THE UNIVERSITY OF

SYDNEY

TRANSPORT ADMINISTRATION AND PLANNING IN SYDNEY

Co-ordinative Influences in a Multi-Organisational
Policy Field

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This thesis is submitted for the degree of
Master of Economics
in the Department of Government and
Public Administration
University of Sydney

March 1978

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis represents a large part of the fruits of a four-year programme of research, discussion and lately work experience in and around the New South Wales transport administration. While the thesis is entirely my own work, I gratefully acknowledge the assistance of the following:

Gordon Messiter, Ken Trott and Keith King for invaluable help on general questions of practice and theory;

Dr Martin Painter and Professor Richard Spann for reading and commenting on earlier drafts of the Introduction and associated papers, and Dr Painter for his guidance and patience as supervisor;

the Hon. M.A. Morris, the Hon. P.F. Cox, Mr N. McCusker and Mr K.J. Trott for formal interviews, and others listed in the Bibliography for other discussions;

Dr Peter Spearritt, Milton Cockburn, Leonie Yandell, Doug Keech, Alex McNeill, Bob Ritchie, Tess Horwitz and John Forsyth for co-operation, guidance and occasional specific assistance;

and many other public servants, whether listed here or in footnotes or not.

I also thank the Hon. Peter Cox for permission to include Appendix 1; Dr Martin Painter for his collaboration in earlier associated work for the former Commonwealth Bureau of Roads; and the audience at the Institution of Engineers Symposium on "The Dilemma of Transport Decision-Making" in June 1977 for their comments on my paper on co-ordinative influences.

A number of references have been made in the early chapters to unpublished work of my own, in order to simplify the treatment. As a rule these works are available from the nominated University Department or other place. Also transcripts of five formal interviews have been included as Appendices for the same reason and because of their intrinsic importance. It is considered essential that the Appendices be reproduced here as will be seen in the chapters on the post-1945 period.

My greatest debt is to my wife, Anne, for the encouragement and typing.

Robert Gibbons

ABBREVIATIONS

ALP	Australian Labor Party
CBD	Central Business District
CCC	Cumberland County Council
CUMTAC	County of Cumberland Passenger Transport Advisory Committee
DCA	Department of Civil Aviation
DGT	Department of Government Transport
DMR	Department of Main Roads
DMT	Department of Motor Transport
DOT	Department of Transport (Commonwealth)
MOTH	Ministry of Transport and Highways
MRDP	Main Roads Development Plan
MSB	Maritime Services Board
NRMA	National Roads and Motorists' Association
NSWPD	New South Wales Parliamentary Debates
NSWPP	New South Wales Parliamentary Papers
PEC	Planning and Environment Commission
PTC	Public Transport Commission
SATS	Sydney Area Transportation Study
SPA	State Planning Authority
TAC	Traffic Advisory Committee
URTAC	Urban Transport Advisory Committee
UTS	Urban Transport Study Group
VPLANSW	Votes and Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly of N.S.W.

A Proposition on Co-ordinative Influence

An historically-minded generation is one which
looks back... for those critical insights which
are necessary both to the understanding of its
existing situation and to the realisation of the
values which it holds.

E.H. Carr   The New Society

Urban transport planning is one of the most contentious areas of contemporary public administration. The effective functioning of the metropolis as a whole depends more on the quality of the planning, operation and management of transport facilities than on any other factor. Transport is a determinant of the environmental character of city and suburb, workplace and home; of the location of residence and industry; of the effectiveness of public and private facilities; of safety and increasingly of health; of local political involvement and of the distribution of the benefits and costs of urban living. Transport administration is central to the formulation and implementation of urban policy, and the influences on the efficiency of the various processes in that administration can be considered to be of especial significance in the study of public policy generally. Decision-making in urban transport is very complicated and the role and responsibilities of the administrator are commensurately important.

Since the Second World War, however, urban transport authorities have been subjected to increasing criticism regarding their administration of existing services and the scope and intent of their planning of new systems. In most major cities the transport networks were developed before the First World War and are still in operation — and deteriorating. The penalties of obsolescence are numerous: costs (and fares) are rising, equipment and rolling stock are inadequate, uncomfortable and difficult to maintain, networks are overcrowded at peak hours but are unsuited to the bulk of non-peak trips due to structural changes in the cities, and personnel arrangements are commonly anachronistic. The relationship between public and private transport facilities has changed enormously, particularly since 1945, making new and expensive demands on transport authorities but without relieving them of the debt burdens of existing and past systems; the inability to respond to changes in demand patterns has compounded financial problems.

Even where new planning and construction have taken place, planners have been accused of adopting policies that are deleterious to the efficient and equitable management of the metropolis. There have been rapid changes in popular notions of the purpose of urban transport, ecological responsibility, and the distribution of the benefits and costs of investment programmes, leading to a new consciousness of the processes of urban society and a strict accounting of transport investment. Transport planners have acknowledged this, although in many cities in the world the dominant conventions of planning philosophy, methodology and technology have been criticised by politicians and the public

as being simplistic and socially irrelevant and planners have not
given ground. Technocratic philosophies have developed and become
entrenched, often further disadvantaging bureaucracies that are
confused by the rejection of their policies and even their
standards of common sense.

The problems of transport administrators are not unique: many
of the preceding comments may be found to apply to other areas of
public policy, in different measure perhaps but with the familiar
themes of high and rising costs, obsolescence of methods and
equipment, and a perserverance with policies that are aligned more
to the needs of bureaucracy than the community. In transport
however there is a significant complication. While "transport"
can be identified as a single functional sub-system of the
metropolis (with interdependencies arising therefrom), it also
consists of specialised activities, for instance trains, buses,
ferries, trams, main and local roads, airports, taxis, carparks,
footpaths, and traffic regulation and control. Each of these can
be administered separately as has been the case in Sydney for most
of its history, or in combination with the rest. Administrators
therefore have to deal with an extremely complicated policy field
in which co-ordination is the key word; there are overlapping
spheres of action and important policy and operational
interdependencies. The performance of each administrative agency
and each service will be affected in some way by that of the others.
Decisions made within one body can influence not only the effective-
ness of the other agencies but can also affect the overall perform-
ance of the urban transport function and that of the metropolis as
a whole.

