



<https://theses.gla.ac.uk/>

Theses Digitisation:

<https://www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/research/enlighten/theses/digitisation/>

This is a digitised version of the original print thesis.

Copyright and moral rights for this work are retained by the author

A copy can be downloaded for personal non-commercial research or study,  
without prior permission or charge

This work cannot be reproduced or quoted extensively from without first  
obtaining permission in writing from the author

The content must not be changed in any way or sold commercially in any  
format or medium without the formal permission of the author

When referring to this work, full bibliographic details including the author,  
title, awarding institution and date of the thesis must be given

Enlighten: Theses

<https://theses.gla.ac.uk/>  
[research-enlighten@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:research-enlighten@glasgow.ac.uk)

BRITISH NEW TOWNS: SOME ADMINISTRATIVE ASPECTS

L. G. PACKER

Submitted as part of the requirements for the  
Degree of Master of Philosophy

Department of Town and Regional Planning,  
University of Glasgow.

April 1975

ProQuest Number: 10754007

All rights reserved

INFORMATION TO ALL USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.



ProQuest 10754007

Published by ProQuest LLC (2018). Copyright of the Dissertation is held by the Author.

All rights reserved.

This work is protected against unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code  
Microform Edition © ProQuest LLC.

ProQuest LLC.  
789 East Eisenhower Parkway  
P.O. Box 1346  
Ann Arbor, MI 48106 – 1346

## CONTENTS

### Page

#### PREFACE

Chapter 1. Who Shall Built the New Towns: the Progress of Thought	1
Chapter 2. Who Shall Build the New Towns: the Path Followed Up.	13
Chapter 3. The Reith Reports and the New Towns Act	31
Chapter 4. New Towns: the Public Exposure	51
Chapter 5. The Employment Case for New Towns and Development Corporations	71
Chapter 6. New Towns: the Future	87

#### ADDENDUM

PREFACE

The degree of continuity in this essay is far from being all that it should, but a common thread is discernible, namely the administrative arrangements devised to handle new town development, both in theory and in practice, and in particular, the means devised (or not devised) to ensure that new town developments (of all sorts) were integrated with wider strategic planning policies.

As study progressed, it emerged that new towns in Britain were at something of a cross-roads. The function of new towns in planning as a whole was being discussed between Government and interested parties. Accordingly, much of the essay is devoted to examining the case for new town and development corporation-type institutions and considering how the experience of the past suggests that they might be adapted for use in the future.

If any dedication is required, then it must be two-fold. First, to Ebenezer Howard, a man more grievously misrepresented by his friends than by his opponents. And Secondly, to the Marley Committee whose study (given great prominence in this essay because it appears to me to have been so unjustly neglected elsewhere) is a model of incisive understanding and sound common sense, which, had it been found in so-called "planners", would have prevented much wasted time and effort, and many misguided initiatives.

WHO SHALL BUILD THE NEW TOWNS: THE PROGRESS OF THOUGHT

New town development in Britain as an element of public policy has a long history. New towns formed an important part of Edward I's (military) regional policy; the planned village movement in Scotland between 1730 and 1830 was sustained by private landowners, and Smout (1967) describes the movement in terms of their political role in the economic and social planning of the country. Interesting parallels can be drawn between the town development work of the British Fisheries Society and the Commissioners for the Forfeited Estates in the Highlands after 1745, and the Development Corporation machinery of this century. Both were concerned with the creative urbanisation of overspill people - the first with "overspill" from subsistence agriculture, the second with overspill from congested cities. Both superseded the local government of the day by use of government development agencies, centrally-endowed public commissioners answerable to Parliament. Youngson (1973) gives a valuable account of the work of this early Highlands and Islands Development Board.

The various planned communities of the nineteenth century are no more than tied factory houses on a large enough scale to be given also the basic services of a settlement - they do not have the social and political attributes normally associated with urban settlements. So it is right at the turn of the century, with the publication of Ebenezer Howard's (1899) "Tomorrow - a Peaceful Path to Real Reform" that it becomes useful to look at new town thought on the question of administrative arrangements.

"Howard saw that there was no solution to the city's problems within the existing framework of municipal administration because one of its greatest problems was the lack of economic and social and political relation to the surrounding

countryside ... What Howard said about the relation of town and country within the garden city area is equally applicable to the entire business of city and regional planning: the administrative unit that is created must be capable of embracing both the urban and rural aspects of the regions."

Mumford (1945) p. 35.

This quote at once confirms the intellectual scope of Howard's work. He wrote at a time when thirty years of continuous depression in agriculture had left rural society debilitated and impoverished. He saw the problems of urban and rural squalor as two aspects of malaise in the organisation of communities and the economy. This understanding was sadly not reflected in the 1947 Act, a situation which PAG attempted to remedy only in 1968. Howard has suffered from consistent superficial interpretation, but it is disappointing that in "Garden Cities of Tomorrow" his understanding is not formalised into an analysis of the administrative framework which might achieve the town and country planning which he advocated. By contrast, very precise suggestions about the finance and administration of the built up area are given, encouraging practical men to think in terms of building closely-bounded towns quite insulated from the surrounding country.

Howard's ideal of a country-wide spread of Social Cities called for far more than the addition of a few new "municipalities": it would have called for a complete reform of local government boundaries, along the lines of city-regions disposed around town clusters, of some level or other. One can look upon the Radcliffe-M and proposals for England, ✓ and the new regional divisions in Scotland as attempting this form in the same conviction which Howard had, that town and country must be planned in a way that recognised the interdependence of their functions in a healthy system (in this case grouping around town clusters of a very high level in the hierarchy).

Instead of tackling this, the model developed starts by assuming the existence of a "municipality", and concentrates on demonstrating the financial realism of the approach. The provision of infrastructures and services is discussed in some detail, but in a chapter entitled "Expenditures": who will provide the services is not an issue, the question is whether the rate-rent revenues in prospect will meet the costs - and the answer is of course "yes". Items discussed are:-

Roads - city

Roads - country

Circular railway

Schools

Town Hall

Library

Museum

Parks

Sewage Disposal (Howard 1902 pp. 81-88)

This leaves a "balance available for rates levied by local bodies within whose jurisdiction the estate is situated", but it is not clear why rates should be paid: the intention is to convey "and more to spare besides".

The list indicates the high degree of self-sufficiency which Garden City would display.

"It will be seen that the whole scheme of Garden City will make extremely few demands upon the resources of outside local authorities. Roads, sewers, schools, parks, libraries, etc., will be provided out of the funds of the new "municipality" ... (Howard 1902, p. 87)

The exceptions strike a very distant note:

"I do not however forget that there are some functions which such a voluntary organisation as a garden city could not take over, such as the police and the administration of the poor-law." (Howard 1902 p. 87)

but these are swiftly dealt with: Garden City will pay pensions, undertake charitable work and maintain its own institutions. Its physical



conditions will not encourage criminality, and in any case Garden City will not be attractive to the criminal classes.<sup>1</sup>

Howard does devote a chapter to "Administration" but this is concerned with the detailed workings of the civic administration, departmental responsibilities, electoral procedures and so on. He took great care to defuse the issue of the degree of communal enterprise, asserting the value of a pragmatic approach - which provisions are best made privately, which publicly, decided by each municipality. (Howard, 1902, Chs 6, 8).

Such a degree of self-sufficiency of course was quite realistic, given the nature of local government as it then existed. Consider the utilities on which Letchworth spent its money in the early years: in 1904, roads, drainage, waterworks; in 1905, a gasworks; in 1907 a power station and electricity supply.<sup>1</sup> Of these, by 1946 not one was not provided by local government or statutory undertakers, and even with the enormous advantage of statutory foundation and central government pressure for co-operatives, formed a potential source of disagreement and delay. By contrast, the worst which Hitchin RDC could do to the puny Letchworth was "look on the scheme with extreme distaste"<sup>2</sup>, and decline to build houses.

In fact, although Letchworth might have been powerless by comparison with new towns under the 1946 Act, it operated in a different world, where its ability to pay determined what services it could provide. As Howard observed

"The powers possessed by the Central Council (the Board of Management of Garden City) are, it may be noticed in passing, more ample than those possessed by other municipal bodies, for whilst most of them only enjoy such powers as are expressly conferred on them by Act of Parliament, the

---

1. See Purdom, 1963 p.28.

2. Ibid. p.22.

Central Council of Garden City exercises on behalf of the people those wider rights, powers and privileges which are enjoyed by landlords under common law ..." (Howard, 1902, p. )

"Garden City is in a greatly superior position, for by stepping as a quasi public body into the rights of a private landlord, it becomes at once clothed with far larger powers for carrying out the will of the people than are possessed by other local bodies, and thus solves to a large extent the problem of local self-government." (Howard, 1902, p. 92: my italics).

This is probably the reason for Howard's emphasis on the physical realisation of his objectives. Local authorities' responsibilities were very much less than they were to become, and their power to influence the organisation of communities, through provision of services, infrastructure and housing was restricted - in other words their effective planning powers were nowhere near as powerful as they became between the wars (although most of the powers did not pass under the term "planning" at all). Howard's task was not to convince local authorities that they could achieve the benefits of Garden City, but to demonstrate the realism of the method of development to private but public-spirited developers. Letchworth was the practical demonstration which Howard embarked upon to do this. And its growth was not so convincingly smooth as might have been hoped. The success of the scheme of buying inaccessible land cheaply and increasing its value by endowing it with accessibility, depends on raising enough capital for the initial period of development, when money is being spent in large, indivisible lumps, but no revenue is coming in. Both Letchworth and Welwyn were severely hampered by the inability of the conventional capital market to produce enough money to finance the costly initial period before "takeoff". Both depended on the personal influence of Howard, and the faith of his sympathetic, and wealthy, directors. Even so, there was a recurrent conflict between the ideal of keeping the maximum development value, and the prospect of easing growth by allowing commercial and industrial concerns to share,

encouraging settlement by means of sale and long leases at low early land values.<sup>1</sup> The slow development of the two specimen garden cities under the direction of "authorised associations" was Silkin's main reason (or so it was claimed) for regarding them as unsuitable agencies in the 1946 Act.

Even if enough finance had been available, growth might still have been uncertain. Movement of industry is the key, and individual firms have, during the last sixty years, proved irritatingly cautious in changing their location patterns. Howard in "Garden Cities" is not entirely consistent on this point. He recognises the benefits of Wakefield's proposals for colonising by moving fully-formed socially-balanced communities en bloc, ensuring a large market for entrepreneurs and a good choice of services and employment for settlers. But he gives no indication of how the problems of initial growth, which must be unbalanced, arising from individual decisions, were to be solved. Presumably he believed that the long-term advantages of the garden city economy would triumph: short term disadvantages would not prevail. There is a suggestion that Letchworth was deliberately chosen as a difficult location, to demonstrate the strength of the Garden City idea in even adverse conditions.

By 1938, Barlow could observe:

"Their (Letchworth and Welwyn) appeal was largely to those in sympathy with the ideas of the founders: this somewhat limited appeal, at any rate in the early days, may account for the comparatively slow growth of these two communities" (Barlow, 1940, para 272).

Certainly "those in sympathy" included a rich array of eccentrics and cranks, but whether this was lunacy or a renaissance of personality depended on one's notion of human advancement. Much more regimented

---

1. Osborn and Whittich , pp. 46-48.

development of new towns after 1946 meant that the Government and its resources were devoted to the successful development. But would this mean conscription of those not "in sympathy", Conservatives asked in the debate in 1946?

The self-sufficiency of the garden city was affected also in administrative theory between 1902 and 1946. Before the advent of formal planning powers, house provision constituted the vital change in circumstances. In 1902, provision of housing for rent was not a conventional responsibility of any public authority. Local authorities did not provide rented houses, and neither did Howard regard it a point of his municipality's task to do so. Both the incidental discussion of housing, and the means of provision contemplated are in sharp contrast to the prime importance of house provision by post-1946 Development Corporations.

"There is another large field for pro-municipal activity, in the work of building houses for the people. The municipality would be attempting too much if it essayed this task, at least at the outset. To do so would be perhaps to depart too far from the path which experience has justified ... The municipality has however done much to make the building of bright and beautiful homes for the people possible. It has effectually provided against overcrowding ... it offers sites of ample size at an average rate of £6 per annum for ground rent and rates." (Howard, 1902, p. 106)

Taking advantage of these favourable conditions posed no problems, because many agencies would be willing to assist "workmen secure of good wages" to own their homes - building societies, trade unions, co-operative societies, friendly societies and so on. This was not the case in Letchworth and Welwyn, and increasingly after 1919 provision of new homes for working people became less a matter of operation of the free market, more within the discretion of local authorities. The simplicity, even in theory, with which new town policies could be put into effect independently of the attitudes of local authorities was gone. The garden city solution would be adopted only if local authorities

exerted their influence as housing authorities in that direction.

Howard realised in 1902 that these circumstances were not favourable: a multiplicity of urban and rural authorities even well-disposed to each other will find an integrated solution difficult to attain. In practice, the degree of subtle analysis of planning principles in housing location, and the willingness of local authorities to co-operate in achieving a coherent solution in the wider public interest is very unsatisfactory, and continues to be. This regrettably provides Peter Hall with his main theme in his recent analysis of the achievement of British statutory planning (Hall, 1973). Local authority boundaries are tightly drawn around urban areas. Counties are unwilling to have "urban problems" foisted on them: encroachment of public housing, industry and commerce is disliked. Conversely urban areas are unwilling to lose population and rateable value.

"The planning powers created in 1947 could only be wielded fairly by some agency big enough to encompass and weigh up both urban and rural interests: either a central national authority, or a local government unit based on the notion of town and country. But in some of the most problematic areas we seem little further in achieving a structure of this kind than we were in 1947." (Hall, 1973, p.415)

At least in 1947 there was a statutory provision for the ultimate supremacy of the wider "public interest": each local planning authority's proposals were scrutinised to ensure that this was considered, and subsequent decisions could be challenged. There was no such limitation on local authorities' laissez faire planning decisions between the wars. The problem for followers of Howard after 1918 was how to ensure that with their new powers to help, or hinder new town planning, authorities did the former.

Many of Howard's supporters were in fact only admirers of the

principles of Letchworth and Welwyn - indeed it is a sad paradox that it was the work of Parker and Unwin which was, with government encouragement, used up and down the country as the physical semblance of "Garden City", perhaps stifling true understanding of the planning principles which lay behind the pleasing design. These interpreters failed Howard in their limited understanding of his vision, which was nothing less than a transformation of the spatial organisation of activity, so as to maximise "quality of environment" and "accessibility to opportunities". The characteristics of town and country were (as outlined in the famous magnets diagram) opposite, but equally unacceptable combinations of these two attributes. The achievement of the "town-country" combination of the best of both worlds now required the collaboration of town and country local authorities, particularly in the use of their house-provision powers.

Howard also developed the national implications of his model.

"... the idea of a well-planned town such as I have described will not have prepared the reader for the later development which must inevitably follow - the planning and building of town clusters - each town in the cluster being of a different design from the others, and yet the whole forming part of one large and well thought out plan." (Howard 1902, p.139)

"... if the movement is to be carried on in anything like a scientific fashion, stretches of land far larger than that occupied by our first experiment must be obtained." (p.139)

Purdom (1963) picks up the implications of this:

"... he thought that parliamentary powers would be necessary for the larger project (the system of social cities). He was thus in principle a regional-planning pioneer." (p.5)

The organisation of a national system of garden cities was a task beyond the proper competence of autonomous public-spirited private

development agencies, yet Howard neglects to consider how regional-metropolitan planning of this kind will be achieved - why? This is perhaps a great deal to ask of one popular text, but the outcome does concern Howard. His neglect of details of regional and national administration is due to his supreme confidence that the case for garden cities is so overwhelming that administrative arrangements could be left to follow in the wake of such an irresistible system of planning:

" (are) crowded, ill-ventilated, unplanned, unwieldy, unhealthy cities - ulcers on the very face of our beautiful island - to stand as barriers to the introduction of towns in which modern scientific methods and the aims of social reformers may have the fullest scope in which to express themselves? No, it cannot be, at least not for long." (Howard, 1902, p. 145)

"The reader is therefore earnestly asked not to take it for granted that the large cities in which he may perhaps take pardonable pride are ... any more permanent than the stage-coach system which was the subject of so much admiration just at the very moment when it was about to be supplanted by the railways." (p.146)

With this conviction, Howard satisfied himself with the suggestion that the oberburdened "Imperial Parliament" would devalue considerable powers on the local authorities, who would be eager and willing to devise and build social cities.

"Vested interests" are dismissed in very unspecific terms. Garden Cities will triumph because:

1. Vested interests, in land and property, will be divided. Some will resist garden cities, some will apply their expertise and property to their development.
2. "Men of goodwill" will inevitably support garden cities.
3. Influential groups will accept garden cities rather than face socialism.
4. The popular demands of "those who work for their living" (shades of Chamberlain!) will prove irresistible.
5. The development of garden cities is a noble aim which will call

forth the energies of a dangerously divided nation. (Howard 1902, p.147)

Perhaps we speak with the unfair advantage of hindsight, but Howard appears rather unworldly in his estimate of the readiness with which existing settlements would give up population, rateable value, and the prospects of civic growth. He spares no civic feelings in his dismissal of prospects for improvement in existing settlements.

"The simple issue to be faced, and faced resolutely is: can better results be obtained by starting on a bold plan on comparatively virgin soil than by attempting to adapt our old cities to our newer and higher needs? Thus fairly faced, the question can only be answered in one way: and when that simple fact is well grasped, the social revolution will speedily commence."  
(Howard, 1902, p. 146)

This seems rather harsh when compared with his earlier remarks, that town clusters might take a great variety of physical shapes, as long as the essential garden city attributes of quality of environment and accessibility to opportunities were preserved for working people: so why could existing towns and cities not plan themselves along these lines? Two reasons suggest themselves: first, this method would not allow purchase of land entirely free of development value - Howard had no expectation that nationalisation of development value might be contemplated, or that a similar end result might be achieved by government subsidy of house provision around existing towns. Second - probably less justified - Howard was too influenced by the London situation - a fault which many of his successors continued - notably Barlow. The result was that other local authorities did not regard his conclusions as applicable to them (indeed, London local authorities have consistently been better disposed to new town and expanded town planning than any others).

Awareness of political realism is thus the light in which to view the Fabian response to "Tomorrow - a Peaceful Path to Real Reform"



(a project they might have been expected to welcome):

"His plans would have been in time if they had been submitted to the Romans when they conquered Britain. They set about laying-out cities, and our forefathers have dwelt in them to this day. Now Mr. Howard proposes to pull them all down<sup>1</sup> and substitute garden cities.

We have got to make the best of our existing cities, and proposals for building new ones are as useful as would be arrangements for protection against visits from Mr. Wells' Martians."  
(Fabian News, December 1898)

---

1. A significant misunderstanding.

## WHO SHALL BUILD THE NEW TOWNS: THE PATH FOLLOWED UP

Although the post-war climate was favourable to planning in the sense of greater supervision of the conditions in which people lived, the task of securing a "garden city" solution was by no means easy. There is never any problem in recruiting public support for good housing, but good planning is a much more nebulous (and more controversial) quantity. No houses had been built during the war, maintenance had been neglected, and the public imagination was fixed with the vision of new houses, not "social cities" or "town clusters". Lloyd George's "Land fit for heroes" quickly became "Homes for Heroes". The Tudor-Walters Report had concentrated attention on housing quality.

Altogether, official and public opinion was running strongly in the direction of "environmental quality". "Access to opportunities" seems almost entirely neglected: it is more difficult to understand, more difficult to demand, and more difficult to provide.

When Howard wrote it was possible for the balance to be struck within "municipalities" whose landlord powers made almost free to operate with little local authority control. By 1918 it was apparent that the influence of central and local government could only increase. This then was the challenge for followers of Howard's ideas - to ensure that the inevitable development beyond their control was informed by garden city principles. The dangers were illustrated by Britain's first, albeit ineffective essay in planning legislation, the Planning Act of 1909:

"What irony that the first step in England towards town-planning was directly away from the principles of the garden city, from which planning was said to have gained its impulse! For the fact remains that the 1909 Act was concerned only with furthering the suburban planning of towns and cities, the very thing which the garden city was designed in principle to stop." (Purdom, 1963, p.18)

Howard's early plan for winning support was two-fold, to demonstrate the garden city in operation and to influence informed public opinion "by a little skill in the grouping of forces and the manipulation of ideas". In 1918 the scope for improvement through personal intervention was very limited. Letchworth had proved itself, and what was required was a great feat of proselytization. But at this point Howard succumbed to the temptation of another personal achievement - the building of Welwyn. Mumford (1945) emphasises the significance of this:

"At the end of the last war, his younger lieutenant, Mr. F. J. Osborn, proposed to build "New Towns after the War", on a scale commensurate with the current needs for housing and rehousing: a proposal which required complete legislative backing. Howard's absorption in the launching of the second garden city diverted energy from the more important work that Mr. Osborn had outlined; and the broad political need to unite housing and industrial rehabilitation with urban improvement was subordinated to a muddled and wasteful effort at town expansion and estate building within the existing urban areas." (p.37)

Letchworth and Welwyn may not even have been useful as examples of garden city principles. To those who had not read Howard (and to many who had!) they were excellent examples of garden cottage settlements: the superb design work of Parker and Unwin was undoubtedly the most influential aspect of the towns. And ironically their economic success depended on accessibility to the metropolis: in no sense did they influence the surrounding economy in the way that Howard had intended. Incidentally, the towns gained a popular reputation as something of an eccentrics' colony (see John Betjeman's "Group Life: Letchworth").

The phrase "garden city" proved enormously popular, and supporters of the pure Howard vision fought hard to distinguish their garden cities from thousands of what they regarded as mis-named travesties. In fact the superiority of Letchworth and Welwyn was not readily apparent to people with no personal commitment to Howard's experiments. The

The huge council estates were clearly worse in accessibility of residents to employment, but the vast majority of smaller "garden suburbs" were no worse in their effective "accessibility to services", even if these were not part of the same development.

