubrovnik en Croatie. Mais que de destructions ou de galvaudages pour quelques réussites!

La grande prise de conscience, celle qui englobe progressivement tout le patrimoine urbain ancien, ne date que des quinze dernières années. La France a montré la voie sous l'impulsion d'André Malraux, ministre de la Culture, qui instaura une grande politique visant «à sauver le passé pour l'avenir». La loi du 4 août 1962 fut le modèle de nombreuses mesures

légales édictées dans d'autres pays. La création de «secteurs sauvegardés», couvrant des villes entières, ou de très vastes quartiers tels le célèbre Marais, à Paris, confrontait pour la première fois la préservation du patrimoine avec l'ensemble des problèmes que posent l'urbanisme et l'aménagement du territoire. La dimension économique et sociale et l'indispensable notion d'intégration des villes historiques avec leurs spécificités dans l'ensemble des problèmes de l'équipement et de l'habitat se dégagèrent progressivement. La sauvegarde se fera dorénavant au sein de plans d'aménagement et de structure qui donnent aux quartiers historiques une fonction vivante, particulière et essentielle dans la solution de l'ensemble des problèmes posés par la ville, l'agglomération, voire la région.

De nombreux pays d'Europe adoptent progressivement une politique qui s'inspire de cette conception. L'Année du patrimoine architectural européen a été à cet égard un stimulant certain. Plus de cinquante opérations-pilotes ont été décidées à l'occasion de cet événement qui toucha une vingtaine de pays. Elles ne sont pas l'amorce d'une politique appelée à se développer largement au cours des prochaines années. Des dizaines, voire plusieurs centaines de villes sont concernées par elle. L'exemple de l'Europe commence à être suivi sur d'autres continents. En Afrique du Nord, où sous l'impulsion de l'UNESCO, les villes de Tunis et de Fez font l'objet d'études ou de travaux de sauvegarde globale, en Amérique où il faut citer entre autres Québec et Philadelphie, en Australie où les habitants de Sidney et de Melbourne se préoccupent de sauver leurs constructions victoriennes, en Asie où parmi d'autres, des efforts sont faits pour sauver le vicus Batavia (Djakarta), en Indonésie, et les trois villes extraordinaires de la vallée de Katmandou, au Népal.

L'évolution de la sauvegarde du patrimoine monumental évoquée ci-dessus, ne concerne qu'une partie de celui-ci, la plus modeste à première vue. Mais c'est incontestablement celle qui prédomine par son étendue et par la mission qu'elle remplit: entourer et loger dignement les hommes. Elle occupa une place essentielle dans les objectifs de la Conférence de Vancouver: un habitat pour tous. Non pas n'importe lequel, mais un habitat qui respecte la nature de l'homme, ses traditions, sa diversité, sa dignité. La présence du passé dans le cadre de la vie est nécessaire à son équilibre. C'est pourquoi, il faut assurer son avenir. □



**La mégalopole du nord-ouest de l'Europe**

-  Aires urbaines
-  Formations axiales
-  Axes tendanciels

## Vers une planification mégapolitaine?

L'Institut européen de recherche pour l'aménagement régional et urbain (Eriplan) a effectué une étude pour la Commission de la Communauté économique européenne sur la mégalopole du nord-ouest de l'Europe. L'étude a été prudemment intitulée: *Etude prospective sur la planification physique et l'environnement dans la mégalopole en formation dans le nord-ouest de l'Europe* (un rapport de synthèse du même titre est sorti en mars 1975 et est disponible chez Eriplan, Molenstraat 15, La Haye). Eriplan a, de plus, organisé un séminaire international en juillet 1975 sur les problèmes comparatifs mégapolitains, avec des collègues japonais, américains et européens, intéressés par leurs propres problèmes mégapolitains et par des études comparatives sur les mégalopoles. Le rapport de ce séminaire, de même titre, est également disponible chez Eriplan.

Il est de mon intention de situer, avec précision, quelques-unes des tendances de réflexion sur les problèmes mégapolitains fondées sur ces expériences récentes. L'étude sur la mégalopole du nord-ouest de l'Europe a été une expérience importante, dans la mesure où elle a permis une réflexion de portée supranationale sur les interrelations urbaines à un niveau européen.

La comparaison avec d'autres formations mégapolitaines existant dans le monde a clarifié les caractéristiques spécifiques de chaque formation mégapolitaine et a posé la question fondamentale de leur rôle à l'échelle mondiale et de leurs relations avec le monde en voie de développement.

### Les étapes du processus mégapolitain

Le processus urbain et métropolitain à l'échelle mondiale a révélé, au cours des dernières décennies, de nouvelles interdépendances fonctionnelles et spatiales, intimement liées, que nous avons appelées «mégalopole». (Se référer à l'ouvrage précurseur de Jean Gottmann, *Northeastern Seaboard Megalopolis of USA*).

### Les facteurs du processus urbain

Selon G. Sjoberg (*The Preindustrial City*, 1961), l'origine et l'évolution de l'urbanisation sont liées aux trois niveaux majeurs d'organisation humaine: sociétés tribales, sociétés civilisées préindustrielles ou féodales, sociétés industrielles. Les bourgs et les villes ne sont apparus qu'à la seconde étape, il y a 5500 ans, mais l'urbanisation à grande échelle comme conséquence de l'industrialisation, n'a débuté qu'il y a 100 ans.

Selon L. Reissman (*The urban process - Cities in industrial Societies*, 1964) l'urbanisation, résultat de l'industrialisation, est liée partout où elle existe à l'émergence des classes moyennes et à la montée du nationalisme. Les sociétés tertiaires révèlent de nouveaux types d'urbanisation, avec un ensemble com-

plexe de facteurs déterminant des structures physiques et sociologiques nouvelles.

### Les facteurs du processus métropolitain

En 1800, il n'y avait pas de villes d'un million d'habitants. En 1950, il y en avait plus de 100 réparties à travers le monde. La formation métropolitaine est clairement le résultat de la révolution industrielle et du développement nouveau du tertiaire bien que, dès le moyen-âge, l'aire à dominante rurale de l'actuelle mégalopole du nord-ouest de l'Europe concentrât déjà des villes-ports prospères, qui ne donnèrent naissance à des aires métropolitaines qu'après 1800.

A partir de cette date, elles se transformèrent en pôles de croissance, en raison des effets économiques multiplicateurs d'investissements multisectoriels, publics aussi bien que privés. Le rôle de la bourgeoisie et des entrepreneurs est clair, car ces investissements furent provoqués par des possibilités localisées dans les villes où les gens qui s'y trouvèrent impliqués étaient formés. Mais le rôle du secteur public est également apparent: les nations les plus centralisées tendent à avoir des types urbains plus décentralisés. Il serait intéressant de comparer les facteurs et les causes spécifiques de la formation métropolitaine, dans des aires métropolitaines sélectionnées (Rotterdam sous l'influence du port, Eindhoven, comme produit de Philips, Lille comme aire industrielle du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle, Bruxelles comme capitale, etc.).

### Le processus de la formation mégapolitaine

Les trois formations mégapolitaines les plus évidentes dans le monde sont à l'heure actuelle: la façade maritime mégapolitaine du nord-est des Etats-Unis, la mégalopole japonaise et la mégalopole du nord-ouest de l'Europe. Selon la définition du professeur Jean Gottmann, dans son introduction sur la mégalopole du nord-ouest de l'Europe, une mégalopole est «la concentration d'aires métropolitaines étroitement contiguës sur une partie relativement limitée et petite d'un continent, et qui conduit au phénomène mégapolitain lorsqu'elle atteint de très grandes dimensions, rassemblant plus de 25 millions de personnes» (*Problèmes comparatifs mégapolitains*, Eriplan, La Haye, 1975). Il distingue ainsi trois formations mégapolitaines en Europe, une en Angleterre, une autre dans l'extrémité nord-ouest du continent (Amsterdam, Calais, Ruhr) et une troisième le long de la Méditerranée, s'étendant de Marseille vers l'Est jusqu'à Bologne et vers le Sud par la côte jusqu'à Pise. Cette distinction est semblable à celle que fait J. G. Papaioannou («Future Urbanization patterns in Europe» dans *The Mastery of urban growth*, Mens en Ruimte, Bruxelles, 1971) et qui se base sur les études ayant trait à la ville de l'avenir, menées au Centre Ekistics d'Athènes. Il distingue:

a) la mégalopole britannique qui s'étend de Londres aux Midlands via Birmingham et plus loin vers le Nord-Est jusqu'à Newcastle-upon-Tyne

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b) un groupe de cinq mégapoles intimement liées, dans le centre et le nord-ouest de l'Europe. L'axe central de ce système est fourni par la mégapole rhénane (Randstad Holland – Ruhr – Francfort – Stuttgart)

c) la troisième formation mégapolitaine plus petite est celle qui relie Milan à Turin.

Un grand nombre de facteurs déterminants du processus mégapolitain ont été discutés à notre séminaire sur une comparaison mégapolitaine: ainsi les facteurs historiques, les caractéristiques géographiques, le réseau de transport et d'infrastructures, les forces et la concurrence économiques (par exemple entre les ports principaux du nord-ouest de l'Europe), le type de gouvernement avec ses facteurs politiques et sociologiques, les préférences touchant à l'environnement, les valeurs changeantes qui ont des répercussions sur la position géographique, etc.

La poursuite d'une recherche systématique sur les forces sous-jacentes du développement mégapolitain est une base essentielle pour toute forme d'orientation ou de maîtrise de ce phénomène. Dans un programme de recherche mégapolitaine comparative, il serait très important d'analyser le rôle des différents facteurs dans des régimes gouvernementaux et des contextes continentaux différents.

Dans les trois cas examinés, le phénomène mégapolitain semble être fondamentalement le résultat de forces économiques convergeant dans une région favorisée sur le plan de la géographie et des infrastructures.

Les développements portuaires semblent jouer un rôle important dans les trois cas. Chaque type de formation mégapolitaine a ses propres facteurs déterminants, tels que l'industrie automobile aux Etats-Unis, le rôle des ports de la Mer du Nord (Londres, Anvers, Rotterdam, Hambourg) dans le nord-ouest de l'Europe, les conditions géographiques et le cadre politique et institutionnel centralisé au Japon.

Le cadre social et institutionnel est différent dans chacun des trois cas: une structure nationale centralisée au Japon, un régime fédéral aux Etats-Unis et un système décentralisé dans des pays différents à langues différentes, dans le cas du nord-ouest de l'Europe où sont situés six capitales de pays membres de la Communauté européenne.

Apparemment, l'émergence de formations mégapolitaines est influencée par une combinaison de conditions économique-géographiques et socio-politiques.

### L'étude sur la mégapole européenne

Quelques-unes des idées principales qui ressortent de l'étude sur la mégapole du nord-ouest de l'Europe, quoique celle-ci n'ait qu'un caractère exploratoire, peuvent inspirer les politiques et les planifications mégapolitaines du reste du globe.

### La mégapole du nord-ouest de l'Europe

La question: «Existe-t-il une mégapole dans le nord-ouest de l'Europe?» n'a pas tellement d'importance. Le plus important est de savoir quels sont les problèmes liés à l'existence d'une zone hautement urbanisée dans cette région et comment les résoudre.

Les phénomènes dont tout le monde reconnaît l'existence sont les suivants:

- il existe des aires métropolitaines dans différents pays du nord-ouest de l'Europe
- ces aires métropolitaines situées dans ces pays fortement urbanisés se rapprochent
- il se manifeste au moins des tendances mégapolitaines ou d'urbanisation connexes, surtout le long des axes qui relient les zones métropolitaines entre elles.

Le phénomène d'urbanisation dans le nord-ouest de l'Europe appelé mégapole porte sur des zones métropolitaines, des zones de suburbanisation et d'exurbanisation, ainsi que sur des formations axiales entre elles. Les zones les plus reliées et intégrées sont:

- le Randstad Holland
- la partie centrale de la Belgique (Anvers-Bruxelles-Gand et le sillon industriel wallon)
- la «Métropole du Nord» en France
- le «Ruhr Gebiet» et les zones urbaines reliées comme Cologne-Bonn et le triangle Liège-Aix-la-Chapelle-Maastricht.

Ces zones forment la partie centrale dudit phénomène. Ce ne sont pas toutes de vraies métropoles qui se sont développées d'une manière monoconcentrique, mais elles constituent plutôt un conglomérat de centres de taille différente. Deux grandes métropoles, Londres et Paris, peuvent être considérées comme satellites, autour de ce phénomène de conglomération, bien que surtout Londres fasse déjà partie d'une zone d'urbanisation allant de Londres au nord-est de l'Angleterre.

Toute cette zone mégapolitaine s'étend sur le territoire de cinq pays: Pays-Bas, Belgique, France, Allemagne et Angleterre. Ces zones hautement urbanisées et urbanisantes sont en train de former une entité géographique et/ou fonctionnelle. La mégapole du nord-ouest de l'Europe pourrait être considérée dans l'avenir comme un niveau intermédiaire entre le niveau national et le niveau supranational de la Communauté européenne.

Les problèmes spécifiques résultant du phénomène d'urbanisation contiguë et concentrante dans le nord-ouest de l'Europe se posent à deux niveaux:

Les problèmes internes inhérents à la conglomération sont surtout caractérisés par a) la consommation des espaces ouverts engendrée par la dispersion de l'habitat avec des gaspillages de l'infrastructure et des services publics, b) la détérioration de la qualité de l'environnement aggravée par cette dispersion accidentelle. Le phénomène de la concentration des nuisances dans les centres-ville se déplace en direction des zones nouvelles d'urbanisation.

Les problèmes externes ont trait principalement aux déséquilibres créés au niveau européen par une concentration plus forte. Le déséquilibre dans le processus d'urbanisation est l'expression de distorsions économiques. Ce n'est pas seulement le secteur privé qui a une préférence prononcée pour une multiplication des investissements dans le nord-ouest de l'Europe. Cette zone contient six capitales nationales des pays de la Communauté européenne, dont Bruxelles qui connaît l'influence de l'administration européenne. Apparemment, les fonctions administratives de la Communauté économique européenne, et particulièrement le libre marché, vont favoriser également la concentration des activités dans le nord-ouest de l'Europe, si on ne suit pas une politique européenne délibérée de décentralisation.

Les problèmes énoncés ne sont que des exemples pour montrer la nécessité d'une politique vis-à-vis de ce phénomène spécifique au nord-ouest de l'Europe.

#### **Quels sont les défauts et les difficultés des approches strictement nationales visant à remédier à la croissance urbaine ?**

Le succès des politiques nationales de maîtrise du phénomène urbain n'a été que partiel, à cause de trois facteurs principaux :

- Les politiques sectorielles ont, dans beaucoup de cas, contrarié les politiques urbaines (difficulté de coordination horizontale).
- Les politiques des différents niveaux d'administration et de décision sont, dans beaucoup de cas, contradictoires et conflictuelles. Les ambiguïtés sont apparentes surtout dans les pays où se posent des problèmes de forte concentration ayant comme objectif national la décentralisation, tandis que les politiques urbaines traditionnelles, au niveau métropolitain, favorisent la concentration.
- Les mesures et instruments aux effets multiples ne sont pas suffisamment évalués. Une telle évaluation multinationale serait extrêmement importante si l'on veut augmenter l'efficacité de la planification dans les différents pays et préparer un système de mesures dans une optique communautaire.

Même si la planification et les politiques nationales étaient suffisamment efficaces, la question se poserait de savoir si elles sont *suffisantes pour la maîtrise du phénomène mégapolitain*. C'est cette question cruciale qui servira de motif à d'éventuelles politiques européennes de contrôle. Car il faut respecter le principe de la délégation à un niveau inférieur, quand il n'y a pas motif à un niveau plus élevé.

Pourtant, dans le cas du nord-ouest de l'Europe, il semble qu'il y ait des arguments décisifs en faveur d'une approche supranationale.

- Le phénomène d'urbanisation diffuse dans le cadre du nord-ouest de l'Europe nécessite au moins une coordination des conceptions et des futurs choix de développement.

- Les objectifs nationaux n'étant pas coordonnés sont parfois contradictoires entre pays voisins.
- Les mesures ne sont pas synchronisées; elles sont de nature différente, même si elles ne sont pas toujours contradictoires.
- Les problèmes externes et l'équilibre régional, sur le plan européen, nécessitent aussi une approche supranationale qui ne peut pas suivre les frontières nationales parce que la France, l'Angleterre et l'Allemagne n'ont qu'une partie de leur territoire située dans la région mégapolitain, alors que ces pays comprennent aussi, à l'extérieur de celle-ci, des zones qui peuvent être considérées comme sous-développées par rapport à l'Europe.
- L'équilibre écologique, en particulier, nécessite une approche plus large qui englobe tout le phénomène urbain contigu dans son cadre naturel et dont les éléments biologiques ne sont pas déterminés par les frontières nationales.

De ces arguments évidents, il résulte qu'il y a nécessité, à moyen terme, d'arriver à une politique communautaire de maîtrise du développement mégapolitain.

Les conditions pour atteindre cet objectif sont les suivantes :

#### **1. Formulation des objectifs vis-à-vis du développement mégapolitain du nord-ouest de l'Europe**

Les objectifs du développement urbain et de la politique écologique doivent être intégrés dans une conception cohérente et globale du développement mégapolitain du nord-ouest de l'Europe. Les premières lignes directrices possibles d'une stratégie écospatiale relative au nord-ouest de l'Europe ont été élaborées dans l'étude précédemment mentionnée au début de cet article. Les aspects du développement urbain et les aspects écologiques y ont été particulièrement élaborés, tandis que les problèmes de l'équilibre régional en Europe ont seulement été posés.

#### **2. Elaboration d'un système de mesures et d'instruments au niveau supranational ou européen**

Pour rééquilibrer le développement dans le cadre de l'Europe, pour aménager le développement mégapolitain et pour protéger et améliorer l'environnement, des mesures et des instruments appropriés seront nécessaires.

#### *Mesures et instruments de l'urbanisme et de l'aménagement physique*

Une étude comparative s'impose pour évaluer l'efficacité de l'utilisation des plans d'urbanisme et d'aménagement du territoire, des permis de construire, etc., dans les différents pays et dans des situations différentes. Il est clair, et ceci est d'autant plus vrai pour la région mégapolitain, que l'efficacité des systèmes de maîtrise de l'utilisation du sol est très différente d'un pays à l'autre.

#### *Mesures et instruments de la politique régionale*

Une comparaison et une évaluation de différents types de mesures utilisées dans le domaine de la politique régionale seraient de grande importance pour la préparation de mesures appropriées au niveau européen. Il serait important de faire une étude comparative et une appréciation des mesures positives (comme les subventions, les allègements fiscaux, les prêts bonifiés, les primes de décentralisation, etc.) et des mesures négatives pour freiner le développement métropolitain et/ou mégapolitain (comme le permis d'établissement, la taxe ou les redevances sur les nouveaux emplacements, etc.).

#### *Mesures et instruments de la politique de l'environnement*

Des études comparatives sur les normes, mesures et sanctions contre différentes formes de pollution, les moyens et les instruments pour protéger et améliorer l'environnement seraient de grande importance pour le système de mesures en préparation au niveau européen.

### **3. Nécessité d'un niveau supérieur d'étude, de planification, d'administration et de décision**

Une conception cohérente de développement et d'aménagement au niveau européen, avec un ensemble d'instruments de mise en œuvre, nécessite aussi un niveau supérieur d'étude, de planification intégrative, d'administration et de décision.

*Une coordination horizontale des politiques sectorielles* est nécessaire pour contrôler et guider le développement mégapolitain dans ses différents aspects. Toute politique sectorielle avec des implications écospatiales devrait être coordonnée. Cela comprend, entre autres, l'économie régionale, les investissements publics et l'infrastructure, le logement et le secteur socio-culturel, la politique de l'environnement, le tourisme, la politique agricole, etc.

*Une coordination verticale des niveaux de planification et de décision est également nécessaire* La coordination entre le niveau local, régional, national et international à l'échelon européen, laisse la question ouverte concernant le niveau approprié pour la zone mégapolitaine.

Différentes solutions sont possibles:

- Une approche bi- ou multilatérale entre pays concernés.
- La création d'un niveau intermédiaire de la mégapole, comme les niveaux intermédiaires créés, par exemple, pour les zones métropolitaines dans certains pays.
- Une politique communautaire ou au niveau européen, vis-à-vis de la région mégapolitaine.

Les approches bi- ou multilatérales ont prouvé que, sans un niveau de décision approprié, tous les efforts d'études et de planification sont en grande partie inutiles. De plus, la création d'un niveau de déci-

sion intermédiaire sans un niveau de décision supranational de la communauté soulève de nombreuses difficultés. Donc, la solution la plus réaliste est certainement l'introduction d'une politique communautaire vis-à-vis du phénomène mégapolitain dans le cadre d'une politique plus large.

L'importance des études sur le phénomène mégapolitain dans ses divers aspects, de l'information concernant ces problèmes inter- et supranationaux et des possibilités de participation pour les résoudre doit être soulignée. Le succès d'une planification et d'une politique écospatiale repose sur une conscience commune et élargie.

### **Développement mégapolitain et monde en voie de développement**

Le développement mégapolitain excessif est-il une des raisons des disparités croissantes à l'échelle mondiale entre régions en voie de développement et régions développées? Et de ce point de vue, faudrait-il également maîtriser le développement et le décentraliser vers d'autres continents?

Un programme d'étude du développement mégapolitain devrait, de préférence, inclure des études de cas concernant les pays en voie de développement, par exemple en Chine et au Brésil. Ces deux pays, dont les perspectives politiques et idéologiques et les formes de gouvernement diffèrent ont été mentionnés comme des exemples dans le Tiers-Monde de pays présentant quelques symptômes mégapolitains.

Cette étude pourrait également contribuer à élucider la question de savoir dans quelle mesure un régime économique et politique différent serait à même d'éviter des concentrations urbaines et mégapolitaines excessives.

L'idée de pôle de croissance a été utilisée comme concept pour expliquer la croissance autosoutenue des aires urbaines. Bien qu'elle ait été également utilisée dans les pays en voie de développement comme instrument de développement social et régional, on peut se demander si cette idée n'est pas liée d'une façon spécifique aux sociétés capitalistes. Puisque l'idée de pôle de croissance a suscité des réactions critiques dans les pays en voie de développement, il faut se rendre compte que le développement mégapolitain du point de vue du Tiers-Monde pourrait susciter de nombreuses réactions et critiques.

Dans le contexte européen, la notion de mégapole a également des résonances très négatives pour les régions marginales et périphériques et cela vaudrait certainement aussi pour les pays en voie de développement. Les régions mégapolitaines à l'échelle du monde tout entier, sont reconnues comme produit de régimes économiques et sociaux capitalistes à grande échelle.