There are important theoretical issues involved in such a
multi-organisational system, especially with regard to the
difficulty of co-ordinating policies and actions between separate
agencies. Disagreements between organisations in related areas
are common, for instance in national defence,[1] economic policy,[2]
and in a somewhat analogous situation, nation states participating
in international organisations.[3] Even cases of agencies such as
the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers proceeding with works and policies
against the wishes of the superior levels of the official hierarchy

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1. One example concerning Australian Defence investment is Paul
Kelly, "Who wins the billion dollar tug o'war?", National Times
October 18-23, 1976.

2. See for example C.L. Schultze, The Politics and Economics of
Public Spending (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1968).

3. See especially A. Etzioni, Political Unification (N.Y.: Holt,
Rinehart and Winston, 1965) for a discussion of integrating power
in regional unions; also T. Hovet, Bloc Politics in the United
Nations (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1960).

have been recorded fairly frequently.[4] Inter-organisational
competition and conflict is institutionalised in the American
budgetary system.[5] In the case of urban transport planning,
there may be disagreements between authorities over particular
issues, for instance at the simple and obvious level of the
division of costs of common works (such as ancillary investment at
railway stations, that is, carparks, road and bridge adjustments,
and so on), or the equally obvious disagreements over spending
priorities between local councils and State instrumentalities.[6]
More fundamental in the longer term is the possible effects of any
independence allowed to separate authorities on planning
priorities. Even if independent authorities co-ordinated them-
selves through processes of bargaining, mutual understanding and
other forms of "partisan mutual adjustment",[7] the results may be
far from satisfactory in the view of elected governments or
statutory co-ordinative agencies.

Co-ordination is a concept which, although often mentioned in
the literature of public administration, is generally approached
at the case-study level without adequate consideration of its
importance in policy formulation, programme implementation,
political accountability and the like, in multi-organisational
governmental systems.[8] The science of public administration has
been largely concentrated on the study of established organisations
where participation in co-ordinative mechanisms is virtually
assured by the characteristics of the organisation. Co-ordination
is seen as a task of "the greatest importance, complexity and
difficulty",[9] but by definition, if the organisation is to
function effectively and survive, its internal structure will
promote co-operation over elements of conflict.[10] There may be

4. See in particular A. Maass, Muddy Waters (Cambridge, Mass.:
Harvard University Press, 1951); R.A. Dahl and C.E. Lindblom,
Politics, Economics and Welfare (N.Y.: Harper Torchbooks, 1963),
p. 343 and elsewhere.

5. A. Wildavsky, The Politics of the Budgetary Process (Boston:
Little, Brown, 1964).

6. These aspects are discussed in later chapters.

7. C.E. Lindblom, The Intelligence of Democracy (N.Y.: Free
Press, 1965).

8. In this thesis the term "governmental system" will refer to
any group of officially-constituted bureaucracies and institutions
which are interdependent, that is which occupy a common policy
field in which the policies of all bodies are directly or
indirectly connected. For a full definition of interdependence
see Lindblom, ibid., pp. 21 f.

9. H.A. Simon, Administrative Behavior (N.Y.: Free Press, 1965),
p. 103.

10. On this subject see: Simon, ibid., chapter VI; H.A. Simon,

disagreement at personal and group levels but the organisation, with its inducements, punishments and structure of authority, will itself function as a co-ordinative system to produce a favourable outcome for the whole. The situation <u>between</u> organisations may be very different if there is a lack of effective co-ordination.[11] The same processes of "identification"[12] and internal co-ordination that unify the sections and departments of an organisation (albeit perhaps imperfectly) also give organisations their own individual orientation:

> A bureaucracy tends to have a life of its own; it tends to become an organic whole with a sense of common commitment among its membership and a readiness to close ranks and protect the common interest.... it is more or less organic and self-protecting as well as systematic and deliberate...(13)

Further,

> The permanent civil servant has a major investment in his agency, and he will seek to protect it in his relations with others outside the agency.... the bureaucrat high enough in the hierarchy to make responsible decisions is probably also devoted quite sincerely to his agency's cause.... (His) psychic investment in the agency becomes a motivation to fight on behalf of its program.(14)

D.W. Smithburg and V.A. Thompson, <u>Public Administration</u> (N.Y.: Knopf, 1950), chapters 8, 9 and 14; J.A. Litterer, <u>The Analysis of Organizations</u> (N.Y.: Wiley, 1965), part 3, "Achieving Coordination", especially chapter 15; B.M. Gross, <u>Organizations and their Managing</u> (N.Y.: Free Press, 1968), chapter 3, "The Conflict-Cooperation Nexus", especially p. 60; A. Etzioni, <u>A Comparative Analysis of Complex Organizations</u> (N.Y.: Free Press, 1961), pp. 78 f; and J.G. March and H.A. Simon, <u>Organizations</u> (N.Y.: Wiley, 1958), especially chapter 4. One reference on survival and schism under conditions of conflict is H. Assael, "Constructive Role of Inter-organizational Conflict", <u>Administrative Science Quarterly</u>, 14 (4), December 1969.

11.   Conflict may exist regardless of the effectiveness of co-ordinative mechanisms; the issue lies more in the outcome of conflict. A general reference is W.M. Evan (ed), <u>Interorganiza-tional Relations</u> (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1976), Part One, especially Reading 3.

12.   See Simon, <u>Administrative Behavior</u>, <u>ibid</u>., pp. 12, 103 and elsewhere; and J.K. Galbraith, <u>The New Industrial State</u> (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1969), chapters 11 to 15, also pp. 272 f.