Garden suburbs were however the outcome of the existing political and administrative organisation of the country, whereas a system of town clusters planned "in a scientific fashion" would have required a very different structure of administration. The distinction is reflected in the aspects of new town development which early legislation covered. Section 10 of the Housing (Additional Powers) Act 1919 empowered the Minister of Health compulsorily to purchase land for garden city development "if necessary or expedient so to do for the purpose of securing the development of the land as aforesaid." This he could do on behalf of any local authority (including a county council), or two or more authorities, or an authorised association, whom he was satisfied were able and willing to develop the land as "a garden city (or garden suburb or garden village)". An "authorised association" was

"any society, company or body of persons approved by the Minister whose objects include the promotion, formation or management of garden cities (including garden suburbs and garden villages) or the erection, improvement or management of buildings for the working classes and others, which does not trade for profit, or whose constitution forbids payment of any interest or dividend at a rate higher than six per centum per annum."  
(Housing Act 1919, Section 10, para 4)

Section 16 of the Town Planning Act 1925 gave the Minister the additional right to authorise the Public Works Loans Commissioners to lend money to approved garden city developers, subject to conditions and limits fixed by the Treasury (local authorities had been empowered to borrow for garden cities as for any housing development by the 1919 Act). The other provisions were repeated almost word for word and the whole was repeated in the Town Planning Act, 1932. Identical legislation

covered Scotland.

Several interesting points arise. The legislation tackled the two major problems which garden city development by private bodies had thrown up, namely acquisition of large sites, and finance of the early stages of development. It did not tackle the problems of grafting new town development by public bodies into the framework of the (growing) powers, responsibilities and attitudes of existing local government agencies (which is what the 1946 Act did do). There seems to have been no serious thought about why local authorities would contemplate garden city development. On the other hand this could hardly have mattered when what constituted garden city development was so vague. Garden "city" "suburb" and "village" appear almost interchangeable, and one suspects that variety of nomenclature covered the lowest common denominator - garden suburbs. This impression is incidentally confirmed by a reservation attached to the Departmental Committee of the Ministry of Health set up in 1920 under Neville Chamberlain to establish "The Principles to be Followed in Dealing with the Unhealthy Areas". This report is often cited as the first official advocacy of the garden city principle, and certainly without a paragraph's reasoning, the report stated that "horizontal" building (i.e. as against multi-storey building)

"can best take place in garden cities of about 50,000, outside London<sup>1</sup>, each surrounded by a green belt (sic)"

However, the reservation, by Mr. E. J. Brown, expressed the view that it would be unwise to prescribe garden cities until the transport problems caused by the existing estates round London had been examined. What sort of "garden city" had the committee in mind, which would cause traffic problems in the municipality which built it? Certainly not any which

---

1. As with Howard, attention is again virtually confined to the metropolitan experience.

Howard had advocated.

Unfortunately, there is no way of knowing precisely what constituted a garden city (suburb, village) for the Ministry of Health, since no projects were carried out under the legislation. Instead, almost four million houses were built between the wars in ways which intelligent observers abominated:

"New houses spread along the main roads in the ribbon building characteristic of the period, with little stubs a hundred yards or so down the side roads. These new settlements had no centres, no sense, no communal spirit. They were composed of little more than individual cars come to rest." A.J.P. Taylor (1965, p.26)

One consequence of disquiet about the new tendencies was the Control on Ribbon Development Act, another an inquiry into "Garden Cities and Satellite Towns" under Lord Marley in 1934. This study appears to have suffered undeserved critical neglect, normally being mentioned briefly as an equally ineffectual companion to the Chamberlain Committee Report. It is in fact a planning document of notable vigour and breadth of vision. Even in terms of reference illustrate the realism, notably absent from earlier discussion of the encouragement of garden city development:

"To examine the experience already gained in regard to the establishment of garden cities and villages and satellite towns and to make recommendations as to:

- a) the steps, if any, which should be taken by the government or local authorities to extend the provision of such garden cities, villages and satellite towns;
- b) in particular, how the location of industry in them can be stimulated;
- c) the questions of finance and local government connected with their establishment; and
- d) what further measures, if any, can and should be taken for securing that in the extension of existing towns, industrial, residential and other developments are properly correlated."

(Marley Report 1935, para 1)

"Proper correlation of developments" is the key to the combination of environmental quality and access to opportunities which Howard was basically concerned with, and these terms of reference are less prejudiced in favour of a particular physical form of combination (i.e. the closely-bounded new development), than the Reith Committee were given.<sup>1</sup> The committee responded with a wholehearted commitment to achieving the substance of the garden city model, and not isolated examples of ideal settlements, however appealing or fulfilling these might appear:

"The first three sections of our terms of reference lay particular stress on "garden Cities", "Garden Villages" and "Satellite Towns" and would appear to invite consideration of them as a detached and isolated problem. We deem it essential at the outset of our report to state that our investigations have led us to view "Garden cities" and other developments of a similar kind rather as elements in the wider sphere of regional and national planning than as constituting a problem apart ... If we view in correct perspective the ordered planning of the whole country, which may be taken to be the fundamental purpose of town and regional planning, then the garden city, the satellite town and the garden village fall into place as incidental items in the general plan. It is therefore mainly in relation to the proper and orderly correlatinn of industrial residential and other developments specifically referred to in connection with expansion of towns in the fourth section of our terms of reference that we propose to consider the problems involved in our terms of reference taken as a whole." (Marley Report 1935, para 4)

This crispness of thought is characteristic of the report: it is, for example, one of the few documents to say exactly why ribbon development and "sprawl" are undesirable, viz.:

- 
1. "To consider the general questions of the establishment, development, organisation and administration that will arise in the promotion of New Towns in furtherance of a policy of planned decentralisation from congested urban areas; and in accordance therewith to suggest guiding principles on which such Towns should be established and developed as self-contained and balanced communities for work and living."  
(New Towns Committee, Interim Report, p.2)

1. The resultant agglomerations are unco-ordinated. Dormitory areas without employment, industrial areas with no labour force, are created without thought as to consequences.
2. Suburban developments usually lack open space.
3. Costs are imposed on local authorities when development is taken beyond the capacity of the road system.
4. Arterial roads designed to relieve congestion are exploited by developers, and congestion becomes as bad as ever.
5. Amenities and values in existing settlements are uncontrollably prejudiced by new development.
6. Servicing of unplanned development is costly.
7. More land is despoiled than necessary: ribbon development wastes more land than it uses.
8. Those in central areas must spend much time and money to reach the countryside.
9. Central congestion is actually worsened. (Marley Report 1935, Para 6)

In short, the case against dormitory housing estates is put in terms of "quality of environment" and "accessibility to opportunities."

"(dormitory housing estates) provide better living conditions for the families who occupy them: but they again produce serious economic and sociological problems. Waste of time and energy, together with heavy outlay, are involved in taking large numbers of workers to and from their work in the city; and the fares necessarily form a drain on the family incomes." (Marley Report, 1935, para 6)

For these reasons, the Committee felt justified in advocating satellite towns:

"Broadly speaking, we are of the opinion that when a town reaches a certain size (which must vary within wide limits) contiguous growth round the fringe tends to create evils that outweigh any disadvantages; and we therefore advocate a definite policy of outward development taking the form of complete planned units with due provision



for industry, residence, social services and recreation, at some distance from the original nucleus - a type of development for which the term "Satellite Town" is not inappropriate." (ibid., para 8)

Since the problem was seen as one of integrated planning throughout the country, local authorities were regarded as responsible:

"Having regard to the fact that we view the problem mainly in its relationship to existing centres of population where congestion already exists and where by slum clearance and replanning an opportunity may be afforded for decentralisation and outward development, we have come to the conclusion that it is the function of the Local Authorities of the greater towns and cities to undertake such development. We see no serious difficulty in the setting up of an adequate and efficient development organisation under the aegis<sup>1</sup> of the councils of our great towns including London.

... provisions have been on the statute book for more than a decade ...

What we propose is to instil life into these provisions in order that they may be used." (ibid. para 12)

The means of doing this was to be a national planning agency.

Howard had anticipated the need to ensure that each city and town cluster formed "part of one large and well-thought-out plan" but had not discussed the administrative machinery necessary to achieve this. The "Planning Board" represents an attempt to redress the neglect:

"... we are of the opinion that it is an essential that the problem should be dealt with as a national problem affecting the country as a whole. We are of the opinion that the first essential step is that the Government should establish at the earliest date possible a Planning Board appointed by the Minister of Health ... under whose aegis should be brought the question of land development throughout the country. By this means alone do we see any possibility of an effective handling of the general situation on broad lines." (ibid. para 9)

The central position of the Planning Board in the Committee's proposals probably explains the apparent neglect of its other terms

---

1. This presumably implies a local authority sponsored agency, with a degree of protection from day-to-day influence, such as accepted by the Reith Report.

of reference - for example location of industry and finance and local government problems. Once set up, the Planning Board would have the responsibility and expertise to consider all these matters. The Committee started with the most comprehensive planning view of the problem it faced, and its recommendations were equally comprehensive. The Government, through the Planning Board was to:

- determine the ideal regional distribution of population and industry,
- encourage local authorities to produce planning schemes,
- carry out planning functions (including garden city development) in default of tardy local authorities,
- modify planning schemes to conform to the desired national and regional patterns,
- foster co-operation amongst local authorities and between local authorities and private developers,
- advise on legislation,
- settle the problems of compensation and betterment.

The Board was, incidentally, to comprise five members - though admittedly "of the highest calibre"! In presenting these ambitious proposals, the Committee felt that:

"... the time is ripe for serious consideration of the new methods which should be adopted in regard to the planning of new areas and the replanning of the present built-up areas throughout the country. We consider that the present time offers a favourable opportunity for the introduction of carefully thought out plans of development and reconstruction." (Marley Report 1935, para 7)

Unfortunately, they were wrong, and it is difficult to know whether to regret that an opportunity for more limited new town development was missed through over-ambition, or to suggest that new town development not co-ordinated with other planning as the Report demanded, may do more harm than good. In any case, the degree of intervention

suggested was not acceptable - even to some dissenting Committee members, who felt that existing agencies were quite adequate: they should simply have been asked to co-operate more effectively. For those in local administration the Five Wise Men of the Planning Board had unfortunate antecedents - the Central Commissioners of the Poor Law, the "Three Bashaws of Somerset House" for example; and Edwin Chadwick's somewhat comparable Public Health Board had in 1853 foundered in a sea of local government hostility after only five very tempestuous years (cholera, not overcrowding, had been its remit). In many ways the famous Victorian hostility to government intervention was not adherence to the classic doctrines of laissez faire at all, but intense hostility towards centralised intervention. Local authorities did not like to see themselves as agents of centrally-approved planning, and it is difficult to see that a Board with powers verging on direction of population and industry<sup>1</sup> would have been acceptable, even in the depths of Depression - perhaps particularly then: un-depressed areas would hardly have welcomed redistribution, and one dissident Committee member puts the view that business was so bad that further controls on industrial activity were quite unwise.

While the Committee generally feels content to leave details of administration to the Planning Board, it does make some specific comments which are not always convincing. In dealing with the serious problem of local authorities' unwillingness to provide and pay for services for overspill people from another area, the Committee rejects the

---

1. "These (industries) would be directed to satellites in common with other new development as part of the general plan for securing sound and orderly location."  
(Marley Report 1935 para 13)

view that the developing authority should also take over administrative responsibility, confident that:

"... there will be found to be no insuperable difficulties in administration or in contacts with other Local Authorities responsible for local government administration in the case where the land is outside the boundaries of the promoting Authority." (Marley Report, 1935 para 12)

Yet the experience of Wythenshawe, a case regarded as relevant, was quite the opposite, as is clear from the Appendix describing its progress:

"The development of the estate was hindered at the outset by difficulties in connection with the provision of the necessary, in view of the fact that the land concerned was not within the city ... When the estate was added to the City, the Corporation at once proceeded with the provision of main drainage facilities ..." (ibid. Appendix II)

Developments distant enough to be satellites and not suburbs could not be annexed: what was the solution to be?

Wythenshawe and Speke ought also to have raised the problems of administration in pursuit of social balance, yet the Committee failed to face this in a realistic way. The report makes the conventional case for social balance:

"Segregation of one class in a district ... must tend in the nature of things to lead to undesirable social reactions." (ibid. Para 7)

Yet if local authorities undertake garden city development it will be directed at helping those in need: this does not result in a "balanced community", a problem of resource allocation and priorities which has bedevilled new town development continuously.

Why should it be, in any case, that a Report which started with the conviction that the problem was each of co-ordination of development in existing settlements in the end committed itself to satellite towns at some distance from the original city protected by a green belt?

The Committee agreed that the "ideal" size of city "must vary within wide limits", so in what way was satellite development superior to well-planned town expansion in normal circumstances (London clearly being an exception)? Indeed the Committee do go some way in this direction:

"The remedy may well be found in organising growth beyond such limits by means of satellite units having some independent local life but depending on the parent town for those conveniences and amenities which only a large population can support.

We do not suggest that there are no circumstances in which it might be desirable to build relatively isolated and detached new towns of the Garden City type. There may be economic justification for such new towns in connection with the development of mineral deposits ... and in certain other cases, but we think that normally it is in the direction of Satellite Towns having an economic bond with existing centres of population that it will be found most desirable to proceed." (ibid. Para 8)

The justification for some degree of insulation was social:

"A town may become overgrown as a single unit, just as may happen to any other organism. The community lines in such cases become weakened or lost." (ibid. Para 8).

This is for the Report an unusual uncritical acceptance of received sentiment. Self-sufficiency depends on the range of human needs that can be met within a settlement unit. If this range is large (as the Committee clearly desired for all areas of each town) then there is no need to enforce containment by green belt insulation. If the range is deficient, then insulation can only impose costs and frustration on residents, and the (fully accepted) access to higher-level choice and services is made unnecessarily more costly and troublesome. If the elements of self-sufficiency are present, then it should make no difference to "community links" whether the town centre and its satellites are spread over one mile or ten. The Committee constructed a model of hierarchical settlements and accessibility, then gave the model a misleading and unnecessary spatial dimension. They confused a single geographical unit with a single functional unit, when evidence

was becoming available that what appeared to be an inconveniently large agglomeration could have all the desirable functional characteristics of the formal town cluster - and could certainly be given them by exactly the kind of integrated planning which the Committee demanded. Hall (1973) regarded this tendency as characteristic of the physical bias in British planning thought:

"Preference for a certain quality of urban life are also clearly seen in the formulation and operation of the British planning system. The values of smallness, compactness, neatness and tidiness in settlement design, reflect these values in British life generally ... The small, comprehensively-planned community is a neat and tidy unit of urban life when compared with the great sprawling, dirty, congested city ... Small, clearly-bounded towns are preferred to large cities whose suburbs straggle out across the countryside."  
(Hall 1973, pp 370-71, my italics)

In the context of the Marley Report, this pre-disposition perhaps explains the belief that only if self-containment and independence (desirable in terms of ease of access to opportunities) could be seen on a map would these attributes be attained. Green belts, which functionally might appear to be either troublesome or unnecessary, in this physical model are essential as cordons sanitaire, keeping each town free of the contaminating influence of its neighbours. (The Report recommends them on the grounds that they provide open space for recreation use: why this space cannot equally well be dispersed throughout larger towns is not explained.)

Another aspect of the "new or expanded" choice mentioned in the report, then neglected is that of resource cost, or more accurately the savings from full exploitation of underused infrastructure. This practical matter, quite overlooked in the elevated debates are "essays on civilisation in 1946", proved of crucial importance in the succeeding years, and was a major influence in the change of official policy towards expanded towns ✓

after 1950. Mention of it is rare in discussion, and it is unfortunate that it was not more fully pursued in the 1930s for it is a significant factor in the "jobs to workers, workers to jobs" debate:

"A close enquiry should be made to ascertain how far it may be possible to attract new industry to the areas where unemployment is rife ... having regard to the fact that such areas have already been provided with adequate services such as water, gas and electrical power, and have in existence schools, institutions, churches and all the accessories of modern life."  
(Marley Report 1935, para 9).

The Dissenting Note of one R. Bell highlights the failure of the Report's analytical rigour on the point of green-field or reorganised towns<sup>1</sup>: not everyone was diverted by the tidy Utopianism of the entirely new town:

"The notion that future growth should take the form of independent satellite towns is not based on convincing evidence, and the actual trend of events contradicts any theoretical argument<sup>2</sup> in favour of the idea. Towns extend their limits gradually as a rule and "ribbon development" plays a great part in their expansion certainly "ribbon development" should be controlled but that is an easy matter in comparison with the substitution of a system of founding satellite towns for the natural tendency of places to expand at various points round their original boundaries<sup>2</sup>. In reality the formation of each "satellite" would raise a new set of problems in regard to public services and transport facilities."  
(ibid. Dissenting Note I)

Despite its limitations, the Marley Report represents a prescient and concise argument for comprehensive national and local planning. Its particular views sometimes appear naive, but it makes a sound, and above all, explicit case for planning, and is basically correct in the

- 
1. It should be remembered that if as assumed, the problems of compensation and betterment were solved, there would be no greater economy in building on green-field sites.
  2. Mr Bell over-estimates the opposition case: no theoretical arguments are marshalled.

direction it feels further research should be taken. Its demand that garden city planning must be seen "as elements in the wider sphere of regional and national planning (rather) than as constituting a problem apart" was notably realistic, as editorials in the journal of the Town and Country Planning Association admit:

"I am afraid that the Garden City movement has itself been partly responsible for the neglect of the periphery of London. We have perhaps stressed too much the full-blooded conception of the detached, isolated Garden City and we have not urged sufficiently the need for control of suburban development along Garden City lines."  
(Town and Country Planning, June 1936)

"For better or worse, however, the major job of the foreseeable future will be to improve existing cities and hence to deal with existing social, economic and political facts."  
(ibid. September 1936)

The Barlow Commission Report was a more influential document than the Marley Report, but its contribution to the function of garden cities and their administration is incidental and slight. "Garden cities" were viewed alongside "Trading Estates" as a useful means of decentralisation and dispersal, the value of which was inferred from the Report as a whole. Their value was defined in terms of "environmental quality" at work and in the home, and the model constructed is comparable to that of the Marley Report - satellites offering high environmental quality plus "industrial and other occupational opportunities, preferably with reasonable diversification"; these with links to larger centres, although only, it appears, for access to "medical, educational and recreational facilities". It was not envisaged that wider employment opportunities would be a significant attraction, only "good plays and films" (do no new town residents ever harken after bad plays or films?)

Barlow however added a realistic new element: the Commissioners accepted that creation of entirely new cities could only be on a limited scale. Satellites might equally well be developed through "extensions



on properly planned lines of existing small towns and villages" (para 290).

Why not properly-planned extensions of large cities? Here again there is evidence of how the seductive idea of small clearly-bounded towns could prevail over contrary evidence. Frank Pick (Hall, 1973, p. 48, 378-81) that it was not the case that work journeys must increase with city size, if employment decentralised alongside population, as was happening in an unplanned way in London. Here in 1921, 93% of all public transport journeys were under four miles: in 1937, 96%. During the 1930s, half work journeys were between suburbs, not radial journeys to the centre. Although London had the physical appearance of a single economic unit too large for movement to be convenient, in fact it functioned much as a town cluster, with suburbs as satellite towns and the inner core as the central city.

Significantly, Pick still approved of a halt to further growth, for social and aesthetic reasons: he feared that a "confluent pox" would engulf the home counties. The Barlow Committee may also have had "strategical" considerations in mind when they accepted the general sentiment.

As to who should be responsible for garden city construction, both the majority and minority reports favour local authorities: they can service speedy development, and guarantee a flow of migrants to match capacity, and ones who are likely to carry out development will have enough resources to carry the town through the early unprofitable phase. For these practical rather than ideological reasons, private enterprise development is not encouraged.

Where Marley had appeared to neglect the experience of Wythenshawe, Barlow heeded the evidence of Manchester and Liverpool Corporations on Wythenshawe and Speke, and accepted that for trouble-free development, land should lie inside the promoter's administrative boundary (para 282).

Yet the Report also insisted that the garden cities should be "placed well outside the existing town ... protected by a belt of open country so as to avoid eventual coalescence with the existing town." (para 284).

This combination would seem to have led to important changes in local authority boundaries - either extensions of cities taking in at least the area of green belt between city and satellite, or detached areas of city administration in surrounding counties. It is difficult to believe that would normally have proved a simple or fruitful means of garden city development. ✓

The Commissioners may have intended the resolution to be worked out by central agency recommended to ensure that garden city development is neither haphazard nor inefficient:

"Finally, if the risk of wasteful competition is to be avoided, it seems necessary in the interests of the community as a whole, that some supervision should be exercised by the government over the location and growth of garden cities and satellite towns ..." (ibid, para 285)

Majority and minority reports differed on the form which the supervision should have taken. The majority felt that it should be part of the duties of the 'National Industrial Board.' The minority (which included Patrick Abercrombie) saw it as part of a wider planning function, and called for a body somewhat comparable to Marley's Planning Board, but given greater political weight by being an independent government ministry, rather than appointed agents of the Ministry of Health. In particular, this Ministry:

".. should have power to promote, assist or encourage the building of satellite towns ... by local authorities or other bodies; and to make grants and raise loans for the purpose of acquiring land and building-development values." (ibid. page 223)

The latter was the outcome of the war-time commitment to post-war planning, and for this reason some have seen Barlow's advocacy

of new town development as a significant step towards its achievement. In fact, the Commission's treatment of new towns as such is incidental and superficial: it makes no contribution towards resolving, or even identifying the problems which had to be tackled before new towns as we now know them became a reality. Barlow is not a major advance in this respect. What it did do however, was give enormous weight to the case for national and local planning, and rightly or wrongly, new town development was in most people's eyes part of the bag and baggage of the planner. New town development was in this way helped into the field of planning matters which the wartime government were committed to examining and developing.

## THE REITH REPORTS AND THE NEW TOWNS ACT

At first sight, the prospects for a formal commitment to new towns after 1945, would seem slight. There was a high degree of public determination that Britain after the war should be a better place than the 'land fit for heroes' which had turned so sour after 1920, but this was expressed in terms of the tangible aspects of social welfare: full employment, social security, a free health service and (again) good housing. "Good planning", according to Lord Reith, inspired "massive indifference", and even when planning matters were discussed - the Uckwatt Report, and the 1944 Town and Country Planning Bill for example - it was rare to find garden cities raised save by the enthusiastic members of the Town and Country Planning Association (formerly the Garden Cities Association) in and out of Parliament.