Est-ce sensé de suivre un raisonnement semblable à celui qu'on applique à l'Europe et de plaider

en faveur d'une décentralisation à grande échelle des possibilités d'emploi économique et urbain à travers le monde entier?

On peut se demander de même s'il faut modifier fondamentalement la stratégie du développement économique. L'idée de base concernant l'aide mégapolitaine du nord-ouest de l'Europe était celle d'un développement sans croissance, afin d'étendre celle-ci vers des centres métropolitains et des centres de croissance intermédiaires dans d'autres régions de l'Europe. N'est-ce pas à l'échelle mondiale qu'il faudrait concevoir une telle stratégie de décentralisation des régions développées et principalement mégapolitaines dans le monde, vers des zones de croissance potentielles dans le monde en voie de développement?

Il faudrait en outre examiner minutieusement le type de développement des pays en voie de développement, de façon à ce qu'on puisse faire l'économie des problèmes de disparités régionales et sociales observés dans les trois cas de formations mégapolitaines. Ce type de stratégie de développement a deux dimensions:

1) *Une dimension socio-économique*, au sens où le développement social et la maximisation des possibilités d'emploi dans les pays en voie de développement devraient être favorisés de façon à augmenter les revenus de la population. La conclusion principale, par exemple, du livre *Regional Development in South and North East Asia* de L. Lefebvre et M. Datta-Chandhuri, faisait ressortir que

«le développement économique dans les zones surpeuplées de l'Asie devra reposer sur une transformation rurale d'envergure qui, à son tour, ne s'accomplira pas sans des améliorations considérables dans la distribution des revenus en faveur des chômeurs et des travailleurs sous-employés, conclusion qui va à contre-courant des théories classiques du développement économique».

Dans le même sens, V. Grossmann, dans un article paru en 1974, dans *Regional Development and Planning*, plaide pour une stratégie interrégionale du développement des pays en voie de développement, avec des objectifs régionaux explicites d'égalité et d'emploi. Ces pays ont privilégié des politiques d'industrialisation vigoureuses, visant à un substitut d'importation, qui sont susceptibles d'aggraver les inégalités régionales, si bien qu'il faudrait concevoir des stratégies tenant davantage compte des aspects sociaux.

2) *Une dimension spatiale*, parce que dans les pays en voie de développement comme dans les pays développés, se sont manifestés récemment un intérêt et une motivation croissante en faveur des centres de croissance petits ou moyens, avec un taux d'emploi, d'équipement et de services suffisant à leur

population propre et à leur arrière-pays rural. De telles stratégies spatiales sont fondées sur les déséconomies d'échelle et la dégradation de l'environnement qui sont le lot des grandes agglomérations et des formations mégapolitaines, et en même temps sur les stratégies de développement qui mettent l'accent sur les avantages sociaux et humains d'entités plus petites.

Le phénomène de sururbanisation est caractéristique des pays développés comme des pays en voie de développement, bien que les causes soient fondamentalement différentes.

Dans les pays développés, il est basé sur des investissements multisectoriels dans des zones favorisées géographiquement où les effets économiques multiplicateurs ont donné naissance aux formations mégapolitaines. Dans les pays en voie de développement, il est basé sur les espoirs que fonde la population à l'égard des régions urbaines et mégapolitaines, bien que les possibilités réelles d'emploi soient faibles. En dépit de cette différence, une étude de leurs contrastes peut servir d'exemple et inspirer des politiques adéquates pour chaque cas. Bien que les causes premières soient différentes, les tendances vont toutes dans le sens de la décentralisation et de l'encouragement donné aux centres de croissance ruraux et intermédiaires.

Cependant, puisque l'organisation spatiale est l'expression de l'organisation de la société même, des interventions adéquates ne peuvent avoir d'effet que par la permanente reconsidération de l'organisation de la société et par l'orientation de celle-ci, inspirées par des objectifs d'égalité et d'épanouissement pour tous les peuples, de quelque nation ou continent qu'ils soient. □

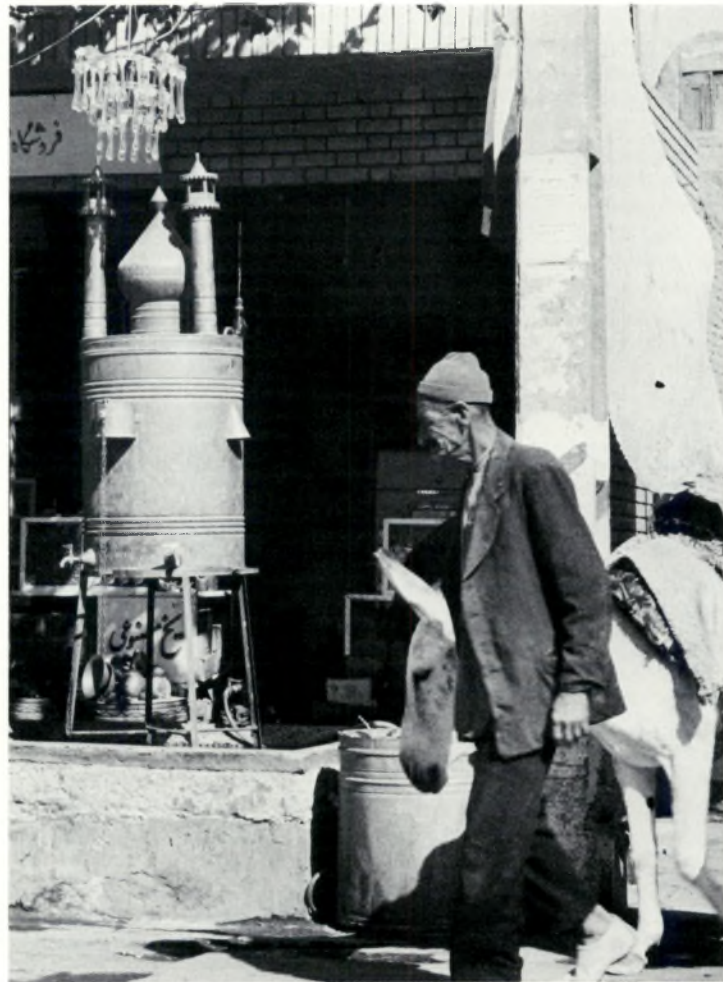


"The single most important factor  
in improving the health environment of the poor  
is to provide clean water . . ."  
*Robert S. McNamara*

"Le facteur déterminant,  
lorsqu'il s'agit d'améliorer les conditions  
sanitaires des défavorisés,  
est de leur fournir de l'eau pure . . ."  
*Robert S. McNamara*



*Memphis, Egypt / Memphis, Egypte*



*Kashan, Iran / Kachan, Iran*

BY ANDREW N. LIGALE

# Housing Problems in Urban AFRICA

There is a considerable lag between technological progress made in the fields of science and engineering and those made in housing. Man has sent astronauts to the moon, but has not been very successful in devising housing cheap enough for the ordinary urban dweller. The situation is even worse in the developing countries of Africa where technological advancement is on a much lower level than in the developed countries. In Africa, the problem has been compounded by an uncontrolled rural to urban migration, especially following World War II, and an economic underdevelopment which has been unable to absorb the impact of this migration phenomenon.

In most of the developing countries of Africa the problems of housing in the urban areas are similar. They differ only in intensity depending on the degree of urbanization and the level of economic development. The ideas given in this paper, however, are based on experiences in Kenya.

## The Dimensions of the Problem

### Population Drift Toward Urban Areas

It is a well-known fact that Africa is the least urbanized continent and has, in the past, had less urban problems in comparison to other continents. During the last two decades, however, population drift from rural to urban areas has gained momentum. In 1950, a United Nations population projection indicated that only 14 per cent of Africa's population was living in urban areas. This has increased to nearly 25 per cent at the present time, and it is projected to reach nearly 40 per cent by the turn of the century.

A wide inequitable distribution of income between the urban and rural areas is the chief cause for this population drift. The rural dweller, whether unskilled school leaver or a subsistence farmer, is normally attracted toward urban areas with the false or real hope of better employment prospects and a higher income. The bulk of these urban migrants are untrained and

Urban/Rural Population in Africa for the Years 1950-2000 (in millions)\*

	Urban	Rural	Total	Per cent urban
1950	30	187	217	14
1960	48	221	269	18
1970	77	268	345	22
1980	125	332	457	27
1990	203	413	616	33
2000	320	498	818	39

\*Source: U.N. Urban and Rural Population, 1950-2000. Pages 14-17 ESA/P/WP.33/RW.1; September 22nd, 1970.

have, therefore, a low level of income. The immediate result of this urban migration of rural families is a strain on the social services, especially housing, in the receiving urban centres, and most of the local authorities are unable to provide cheap houses to accommodate such migrants.

The newly-arrived migrant will normally first look for accommodation with a relative or a friend. Should this fail, he will move into slum housing in the already crowded squatter section of the town. If both these options fail, it is not unusual to find a migrant family providing a makeshift shelter for itself in any suitable open space within the centre, thus swelling the number of squatters already existing in the town. Overnight houses of low sanitary standard spring up in unused spaces in the peri-urban areas, and attempts by town authorities to pull down such unsanitary housing are thwarted by new ones springing up elsewhere. In certain urban centres, the population of the squatters sometimes reaches a proportion that they become a political force to be reckoned with.

### Low Income

The average income per person in most of the African countries is very low, barely over \$110 a year. At this level of income, a family cannot afford any reasonable standard of housing, and squatting becomes the only way through which a low-income family can get a house which fits its pocket-book.

In Kenya more than 83 per cent of urban workers earn less than \$150 a month. This means that the bulk of urban workers cannot afford any type of housing renting or costing more than \$30 per month. Only those able to secure subsidized housing could expect to live in a house of reasonable standard. For those who cannot, the only choice is accommodation in crowded quarters or within slum areas. It is not uncommon to find room occupancy in some urban areas exceeding five persons per room.

### Cost of Construction

In most of the African countries, not less than 60 per cent of building materials used in any one housing project are imported. This factor contributes greatly to the high cost of building urban houses. The need to do more research into the use of local materials as a substitute for the expensive imported components need not be over-emphasized here as it would lower the cost of construction greatly.

### Housing Standards

The building codes used by many urban authorities in Africa have been directly copied from those of the colonizing European countries. Most of these codes are not sensitive to the housing needs in African countries as they are characterized by a high standard of material required for every urban house. This high standard makes provision of housing a rather costly task which, in turn, restricts the number of houses that can be put up by the government, urban authorities or individuals.

Some African countries are beginning to sense the need to relax these codes and have recognized that a lower standard of building material is an important component of the site and service concept. In Kenya, for example, local authorities have adopted bylaws which permit building of houses in certain parts of urban areas using materials of lower standards, such as houses built of traditional mud and wattle.

### **Lack of Housing Funds**

Urban housing is just one of the many national priorities which compete for funding from limited sources. It may be argued that by giving priority to projects which aim at improving the income of the rank and file in a particular country that housing problems would automatically be solved. This argument cannot be valid because even with reasonable wages, the bulk of workers (especially in the urban areas) will still have incomes too low to allow them to purchase adequate housing on the open market.

There are only a few private housing firms in Africa willing to venture into low-cost housing development. The few existing private financial institutions usually concentrate on mortgage housing only, while banks which lend money for residential development often charge high rates and only lend to individuals with good credit in a particular bank. An average urban dweller with meagre savings cannot, therefore, hope to own a home through loans from financial institutions such as banks. Even institutions like labour unions and workers' savings and credit societies have been reluctant to initiate housing projects for their members because the concept seems alien to their normal functions.

The tide of urban migration is so great that individual town authorities are unable to build sufficient housing from their diminishing and meagre financial resources. Some well-developed local authorities, like Nairobi City Council, sometimes raise finances for housing through an issue of municipal stocks or will negotiate for loans from developed countries. But the major source of funding for low-cost housing comes from the central government through its own resources or loans from overseas.

There is a need to encourage private firms in Africa to participate more vigorously in low-cost housing projects through some form of guarantee by the central government as is done in some developed countries. Otherwise, the gap between

housing need and demand in African urban areas will never be narrowed.

### **Lack of Research and Manpower**

A society cannot evolve sufficiently if the role of research in any field is minimized. There is a tendency for some developing countries to regard research as a luxury only to be given attention and funding when there is a surplus of funds.

In many countries of Africa, there are abundant local materials which could be used for construction of cheaper housing; but, they remain unused because of lack of research into the ways of processing them for building use. Instead, many countries choose the easy way out and yield to the temptation of importing foreign materials under the pretence that they are better.

There is an urgent need to set up building research laboratories in different countries of Africa where indigenous building materials can be tested and developed to replace their imported counterparts. This activity would also stimulate the growth of local building industries and thereby reduce the cost of construction considerably.

In countries where such research centres exist, the lack of local manpower qualified to carry out the research is often common. In fact, the lack of skilled manpower is experienced in all sections of the building industry, and implementation of some housing schemes are delayed because of this factor. The need to train skilled manpower at every level is urgent. There is a critical need to overhaul the educational system in nearly every African country to move from mere academic orientation to a more technically based system. The building industry will stagnate in any country which does not fulfill this basic requirement.

### **Scarcity of Public Land**

One of the major factors contributing to the high price of housing is land cost. The

lands surrounding most of the urban areas of Africa are the targets of speculation and hence are very expensive. The practice of national governments or local authorities of acquiring land on a piecemeal basis for specific developments has not helped in bringing land cost down. The practice has, in fact, encouraged land speculation to grow in intensity causing asking prices to constantly spiral up.

The resulting high cost of land has left many local authorities with no sufficient land at their disposal for the expansion of housing programmes. While some countries have prepared five-year programmes for housing development, such programmes are not usually matched by similar action in urban land acquisition. Without sufficient public land, implementation of any housing programme becomes very difficult. There is a need to prepare comprehensive land acquisition programmes for every urban centre and also to make available sufficient funds to implement the programmes. This would enable the artificially high cost of urban land to find its true market value and thus lower the cost of urban housing.

Serious consideration should also be given to the expansion of services in areas programmed for urban expansion. There are many cities and towns in Africa where there is sufficient public land for urban housing expansion but, owing to the absence of basic services such as water, sewerage, electricity and roads within the public land, expansion of urban housing is completely curtailed.

## **Kenya's Response**

### **Create the Machinery**

Central governments of various countries will continue to play a leading role in finding solutions to urban housing problems through their policies, planning strategies and programmes. Many African countries have recognized this by setting up ministries of housing and other financial

institutions whose functions are to finance and develop houses for workers.

In Kenya, the need to set up a body for housing development was recognized as early as 1943 when the Legislative Council passed a Housing Ordinance which created the Central Housing Board. The function of the Board was to administer a housing fund allocated by the Council. It could make grants and loans to local authorities to erect approved housing schemes, and it could also provide loans to individuals to build their own houses.

The Board was replaced by the National Housing Corporation in 1966. In addition to granting loans to local authorities and individuals, the Corporation was authorized to build and invest in housing directly. Since its formation, it has played a leading role in housing activities in Kenya under the supervision of the Ministry of Housing which normally provides funds and policy for its building activities.

The Housing Finance Company of Kenya was also formed later with the help of the Commonwealth Development Corporation. Its basic function is to provide mortgage financing to individuals, local authorities and other housing institutions or firms. It finances medium to high-cost housing. There are other private mortgage institutions which mainly concentrate on medium and high-cost housing schemes.

Assessment of urban housing needs is carried out by the Ministry of Housing, and it is upon the Ministry's assessment that the National Housing Corporation centres its activities. It is encouraging to note that the Corporation's major housing activities are concentrated in low-cost housing, because this is where the greatest need exists. More than 80 per cent of the financial allocation by the National Housing Corporation in the next three years is earmarked for low-cost housing. The bulk of this allocation will be used to advance loans for land and materials to plot owners, site and service schemes and rental units in the urban centres of Kenya.

### **Redirect Migration**

Problems of urban housing cannot be tackled in isolation from other urban problems. As noted earlier, one of the major contributing factors to urban housing problems is the intensified migration of people from rural areas to the major towns of Africa. The migrants tend to gravitate toward primary cities and toward one or two other important towns. The resultant strains on the social services of the receiving towns need not be over-emphasized.

In Kenya, most of the migrants from rural areas tend to gravitate mainly toward Nairobi, the capital city, Mombasa, the chief port, and to a lesser extent toward the towns of Nakuru, Kisumu and Thika where most of the industrial and other economic activities are centred.

It is the policy of the Kenyan government to encourage a limited amount of decentralization of industries toward designated principal towns in order to lessen the volume of migration to Nairobi and Mombasa. A schedule of growth centres has also been prepared covering all districts of the Republic, and public and private investment will be directed into these centres in order to provide an equitable distribution of services, amenities and economic opportunities in the rural areas. In addition to decentralization to towns, the 1974-78 housing programme also makes provision for activity in many of the larger centres included in the schedule. This is one of the strategies adopted by the government to stimulate development in the rural areas.

### **Develop the Expertise**

It has been mentioned earlier that the lack of skilled manpower is one of the constraints in the provision of urban housing. Kenya is trying to tackle this problem from the grass-roots level. Village polytechnics are being established all over the country to train primary school leavers in many skills relevant to housing and other industries. Vocational centres are also

being established in some towns for medium-level skills, and several technical high schools and two polytechnic colleges exist for training medium-level manpower. A technical teacher training college has also been started with the help of Canada to provide teachers for these technical schools and vocational training centres. The positive effect of these efforts on the housing industry will only be felt later.

The challenge that the problems of urban housing pose to planners, administrators, researchers, financiers and builders is great but not insurmountable. What is needed are concerted efforts by all to generate solutions. Town dwelling is one aspect of human settlement that will remain with us. Our goal should be to provide the average urban dweller with a house that is both comfortable and within his income. □

# Human Settlements in ASIA

Beginning in Stockholm and culminating in Vancouver, the international community, meeting in world conferences, has taken the first total view of the needs of man, both as an individual and a social being. They will have looked at the means of preserving this earth, this one and only home of man, and locating him in settlements which are in symbiotic relationship with nature and which uphold the dignity of man and improve the quality of his life.

The result has been a call for well-orchestrated action by the sovereign nations of the world. Their problems will vary in facets and magnitude and thus will require solutions tailored to meet the requirements of each situation. Yet, with cooperative endeavour and will, nations can learn from one another's experience and improve the quality of life for man as a whole.

## The Asian Profile

The Asian region which contains 55 per cent (2.2 billion) of the world's population and 73 per cent of the population of the less developed world, naturally, poses a real challenge and provides new opportunities for the development of man and his habitat.

Asia presents a mosaic of human settlements. In terms of area, population and polity of nations, in forms of human settlements, in the variety of peoples and their cultures, Asia presents a unique blend of various forms of human habitat.

Asia lives in villages, and its rural settlements house the poor masses. The dispersal and intense relationship with nature in these settlements contribute to their sustenance and enrichment in the quality of life. There must be a silent revolution whereby the huge number of rural settlements in this region are improved and modernised.

An attempt is made in this paper to generalize the problems of human settlements in the countries of the region (excepting Japan), to draw largely upon the experience of India with its different and

varied solutions and to indicate possible lines for future pursuit.

## Population Growth

Population growth rates vary from 1.7 per cent per annum in China and Republic of Korea to 3.7 per cent in Malaysia. Population distribution shows an equally varied picture: urban population ranges from 4.3 per cent in Nepal to 41 per cent in the Republic of Korea, and within each country, it reveals a skewed distribution, with the larger cities growing faster than the smaller ones. This imbalance in distribution of population is also present among the regions of each country.

The World Population Plan of Action called upon each country to have a national population policy consistent with its resources. Several countries of the region have already adopted family planning programmes aimed at reducing the population growth rate.

Indian experience in family planning reveals that, apart from motivational factors, some positive measures for reducing population growth rate are called for. In April, 1976, the country adopted a National Population Policy aimed at reducing the population growth rate to 1.4 per cent by 1984. This is sought to be achieved by a scheme of incentives and disincentives, fixing the responsibility on the state governments, local institutions and organizations and individual families to adopt a small family norm as a goal. The state governments are also given freedom to adopt compulsory measures for one-time birth control methods, like vasectomy or sterilization, depending upon the local situation.

A determined beginning has thus been made toward achieving 'zero' population growth during the beginning of the next century. An estimate mentions that under favourable conditions, even with two children per family as the norm, the population would touch about 1.4 billion before attaining 'zero' growth. The National Population Policy, therefore, requires faithful implementation, evaluation and review

in the years to come. Political will and commitment by the nations of the region to adopt serious measures to reduce the growth rates in the next 25 years are called for to sustain better living conditions for the high levels of population that will be reached in the first half of the next century.

## Population Distribution

Population generally aggregates in already densely populated regions and cities, leading to ecological imbalance, environmental degradation and economic and social problems. Yet, such deterioration is not unavoidable. Science and technology have provided the means for harnessing nature, for reclamation of land, provision of irrigation facilities and prevention of floods, for identification of new resources for exploitation, for low energy consumption in settlements, and generally for increasing the production and productivity of each individual. The Dandakaranya Project, the Rajasthan Canal scheme, the new administrative and industrial towns and other settlement schemes in India prove the feasibility of canalizing population and making people assets in national development.

In India, nearly 300 to 400 million people will require settlement in suitable locations in the next 25 years, and a large share of this will be in rural settlements. This will also be the pattern in other countries of the subcontinent and those of Southeast Asia.

Where and how the additional population of this order will be settled in the next 25 years should be a matter of serious national concern. The Philippines have set up a Human Settlements Commission charged with such a task. Many other countries have some strands of policies of sectoral development impinging on settlements, but they remain to be woven into a fabric for channelizing population into a network of settlements.

\*The views expressed by the author are not necessarily those of the Indian Ministry of Works and Housing.

### Rural Development

Asian masses largely depend on agriculture for their living and are underemployed due to pressure on land and the lack of intensive agriculture and agro-industries in the rural areas. Migration results from inadequate rural opportunities and inequities in terms of social consumption. This leads, on the one hand, to rural debilitation and on the other to congestion and overcrowding in major cities resulting in semi-urban pockets within these cities which have subhuman conditions and which segregate the migrants, presenting an affront to human dignity.

The solution lies in resource development in rural areas. The community development programme in India attempted to involve popular participation at local levels to improve certain standards of rural life; but, without a main thrust in regard to improvement of rural incomes through modernization of agriculture, the movement toward rural uplift could not succeed. It is only during the last ten years or so that agricultural development in India has revealed how modernization of agriculture (with inputs of the latest advances in science and utilization of appropriate technology in agricultural production techniques) would be feasible without alienating the population from their age-old occupation and habitat. In fact, the "green" revolution has proved to be the means of stabilizing and strengthening the rural population and giving them the vitality needed to make them full and effective participants in national development.