13.   D. Lockard, <u>The Politics of State and Local Government</u> (N.Y.: Macmillan, 2nd edition, 1969), p. 150.

14.   <u>Ibid</u>. Such statements are common in the literature of public administration. For a discussion of the issues involved vis-à-vis accountability and the role of the Public Service, see H.V. Emy, "The Public Service and Political Control", and subsequent comments by L. Benham and L. Peres, in Appendix 1.B to the <u>Report of the Royal Commission on Australian Government Administration</u> (Canberra: A.G.P.S., 1976). Also P. Self, <u>Administrative Theories and Politics</u> (London: Allen & Unwin, 1972), chapters 6 and 7; and A. Downs, <u>Inside Bureaucracy</u> (Boston: Little, Brown, 1967), generally.

There is a complication, namely at what level in a system such as an organisation does identification take place? This comes close to the conventional view of organisational conflict, as seen in the following quote from Simon's <u>Administrative Behavior</u>:

> The principal undesirable effect of identification is that it prevents the institutionalized individual from making correct decisions in cases where the restricted area of values with which he identifies himself must be weighed against other values outside that area. This is a principal cause of the (inter-section) competition and wrangling which characterize any large administrative organization.[15]

The implication is that the behaviour of the institution might not be too different from that of the "institutionalized individual". This applies particularly in situations where a technocratic professional ethos is pervasive, producing what has been called a guild orientation.[16] Because the main task of say an engineering authority is basically physical and technical, and because internal standards of promotion and remuneration are founded on technical soundness, the outlook of senior administrators tends to be closed to pressures which lie outside the mainstream of organisational standards. As one engineer, E.D. Storr, put it in an article in <u>The Professional Engineer</u> in 1974, concerning the narrowness of perspective of the institutionalised engineer, "His whole conduct may be patterned by the compelling nature of the institutional imperatives which he is unlikely to question because he sees them as the only possible way".[17] The value system of the authority becomes more and more closed in accordance with the standards of performance of the defined organisational task.[18]

To generalise therefore, the consequence of interdependence in a multi-organisational system may well be conflict, in what can be considered to be a parallel case to the internal conflict described by Simon. However in a governmental system, where the survival of both the constituent units and the system itself is virtually assured, conflict will not necessarily be reflected directly in economic performance or organisational disintegration.

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15.   <u>Op. cit.</u>, p. 13. Again this is a common view of administrat-ive theorists.

16.   See J.M. Power, "The Emerging Politics of Engineering", in H. Mayer and H. Nelson (eds), <u>Australian Politics</u> (Melbourne: Cheshire, 4th edition, 1976).

17.   Quoted <u>ibid</u>., p. 305.

18.   This topic is taken up further in R.P. Gibbons, "Co-ordinative Causes of Decision-Making Failures", Institution of Engineers, <u>The Dilemma of Transport Decision-Making: A Symposium</u> (paper available from author; 7th June, 1977.)

The stakes in any contest between official bureaucracies will be measured in influence and policies, especially in interdependent policy fields. Which agency will prevail, and why, and what might be the significance of victory or defeat (or compromise) for the overall functioning of the system?

The strength of the individual commitment of organisations to separate policies will vary with a number of factors such as the potency and permanency of the benefits and costs of compliance with central direction, the degree of established responsibility of a particular agency for a defined policy area, and so on. In some cases where central co-ordination is considered necessary by those in political authority, there may be little trouble in reconciling individual aspirations, in other cases there may be great difficulty with a commensurate load on co-ordinative mechanisms. Little attention has been given to such questions by administrative theorists: very few writers have developed the analogy between intra-organisational conflict[19] and inter-organisational conflict in governmental systems.[20] Conflict and inconsistency may be regarded as fundamental to government, not as aberrations, and the mode and quality of the resolution of differences in goals and policies deserve careful study. Such matters have received extensive attention in the literature of political influence[21] and more particularly by economists

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19. "Conflict" will be used in a very general sense, covering all states of disagreement ranging from inconsistency to actual struggle. More specific meanings will be distinguished as the context requires.

20. The major exceptions are Lindblom, op. cit., who derived his original stimulus from the study of economics (see R.A. Dahl and C.E. Lindblom, Politics, Economics and Welfare (N.Y.: Harper Torchbooks, 1963, originally published 1953), for example chapter 7); Self, op. cit., chapters 3 and 4; and R.N. Spann, Public Administration in Australia (Sydney: N.S.W. Government Printer, 1973), particularly Part I wherein the parallel is constantly implicit, for example at pages 20 and 35. (A main instance is Spann's consideration of both intra- and inter-organisational factors in chapter 4, "Structure and the Division of Work".) All these writers refer to other sources, such as Downs' Inside Bureaucracy, but the generalisation has considerable force even though it is not absolute.

21. The major sources are: R.A. Dahl, Modern Political Analysis (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1970), especially chapter 6; Floyd Hunter, Community Power Structure (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 1953); D. Bell, The End of Ideology (N.Y.: Free Press, 1960); N. Polsby, Community Power and Political Theory (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963); P. Bachrach and M. Baratz, "Two Faces of Power", American Political Science Review, vol 56 1962; and works by D.B. Truman, C. Wright Mills, Talcott Parsons, and others as cited in Lockard, op. cit., chapters 7 and 8.

concerned with oligopoly, the existence of "few" firms in a market.[22] In fact the administrative analysts[23] who have written about co-ordinative problems have tended to resort to the economic theory of oligopoly to explain organisational behaviour in government systems, despite the substantial differences between the two situations. Most important of these are the statutory connections between official agencies and the existence of formal co-ordinative mechanisms.[24]

A major characteristic of governmental systems per se is the systematic framework in which the constraints, inducements and threats and so on, which all agencies must endure whether they are private or official, are effected. Political accountability is basically centripetal (or unitary) in the face of the ultimate contingency, be it election or revolution, even though responsibility may be decentralised or delegated. Thus administration must be placed in the context of the "success of the government as a whole":

> It is certain that occasions will arise on which individual ministers and their departments will seek to exercise their powers to a degree or in ways which ignore, or seek to ignore, constraints necessary for the success of the government as a whole and the welfare of the community. Essential therefore to any form of government in which authority is entrusted to a number of ministers will be the means by which the discipline of such constraints is made effective.
>
> ... This process can briefly be referred to as 'co-ordination'.[25]

In this sense co-ordination is pervasive although not necessarily effective. The mechanisms of co-ordination vary but as implied above are orientated to the centre and are (at least in a technical

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22. See for example S.G. Sturmey and D.W. Pearce, Economic Analysis (London: McGraw-Hill, 1966), chapter 17; R.G. Lipsey, Positive Economics (London: Weidonfeld and Nicolson, 1969), chapter 26; W. Fellner, Competition among the Few: Oligopoly and Similar Market Structures (N.Y.: Knopf, 1949); and J.K. Galbraith, American Capitalism: The Concept of Countervailing Power (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1970), chapter 4.