"In those days the idea of new towns was far from popular. The big local authorities disliked the thought of new rateable value going outside their areas; the small rural authorities held out no welcome to London's overcrowded millions. The urban electorate and the men and women returning from the forces wanted houses and jobs, a reshaping of the economy and a new prosperity, but how, when and where was not in issue ... New towns were merely one of many question marks, and there was no noticeable enthusiasm for them in Parliament or among the general public." (Schaffer 1970, p. 12)

The emergence of the new town legislation out of this uncertainty and apathy is due largely to the evangelical commitment of two men - Lewis Silkin and Lord Reith. Silkin was appointed Minister of Town and Country Planning by Attlee in 1945, and in that busy administration was given a high degree of personal discretion. He was deeply dedicated to the new town as a means of post-war reconstruction, and called in Reith not to examine the scope for new towns in this work, but:

"To consider the general questions of the establishment, development, organisation and administration that will arise in the promotion of New Towns in furtherance of a policy of planned decentralisation from congested urban areas; and in accordance therewith to suggest guiding principles on which such Towns should be established and developed as self-contained and balanced communities for work and living."  
(Reith, Interim Report, page 2)

Schaffer (1970) who was at this point an official in the Ministry suggests that a great deal of the groundwork had already been done under W. S. Morrison and Lewis Silkin, and that Reith was partly engaged on public relations work, presenting arguments in which appeared to be an impartial manner, and giving independent authority to the machinery being developed.

The most important administrative issue to be discussed was the agency to build the new towns, and the Committee recognised new towns were not likely to be developed under existing local authority arrangements. Barlow had left unresolved the question of how an urban local authority could administer a block of land at some distance. Reith quickly established that boundary extensions taking in intervening land "beyond question would be strongly opposed by county and district authorities". On the other hand:

"The representatives of some large cities were in general indisposed to consider functioning as land-owners and developers in other authority's area ... They made it clear that they were anxious to retain their populations, rehoused if necessary, within their existing or extended boundaries."  
(Reith, Interim Report, page 7)

Despite this, and the fact that for importing areas, new towns meant heavy initial expenses not met by rateable value increases, for the apparent benefit of "outsiders", Reith was anxious to allow for local-authority-sponsored development, and suggested that local-

authority sponsored public corporations should be used to achieve this.

It is undoubtedly true that for single-minded development, an agency with one clearly-defined task, reasonably free from day-to-day political interference is a more efficient machine than highly departmentalised ✓ and politically-sensitive local authority direct administration.

But this advantage is something of a red herring, for in this context, it is the financial and fiscal impediments to accommodation of one authority's overspill in another's area which are important: who is to pay housing subsidies, how are costs of expensive and lumpy infrastructure investments to be allocated. Of itself, the corporation structure does not resolve these problems, which remain between it and all the authorities involved in the transfer. If local authority representatives are capable of settling these questions within a corporation, they are capable of settling them outside a formal, government-approved structure. The value of the corporation envisaged lay rather in its independence, and in particular its access to finance from the Public Works Loan Board. Power to use this finance to provide services and utilities which local authorities felt unable to provide was power to override local resource allocation decisions.

Silkin<sup>1</sup> and the Government chose not to include provision for local authority corporations, for reasons given by Marshall, the Parliamentary Secretary, when winding up for the Government at the Second Reading:

"The local authority corporations would find it difficult to get away from the local outlook. If they did get away from the local outlook, they would be on the same level as a government-sponsored corporation. The fact is that local authorities are not concerned with the building of entirely new towns. When they want to build new towns they look forward with anticipation to collecting

---

1. "I can see no hope of a speedy agreement being arrived at between an authority desiring to build and the built-in authority."  
(Silkin, Hansard Vol. 422 c 1085, 8th May, 1946)

the rates. They want to own the freehold and link up to the parent town with finances, rates and services and all sorts of other connections. I have yet to learn that the local authorities have expressed any desire to become local authority sponsored corporations..<sup>2</sup> Obviously it is a vast undertaking: it is a national undertaking and it can only be carried out by a nationally sponsored corporation."  
(Hansard, Vol. 422, p.1182, 8th May 1946)

The public corporation can perhaps be seen as a means of restoring the range of powers which had made Howard's "municipalities" such influential machines of development, within tightly-defined geographical boundaries. Finance was to be over a 60-year borrowing period, directly from the Exchequer. The existing local government structure was not entirely replaced, for services and infrastructure would still be provided by the appropriate local agency, which could charge for services provided in advance of rate revenues, but the corporation had power to provide such facilities in default of local agencies, and impose some costs on the agency. The burden of cost was to be determined by discussion, or in cases of disagreement, arbitrated by the Minister. As regards housing subsidies, the practice was that equal subsidies were paid from the Exchequer and from the local authority out of rates. The arrangement that new town houses should enjoy the same Exchequer subsidies as those anywhere else was straightforward, but who was to meet the other subsidy? Exporting areas were perhaps helping towards a better distribution of population, but for them to continue to pay their subsidy on exported population would mean paying for the privilege of losing population and rateable value. And for

---

2. Enthusiasm was not encouraged by the requirement that:

"Local authority sponsored corporations should not provide exclusively for population from the areas of the sponsoring authorities."

(Reith, Second Interim Report, page 22)

the receiving authority, which might be very small in relation to the proposed expansion, the acceptance of the subsidy responsibility would be financially burdensome, and politically very unpopular - paying for the privilege of receiving other areas' (often very unwelcome) problems. Joseph Westwood, then Secretary of State for Scotland, made a very important point in the debate on the Bill:

"The communities and the local authorities belong to the people, not the people to the local authorities. The whole concept behind this bill is that public enterprise should in the national interest carry out in accordance with the best planning principles ..."  
(Hansard Vol. 422 c 1132, 8th May 1946)

In fact he stated what ought to have been the case. Local authority powers to determine who should be eligible for rate-subsidised housing had introduced an element of unfreedom into choice of housing location. To an extent, local authorities had the power to determine those for whom they felt a responsibility. This was not decided on the basis of "the best planning principles" but on other factors, such as length of residence, locality, and whether a change in population would mean a net loss or gain of local authority revenue. For this reason, the task of relocating population according to national planning criteria required not only government supervision, but correction of local authority "market forces" where these worked (through politics or public finance) for other ends. In the specific case of housing subsidies, Reith recommended that for houses not specifically provided for overspill, the Exchequer subsidy should be increased to cover the rate-subsidy element. Where a local authority continued to pay the rate subsidy, it would be given rights to nominate tenants to be overspilled - in other words another form of selection of those for whom responsibility is expressed (Reith, Second Interim Report, page 17). Subsidy payment by exporting authority proved to



be a continuing source of difficulty as it became apparent that a low proportion of those moving to new towns were coming from housing lists, and that houses vacated by people not on housing lists were not always "filtering down" to those on official lists. The difficulties of even such a carefully-devised scheme illustrate how badly equipped local authority public finance and political attitudes fit them to cope with major planned migration. This remains essentially the case for new town planning being a central government responsibility.

As regards formal relationships between government corporations and local authorities, Reith was recommended by local authority associations that there should be local authority representation on development corporations. He chose to ignore this advice, emphasising instead public relations rather than representative influence.

"Some members (of the development corporation) should be chosen after consultation with local authorities concerned, it being necessary to secure local contacts and goodwill, but it is essential that no member of the governing body should regard himself or act as a delegate of any other authority or organisation."

(Reith, Interim Report, page 11)

This contention was accepted by the government, and appointments have officially been on the basis of merit alone, although the steadily increasing proportion of local political figures appointed suggests at least a greater awareness of local sensibilities!

Reith also recommended that:

"It should be obligatory on the corporation to develop and maintain co-operative relations with the local authority and residents of the area, and to create the machinery necessary for that purpose." (Ibid, p.11)

This was not formally required by the Act, and corporations were left to devise their own arrangements. Again it is notable that far

more attention was paid to good relations with local authorities as time passed. Early relationships tended to range from cool to abysmal.

As to the administrative states of the growing town, the Committee recommended that when population justified it, the town should be raised to urban district or burgh status to "help to create a corporate feeling in the new town". But the responsibility of this corporate body would be confined to "certain small local services" during development; the crucial question was of course what was to happen to the agency's assets on completion. This was the single issue on which the Committee members disagreed. Should the assets pass to the normal representatives of the local public interest - the local authority - once the need for the agency's distinctive abilities had passed: or were the dangers in one body being both local authority and landlords on such a complete scale such that the agency should revert to being the estate owner, representing the public interest in this way, and co-operating with the local authority, each in its own sphere?

The valuation at which assets would be transferred is also important, but attitude to this probably flowed from fundamental attitudes to ownership. Those who favoured local authority ownership held that any other arrangement was in conflict with democratic traditions: local authorities would respond to the responsibility presented, and there was no reason to fear "corrupt" administration. On the other hand, "a large majority of the Committee" (said to be all but one member) took the opposite view, thus:

"Though there are at present substantial areas of towns owned by local authorities, there is no case where the entire area of a town is so owned. The problems which are inseparable from monopoly might present themselves here; and continuity of policy in the management of the estate might be endangered by the changes of personnel natural to an proper in a publicly-elected body".

(Reith, Second Interim Report, page 21)

The Government disagreed, and the Act provided that towns when "substantially complete" should be transferred to the local authority. The only fear of Conservatives was that a government might prove tardy, leaving substantial assets in the hands of bureaucratic nationalised ownership, which they disliked. Their attitude radically changed during the 1950s but their fear was of "problems of monopoly": one wonders how many would have openly accepted Reith's view that elected government was bad for the conduct of affairs, because it threatened "continuity of management"! It is fair to note that the Committee spent little time on this problem, since they had every reason to believe that it would be settled as part of a general land policy. This proved not to be so, and the substantial achievements of the new town corporations (about which many were doubtful in 1946) made the principle of ownership important in later years.

In many ways, the Committee tackled the administrative problems of new town creation as fully as could be expected in a discussion of principle, and what emerged was an effective set of administrative arrangements. But the outcome was heavily influenced by the nature of the towns which were seen as the objective, and this was an issue not up for discussion.

The Committee's Report begins with a forthright statement on the function of the new town:

"The twin evils of slums and overcrowding date mainly from the early years of the last century. They have their roots in the unregulated and excessive growth of towns during a period when the health of the people, no less than their spiritual and social well-being, were sacrificed to industrial progress. Men must live near their work. Yet only in recent years has come a full realisation that the solution of the many problems to which these evils give rise, to say nothing of the spoliation of the countryside by ill-considered building, is by setting some limit to the haphazard sprawl of our existing cities and by providing

in new towns, wisely sited and skilfully planned,  
a proper balance between housing and industry."  
(Reith, Interim Report, page 3)

Why is it not possible to plan skilfully balanced housing and industry within existing settlements? Are all towns excessively large? If not, by what characteristics can excessive size be recognised? These questions were not tackled, yet the Committee felt confident in prescribing small units:

"Beyond a certain point the appropriate balance between industry and housing is hard to maintain, the interval distances become too great, the open country is too remote from the centre, and the sense of corporate living and responsibility is lost." (ibid. page 4)

Each of these points is open to question. The "certain point" which the Committee envisaged was at most 80,000: why should it become any more difficult to maintain equality in provision of houses and jobs at this point - or indeed any point (assuming that this is what is meant by "balance")? It has already been shown that Barlow was given that even in unplanned conurbations, increasing size need not mean longer work journeys: co-ordinated location of houses, employment and services in new towns could presumably enable an even better combination of choice and accessibility. Was there ever any evidence that people with gardens placed high value on open countryside within walking distance? Finally, quite apart from the question of what is a sense of corporate living and responsibility, what evidence was there that it diminished when a town reached 80,000 population or whatever?

Particular emphasis was laid on separation from existing cities by a green belt:

".. development ... sufficiently far out to constitute a new town within our terms of reference (would require) ... a very considerable area of intervening green belt land ..  
(ibid. page 2)

The justification for these (self-appointed) "terms of reference" is not stated. But the reasons for preference for substantially green-field sites rather than expansion of existing settlements, are more fully stated and open to comment. The Committee felt that:

- a) Many small towns were not suitable on the basis for larger development (True, but many were: no one claimed that because all open land was not suitable, none should be considered)
- b) Existing settlement patterns would impose constraints on planners (True, but how important a factor is this)
- c) Existing businessmen etc. would be disturbed (Considerate compensation would be required, just as for displaced landowners everywhere).
- d) Existing services cannot always be extended, nor is there always economy in doing so. (This would be a matter of individual estimation, not a general rule. Against this, early inhabitants would suffer great inconvenience until the 'threshold' for each service was attained. Faced with this in practice, some new town enthusiasts claimed that common deprivation was good for the pioneering spirit, not an outlook which welfare economists proved quick in adopting.
- e) There is unlikely to be spare labour or housing.

The interesting fact is that all the important issues were neglected, and have since proved decisive in the tendency towards development of larger initial units. The benefits of ideal final balance of jobs and services are less impressive when people must tolerate lack of choice for many years. New towns are less dependent on immigrant firms when existing firms can respond more incrementally to changing conditions. A better choice of employment is immediately available in addition to existing towns. Open-minded experiment

has shown that the difficulties of integrating future plans with existing forms are not insuperable - and so on. The Committee showed a determination not to consider satisfactory anything but a classic intellectual planned community - small, highly-ordered, comprehensible, clearly-bounded and self-contained.

"Our responsibility, as we see it, is rather to conduct an essay in civilisation, by siezing an opportunity to design, evolve and carry into execution for the benefit of coming generations the means for a happy and spacious way of life. It is in that spirit that we approach our task." (ibid. page 4)

It was not expected that actuality should always correspond to this ideal state - the point was that it ought to. Reith drew on an old tradition, but it was misleading to claim that Howard's ideas were being put into practice. While each garden city (and even each ward) had a degree of self-containment, Howard's construct was based on a hierarchy of interdependence. The town cluster he outlined had a Central City of 58,000 plus six garden cities of 32,000, which gave a total of some 250,000 (remarkably similar to the Milton Keynes proposal!). This population was spread evenly, with green spaces too narrow to be regarded as green belts in Reith's terms. Each part of the cluster had fast rail (update as "motorway") links with each other, and the town cluster would have been a place of a great deal of commuting, as residents each traded off width of job choice and ease of access, and changed job and moved house. As Hall (1973) remarks, the cluster would have functioned like Los Angeles, and looked more like it than the Reithian garden city.

In the search for visible self-containment, Reith raised the size of the single unit, and perhaps fell between two stools, not accepting the dispersed social city, but not able to achieve fast enough growth at the single point to ensure width of choice, at least not initially. It follows from this that Howard's construct

was more dynamic. Continuous adaptation to growing population and changed conditions is possible by cell-like generation of new garden cities, which in themselves offer the integrated provision of homes and services, but are still sufficiently linked to the town cluster to allow maximum width of choice in higher-level services and employment.

By contrast, garden city development as envisaged by Reith and many others like him is a much more static and once-for-all business. New towns are deliberately placed beyond convenient travelling distance, and the emphasis is on eventually reaching an ideal combination of good environment and accessibility to opportunities. There is confidence that the technical and social conditions which determine the ideal will remain constant, so that sacrifices involved in reaching the ideal (such as poor choice of employment or services) can confidently be made. Arguably, Reith and Abercrombie underestimated the sophistication of people's demands of their community facilities. They certainly overestimated the importance placed on simpler pleasures (such as evening strolls in open countryside) and were not mentally equipped to cope with the implications of widespread car ownership. Their model of change was "static equilibrium" - a period of hectic transformation, followed by decades of technical and social standstill.

"Some of the most active propagandists of that period indeed positively argued that rapid change itself was bad, since it set up pressures which could not easily be accommodated in an orderly planned way."  
(Hall, 1973, page 45)

They certainly contemplated no population growth, which was quite different from the situation which Howard responded to, and to actual conditions, until 1970 at any rate.

The importance of the static, ideal view is that the process

of marginal adaptation, aiming at "improvement", but never in the belief that it is anything but a moving, fickle target, is put at a discount, and there is impatience with the agencies - such as local authorities - which practise it. Clear-minded purposive agencies are not regarded as replacing existing local authorities, but simply superintending this limited period of intense change, then handing back the new situation for minor supervision.

The new towns administrative machinery combined several features of British intellectual attitudes. First, the traditional view of the Utopian town as the quintessence of planning, and second, what Meyerson and Banfield (1965) called the "unitary" view of administration. This assumes a Rousseau-like notion of the general good, to which all other interests must be subordinated.

"Such an approach tends to an extremely lofty, yet imprecise definition of the public good in terms of ends with infinite values, which are ideologically derived and are characteristically presented in terms of the absolute virtue of a concrete set of policy measures"

"The unitary approach ... achieves the rare feat of being both non-rational and undemocratic."  
(Hall, 1973, pp 69-70)

The opposite view is the "utilitarian", in which the welfare of individuals and groups is seen to differ and practical resolution of conflicts determines policy. It is:

"a view held by lower- and lower middle-class people, who may find that the rough and tumble of the party political machine politics give them a better approximation to what they want"  
(ibid. page 69).

Lord Reith was "perhaps the most celebrated exponent of the unitary approach"<sup>1</sup> and both the new town as described by him and approved

---

1. Consider the similarities between the BBC and the New Town Development Corporation as envisaged by Reith, not only in the machinery of administration, but the fundamental uplifting purpose of each. See Reith "Into the Wind" pp 95-101.



in legislation were expressions of the approach applied to planning.

"Howard's ideas ... were turned into a fixed blueprint for the future: a design solution par excellence" (ibid. page 45)

The highly autonomous, centrally-appointed and backed public corporation was a unitary device in the classic British tradition (how Edwin Chadwick would have enjoyed being a Development Corporation Chairman!)

"The new legislation relied on a different set of premises. Local and national policy was to decide the essential character of the community in advance. Private decisions were to be made within the framework of an overall plan which embodied these social goals ... The city was no longer to be an incidental by-product of countless individual decisions made in the market with other ends in view." (Rodwin, 1956, page 39)

Throughout planning in 1946 there was an assumption that private enterprise was to be held firmly in check: it was local authority laissez-faire which the Reithians looked forward to controlling. It might seem paradoxical that a measure with so little popular support should move so smoothly through formulation and debate: the reason is the support for the unitary view among the "ruling classes". Schaffer (a planning civil servant) puts across their temper expressively:

"It is little wonder that new town proposals sometimes produce fierce opposition. This is no new problem. The conflict between old and new preservation and change, stagnation and progress is the whole drama of history." (Schaffer, 1970, page 21)

Local government members (and indeed M.Ps) are elected to represent an assortment of utilitarian points of view, and conflict between unitary men of action and utilitarian local interests was inevitable. Advance warning was given by the intense local opposition to designation of Stevenage, planned before the Act was passed. In

the House of Commons, Viscount Hinchinbrook (Dorset South) drew attention to the flaw in the unitary approach:

"The Minister of Town and Country Planning commended this Bill to the House in a felicitous speech to which tribute has been paid by Hon. Members on all sides<sup>1</sup> ... We have had experience of his amiabilities in this House for a great many years, but the strange thing is, that when the Minister goes outside into the countryside in order to prosecute his aims he finds the Englishman unaccountably in opposition to him."  
(Hansard Vol. 422, c 1147, 8th May 1946)

This indeed appeared to be the case: opposition to the initial designations and the subsequent resource requirements of the early new towns was so intense, and the resulting performance vis a vis the house-building efforts of local authorities so poor, that the survival of the towns must be attributed largely to the indomitable will of Silkin himself. Residents of Stevenage had their finger close to the heart of things when they renamed their station "SILKINGRAD" as part of their campaign against designation. The working out of the new town ideal in reality concerned even liberal spirits who were basically sympathetic, such as E. M. Forster, again discussing Stevenage:

"Life went on there as usual until this spring. Then someone ... was casually informed that ... the whole area had been commandeered. Commandeered for what? Had not the war ended? Appropriate officials from the Ministry of Town and Country Planning now arrived from London and announced that a satellite town for 60,000 people is to be built ... Meterorite town would be a better name. It has fallen out of a blue sky."  
(Forster, 1946, p.67)

Apart from the redoubtable Hinchinbrook, M.Ps during debate

---

1. Hinchinbrook was the only M.P. to oppose the Bill which passed without a division, on robust root-and-branch principles.

did not raise such objections, but instead pointed in sorrow, rather than anger at the difficulties which the new town machinery opened up. Mr. Nally, a Manchester M.P. pointed out that self-contained independent new towns cut across "big city ambitions" and tendencies of "cannibalism" which united all parties. W. S. Morrison raised the fear of neglect of old towns, and hoped that new town development was not going to be like the Mad Hatter's Tea Party, moving on to virgin land, leaving the exhausted "place settings" to decline. Colonel Clarke questioned how adjoining local authorities were to bear the expenses imposed upon them, to which Silkin replied:

"So far as other services are concerned, I cannot see exactly what would be the repercussions on outside authorities, but I shall be very happy to discuss the matter with the Hon. and gallant member at a later stage."  
(Hansard, ibid. col. 1092)

which indicates the extent to which Parliament could only discuss, and influence the broad principles on which administrations would work, and could not possibly determine the precise role of new towns in planning as a whole, at this stage. Mrs. Mann, a veteran campaigner for new towns in Scotland, warned that cities were almost irrational in their attachment to population, often at the same time excusing high-density building on the grounds that people had to live close to employment, and demanding even more employment! Mr. Irving complained of the undemocratic nature of the development corporation - the local authority of Tottenham (which he represented) had been amicably working out details of a garden city scheme for Harlow, and he felt that this avenue ought to be left open.

Perhaps it is indicative of the nature of the discussion of (and hence commitment to) new towns, that finance, in the sense of the total cost, is almost entirely neglected. Reith had claimed that no extra expense was involved, since construction would be carried out

in any case. New towns were as cheap as any other arrangement, quite consistent with the efficiency in allocation of investment which the Committee required. No evidence of this was presented, but more importantly, no guidelines were set as to the scope of costs and benefits to be taken into account, to enable decisions on form of development to be taken in specific cases. (Perhaps one does not think in such terms when embarking upon essays in civilisation, but nevertheless the claim was made, and not vindicated<sup>1</sup>). Hinchingsbrook was left to question the claim of £19 million for 12,000 new town houses, or about £1500 each: was this really enough, he asked, to provide not only a house, but the degree of civilised life the Minister had depicted?