The experience in Punjab and Haryana States in India indicates how the rise in agricultural incomes can lead to an improvement in the quality of life for the rural masses, a change in their outlook and a realization of their aspirations. Land reforms, strengthening of credit facilities, application of appropriate technology and a network of agro-based rural industries are the basic tools of self-supporting agriculture and consequently self-generating rural development. Recycling of waste,

creation of social forests, utilization of biogas plants and of solar energy and tapping of other renewable sources of energy make self-sufficient rural communities possible at less cost. The integrated rural development strategy contained in India's March 1976 Budget documents outlines a package of measures intended to achieve this objective.

The rural settlements in Asia give the masses a harmonious relationship with nature and its beauty, and the basis for integrated social development imbibing the heritage and culture of the society. Yet, beliefs and customs that inhibit future growth need to be removed by mass education. Community organizations in China are reported to have successfully achieved this goal. Newspapers, radio and television can help in this process; however, political will, social movements and village leadership require orientation to achieve this objective.

### Urban Development

Granted that Asian development depends on the strengthening and improvement of rural settlements, one cannot neglect the irreversible process of urbanization in many countries of the region. The causes of migration are well-known, although they vary in emphasis and degree from country to country.

About 25 to 40 per cent of the urban population lives in human settlements which defy any concept of human dignity. Such settlements bring within the urban area the rural poor who are the neglected, but important, components of the urban system. While economically they get involved in the urban dynamics, they are isolated, with no rights in the city. Slums and squatter settlements are viewed by the urban elites as eyesores, yet the settlers therein are required by the elites for cheap labour and for the growth of the city. Thus, in the urban areas, there is a sharp contrast between rich and poor. Traditions and customs become diluted, and the urban poor have no chance of integration into the

new urban values. The resulting social tension leads to urban chaos and disorder.

The city size ranges from the smallest town administered by a township committee to the largest size of a megalopolis like Calcutta or Bangkok administered by multiple agencies requiring a metropolitan government, as it were, to plan, coordinate, supervise and fund their workings. Administration of Asian cities with large populations of rural migrants with incomes below the poverty line requires appropriate settlement planning for locating the migrants in suitable areas and enmeshing them with the developing urban system. The economic and social costs could be reduced if urbanization is channelized by strengthening small and medium towns and cities. Establishment of "growth poles" with different levels of services to the surrounding region is part of the network of settlements.

### Urban Land Control

Land legislations to control concentration of valuable land in the hands of a few and to prevent speculation in such areas become necessary. A major policy measure in this regard in India is the recently enacted Urban Land (Ceiling and Regulation) Act. This Act, a part of the Prime Minister's new economic programme, not only imposes a ceiling on vacant land held by individuals, families, companies and incorporated associations of individuals, but also contains suitable control mechanisms for regulating transfers of urban property in order to prevent speculation and the construction of luxury dwelling units. These measures are to be supported by a mix of other policy measures, mainly fiscal in character, to dissuade holding of vacant land within the ceiling limit without any use, and also tap unearned incomes accruing out of development of land or conversion of land use. Thus, the physical resource of land has been brought under social control.

The success of authorities in Singapore and Hong Kong in providing shelter to

the poor in the cities indicates the possibilities for similar ventures by other metropolitan and city authorities. But, limitations exist in many countries of the region because there is no control of migration into the cities. Sometimes the very act of providing facilities to the poor attracts more to that area. But, neglect cannot avert this inflow and hence the need for planned efforts designed to provide a healthy environment to locate the poor in urban areas.

### **Social Planning**

The slum improvement and sites and services programmes, especially for the poor, undertaken in Pakistan, India, Indonesia and the Philippines, indicate how man can be located in an environment which will integrate him into the urban community without loss of individual happiness and identity. Elitist approaches to physical planning can be replaced by social planning concepts. If planned with open spaces, minimum community facilities and with an eye for environmental quality of settlements, Asian cities can be devoid of multi-storeyed high energy consuming towers of human pigeonholes, but could still be garden cities vibrating with life and cohesion. Housing need not be measured in terms of square feet of covered built accommodation made of brick and mortar conceived of as durable materials. Rather, housing has to be envisaged as a total concept of shelter (whatever the type and use of material in the construction), including physical and social services, and above all, seen as a place of living for social activity with human dignity. In regard to physical construction of housing, there is no doubt scope for adapting and improving local technology and materials so that the masses can be motivated to do self-help housing in planned areas.

### **Uniquely Asian Solutions**

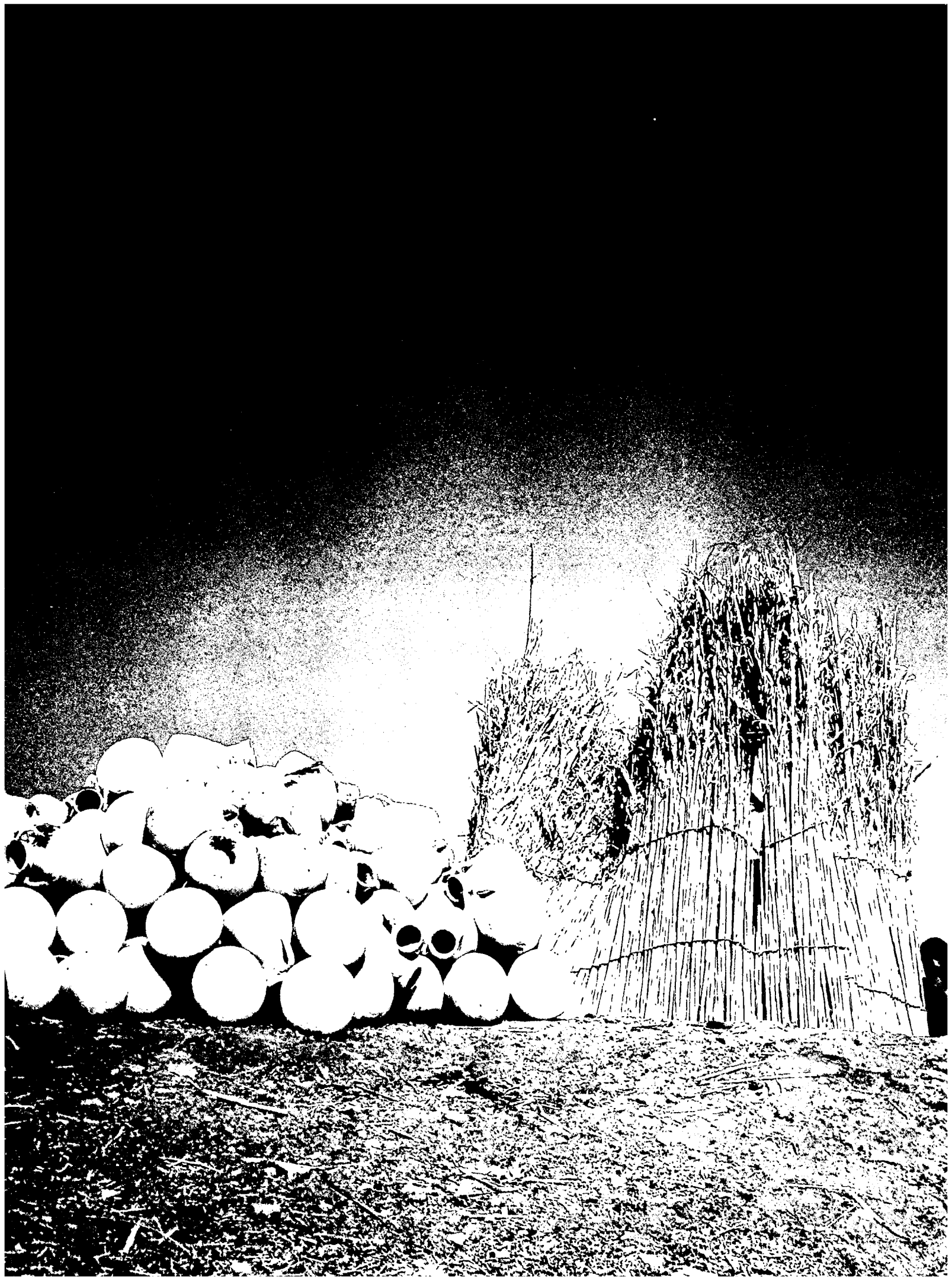
Asia is poor and cannot imitate the richer nations. It must not set standards which it cannot attain in the near future. Asia can improve itself only step by step. With popu-

lation growth even at a reduced rate, Asia has to run in the path of economic development merely to stand still. Asia cannot, therefore, afford to fritter away its resources. Manpower has to be utilised to the fullest advantage replacing mechanical power. This requires organization of society and demands political will and leadership.

The problems of some of the governments in this region are so overwhelming that advice, however well-intentioned, from others about policies, standards and models of development has to be ignored. The fact is that the peoples of this region became free to decide their development only recently, and they started with a handicap—the worldwide phenomenon of the dynamics of population growth. This is the crucial reason why industrialization and urbanization which became the vehicle of development in the industrialized countries in the last hundred years cannot be the solution to the problems of the Asian region.

The Asian countries can ill afford to settle communities at tremendous costs. Rather, more and more of the diverse communities must be settled in surroundings which are low-cost, yet aesthetically pleasing and productive. Nature is their precious bounty. They will have to depend on it and exploit it without harming the ecosystem. It is this design for living that the strategy of human settlements in Asia will have to emphasize.

Asian rural habitat must continue to be the sheet anchor of transformation and improvement in the quality of life. The Prime Minister's new economic programme in India gives a major thrust to achieve this change. Yet the problems of urbanization in Asian cities cannot be ignored as they house, in terms of population, a large section of rural poor migrants needing attention. Innovative approaches are needed to strengthen the rural-urban continuum and thus enhance the richness and variety of settlements, making them mutually dependent and beneficial. □





# Urbanisation **d é l i r a n t e** de l'agriculture

— en pays  
dits sous-développés  
et développés

PAR  
RENÉ DUMONT

## Des débuts encore modérés

La grande vague d'urbanisation s'accélère au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle, en Europe et ensuite aux Amériques, du Nord et du Sud. En Europe et en Amérique du Nord, elle correspond assez bien au développement de l'industrie et des services; de sorte que ces nouveaux urbains, venus des campagnes proches ou lointaines (émigrants du Nouveau Monde) trouvent généralement un emploi; le chômage courant, lors des dépressions économiques cycliques, n'était pas un phénomène permanent. Le pouvoir d'achat largement accru des villes européennes permettait d'écouler plus de produits alimentaires; même s'ils venaient parfois de loin, comme en Angleterre. Et ce développement urbain s'accompagnait de progrès agricoles rapides, permettant de ravitailler plus largement une population urbaine croissante, avec un nombre d'agriculteurs qui allaient en diminuant. Certes, bien des logements étaient insalubres, le confort fort peu répandu. Et les paysans débarquant en ville y trouvaient d'abord des situations très modestes, vu leur insuffisance d'instruction, leur manque de formation professionnelle.

Bien des villes restaient en partie rurales, et d'abord la plupart des agglomérations modestes. Les autres étaient souvent entourées d'une ceinture verte de cultures maraîchères, fournissant à peu de distance la majorité des légumes et des fruits; et même du lait et ses dérivés, denrées périssables, difficiles à transporter loin avec les moyens de l'époque. En Europe centrale et méridionale, de la Hongrie à l'Italie du Sud, certaines villes notables, ayant parfois plusieurs dizaines de milliers d'habitants, comptaient en ville même des milliers de petites exploitations agricoles, cultivant des champs — cette fois souvent des céréales — parfois fort éloignés: je pense à Kecskemet en Hongrie, et aux «villes rurales» de Calabre et des Pouilles.

Toutes les villes abritaient des services directement liés à l'agriculture, fabriquant et réparant les harnais et colliers, les chariots et charrettes, les divers outils à main ou à traction animale du cultivateur. Celui-ci venait vendre en ville les produits de sa ferme, livrait les grains à son meunier, ou à son propriétaire s'il louait ses terres. Il apportait au marché les oeufs et les volailles, le beurre et les fromages, les légumes et les fruits, directement de la ferme, sans intermédiaire. Il faisait parfois du troc avec son épicier, payant avec ses oeufs ses modestes achats de sel, d'huile ou de pétrole, encore à la fin du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle. Il livrait enfin le foin et l'avoine des chevaux assurant les transports urbains, et la nourriture des vaches gardées dans l'intérieur des villes, pour leur fournir du lait frais. Comme les légumes, les vignobles, jusqu'au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle, se rapprochaient de Paris, même en climats moins favorables à la vigne ou ne s'écartaient pas trop des ports d'exportation, comme Bordeaux, ou des transports économiques par eau, comme l'Auxerrois.

## Les villes tentaculaires des pays riches

Le développement des chemins de fer, puis des transports routiers rapides, et enfin aériens, a bouleversé la géographie des aliments périssables qui peuvent désormais, avec la réfrigération, venir de loin dans de bonnes conditions. Nous mangeons en plein hiver des haricots verts cueillis en Haute-Volta; mais les commerçants et transporteurs reçoivent la plus grosse part du prix de vente. Les villes tentaculaires de la seconde moitié du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle s'étendent abusivement sur les plaines environnantes, généralement les plus riches. Le Japon perd chaque année, du fait des villes et de leurs prolongements (aéroports, autoroutes, parkings, rail, loisir et sports...), près de 1% de son territoire agricole. A ce rythme, il n'aura plus de terres à cultiver dans un peu plus d'un siècle! Et déjà sa terrifiante «conurbation», qui défie le bon sens, de Tokyo à Kobé, connaît une pollution atmosphérique parfois difficile à supporter. Et les campagnes japonaises n'ont plus guère d'oiseaux.

La France, que l'on présente souvent comme une terre d'équilibre et de raison, perd annuellement 0,5% de ses terres agricoles, et souvent les meilleures. Il nous faut donc repenser des villes plus accueillantes, donc d'abord plus modestes. En placer le plus possible sur les collines et basses montagnes moins fertiles, souvent abandonnées par l'agriculture, comme les terrasses de culture des Cévennes ou les «restanques» de Haute-Provence. Orientées de préférence au midi, on en ferait des «villes solaires», économes en énergies non renouvelables. Faciles à ravitailler par les campagnes moins éloignées, elles nécessiteront aussi, vu leur taille plus réduite, bien moins de transports intérieurs.

Les géographes du Québec et d'Ottawa ont étudié de près leur plus grande agglomération, celle de Montréal, qui s'étend de plus en plus sur les riches plaines du sud, de climat moins froid, et surtout où il est facile, plus économique de construire. Vision à bien court terme, qui ne tient nul compte des besoins des générations à venir, non représentées politiquement, malheureusement. Car si l'on étudie les possibilités d'intensification agricole du Québec, surtout par le maïs (blé d'Inde) et les légumes, on voit que la plus grande partie du terroir favorable à cette haute intensification est précisément cette plaine sud de Montréal jusqu'à la frontière des Etats-Unis. Outre un meilleur climat, on y trouve souvent des terres très fertiles. Sur les pentes sud des collines approchant les Laurentides, on trouverait des sites de villes secondaires beaucoup plus agréables, encore entourées de forêts, dont la productivité agricole est fort inférieure, presque nulle. Et bien des terrains où l'on espère bâtir sont achetés par des spéculateurs, escomptant de fortes plus-values. En attendant, ils restent en friche, et sont ainsi perdus pour l'agriculture, parfois des dizaines d'années avant d'être utilisés par la ville.

Mais la vraie solution réside dans un ralentissement, sinon *un arrêt de cette urbanisation catastro-*

*phique*. Ceci comporte deux éléments de base. Les pays riches, gaspilleurs des ressources rares et non renouvelables de notre «petite planète», devraient vite ralentir – c'est fait – puis arrêter leur croissance démographique. Et ralentir – là ce n'est pas fait – leur exode rural, leur concentration urbaine. En décentralisant dans les villes petites et moyennes, sinon dans leurs villages, la plus large partie possible de leurs *industries*, dont beaucoup restent économiques à plus petite échelle. Et en y renvoyant aussi une large partie des services. L'utilisation de l'énergie solaire dont les centrales, bien plus modestes que les nucléaires, pourraient être rentables dans une dizaine d'années si on y consacrait autant de recherches qu'au nucléaire, faciliterait une telle décentralisation.

La ville géante, les gratte-ciel de 400 mètres de haut, gaspillent inconsidérément nos ressources rares d'énergie et de métaux, et nous font des villes invivables, de Los Angeles à Tokyo. Il est grand temps de s'arrêter et de chercher des villes moyennes tout en développant les transports collectifs, dans et autour de la ville, aux dépens de voitures individuelles qui sont en train de faire capoter notre civilisation.

### Les campagnes répulsives en pays pauvres

Toute différente se trouve la situation de la grande majorité des pays sous-développés. Les campagnes s'y trouvent généralement en situation très difficile; l'agriculture n'y progresse guère, sauf d'heureuses exceptions (Taiwan, Malaisie, Côte d'Ivoire, partie du Mexique). Il ne s'y réalise pas souvent de «révolution agricole», de progrès rapide, comparable à celui de l'Angleterre au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle, où elle a précédé et partiellement financé et soutenu la révolution industrielle. Le paysan d'Afrique sahélienne n'adopte que trop lentement la traction animale de ses petits et faibles boeufs. Les cultures d'importation, arachide et coton, y contribuent, en réduisant les jachères, à démolir les sols.

En Asie méridionale, où dominent la propriété privée de la terre et le surpeuplement rural, la proportion de paysans sans terre, ou ne disposant que de surfaces tout à fait insuffisantes pour les nourrir et les employer correctement, est déjà élevée et ne cesse d'augmenter. Le petit paysan, même s'il possède assez de terres, reste trop exploité par son propriétaire (rente foncière égale à la moitié de la récolte brute), par le commerçant, l'usurier, sinon même le fonctionnaire corrompu.

S'il va en ville, ce paysan se rend compte qu'une *minorité privilégiée* peut y jouir de tous les confort: commerçants et fonctionnaires, industriels ou politiques, professions libérales, etc., vivent à l'occidentale, la civilisation de l'auto privée, si coûteuse en pays pauvres. En prélevant, pour ce faire, des impôts excessifs sur les paysans, notamment par les taxes de sorties sur les produits agricoles d'exportation. Ce qui empêche le cultivateur d'accumuler les plus-values indispensables à la modernisation de son agriculture,

et l'Etat de développer l'industrie. La ville envoie certes aux paysans l'école, un message de caractère urbain. Et les paysans y envoient leurs fils, dans l'espoir qu'ils pourront un jour pénétrer, eux aussi, au sein de la minorité privilégiée.

Privée par la répulsion des campagnes et l'attrait des villes de ses meilleurs éléments, l'agriculture stagne. Occidentalisés, les riches des villes, à l'imitation des «experts» blancs, font venir des pays développés une forte proportion de leurs aliments, privant des débouchés correspondants leurs paysans, ceci surtout en Afrique tropicale; et le riche Gabon délaisse totalement son agriculture. La population croissant plus vite que les aliments, les pays du Tiers-Monde, appelés aussi pays du «capitalisme périphérique», importent chaque année plus de céréales et autres aliments. Comme la plupart d'entre eux, dépourvus de ressources minérales, ne peuvent les payer, les voici qui s'endettent et se placent en position de dépendance économique, donc politique vis-à-vis des grands exportateurs de grains, ceux d'Amérique du Nord.

Les fils de paysans instruits, s'ils restaient à la campagne, pourraient organiser les coopératives et les syndicats en une sorte de *contre-pouvoir paysan*, pour lutter contre les abus des minorités urbaines qui les exploitent. Cependant, beaucoup préfèrent partir en ville, y tenter leur chance. Mais tous n'y accèdent pas à la richesse, loin de là. L'industrie ne se développe pas au rythme d'arrivée de cette main-d'oeuvre d'origine rurale. Le matériel trop moderne qu'elle utilise le plus souvent exige trop de capitaux et de main-d'oeuvre très qualifiée – denrées fort rares dans ces pays – et pas assez de travail moins qualifié – qui est, lui, fort surabondant. Alors voici les grandes villes des pays pauvres composées de *deux mondes bien distincts* et parfois éloignés l'un de l'autre, comme à Lusaka: les résidences entourées de beaux jardins, hérités de la colonisation anglaise et les «villes» africaines des travailleurs noirs. L'apartheid est certes plus prononcé et légalisé en Afrique du Sud et en Rhodésie, mais il existe de fait à peu près partout, des médinas de Dakar aux «slums» de Calcutta, des barrios de Caracas à ceux de Lima et aux favellas de Rio.

Les Français les nomment bidonvilles, de Casablanca à Tunis. Là dominant le chômage et le sous-emploi, la prostitution, la mendicité, même la délinquance juvénile; et toujours la sous-alimentation plus ou moins prononcée. Certes beaucoup trouvent de petits métiers, quoique les taxis refoulent les rickshaws, les cyclopousses... Un secteur tertiaire trop gonflé n'est pas directement productif, ne constitue pas le signe d'un développement économique réel. Les différenciations sociales deviennent terribles, tant entre pays riches et pauvres, qu'à l'intérieur même de ces derniers.

Le monde va manquer de phosphates, redoutable menace pour l'avenir de notre agriculture, dès la fin du siècle prochain, nous disent certains experts. Au lieu d'envoyer au fond des mers (où les phosphates

seront difficilement récupérables), par le tout-à-l'égout se déversant en rivières, tous les déchets organiques des villes, et d'abord les excréments humains qui sont riches en phosphates et en humus, il faudrait les recycler. La majorité des villes chinoises procèdent au ramassage matinal et quotidien des excréments et urines. La ville nouvelle devra trouver, elle aussi, divers moyens de les ramener aux champs. Des paysans chinois, s'ils étaient présents, iraient d'eux-mêmes déblayer les montagnes d'ordures des rues de Calcutta, vu leur valeur fertilisante. Les vidanges se vendent en Chine relativement cher: on sait les apprécier à leur juste valeur!

### Freiner l'urbanisation

De nombreux motifs incitent à retenir au village ceux qui risquent surtout de devenir chômeurs en ville. Il faudrait leur trouver du travail aux champs, d'abord en intensifiant l'agriculture, pour réduire le déficit alimentaire. Dans toute l'Asie méridionale, les travaux d'aménagement foncier et d'abord de maîtrise de l'eau (irrigation, drainage, protection contre les inondations...) suffiraient à occuper quelques années durant au moins, la totalité des chômeurs et sous-employés des villages. Je l'ai prouvé au Bangladesh et à Sri Lanka (Ceylan). La maîtrise de l'eau, en généralisant la double ou la triple culture par an, augmenterait l'emploi avec la production alimentaire, en attendant qu'on bloque la terrifiante explosion démographique d'Asie du Sud.