23. A major example is March and Simon, Organizations, op. cit., pp. 131-5, for these authors relied on a simplistic presentation of the theory of oligopoly and the theory of games. Among the writers who have integrated political and administrative theory are Lindblom, The Intelligence of Democracy, and Dahl and Lindblom, Politics, Economics and Welfare; and Spann, op. cit., Part I especially chapter 5.

24. See K.W. Heydon, "Public Sector Management and Related Information Requirements", Appendix 1.E to the Report of R.C.A.G.A., op. cit., Appendix Volume One, pp. 171-2; Self, op. cit., pp. 11-12 and elsewhere; and in particular Spann, ibid., pp. 11-16 and references given there.

25. Report of R.C.A.G.A., op cit., p. 355.

sense) structured to produce predictable and politically acceptable results. Similar considerations apply in the case of functional interdependence, although if the consequences of inefficient co-ordination are not likely to be expressed in terms of that "ultimate contingency" then politicians may not give functional factors the same weight that they give to matters nearer to their collective survival. In fact the Royal Commission on Australian Government Administration saw a danger of contamination of the political unity of a government (or ministry) because "... permanent heads of the various departments do not have political or other continuous cause to think collectively or to act in close concert. Differences between departments in the scope of their functions and relative power tend rather to promote a sense of competition among some of them, so that it may require a degree of conscious effort on the part of a minister to maintain an appropriate detachment from the consequences of departmental rivalries".[26] The potential for conflict between central political needs and functional needs, and individual organisational aspirations, is very real.

The preceding discussion can be summed up in the proposition that in a multi-organisational governmental system in which individual policy areas are interdependent, the nature of organisational behaviour will tend to produce competition between agencies, that this will strain the co-ordinative mechanisms in the system, and that those mechanisms may not be capable of overcoming such divisive forces to the extent that is required by the interdependencies. The urban polity is an extremely important example of multi-organisational governmental systems. It will be the purpose of this thesis to explore the implications of such an environment in a major policy area, transport administration, and to draw conclusions as to the significance and effectiveness of the various co-ordinative mechanisms.

At the outset, while the indicative framework which has just been presented would have some theoretical and empirical application to most (if not all) policy fields, two major qualifications must be made. First, there are always difficulties in measuring the effect of any suspected influence on decision-making, often because decision outputs are poorly defined, unknown or abstract (even non-decisions[27]), as has been established in the literature of political influence as cited previously. This is especially true

26. Ibid., p. 58. Cf Emy, op. cit., for example at p. 50.
27. See M.A. Crenson, The Un-Politics of Air Pollution (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1971), pp. 2 ff and elsewhere.

where outputs have to be compared against some conceived standard
of adequacy, that is, what is "bad" planning or a "bad" decision?
Normally it is argued that policy decisions should be part of and
consistent with the formal chain of accountability in the
Westminster system, so that where statutory organisations do
specialise their decision-making and are judged to be too separate
from Ministers and unco-ordinated, their planning is "bad".[28]
This line of argument is invalid where the intention of the elected
Government is in fact to "hive off" all but the most electorally
potent decision-making without significant regard to co-ordination.
This has been a prevailing convention of urban government in
twentieth century Sydney. While consequent corporate planning
might be judged to be inadequate on other grounds, it would not
necessarily be "bad" by contemporary political standards.

This does not make co-ordination a minor consideration for the
political analyst. Co-ordination must be defined to include
political institutions such as Cabinet, perhaps more so than self-
regulatory mechanisms such as inter-departmental committees.
Co-ordination can also include the various societal interests
affected by different decisions, to the extent that such interests
can be fundamental determinants of the constraints and pressures on
formal co-ordinative mechanisms. While this might stretch the
definition it does emphasise the fact that even in a system like
that of New South Wales, where the statutory corporation has
dominated urban administration (as will be seen in later chapters),
failures of co-ordination can be obvious, or can indicate more
essential weaknesses of a political system. This does not
necessarily vindicate statutory incorporation for many weaknesses
will be identified later, in a long-term and substantial context. .
However one major inter-departmental committee will be seen to have
been ineffectual, and several major planning developments to have
been based on internalised organisational values, because
governments were not seriously concerned with the quality of
operational performance. This will be a recurring theme in this
thesis. It is suggested that the treatment of planning as a
decision-making output, against the background of major structural
influences on planning processes, will allow a critical examination
of the "theory" of co-ordinative influence advanced in this chapter.

The second major qualification is that every policy field,
organisational task and political environment makes more or less
unique requirements on organisational structure and performance.

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28.   This has been an important theme in the papers of Professor
Peter Wilenski's Review of N.S.W. Government Administration. An
important example is P. Wilenski, "Urban Administration and Policy
in New South Wales" (roneo; UNESCO Seminar on Urban Management
Processes, Adelaide, 1977).