And so it was that Parliament, having committed itself to the seductive unitary view of new towns without enquiring the price, was sharply brought to heel by the staggering amounts of resources they required<sup>2</sup> (as revealed by the Public Accounts Committee), and by acrimonious ("utilitarian") disagreements over the allocation of costs among the - sometimes unwilling - participants.

Can the quiescence of Parliament in the face of local authority reserve and popular apathy be explained by members feeling that they were no more than supporting noble general principles which would prove unrealistic anyway? The background to the Act was very much

- 
1. There are, after all, some simple reasons for new town provision being more expensive - such as heavy advance investment in infrastructure, which would remain underused for many years: this is costly in resources.
  2. The acceptance of town development as a cut-price compromise was not a party matter. Although the Conservatives introduced the Town Development Act, it was clear that their Labour predecessors were working along much the same lines.

Metropolitan - it was hurried through Parliament to allow the commencement of Stevenage. It was widely accepted - notably by the LCC - that London needed new towns: this was not controversial, and all the mainstream new towns until 1961 had been determined by studies already carried out and widely accepted.

The Act merely serviced decisions made outside the centralised planning machinery.

But did the Government's intention go further (and so beyond what was acceptable in practice to M.Ps as representatives of constituencies)? In later years Silkin claimed that he had thought that 20 new towns would be needed, and reflected that by the mid-sixties he had been proved correct. This is rather misleading: what he told the House in opening for the Government that initially 20 would be required, the implication being that more would follow as work comparable to Abercrombie's was done elsewhere. An exchange between Silkin and the Advisory Committee on London Regional Planning (which represented local authorities and their planning officials) is revealing for it shows that even although the new town ideal was receiving overwhelming approbation in Parliament, practical planners (as well as local authority members) could look at the same situation, with the same objectives of quality of environment and access to opportunities, and come to quite different conclusions as to the role of the new town.

"In the process of investigating the various centres of population in the Greater London Area, it was brought home to us that in a large number of existing towns, redistributed population could be received to a greater extent than proposed in the Plan (i.e. Abercrombie's) and yet larger additions could still be integrated with the existing centres so as to form reasonably balanced communities. This also appears to be the view generally shared by the Constituent Authorities. Furthermore, as a result of our investigations we have reached the conclusion that new towns cannot be justified solely as being necessary to accommodate redistributed populations, because the whole of the redistribution could if necessary

be effected in the existing communities within 50 miles of London. We agree however that a certain amount of redistribution could be dealt with by the development of new towns, as these will have intrinsic planning advantages and will form valuable examples for guidance in planning extensions of existing towns. In all cases we have kept in view the need for work to be provided near at hand for the redistributed persons."  
(Advisory Committee. Report to the Minister, Para 26)

To which Silkin replied:

".. the Minister regards the provision of new towns as an essential part of the regrouping of the population and not merely as a valuable example in planning; and ... as laready stated, the Minister is generally unable to accept the expansions which the sub-committee recommended in the Green Belt."  
(Memorandum by the Minister .. on the Report of the Advisory Committee ... Para 19)

The point is of course that the agencies involved did not have identical aims, for Silkin and the new town advocates sought the balance of amenity and opportunity only within the context of the traditional ideal town: this as the Advisory Committee probably realised, was the special justification for new towns, and the concomitant central agencies, but they could accept neither ideal nor machinery. In the long run, Silkin was proved wrong, and the Advisory Committee remarkably prescient. Only a fraction of relocation both in the private and public sectors, took place in new towns, and the "idealists" proved not to have the political weight to enforce the new town ideal, or justify its costliness. It proved to be the case that the experiments in town design and organisation were the most significant contributions of the new towns to post-war British planning.

Perhaps the last word should be left to Viscount Hinchbrook, the only man in Parliament to roundly condemn the case for the ideal town and its ideal administrations:

"Who are the Corporation? They are an oligarchy of nine men who are going to rule the roost at Stevenage and in other towns. They are the creatures of the Minister. They are appointed by the Minister. They are responsible to no one but the Minister, and are given enormous powers. It scarcely needs the acquisition of pistols to turn these gentlemen into the bosses of Wild West towns of gold rush times.

One day the spirit of independence of the Englishmen will rouse itself to a fever pitch and will wake these planners out of their dreams.

... members of Parliament who with their friends and associates outside Parliament do not fully understand the Bill and do not like the smell of it. They are nevertheless more powerful politically in the long run."

So unreal was the rest of the discussion that it was this eccentric who was proved correct in the fulness of time. ✓

## NEW TOWNS: THE PUBLIC EXPOSURE

"The New Towns Act is a wonderfully complete and flexible piece of legislation, and the single-minded development corporation an inherently effective instrument of public purpose"  
(W. Thomas, 1972, page 46)

An easily recognisable statement of the Reithian unitary view, characteristic of the New Town Bill debate. But when the Act began to operate in the outside world, other questions became important: "which public?"; "which purpose?" The Act was badly fitted to tackle these types of problem. Perhaps because of the heavy Metropolitan bias in most protagonists' thinking, the Act worked as though strategic plans such as the Greater London Plan would provide the basic planning input. It would then build on the broad agreement that "x" new towns would be required, and provide the machinery for the quick and satisfactory achievement of the objective. The Act itself could not define the new towns required, but it gave no help in setting out the range of factors which were to be taken into account in deciding between new town development and other forms. Nor did it indicate the institutional framework within which consideration was to take place (cf the Marley and Barlow proposals). It offered no guide to how a determinate new town policy would be formulated. How then would plans emerge?

The 1947 Act gave local authorities responsibility for planning, and the Government apparently felt this would be the source, since:

"... the county councils have become firmly established as the local planning authorities for their areas, and are carrying out the surveys prescribed by the 1947 Act, it is expected that the first proposals for sites will come from them, either on their own initiative or in conjunction with their urban neighbours."  
(Town and Country Planning 1943-51, page 123)



The initial experience suggested that this might be so. Stevenage, Peterlee and Basildon originated partly from local authority overtures. Corby, Aycliffe and Glenrothes were also seen by local authorities as cases where the new town machinery could tackle difficult planning problems. But behind this early appearance lay the reality that the urban/rural division in British administration had been built into the planning system.

"Howard saw that there was no solution to the city's problems within the existing framework of municipal administration because one of its greater problems was the lack of economic and social and political relation to the surrounding countryside. What Howard said about the relation of town and country is equally applicable to the entire business of city and regional planning: the administrative unit that is created must be capable of embracing both the urban and rural aspects of the regions."  
(Mumford, 1945, p.35)

This condition was not met in 1947. But there was a second point at which the integration of new town and overall planning could take place - namely through the function of the Ministry to approve plans, and ensure that a coherent rational policy emerged. This assumes the Ministry's capacity to formulate a model national development plan against which to measure local authority submissions. The Ministry itself minimised its function in doing this:

"Will plans of this kind dovetail into a sensible pattern of land use for the whole of England and Wales? .. the greater part of the work of dovetailing and reconciling plans must be left to the local planning authorities themselves.."  
(Town and Country Planning, 1943-51, page 25-26)

The possibility of either source producing strategic plans, to develop a coherent and continuing strategy of new town designation, was dismissed by an American commentator:

".. such co-ordination as occurs is the result of ad hoc consultation between senior civil servants and the more powerful local planning authorities. In the latter case, the conflict of interest between great cities such as Manchester and Liverpool, and their respective county planning authorities throws the burden of co-ordination in many cases on the central government... In sum, despite the great strides which have obviously been taken, it seems fair to conclude that effective town planning will await an intensive overhaul of the national and regional machinery which presently seeks to co-ordinate Whitehall and the local planner." (Presthus, 1952, page 487).

In itself, the young Ministry had not the expertise to fashion a continuing new towns policy out of the submissions which is processed - even if these had been a suitable vehicle for carrying such a policy. Moreover even a coherent national strategic plan at Ministry level would not have been sufficient, for many other more important departments were inevitably involved. The Treasury, the Board of Trade with its crucial industrial location powers; the Ministry of Works, in control of the distribution of scarce building resources; the Ministry of Transport; the Ministry of Housing and Local Government; the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries. Each of these had sectional interests which often were inconsistent with the objectives of new town developments. The problem with impulses so "unitary" as the new town philosophy is that they must expose themselves in the "utilitarian" market place - which in Britain describes the process of central government. It might be expected that "the Government" would be capable of fashioning a corporate programme in which elements such as new towns, would be integrated, and then given continuing support. In fact this is not the case: much administration is done (as Mr. Crossman has recently shown) by inter-departmental committees of officials, which, reflecting the Cabinet itself, are "utilitarian" bargaining places where

conflicts are resolved. They do not operate as corporate policy formulation bodies - hence the need for the Central Policy Review Staff.

This was the environment in which the established new towns had to operate, and in which a continuing policy of designation would be formulated. It was naive for new town advocates to demand (as they continue to) that once a town had been designated, it should be guaranteed the resources (not only money, but industrial development certificates and so on) to carry through the task. This is particularly the case when new towns were designated with no thoroughly worked out concept of what the resource costs might be, and exactly who would be forced to meet the costs.

Each of the new towns found their progress impeded by differences of opinion with other central agencies: one thinks of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries' objections to Basildon's sewerage schemes, which threatened local oyster beds, or the protracted disagreement with the Coal Board at Peterlee, about the effects of town design on coal accessibility. These delays and others like them invariably infuriated the "men of action" who constituted the Corporations, but the effect for the people at large was that it was several years before the new towns began to make a significant contribution to house-provision. During this period the new towns were substantially out-performed by local authorities' piecemeal additions to their stock, a fact which must have done much to foster support for town expansion schemes.

If it is surprising that central government proved so poor at integrating its new town policy with its other strategies, then it is not surprising at all that the new towns had serious

difficulties in dealing with local authorities. Perhaps the emphasis on autonomy of corporations and self-containment of developments led people to underestimate the extent to which new towns would depend on other agencies:

"Development corporations cannot build such 'complete' towns by themselves: they lack the staff, the organisation, the experience, and the financial resources or subsidies. To a much larger extent than is often realised, their task is to enlist the help of other organisations, private or public, that can provide these types of assistance."  
(Rodwin, 1956, p.58)

A high degree of sympathetic co-operation with local authorities was required. And since there was no formal structure for bringing forward new town proposals, the attitude of local authorities would be influenced by their collective experience. By and large this was not fruitful. The distinction between "unitary" and "utilitarian" is very much one of temperamental attitudes to the conduct of public business, and these differences can be seen in the new town administrators' lack of sympathy with the concerns and sensibilities of local authorities. Different aspects of this emerged in different towns. Peterlee's local councillors found development corporation staff aloof and rather contemptuous - from a very different social and intellectual background. At Aycliffe, the effect of development on nearby urban centres was a political issue. At Basildon, Essex County Council had difficulty in providing educational facilities, at Harlow, roads and sewerage proved sources of conflict and delay - and so on. These were issues of substance, made more difficult by the insensitive methods adopted at the top. Silkin's conduct of the Stevenage issue was a model of how to make enemies and antagonise everyone. The local authority and residents were

unnecessarily denied information. After a stormy public meeting, he refused to meet council representatives. He refused to consider changes in the designated area, yet gave no reason for the Ministry's intransigence. He refused to take local sentiment into account in appointing corporation members - and so on. The designation started off as a local authority initiative, but was finally opposed, right to the House of Lords, where Silkin won, but:

"Considering the initial objectives, it was a Pyrrhic victory. Instead of a model town, the programme turned into a frustrating failure, with the Stevenage Corporation in the position of a successful occupying power. Development was practically at a standstill. The lessons were all negative: a record of how things should not have been!"  
(Rodwin, 1956, p.96)

This is particularly sad, because Stevenage was the symbolic prototype new town. It could have served as a model of how the Government would respond to local authorities' planning initiatives. The model instead had a quite negative effect.

The attitude of Silkin was reflected in individual new town personnel. In 1949 Crawley Development Corporation printed in anguish a list of the bodies they had to consult with. Sir Ernest Gowers (former civil servant and advocate of plain words) of Harlow complained of "machinery .. cumbrous almost past belief" (Rodwin, 1956, pp 73-5). There is to-day a greater sympathy with the political constraints within which local authorities operate, but one can still sense contempt for local politics and government among corporations (at least in private)-an incompetent nuisance which people who should realise that the corporation knows best perversely cling to. The essay of Wyndham Thomas (1972) captures the flavour well:

"Getting your new town build... is also an exercise in engineering a variety of consents .. (p.49)

It is particularly important to inform, consult, involve and if at all possible enthuse local authorities (p.50)

My personal conclusion is that public participation in plan-making ... is a costly and largely fruitless exercise .. as one general manager puts it 'sympathetic efficiency' (i.e. 'benevolent despotism'?)

... will give the overwhelming majority all the participation they want." (pp. 51-2).

That said, it is undoubtedly true that relations between corporations and local authorities have improved immeasurably since the '40s and '50s. The practice of appointing local political figures to corporations is well-established, and it may be that Thomas is a "Mark I Corporation Member" - certainly few would give support publicly to his sentiments. As regards financial arrangements, there is greater sympathy in recognising and accommodating local authorities' valid concerns - for example by the "no profit - no loss" arrangement, by which corporations lend money to cover costs during the initial unremunerative period, and the local authorities pay back the sum once the provision produces revenue.

This is to anticipate, for the experience of the first five years gave no such hope for the future. For the established towns, this was a result of imposing a "unitary" vision on a sea quite storm-tossed by "utilitarian" conflicts - within government, within local government and between both. For the prospect of a continuing programme, the Act itself set up no mechanism for achieving it; the workings of the planning machinery could not produce it; and the experience of the first towns did not encourage it. The partial nature of the new town construct is evident in the painful contrast between the planning inside the towns, and the chaos all around:

"In these planned towns a bewildering variety of unanticipated problems have cropped up during

the early years. They were not the physical problems, like subsidence, that are the raw materials with which planners must work. Instead they were problems that revealed the weakness of the broader economic policies and relationships, of the administrative machinery, and particularly of the corrective devices. The problems have appeared under many guises: in public understanding, in resolving conflicts of interests, in administrative flexibility, in co-ordination of inconsistent ministerial policies, in financial formulas... in setting or achieving objectives. As a consequence, the first model towns became examples of bad practice. Towns that started with grass-roots support for a long time steadily lost that support ... The planning mechanism has shown embarrassing failures in forethought. Comprehensive planning has not proved comprehensive; and to the extent that it has, equally comprehensive problems have been generated for which the planners were often unprepared." ✓  
(Rodwin, 1956, p.129).

Add to this the poor performance of the new towns as against local authority housing efforts, and the realisation, through the reports of the Public Accounts Committee, of the true cost of new towns, and the fact that only one town was designated by the Conservatives (who were not opposed in principle) until 1961, is not surprising. The exception is itself significant: Scotland, because of the separateness and more "corporate" nature of its domestic administration (plus the continuous concern for regional prosperity) sustained an interest in regional strategic planning, and it was from this concern that Cumbernauld emerged in 1955. There was no such machinery or concern in England, at least until 1960.

#### New Towns and the Urban Areas

One of the most important conflicts which new towns experienced was with the local authorities whose overcrowding they were intended to relieve. The problem of accommodating the overcrowded was two-fold. First, new towns were intended to be socially "balanced".

Therefore they could not devote themselves entirely, or even substantially, to housing the overcrowded. Second, they were intended to be self-sufficient, and so the emphasis was put on ensuring that only those who worked in new towns would be housed in them. When the majority of inhabitants moved with their firms, it would be entirely fortuitous if some had been previously in housing stress.

The Industrial Selection Scheme was devised to use the remaining houses to help those in housing need, but the emphasis remained primarily on aptitude for employment, so that it was the nature of the firms moving to the towns, and the labour they selected, which determined who was rehoused.

New town supporters continue to stress that while the most overcrowded may not be helped directly, if the vacated housing "filters down", then overcrowding must be relieved. The problem is that if there is movement in to reoccupy property which has been vacated, then the overcrowding and housing stress which local authorities must cope with is not lessened. This became a pressing issue when local authorities were paying a rate fund contribution to new towns or expanded towns on behalf of people they exported. Cullingworth (1959) found that in East Ham 44% of vacated houses were reoccupied by people from other areas. Although many of these were in housing need, so far as East Ham was concerned, it was paying in order to relieve housing need elsewhere. For it, the important variable was the amount of property: unless it was cut down, then the basic position would not change. As explained in the final chapter, the cost of extinguishing land uses was crucial to decongestion. It was substantial, and should in logic have been met from the betterment resulting from development elsewhere. It was not, and this represented first, in aggregate terms



an under-statement of the resource cost of new and expanded towns:  
and second, a weakness in the distribution of the costs and benefits  
of development.

These financial considerations aside, the question of new town  
help for the most needy in cities remains controversial. Deakin and  
Ungerson (1972) demonstrated that even with substantial changes in  
the operation of the Industrial Selection Scheme, only 10% of Londoners  
reached new towns by it. They saw little scope for fundamental  
improvement:

"Seen from our perspective, the chief source of difficulty  
appeared to be the elementary one of incompatibility  
between the two key objectives in the scheme, of satisfying  
employers' needs and meeting London housing needs."  
(ibid. page 25).

The Department of Employment told the Expenditure Committee  
(H.C. 1973-74, 18-iv, q 708-712) that 21,563 were on the ISS register  
in London, and that in 1972, only 591 had been placed in new towns.  
Moreover housing need was not the primary concern in selection:

"So the housing requirements are taken into account,  
though one would not put it very much higher than  
that? - Not in the final analysis, It does not  
rest with the Department of Employment to select  
someone."  
(ibid. q. 729).

It is difficult to see that new or expanded towns can afford  
concentrations of disadvantaged, unskilled and poorly-paid people  
any more than London Boroughs can, but ways in which the relationships  
between new towns and exporting local authorities might be improved  
are explored in the final chapter.

## The Town Development Act

After the suspension of an active new towns policy, the Conservative Government in 1952 passed the Town Development Act<sup>1</sup>. This sought to achieve the substantial advantages of new town development, within the normal local authority structure, by encouraging overcrowded areas to make arrangements with other local authorities to receive population. The provisions made were partly financial and partly administrative. Either exporting or importing authority could build: the normal exchequer rent contribution would be payable, but in addition, for a period of years the exporting authority would pay its rate fund contribution to the importing authority, and in return receive the right to nominate tenants for houses.

In some ways the project was the better of the chastening new town experience. It was based on giving support to voluntary agreements between local authorities: it was less costly in resources, requiring only marginal additions to capital stock (presumably in towns whose primary infrastructure had spare capacity): greater emphasis was placed on resolution of differences before designation, and on using the network of relationships which was already in existence.

In other ways it suffered from the same limitations as the New Town programme. The act facilitated co-operation once the programme of co-operation had been formulated, but could do less to initiate strategic relocation. There would be no assurance, for example, that the areas prepared to accept population were the areas best placed to receive it - either from the point of view of physical accommodation or of industrial development. There was no attempt to dovetail

---

1. The previous Labour administration had been in the process of formulating a similar piece of legislation.

government industrial location policy and relocation patterns. As with the new town policy, there was no accounting calculus or administrative machinery devised to ensure that the distribution of costs and benefits was fair, and encouraged movement towards a better spread of population (however that was determined!).

Just as the New Towns Act had been based on a strategic planning exercise which would not (without government intervention) become the general pattern, the Town Development Act was based on two similar developments. The first was again in London, where the ICC had been working on a number of overspill schemes to supplement the tardy new town developments. The second was in Lancashire. Salford had serious problems of overcrowding, but wholesale annexations of surrounding areas were out of the question. Lancashire County Council moved in as mediators, and helped to conduct discussions between Salford and Worsley, which was willing to expand, but had neither the resources nor staff to cope. There is no doubt that the Lancashire example influenced the emergence of the Town Development policy:

"The arrangements made between Salford .. and Worsley, assisted by the Lancashire County Council, is an example of the kind of scheme which I want to promote and assist under the Bill. That scheme is taking people through the voluntary unaided efforts of the three authorities working together. I believe that what Lancashire does to-day .. England does to-morrow." (Hansard, March 26, 1952, p.180).

The important point is that the quality of the arrangements being organised by London and Lancashire County Councils depended on their being able to act as though they were strategic planning authorities.

The Town Development Act serviced sound plans already formulated, and provided no mechanism by which similar strategic plans could be generated and tested elsewhere. The New Towns Act fell into disuse

partly because the positive input, in the form of Abercrombie-type plans, was not forthcoming. The Lancashire-type strategic plans proved equally unique.

The results of this were two-fold. Much of the development which might have been expected had there been a formal study of population location patterns (either at county, regional or national levels of responsibility) did not take place. Sometimes this was because of "selfish" protection of interests - as in the case of counties' reluctance to take overspill. More often it was because there was no process of supervised appraisal of interests and potential in the field of strategic redistribution of population. This would have been a task for central government, but during the '50s, government interest in regional planning was at a low ebb, and it unfortunately took the shock of the Wythall inquiry, concerned with distribution of population in the West Midlands, to arouse concern once again. For Wythall was more than anything an indictment of Government neglect of the situation and consequent failure to act, either by new town designation or by fostering expanded town arrangements vigorously. The limited nature of the Town Development Act (essentially the absence of a positive policy of strategic planning to accompany the<sup>1</sup>/<sub>3</sub> supportive measures) represented a lost opportunity. The New Towns Act was a tacit acceptance that because of the "market imperfections" - fiscal, psychological, economic etc. - local authorities on their own had no incentive to attain an optimum distribution (however determined) of population. The centralist device adopted was not capable of achieving the distribution, but a system re-integrated with local authority jurisdiction might - but not without a device for exposing mal-distribution and devising improvement.

The second result of the Act was that often its use was an administrative device for carrying on the inter-war pattern of suburban sprawl:

"... most (of the provincial schemes) are small-scale schemes which represent little more than house-building on the other side of the borough boundary. The important point is that these latter schemes are more than likely to result in commuting back into the conurbation to work. They are the very reverse of self-contained and balanced development." (Hall, 1973, p.356)<sup>1</sup>

Where overspill agreements were more in the nature of true country town expansion with the essential functional features of new town developments - as in the case of many Metropolitan schemes - this was fortuitous. The basic problem however was that redistribution did not occur on a large enough scale - hence the exposure of the complete absence of coherent government policy in the West Midlands by the Wythall Inquiry, and the hurried resumption of new town designation (yet so recently as 1957 the Government had firmly stated that no further new towns were required!)