Il faut ensuite, comme en Chine et en Indochine, renvoyer au village des millions de chômeurs ou même de «jeunes instruits» de la ville, pour qu'ils y organisent la production agricole et y développent un artisanat. Celui-ci pourrait ensuite se moderniser progressivement, à mesure qu'il saurait fabriquer, donc réparer l'équipement, en petite, puis moyenne industrie. Ceci est spécialement valable pour tous les biens de consommation, de l'alimentation aux textiles, où les technologies intermédiaires sont généralement mieux adaptées à la situation économique réelle.

Pour accroître les débouchés de l'agriculture autochtone, il faudrait d'abord interdire ou taxer très fort les produits alimentaires importés qu'il est possible de produire sur place, comme les conserves de légumes et de fruits, les boissons, alcoolisées ou non. Le coca-cola est le type de production le plus nocif au développement: on pourrait produire sur place des jus de fruits moins coûteux, surtout compte tenu de leur valeur alimentaire très supérieure, de leur valeur hygiénique indiscutable.

### Que la ville n'exploite plus la campagne!

En Amérique du Sud, bien des grands propriétaires absentéistes vivent encore largement, en ville, de leurs rentes foncières d'origine rurale, sans généralement contribuer au progrès agricole. Au Togo, les offices nationaux d'exportation des produits agricoles préle-

vaient, ces dernières années, 60% du produit des ventes à l'étranger des trois grandes cultures d'exportation (café, cacao, coton), n'en reversant que 40% aux producteurs! Ceux-ci ne peuvent donc modifier leurs systèmes de culture pour pouvoir répondre à des besoins accrus sans ruiner les sols et notamment associer l'agriculture à l'élevage.

Le drame le plus effroyable se prépare en Asie méridionale, où le second rapport au Club de Rome nous annonce, dans les cinquante prochaines années, des centaines de millions de morts de faim, des enfants et adolescents, de 0 à 15 ans, si nous ne savons y maîtriser l'explosion démographique et y propulser plus rapidement le développement agricole. Tant que persistent le métayage, l'usure, la spéculation sur les grains, la corruption sous toutes ses formes, le pauvre paysan reste exploité par les privilégiés urbains associés aux petits potentats des villages, eux-mêmes liés aux éléments exploités de la ville.

Le problème de la faim dans le monde se trouve ainsi étroitement lié aux relations villes-campagnes, à la domination abusive des *minorités privilégiées urbaines* (tant dans les pays capitalistes que dans la plupart de ceux qui se disent socialistes) sur les producteurs agricoles, les vrais prolétaires des temps modernes, les paysans des pays tropicaux. Essayons de dégager, non des solutions – bien des données des problèmes évoqués nous sont insuffisamment connues – mais quelques perspectives pour des villes de demain qui permettraient, nous l'espérons, de meilleures garanties de survie de l'humanité.

- Des villes plus modestes, moins surpeuplées, enfin capables d'économiser les ressources rares, non renouvelables, surtout pour l'énergie et les métaux, et de respecter la nature autour d'elles.
- Faisant plus appel au recyclage et aux ressources renouvelables, surtout d'origine végétale (bois, alcools, algues) ou venant du soleil (énergie) et des océans.
- Laissant à l'agriculture la grande majorité des terres fertiles, se localisant de préférence sur les sols plus médiocres, plus minces, plus en pente.
- Réalisant une meilleure répartition des pouvoirs entre la ville et la campagne, pour que les décisions essentielles émanent de pouvoirs plus également répartis.
- Favorisant donc un enseignement rural qui permette de moderniser écologiquement l'agriculture et retienne les jeunes à la campagne, en leur y assurant un volume d'emploi convenable, tant agricole qu'artisanal, industriel ou de services.
- Donc accordant les crédits nécessaires à l'intensification agricole, au contrôle de l'eau et des sols par la lutte contre les érosions et le reboisement des terres non utilisées par l'agriculture proprement dite.
- Répartissant judicieusement les industries nouvelles et les services entre les villes, les bourgs et les villages, de façon à freiner les concentrations urbaines excessives, dont on reconnaît enfin les multiples dangers.

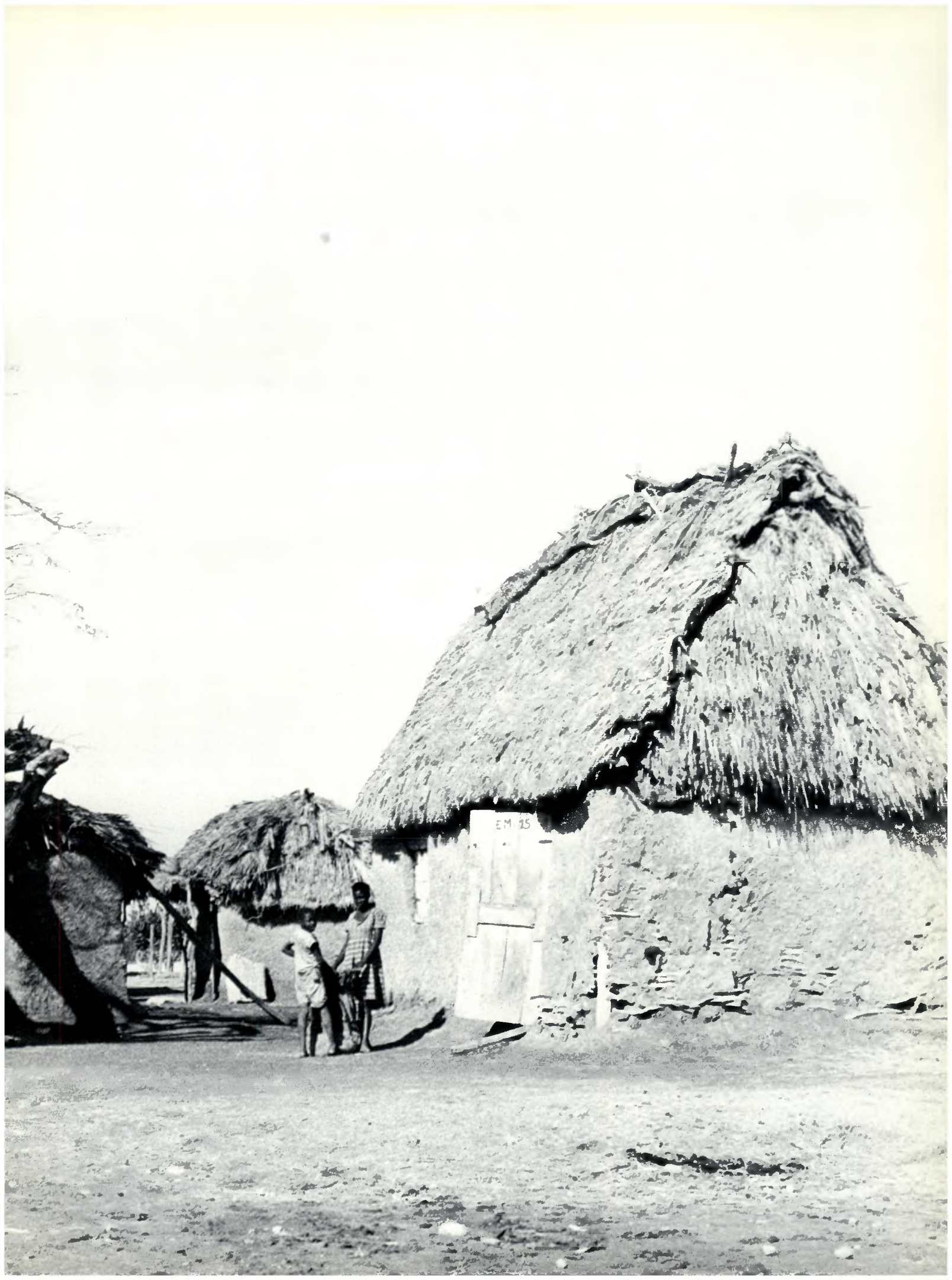
• Donc assurant une organisation des paysans leur permettant de peser efficacement sur toutes les grandes décisions engageant l'avenir de l'humanité...

Beaucoup de ces propositions pourraient apparaître *utopiques*, dans les conditions actuelles, surtout pour tous ceux qui ne se rendent pas compte de l'ampleur et de la proximité des dangers que nous courons. Jusqu'ici ce sont bien les réalistes qui commandent le monde. Or nous savons maintenant, avec certitude, que la prolongation des orientations actuelles nous mène à une catastrophe finale que le Club de Rome situe au siècle prochain.

Il nous faut donc rechercher d'autres solutions, parmi lesquelles *le freinage puis l'arrêt de l'explosion démographique et de l'hyperconcentration urbaine* nous paraissent mériter la priorité. Ce qui implique une série de décisions économiques, donc politiques. Il y faut joindre, sur le même plan, *l'économie et le recyclage* de toutes les ressources rares non renouvelables de la planète, et la lutte contre les différentes formes

de pollution. Ce qui implique la réduction des consommations somptuaires et des gaspillages, l'arrêt de la folie des armements. Donc la recherche d'une société moins nombreuse, respectueuse de son environnement, des autres espèces (animales et végétales), avec qui nous partageons les ressources de cette petite planète, réduisant enfin les inégalités sociales, entre pays et à l'intérieur des diverses nations, permettant à chacun de participer aux grandes décisions qui engagent l'avenir. *Les inégalités villes-campagnes, la domination abusive des minorités privilégiées urbaines* représentent les plus gros dangers. Elles freinent la recherche des solutions d'avenir, qui s'avère très difficile. Nous sera-t-il permis d'espérer qu'ils seront plus nombreux ceux qui, conscients des périls, rechercheront un meilleur accord avec la Nature, dans des voies qui s'orienteraient autour de ce qu'on pourra peut-être un jour appeler un *socialisme écologique*, capable de rétablir un accord entre des campagnes protégées et des *villes totalement renouvelées*. □





## Urban Settlements in The Caribbean and Central America

The Habitat Conference held in Vancouver in June represented the culmination of four years of discussions at an international level on the subject of settlements. For the first time ever, the collective wisdom of national and international experts was mobilized to concentrate on the conceptual approaches to definition, implementation and evaluation of settlements as comprehensive units.

The Conference, unfortunately, was unable to arrive at a consensus on all matters discussed. Nevertheless, it has provided detailed guidelines which might well be regarded by all countries as a set of conventions which they can use in planning and implementing the improvement of existing settlements and the construction of new and better ones for their people. These conventions are wide ranging, and some countries have already implemented many of the proposals listed. They are of particular value to the developing world which faces the twin crises of massive urbanization and a relative scarcity of human and financial resources. Central America and the Caribbean are part of this developing world.

### A Physical Portrait

Central America is a narrow bridge of land which links the two continents of North and South America. Although it is over 500 miles wide at its broadest point, Central America is relatively narrow compared with the two large land masses it joins. It consists of Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Panama, which are all independent states, and Belize which is still a colony of the United Kingdom. This land area totals 523,117 square kilometres, and the population estimate at 1975 was 19,117,000.

The Caribbean shares access with Central America to the Caribbean Sea. This area is bounded on the west by Central America and on the north and east by a line of islands running in a great curve from Cuba in the north to Trinidad in the south-

east. The political status of each island surveyed is set out below:

Antigua	Associated State of the United Kingdom
Barbados	Independent
Cuba	Independent
Dominica	Associated State of the United Kingdom
Dominican Republic	Independent
Grenada	Independent
Guadeloupe	Department of France
Haiti	Independent
Jamaica	Independent
Martinique	Department of France
Montserrat	Colony of the United Kingdom
Netherlands Antilles	Colonies of Holland, except for Surinam which is independent
Puerto Rico	Dependency of the U.S.
St. Kitts, Nevis, Anguilla	Associated State of the United Kingdom
St. Lucia	Associated State of the United Kingdom
St. Vincent	Associated State of the United Kingdom
Trinidad, Tobago	Independent

The largest of these islands is Cuba with 114,524 square kilometres, while the smallest, included in this survey, is Montserrat with 98 square kilometres. Among the seventeen island territories surveyed for purposes of this article, the land area totals 224,225 square kilometres, while the population estimate at 1975 was 26,819,000.

The rate of population growth in the Caribbean and Central America area varies from 0.6% (Barbados) to 3.4% (Dominican Republic and Honduras), and the density from six persons per square kilometre (Belize) to 568 persons per square kilometre (Barbados). The average density is 71 persons per square kilometre.

It is proposed to concentrate on some of the critical problems to be faced in creating humane and functional settlements in the area surveyed by discussing four topics:

- urbanization and its implications;
- identification and allocation of resources;
- policy formation, and
- need for a suitable technology.

### Urbanization

Central America and the Caribbean, like Latin America, show two main demographic trends. One is a continuing rapid rate of population growth. The other is an even greater rate of urban growth. Table 1, listing all the territories surveyed, indicates the estimates for the urban population between 1950 and 2000 while Table 2 summarizes the relationship between the urban and the total population for the same period.

It will be seen that urban growth is now taking place and will continue to take place at an increasingly faster rate than total population growth. This rapid growth has often resulted in, among other things, unemployment, social friction, crime and violence, poor housing and lowered standards of education and health.

Perhaps the most startlingly obvious effect of this rapid urbanization has been the growth of squatter settlements, called by various names throughout the developing world—*favelas*, *bidonvilles*, *calampas*, *bustees*, shantytowns. But, as Barbara Ward says "The name changes. The desolation is the same."

Central America and the Caribbean are no exception to this phenomenon. Generally speaking, the population of both areas is young, and this is reflected in their squatter settlements where there tend to be a high ratio of young people. Average urbanization growth rates for the various countries are about 3% per annum. In these squatter settlements the rate sometimes increases to as much as 12%. It appears, therefore, that a considerable proportion of urban growth is taking place in squatter settlements.

Then there is also the corollary of urbanization resulting in stagnation of rural areas. Many countries have felt that rural-

TABLE 1

Urban Population Estimates and Projections Median Variant and Annual Rate of Growth

Country	Total Population (in Thousands)		Annual Rate of Growth (Percentage)		1970		1975		1980		1990		2000
	1950	Rate	1960	Rate	Rate	Rate	Rate	Rate	Rate	Rate	Rate	Rate	Rate
Antigua	N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A
Barbados	84	a	94	a	104	1.3	111	1.4	119	1.7	141	1.7	167
Belize	37	a	49	a	67	a	80	a	95	a	129	2.2	160
Costa Rica	284	4.0	422	4.5	659	3.8	795	3.8	962	3.8	1,400	3.5	1,986
Cuba	2,866	2.3	3,593	3.4	5,056	2.9	5,839	2.9	6,764	2.8	8,942	2.5	11,426
Dominica	N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A
Dominican Republic	539	5.6	940	6.1	1,726	5.3	2,253	5.2	2,919	4.9	4,766	4.4	7,419
El Salvador	701	3.2	963	3.4	1,359	3.8	1,647	4.0	2,016	4.2	3,072	4.1	4,643
Grenada	N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A
Guadeloupe	49	a	101	3.7	146	3.7	176	3.3	208	2.9	277	2.1	343
Guatemala	893	3.5	1,263	3.4	1,773	3.9	2,154	4.0	2,635	4.1	3,977	4.1	5,973
Haiti	376	3.7	546	3.7	792	3.5	945	3.8	1,141	3.9	1,680	3.5	2,389
Honduras	340	2.4	430	4.6	683	4.4	851	4.5	1,064	4.6	1,689	4.8	2,722
Jamaica	311	4.3	480	4.6	760	3.7	915	3.3	1,077	2.8	1,427	2.1	1,768
Martinique	62	a	114	5.2	191	3.5	227	3.1	265	2.4	336	1.6	393
Montserrat	N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A
Netherlands Antilles	80	a	132	3.3	184	2.6	210	2.7	240	2.5	309	1.8	370
Panama	297	4.3	449	4.7	715	4.1	878	4.1	1,075	3.9	1,576	3.4	2,209
Puerto Rico	900	1.6	1,053	4.6	1,675	2.5	1,897	2.3	2,130	2.0	2,600	1.5	3,006
St. Kitts, Nevis, Anguilla	N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A
St. Lucia	N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A
St. Vincent	N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A
Trinidad and Tobago	145	2.4	185	2.2	230	1.9	253	2.0	280	2.3	353	2.5	455
	7,964		10,814		16,120		19,231		22,990		32,674		45,429

a) Rates of growth are not shown where population estimate at beginning of period is less than 100,000.

Source: Global Review of Human Settlements Statistical Annex pp. 29-33

urban migration must be halted and have initiated policies toward this end. Yet it is generally accepted that such policies do not succeed. In the World Bank Sector Paper on Urbanization, it was noted that despite unusual cases such as Taiwan "attempts to restrain migration by deliberate policies of restricting the growth of urban services, appear to have been unsuccessful." Indeed, the World Housing Survey 1974 points out that: "As far as it is possible to evaluate success, it appears

that countries that wished to control urbanization did not succeed in preventing either the growth or the deterioration of the conditions of their urban centres."

In Central America and the Caribbean, there appears to be little choice. Cities are growing larger and will continue to do so. Table 3 makes this clear.

It is therefore necessary for countries to realize that urbanization is a dynamic process and one which needs to be integrated into the national development

process. A number of countries, notably Colombia, are proceeding along these lines.

It is clear, however, that most countries of Central America and the Caribbean consider themselves to be lacking in the financial and skilled human resources to cope with the expanding slum and squatter settlements in their urban areas. Yet the very fact of the existence of these settlements indicates that some resources are available.



For instance, land is available. It may not be zoned for this use, and there may be problems of tenure, but in all cases, except perhaps Barbados, densities are low enough to indicate that land can be made available.

Secondly, certain skills are available. These skills are evident in the ways in which the squatters themselves move, build and organize their settlements. Skills become a problem when the minimum standards acceptable to the planning officials are beyond the resources not only of the people involved but also of the country itself.

For this reason, one of the most significant breakthroughs in settlement development over the past several years is the planning and implementation of the sites and services projects promoted by the World Bank in which a government's expenditure is limited to the provision of services and the people themselves utilize their skills in constructing their shelter.

Recent studies have shown that the energy available in squatter settlements can be mobilized for planning and implementing savings programmes, construction of community facilities and other amenities. There are examples of schools and clinics being built with a minimum of government assistance. These settlements in this way become a training ground for the construction industry and can assist in eventually raising the overall level of productive work in the city.

In Central America and the Caribbean, the level of underdevelopment makes it possible that—if based on the resources available in the area and the acceptance of standards suitable to the existing resources—rapid urbanization can result in reasonably well organized settlements in which people can live a healthy and productive life. This cannot be dealt with effectively in a vacuum. The concept of integrated development aimed primarily at establishing reasonable levels of living for the mass of the population is a neces-

TABLE 2

	1950	1960	1970	1975	1980	1990	2000
Total	24,717,000	30,914,000	39,072,000	43,948,000	49,621,000	63,259,000	79,332,000
Urban	7,964,000	10,814,000	16,120,000	19,231,000	22,990,000	32,674,000	45,429,000
	32%	35%	41%	44%	46%	52%	57%

TABLE 3

Size of Cities	Caribbean Islands		Central America	
	Estimated % of Population 1975	2000	Estimated % of Population 1975	2000
5,000,000 plus	—	—	24.3	30.3
2,000,000 - 4,999,999	17.3	27.3	—	5.7
1,000,000 - 1,999,999	—	14.5	7.8	9.8
500,000 - 999,999	23.2	4.5	6.6	10.2
200,000 - 499,999	5.6	10.6	12.5	6.8
100,000 - 99,999	10.4	6.9	6.8	6.9
Rest	43.2	35.9	41.7	29.9

Source: Global Review of Human Settlements Statistical Annex — page 65

sity. In most countries of the area, such integrated planning and development procedures are not being used. Indeed, at the moment, spatial planning tends to be regarded as a residual factor. This is unfortunate. A development process based on planned use of resources with land as a key resource is critical to the planning and implementation of integrated social and economic development.

Looked at in this way, urbanization can result in increased employment, increased use of local building materials and the development over time of an inexpensive local building technology, making the likelihood of more houses for poor families possible.

**Identification and Allocation of Resources** Resources for settlements can be categorized as physical, human and financial. In terms of physical resources, land and materials for building are of great importance. Throughout Central America and the Caribbean, the demand for urban land is growing. Generally, as in Latin America, land ownership is for the most part based

on individual rights to land which, with the process of rapid urbanization, has resulted in land speculation and an inordinate increase in the value of urban land. The main exception is Cuba where the National Urban Land Reform Law has resulted in a radical change of ownership patterns, utilizing need as the criteria rather than historical ownership.

Throughout the area, governments have adopted a number of techniques to control use of land. In Puerto Rico and Jamaica, tax benefits are offered to persons who locate industrial enterprises in specific areas. It is becoming more and more accepted, however, that it is necessary to own land to ensure the required development. Examples have been set by the National Housing Bank in Brazil, the Corporation for Urban Development in Chile (CORMU) and the Urban Development Corporation in Jamaica, where comprehensive urban development programmes have been implemented on land acquired by the state for that purpose.

The truth of the matter, however, is that there is no lack of land for urban pur-

poses or for housing the urban poor. The problem lies in the misuse and/or inequitable distribution of land. There are several ways, depending on the political system, which can be used to modify this inequitable distribution, and countries in the region would be well advised to ensure that careful solutions to this problem are worked out. Jamaica has recently amended its Land Acquisition Law to give the government the right to compulsorily lease, as well as acquire, land for public purposes. In regard to compensation, this will be determined by the assessed value on the tax roll and not by the market value as was previously the case.

In the World Housing Survey 1974 issued by the United Nations in 1976, it is noted that "the insufficiency of locally produced building materials is still typical for most less developed countries and the importation of building materials at times represents 50% of the value of building materials used in a country. Therefore, the national production of building materials based on locally available raw materials is essential."

This is perfectly true for the majority of countries in the area. One of the basic problems here is lack of research. Another is the establishment of standards based on those metropolitan countries which in themselves require importation of raw materials. There is need for area-based building research organizations which can list experiments being made in the various areas and which can also test the quality and standardize the production of the resulting components.

Human resources are generally interpreted as the availability of skilled persons. There is indeed a shortage of skilled persons in the field of construction in the area under survey. But, it is also true that the existing unskilled or semi-skilled workers are not being satisfactorily used.

In Jamaica, in a housing project constructed in Kingston, it has been found that an additional room to a house can be

provided much more cheaply by the house-owner than by the developer. In the first place, the developer's overheads are not chargeable. Secondly, the skills of the house-owner and his family and/or friends are offered at a cheaper rate. These two factors outweigh the saving made by the developer in terms of bulk purchase of materials. It appears that the house-owner benefits from undertaking his own construction where the more complicated elements of plumbing and electricity which require very scarce skills are not required.