This is contrary to the classical Weberian guidelines of efficient bureaucratic administration but this basic proposition has been subject to extensive documentation in the last twenty years, especially from the "contingency theorists".[29] In simple terms, their argument is that inherent policy field characteristics (such as stability, diversity and so on) affect internal practice in many ways especially through delegation of authority, the operation of "boundary" (or externally oriented liaison) groups, the "shallowness" or "depth" of authority chains and so on. Also the way the policy field is organised ab initio affects organisational behaviour. Contingency theorists have been typically concerned with internal operations and adaptation rather than with system outputs and inter-corporate co-ordination yet the school of thought has obvious relevance. Some of its insights on internal organisational change will be related to Sydney's experience in the appropriate chapters. At this point brief attention needs to be given to the main features of the transport "policy environment" at a general level, as background to the later empirical treatment.

Transport "administration" consists of a diverse range of policy processes. At the start a broad distinction must be made between planning and managerial[30] decision types on the basis of the functional characteristics of urban transport. In its simplest terms the distinction can be expressed as the difference between

29. There is a wide range of literature on this point, especially in the Administrative Science Quarterly, most issues. Some major references are: H. Aldrich, "Organizational Boundaries and Interorganizational Conflict", Human Relations, vol. 24, 1971; J.K. Benson, "The Interorganizational Network as a Political Economy", A.S.Q., 20 (2), June 1975; T. Burns and G.M. Stalker, The Management of Innovation (London: Tavistock, 1961); F.E. Emery and E.L. Trist, "The causal texture of organizational environments", Human Relations, vol. 18, 1965; W.M. Evan, "The organization set", in J.D. Thompson (ed.), Approaches to Organization Design (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1966); H. Guetzkow, "Relations among organizations", in R. Bosers (ed.), Studies in Behavior in Organizations (University of Georgia Press, 1966); R.H. Hall, Organizations: Structure and Process (N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1972); P.M. Hirsch, "Organizational Effectiveness and the Institutional Environment", A.S.Q., 20 (3), September 1975; T.A. Kochan, "Determinants of the Power of Boundary Units in an Interorganizational Bargaining Relation", A.S.Q., 20 (3), September 1975; P.R. Lawrence and J. Lorsch, Organization and Environment (Homewood, Ill.: Irwin, 1967); J.W. Lorsch and P.R. Lawrence, Studies in Organizational Design (Homewood, Ill.: Irwin, 1970); J.D. Thompson, Organizations in Action (N.Y.: McGraw-Hill, 1967); P.E. White, "Resources as Determinants of Organizational Behavior", A.S.Q., 19 (3), September 1974; and J. Woodward, Industrial Organization (London: O.U.P., 1965). A close study was made of this general literature at the suggestion of Professor R.N. Spann. This list contains only works which were found to be fairly directly relevant to this thesis.

30. Managerial has been chosen in preference to such words as operational, short-term, tactical, corporate, administrative, temporary and so on; its meaning will be defined in the following.

long-term strategic rankings of priorities which provide the
continuing background[31] for more flexible ad hoc or tactical
decision-making. The first factor underlying the division is the
nature of transport works for these are typically very expensive
and have a long operational life. They are often difficult to
modify and reviews of their operational effectiveness are therefore
only periodically made. Thus decisions concerning substantial
investment programmes normally have to provide for long-term
factors, with any flexibility that might be needed coming from
for instance pricing policy. The second reason relates to the
nature of the interaction between transport and other major urban
processes. Roads, railways, airports and the like not only must
be planned to anticipate long-term traffic growth but themselves
influence land use and traffic purely through either being
available for use, or being inadequate, or not being available as
the case may be. Thus transport planning tends to be self-
reinforcing and it is often only exogenous factors such as
technological change and societal change (for instance the popular
adoption of the motor vehicle) that necessitate major reviews of
priorities and operational effectiveness.

The third reason is the intrinsic and exceptional importance
of short-term decisions. Apart from investment in traffic control
systems on roads and railways and similar expenditure, management
in the present sense includes fare and pricing policy, the level
and type of service provided by different modes of transport, and
regulatory policies. Like other public services transport
authorities depend on revenue from user charges (fares, fees and
taxes and the like) for their financial viability; yet the
transport administrator is almost unique in having to consider .
demand factors and market forces as major influences on policy.
Public transport for example is essential yet it has close
substitutes, such as trips on foot or by bicycle, by car and taxi,
and even perhaps by commercial delivery services. Motor vehicle
registrations and petrol tax receipts could also be affected by
pricing policies. The political and functional importance of such
considerations must be emphasised. Managerial decisions such as
fare-setting (which is not normally related to individual route
performance but to annual overall financial results) can affect
long-term trends in transport patterns and because of the physical
inflexibilities mentioned above can be of fundamental significance
in making existing transport systems effective or redundant. Even
decisions such as the installation of extensive traffic control

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31. While this statement does not preclude the possibility of
"incremental" policy-making, it does imply a limitation on such
processes (for which see Self, op. cit., pp. 39 ff).

systems on roads can affect travel patterns substantially,[32] although this is not generally the intention.

The distinction between planning and management which has been outlined has considerable empirical validity but not of course in a black-and-white sense. There are many facets (time span, functional complexity, impact on long-term priorities, finance, extent of interdependencies and so on) which might be mixed-up in a particular process and it is more realistic to speak of three catagories — strategic planning, ad hoc planning and management. Strategic planning has three basic characteristics: (i) it is concerned with the "long term" (the definition of this is flexible); (ii) it deals more in priorities than details of route, construction timing and finance, etcetera; and (iii) it is comprehensive in that it should encompass all elements of the policy field and all interdependencies. Ad hoc planning deals with detailed planning,[33] especially specific issues. It builds on the broad framework of priorities provided by the strategic planning, but if prior strategic planning (in effect, the co-ordination of conflicting goals in the policy system) is lacking then it should be at least compatible with the long-term priorities of the government; and it should be sufficiently comprehensive to incorporate the interdependencies relating to the specific subject of the planning. (Ad hoc also implies that the problem is more or less unexpected and requires individual attention, although here the sense will be extended to cases which were anticipated but left for later detailed attention.) Obviously the difference between ad hoc planning and managerial decision-making might be slight in the sense that both are concerned with short-term matters; the distinction lies in the subject matter, managerial policies being essentially repetitive and operational, based on the management of existing facilities rather than the addition of new works and such like. Decisions in the managerial class are also typically flexible and reversible (even though the policy effects of decisions may not be).