#### The Second Wave

"The approach does not seem to have been sufficiently comprehensive ... The balance sought has been largely between place of work and residence, between town and country. Not enough emphasis has been placed on the varying functions and sizes of cities; on the interrelationships of existing and new cities; and on an evaluation of development prospects and requirements from a regional and national point of view. Howard himself remarked near the end of his career that when he conceived of the idea of

---

1. See also Cullingworth (1960) Housing Needs and Public Policy, Ch. 10, Dickinson (1963) Town Planning Review, pp. 49-62.

garden cities, practically no one had "any conception whatever of regional planning. A colossal mistake might be made if in starting New Towns the importance of their interrelationship has not been sufficiently recognised." Exploring this wider more 'balanced view would appear to be one of the major tasks of the present generation of planners."  
(Rodwin, 1956, page 71).

Rodwin was one of the most consistently perceptive critics of British new towns policy, and it was the issue which he raised ✓ that was taken up in the '60s, in a succession of regional studies. The role of new towns was widened, taking in not only overspill, but regional rehabilitation. As with the first wave of London new towns, the towns formed part of a wider regional strategy, and again as with the Greater London Plan, the plans were drawn up not by established planning authorities, but by ad hoc regional economic planning agencies whose limitations were lack of direct democratic responsibility and the fact that so far as local authority planning was concerned, they had only advisory powers. Clearly, however, since central government planning and investment decisions at a strategic level (new towns, motorways, etc.) would be influenced, and the degree of interrelationship now accepted meant that central decisions would deeply influence also the environment within which local authorities would work, it was important that authorities should have some influence on the planning process. The Lothians Regional Survey and Plan (1966) illustrates one aspect of this - the involvement of the relevant planning authorities in plan formulation, and their endorsement of the proposals. In theory no further formal influence is required, since only agreed proposals will be pursued, but in practice this represents an over-estimate (perhaps characteristic of the '60s) of the durability of

strategic plans. Circumstances alter, and in the absence of continuing formal machinery to supervise plan adaptation, conflicts may emerge. For example, the Lothians Regional Plan proposed a regional shopping centre at Livingston. Despite the fact that only half the expected population growth in the survey area has been achieved, the Development Corporation are pursuing the shopping proposal; and local authorities are seriously concerned about the effects on existing shopping centre. (The shopping analysis was extremely poor to begin with, which highlights another problem of the super-confident '60s, over-estimation of the permanent validity of a single planning document.)

The second important element in the involvement of local authorities in new town planning during the '60s was the "Partnership" concept, applied initially to Northampton, Peterborough and Warrington. The primary purpose of the arrangement was to come to terms with the fact that sizeable towns were being expanded in which it was neither desirable nor possible to replace existing authorities. But the scope of the arrangement was widened to include surrounding authorities whose resource allocation and planning environments were affected by the town expansions. The experience of the Peterborough partnership was reviewed in the 6th Annual Report of the Development Corporation (H.C. 1973-74, 317), and the kernel of the arrangement appears to have been the building up of a strong corporate management structure, on which all parties to the partnership were represented. A Development Corporation is precisely this - a very powerful "policy and resources committee", but the burden of co-ordination appears in Peterborough to have fallen on the parallel professional teams. Chief Officers met jointly to review progress, while subsidiary joint professional teams were appointed where necessary - for example to

deal with city centre redevelopment, planning of housing areas, provision of social facilities, co-ordination of inputs to development, and so on.

Perhaps the high professional quality of work and corporate integration gives the misleading impression that the political component in the partnership was minimal. There was certainly no political equivalent to the chief officers' review group, but local authority influence could and did lead to basic objectives being altered where necessary.

The value of forcing apparently disparate interests into the same boat is simple. Whether they approve of it or not, the interests must operate over the same physical and economic and social space. It is better that conflicts should be played out within the abstract structure of a partnership (where alternative policies can be generated and tested quickly and costlessly) rather than involve real people, real resources and really long time spans. A formal and permanent "boat" in the form of a partnership agreement serves to concentrate the minds of all on resolution of conflict.

An example of the situation which can arise when the (sometimes painful) process of integration is not carried through is provided by the discrepancies in rent policies between East Kilbride and the surrounding areas<sup>1</sup>. Broadly speaking, house rents are substantially lower in local authority areas than in the new town. As a result many less-skilled employees in the new town are encouraged to remain in their old houses, while many white collar employees working in

---

1. Since the operation of the new towns' rent rebate scheme the differences are less real, but many people have not comprehended the changes, and the differences are still perceived to exist: the point remains valid.



Glasgow find that they cannot obtain suitable rented accommodation except in the new towns. The result is a high degree of commuting within the region<sup>1</sup>, which could be avoided given a higher degree of integration of housing rents policy. Daily movement is costly, and Thomas (1969, page 917) suggests that the development of East Kilbride and Cumbernauld may in practice have worsened road congestion in West Central Scotland. Lack of integration of house allocation policies may have the same effect.

#### New Towns and Regional Planning

The experience of the last fifteen years illustrates the need for continuous participation of local authorities in the formulation of new town policies, so that the machinery already in existence can be given the essential input absent in the 1946 and 1952 formulations - that is, a framework of strategic planning which comprises the two elements, of a central government policy on inter-regional distribution of population and industry, and intra-regional strategies which have the informed consent of the authorities affected by the proposals. ✓  
The partnership towns illustrate the value of collaboration, but represent only three isolated examples. How is the co-ordination to be achieved more widely?

Unfortunately local government reform in England does not everywhere facilitate such co-ordination within the statutory planning system.

"The theory of - and the main justification for - local government reform has been that by making local government boundaries correspond to city-regions, plan-making

---

1. More than twice the level found in comparable London new town situations.

within each local authority can refer to a natural unit of economic and social interaction... Many of the units based on the larger free-standing cities such as Leicester, Nottingham or Bristol, seem to correspond tolerably well to the city-region concept ... But in some critical areas of the country ... there will be no such guarantee. First by cutting the areas of the so-called metropolitan counties back to the limits of the physically-built-up conurbations, the reform perpetuates the split between city and countryside in precisely those places where it has proved to be most serious in the past ... Second, by trying to preserve traditional county boundaries as far as possible, the reform continues divided responsibility for some of the most important growth areas of the country. (Hall, 1973, p.452)

The present Labour government supported the original Radcliffe-Maud proposals, but has indicated that another bout of reform is not to be expected within 10 or 15 years. Hall (ibid 451) suggests that the compromise will be the continuation of ad hoc strategic planning by the standard planning regions:

"It will give what has been conspicuously lacking in the history described in this book: strong regional guidelines for development of the whole region, within which local planning authorities can set their structure plans." ✓ (ibid. page 451).

The participants in the planning process are likely to be the Regional Planning Council (representing a fairly standard range of local notabilities - trade unionists, planning and economics professors, etc.); the Regional Planning Board (representing central government departments concerned with the area); and local authorities.

As regards new town-type development in furtherance of a strategy, the question is not whether a development corporation-type agency appointed via the consortium will be suitable for the task, but what other agency could possibly negotiate the minefield of diverse interests, split planning functions and multiple contributors to development. A particularly explosive issue has now been added in

the form of local authorities' claims on realised development values. This (itself being two-tier) accentuates the difficulties of two-tier planning, and provides a comprehensible issue (i.e. "who gets the money for which development") which the public and local authorities will find easy to get very heated about.

The success of the three-cornered partnerships already in existence suggests that there is reason for hope that more complex partnerships over larger areas might well prove the best possible agencies for new town (and any other appropriate) developments within the framework of regional strategic planning.

Like the Regional Planning Councils themselves, the device can only be a second-best alternative to fully-representative regionally-organised local government. The extent of collaboration between authorities in formulation of structure plans already apparent is an indication that they themselves realise the limitations of the framework within which they are being asked to plan, and are groping for a better system. The existing economic planning region framework offers an authoritative structure with a background of co-operation, and well-fitted to comprehend the more interventionist policies in prospect both for industry and planning.

The proposal is not a tidy, foolproof recipe for co-operation, but planning by its nature is not amenable to such solutions: a plan which was anything but tentative, pragmatic and flexible should be viewed with suspicion.

The final chapter takes up this general principle, and explores why the interrelationship between new towns and existing settlements is likely to become closer. It suggests in more particular terms how the new town machinery might be adapted for its more integrated role.

## THE EMPLOYMENT CASE FOR NEW TOWNS AND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATIONS

New towns set out to provide employment for their residents, and whether one can point to self-containment in these simple terms, clearly they have been very successful in attracting employment. But has this employment simply been diverted from other locations? New town enthusiasts have frequently claimed that new towns not only divert growth, but generate growth which would not otherwise have taken place: this makes them an important tool in regional development. By creating conditions favourable to growth, new towns attract employment to problem regions which would not otherwise have come, and foster growth in indigenous and immigrant industry which would not otherwise have occurred:

"There is little doubt that the single most outstanding achievement of the seven (i.e. non-London Mark I) new towns is their contribution to industrial growth. All three Scottish new towns - East Kilbride, Cumbernauld and Glenrothes - and Newton Aycliffe in County Durham, have brought pockets of prosperity and almost full employment to within otherwise depressed regions. Without these new towns, the problems of Scotland and north-east England would be that much more intractable."  
(Thomas, 1969, p.941)

"In the cases of Scotland and the North-East in particular, the new towns have been much needed magnets for new industrial growth."  
(Self, 1974, p.85)

The purpose of this chapter is to consider whether this is the case, and if so, what the attributes of new towns are which make it so. In particular, are they attributes which local authorities would find difficult to duplicate? Central Scotland is the British region where the theory and practice of new towns as tools of regional policy

has been worked most thoroughly, and evidence in the chapter will largely be drawn from the area.

The growth of employment pari passu with population was essential for avoiding "dormitory" tendencies in new towns. This was stressed in the Reith reports (see Interim Report, page 14 for example), and the fear in 1946 was that this might prove difficult (Letchworth and Welwyn did not induce optimism). Suffice to say that within ten years, Professor Self discussed the "New Town's Industrial Boom" (Self 1955), suggesting that so far from being hindered by lack of employment, the very success was in danger of encouraging too great an expansion of the planned populations.

In the changed circumstances of the sixties, when regional problems once more became an active concern of the government, the impressive industrial growth of the new towns in the depressed regions suggested a more active role for new towns in regional policy. Prior to this point there had been virtually no link between new town location and regional policy. By 1960 75% of capital expenditure had been within 25 miles of London and as for the non-metropolitan new towns:

"The fact that only two - Corby and Glenrothes - of the seven ... were located outside development areas as defined from 1945 to 1958, must be recognised more as a happy coincidence than as a positive act of regional planning."  
(Diamond, 1972, page 58)

New towns had already experienced the sort of conflicts which would arise from pursuit of other objectives - Board of Trade refusals to grant development certificates for towns not in development areas, and so on. The case for using new towns in pursuit of more widely defined national policies was clear enough - and it certainly had

an impressive pedigree.

Moreover new towns appeared to fit perfectly into another policy being strongly developed in regional policy - that of Growth Areas. The package of ideas collected under this title was extremely persuasive. It represented a reaction against defensive regional policy, emphasising the need to invest capital in areas with potential for growth. Investment in scattered, isolated facilities and factories was also mis guided, the argument ran, because only by concentration of effort would the "external economies" of growth and scale, so crucial to self-sustaining growth, be created. Professor Wilson, writing in 1964, catches the fervour well:

"No claim to novelty can be made for the consideration .. They are really very familiar. What is surprising is that it has taken so long for them to be adequately recognised in the formulation of policies for the less prosperous areas. For it will not do simply to select a number of scattered districts with particularly heavy unemployment and to offer certain inducements to industrial expansion ... If the policy is really to succeed, particular stress must be laid on the existing industrial centres or on the scope for creating such centres. What is needed is a plan for regional development rather than piecemeal measures for small scattered districts."  
(Wilson, 1964, page 13)

Because of their previous record, new towns commended themselves for selection as growth areas, or more accurately as the growth points in growth areas: an example from the two regional development White Papers (on Scotland and the North-East) which were organised around growth area concepts:

"Outstanding examples of rapid growth in recent years have been the new towns and certain overspill reception centres. Here there has been a deliberate and co-ordinated attempt to build up, according to a properly phased programme, industrial, commercial and residential communities capable of progressive and self-sustained expansion."  
(Central Scotland, 1963, para 102)

It was felt that the success could be repeated: Professor Self claimed in his evidence to the Hunt Committee on the Intermediate Areas that:

"the most obvious and satisfactory growth point is a new town."  
(Self, 1968, page 21)

Much regional policy is concerned with infrastructure investment, and this may explain the ease with which "growth area" policy becomes "growth point" policy, with the new town as the point. It can be claimed that a given quantity of infrastructure investment has the greatest impact when concentrated within one urban unit, but no analysis of why this should be so has been offered. Or it may be that it is cheapest to plan, that there are planning economies of concentration (the South East Study, 1960, suggested that concentration on growth areas economised on planning capacity, a scarce resource). Or it may be that since central government has most comprehensive and direct influence on new towns, concentration on them is administratively convenient. Whatever the case for growth points offering economies in infrastructure (and what evidence there is tends to suggest that economies of scale in service provision are very limited), this is not the question; rather, are there sound reasons to believe that conditions for economic growth are enhanced by the close physical concentration of activity which new towns have claimed as their particular strength? The distinction between growth areas and growth points has been a real one: Glenrothes and Livingston were in the late 'sixties given Special Development Area status, while their officially designated growth area hinterlands had only Development Area status. This cannot be justified (so far as economic growth is concerned) unless there are advantages in tight economic agglomeration.

Growth point theorists have argued that there are both input-output and external economies of concentration. The first group

concerns the availability of components - low transport costs, reliable delivery, quick spreading of innovation and response to changed market and technical conditions. External economics arise where the activity of one firm reduces the costs of others: specialist services can be sustained: firms will benefit from the growth of a specialist labour pool: it may be possible to support industry-wide research and development facilities; local schools and universities may specialise in appropriate disciplines - and so on.

The test of the theory is how far new town (growth point) economic development has displayed such characteristics. Glenrothes, for instance, clearly fits the pattern, by its specialisation in electronic engineering. After the arrival of the first electronics firm in 1958, the Development Corporation fostered the idea of the new town as an "electronics centre", and today the town and surrounding area has a large number of firms in the industry. There are specialist component suppliers and a high degree of technical linkages. Local schools are very strong in mathematics and physics, and close links are maintained with the four nearby universities. There is clearly a specialist labour force, for firms located elsewhere advertise in the local press for staff.

Glenrothes, however, is very much the exception. Sound information on the input-output characteristics of other growth points such as East Kilbride and Cumbernauld is scanty, but one could be confident of Industrial Development Officers making the most of external economies of this kind, and they are never mentioned. Until demonstrated otherwise, one may assume that they do not exist. The West Central Scotland Report described East Kilbride's growth as follows:

"What appears to have happened is that growth areas (particularly the new towns) have attempted with some success to attract any growing industry without losing their strategy too closely on the possibilities of building up a complex of inter-linked industries ..."  
(WCS Report: The Regional Economy, page 368)



Cumbernauld is described in an appendix to an EFTA study of growth area theory. One would expect its economy to be discussed in terms of external economies of scale in this context, but instead:

"The products made in Cumbernauld are diverse; the town has a good representation of science-based industry, and products made by other manufacturers include carpets, clothing and packing cases."  
(EFTA

which is hardly a strong case for the existence of industry-specific external economies!

Nor is it at all clear that the availability of specialist services for industry as a whole, is a significant feature of new towns as growth points. Casual inspection does not turn up research laboratories, public relations consultants, financiers, company doctors or the like. Would new towns be all the better for being large enough to support them? Luttrell (1972) who is a location consultant to private industry barely mentions the possibility:

"There are various functions like financial and higher commercial facilities that are hardly found at all in medium-sized towns, so that a new town will tend to lack these types of jobs especially in its earlier years."  
(Luttrell 1972, p.81)

The early lack does not appear to be a major hinderance. A converse example, where presence of such a high-level service proved to have no local effect, is the National Engineering Laboratory at East Kilbride. The decision to locate in a new town was intended to cultivate a "technological growth point" because of the close physical proximity of research and development advice. In fact use of the facilities has not proved to be related to physical distance at all directly.

The argument for growth areas is that linkages, external economies, transmission of innovation etc. are important for growth. They have a spatial dimension, therefore should be spatially concentrated for

maximum effect. The weak link is the second. Much growth area theory was grafted from the economics of underdevelopment, where "scatter" might mean random distribution over thousands of miles of badly-serviced wilderness: here the case for external economies being closely related to distance would be strong. But these are not the physical conditions in Britain, which has a relatively dense communication network. This influences and is influenced by the organisation of firms. Purchases of inputs is not characteristically influenced by the population of firms within a set distance: firms such as BMC at Bathgate and Rootes at Linwood did not develop technical linkages with local suppliers as had been expected, but continued to purchase from previous suppliers in the Midlands. Flows of information and innovation might depend on the circulation of a weekly specialist newspaper, not on face-to-face discussion. Even transport economies of concentration may not be significant when firms operate standard pricing over large areas.

For reasons such as these, the West Central Scotland report was sceptical about the validity of small pockets of growth-area within the industrial belt.

"It can be argued that Central Scotland is too small and well-developed for the growth area policy to have much effect in inducing firms to grow faster because of technical or external economies ...

The incidence of economies of concentration would appear to be very slight where there is an excellent transport network not directly associated with the growth areas. Industrial estates within the central belt seem to be just as well able to take advantage of technical economies, which do not appear to be a specific advantage of the growth areas ...

Designation of the Growth Areas in 1963 ... implied rather too precise a distinction between individual locations within the central part of the region ..."

(WCS 1974, The Regional Economy pp 366-69)

Diamond (1972) suggests that the 1963 White Paper forestalled this objection, and in fact was a strategy for securing the economic and social advantages of a high density city along a 100 mile

urbanised zone from Ayr to Dundee.

"Economies of scale and linkage, pools of skilled labour, proximity to large consumer markets, choice in educational, technical and vocational opportunities can, it is believed, be more efficiently provided in this polynucleated urban form not fundamentally very different from Ebenezer Howard's idea of "social cities"."  
(Diamond 1972, p.63)

Why then was there further locational distinction, the granting of preferential development area status to the tightly-defined new towns? It may have been to encourage a faster take up of underused infrastructure - such as sewers - and so to alleviate the costliness of an initial bad decision to develop on self-contained new town lines. But Cameron (1970) in his review of growth area policy, corroborates that spatial discrimination in fiscal or economic policies on the grounds of better conditions for growth, is very difficult to justify. Not unnaturally, the surrounding authorities find discrimination which appears to have no economic justification evidence of undue sympathy of central government towards its new town favourites.

This analysis suggests that (provided there is spare capacity for residential overspill) there would be no economic disadvantage in expanding existing settlements within broad urbanised zones such as the central belt of Scotland, dispensing with new towns and their administrations (which local authorities see as a permanent slur on their abilities). This belief is partly borne out by the record of different areas in West Central Scotland in attracting and generating employment. The apparent success of the East Kilbride and Cumbernauld areas is due largely to the fact that they had no declining industry to cope with. Any employment attracted was a net growth. In gross terms, between 1958 and 1968 they attracted only 31% of immigrant employment. Other areas took 69% of the growth, an achievement

masked by the decline in their inherited industries.

Nor is it the case that firms once established in the new towns grow notably faster than those locating in the older settlements. Until proved otherwise, there appears in practice to be no profuse growth pointing to the presence of technical and external economies. Having said this, new towns in the central belt have grown in ways which suggest that they do have particular characteristics.

"... the success of East Kilbride in particular draws attention to the special attraction of a new town location and of the importance of growth itself as a factor producing more growth .. If it were a question of being attracted by low rents or cheap labour, there is no reason to believe that they would go to East Kilbride. Factory rents are the highest in Scotland. The social composition of the town and the long journeys necessary for workers from Glasgow are not the sort of conditions to produce low wages. East Kilbride is a case of success breeding success ..."  
(Thomas 1969, page 923)

If the explanation is not economies of linked production or of concentration, what is it? The experience of Glasgow perhaps gives a clue, for it is quite the reverse: of the 69% of employment outside the new towns, it took only 8%, and this percentage has been falling further. The West Central Study concluded that this was due to the "very limited choice of industrial sites". Thomas (1969) makes the point that by contrast:

"Perhaps the biggest single difference between the new town development corporation and most local authorities is that development corporations do seriously try to match the levels of employment and population." (page 815)

The early commitment to employment growth, and perhaps the "business" background of many development corporation members meant that new towns have long been skilled in wooing and servicing industrial growth. To the businessman it appears that new towns understand his problems. They have skilled staff entirely devoted

to making sure that his needs are met, and above all, the machinery is capable of moving very quickly. Some local authorities are equally good, but too many, as one industrialist described, believed that a brochure with views of the town was enough to influence huge capital decisions. The decision to provide well-sited, well serviced, industrial areas and buildings can be a political one: Glasgow during the 'fifties and 'sixties chose to devote its green-field sites to housing, and (presumably) accepted the risk of industrial growth being jeopardised - which it was. But more often one senses that the problem is simple incompetence: industrialists are not pursued earnestly enough; industrial sites are badly located and inadequately serviced; there is not enough flexibility in dealing with needs; and the whole process is a slow muddle through many committees. One can only hope that a corporate approach to responsibilities and administration will raise all local authorities to the level of competence of the new towns - there is no reason why it should not. It does seem particularly important: asked about the value of new towns in regional policy, the Department of Trade and Industry told the House of Commons Expenditure Committee on New Towns that quite simply:

"They provide a planned environment and are extremely helpful in promoting the economic development of central Scotland."  
(House of Commons 1973-74 18-ix question 1284)

The other great strength of the new towns is their ability to offer subsidised housing to all employees who want it. This is much more difficult for local authorities to match, for quite sound reasons.