Squatter colonies offer many examples of construction skills that are not fully utilized. Any settlement in the area will have examples of permanent well-built housing as well as paper and cardboard shacks, provided it has been in existence for several years.

Flanker in Montego Bay, Jamaica is an example of this. In six years, the author watched housing in this settlement change, in some instances from cardboard to wood, to concrete—complete with electricity and facilities for piped water. Ways must be found (and experimental projects in Guyana and the Dominican Republic indicate that this is possible) to mobilize these skills to improve our poorest settlements.

The need for the channelling of financial resources into settlements is one which the developing world has emphasized in international fora. And indeed, it merits this emphasis in a world where millions of dollars are spent on destructive weapons while in some countries children are dying from starvation and lack of water. Nevertheless, the developing world must itself look at its own priorities in this regard.

In Central America and the Caribbean, many countries have established institutions or participate in institutions which assist in the financing of housing for low-income families. In this way, governments have initiated action to channel more and more funds into housing for that sector of

the population that needs it most. Examples are the Caribbean Development Bank<sup>1</sup> which, as at July, 1976, had loan commitments for housing mortgages amounting to over \$11 million, about 11% of its total loans. There is also the Central American Bank for Economic Integration<sup>2</sup> which now operates a home loan department. Guatemala, El Salvador, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Cuba, Jamaica and Barbados all have national institutions geared to promoting and facilitating home-ownership.

What remains to be done is for countries to follow up their asserted priority rating for settlements by ensuring that a higher proportion of developmental expenditure reaches the most disadvantaged groups. Decisions about infrastructure works must be taken on the basis of need and productivity. If a choice exists between telephones for relatively sparsely populated middle and high-income suburban development, and access roads and street lighting for a slum or squatter area, the expenditure should be made where the need is greater.

### Policy

It is difficult to assess the total expenditure on settlements made in each country. This is because the development model used by most countries is based on sectoral planning and development.

If we take the basic aspects of settlements to be water, food, shelter and health facilities, we find that action in each of these fields is pursued as a separate exercise. Thus, settlements as a comprehensive unit have no place in the development planning process as it is presently practised. Further, all these items are seen as part of the service sector and not as part of the productive sector. This has resulted in a lack of emphasis on settlements which is only now beginning to be realized. Thus, steps are being taken in some countries to initiate new towns or special development areas where a comprehensive plan of

<sup>1</sup>Members of the Caribbean Development Bank are all the English speaking territories of the Caribbean.

<sup>2</sup>Members are Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua.

development can be formulated and implemented.

Out of this has arisen the realization that most countries do not have an urbanization policy. Urban areas must not just grow; they must be planned around employment opportunities, with facilities and amenities based on the resources available. All countries cannot afford a minimum standard of a 500 square foot house made from concrete and steel for each family. Many of them could afford planned communities with water and electricity, walkways (not necessarily roads for motor vehicles throughout), schools and clinics. People could then, on the basis of reasonable tenure, build and improve their shelter over time.

It is better to give a bare minimum to the maximum of the population than to give a unit acceptable by developed world standards to a minimum of the population. Housing policies should make this their main aim.

### Technology

Most developed countries spend between 1% and 3% of their Gross National Product on research, including research and development. At the start of the first development decade, developing countries agreed that an investment of 1% of Gross National Product was an acceptable level for research, including research and development.

None of the countries surveyed have attained this figure. The last survey done reveals that in Jamaica the figure was .76% in 1973. Because of the competition for scarce resources, developing countries find it difficult in the short term to assign funds for research. But the increasing rate of urbanization makes it necessary in the medium and long term to initiate and direct research into the area of settlements.

The question of building materials is only one of many fields. We need to know more about the sociology of settlements.

We need to find out how to identify and utilize the energies that go into voluntary settlements. We need to look at the possibilities of energy for settlements using available resources such as the sun and the wind. We need to research the possibilities of using the light of the sun and the coolness of the wind to maximum advantage, thus reducing the dependence on metropolitan technological advances such as air conditioning. A breakthrough in this can benefit the poor as well as the rich and can go a long way towards making a small house in a dense development more comfortable. It is in areas such as this that international agencies can assist, for countries such as those of Central America and the Caribbean cannot individually mobilize the skills and resources necessary to undertake the wide range of research projects needed.

Humane and functional settlements can be created in Central America and the Caribbean; but, this requires a clear understanding of the urgency of the matter, of the need for comprehensive long-term planning, and of the will to take decisions and implement them for the good of the many instead of the aggrandizement of the few. □

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Solving  
Urban Problems:



## Lessons from Latin America

BY A. A. LAQUIAN

### A Profile of the Problems

The twenty countries of Latin America are lands of contrasts. On the hills surrounding the modern city of Caracas, capital of oil-rich Venezuela, towering apartments compete for the view with tens of thousands of ramshackle squatter huts known as *ranchos*. The luxury hotels of fun-loving Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, push the *favelas* higher up the hills, where water and other services are rarely available. And, yet a few blocks from Bogota's gold museum (that glittering reminder of Colombia's ancient civilization) are some of the worst slum areas called *tugurios* where—with luck—a family of eight may have a daily income of 30 pesos, barely a dollar.

Whether called *ranchos*, *favelas*, *tugurios*, *barriadas*, *calampas* or *vilas de miserias*, the slum and squatter settlements that plague every large city in Latin America best symbolize the region's main urban problem. These communities of the urban poor which often make up illegal cities within cities were originally formed by rural-urban migrants who traded rural misery for desperate urban hopes.

New studies show, however, that more and more, squatters and slum dwellers tend to be city-born. In the progressive 1960's many optimists thought that squatting was a transitional phenomenon, that the migrants would be absorbed by the city and become wage earning citizens. But, as the number of squatters grew with the years, city authorities realized that unless they carried out massive reforms, the squatters and slums would not go away.

While slum and squatter areas are the most visible problems in Latin America, they cannot approximate the magnitude of the financial, political and administrative burdens that most cities are saddled with. At its core, the urban problem is due to too many people crowded together in increasingly limited space. Mexico City is already eight million and still continues to grow at more than four per cent per year.

The three metropolitan areas of Rio de Janeiro, Sao Paulo and Belo Horizonte—Brazil's golden triangle of growth—are still growing, despite the fact that the beautiful sunsets over Copacabana's beaches are more likely to be filtered by industrial smog rather than clouds. The Rio de la Plata, that shimmering river that connects Buenos Aires with the city of Rosario, is dead from industrial wastes.

Even smaller Latin American countries are suffering from too rapid rates of urbanization. More than 70 per cent of Uruguay's population lives in the city of Montevideo. And, during the holiday season, when millions of tourists from Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay flock to the city, the water and electricity services in Montevideo and Punta del Este are strained to their limits.

Despite the many problems that confront Latin American cities, however, there are a number of innovative reforms and government actions which offer some hope for the future. These policies and programs are the more remarkable in light of the economic and political conditions that conspire to make life difficult. Generally, progressive policies and programs may be divided into those that make possible: (a) minimal housing with a large self-help component; (b) growth centres in frontier or lagging areas and (c) rural reform that encourages people to remain in the countryside even as urban reforms are being carried out. Many Latin American countries have adopted national development strategies that combine most of these measures. And, at the recent United Nations Habitat conference held in Vancouver, practically all the countries of Latin America had documents and films showing innovative programs that promise to solve urban problems at both the national and local levels.

### Self-Help and Popular Action

If slum and squatter settlements constitute Latin America's primary urban problem,

studies have also shown that they provide their own best solution. It is now widely accepted that the cities of the Third World will largely have to be "self-built" and that most of them have no chance of ever attaining the level and quality of urban services now enjoyed by the cities of North America, Europe and other technologically advanced regions. The fastest growing types of projects supported by the World Bank these days are "sites and services" schemes, and, increasingly, they are shifting to "squatter upgrading" and "self-help" approaches rather than opening up serviced lands in new urban areas.

The acceptability of self-help principles in providing urban housing and services in developing countries may be traced to the pioneering studies of slum and squatter communities in Latin America. The studies of John F. C. Turner and William Mangin, conducted in the *barriadas* of Lima, revealed a tremendous capacity on the part of the urban poor to call on their own individual and group resources to solve their own problems.

A squatter invasion, it was shown, had all the intricacies of a military operation, and the squatters and slum dwellers repeatedly carried out such actions despite police and military harassments. The studies also revealed that given security of tenure, a squatter tended to consolidate his gains and improved his house, whereas people provided with public housing did not seem to value what the government had given them.

The Peruvian government, realizing the potential for growth inherent in the capacity of the people to organize and solve their own problems, launched a massive urban reform program to make shelter available to the majority of the people. In Lima, these days, it is not polite to call the slum and squatter communities *barriadas*. They are called *pueblos jovenes* or "young towns" and reflect the government's hope that through self-help and popular action,

they will become mature urban communities in the future.

One of the most important lessons to be learned from the literature on slums and squatters in Latin America is that a house should not be seen as an object or a product to be built for a consumer, and since a person's house reflects his socio-economic condition in life, its construction should be seen as a process. As poor migrants start their life in squatter communities, they make do with whatever materials they can get for housing. As their lives improve, however, they consolidate and improve their shelters.

Public housing policy, therefore, should unlock these resources on the part of people needing housing. Instead of providing them with finished houses, as the Venezuelan government tried to do with their superblocks (which the people eventually vandalized and rejected), the government should provide the minimum infrastructure (water, roads, sanitation) which the people would then build upon to form their own settlements.

#### **Sites and Services Schemes**

The sites and services schemes now popular in Latin American and other developing countries are based on this philosophy of self-help and popular action. External loans and government resources are usually devoted to providing basic services that the people find too expensive or too large to provide themselves. Even in the construction of roads, the digging of drainage canals and the laying of sewers and water pipes, the people are employed, either with full pay or as a labour contribution for the so-called "sweat equity" built into the project budget. Some projects, such as those in El Salvador and Nicaragua, give the people a head start by the provision of "core housing" which may range from just two walls, a roof and a toilet, to an almost finished house. Additions and improvements, however, are the responsibility of the homeowners,

to be made when the family has the means to pay for them.

Experience with sites and services projects in Latin America has shown that people can organize to make possible the attainment of shelter. Community organizations, based on traditional cooperative activities, are readily established when the need to improve the lives of poor people is felt. Housing agencies that recognize the willingness of the people to work toward the attainment of their own housing are proving to be the most successful in many Latin American countries. They have come to realize that housing is too important an aspiration of people to be treated merely as a service to be provided. Instead, it should be achieved by people through self-help and popular action.

#### **Growth Centres**

The problem of primacy or the domination of a country's urban hierarchy by one large city is common in Latin America. In most countries, therefore, there are attempts to create secondary cities and towns that will act as counter-magnets to people migrating to cities. One of the earliest efforts to create a city from the jungle was Brasilia, the architecturally magnificent capital of Brazil. Although Brasilia has had its problems, the city has rapidly developed into one of the country's important urban centres.

One of the best documented efforts to create a growth pole was Ciudad Guayana on the banks of the Caroni River in northeastern Venezuela. Unlike Brasilia, Ciudad Guayana was planned as an industrial city, using job opportunities as the main attraction to migrants. Cheap power, public investments, good transport and adequate urban services were combined to make Ciudad Guayana a viable growth pole.

The planners of Ciudad Guayana were not always right. For example, while they planned to separate housing from the industrial zones, the people followed their

own logic of wanting to be close to their jobs and, as a result, uncontrolled settlements grew rapidly around the factories. The investments needed for the new city were massive and probably out of the reach of countries that do not have Venezuela's oil wealth. Nevertheless, the lessons from Ciudad Guayana are instructive from both the comprehensive planning approach and the willingness displayed by the planners and authorities of the city to adjust to changing times.

With the proven success of Brasilia and Ciudad Guayana, many Latin American countries are embarking on growth pole schemes. One of the most impressive and demanding projects is the construction of a series of dams on the Parana River on the borders of Paraguay, Argentina and Brazil.

The Itaipu dam, alone, is expected to result in a city of 300,000 when it is fully operational. This new city will straddle the boundaries of two countries and require a new concept in international management. Already, Paraguayans have migrated by the tens of thousands to the Argentinian side while Argentinians and Brazilians are now settling in Paraguay. When the dam starts supplying electricity to these countries and the factories hum with activity, the urban settlement patterns of the three countries, especially Paraguay (where the capital city of Asuncion is already rapidly growing along the newly constructed road linking the city with Itaipu), will be changed radically.

The growth pole approach is gaining support, even in a country like Colombia which is blessed with a geographic and ethnic diversity that has resulted in large and progressive urban centres that successfully compete with Bogota, the capital. Until a couple of years ago, Colombia's development strategy was to encourage a rapid move to the cities. Under the influence of a Canadian economist, Laughlin Currie, who was instrumental in the adoption of a plan that would create

"cities within cities," Colombia embarked on an investment program that encouraged urban industrial expansion and massive expenditures for urban housing. These investments were seen as the "motors" that would generate rapid economic and social development.

Unhappily, the threat of inflation, coupled with dropping prices for Colombia's exports, spelled trouble for the development plans. Under a new government, Colombia has now switched priorities and cooled the pro-urban strategy. Investments in agriculture have gained prominence and housing starts are down. Still, growth centres are being set up in lagging areas of the country. The area around Boyaca, for example, is being developed as a growth centre. There are also plans to rapidly develop a number of settlements in the Colombian *llanos*, the vast fertile plains in the eastern part of the country, that promise to be a new Latin American breadbasket.

Although growth centre and growth pole approaches have been implemented in a number of Latin American countries, there is still a lot to be desired in their planning and implementation. For one, the growth centres in the past have been set up for political and symbolic rather than sound economic reasons. The plans for the centres have also been overly ambitious and expensive and, as a result, have strained the nations' resources. Too much reliance has been placed on heavy industries that require great amounts of power, and the models used have been straight out of the industrialized West, where capital, technical skills and technology are abundant.

In the future, a number of Latin American countries are planning to make important reforms in their growth centre plans. Already, the plans for Ciudad Lazaro Cardenas in Mexico are more realistic and modest, compared to Brasilia or Ciudad Guayana. More labour-intensive industries, manufacturing based on agri-

culture and products requiring use of local materials are being stressed in Ciudad Lazaro Cardenas. Most important of all, quick and dramatic results are not expected, and progress is planned in a phased, orderly manner over a longer span of time.

#### **Agrarian and Urban Reform**

As a result of their colonial histories, the predominantly agricultural countries of Latin America have had serious agrarian problems. Local elites control the richest lands and run them in feudal fiefdoms called *latifundios*, even as the poor *campesinos* or peasants try to eke out a living from pitifully small farms reduced by inheritance laws and the rapacity of local moneylenders. The desperate plight of the farmers, in turn, is the root cause of the region's urban problems. With nothing to lose but his bondage to the soil, the peasant moves to the city in the hope that even in the slum and squatter settlements, life will be better.

The Mexican Revolution, of course, was the classic attempt to change a country's agrarian situation. While the agrarian reform program in Mexico is often cited as an example of a revolutionary change, there are many who believe that the revolution fell short of its promises. If the rural-urban migration in Mexico is used as an indicator of that country's land reform program, then it must be accepted that the revolution is not keeping them "down on the farm". The population of Mexico City swells daily with migrants from the countryside, and the situation is no better in other cities throughout Mexico.

The Cuban Revolution is often cited as a sharp contrast to the Mexican situation. Because of the sweeping changes brought about by the government of Premier Fidel Castro, the pattern of land tenure in both rural and urban areas has been drastically changed. The success of the Cuban Revolution, in fact, has caused some Latin Americans to feel that only

a complete change will succeed in solving a country's agrarian problems. There are many, however, who feel that the price of the Cuban Revolution in blood and suffering is something they are not willing to pay.

The latest massive attempt to change a country's agrarian structure is happening in Peru. Although the Peruvian program is carried out by reform-minded militarists, it is effectively breaking up the large haciendas and redistributing more manageable parcels to farmers. The people are also being organized into cooperatives and other associations to tap their skills and resources in solving common problems. While it is too early to tell if the agrarian reform program in Peru will succeed as well as the Cuban case, some positive effects are already being observed. The migration of people to coastal cities has shown signs of abating, and the life of people in the *pueblos juvenes* of Lima, Arequipa and other cities has markedly improved.

The joining of agrarian and urban reform in a number of countries in Latin America reveals one of the most important lessons in coping with urban problems—that the solution to such problems lies in a total approach requiring all the resources and talents of a country's population rather than city dwellers alone. What is often needed to solve the problems of the cities is a national development strategy.

Cities are not isolated settlements, as in the ancient days when they could be contained within massive walls. Nowadays, the problems of the cities can be solved on the farms, in small towns, and in the slum and squatter areas that so trouble them. All such efforts are required if cities are to survive and continue to contribute their energies to the countries they are so much a part of.

#### **Cuba: The Total Approach**

The most successful attempt to solve housing and urban development problems

in Latin America through a total human settlements strategy may be found in Cuba.

The Cuban approach has three basic ingredients: keep them down on the farm; channel them to intermediate towns and cities; and solve the problems that already exist in large cities. So far, the strategy seems to work. Havana, the capital, has kept its proportion of about a fifth of the country's population since 1959. Other cities, however, notably Piñar del Río in the west and Santiago de Cuba in the east, have been growing rapidly so that the country's population spread has become more balanced.

#### **Down on the Farm**

The rural development program is spearheaded by a massive rural concentration effort which has aggregated formerly dispersed farmers into more than 200 towns. In the town of Jibacoa, for example, people are housed in four-storey row houses that form an integrated community centred around the school, community centre and the main source of employment, a dairy farm. Each farmer is given a free apartment unit with running water, electricity, gas, a refrigerator and even a television set. Thus by bringing city amenities to the farm, the Cuban government is keeping the people there.

It is interesting that agrarian reform has been achieved by confiscating the land from the elite (many of whom left the country) but the land has not been redistributed to the farmers as private property. Instead, a disciplined mobilization effort based on the Communist Party, committees for the defence of the revolution, women's associations and youth groups inculcates a sense of communal ownership. By concentrating on productive cash crops (sugar, cattle, citrus fruits) instead of subsistence crops, the agricultural effort is succeeding, and the farmers seem to be happy to work and live in the rural areas.

When Havana fell to Castro's rebels in 1959, many of the peasant soldiers

wanted to remain in the capital city. In no time at all, however, programs were launched to get them back to the countryside. Revolutionary exhortations were made about the need to regain the country's sugar production capacity. The young, especially, went to the rural areas in great numbers, as seen in the resettlement of the Isle of Pines, which is now a thriving agricultural region exporting citrus fruits. Strict controls were also imposed on housing, food rations, jobs, transport and other necessities in the capital. A national registry system carefully noted the skills of the citizenry and other requirements of the urban settlements and only those who could fill this need were allowed to stay in the city.

#### **Away from Havana**

At the same time that moving to Havana was being discouraged, a campaign for moving to other cities and towns was launched, and this encouragement of growth to other cities continues today. In the Party Congress last year, the Cuban Constitution was revised to reorganize the whole country's administrative machinery. In early 1976, a massive reorganization of the governmental and party structures increased the number of provinces and ministries and decentralized other branches of government. Even the university structure was revamped. In the past, anyone wishing to get a college degree had to go to Havana. With the new reforms, three new universities located in other cities were set up. Since education and jobs are the main magnets to migrants, the reorganization of the government agencies and the educational system cannot help but alter the country's settlement pattern.

#### **Self-Help Housing**

In Havana itself, new housing is being constructed, even as the old housing stock abandoned by Cubans who emigrated to Miami and elsewhere is being improved.

Construction uses prefabrication and other advanced techniques. However, self-help is used extensively through the mechanism of the micro-brigade. Each brigade is made up of around 34 persons representing various skills needed for construction, such as masons, carpenters, electricians, etc. The members are trained and assigned a quota of houses to build, and in most instances, they construct the houses that they will live in themselves. Thus, not only initial construction but long-term maintenance is assured because all the skills necessary for upkeep are represented among the tenants in the community.

With the apparent success of the Cuban revolution, there is considerable interest in the approaches that have been used. The programs of rural resettlement, investments in towns and smaller cities and the construction techniques used by the micro-brigades are most interesting. The question most often asked, however, is whether these techniques will succeed without the wholesale political and economic changes brought about by the revolution. Not too many Latin American countries are willing to find out the answer to that question. □

# Settlement Problems in NORTH AMERICA

## The Spirit of our Rural Past

The United States and Canada developed during the first two centuries of white settlement as predominantly rural societies.

In the early years of the 19th century, the level of living for the mass of the population probably was higher than on other continents. Yet, the percentage of the population living in cities was lower than it was in Europe, Latin America or East Asia, and the size of the largest cities was much smaller. Following these early years, however, urbanization proceeded very rapidly, and at present more than three out of four North Americans live in urban or metropolitan areas.

The bulk of the rural population lived not in compact villages or hamlets, but in scattered settlements. And, although only a minority of the present rural population consists of farmers, the isolated and independent farmstead set the pattern. For the European peasant, escaping from feudal fetters, North America was "the Land of the Free" because the land was free. The immigrant was free to do on and with his land whatever he pleased—to improve or destroy it, to buy and sell and mortgage it. This "fee simple" form of landed property has been enshrined in North American ideology as a "natural" right, as the basis of human freedom and dignity.

Just as the spirit of the pioneer farm has largely dominated the spirit of urban development, so has the form of rural land division generally determined the urban street pattern which, with few exceptions, was established as an undifferentiated grid. The public contribution to city building was limited almost exclusively to the maintenance of the street system and its gradual improvement by engineering services. What happened beyond the street line was for the owner to decide.

When railroads developed, every city wanted them to come as close to its center as possible; tracks and yards ruthlessly disrupted the street system and occupied the waterfronts. The railroads attracted

commercial and industrial enterprises which, in turn, attracted people. The city developed as a money mining camp, with the mining camp mentality concentrated on immediate gain with a ruthless disregard for ultimate consequences. As such, as a place for making a living, the North American city has been, and still is, highly attractive. But as a place for living, the city—with its increased noise and pollution—has become increasingly unattractive.

The railroads, however, were seen by some early reformers, such as Robert Gurley in Boston in 1840, as the instrument which would give all urban dwellers access to land for a house and garden of their own. In fact, railroad companies commissioned landscape architects, such as Frederick Law Olmsted, to design suburbs around their stations. They were designed as places for living. Replacing the grid with curved streets, they attempted to create a "natural" healthy and pleasant environment for their inhabitants. The detached single-family house surrounded by lawns and trees on a quiet residential street, which they provided, has set the standard of aspiration for the typical North American family and for most government actions.