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32.   Jane Jacobs argued in The Death and Life of Great American Cities (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1972), chapter 18, that the potential of such policies for controlling the use of cars in a negative direction ("the attrition of the private automobile") is considerable. See that source for examples.

33.   Planning is a particular type of policy process which seeks to foresee and control the direction of change in a policy field, whether that field is broad or narrow. "A plan is a course of action which can be carried into effect, which can be expected to lead to the attainment of the ends sought, and which someone (an effectuating organization) intends to carry into effect" (M. Meyerson and E.C. Banfield, Politics, Planning and the Public Interest (N.Y.: Free Press, 1964), pp. 312 and following).

Strategic planning has the most public and best-documented type of decision process and it will receive brief attention here for three main reasons. First, "grand plans" are a notable part of transport planning and often have substantial political and operational importance. (Not all strategic plans are as ambitious as the Sydney Area Transportation Study which is discussed below but normally definite decisions have to be made on priorities and these are normally well publicised.) Second, this type of planning has the most obvious decision processes and thus sources of co-ordinative influence can be defined in a manner that has more general relevance. Finally, the methodologies of past "grand plans" are distinctive and have attracted a great deal of attention. It is important to say that while such methodologies can have untoward implications which are not immediately obvious, it is generally true that the methodologies employed at different times in Sydney were consistent with the predominant organisational and political intentions and had no real mysteries to the users. That is, the methodologies were less significant than the factors which explain their adoption. The treatment here will be brief[34] but it will indicate the general scope for co-ordinative influence in this policy field and the type of co-ordinative influence which might be explored in later empirical chapters.

The conventional methodology for strategic transport planning is characterised by the use of relatively standard assumptions and procedures of data collection and modelling, which are intended to produce an abstract framework of causal relationships to simulate and simplify the urban world. The methodology has been evolved and standardised (even to the extent of commercial computer "packages") by the engineering profession and has been applied in most major cities since the Second World War.[35] There are four major steps:

(i)   establish the main social parameters for the planning period (typically 10-30 years), such as population, employment, income and travel trends;

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34.   This subject was covered in more depth in R.P. Gibbons, "Transportation Planning in Sydney, Post 1945: Politics, the Environment, and Sociospatial Dynamics" (Colloquium paper, Department of Government and Public Administration, University of Sydney, April 1975).

35.   Some general references of value are: T.M. Cowling and G.C. Steeley, Sub-Regional Planning Studies: An Evaluation (Oxford: Pergamon, 1973); E.K. Morlok, "Methodologies in the Selection and Evaluation of Transportation Alternatives", in High Speed Ground Transportation (Research Report, Transport Research Institute, Carnegie-Mellon University, 1969); and P.G. Pak-Poy, "Comprehensive Transportation Study Techniques", Australian Planning Institute Journal, 4 (4), October 1966.

(ii)   project the expected increase in traffic on the basis of present base-year traffic patterns;

(iii)   evaluate the existing transport facilities in terms of the projected traffic loads; and

(iv)   design new facilities and policies to accommodate the traffic increase within policy objectives for pollution and the like.

This procedure, which is depicted in graphical form in Figure One, is realistic in the special terms of the "grand plan" or systems approach, as seen in the methodology of the Sydney Area Transportation Study,[36] but it can be put into a more generalised form as a policy process, as follows. Goals and objectives are first formulated; technical models are used to depict relationships, define problems and suggest alternatives; the choices are evaluated; and the preferred solution is (hopefully) implemented.[37]

The critical question to be considered is, what structural characteristics of a political system might affect the planning process in the stages set out immediately above? A detailed typological analysis was written on this point in the course of preparation of this thesis which suggested that three first order parameters were significant.[38] These are:

(a)   the degree of specialisation of administration, that is, is there central unified responsibility for the various transport and land use areas or are there separate specialised agencies?

(b)   the type of accountability — is there for example a greater metropolitan council based on direct representation, or is a State Government (and Ministerial system) responsible, the latter containing a less direct nexus between authority and accountability; and

(c)   the types of finance such as betterment tax, triennial and annual grants or loan allocations, and user charges.

There are other factors such as statutory, personality or manpower advantages of specific organisations but these are generally dependent on or included in the three categories, and/or are independent of governmental structure. For example it is

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36.   See Gibbons (as cited in note 34 above);   also Sydney Area Transportation Study (Sydney, 1974-5), vol. II.

37.   This is basically the "synoptic" approach analysed by D. Braybrooke and C.E. Lindblom, A Strategy for Decision (N.Y.: Free Press, 1963), chs 2 and 3. See also Y. Dror, "The Planning Process: a facet design", in F.J. Lynden and E.G. Miller (eds), Planning, Programming, Budgeting (Chicago: Markham, 1968).

38.   That discussion was much too long to be included here. The comments thereon of Dr M. Painter were very helpful in adapting that treatment to the present context.