As Thomas (1972, pp 824-25) points out, if housing were bought and sold like bread, readily available wherever a market developed for it, then the case for new towns would be very different. Housing is not like bread, and there is virtually no market in rented accommodation outside city centres. On the one hand houses can be bought,

and on the other, local housing authorities operate local monopolies, allocating tenancies according to rules of their own devising. House policies are close to the heart of local politics, and local needs are strongly emphasised - eligibility is usually according first to "need", and secondly to length of residence, or time on waiting list.

The nature of this system was described by Cullingworth as follows:

"The residential qualifications imposed by many councils have been the subject of repeated criticism, but in spite of this they threaten to constitute a new law of settlement. Clearly there are dangers that this may retard industrial mobility. There is an indication that this may be so: only 4% of council tenants moved for employment reasons, compared with 15% of all movers ... Local authorities appear to be in practice well organised for meeting local needs in a static situation."  
(Cullingworth, 1965, page 61)

New towns were also monopolists, but they allocated housing according to the needs of industry. They could offer a "package deal" to employers and employees. Employers were assured that their key workers would be given houses (sometimes even all the workers who chose to move with the firm). The Industrial Selection Scheme would then ensure that any incoming workers they chose would get houses. In 1961 the Tothill Committee of Inquiry on the Scottish economy set out the effects:

"An industrialist coming to a new town ... can therefore count not only on the existing supply of labour, but the labour which will be prepared to come, given housing. This has weighed very considerably with some of the enterprises which have come to Scotland within the last few years ... So long as the shortage of houses persists, whether real or exaggerated by low rents, the provision of houses under overspill schemes will remain one of the chief means of facilitating mobility."  
(Tothill, 1961, page 141)

Many local authorities would claim that development corporations were exploiting their undemocratic position to pursue socially unjustified policies: even if greater employment growth resulted, it

was bought at too high a price if housing resources were diverted from those in "need" to those already well housed. This is a point of view which the economist cannot criticise, although he can explore the consequences. Toothill takes one view:

"Some authorities - especially in the industrial belt - have an excellent record of helpfulness (i.e. in providing housing for incoming workers), some have a mixed record, many have been frankly bad. It is difficult, or it may be understandably be thought to be thought to be difficult, for a local authority to give houses to people newly arrived in the area when local people have been waiting for years for a house. It can be argued that special subsidies are payable for these houses, but the house-hungry may be unimpressed ... In consequence the community as a whole may suffer out of all proportion to the demand it failed to meet."  
(Toothill, 1961, page 133).

Local authorities should certainly feel aware of the consequences of their house allocation policies, but the important point for the question of new towns as employment generators, is that neither of the advantages identified in new towns need to be confined to specific points: they do not depend for their operation on concentration of economic activity in a small geographical area. For this reason, these advantages are quite different from the "growth point" advantages traditionally claimed for new towns, and can be achieved in any administrative unit, given the political will. The likelihood of local authorities sticking with their "local" and "static" attitudes, and the function of central agencies in this situation is considered in the chapter "New Towns: The Future".

It has already been suggested (Thomas, 1969, p.923) that in East Kilbride growth itself produced more growth. This is the concept of "economies of growth" as distinct from those of scale or concentration. There are two ways in which this might operate - first, through quality of environment and second, through expansion of the

labour force.

Growth is accompanied by investment in infrastructure and services, and the newness of the environment may of itself encourage further growth. This argument has in the past been associated with new towns (probably because of the attractiveness to physical and design planners of starting with a blank sheet: "economies of scale" was probably a rationalisation - empirical research done shows these economies to be very minor).

"Newness and freshness of their environment ... ensure that new towns have a strong impact on the character and image of a region. In particular they provide a striking contrast to the urban obsolescence which is typical of old industrial areas."  
(Self, 1968, page 21)

What is the benefit, one wonders, of this (provocative?) contrast to the inhabitants of depressed regions, and exactly how does the "impact" operate? In short, is there any reason why the benefits of environmental newness cannot operate in existing settlements?

Turning to the labour force advantages, the prospect of continuing growth in the labour from which choice can be made can be attractive to the industrialists. Secondly, the experience of economic prosperity can induce high motivation and adaptiveness in a labour force (which is very far from being a homogeneous quantity). Thomas (1969) has suggested that East Kilbride's wide opportunities have encouraged a general upgrading in the quality of the labour force through re-training. Conservatism and defensiveness among labour in declining areas is such a limitation on adaptiveness of local economies that "growth-mindedness" and a favourable "intellectual infrastructure" are qualities to be valued highly.

Is there any reason to believe that such phenomena are confined to new towns? The West Central Scotland report suggests not. Moreover



it suggests that the concentration of overspill in new towns has denied the advantages of economies of growth to indigenous industry, much of which finds it impossible to face the direct and indirect costs of relocation.

"... our emphasis on the scope for an improved performance on the part of indigenous industry and the existing industrial structure suggests that particular emphasis in physical planning should be placed on the opportunities for development in the central part of the region, i.e. broadly the existing conurbation, where the greater part of existing industry is located."  
(WCS, The Regional Economy, page 312)

In other words, the benefits of an increasing population, so far from being maximised by concentration on a few growth points (the quite unsubstantiated "creative" use of overspill so much in vogue during the 'sixties), would have a larger effect if used in existing settlements, so helping indigenous industry not capable of moving. There have also been suggestions that indigenous industry is capable of providing more unskilled employment than mobile industries characteristically bring to new towns.

This chapter deals only with the aspects of new towns which are said to have an influence on conditions for economic growth: there may be other justifications, such as aesthetic quality, the innate superiority of bounded towns, economies of scale in provision of services, but "faster economic growth" is often used as the clinching argument.

In fact, it is very difficult to find either in theory or in practice evidence that this is likely to be so. In the context of British industrialised regions, there appear to be few advantages to the firms in close physical concentrations of economic activities and services in a "growth point", (which has often been a new town). There is no evidence that the favourable effects of growing population

or newness of infrastructure are any greater for being concentrated at a small number of points, rather than spread around more, according to other criteria. And the latest work (such as the West Central Study) suggests that opportunities for growth in indigenous industries and in the less skilled type of employment which they provide may be lost unless growth is allowed to take place in existing settlements.

Finally, even if it could be demonstrated that concentration can create more employment growth in aggregate, the process by which the benefits of this are transmitted to the surrounding areas has never been satisfactorily discussed.

"... by forming focal points of especially vigorous economic development, particular growth areas will help to create a favourable climate of growth in the wider catchment areas associated with them."  
(Central Scotland, 1963, para 104).

This is typically vague skating-over of the question. Growth point theorists seem to assume a powerful "invisible hand" at work, yet this area of economics is notorious for the absence of the perfect conditions needed for automatic, costless adjustment: daily travel seems to be widely assumed as the means of spreading benefits, but movement is costly, and people most in need are often the least mobile.

In some ways the "case" for growth points is no more than hunches or hopes given a spurious firmness by being named as if proved economic phenomena. Growth points are a tool of positive regional policy, allowing integrated provision of services and creative use of overspill. They become focal points of development from which growth diffuses through the local economy by means of a series of spread effects. ✓

Word-spinning such as this is almost totally devoid of firm and testable meaning, yet its influence is immense. Perhaps it serves to reassure the planner that he, and he alone, understands and can control that most mysterious of forces, growth!

New towns have flourished by their ability to meet the needs of industry, in the provision of well-serviced and located sites and premises, and in particular their ability to adapt housing policies to the needs of industry. Their ability derives partly from the longer run, prospective view (as against short-run and retrospective) which their centrally-appointed status allows, and partly from superior administration and management - essentially the "corporate approach" applied intelligently. There may be a case for retention of development corporation machinery if local government fails to take note of the lessons, but in no way are these attributes able to be achieved only in concentrated geographical boundaries, such as new towns set up as growth points. They are not a case for growth points.

This chapter seeks to review the experience of the new and expanded town machinery at work, from the point of view of its future use. This question is currently being discussed in Government. During the 1973-74 session, the Home Affairs Sub-Committee of the House of Commons Expenditure Committee examined the new town experience, and in particular invited evidence advising on:

"The possibility of using new town machinery and procedures in other planning situations."

(Royal Town Planning Institute, 1974, p. 1)

The work was halted by the election in February 1974, and no report was produced. The Labour Government however continued consideration, and in early 1975 produced two "Consultation Documents" on the new towns, one dealing with Scotland, the other with England and Wales. Currently (April 1975) these have circulated among interested groups and individuals for comment, and it remains to be seen what the eventual outcome is.

Such a review was stimulated by a number of factors. The Labour administration of 1964-70 were unhappy about the Commission for the New Towns, but left the issue unresolved. In 1974 the Party was committed to reopening the question of the ultimate ownership of the new towns.

Secondly, the operation of the new Structure Planning system raised questions about how new town planning should be related to it.

Closely related to this was local government reform. This was particularly true of Scotland, where strategic planning was to be carried on by "regions" which encompassed both urban and rural interests. In Strathclyde for example was contained both the origins

and destinations of most of the planned overspill in Scotland. One of the justifications for the new town machinery was that only it could transcend the tightly-drawn boundaries and different interests of congested urban authorities and their neighbours. Could new town planning now be left safely to regional authorities?

Reorganisation along comparable town-and-country lines was frustrated by the Conservative government in 1971, but even here there appeared to be co-operation in drawing up of structure plans - in the West Midlands for example. Could new towns in practice be handled adequately by local government?

Fourthly, the Government saw its proposals for public ownership of development land as giving local authorities the means of "a positive approach to planning, land assembly and development" which new towns had "successfully pioneered in the public interest" (New Towns in England and Wales, 1974 para 1.1). Had new towns any lessons for local authorities in the exercise of these powers?

The nature of new towns in themselves has changed since 1946. A previous chapter showed how new towns were a means of combining two attributes - environmental quality and access to opportunity - in a better way than congested urban centres or large dormitory estates had been able; but that the inclination of those behind the 1946 Act was to do this in a highly specific physical way. This reflected the powerful traditional ideal town - small, physically separated from others, functionally self-sufficient, socially balanced and intensively planned. The virtues of this ideal were essentially spiritual - a sense of civic identity, development of highly integrated personalities and so on<sup>1</sup>. The need for new, distinct settlements was much of the

---

1. For the highest development of this concept, see Osborn 1946 "Green Belt Cities".

case for new, distinct administrative units.

The changes in the physical appearance of new towns are important because they reflect the declining force of the "metaphysical" objectives in new town development. The twin aims of environment and opportunity have remained important, but they are now resolved in a much less restricted physical form. Self-containment as such is not now valued; "sprawl" as such is not now condemned in professional planning thought (as the political objections to new town conceits suggests, ordinary people probably always had this down-to-earth outlook).

The change can be seen in different ways. Extensions to existing towns were recommended to Reith, who dismissed the idea without even considering whether a well-planned addition could give immediate advantages of wide choice of employment and services to immigrants. The notion was inconsistent with the ideal civic entity, not an "essay in civilisation" at all.

In due course, the great inconveniences of starting from green-field sites became one of the more unpopular features of new towns, and when the second group of London overspill towns were designated in the 'sixties, the choice was made to take some large towns and enlarge them considerably. The case for this was made in terms of access to opportunity and ease of extension, both of population and industry: the notions of easy access to open countryside, civic consciousness, integrated community life, are quite abandoned.

Part of the separateness of the early new town was self-containment in employment. Reith accepted that people might travel to larger centres to see a good film, but not (apparently) to get a good job. Allocation of houses proceeded on the basis that no one should travel elsewhere to work. The practical outcome was quite different, but

even in principle the Government now takes a different view:

"... it no longer seems sensible to insist that a breadwinner should actually work within the designated area before one houses the family. With increased mobility it must be accepted that a development corporation can house a family whose head has, or finds, a job within a reasonable commuting distance."

(New Towns in England and Wales 1974 para 1.1)

It remains true that the welfare of the community as a whole is increased if an effort is made to offer as wide a range of employment as possible, as close as possible to the most people. Other things being equal, people prefer to live nearer rather than farther from their work. But it is not necessarily bad that some prefer to travel for a wider choice. The constant increasing of target size of new towns was partly an attempt to widen employment range. But why should increasing distances travelled with/a designated area be any more acceptable than travel between existing settlements in a "town cluster"? The less restrictive interpretation of self-sufficiency weakens the case for distinct new towns surrounded by green belts. It is an argument for intelligently-combined housing, employment and services, which can be achieved in groups of existing settlements. These may appear physically to be too extensive to be efficient (in the sense of combining environmental quality and access to opportunity), but in fact operate much as the elements of Howard's Social City would, (see Hall, 1973, page 381).

The third element in the 1946 case against extensions was "social imbalance". New towns, it was claimed, could combine all classes, to the benefit of social health, simply by providing housing for all classes (Hansard, Vol. 422, 8th May 1946, p. 1088). In fact, as a whole, new towns have achieved a poor balance within the working class -

the most significant range. They have not fostered upward social mobility for lower-income working classes. Within new towns socially-segregated districts quickly emerged. And sociologists have criticised the theoretical basis of new town social policy. Do people actually feel the better of close social mixing: what is the objective: does it foster social opportunity: does greater physical separation hinder it? As regards "neighbourhood units", the typical new town device - does the physical expression really reflect how people structure their social relations? All in all, sufficient doubt has been cast on the reality of what separately-administered urban unity could achieve. The case against intelligent peripheral development by local authorities to this extent is weakened.

There have also been important changes in the conditions within which development operates. A high rate of population growth will tend to strengthen the case for large new settlements to relieve the pressures (whatever they may be) on existing areas, and so the soaring population estimates of the early '60s do much to explain the return to new town designation after the barren 'fifties. These estimates have been continuously pared, and the latest figures suggest that population in 2000 may be no more than to-day's. The sharp change in this basic parameter must influence the scope for large new settlements.

Economic growth is also a subject for pessimism. There is no growth in prospect, and it remains to be seen if indigenous oil restores a possibility of the 4% p.a. growth planned for during the '60s. Some observers take a more pessimistic view, that oil cartels may be followed by third world metal ore, phosphates cartels and so on.



In the short run, transfer of population and economic activity is eased if there is enough growth for no absolute decline to be anywhere required, simply differential growth. Self (Expenditure Committee 1973-74 q.564) described a new town as "an engine for town building within the context of expansion". Can new towns survive without the lubricant of all-round prosperity?

Related to overall prosperity is its distribution through society, and there is now greater scepticism about the disadvantages in society benefitting automatically from overall growth. It is now accepted that some of the most needy cannot be helped except in situ, that many of the worst off do not have the mobility or initiative to benefit from jobs provided in a new town intended to operate as a regional growth centre. In other words, new towns as presently constructed, not only have not helped the most disadvantaged, but in many ways cannot.

David Eversley (1974) described these changed circumstances, and concluded that everything pointed to a shift in emphasis towards development of existing settlements:

"The Northern Region strategy team ... would be wise if it based its report on further shifts towards a system of selective infrastructure and income improvements in existing settlement areas. The time for grandiose plans and new cities is over." (page 455)

"The real question for the regional planner, and for his national counterpart, is this: how can a reduced volume of total fresh investment produce the greater benefits for those sections of the population in greater need ... wherever such people may be living now?" (page 455)

The recommendations in the Strategic Plan for the North West are consistent with Eversley's approach. They explicitly take distribution of benefits into account and conclude that the most useful strategy is to improve the settlements and social equipment

the Mersey belt, including Liverpool. Central Lancashire New Town is not thought to be necessary until the 1950s/60s population boom works through to family-formation age.

#### New Towns and Local Authorities

How far the emphasis on existing settlements should be taken is a matter for debate, and Eversley perhaps stands at the far end of the spectrum. The New Towns Association told the Expenditure Committee (HC 1973-74 18-v) that there remained a need for significant relocation of population from London and other congested urban areas: they felt that "there will be a continuing need for machinery which will permit effective and purposeful intervention". The London Boroughs Association severely criticised the social selection which new towns had practised, but stressed that the development corporation mechanism offered most scope for improving the lot of overcrowded Londoners:

"This is where the new towns are in a unique situation. There may be three conflicting interests in the designation of a New Town. Whose views are to be respected? First there may be those residents whose amenities will be adversely affected ... Secondly there may be other local residents whose amenities and prospects may improve ... Thirdly, and totally ignored in any purely local democratic exercise, would be the people in housing need in Inner London for whom the New Town would be designed. No locally-elected authority could be expected to respect their interests! Basically then the democratic issues are not the same in the New Town situation as they are in other planning situations. For this reason the Development Corporation is uniquely suited to New Town Development."  
(HC 18 - x, page 352-3)

This appears to be the approach which the Government has accepted, that where large-scale redistribution of population is required, centrally-appointed corporations will remain the appropriate agencies.

"Although the legislative framework for designating and developing new towns remains sound in most of its essentials, some policy changes are needed if the machinery is to function as well for the future as it has done for the past."

(New towns in England and Wales, 1974, para 3.2)

"The new local authorities will be planning for the generality of development required in England and Wales, through the machinery of structure plans and local plans. But there may well be further special cases where the need for development does not arise locally and where the national interest will be best served by setting up under the New Towns Act a single-minded development corporation path to plan and promote the development. This is a possibility which the Government would wish to leave open ..."

(ibid. para 3.7)

One major policy change however is to encourage better relations between local authorities and development corporations. By definition distinct authorities indicate different interests, but the Government can encourage co-operation by laying down the ground rules through which resolution of conflict may be achieved. Richard Crossman as Minister attempted this in the partnership agreements relating to Peterborough, Northampton and Warrington, and it is felt that the principle should be applied to other new towns. It was perhaps one of the weaknesses of the 1946 Act that there was no formal provision made for consultative machinery. Even without statutory power, regular consultation might well have deepened understanding on both sides of the purposes and problems of development, instead of the bitter hostility which often marred early relationships (and which often derived from different temperamental approaches to policy and administration, rather than substantive issues). Reith had requested such a provision, and his advice was neglected.

But if local authorities are willing to co-operate in schemes like these, why is a development corporation needed at all? An important fact is that development corporations may not be so important for

conferring favourable financial advantages but in providing an effective co-ordinating agency. Large scale development requires the bringing together of a great many agencies, and the working out of financial terms which lead to provision of services. Local authorities may be well-disposed to accepting (say) Londoners, but have no incentive to surmount the problems of doing so. The development corporation can take the basic good-will, and built on it a single-minded organisation wholly devoted to surmounting obstacles, not avoiding them (which is a perfectly rational local authority outlook).

Development requires a commitment to stability of policy which is not always provided in local government. The Town and Country Planning Association described how Swindon's will to expand was shared by Labour and Conservative councillors, and could survive changes of administration. Ashford, on the other hand, voted six times for expansion, seven times against (HC 1973-74 18 iii cf 568). The development corporation is a device for taking a decision, once freely made, out of the political arena slightly for long enough to enable development to take place.

Thirdly, local authorities entirely on their own might not make an objective assessment of the benefits and costs of expansion for overspill. In Peterborough there is a great deal of hostility towards Londoners, who supposedly cheat Peterburghers out of houses. This prejudice is probably unfounded - but ill-informed hostility is as important to councillors as well-founded objections. The joint agency is a means of reaching an objective view of the effects of expansion, and giving councillors a certain amount of elbow room to devise policies in the long-run interests of the city concerned. Gross abuse of the privilege will still be rewarded with loss of office, and there is great scope for influencing development policy since development

corporation members will be equally willing to listen to reasoned points of view. The proof of this system is that it appears to function effectively: there is certainly a world of difference between the situation after 1946 and that in partnership towns.

Johnson (1973) conducted a comparison of the development of two overspill towns for Glasgow. Cumbernauld was an official new town with a development corporation. Linwood was a private arrangement between Glasgow Corporation, the Scottish Special Housing Association and the District Council. The study concluded that the quality of integration of development at Linwood was substantially inferior. There was fragmented responsibility for house provision, social provision, statutory planning, and no attempt was made to set up an ad hoc committee concerned to achieve co-ordination. Housing had been provided for the Rootes car plant, and no effort was made to achieve a healthier balance of employment. Those not working in Rootes had to travel to Paisley, Johnstone or Glasgow, and female workers were particularly badly off.

Thus:

"It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the creation of a Development Corporation would have resulted in a more satisfactory development at Linwood."  
(Johnson, 1973, page 90)

Johnson suggested that a development group or liaison committee of officials from the agencies involved would also have resulted in more satisfactory development without any change in the statutory financial arrangements, simply because it would have been continuously and solely concerned with the welfare of the emergent unit. The advantage of a development corporation is more than financial: there is a significant organisational element also.

The partnership at Peterborough was three cornered - Development Corporation, City Council and County Council, for the Government recognised that the demands a new town made on local authorities other than authorities whose cities were being expanded, were substantial. Conversely, even a new town not specifically planned to perform a regional function would influence the function of an entire area. In both England and Wales and Scotland however, it is emphasised that where new towns perform different functions from local authorities, ultimate responsibility must remain with the centrally-appointed agency. But in each case, local authorities' influence on the resource allocation decisions which new towns inevitably involve is strengthened. In England and Wales, the Minister warns:

".. if both structure planning and new town master planning are to be successful, a high degree of harmonious co-operation between the authorities is essential."  
(New Towns in England and Wales, 1974, para 3.11)

While in Scotland the Secretary of State feels that local participation in decision-making is desirable,

"He will encourage co-operative arrangements between development corporations and new local authorities in the provision of services and social facilities in the New Towns and in the exercise of their inter-related functions."  
(The Scottish New Towns, 1975 para 8)

Part of this encouragement will be the continuing appointment of "a substantial proportion of members from local government" to corporations. Reith specifically ruled out appointment of local government members as representatives, and this position is here being sustained in theory. But the commitment by the Secretary strengthens the role of councillors who de facto if not de jure must tend to act as representatives would.

"Greater participation" by local authorities is probably a

fair description of the change, for the emphasis, as in planning participation in general, is on devising forms within which different points of view can be developed and reviewed, without alteration of the final constitutional responsibilities.

The evidence of the partnership towns suggests that the arrangement will encourage better integration of new town development and wider planning. There may be more apparent conflict, but if this means that differences are being settled rationally, rather than settled on the basis of political weight, then that is no undesirable thing. The proposal differs sharply from that proposed by the Scottish new towns to the Wheatley Commission<sup>1</sup> that in cases of disagreement with local authorities, development corporations should be able to provide the service and indent for cost - which would have further insulated new towns from local authority thinking on resource allocation.