The railroad suburb was generally accessible only to the upper-income groups, but subsequent developments in transportation and communication (electric traction, the bicycle, and the telephone, followed by automobiles, trucks, and buses) enabled an increasing percentage of the population to satisfy their desire for more space in the form of the suburban single-family house. Industrial, commercial and recreational land uses, accompanying or following the outward spread, also absorbed more extensive areas. The total amount of land absorbed by each urban dweller for all urban purposes is now at least five times as great as it was around 1850.

Thus, the North American city has been transformed into a new, much vaster and looser form of settlement, containing

"rural" as well as "urban" elements, which the census recognizes as a "metropolitan area." Like the city which preceded it, the metropolitan area is defined as a common labour and common housing market.

## The Incongruence of our Urban Present

The political/administrative structure has not been adjusted to this new reality, and still largely perpetuates the forms inherited from our rural past. For Canada, where sovereignty is vested in the Crown, provincial legislation has established various forms of metropolitan government, though their effectiveness is circumscribed by the limited extent of their territory as well as of their powers. In the United States, the constitutional right to "local autonomy" has largely frustrated attempts to establish metropolitan governments. This is ironic, because the autonomy does not extend to financial matters. Consequently, municipalities are totally dependent on tied grants from higher levels of government and have lost the power to determine their own priorities.

In both the United States and Canada, the main source of revenue available to municipalities is the real property tax. Thus, while their obligations are proportional to people, their revenues are proportional to property. This has driven them to use their regulatory powers, in particular zoning, to prevent housing for low-income families. Zoning has been the main North American response to the problems created by the impact of the landowner's right to develop his property as he pleases on the value of the properties of his neighbours. It has been and is a measure of property protection more than one of planning. The provision of public works, the other major contribution of public authorities to the shaping of settlements, has largely followed private development rather than leading it. In the main, North American cities have been designed by the invisible hand of the market.

This design is not devoid of logic. The regular decrease of density from the



center to the periphery, the preponderance of residences for adults in the inner and for children in the outer areas, concentration at the center of establishments dependent on the entire area and/or on each other, and of manufacturing and warehousing along major transportation corridors are functional and rational. However, market factors, reinforced by restrictive policies of suburban municipalities, have led to increasing segregation. In the United States, where class distinctions are expressed and reinforced in terms of race, this has led to an abandonment of the central cities by middle and upper-income groups, with consequent deterioration of their financial situation. In the 1950's and 1960's, the central cities attempted to counteract this by "urban redevelopment," financed by the federal government, which enabled them to tear down low-income housing and replace it by housing for people of substantial purchasing power. The inevitable resistance of those displaced by this policy, as well as the simultaneous construction of radial freeways, has been a major factor in the social disintegration of the United States.

In Canada, there has been no exodus of the upper-income groups from the central city. To the contrary, the center is becoming the preserve of the wealthy; *working-class housing is disappearing not only from displacement by multistorey apartment houses, but even more from rehabilitation to luxury standards.* The net result has been the same on both sides of the border: a shrinking of the housing supply available to low and moderate-income groups, with the dream of owning a single-family house farther from reality than it was 20 years ago.

### **The Crisis of Price**

More than ever there is talk of the "housing crisis." This crisis has existed ever since the Industrial Revolution; and the main reaction of governments has been the establishment and enforcement of rising standards of housing quality. Census data

indicate that the overwhelming majority of urban dwellings in North America actually do conform to fairly high standards in terms of structure, equipment and occupancy, although not necessarily in terms of environment. These data show an average of 1.5 rooms per person (about 1.2 without kitchens). As well, the average number of gross square feet per person appears to be no less than 350, more than five times the average found in most developing countries. The North American housing problem seems to be predominantly one neither of equality nor of quantity, but of cost, that is, price or rent.

One of the elements of housing costs which has risen very steeply in recent years is the cost of land available for urban development. With an increase in the number and wealth of the members of a given community, their effective demand for land is bound to increase its price. To the extent that the resultant "rationing by price" allocates land in response to different demands and counteracts wasteful use, it is desirable. However, it can be and is being claimed that the increment in land value, being created not by its owners, but by the growth of the community, should be appropriated by the latter by means such as a site value tax.

Such a change in appropriation would, by itself, not change the cost to the user. As a result of restrictive public policies, the cost of residential lots in many urban areas, such as Toronto, has risen far above the level determined by community growth to an oligopolistic level. The declared purpose of these policies is to prevent the scattering of development which involves high financial, social and environmental costs. It may well be that the only way out of the dilemma of accepting either scattering or oligopolistic land prices is public ownership of the bulk of potential urban development land. Such ownership could allocate rationally suitable areas of land to be developed for various urban purposes, and other areas to be preserved for non-urban uses, such as agriculture or recrea-

tion. These concerns, popularly expressed in the negative form of "preventing land speculation," are leading to increasing interest in public ownership of land.

One of the concerns frequently expressed is absorption of agricultural land by metropolitan growth. While waste certainly should be avoided, the concern appears to be excessive, considering that land occupied by all urban uses equals, at most, three per cent of all agricultural land in North America. It should also be noted that five million people living in a metropolitan area absorb far less land than do the same number living in a thousand villages of 5,000 population.

### **The Legacy of the Car**

A far better reason against excessive urban land absorption is the cost involved in overcoming the resultant distances, in particular the excessive movement of motor vehicles. Even if those aspects presently causing alarm—energy consumption and air pollution—should someday be overcome by technology, the accident toll would remain. Year after year, motor vehicles kill 50,000 and hurt over half a million human beings in North America.

In the first quarter of this century, persons in large North American cities traveled largely by collective transportation which used highly efficient electric traction, while individual transportation relied exclusively on inefficient human or animal muscle. Once individual movement was also supplied with a mechanical motor, it became greatly superior to transit in terms of door-to-door travel time. The only way to at least partly compensate for this disadvantage in time is to provide transit with a right-of-way free from the congestion which impedes automobile movement, that is, rapid transit. However, the capital cost of such facilities is so high that they can be justified only by the high volumes which can be attracted to a limited number of lines in the largest cities. In general, the wide dispersal not only of residences, but also of places of work and other destinations (in part a result

of the motor vehicles) makes it extremely difficult for transit to compete with the private car. Even partial success can be achieved only by long-term systematic coordination of the means of land use control—compact shape, higher densities and balanced mix of functions—with preference for transit in terms of financing and of the right to the use of street space.

As the evil consequences of the long-standing exclusive reliance on the private automobile have been realized, public opinion has, in the manner characteristic of societies manipulated by mass media, elected the freeway as its scapegoat. This too is ironic considering that the freeway is the most effective means to radically reduce (per vehicle mile) the number of accidents and also substantially reduce energy consumption and pollution. In fact, the anti-freeway crusade can be understood only as part of the sudden reversal of the attitude toward growth.

### Slowing the Growth

With a high rate of growth of both population and of real income per head and with increasing concentration of both population and wealth in metropolitan areas, their expansion has been exceedingly rapid during the century from 1860 to 1960. In the last 15 years all three of these trends have slowed down; indeed, the latest data supplied by the United States Census indicate a net migration loss in the largest metropolitan areas. Nevertheless, while the rate of expansion will be much lower than in the past, the absolute amount will remain substantial.

As noted earlier, North American cities developed as places to "make a living." From this point of view, bigger was always better. Growth meant more customers for the businessman, more jobs for the worker, more buyers or renters for the owner of real estate. Public opinion and public policy were dominated by a "growth ethic."

In recent years, however, the pendulum has swung to the other extreme. Now

small is beautiful; "progress" and "development" have become dirty words. The role of a person as a participant in the economy has become less important to him than his role as a resident, interested in his settlement as a "place for living." In this role, he is interested in protecting his environment against more people who will spoil it with more concrete, more cars, noise and pollution. In the suburbs this concern neatly dovetails with the traditional fiscal concerns, surrounding them with the halo of preservation of the environment.

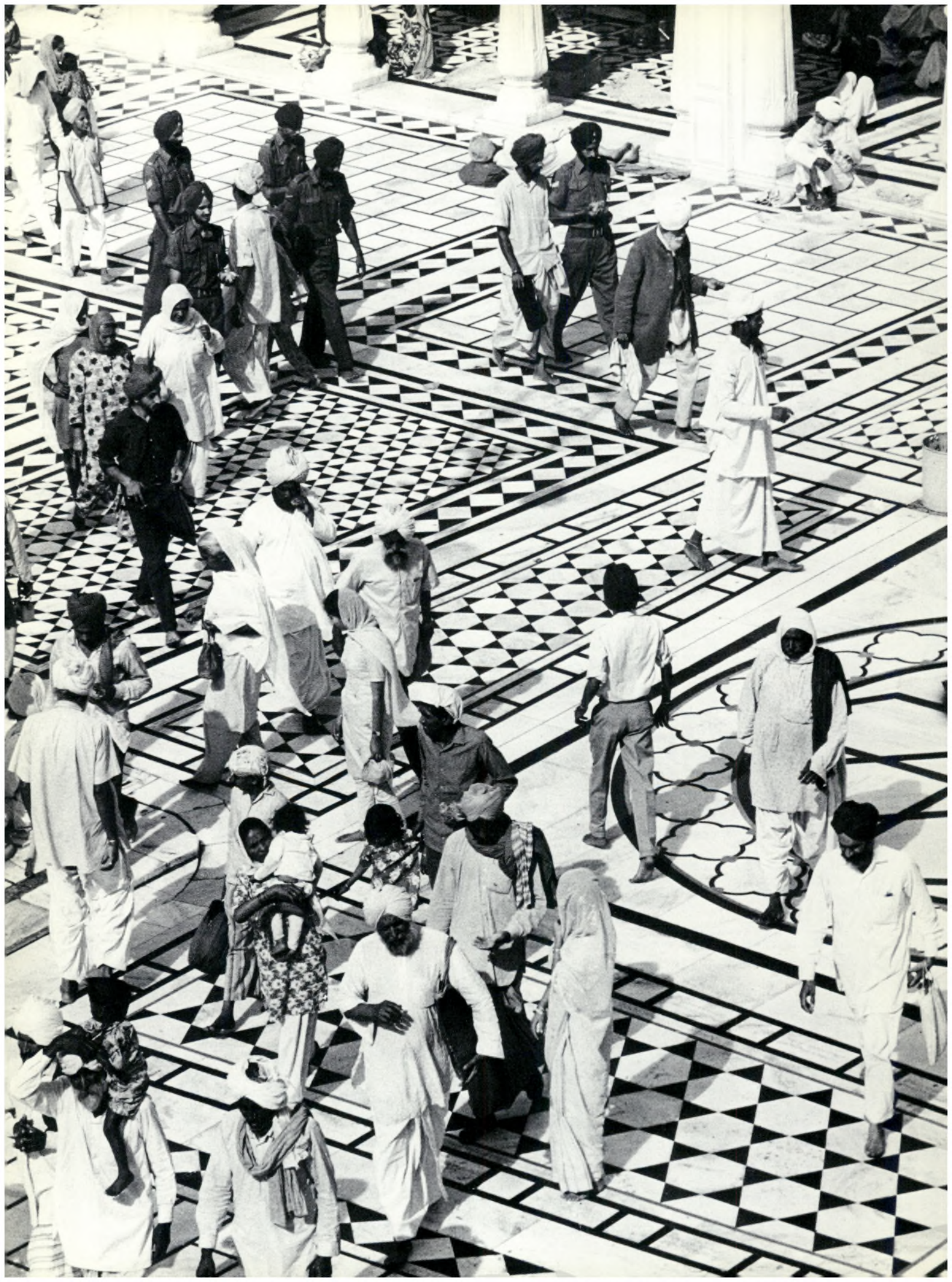
While this anti-growth ethic has become predominant in many metropolitan areas, most small settlements continue to clamor loudly for more growth in order to provide employment for their young people. Given this constellation, it is inevitable that politicians advocate decentralization and that governments promote it. In some cases, success is achieved at the "positive" end of accelerating small settlement growth. However, large settlements can be prevented from attracting more people only by making them less attractive as places for making a living (for example, by higher unemployment) and/or as places for living (for example, by poor housing and more pollution). It is not likely that their residents will vote for such policies.

### The Social Dilemma

The growing concern of middle and upper-income neighbourhoods for the preservation of their environmental amenities has merged with the struggle of low-income residents against displacement by public and private redevelopment to produce a vigorous movement for direct citizen participation in urban government, based on informal local groups. This movement has mobilized much creative energy and detailed local knowledge for improving the environment, but its demands frequently conflict with the aspirations of people who want to and probably will live in that locality in the future as well as of those living in other localities.

The popular demands raised by citizen participation have made it evident that the problems of human settlements are social rather than physical. Unemployment, poverty, unsatisfactory housing, alienation of the worker from both the process and the product of his work, poor physical and mental health, crime and delinquency certainly are problems in the city, but not of the city. They are not correlated either with the size or the form of the human settlement. Instead, they are products of the basic structure of North American society.

If our guests at the Habitat Conference can learn anything from the North American experience, it is that the single-minded pursuit of higher monetary income, regardless of the kind of goods and services reflected in money and their distribution, is insufficient to create satisfactory human settlements. □



# Centre-ville et vie collective

Notre analyse essaie de comprendre les changements qui surviennent dans les rapports de l'homme avec l'espace qui l'entoure, à partir des centres-ville où un emploi tertiaire et donc des bâtiments à son usage se développent et où cet emploi n'est pas destiné d'abord à desservir les populations y vivant ou les utilisant.

## I. Univers individualiste et déclin du centre-ville

### 1) Activités tertiaires nouvelles et remodelage du centre-ville

Les centres-ville subissent depuis quelque temps déjà d'importants remodelages du fait des exigences spatiales des fonctions tertiaires qu'on y trouve et dont la capacité financière permet d'accroître la rentabilité des investissements immobiliers. Ces fonctions disposent donc du pouvoir d'imposer leurs choix et d'un quasi-droit de préemption qui force de déplacer habitants et activités qui auraient souhaité rester sur place mais qui sont privés de la possibilité d'exprimer leurs préférences. Au contraire, les activités nouvelles s'imposent d'autant mieux qu'elles se réservent des zones où le loyer est bas. En outre, la substitution peut s'expliquer au nom du bien commun et même de l'exploitation maximum des infrastructures existantes ou à créer. Ainsi, à Bruxelles, un quartier populaire comme les Marolles, situé entre des lieux importants d'investissements urbains, telles la Grand Place, la place de Brouckère, la Porte de Namur, la gare du Midi, est occupé par des habitants qui n'utilisent pas ces équipements, et on se trouve donc devant une localisation à accessibilité privilégiée et sous-utilisée. Néanmoins, dans ce cas, étant donné la forte conscience collective et les appuis extérieurs liés à la valeur symbolique du quartier, les mouvements revendicatifs ont pu stopper les grignotements, ce qui a laissé apparaître l'importance du conflit entre des exigences différentes.

### 2) Désertion du centre-ville et individualisme des classes moyennes

Les centres-ville, surtout en Amérique du Nord, ont été désertés par une partie des classes moyennes, d'abord par les classes moyennes supérieures, imitées ensuite par les autres. Cette préférence est basée sur un modèle culturel régissant l'organisation des préférences et des besoins et valorisant l'individualisme et la consommation isolée. Avec l'objectif d'accéder à plus de bien-être individuel, ces populations ont perdu des raisons de vivre en milieu aggloméré. La ville n'étant plus signifiante, elle est devenue pauvre en supports de vie collective si on la compare aux investissements que consentaient des sociétés économiquement moins fortes, telles celles du moyen-âge et de la Renaissance. Cette pauvreté a d'ailleurs été soutenue par nos utopies architecturales et urbanistiques, lesquelles ont transformé nos villes en machines à résoudre une somme de besoins individuels supposant

néanmoins certains équipements collectifs. D'où l'éclatement du centre-ville comme lieu important de vie collective. La notion de centre elle-même se galvaude. Ne parlera-t-on pas de centres d'achat, de centres d'éducation...? Même en Amérique du Nord, la langue anglaise ne connaît pas la notion de centre. Elle est remplacée par *downtown*–*uptown*. Tous ces endroits sont à mono-fonction prédominante sinon exclusive et sont dissociés du lieu de résidence.

Cette image culturelle, élaborée par ailleurs dans des utopies urbanistiques, risque d'atomiser la vie sociale. Elle a probablement été appuyée et renforcée par la stratégie des corporations industrielles. Peut-on rappeler la tactique des entreprises automobiles aux Etats-Unis, rachetant dans les années trente les sociétés de tramway et les remplaçant par des autobus? Ce contrôle des transports urbains n'a pas favorisé le développement de ceux-ci. La publicité, au contraire, a stimulé la promotion individuelle à travers la voiture.

### 3) Résidences dispersées—gaspillage d'espaces

La consommation d'espaces résidentiels amène à chercher des localisations de plus en plus éloignées, d'autant que la taille des agglomérations elles-mêmes s'accroît. Cette propension à consommer des espaces périphériques a des effets différents selon que l'on se situe ou non en rareté. Le gaspillage des terrains pose bien des problèmes en Europe où il faudrait intégrer davantage la rareté dans toute la dynamique sociale. Ceci vaut pour une série d'habitudes et de technologies importées des Etats-Unis, promouvant le gaspillage en supposant l'abondance des matières premières et de l'énergie. L'avenir, spécialement l'avenir de l'Europe, implique le développement d'une technologie propre et de modes de vie axés sur l'économie. Car l'énergie ainsi que les matières premières dont pourra se servir l'Europe risquent d'être plus rares et plus coûteuses qu'ailleurs.

### 4) Revenus modestes et isolement périphérique

Dans la mesure où des gens aux revenus plus modestes seraient inspirés par le même modèle, les effets d'isolement et de séparation ont toute chance d'être multipliés. Surtout dès qu'il y a rareté des terrains, la rente foncière vient opérer des sélections et le logement social périphérique risque d'être érigé dans des zones défavorisées. Les grands ensembles résidentiels français, notamment dans la région parisienne, en sont un bon exemple. La recherche de sites de prix moins élevés aboutit à un éloignement des zones de travail, à des endroits souvent peu accessibles par les transports en commun et où la rentabilité minimum du capital engage à la "densification" du logement, sans qu'on puisse prévoir de financer des équipements collectifs non rentables. Tout ceci fut à l'origine de mouvements revendicatifs divers qui sont loin d'avoir produit tous leurs effets et qui n'ont pas encore atteint en France l'ampleur et l'impact sur les rapports sociaux que l'on connaît en Italie.

PAR JEAN REMY

### 5) Transformation urbaine et droit à la ville

Depuis une dizaine d'années, un malaise se manifeste dans diverses catégories d'habitants face à la transformation du cadre social. Il en résulte des revendications qui cherchent à équilibrer le jeu des forces en présence et à remettre en question les images idéales qui nous servent de guides. Tout ce mouvement est soutenu par une mise en doute, sinon par du pessimisme, vis-à-vis du progrès lié à la technologie. N'y a-t-il pas une connivence de fait entre ces mouvements urbains et les mouvements pour la défense de l'environnement?

Ces mouvements urbains, en Europe notamment, peuvent s'exprimer autour du droit à la ville, se substituant à une simple exigence du droit au logement, comme droit à un bien individuellement appropriable. Ce droit à la ville est peut-être développé en Europe dans des populations ayant une tradition valorisant la vie urbaine. Qu'on se rappelle le vieux parti antiurbain régissant les intellectuels aux Etats-Unis.

Le droit à la ville suppose que soient valorisés des espaces collectifs de rencontre, fussent-ils une brasserie avec, en contrepartie, la mise en question d'une lecture puritaine de l'espace social. Cette dernière connote positivement le logement comme un espace maîtrisé par une famille ainsi que les espaces marqués par un pouvoir organisateur: l'école, l'hôpital, etc., tandis que les espaces intermédiaires, telle la rue, sont connotés négativement et vus comme socialement vides. Que l'on pense à la manière dont est perçu l'épanouissement affectif de l'enfant où les espaces intermédiaires entre la maison et l'école sont souvent oubliés, alors que c'était bien souvent dans ces espaces que se nouaient diverses relations des enfants et des jeunes avec des adultes qui n'étaient ni leurs parents ni leurs éducateurs mais jouaient pourtant un rôle très important dans la formation des liens affectifs. Mais cela supposait des supports de vie collective et certaines communautés d'appartenance où des adultes acceptaient spontanément cette prise en charge informelle. Le rétrécissement de l'espace affectif de l'enfant, qui se réduit souvent au couple et aux relations parentales, a bien des conséquences, notamment sur la nécessité de la réussite de la relation parentale. Ce monopole sans possibilité de compensation est d'autant plus accentué que l'école a accusé de son côté une dimension instrumentale ne favorisant pas une identification forte des jeunes, notamment, à des groupes de classe de composition stable (cf. au Québec, le problème des écoles polyvalentes).

L'absence d'identification affective à travers des espaces collectifs déséquilibre la vie sociale à bien d'autres égards et pose, notamment, un grave problème d'insécurité. Cette insécurité de la rue et des espaces collectifs est souvent notée aux Etats-Unis, non seulement dans les centres-ville, mais dans certains quartiers résidentiels où il est parfois dangereux de faire une longue pérégrination pédestre et prudent de circuler avec les portières de la voiture bien fermées. L'individualisation supposant que chacun résolve ses pro-

blèmes diminue la volonté de prise en charge des lieux publics. D'où, à la limite, on peut se faire égorger dans la rue sans réaction de solidarité. Il n'en était pas ainsi dans les milieux urbains connotant positivement les espaces collectifs et où, jusqu'y compris au centre-ville, il y avait une prise en charge collective et informelle par les «propriétaires naturels». Ainsi, au contraire de ce qui a été maintes fois affirmé, la ville doit disposer d'une multiplicité de contrôles informels qui produisent une sécurité collective au sein de l'anonymat. Certaines combinaisons spatiales, si elles sont absentes, risquent de handicaper cette prise en charge.

Les revendications nouvelles face à la ville doivent pouvoir se concrétiser en transposant des formes spatiales appropriées. C'est toutefois une erreur fréquente chez les architectes et les urbanistes que d'établir un lien automatique et quasi mécanique entre une nouvelle structure spatiale et une nouvelle forme de vie sociale. Cette conception a d'ailleurs été favorisée par certains sociologues et notamment par toute une tendance de l'École de Chicago qui a marqué la sociologie urbaine jusqu'à ces dernières années.