DEVELOPING THE SYSTEMS MODEL

Evaluation

Data
of
problem
situation

Programme
Run

OUTPUT OF
PROGRAMME

Analytic Framework

Data Requirements of Algorithm
and Computer Programme

Computer
Programme for
Algorithm

Algorithm
for
Mathematical
Concept

Algebraic
Statement
of
Concept

Analytic Framework

Problem Situation

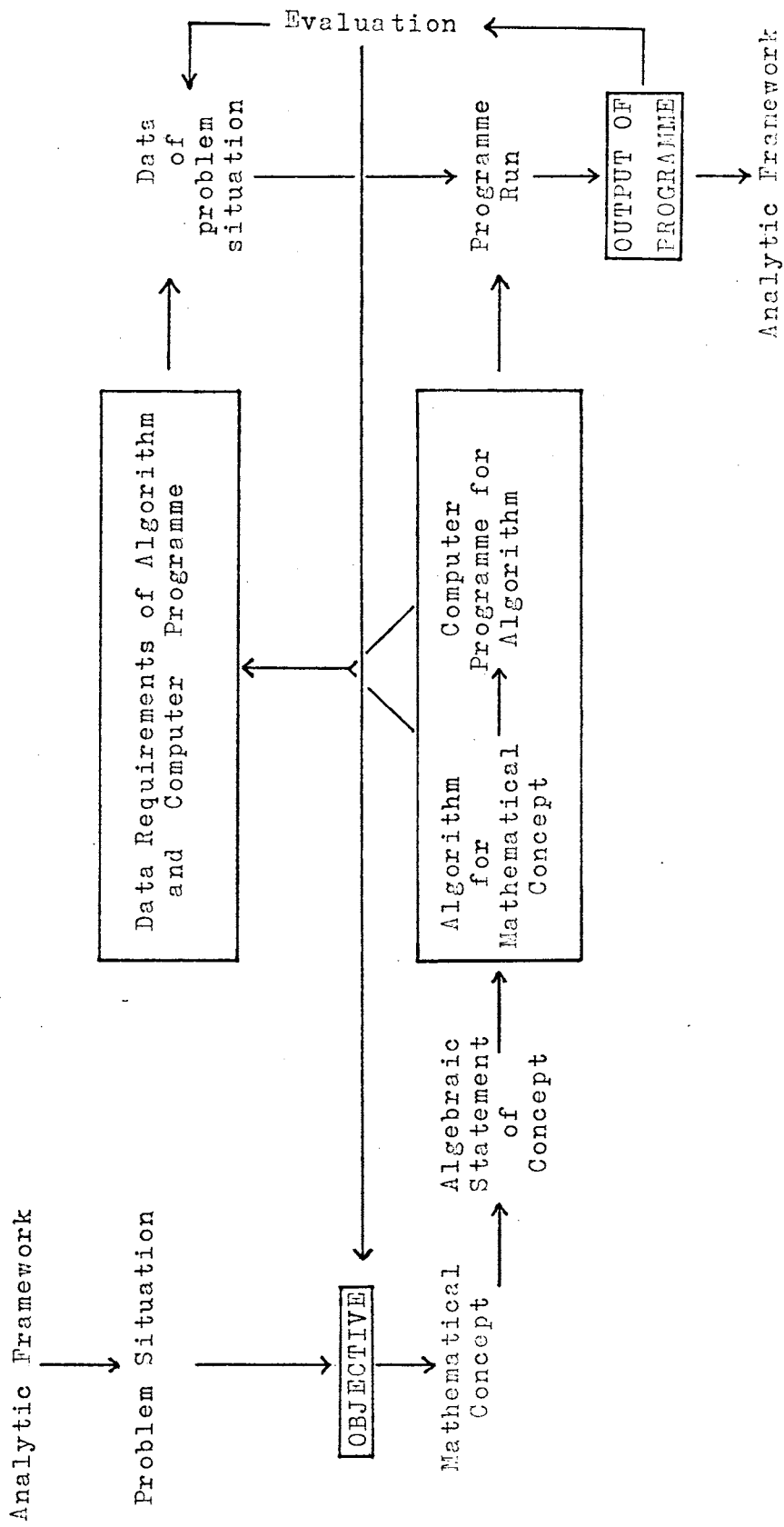OBJECTIVE

Mathematical
Concept

Figure 1: adapted from G. Chadwick, A Systems View of Planning
(Oxford: Pergamon, 1971), p. 194.

axiomatic that an organisation with a dominant advantage in terms of "system resources" as defined later will exercise most influence in a policy process, either because it can directly influence the terms of reference or recommendations and the like, or because it is in the best position to take positive action and is therefore favoured in programme recommendations, and so on. Some organisations may be so disadvantaged that they can participate in name only. In general such circumstances arise as a consequence of structural factors and while temporary influences may be important at a specific time, it is preferable to identify the structural factors. While the typology is necessarily simplified it has considerable indicative value in terms of interpreting the dynamic performance of a policy system.

Although it is not possible to develop the typology at length in this place, and it would be meaningless to summarise it in tabular form because of its complexity, the "goal setting" stage will be analysed briefly. (Financial parameters will be examined in Chapter Six.) It will be necessary to assume that the planning study is being conducted by a representative and "objective" team of specialists, which is unfortunate because bias can be reflected in the composition of a study team. However the analysis is intended to be indicative only and this weakness is not significant. Further, in the interest of simplicity the main structural parameters will be arranged in three basic combinations,[39] namely:

Case A: central unified administrative structure; greater metropolitan council based on direct representation and with overall responsibility for urban policy; and funding from a land tax (calculated according to the incidence of benefits of a programme), triennial funding, and user charges;

Case B: decentralised administrative structure but with effective co-ordination through Parliamentary and interdepartmental committees and officer communications; Ministerial responsibility in a State Parliamentary system; and annual and triennial funding from consolidated revenue; and

Case C: dispersed administration without effective co-ordinative mechanisms; Ministerial responsibility; and finance from user charges.

These alternatives are not meant to be totally comprehensive nor do they directly relate to any particular policy system applying in Sydney.

The first task of the transport planning team is the determination of the goals of their study and the translation of their brief into the terms of their methodology. This is an

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39. An alternative framework which has some relevance was provided by Richard S. Bolan in "Community Decision Behavior: The Culture of Planning", Journal of the American Institute of Planners, XXXV (5), September 1969.

extremely complicated topic. The brief may for instance be in
very general language, specifying values to be sought after and
directions to be taken; it may be more specific and consist of
objectives, measureable and attainable and specific to the
circumstances.[40] The brief may be all but sufficient for the
derivation of operational criteria by the study team; or the team
may have to go to a local knowledge of politics, a scrutiny of the
minutes of the responsible planning authorities, formal and informal
discussions at all levels, and so on. Some issues will rarely be
specified, as one prominent urban economist has implied:

> The first crucial issue involves one's point of view;
> that is, it involves designating whose interests and
> welfare are of concern and at stake. In more direct
> terms, the analyst must specify with some considerable
> care the particular people for whom the "best" plan is
> being sought...[41]

The planners will have a varying degree of discretion in the
formulation of overall and specific priorities, in the specification
of performance criteria of all types, and in the balancing of
conflicting community interests:

> ... the sheer complexity of the work... means that the
> planner will himself make many of the important value
> judgements. It is impossible to consult the whole
> community on many value judgements and it is often
> considered impracticable to consult even elected
> representatives on the grounds that, if this were done,
> the task would never be completed, or data would have
> decayed to the point of uselessness before publication
> of the plan.[42]

For the moment it will be assumed that the brief given to the
planning team is sufficiently detailed to eliminate the need for the
planners to derive operational objectives from nominated goals. We
are therefore interested in the effects that governmental structure
can have on the constitution of the brief.