One of the most persuasive objections to the working out in practice of new town administration is that it, in the words of the English and Welsh Document:

" .. allows the new towns to beggar the cities they serve by taking only the relatively fortunate members of society and leaving the least fortunate behind..."  
(para 3.16)

Most of the evidence presented to the Expenditure Committee was to the effect that the new towns were not helping the unskilled and those in greatest need, to the extent that could be expected of a public body with the capacity to impose unpopular tenant selection policies. The early selection procedure was intended to make sure that those who lived in new towns worked there to avoid the emergence of dormitory suburbs. As it operated, however, when a firm was

---

1. Wheatley Commission, Written Evidence Vol. 8, pp. 27-39

choosing the labour it did not bring as key labour or recruit in the vicinity, it was presented with perhaps twenty applicants, chosen primarily for their aptitude, not housing need. From this the firm chose the person to get the job and be rehoused - again on the basis of ability and not housing need. This process tended to single out the most economically tractable people, and the marginal advantage to the firm might well have been outweighed by the social consequences of the selective loss to the exporting area. This should be changed, said the London Boroughs Association, so that choice is primarily by housing need, although movers should have a reasonable prospect of finding work. ✓

Secondly, those industries moving to the new towns tended not to employ the type of people in housing stress. The Association claimed that new towns were economically strong enough to select firms according to whether they employed the people the towns set out to house - a neat reversal of the matching process.

Peter Self of the Town and Country Planning Association admitted (HC 1973-74 18-vi, q 948) that there was scope for such changes:

"I think it is probable that you have to go through a first stage which is jobs, jobs, jobs, because the whole thing will not take off otherwise. Then maybe after twenty years you can begin to modify this and get more flexible and sensitive to particular social requirements."

However, the demands of the London Boroughs Association went further than requiring new towns to take their "fair share" of economically less productive people - such as pensioners, the unskilled, the disadvantaged. As public agencies, new towns should redress the imbalance caused by "unplanned" overspill. But since unplanned movements outnumbered planned by 9:1 between 1961 and 1971, to make



a significant impact, movement to new and expanded towns would have to be quite extraordinarily imbalanced: is there any reason to transfer social imbalance from London boroughs to new towns?

In fact the Government is not specific in its intentions to improve the social performance of the new towns. The changes will probably take the form of requiring a greater emphasis on housing need in industrial selection, a higher proportion of less-skilled employment, better publicity among less well-informed groups about the opportunities of moving, and possibly specific requirements in absorbing groups such as pensioners, the unemployed, minority groups and so on. In all a significant improvement which new towns are in a strong position to bear, but no substitute for remedial action in restoring the physical, social and economic fabric of the inner-city areas.

#### Ownership of New Town Assets

The question of ownership of new town assets was not examined by the Expenditure Committee, but it was an issue of importance to the Labour government. In the party's "Programme for Britain" the transfer of housing and local assets (such as district shopping centres) to local authorities in the commission new towns, and the district-by-district transfer in developing new towns, was seen as essential to the fundamental principle of local democracy. Whether the importance is symbolic only is difficult to gauge. In 1967, Cullingworth's researchers showed no high passion among new town residents about the great constitutional issues some claimed to be at stake. As regards the claim that development corporations are "undemocratic", new towns can justly point out that local authorities' record in the field of responsiveness to public feeling (even without the question of "which public") has hardly been outstanding, as the

need for the Government to impose standards of participation on what claim to be highly responsive bodies emphasises. Not a strong position from which to criticise: new towns claim that in practice they have been more democratic -

"... development corporations have always been conscious of the need to win and hold local support if they are to function effectively. All of them have taken great trouble over public information and are in the forefront of public authorities in enlisting public participation in their proposals."  
(HC 1973-74 18-v, page 204)

Cullingworth defined the desirable tenure pattern not in terms of who traditionally "ought" to control public housing, but in terms of performance of a given objective, which he suggested to be the pattern which:

".. provides the widest range of choice to the consumer, meets the needs of all groups in the community, involves the least change on public funds which is consistent with giving assistance to those who cannot afford housing of the standard determined politically as being acceptable, and presents the fewest barriers to mobility."  
(Cullingworth, 1967, page 153).

It is a matter of debate, in particular circumstances, whether local authorities or development corporations meet these requirements better, and indeed whether the requirements are acceptable. But a process of open analysis of objectives and effectiveness is involved, unlike the handing over of housing to local authorities out of commitment to a political "principle".

To take a specific example, Cullingworth discovered that the opportunity to own one's home was a major concern to many people: whether they were more likely to achieve this was the main influence on attitudes to local authorities or development corporation ownership. It is by no means clear that local authorities can better achieve a policy on this which will stand public debate than can development

corporations.

The major issue around which debate on local or corporation control centres is not home ownership, but the ability of each body to cope with movement of people for employment reasons. Government thinking emerges more clearly from the Scottish Consultation Document because in Scotland the complication of movement for overspill reasons is felt to be absent:

"... the role of the new towns as providers of sites for overspill homes ... is now less important than it was and their attention can be focussed primarily on their role of promoting economic growth."  
(The Scottish New Towns, 1975, para 6)

The tendency for local housing authorities to take a narrowly local view of housing policies is well-known and much regretted. The ability of development corporation to pursue allocation policies directly related to industrial movement is equally argued:

".. by its (the development corporations) very nature it is likely to take a more objective view on letting policy than one could get from a local authority, particularly where the new town is serving a semi-regional function and houses should be let to persons other than those living in the town. It will therefore assist .. in facilitating mobility of labour."  
(Cullingworth, 1967, page 38)

This view was put to Cullingworth by a local authority official which perhaps indicates that local authorities often welcome external agencies, because they realise the importance of servicing industrial growth, but are unable to act because of adverse political constraints. This was the view which the Scottish Special Housing Association (a body with similar housing policies to new towns) put to the Wheatley Commission:

"Where a local authority is providing houses partly paid for from local rates, it is only natural that poorly-housed ratepayers expect to be rehoused.

This can at times be an embarrassment to a local authority who would otherwise be prepared to provide houses for incoming industrial workers required to encourage the economic expansion of the area. The Association suffers from no such embarrassment and as national and not local funds are involved in the Association's operations, there is not the same difficulty in providing houses not primarily intended for local inhabitants."

(Wheatley, Minutes of Evidence, Vol 8, page 12)

The "balance" case for development corporation ownership was also put to Cullingworth by the New Towns Association.

"Development corporations must provide a wide range of different types of housing to attract people of all incomes and capabilities. This is again an attraction for industry and also improves the overall quality of life in the town. Local authorities may be compelled for political and other reasons to restrict the provision of houses to those suitable only for the lowest income levels."

(Cullingworth, 1967, page 48).

In general terms, the Government appears to accept the labour mobility/employment growth case for new towns:

".. the availability of housing to let has been of the highest importance to them in their efforts to attract industry."

(New Towns in Scotland 1975, para 14).

"Until the development of the New Town has been completed, great weight must be given to the overriding need to promote growth in the Scottish interest, which experience shows can be pursued to good advantage by a development corporation in full control of the assets it has created ... For this reason the Government do not see advantage in providing for the transfer of property to local authorities during the period of development of the New Town save where this is agreed by the corporation and the local authorities to be in their mutual interest."

(Ibid. para 10).

Government policy is that during development, corporations will retain their present control over all assets. When development is completed, housing and associated local commercial assets will be assumed by local authorities, while commercial and industrial assets

will be managed in the national interest. The assumption is that new towns will have performed their distinctive role in servicing economic growth, and are no longer required, since it is also Government policy in Scotland (although the way is left open in England for overspill towns<sup>1</sup>) that no further centrally-sponsored towns will be created.

The Consultation Document in fact reveals a rather ambivalent attitude towards new towns: their non-local administration is valuable in providing support for economic growth, yet this administration is to be phased out as quickly as the present towns reach maturity.

For example, new towns are asked to co-operate in housing "people in priority categories determined by the local authority, such as teachers and nurses". If these groups are so vital to the community, why cannot they be housed in the normal way? It is politically unacceptable to give them houses, or are they dissatisfied with local authority housing? In either case, new town authorities are being expected to "paper over the cracks" in local authority administration: and what will happen when such independent housing authorities cease to exist? Similarly, new towns are asked to "assist local authorities in their endeavours to promote employment outside the boundaries of the designated areas". Again, what is the fundamental defect preventing the "normal" (as the Government affirms) housing authorities from doing this job? The Consultative Document fails to tackle the questions which the very need for an extra-local agency raises, and proposes the abandonment of the agencies (which it claims to value highly) without resolving the basic defects.

Cullingworth pursued these thoughts in 1967:

---

1. See "New Towns in England and Wales" 1974, para 3.7.

"A transfer of housing to local authorities would set the seal of 'normality' on the town. So far as we have been able to judge, there are no disadvantages in this which are not shared by other towns which already have a large proportion of publicly owned property."  
(Cullingworth 1967, page 161)

He suggested that these disadvantages were serious enough to raise the possibility of housing being taken out of local hands entirely:

"One conclusion which could be drawn from, for example, an analysis of the inadequacies of local authority rent and tenant-selection policies is that housing should be removed entirely from local government. Ad hoc bodies such as development corporations ... do precisely this ... By definition local authorities are locally responsible bodies. Their 'localities' may be too constricted, but that is another matter which is receiving attention elsewhere."  
(Ibid, page 161).

The attention Cullingworth spoke of was review of local government as a whole. Wheatley showed his view of the limitations of very local control of housing:

"Housing policy raises issues clearly related with strategic planning, and should preferably be worked out over the same wide areas."  
(Wheatley Commission, 1969, Report, para 470)

Accordingly he placed housing alongside structure planning at regional level. His advice was ignored, and housing in Scotland remains a district function, which gives no reason to suppose that the broader perspective of the new towns will be met within conventional local politics. It may be that the Government will never accept that the existing new towns' "development" phases will have ended; or that they intend to use the Scottish Special Housing Association; or that they expect regionally-sponsored development agencies to supervise the provision of housing in support of economic growth (which is a process of continuing adaptation, a fact the

Government do not appear to have understood).

From the Consultation Documents, however, it appears that the traditional function of a new town in supporting labour mobility and economic growth is to be abandoned. In Scotland, then, where the overspill function of new towns is also discounted, it appears that the Document marks the end of the centrally-sponsored corporation as a tool of planning, although there may prove to be a bright future for locally-sponsored corporations and partnerships involving local and central finance and membership. In England, where overspill is still required (although the extent is a matter of debate) it appears as though the continuance of the Development Corporation will be more positive, although the "partnership" concept will be developed, to meet the difficulties of greater physical interaction of old and new developments, and the general recognition that new towns should function as an inter-related part of existing settlement clusters.

The continuation of central control of commercial and industrial assets of regional and national importance is less significant. In England, the Commission for the New Towns is to perform this function, but it may offer its expertise outwith the new towns, as an agency service. The intention is that the agency will perform a national factoring function, akin to the work of the Scottish Industrial Estates Corporation. Indeed there are suggestions in the Documents that outwith England, the work will be absorbed into the duties of the Scottish and (projected) Welsh Development Agencies.

#### Future Use of the New Town Machinery

When the Expenditure Committee pointed out to the Town and Country Planning Association witnesses that strategic plans did not seem to refer specifically to "new towns", Professor Self replied

that the Strategic Plan for the South-East:

".. does not use the words "new town". It used the words "growth area" or "medium growth area". What is a growth area? I mean, it is an area which looks rather like a new town, but is spread around more over a larger scale ..."

(H.C. 1973-74, 18-iii, q 540)

This development was a logical outcome of viewing new towns as centres of growth areas. If development corporations had been largely successful in directing development within a tightly defined designated area, was it time to extend development corporation-type powers over wider areas, now that new towns were viewed as an integral part of a regional structure?

Hall (1973, page 453) pointed out that the discrete growth zones proposed constituted developments as substantial as new towns, but over a much larger area:

"Yet no specific machinery is posed for acquiring the land and carrying through the expensive and difficult provision of infrastructure."

The question posed was this: should local authorities be given development-corporation-type powers of land acquisition and assembly; or should the centrally-appointed corporation be given jurisdiction over the wider area now admitted to constitute its zone of influence?

The Wheatley Commission in 1969 recognised that there might be situations where strategic redistribution of population might be needed, while the policy had no implications outside the local authority areas:

"It is an essential part of the job of a strategic planning authority to decide to what extent the population needs to be redistributed within its own bounds, in pursuance of social, economic and land-use objectives. New town development as we see it is simply one means of giving effect to the authority's strategic planning decisions."  
(Wheatley Commission Report, para 292).



Accordingly, new town planning and finance of this nature should be a local government concern, probably handled by a special agency within the system. The legislation to enable this was not incorporated in the reform, but the Scottish Consultative Document indicates the Government's sympathy towards the proposal.

"A possible development, as strategies are worked out by the regional councils, may however be the identification of regional needs for urban redevelopment using the special facilities and powers for the assembly and development of land available to development corporations .. Action in this regard will be upon the initiative of the new regional authorities, in the light of their assessment of their needs and of alternative methods of meeting them."  
(The Scottish New Towns, 1975, para 12).

The prospective arrangements are considerably complicated by the fact that housing is not (as Wheatley recommended) under the same authority as structure planning, but this is a problem which will arise whether local new towns are planned or not.

The possibility of such an adaptation of the development corporation machinery was raised in evidence to the Expenditure Committee, for example by the Town and Country Planning Association, who suggested "Roving Regional Development Corporations", with strong, if not complete, local authority membership. The Royal Town Planning Institute suggested "Special Development Boards", sponsored by one or more local authority, with powers to borrow money and purchase land on the same terms as development corporations. It may seem surprising that the English Consultation Document makes no mention of the possibility of locally-sponsored corporations.

The explanation is perhaps that the Government felt that its land proposals, enabling and requiring local authorities to acquire at existing use value all land required for development over the next ten years, gave local authorities the substance of the new town advantages.

"This is not to deny that plan-making is a very valuable function of our local authorities, it is rather to point out that the existing powers to implement their plans are restricted by the price that the market puts on some land, and by the fact that the planners' resource is in the hands of private owners rather than at the disposal of the community."  
("Land", 1974, para 19).

The plan was described by Wilcox (1975) as

".. allowing planners the freedom of choice usually available only when conceiving new towns."  
(Wilcox, 1975, page 154)

The intention of the proposals is clearly this, to give local authorities the advantageous powers of land assembly at existing use value which the new towns had used so effectively, or as the thought-avoiding expression has it "encouraging positive planning". Powers are one thing, however, and a great many professional observers (and, one understands, Whitehall officials) note, ability to use them is quite another. If successful development is defined in terms of the highest possible combination of environmental quality and access to opportunity, then when local authorities' powers have most approached those anticipated in the White Paper, the results have sometimes been very bad indeed - vide Easterhouse in Glasgow, and more recently, Wester Hailes in Edinburgh.

Wilcox (1975) develops this theme at some length, suggesting that there are two problems. First plain ineptitude, and secondly, intemperate political interference in the composition of development. ✓  
"Ineptitude" is perhaps rather harsh: it may be that the complete initiation (rather than fairly crude control) of development, is a task not appropriate for local authorities as presently constituted.

Thus:

"Perhaps I am soured by reporting the London planning scene for six years, but I have the most profound

doubts about the ability of councils to initiate developments rather than control it.

... nowhere in the country can there be more planners to the acre than in County Hall, The elected members just don't know which way to turn ... By what mechanism would the GLC, say, assess the total quantities and distribution of office space, warehousing, industry, shops? From past experience we know the answer. Whatever sophisticated research methods might be deployed ... the ultimate decision would rest on whether members of the Labour group had got over their antipathy to Harry Hyams ... Labour members happily admit that their policy is dictated by dislike of office building in itself."

(pp. 196-7).

As the example of Linwood cited above suggests, even with new town-type powers, there may be a strong case for the continuation of the use of the development agency machinery<sup>1</sup> in a modified form, the local authority-sponsored agencies foreshadowed in the Scottish Consultative Document. The advantages of centrally-appointed development corporations were outlined to the Expenditure Committee by the Royal Town Planning Institute as follows:

1. They can straddle administrative boundaries (and it should be remembered that the land assembly proposals raise "all the horrors of two-tier planning authorities", while the difficulties of multiple agencies of development remain).
2. They are organised to apply themselves single mindedly to the task in hand.<sup>2</sup>

---

1. "Take the example of Telford, which is I think a very good example of a new town where work is going ahead which I cannot conceive would have been done by the existing local authorities ... The sheer complexity of the co-ordination would not allow it."  
(Prof. Self, H.C. 18-iii 1973-74 q. 565)

2. "The Government recognise that much of the success of the Scottish New Towns is to be ascribed to their ability to focus staff effort, bringing together a variety of professional disciplines into closely-knit planning, administrative, development and promotional teams."  
(The Scottish New Towns, 1975, para 11).

3. They have a more corporate approach to development, and a tradition of inter-departmental co-operation "often sadly lacking in local authorities."
4. They can pursue development, once its basic purpose and form has been (politically) determined, free from immediate political influence and on a stable footing.

(H.C. 1973-74 18-vii, page 271)

The disadvantages mentioned - overall political unaccountability, lack of integration with other authorities' plans, and lack of powers as wide as local authorities, would appear to be overcome in locally-sponsored agencies, which might well offer the best of both worlds.

The land proposals are significant, because they not only open the way for the creation of locally appointed development agencies, giving them the substance of the advantages enjoyed by the old central agencies. But by placing the responsibility for positive and more interventionist planning on local authorities, the Government is challenging them to produce planning and development of as high a quality as the new towns have achieved (albeit for too narrowly-defined purposes) in their enclaves. This is a development of the utmost importance. It is an opportunity to bridge the gulf between new town planning and "the rest", which has grown up since 1947, and it is ironical that it represents an opportunity to achieve the integration outlined in 1934 by the Marley Committee:

"We deem it essential at the outset of our report to state that our investigations have led us to view 'Garden Cities' and other developments of a similar kind rather as elements in the wider sphere of regional and national planning than as constituting a problem apart ... It is therefore mainly in relation to the proper and orderly correlation of industrial, residential and other developments ... that we propose to consider the problem involved in our terms of reference taken as a whole."

(Marley Report, 1934, para 4).

The gradual trend in new town planning towards integration with wider intra-regional organisation represents movement towards this understanding<sup>1</sup>. The Government has stated that where developments of non-local origin are involved, it will continue to appoint central agencies. But the opportunities to apply the lessons emerging from the successful organisation of development corporations and their achievement of a high level of planning (in the sense that environmental quality and access to opportunities are combined efficiently<sup>2</sup>), lie with local authorities. If agencies with the attributes and skills of development corporations are successfully integrated into the structure of local (i.e. non-central) planning, then the result could be the most important contribution of the new town experience to future planning - certainly more significant than the limited use made - and apparently to be made - of centrally-appointed agencies.

- 
1. "The idea of a New Town as a self-contained and separate entity is giving way to the newer and socially more healthy concept of a New Town as the centre of a wider district. The needs are again complimentary: as well as the use of the town's facilities by residents of a wider area, the residents of Bracknell appreciate and enjoy the advantages and attractions of the surrounding towns and countryside."  
(Bracknell DC Report, 1965).
  2. See the evidence in Thomas (1969) Chapter 3, that the London new towns have improved in ease of access to employment opportunities, as measured by the apparent need for commuting, while comparable normal towns have shown deterioration. Hence "What the new towns have done is to demonstrate the feasibilities of the policy of moving work and homes out in step. The same policy could be applied ... to other major employment centres in the South-East."  
(Hall, 1973, page 346).

## New Town Machinery and Urban Redevelopment

Much of the evidence submitted to the Expenditure Committee concerned the applicability of new town machinery to inner-city redevelopment: the specific example of London's Dockland was used by the RTPI to illustrate a situation in which one, or several, local authorities faced a whole complex of interrelated problems, requiring sophisticated co-ordination of agencies. The Town and Country Planning Association discussed areas of multiple deprivation in inner cities in similar terms. Both concluded that centrally-appointed agencies were inappropriate, but that there could be advantages in giving development corporation-type powers to local authorities, singly or in consortia. As already noted, the Government's land proposals go far in this direction (for example in the Docklands case local authorities will be able to purchase land net of "hope value"). The TCPA added the proviso that local authorities would have to prove more capable of meeting real needs of people, and suggested the formation of "Special Area Management Committees". The combination of cheap land assembly powers and an area-based corporate approach comes very close to locally-sponsored development agencies. The RTPI's suggestion of "Special Development Boards" is clearly closely related and the West Central Scotland Study illustrates the device being recommended for specific application:

"In view of the size of the redevelopment schemes we believe that Glasgow Corporation and subsequently the Glasgow District Council should consider setting up Development Committees to co-ordinate the whole development programme in each scheme, including social services shopping and other facilities"  
(West Central Scotland, 1973, para 7.24)

Despite the wide discussion in committee, no mention is made in the English Consultative Document of the adaptations of the new

town machinery which might be used in urban regeneration. It is again left to the Scottish Document to indicate that the concept is at least within the field of alternatives to be considered:

"The Government have in mind that the talents of these teams may have a contribution to make in other fields ... that they may perhaps find a new role to play in the regeneration of existing urban areas. This is a topic which the Government would wish in due course to explore further in consultation with the local authorities, the development corporations, and, prospectively, with the Scottish Development Agency."  
(The Scottish New Towns, 1975, para 11)

This is not to say that the problems of English cities will not be tackled in this way. The Government is deeply concerned with inner city decline, but its programmes at present can only be described as varied and experimental. The field is still open. As the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy observed to the Expenditure Committee, the central corporation is a device for Government investment of large amounts of money, with some influence over policies pursued. If the Government is intent on serious investment in inner area rehabilitation, it may force local authorities to accept "partnership" development corporations as the price of financial help. The recent moves in the housing field (April 1975) show that the Government is prepared to take a more interventionary approach to local government affairs. General shortage of resources and the success of other partnerships arrangements will tend to encourage partnerships in city situations, and encourage local authorities to swallow their principles and cooperate in them.