### 6) Droit à la ville et «écologie humaine»

Le droit à la ville peut s'expliquer par l'élaboration d'une science de l'homme et de son milieu où la distribution des catégories de populations et des activités, ainsi que leur mode de regroupement, apparaissent importants pour la dynamique sociale; à condition de mettre ces formes spatiales en interrelation avec des modèles culturels et les structures sociales. Cette science suppose l'élaboration d'un système complexe où une même structure spatiale va être considérée dans des effets différents d'après le modèle culturel de référence. En outre, les effets seront parfois opposés d'après le milieu social d'appartenance. Ainsi, la valorisation de la seconde résidence dans le contexte actuel peut provoquer un isolement des familles dans la classe moyenne tandis que, dans les classes supérieures, elle peut servir à une stratégie de pouvoir en multipliant des lieux de contact à faible visibilité sociale. Donner quelques jalons pour élaborer cette écologie humaine fut notre propos dans l'ouvrage *La ville et l'urbanisation*. L'écologie humaine doit, par ce biais, dégager les facteurs spatiaux stimulant la capacité innovatrice. N'était-ce pas une des fonctions des centres-ville dont il faut redécouvrir les modalités d'opération, par exemple en dégageant l'importance des contacts informels se combinant à des communications à distance? Cette redécouverte n'est-elle pas à l'origine du développement des milieux d'affaires et de leur réappropriation des centres-ville, souvent au détriment des milieux supports d'une incubation et d'une innovation culturelles? La ville avec sa combinatoire spatiale apparaît alors comme un lieu privilégié de production de connaissances. La disparition des centres-ville risque de casser ces incubateurs, au moins pour certaines fonctions sociales.

L'écologie humaine devient alors, pour les intervenants de la politique urbaine, un instrument fort utile d'analyse et d'évaluation des effets économiques et sociaux des mesures proposées tout en accroissant leur capacité d'imaginer des solutions de rechange.

### 7) Ecologie humaine et mouvements collectifs

Ceci est particulièrement vrai si l'on se place du point de vue des comités de résidents ou d'autres groupes d'action urbaine voulant réagir, notamment à travers l'opinion publique. Dans ces domaines de consommation collective, il est résulté un déséquilibre entre la production et l'utilisation. La production est devenue de plus en plus le fait d'oligopoles, tandis que les populations concernées sont restées en position atomistique, pour garder la terminologie de la théorie des marchés en économie classique, c'est-à-dire n'intervenant qu'à travers une somme de réactions individuelles. Ce déséquilibre est encore accru lorsque le pouvoir politique doit coordonner par des mesures d'urbanisme et d'aménagement du territoire. A ce moment, les acteurs en oligopoles pourront négocier et renégocier, tandis que les autres sont placés presque dans un rapport d'imposition face au plan proposé.

Dans tout ce domaine, des relais d'expression collective vont probablement s'organiser à la manière dont les relations professionnelles ont été transformées par les générations précédentes avec le développement de formes d'associations diverses et, notamment, des syndicats. Cette évolution est d'autant plus importante dans les domaines extra-professionnels que l'on se trouve confronté à des exigences nouvelles relativement à la vie collective et issues bien souvent des contradictions des solutions actuellement préconisées.

Si les dix prochaines années ne peuvent être imaginées comme une prolongation, avec mise en ordre progressive de l'espace, des modèles des dix années précédentes, ce sera probablement en grande partie à ces mouvements collectifs que nous le devons.

## II. Dynamique spatiale et centre-ville

Dans la perspective des centres-ville, les problèmes vont apparaître de façon plus explicite. Néanmoins, les questions relatives aux espaces collectifs sont transposables au plan de la vie de quartier.

### 1) Capacité d'isolement et communication

Dans le contexte actuel, la capacité d'isolement dans des espaces privés est à bien des égards une condition apte à favoriser la communication, dans la mesure où une famille ou un groupe de base accepte de s'ouvrir sur l'extérieur, s'impliquant de façon affective tout en conservant le droit à un style de vie propre.

Cet isolement est condition d'autonomie et d'ouverture et implique, au niveau du logement, un espace

suffisant et une isolation acoustique et visuelle.

N'a-t-on pas constaté qu'à égalité de décibels, le «bruit des autres» passant à travers les cloisons d'un logement produit un stress bien supérieur au bruit de la rue? Il en va de même d'un contrôle visuel de l'extérieur, jusqu'y compris la capacité d'observer les allées et venues des visiteurs dans le logement. Cette capacité de jouer un rôle d'isoloir où chacun a son domaine propre sans se sentir agressé par les autres diminue les mécanismes de défense réciproque et crée une propension à communiquer.

### 2) Supports collectifs en extension directe ou non du logement

Le support externe du logement doit, en outre, favoriser la communication. Mais celle-ci ne doit pas exister exclusivement dans une extension spatiale directe du logement. L'importance des supports collectifs en extension directe ou indirecte du logement va dépendre des milieux sociaux.

Dans les quartiers populaires, notamment dans des villes belges comme Liège, la rue et la placette autour des logements sont considérées comme une extension de ceux-ci où l'ensemble de l'unité de voisinage se sent en territoire propre, au point que la personne de passage se sent considérée comme une étrangère ayant violé le territoire d'autrui. Ce réflexe de propriété collective, plus ou moins fort, est de nature à créer une sécurité collective et à doter le groupe d'un espace d'échanges et de production collective. Les habitants de ces quartiers évaluent négativement la résidence dans un immeuble à appartements multiples où manque cette zone d'appropriation commune et qui, de ce fait, leur apparaît comme un espace de promiscuité, c'est-à-dire de mélanges incontrôlés. La réaction est d'autant plus forte que ces habitants voient souvent les espaces extérieurs comme des espaces inconnus, étrangers et donc hostiles.

Pour la plupart des groupes sociaux, la recherche d'espaces collectifs nouveaux suppose l'accès à une notion plus complexe de distance/proximité vis-à-vis d'autrui. La zone spatialement proche du logement n'est qu'une possibilité parmi d'autres, sans devoir être nécessairement une zone prioritaire où se forme un milieu d'échanges intenses. Pour ce faire, il faut à nouveau réagir contre une lecture puritaine où sont supposés insignifiants les espaces intermédiaires entre le logement comme espace privé et les espaces maîtrisés par un pouvoir organisateur: usine, école, etc. Ces espaces intermédiaires sont réduits à des espaces de liaison pour le transport ou à des espaces verts pour la vue et la santé, mais quelle différence et quelle distance entre une voie de communication et une rue, entre un espace vert et un jardin public!

### 3) Valoriser la gamme intermédiaire

Toute cette gamme intermédiaire entre les pôles privés et publics, entre la relation intime et la relation strictement fonctionnelle, permet d'entrer dans un régime

complexe de distance/proximité. C'est le domaine des espaces semi-privés ou semi-publics selon que le contrôle dépend ou non des personnes retenues à l'endroit, de façon stable, par leur métier ou par leur résidence.

Une des fonctions du centre urbain consiste justement à *diversifier les rencontres spontanées favorables* à l'innovation sociale et aux prises de décision. Par là se créent des connexions multiples dans des circonstances où on ne sait qui est porteur de l'information décisive ni même quelle est cette information. N'en est-il pas ainsi du milieu des affaires pour qui les cocktails prennent autant d'importance que la réunion du conseil d'administration du matin.

Selon des modalités concrètes différentes, les mêmes processus de rencontre sont valables pour les activités culturelles et toute activité où la population doit sortir d'un simple rapport de clientèle.

La multiplication de toute la gamme intermédiaire nous incite à réagir contre certaines utopies urbanistiques actuelles où l'on rêve d'un univers sans cloison. Ainsi les expériences hollandaises d'«*agora couverte*», tel le Karregat à Eindhoven où devraient se mélanger, sans cloison, école, marché, espace de jeux pour le troisième âge, ou encore le fameux bâtiment du bureau du Centraal Beheer à Appeldorn près d'Amsterdam où l'option architecturale n'est ni celle des bureaux cloisonnés ou de bureaux paysagés mais, au contraire, permet à des équipes de travail de s'approprier des espaces collectifs à la manière d'espaces privés. Quelle que soit l'ingéniosité de la conception architecturale, ces réalisations risquent de nous présenter simplement la contre-image de la situation actuelle, opposant à un univers cloisonné un univers décloisonné. La compénétration spatiale, la visibilité réciproque permettent de dépasser l'écartèlement de la vie sociale actuelle produisant un «*homme en miettes*» parachevant le fameux «*travail en miettes*» dénoncé depuis longtemps.

Cette projection architecturale est certes révélatrice d'une inspiration nouvelle en rupture; mais elle est probablement simplement l'image inverse qui ne deviendra pas image projective. Au contraire, on va vraisemblablement, au niveau des concrétisations de ces aspirations nouvelles, vers une valorisation des espaces collectifs à travers une multiplication des gammes intermédiaires.

#### 4) Image projective et analyse des centres-ville traditionnels

L'observation des centres-ville traditionnels qui sont encore animés est riche d'enseignement. Préalable indispensable à toute recherche et à toute action, cette observation n'a certes pas pour objectif de construire les villes du futur ou d'aménager les villes existantes sur des modèles copiés du passé. Elle a pour intérêt capital d'aider à découvrir des mécanismes psychosociaux et économicosociaux que l'on ne peut négliger sans conséquences graves pour l'avenir.

#### 5) Les ambiances urbaines – scénarios de vie sociale

Nous avons essayé d'élaborer une telle transposition dans le cadre d'une consultation relative à Louvain-la-Neuve en Belgique. L'Université de Louvain francophone devant quitter la ville flamande de Louvain pour s'installer en territoire wallon, a choisi de jumeler ce déménagement de 15 000 étudiants avec le développement d'une ville nouvelle qui devrait compter 50 000 habitants, située à une trentaine de kilomètres du centre de Bruxelles. La conception d'ensemble devait imbriquer ville et université. L'intervention demandée arrivait après la conception de ce plan d'ensemble et même après la mise au point du plan-masse du centre-ville. La conception supposait l'entremêlement des fonctions, le rejet de bâtiments isolés implantés sur un fond de verdure qui, en multipliant les espaces ouverts, dilue le sentiment du coude-à-coude. Notre option cherchait, au contraire, à réhabiliter la rue, les placettes de types divers sur lesquelles débouchaient des espaces semi-publics, extensions de celles-ci. Un grand investissement imaginaire devait donc être fait pour la conception de ces espaces, indépendamment des bâtiments vus en eux-mêmes.

A partir de ces contraintes, il s'agissait de faire quelques suggestions sur le mode de distribution des activités qui augmenteraient la chance de créer un centre urbain animé.

Pour transposer une observation de divers centres urbains traditionnels, nous sommes partis de la notion d'ambiance. L'ambiance était pour nous un effet de milieu qui est produit par un public diversifié circulant dans un espace réduit à un moment donné du temps. Ceci nous a conduits d'emblée à diversifier des ambiances d'après les moments: *ambiance-midi* et *ambiance-soir*, *ambiance-matinée* et *ambiance-après-midi*. L'alternance de temps forts et de temps faibles, l'*ambiance-jeudi soir* ou *dimanche matin*. Après quelques essais, nous avons été amenés à définir en termes simples le concept d'ambiance:

1. un support temps, c'est-à-dire un moment privilégié d'expression
2. un support espace, c'est-à-dire un lieu spécifique d'expression
3. une gamme plus ou moins étendue d'activités distinctes mais productrices l'une pour l'autre d'économie externe
4. une certaine densité de population rassemblée sans contrainte, sans formalisation et sans nécessairement un but bien défini
5. une connotation affective positive ou négative

Une fois le parti adopté, il restait à l'explicitier par la technique des scénarios de vie sociale où nous avons essayé d'imaginer des séquences spatiales et temporelles adaptées au cas de Louvain-la-Neuve. Nous l'avons fait à partir des éléments suivants:

1. analyse des points contraints d'utilisation
2. les circuits possibles
3. les points d'appel
4. les points d'accrochage
5. la convergence des initiatives

A partir de ces lieux probables des ambiances, il était possible d'imaginer des distributions spatiales des activités qui les stimuleraient. Chaque ambiance supposant un sous-système spatial, ceux-ci se superposaient en certains points qui pourraient devenir des lieux d'animation constante et, de ce fait, seraient perçus comme des coeurs de vie sociale où toujours quelque chose se passe.

Sans vouloir écrire l'histoire à l'avance et tout en admettant que le centre-ville suppose des appropriations souples, cette méthode diminue les zones d'incertitude et diversifie, tout en les concrétisant, les espaces intermédiaires favorisant les relations intimes et les relations fonctionnelles.

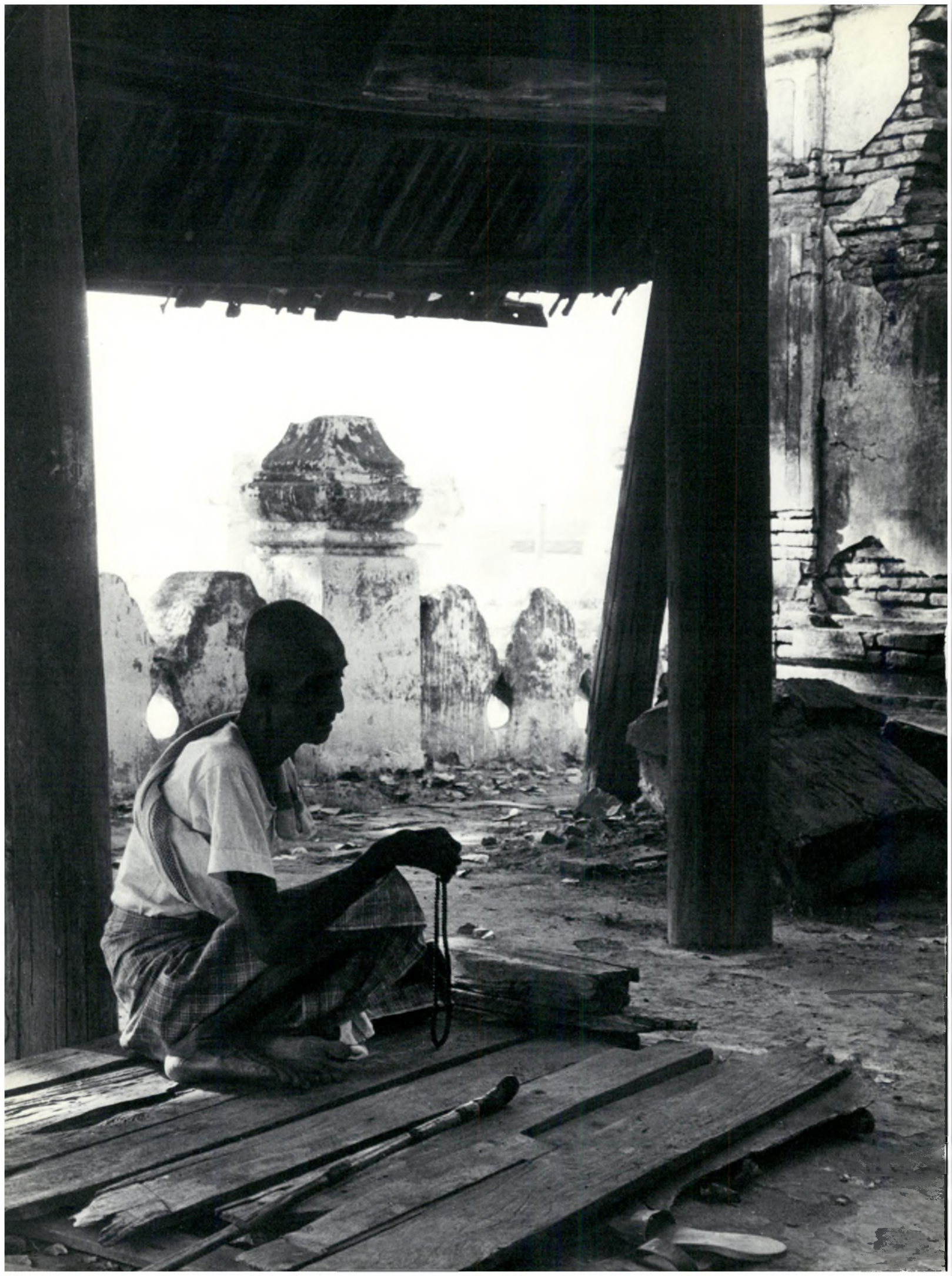
Tout ceci suppose que le centre-ville, y compris sa conception architecturale, soit le lieu par excellence où se sentent chez soi, c'est-à-dire en territoire propre, sans s'agresser réciproquement, des populations résidant et travaillant sur place, des populations travaillant sans résider et des populations visiteuses résidant et travaillant ailleurs, y compris des populations appartenant à des groupes sociaux et culturels divers. Les mécanismes psychosociaux que nous avons essayé d'élaborer ont une incidence sur l'économie et, réciproquement, certaines contraintes économiques doivent être abordées de front, sans quoi on risque de se heurter à un obstacle fondamental. Les ambiances supposent, notamment, l'imbrication de cheminements, d'où développement d'équipements dérivés qui ne sont rentables qu'à cause de la diversité des clientèles ainsi rassemblées. Cela suppose un entremêlement d'équipements et de clientèles qui s'entraînent réciproquement sans avoir nécessairement la même capacité de payer ou de consentir des loyers élevés. C'est souvent le cas pour un certain nombre d'activités de type culturel qui sont fréquemment au départ quelque peu marginales, alors qu'elles peuvent être de grands inducteurs d'animation et donc produire des économies externes pour d'autres activités. Ce problème est généralement résolu dans les vieux centres-ville qui regroupent des bâtiments d'âges différents et peuvent dès lors proposer des loyers diversifiés. Au contraire, les constructions nouvelles et même les rénovations d'habitats anciens risquent de provoquer une hausse générale des loyers et une homogénéisation dommageable de ceux-ci.

L'avenir de la ville comme support de vie collective et comme participation à des innovations collectives autres que les organisations de défense et les comités d'action, suppose une mise en question d'un urbanisme qui à la fois atomise la vie sociale et multi-

plie des relations de clientèle où l'offre et la demande sont dissociées. Une orientation toute nouvelle commence à se dessiner et se cherche à travers des utopies urbanistiques nouvelles. Une meilleure connaissance des mécanismes psychosociaux et économicosociaux peut aider à élaborer des solutions de rechange.

Si la création collective doit dépasser la participation à des comités et à des organisations, cela ne veut nullement dire qu'ils ne sont pas indispensables, notamment pour transformer les rapports par trop déséquilibrés entre les utilisateurs et les producteurs. Mais ces groupes devront pouvoir s'aider d'une meilleure connaissance de l'écologie humaine, de manière à élaborer des réactions plus systématiques. □





# The Urbanization of DEVELOPING NATIONS

Prospects and Problems up to  
the Century's End

It is difficult to consider the urban problems of a single nation let alone the problems of a wide range of developed and developing nations whose per capita incomes can range from over \$25,000 to less than \$100 annually.

However, by simplifying the problems down to questions of population growth, degrees of urbanization and incomes, it is possible to have a brief, preliminary, distant look at the prospects and problems in terms of housing, transportation and planning. The solutions, which are elusive in urban affairs, are another issue and will be largely determined in any case by the nations and societies concerned.

## Dividing up the Globe

To place the nations in world context, the rough division must be between the developed/urbanized/motorized nations on the one hand, and the developing/urbanizing/motorizing nations on the other.

The developed world may be divided into:

- North America (primarily the United States and Canada) with present populations of 235 million (six percent of world population accounting for about 32 percent of world income);
- Western Europe with a present population of 340 million (nine percent of world population with 28 percent of world income), and
- Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union with about 300 million (eight percent of world population with 20 percent of world income).

Adding in Japan and Australasia, the developed nations can be said to account for about 25 percent (one billion) of world population, yet 80 percent of the world's measurable income. Two-thirds of their populations are urbanized and industrialized, or suburbanized and post-industrialized, as suburbs and services have gained increasing importance.

The developing nations may be divided into:

- Asia with a present population of 2,100

million (dominated by China with 800 million and India with 600 million);

- Africa with 400 million, and
- South America (adding Mexico and the Caribbean) with present populations of about 350 million.

They account for about 75 percent (three billion) of world population with only about 20 percent of the world's measurable income. The unmeasurable and potential value of their own labour for subsistence and self-sufficiency are, however, of great importance. Only 28 percent of their populations are urbanized.

## World Birthrates

With its birthrates tending to fall below replacement, the developed world is only expected to increase its population by about 20 percent by end-century, with all this increase (plus some rural/urban shift) going to urbanized areas, thus increasing their degree of urbanization to about 80 percent. The developing world, on the other hand, is expected to increase its population by about 66 percent to five billion by the end of the century, with the increase of two billion being mainly oriented to urban areas. This will increase the degree of urbanization in the developing world to about 42 percent, and more than double their urban populations by an annual average rate of about four percent by the turn of the century.

Against this background, the urban pressures and problems of the developing nations must also be classified and analyzed in more detail in the world context of recessions, inflations and monetary, energy and food problems, along with the demands for a new economic order which will try to redistribute income from developed to developing nations.

## Developing Nations and their Urban Growths

In considering and classifying the various types of urban growth in developing countries, it must be realized that households (based on the large or extended family

rather than on the small disintegrating nuclear family) are substantially larger than in the developed world. Thus, while per capita incomes are generally substantially lower than in developed countries, urban incomes in developing countries tend to be substantially above national averages. Incomes per urban household, therefore, are much greater than per capita incomes imply, and with smaller physical wants and higher densities (both inside and outside the dwellings) the physical limitations for a given urban population size are substantially less than in developed countries.

Also, major urban solutions for this period cannot be sought in falling birthrates since the household is probably the most relevant unit for most urban matters and its numbers will be little affected by birthrates up to the end of the century. In any case, falling birthrates will possibly occur with increasing urbanization.

A further preliminary point is that incomes and services in developing countries are usually more unevenly distributed than in the developed world, resulting in wide disparities to Western eyes. These disparities will possibly be reduced by increasing urbanization in the long run, as has occurred in the developed world.

## Through the Looking-Glass

### I. Higher-Income Urbanized Countries

These nations, typified by the more successful countries of Central and South America (Mexico, Brazil and Argentina), are already more than 50 percent urbanized, and have urban household incomes roughly averaging \$3,000 per annum which approximates fairly closely the developed world. It is expected that almost all their population increase will occur in urban areas and that they will urbanize to about the 80 percent level by the end of the century with an annual rate of increase in households of about four percent.

These countries are industrializing rapidly with increasing urban household

incomes. If the increase in urban household incomes reaches the four percent level, it would tend to push net household formations toward the top of the income range and thus enable urban household growth to achieve fairly good private standards. Circumstantial evidence seems to indicate that this occurred in the urbanization processes in Canada and, no doubt, other countries.