The Town and Country Planning Association called urban renewal the "missing half" of overspill policy, and it is true that much of the social imbalance created by past (planned and unplanned) overspill is due to the inability of planning in the cities to match the success elsewhere - most notably in the new towns. It is quite logical, then,

to seek to apply the lessons of the new towns to city situations, and the scope for using the understanding, and the machinery, of development corporations is probably very substantial. This is true whether "partnerships" are organised or not. But candid admission of the failings of local government is not politically expedient, and this may account for the "low profile" adopted in the English (but not Scottish) Consultative Document.

#### Financial Arrangements

Neither Consultative Document is explicit in discussing the terms on which new town assets will be transferred to local authority assets, but the principles involved in the distribution of betterment between the two representatives of "the community" - i.e. central and local government is the same for new towns and general development alike. Thus, the terms set for distribution of benefits under the Government's land proposals will serve as a guide to the distribution which will be sought when new town assets are transferred or disposed. The terms must emerge soon, but meanwhile the thinking of the Government appears to be:

"The community in general, i.e. the taxpayer, will have made a contribution towards the acquisition of land and the Government propose therefore that the benefits from the scheme should be shared between local and central government. The major part of the benefit will accrue to the taxpayer in general through the Exchequer; but a part will remain with the local community and a part will be distributed amongst local authorities to help equalise the benefits of the scheme between ratepayers at large ... It must be recognised that because of the timelag between acquisition and disposal it will be some time before benefits accrue generally."  
(Land, Cmnd 5730, 1974, para 59)

New town development is more complex, involving central and local provision of services ahead of demand (and rate revenue), but



the Government has indicated that "The sharing of benefits must take all such aspects fairly into account (New Towns in England and Wales, 1974, para 3.5). This approach must help in easing the way for partnership towns, and new town development generally. Moreover, if financial provisions for development within the framework of a central development corporation and "private enterprise" local authority development are congruent (as they should be), then new partnerships should be entered into more readily - the intention of the Government - since local authorities that they will gain nothing by "going it alone". The bitterness of local authorities' feelings that assets which they had made financial sacrifices for, and helped to create, falling permanently to the Commission for the New Towns, should at least be alleviated.

The formalisation of the financial arrangements may also be the opportunity to tackle the distribution of benefits between exporting and receiving areas. The creation of development value in one place partly involves the extinguishing of it in another. However, one of the difficulties of exporting areas was that no provision was made for meeting the cost of extinguishing the value - by elimination of former use, which necessitated compensation. So it was that Birmingham could not eliminate industrial congestion, because as firms emigrated, new firms moved in or expanded to take their place. Similarly, London Boroughs often found that they paid towards the housing of people in new or expanded towns but did not get the benefit of reduced congestion or housing lists, because new residents re-occupied the vacated property (perhaps at several removes). In both cases, nothing could be done without buying out the land uses concerned. This cost was clearly a cost of new development and should have been set against the development value created in the expanded communities.

Theoretically it should be possible to balance betterment and

and compensation at every stage, but this is not practical. But there is a clear case for a rolling programme, by which the realised benefits of mature new and expanded settlements are directed at meeting the costs of extinguishing development values in towns which are being redeveloped in pursuit of national policy. It remains to be seen whether the rack-renting of commercial and industrial prosperity and the Government's intention to give the national community the bulk of the increased development values, is adequate to finance the logical transfer involved.

### Conclusion

New towns have become progressively more integrated with existing settlements and the rest of the planning machinery. Reform of government, the planning system and the system of ownership of development values is likely to further foster integration. Physical detachment as a policy is in decline, because of the decline of the intellectual ideal of the self-sufficient civic unit, the falling expectation of population, economic and industrial growth, and dissatisfaction with the prospects for helping the least well off through a policy of long-distance dispersion.

The traditional combination of autonomous development corporations developing distinct settlements is not likely to be repeated. Where development of a non-local nature is required (for overspill, or in support of strategic growth), centrally-appointed development corporations will be used, but in formal partnership agreements with local authorities. These may concern single large cities, or larger areas within which the degree of urbanisation will be intensified. There will be a formal procedure of negotiation with the authorities concerned before designation, to work out the respective areas of

administration. Particular attention will be paid to integration of housing policies. There may be division of responsibilities along departmental lines, there will certainly be close professional collaboration. Such arrangements may be developed in existing new towns. ✓

Co-operation will be encouraged by the fact that new towns will be asked to see that their plans do not unnecessarily conflict with local authorities' structure plans.

The operation of the projected land policy will reduce the administrative and financial differences between official new towns and all other authorities. These authorities will find that successful use of their new powers involves organising themselves along corporate lines, and planning more comprehensively. New towns have demonstrated how this can be achieved, and local authorities may find it worthwhile to adopt the development agency administrative device for their own intra-regional planning purposes.

In Scotland this development has already been suggested as realistic by the Government, and it fits more easily into the regional framework of the new local authority structure. In England, the present co-operation of planning authorities at regional and sub-regional levels is encouraging, and the fact that several authorities are involved at structure plan level may indeed encourage the setting up of local development agencies in furtherance of agreed strategic objectives.

In overspill new towns, greater emphasis will be placed on ensuring that a more representative cross-section of the urban population is absorbed - more unskilled people, more old people and so on. Friction between old and new towns will also be relieved by adjustments in the rate support grant to allow for the diseconomies of population decline and presence of disadvantaged groups.

Redevelopment within urban areas will be facilitated by the operation of the land policy, and probably by an increase in resources directed at urban regeneration. But local authorities will have to display great skill in combining all aspects of redevelopment efficiently and quickly: this task will be complicated by the presence of several tiers of local government. Authorities will be wise to co-operate in formal corporate planning agreements, and they may use the device of the development corporation sponsored jointly, as the means of expediting development and removing it slightly from direct political control, with its unsuitably short time-horizon. Where central government injects large amounts of resources (especially on an area basis), it may encourage partnership corporations with an element of formal government influence. It may require the setting up of a development agency as the price of its financial involvement, but agencies sponsored only by central government will not be introduced to replace local authorities entirely. ✓

At a more modest level, application of locally-sponsored agencies to specific tasks, such as regional environmental improvement, house rehabilitation, provision of industrial sites can be expected.

In the immediate future, housing assets will be transferred gradually from the Commission for the New Towns to local authorities. There may be some attempt to ensure that houses remain available for incoming workers. In the present and future new towns, the close co-operation of corporations and local authorities in the field of house rents and letting policy will form the basis for agreed terms of transfer. As to unfair manipulation of rents etc. by new town local authorities, the present level of central government supervision of housing policy is likely to be maintained, and may be intensified (regardless of party politics) if economic conditions in the public sector worsen.

In Scotland, only houses in East Kilbride and Cumbernauld are likely to be transferred in the immediate future, although transfer of neighbourhoods in other new towns may take place, depending on the degree of co-operation in housing policies achieved. If local housing authorities prove unwilling to service industrial development, the role of the Special Scottish Housing Association (which in a sense is a centrally-sponsored housing agency whose "designated area" is all of Scotland) will be strengthened. There may be friction between regional authorities and district (housing) authorities, over provision of housing to service industrial growth, but direct intervention by regional authorities is not likely.

Virtually all the anticipated policies represent promising adaptations of the planning machinery pioneered in 1946. Its application then was restricted unnecessarily by the unjustified insistence on a detached, autonomous type of development, and by the political impossibility of the imposition of centrally-appointed agencies on the local authority system on a wide enough scale to be significant. The first restrictive condition has long lost its force, and the question is now whether the second can be circumvented by the ability of local authorities to integrate the valuable aspects of the new towns' professional and administrative abilities into their own framework.

There is, in short, the possibility of freeing the new town approach from the physical and administrative limitations of the centrally-administered designated area, and adapting it for closer integration with the wider practice of planning.

If the adaptations are applied with understanding, and the basic reasons for the new towns' success in combining quality of environment and access to opportunity grasped, then we will be well set to raise

the quality of planning as a whole to the level attained in the new towns. Clearly the new town experiment (for that is what it proved to be) was carried out in favourable circumstances: new towns did tend to work with the more socially and economically tractable groups in society, and they may have more than their "fair share" of resources. But their success is substantial enough to be a fair challenge for others to equal.

The question is given special urgency by the Government's land proposals, which are designed to put planning as a whole on the same footing as that in new towns, so far as powers are concerned. In a sense planning is on trial, for there is widespread cynicism about the ability of local authorities to cope creatively with the new powers, and turn "positive planning" from a slogan into reality.

The experience of new town planning and administration has much to offer in the effort to avoid the demoralising failure of another great planning initiative.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- ABERCROMBIE, P. Greater London Plan, 1944. H.M.S.O., London, 1945.
- ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR LONDON REGIONAL PLANNING. Report to the  
Minister of Town and Country Planning. H.M.S.O. 1946.
- BARLOW REPORT. (Royal Commission on the Distribution of the Industrial  
Population), Cmnd 6153, H.M.S.O. London, 1940.
- BRACKNELL. Development Corporation Annual Report 1956, HC 110, 1966-67.
- BULL, D. A. New Towns and Town Expansion Schemes: Government Planning  
Reports. Town Planning Review. Vol. 38.2, July 1967.
- CAMERON, G. C. Growth Areas, Growth Centres and Regional Conversion.  
Scottish Journal of Political Economy, 1970.
- CAMERON, G. C. and REID, G. L. Scottish Economic Planning and the  
Attraction of Industry. Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh, 1966.
- CHAMBERLAIN REPORT. Departmental Committee on the Principles to  
be followed in Dealing with the Unhealthy Areas. H.M.S.O.  
London, 1921.
- CULLINGWORTH, J. B. Some Effects of Planned Overspill. The East  
Ham Study, Journal of the Town Planning Institute, Dec. 1959.
- CULLINGWORTH, J. B. Some Administrative Problems of Planned Overspill:  
The Selection of Tenants for the New and Expanded Towns for  
London. Public Administration, Winter 1959,
- CULLINGWORTH, J. B. English Housing Trends, Bell, London, 1965.
- CULLINGWORTH, J. B. The Ownership and Management of Housing in the  
New Towns, H.M.S.O. London 1967.
- DEAKIN, N., UNGERSON, C. Town and Country Planning, January 1974.
- DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT. Land. London, H.M.S.O. 1974.
- DIAMOND, D. New Towns in their Regional Context. in Hazel Evans (ed.)  
New Towns: the British Experience, 1972.

EUROPEAN FREE TRADE ASSOCIATION. Regional Policy in EFTA - the Growth

Centre Idea. EFTA, Geneva, 1968.

EVERSLEY, D. E. C. The Wythall Inquiry - A Planning-Political Post-script. in The Wythall Inquiry. Ed. J. R. Long, London, 1960.

Estates Gazette.

EVERSLEY, D. Four Outdated Assumptions. Built Environment, September 1974, pp. 452-5.

FORSTER, E. M. The Challenge of Our Time in Two Cheers for Democracy, Penguin, London, 1965.

GEE, F. A. Homes and Jobs for Londoners in New and Expanded Towns. H.M.S.O. 1972.

GREATER LONDON PLAN. Memorandum by the Minister of Town and Country Planning, London. H.M.S.O. 1974.

HALL, P. The Pattern of Cities to Come. New Society, 10th March 1966.

HALL, P. Containment of Urban England, Vol. II. George Allen and Unwin, 1973.

HANSARD. Vol. 421, May 1946. H.M.S.O., London, 1946.

HERAUD. B. J. New Towns and London's Housing Problem. Urban Studies. Feb. 1966.

HERAUD, B. J. Social Class and the New Towns. Urban Studies 5.1, February 1968,

HOUSING (ADDITIONAL POWERS) ACT 1919. 9 and 10 Geo. V, Ch. 99, Section 10.

HOWARD, E. Garden Cities of To-morrow. 1902, London. Faber 1965. London.

IRETON, P. T. and McCOMB, J. E. Future Ownership of the New Towns.

Town and Country Planning, Jan. 1956,

JOHNSON, R. "New Town" and "Expanded Town" Development. 1973, Glasgow. Unpublished M.Phil thesis.

LONG, J. R. (ed.) The Wythall Inquiry. 1960, London, Estates Gazette.



- LUTTRELL, W. F. "Growth of Industry" in Hazel Evans (ed.) 1972, New Towns; the British Experience.
- MANN, P. The Socially Balanced Neighbourhood Unit. 1958. Town Planning Review, Job 24, July, pp. 91-98.
- MARLEY COMMITTEE (Departmental Committee on Garden Cities and Satellite Towns). Report. London, H.M.S.O. 1935.
- MERCER, G. Speke as a New Town. Town Planning Review, 1953. Oct. 215-238.
- MEYERSON, M. and BANFIELD, E. C. Politics, Planning and the Public Interest. The Free Press, Glencoe. 1965.
- MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT. Memorandum on the Town Development Act. H.M.S.O. London, 1952.
- MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT. Selection of Tenants. Circular 29/1953. H.M.S.O. London 1953.
- MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT. Green Belts: Circular 42/1955. H.M.S.O. London, 1955.
- MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT. Green Belts. Circular 50/1957. H.M.S.O. London. 1957.
- MINISTRY OF TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING. Selection of Tenants: Circular 12/49. H.M.S.O. London 1949.
- MINISTRY OF TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING. Town and Country Planning 1943-51. Cmnd. 8204. H.M.S.O. London 1952.
- MUMFORD, L. The Garden City Idea and Modern Planning. in Howard "Garden Cities of To-morrow" Faber and Faber, London, 1965.
- THE NORTH EAST. A Programme for Regional Development and Growth. H.M.S.O. 1963, Cmnd. 2206.
- NORTHAMPTON DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION. 2nd Annual Report 1969-70 HC 64
- NORTHAMPTON DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION. 3rd Annual Report 1970-71 HC 550.
- NORTHAMPTON DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION, 4th Annual Report 1971-72 HC 453.

NEW TOWNS. Expenditure Committee, Environment and Home Office

Sub-Committee. H.M.S.O. 1973-74.

- H.C. 18
- i Dept. of Environment Memoranda and Evidence
  - ii Dept. of Environment - continued.
  - iii Town and Country Planning Association.  
Memorandum and Evidence.
  - iv Association of New Town Local Authorities  
Memorandum and Evidence.
  - v New Towns Association.  
Memorandum and Evidence.
  - vi Town and Country Planning Association continued.
  - vii Royal Town Planning Institute.  
Memorandum and Evidence.
  - viii Commission for the New Towns.  
Memorandum and Evidence.  
Chartered Institute of Public Finance  
and Accountancy.  
Memorandum and Evidence.
  - ix Department of Trade and Industry.  
Memoranda and Evidence.
  - x London Boroughs Association.  
Memorandum and Evidence.

NEW TOWNS ACT, 1946. H.M.S.O., London, 1946.

NEW TOWNS ACT, 1958. H.M.S.O., London, 1958.

NEW TOWNS ACT, 1959. H.M.S.O., London, 1959.

NEW TOWNS ACT, 1965. H.M.S.O., London, 1965.

NEW TOWNS (REITH) COMMITTEE. Ministry of Town and Country Planning.

Interim Report Cmnd 6759  
Second Interim Report Cmnd 6794  
Final Report, Cmnd 6876.

London, H.M.S.O., 1946

NEW TOWNS IN ENGLAND AND WALES. A Consultation Document.

Department of the Environment, London, 1974.

OGILVY, A. A. The Self-Contained New Town. Vol. 39.1 April 1969

Town Planning Review.

OSBORN, F. J. Dispersal: A Call for Action. Mr. Sandy's Opportunity.

Town and Country Planning, April, 1955.

OSBORN, F. J. Parliament and Planning. Town and Country Planning,

May, 1955.

OSBORN, F. J. Preface to "Garden Cities of To-Morrow"

Faber and Faber, London, 1965.

OSBORN, F. J. Green Belt Cities. Evelyn, Adams and Mackay.

London, 1969.

OSBORN, F. J. and WHITTICK. New Towns: the Answer to Megalopolis.

London, Hill, 1969.

PETERBOROUGH DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

1st Annual Report	1968-69	H.C. 398
2nd "	"	1969-70 H.C. 64
3rd "	"	1970-71 H.C. 550
4th "	"	1971-72 H.C. 453
5th "	"	1972-73 H.C. 403
6th "	"	1973-74 H.C. 317

PRESTHUS, R. V. Note on British Town Planning Co-ordination.

Journal of Politics, 1952.

PURDOM, C. B. The Letchworth Achievement. London, Dent, 1963.

REITH, J. C. W. An Essay In Civilisation. Britain Today, 1946, London.

REITH, J. C. W. Into the Wind. Collins, London, 1946.

RODWIN, L. The British New Towns Policy - Problems and Implications.

Harvard U.P. Cambridge, Mass. 1956.

SCHAFFER, F. The New Town Story. McGibbon and Kee, London, 1970.

SCHAFFER, F. The New Town Movement. in Hazel Evans (ed.) 1972

"New Towns: the British Experience.

SCOTTISH DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT. CENTRAL Scotland: Development and

Growth. Cmnd. 2188, H.M.S.O. 1963.

SCOTTISH DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT. Lothians Regional Survey and Plan.

H.M.S.O. Edinburgh 1966.

THE SCOTTISH NEW TOWNS. A Consultation Document. Scottish Office,

Edinburgh, 1975.

SELF, P. The New Towns Industrial Boom. Town and Country Planning,

January, 1955.

- SELF, P. The Green Belt Idea. Introduction to The Wythall Inquiry, ed. Joyce R. Lord. London, Estates Gazette Ltd. 1960.
- SELF, P. TCPA Evidence to the Hunt Committee. Town and Country Planning, Vol. 36, no. 5.
- SELF, P. New Towns in the Modern World. Intro. to New Towns, the British Experience, ed. Hazel Evans, Charles Knight, London, 1972.
- SHARP, Dame E. The Government Role. in Hazel Evans (ed.) 1972. New Towns: the British Experience.
- SMITH, H. R. Dispersal of Population from Congested Urban Areas in Scotland. Public Administration, Summer 1956.
- SMOUT, T. C. The Londoner and the Planned Village in Scotland, in Mitchison and Phillipson. Scotland in the Age of Improvement. Edinburgh University Press, 1969.
- THE SOUTH EAST STUDY 1961-81. Ministry of Housing and Local Government. H.M.S.O. London, 1964.
- STRANZ, W. Overspill - Anticipation and Reality. University of Birmingham, Centre for Urban and Regional Studies. Birmingham, 1972.
- STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE NORTH WEST. SPNW Joint Planning Team. H.M.S.O. London 1973.
- TAYLOR, A. J. P. English History 1914-1945. Oxford U.P. 1965, Oxford.
- TELLING. A. E. The Act in Brief Town and Country Planning, August, 1954.
- THOMAS, R. Aycliffe to Cumbernauld. A Study of Seven New Towns in their Regions. PEP Broadsheet 516, London, December 1969.
- THOMAS, R. "London's New Towns" PEP, London 1969.
- THOMAS, W. The Management Task. in Hazel Evans, 1972, New Towns: the British Experience.

TOOTHILL REPORT. (Inquiry into the Scottish Economy 1960-61)

Scottish Council (Development and Industry). Edinburgh, 1961.

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (Journal)

June 1936 ) Editorials  
Sept 1936 )

TOWN DEVELOPMENT ACT, 1952. H.M.S.O. London, 1952.

TOWN PLANNING ACT, 1925. Section 16.

TOWN PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1925. Section 15.

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT, 1932. Section 35.

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1932. Section 34.

WAIDE, L. Expanded Towns: the Background. Built Environment,  
March 1973, pp. 136-138.

WELLS, Sir H. Agencies and Finance. in Hazel Evans (ed.) 1972  
New Towns: the British Experience.

WEST CENTRAL SCOTLAND PLAN Consultative Draft Report. Glasgow, 1974.  
also Supplementary Volume 1, The Regional Economy.

WHEATLEY COMMISSION (Royal Commission on Local Government in Scotland)  
Report. Cmnd 4150. H.M.S.O. Edinburgh 1969.

Written Evidence Vol. 5 Regional Studies Association  
Vol. 8 SSHA  
New Town Development Corporations.  
Vol. 22 East Kilbride Town Council.

WILCOX, D. "But Who Will Initiate?" Built Environment, March 1975.

WILSON, T. Policies for Regional Development, Oliver and Boyd,  
Edinburgh, 1964.

YOUNGSON, H. J. After the Forty-Five. Edinburgh University Press,  
1973.

## ADDENDUM

Since writing, some of the possibilities for the future outlined in the final chapter have emerged as firm suggestions to the Department of the Environment by Northampton County Council<sup>1</sup>, in response to the Government's Consultative Document.

They argue that development pressures are being misdirected in the county. Daventry and Corby have spare capacity, yet expensive infrastructure is required to service proposed developments at Northampton, for example. Accordingly, to ensure more rational direction of growth pressures:

"... they propose that in Northamptonshire the existing agreements - particularly those under the New Town Development Act - should be renegotiated and the possibility of two development corporations for the whole county be discussed."

There is a strong suggestion that to ensure representation of local views, direct local government nomination of a majority of corporation members should be negotiated, but since the issue is not raised, the council appears to accept that the development corporation agency remains the best way of co-ordinating development in the interests of all.

(The 'Observation Document') "... stresses the impossibility of seeing New Towns in isolation from neighbouring areas, and refers to the need for all country development to be co-ordinated. While acknowledging the achievements of new and expanded towns, the county feels that the time is opportune for more effective arrangements to cope with expansion. This is particularly evident as there

---

1. See Gillard, R "Northampton put Forward New Town Master Plan" Public Service and Local Government Appointments, 7th April 1975, page 10.

appear to be potentially serious conflicts over the master plans of the single-minded development agencies and the county's proposed structure plan."

Finally, the emergent issue of distribution of development values is tentatively aired - and again the tacit assumption that resolution of differences can most easily be achieved by adapting the valuable development agency machinery, not be eliminating it:

"We also feel that the local authority should share in the development carried out by the Development Corporation - so that if there is a financial return through the land assembly operation ... the local authority should participate in these profits."

What is interesting is that the assumption of development corporation-type powers by local authorities in pursuit of regional plans was a possibility floated in the Scottish Consultation Document alone (The Scottish New Towns, 1975, para 12). The fact that a county with experience of partnership agreements on a smaller scale should independently generate the novel concept is perhaps an indication that it is worth serious consideration.