Some realistic improvement in existing "illegal settlements" should then offer prospects of a reasonable adjustment to housing problems in these countries, although some of the magnitudes may be alarming, such as the possible growth of Mexico City to 20 million by the end of the century.

The transportation problems of these exploding cities arise from present congestion, future growth and the prospects of an additional explosive growth in vehicle ownership and use from the present low levels per capita. To some extent, the conversion to motor vehicles from slower forms of transport should increase urban speeds and highway capacities, as has occurred in the older developed nations and cities, such as London. However, the possibilities of an explosive growth in automobile ownership and use (with the explosive and costly congestion and highway and energy problems to match) imply the desirability of a restraint in automobile usage and a switch to transit in the form of rail or bus on special busways. The higher population densities of these types of cities suggest a strong case for rail, but capital costs and lower labour costs might favour the low-cost bus, provided they can be maintained.

## II. Medium-Income Urbanized Countries

These are nations with medium household incomes of about \$1,500 per annum in urban areas, slightly less than 50 percent urbanized, and exemplified by the semi-industrialized nations of North Africa and Asia, such as Egypt, Algeria and Korea.

These nations are industrializing rapidly with increasing urban incomes and are expected to more than double their urban populations and households by the century's end (to a 70 percent urbanization level) at growth rates of about five percent per annum.

However, unless they attain a high growth rate in urban incomes of about five percent per annum, their housing problems are likely to be more difficult than for the higher income nations. Transportation problems, as well, are also likely to be relatively more difficult. For these reasons, it is again important that housing, servicing and transportation standards should be held down to realistic levels, both for new and for upgraded settlements.

## III. Lower-Income Rural Countries with Small Urban Populations

These countries are predominantly rural and are expected to remain so up to the end of the century. However, they are urbanizing rapidly with growth rates of five percent per annum or more. They are typified by the more populous countries of Africa, for example Nigeria, Sudan and Kenya, and have urban household incomes around the \$1,000 level.

Here again, the urbanization process will be correspondingly more difficult, and again it will be important that realistic housing, transport and other standards be set for both new and upgraded development.

## IV. Low-Income Rural Countries with Large Urban Populations

This category is typified by the Indian subcontinent, China and Indonesia, with combined populations approaching two billion, and it is clear that by far the largest and most difficult urbanization problems lie here. It is thus important to analyze the nature of the urbanization process in this category.

Unlike the other developing nations which are urbanizing in response to industrialization and increasing urban incomes,

the population shift in these countries is characterized by heavy population pressures on rural areas and thus on agricultural land, with population overflow living in poverty in the urban areas.

Thus, the solutions to this type of urbanization may lie in the rural areas and villages (for example, through land tenure) as well as in urban areas, although from this distance it is impossible to suggest any obvious solutions or directions. These will depend on the nations concerned as well as the relevant international aid and expertise.

Since there seems little doubt of China's ability to solve its own problems, in its own way, with its own resources and to its own satisfaction, this urbanization situation in world terms is mainly confined to the Indian subcontinent and Indonesia. Although these countries will remain predominantly rural up to the century's end, their urban growth rates will still be at the four percent level. Thus, special attention must be directed to coping with the urbanization in these countries.

## Some Final Statements

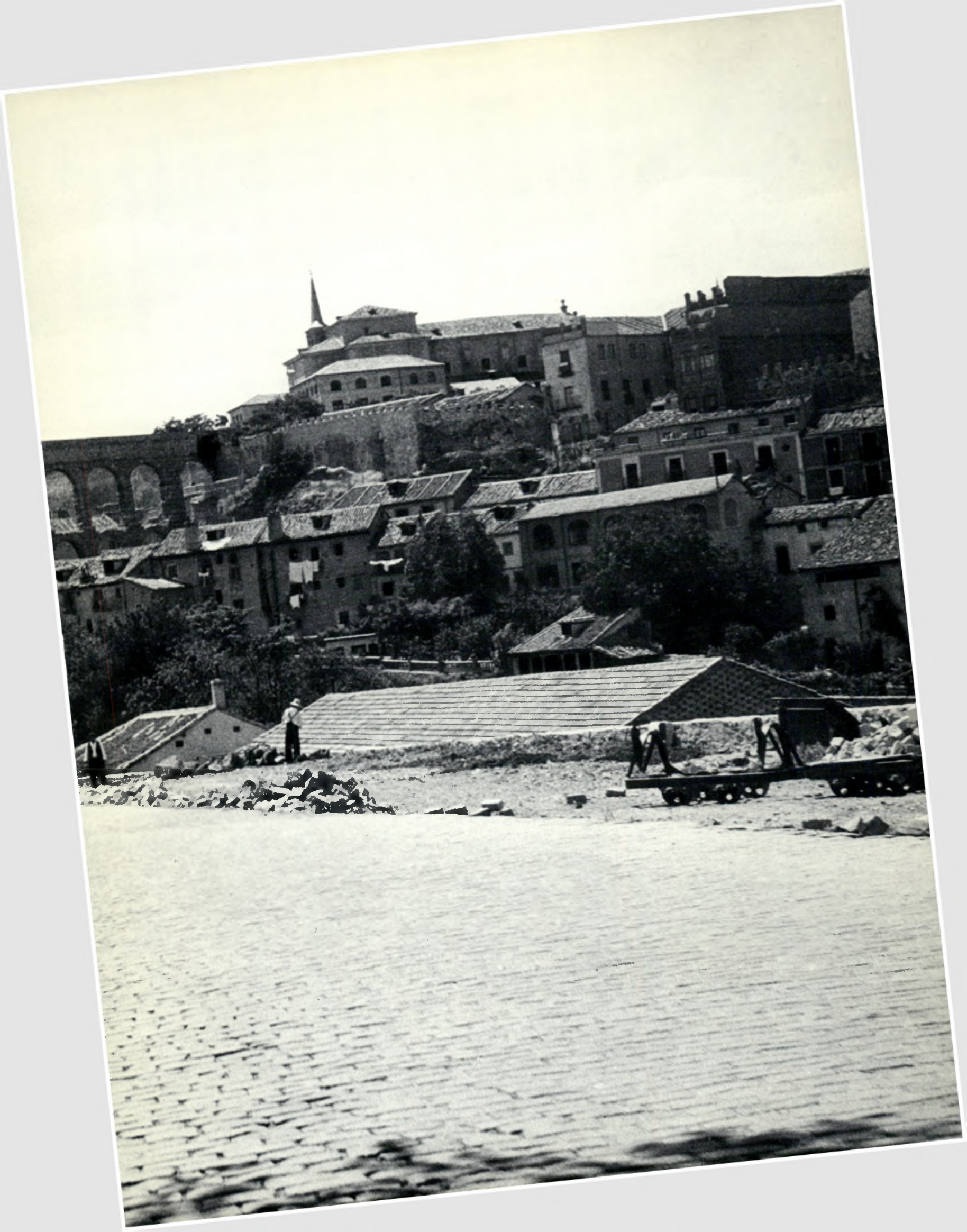
Placing the urbanization of the developing world in context, it is possible to see that the developed world will be of declining importance and relevance in terms of its populations, incomes, standards, values and attitudes, although important as a source of aid, relevant experience and expertise.

This latter point is particularly true. The developed countries seem to have urbanized in much the same way as many of the developing countries are now, that is, by a process of differential growth in urban incomes, differential urban household growth in response, together with increasing productivity in rural areas. As well, the growth in urban households (in Canada at least) has been almost as rapid as that expected and experienced in the developing nations. The growth, however, in the developed world has generally occurred at lower population levels and densities.

Thus, although there are no easy or obvious solutions to urban problems anywhere, for much of the developing world the prospects of coping with urbanization (to the nations' relevant standards) seem to be reasonable—with the possible exception of the Indian subcontinent and Indonesia. This is particularly true as cities and their peoples can adjust on many margins, and the dire predictions of urban disaster have hardly been fulfilled as yet.

Special efforts and attention must obviously be given to these urbanization problems, with emphasis on planning for growth in households and housing—both of which oddly seem to have been neglected in general urban planning. Emphasis should likewise be placed on encouraging transit use, restraining automobile ownership and use, and utilizing the special strengths of developing countries such as their labour supply, skills and stronger social and family structures. In addition, aid should be concentrated on essential materials, equipment and expertise which, as yet, cannot be locally produced. □





## Reflections on the UN Conference on Human Settlements Vancouver, 1976

BY PETER NICHOLSON

# A Personal Assessment

If one believes the Canadian news media, the Habitat Conference was a multi-million dollar exercise in irrelevance. Said MacLean's magazine in a June 14 headline—"Habitat: living up to all non-expectations." The accompanying text was more balanced, but for the great majority of Canadians whose attention span must be allocated among thousands of competing messages, a fleeting headline is the only image of Habitat that will stick. Indeed, until the Conference opened on May 31 with Prime Minister Trudeau's widely-quoted speech, Habitat was known to most Canadians either as a futuristic apartment building in Montreal or as some Conference in Vancouver that the City Fathers didn't want, apparently because the P.L.O. was coming.

### Media Reaction

It was inevitable that Habitat would be panned by the Western media. Unaccountably, not a single newspaper in France, Italy or West Germany was represented in the press core, nor did the two largest U.S. television networks of CBS and NBC cover the Conference. And except for thorough and balanced reporting in the Vancouver papers, there was little prominent coverage in the Canadian press. A mid-Conference edition of the Toronto daily newspaper, *The Globe and Mail*, for example, contained only a Habitat sidelight on nuclear power tucked away in the business section. Having committed such meagre resources to Conference coverage, the press in the industrialized world could hardly have been expected to render a favourable judgement—their minds were made up before things got underway.

Of course, not every assessment was negative. The respected environmental correspondent, Jon Tinker, in a lead editorial in *New Scientist* magazine (June 17, 1976) concluded that "Vancouver was no failure." Tinker wrote that "Habitat's achievements will prove of more lasting significance than the West's defeat over Israel, which dominated the press coverage of the Conference."

Tinker enumerated four important successes: first, the recognition that "it is the responsibility of Governments to prepare spatial strategy plans... to guide socio-economic development." The time is not long past when the notion of national planning was anathema to Western nations which were quick to associate it with the bureaucratic excesses of Communist states. At Habitat, national spatial planning could almost pass for "motherhood."

Second, the Conference adopted clauses urging that "the use and tenure of land should be subject to public control" and the blunt assertion that "the increase in value of land as a result of public decision and investment should be recaptured for the benefit of society as a whole."

Third was a set of resolutions supporting public participation and self-help. The latter was clearly recognized by Third World countries as the

only feasible way of using a labour surplus to overcome an unavoidable insufficiency of capital in the construction sector.

Fourth in Tinker's list of significant achievements was Habitat's endorsement of the target for clean water in urban and rural areas by 1990. As Tinker concluded: "To the half of mankind without easy access to a tap guaranteed not to pass on dysentery, this is a 15-year target worth aiming for."

Unfortunately, there are too few who will be exposed to the thoughtful and informed analysis that reporters like Jon Tinker have provided. Far from being UN apologists or utopians, these analysts offer the most realistic appraisals of events such as Habitat. They did not approach the Conference with "no expectations" as MacLean's apparently did, nor did they come with exaggerated expectations as, unfortunately, much of the UN and Canadian Habitat propaganda was only too willing to engender.

### An Evolution of Thought

Those used to covering the day-to-day work of the UN and its specialized agencies look beyond the bizarre diplomatic nit-picking to see an evolution of concept and attitude that is remarkable for its pace and universality. On the natural environment, on population, on food resources, on the status of women, and now on the built environment, the world has come near to speaking with one voice.

It will be objected that this voice is not saying anything worthwhile and that the process of consensus building results only in pompous platitude. The experience of the Canadian delegation in Vancouver demonstrates that such cynicism is misplaced.

### The Debate on Resolution D.3

This is remarkably illustrated by the Conference debate over Resolution D.3 on land speculation which in the original formulation of the UN Secretariat stated that:

"The plus value resulting from change in use of land or from public investment must be recaptured by the community."

An innocuous resolution said some, noting that Canada already has a great deal of legislation to confiscate profits whether from land sales or otherwise. They point to a capital gains tax, corporate taxes and even a speculation tax in Ontario. But the more politically astute—including Alberta Housing Minister William Yurko—recognized in the wording a subtle but significant advance on contemporary Canadian practice.

The Canadian Real Estate Association was also quick to enter the debate, issuing a statement at Habitat Forum (the non-governmental conference at Jericho Beach), which said in part—"The Association believes in private ownership of land

and believes that the private sector can do a more efficient job of land development than the public sector" and that "government intervention should be limited to what is needed to make the market work better."

Resolution D.3 was a very real philosophical divide. There was no difficulty whatsoever discerning the ideological stripe of anyone who addressed it. In the Canadian delegation, the argument superficially turned on ambiguous phrases such as "plus value" and "change in the use of land." The "clarifying" amendment proposed to the Committee by Mr. Yurko was more revealing. Speaking for Canada he suggested D.3 should read:

"An equitable portion of that plus value resulting from change in use of land caused by public investment or decision should be captured by the community."

The final clause beginning "resulting from change" was, in fact, a useful clarification and indeed a strengthening of the original text in that "public decision" was added to "investment" as a recognized source of unearned value. But virtually every other delegation, including the U.S., perceived the phrase "An equitable portion of (that) plus value" as an unacceptable weakening of the original intent which had implied that 100% of the plus value should be subject to public recapture.

Canada was embarrassed, finding itself isolated even from the United States on the right wing of a socio-economic policy issue. (In fairness, had the Conference been in Seattle rather than Vancouver, the domestic political shoe would have been on the other foot and no doubt the Canadian and American positions would have been reversed.)

In the meantime, a drafting group of the Land Committee was preparing a compromise resolution which Rube Goldberg would have been proud to claim. It read:

"A major portion of the unearned increment resulting from the rise in urban and suburban land values resulting from change in use of land, from public investment, or due to the general growth of the community must be subject to recapture by appropriate public bodies (the community), unless the situation calls for more radical measures such as new patterns of ownership, the general acquisition of land by public bodies or other similar measures."

As always, the choice of words is revealing. Canada's "equitable" has been elevated to "major"; the ambiguous and unfamiliar "plus value" is now plainly established as an "unearned increment"; but "land" has unaccountably been restricted to "urban and suburban" only. (What about farmland on the urban fringe?) And another important notion has crept in. The resolution now encompasses unearned value "due to the general growth of the community."

This formulation was still not satisfactory to the majority of delegations. Even a "major" portion was thought to be too little to recover from a profit that by definition was unearned.

By now, the Canadian delegation had regrouped, determined to atone for its earlier embarrassment. With Minister Yurko taking a backseat, Senator Ray Perrault spelled out a new Canadian amendment to D.3 which was to become the adopted text. It read:

"The unearned increment resulting from the rise in land values resulting from change in use of land, from public investment or decision, or due to the general growth of the community must be subject to appropriate recapture by public bodies (the community), unless the situation calls for other additional measures such as new patterns of ownership, the general acquisition of land by public bodies."

This resolution is undoubtedly stronger and clearer than its predecessors but still one must read carefully. The phrase "recapture by appropriate public bodies" has been subtly inverted to read "appropriate recapture by public bodies." To those, who under political pressure reluctantly abandoned "an equitable portion," the notion of "appropriate recapture" reintroduces sufficient ambiguity to argue a status quo position at home.

Only the Polish delegate caught this on the floor, but the Committee Chairman, a Venezuelan, presumably missed the Pole's objection in translation and the Canadian amendment was gavelled through.

It would be misleading to claim that the debate on D.3 was typical of the discussion on every agenda item. Indeed, few resolutions were philosophical watersheds capable of inspiring a substantive debate from which genuinely new positions could emerge. But there were a few others, less widely reported, and from Canada's viewpoint, less favourably concluded that were.

Throughout the Conference, the Canadian delegation was instructed to stress the rights of women and of indigenous people. Though some references in support of these groups were added by the Conference, there remained appropriate places where they were ignored. Only a careful study of the full Conference transcript could reveal the often subtle reasons for these omissions.

#### The Water Issue

Another widely touted Canadian initiative at Habitat was the 1990 water target. Most significantly, this was not eagerly seized by many Third World delegations. The final text urged only that:

"Safe water supply and hygienic waste disposal should receive priority with a view to achieving measurable qualitative and quantitative targets serving all the population by a certain date; targets should be established by all

nations and should be considered by the forthcoming United Nations Conference on Water."

In a supplement to the principal statement of the recommendation, it was added that—"In most countries urgent action is necessary to adopt programmes with *realistic* standards for quality and quantity to provide water for urban and rural areas by 1990, *if possible*;" (italics added).

The weasel words are highly significant and not at all accidental. They severely limit the moral and political strength of the resolution because they clearly encode a widespread unwillingness by governments to place the necessary financial priority on clean water projects.

Our aid partners know that Canadian assistance is distributed in response to the recipient government's requests (and thus priorities) and that Canada—as a matter of explicit policy—is not going to earmark a special fund for water projects only. The aid partner knows full well that money diverted to clean water will not, for example, be available for urban industrial development. Choices must be made, and the tragic reading from Habitat, Jon Tinker's optimism notwithstanding, is that Third World politicians are still not ready to trade factories for drinking water.

#### Deciphering the Code

The foregoing analysis of merely two resolutions may seem an unusual and even eccentric way to review Habitat and its achievements. Admittedly, it is grossly incomplete. But the objective has been to provide some insight into the nature of UN debate, which to the outsider and often to the insider as well, appears to be banal, trivial and as a rule excruciatingly boring.

To discover its logic and indeed the profound message, one must hang on every word and take clues from the nuances conveyed by adjectives and verbs. What one sees on paper is a code which represents the distilled essence of the political philosophies of over 130 nations, speaking six languages. It is a dynamic code. To cipher its true significance one must study its evolution from conference to conference and from General Assembly to General Assembly. It then becomes clear why delegates occasionally rise, quite literally, to replace "and" by "comma." Without such meticulous care, the code would cease to be effective and a diplomatic Babel would ensue.

#### Was It Worth It?

A legitimate question remains. In the face of one estimate that Habitat cost over \$40 million if every nation's expenses were toted (Canada alone contributed at least \$15 million) it is fair to ask—was it worth it? Unfortunately, on this question one can only have opinions.

The potential benefits are largely incalculable in that they can rarely be traced directly to Habitat itself. Who, for example, could say that the new

water taps in 1990 will have depended for their existence on Habitat Resolution C.12? Or what monetary value could be placed on the social consequences of a land speculation tax enacted in country "X" in 1978 as a result of the political acceptability conferred by Resolution D.3?

A sense of perspective emerges, however, when we compare the total resources invested by the world in the Habitat Conference with the cost of a single large office building. They are roughly equal. Or consider that in 1973 Canadians spent \$2,338 million on alcoholic beverages, \$966 million on beer alone. In the devalued currency of 1976, the world investment in Habitat was matched by Canadian beer drinkers over a long weekend.

#### Opportunities Missed

So if Habitat is to be criticized, it should be in terms of opportunities missed, not resources squandered. And opportunities were missed.

There can be no doubt that as a "consciousness-raising" event Habitat demonstrably fell short in the developed world and not least in Canada. The simplistic and sensationalist press treatment is only partly to blame and indeed reflects a difficulty inherent to the notion of human settlement. Too much is encompassed and when it is further insisted that the most crucial aspect is the inter-relatedness of every facet, the mind simply boggles.

Nor can there be any doubt that Habitat shamefully neglected the 70% of the Third World population that is not yet urbanized and whose growth still outstrips in absolute numbers the annual increases in the cities.

Hundreds of millions of destitute rural poor are at the very root of the urban crisis. To attack this root malaise would seem to require a radical redistribution of national investment from its current concentration in the urban "modern" sector of most Third World economies to the rural agricultural sector. This transcendent issue was never raised. Significantly, and sadly, the one country that has been able to retain a rural-urban equilibrium was not in Vancouver. China's unexplained absence was one of Habitat's greatest failures.

So the Habitat assessment is mixed and its worth forever a matter of individual judgement. Yet for those Canadians who need and demand more tangible evidence of follow-up activity, they can look to Canada's own clean water targets promulgated by Urban Affairs Minister Barney Danson immediately after the Conference; or to the Energy and Human Settlements Seminar that Canada will host in 1977.

The record of Habitat gives ample direction. Whether the world chooses to follow is a matter of will. □



# Afterthoughts on the

BY ADOLF CIBOROWSKI

## Habitat Conference

I was both optimistic about and shocked by the UN Habitat Conference. The achievements of the preparatory process were very encouraging. Simply to convince the world governments that the issues surrounding human settlements were sufficiently important to meet and talk together, even with all the difficulties they have in such an exercise, was a major achievement. This is especially so when you realize that only ten years ago not many governments believed human settlement issues to be a concern. The building of housing was regarded as a market business. He who had money owned a house; the poor went without. The planned distribution of population and the explosion of urban areas was not considered. These attitudes have changed through the preparatory process. The recognition that this is important business, however, does not mean that tomorrow there will be a miracle and all the cities of the world will start to improve. What it does mean though is that a social consciousness, a public awareness and the political commitment have started to build.

I was shocked by the Habitat Conference as well.

This conference had a new element—the audio-visual component. I must confess I was at first somewhat doubtful about this audio-visual element which could have created simply the biggest film festival in human history. During the preparatory process, we expected that the films would be useful as a source of information on new solutions to settlement problems. A few of

the films met this expectation, but what really happened was something quite different and quite dramatic.

We are now quite overwhelmed with statistical data to the point where we have lost our sensitivity. When we read that 80% of a country's population is starving or 70% of its population live in shacks, it no longer means anything; it is too abstract. What does a billion people really mean? Nobody has seen one billion people at once.

At the plenary sessions and at the committees, however, we saw what were called capsules—short excerpts from each country's audio-visual presentation. Everyone of these capsules, whether they were weak, dull or technically poor, made the viewer realize that the problems surrounding human settlements were much more than statistics. We were confronted at that conference with a living, dramatic picture of the world. Even the solutions and achievements presented indicated how poor our achievements are, how tragic sometimes are the solutions and how sorry is the picture of the world. A hungry child, a basic house, these things were no longer merely statistics. Although I have travelled around the world, and have spoken and fought for the elimination of these problems, I was still shocked. The impact of this one injection of visual information was unbelievable. In the capsules we had the first dramatic visual commercial about the grave and difficult situation around the world, and I believe that they will have a subconscious impact on our future attitudes toward the problems of human settlements. □

DESIGN/CONCEPTION GRAPHIQUE: GOTTSCHALK + ASH LTD.  
TYPESETTING/COMPOSITION TYPOGRAPHIQUE: TYPOGRAPHIC SERVICE TYPOGRAPHIQUE  
PRINTING/IMPRESSION: DOLLCO PRINTING LIMITED, OTTAWA