The first requirement for determining goals and objectives is
that the individual problems and requirements of each service
(trains, buses, roads and so on) are properly understood by the
policy-makers. In the first system, Case A, the central greater
metropolitan council has responsibility for each service and the
potential for understanding is maximised. Objectives can therefore
be related to performance and be attainable. In Case B, where the

40. See for example R.C. Young, "Goals and Goal-Setting",
Journal of the American Institute of Planners, March 1966.

41. M. Wohl, Another View of Transport System Analysis (RAND
Publication P-3785, February 1968), p. 3.

42. Cowling and Steeley, op. cit., pp. 23-4.

services are administered separately but are centrally co-ordinated, there is again a good possibility that individual requirements will be understood properly although there may be weaknesses in the communication of that understanding to the Minister and thence Government. In Case C, however, the burden of monitoring and understanding the separate administrations falls to the Minister(s) and the level of understanding will depend largely on the independence allowed by the Minister and on the quality of the Ministerial research facilities.

The second factor relates to the source of accountability of the policy-makers, respectively the greater metropolitan council, and (for Cases B and C) the Minister (or Ministers as the case may be). In Case A the boundaries of the electorate of the council are broadly coincident with the operations of the transport services and therefore the political rewards and punishments for planning goals and objectives (other things being equal) will be meted out in proportion to the judgement of the planning clientele.[43] This is not necessarily the case in the other two systems because the allocation of Ministries would usually divorce the Ministers' electorates from their clientele. Also the communication between the urban electorate and the more broadly-based Government is less complete post hoc than in Case A. This could affect the selection of goals and objectives through (say) the imposition of partisan values on the planning process.[44]

The third influence relates to the initial planning commitments of the authorities controlling the respective services. In Case A, where activities are controlled centrally (and we can assume have been so controlled for a substantial period), commitments to investment programmes and administrative policies will probably be co-ordinated between services and the chance that

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43.   Clientele and constituency will be used interchangeably to indicate the interests affected by a planning study. See J.K. Friend, J.M. Power and C.J.L. Yewlett, Public Planning: the Inter-Corporate Dimension (London: Tavistock, 1974), pp. 29-30.

44.   Distortions in value-judgements arising from political processes are conceptually difficult, if not impossible, to identify let alone measure. Governments never merely represent majorities, for they cannot afford to ignore minorities, and there is a strong normative element in social planning; that is, they provide the people with improved policies or with practical compromises, "as may be required in the circumstances". Even if a Government with strong support from rural electorates chose to allocate a disproportionate share of its total road funds to the country, it would not necessarily mean that the Government had distorted planning values — but it may have. Cf Stephen L. Elkin, Politics and Land Use Planning: The London Experience (London: Cambridge University Press, 1974), chapter 5. An excellent general discussion is Simon, Administrative Behavior, op. cit., chapter III.

one service will not be as flexible towards new planning as the others (given physical constraints which would be allowed for in the planning process) will be minimised. The same can be said of Case B. However in the third instance the opportunities for the separate administrations to act out-of-step are maximised; this will possibly mean that one or more services will be disadvantaged, or worse, out-of-step, when the new planning is undertaken. If the policy-makers are aware of this, the goals and objectives which they would have otherwise specified would have to be altered. Such an alteration might be significant.

The remaining factors follow on from the third in that they are all potentially destructive of an "objectively-defined optimum mix" of goals and objectives.

The fourth requirement is that there be no undue bias towards either social or operational objectives. In Cases A and B the shared political responsibility for all types of urban agencies (in different measure) and the past history of effective co-ordination will tend to produce balanced objectives in the terms of the preceding paragraph. The dispersed structure of Case C again suggests that there may be a tendency towards imbalances between authorities and that this could prejudice the goal/ objective-producing processes. The determination of the importance of this factor rests on the characteristics of those processes; the final point is concerned with this.

It is generally accepted that the outcome of any decision-making process will largely depend on the distribution of what might be called "system resources" between competing groups, the use of those resources, and the sensitivity of the decision-making process to the use of those resources over a range of issues. Thus the fifth requirement for a balanced mix of planning goals and objectives is a composite: a reasonably even distribution of resources between service administrations (where the resources are defined according to the characteristics of each political sub-system), an impartial agency in overall authority, and a set of issues which do not arouse combative instincts of say self-survival. It cannot be determined a priori which of these are "necessary" and/or "sufficient" conditions; in any case, this analysis is concerned only with broad principles.

There are four main types of system resources which are available to transport planning agencies. The first is the political strength of the respective bureaucracies: do they enjoy the favour of politicians; do they have influential constituencies, such as motor-lobby pressure groups (or even influential enemies, such as environmental groups); and do they have special statutory

powers, one against the other? The second resource is the
administrative and research strength of the agencies and their
ability to wield their resources. (The willingness to do so is a
separate question.) The third possible resource in a multi-
organisational planning framework is the agencies' respective
control over finance, manpower and materials to enable them to
confidently plan ahead. The fourth is in some respects a mirror
image of the third: the ability of an agency to assume planning
responsibilities and participate in the planning process will be
inversely related to its initial financial disabilities and
continuing debt commitments. If an authority is unable to incur
new investment itself, and depending on the characteristics of and
resources within the planning system, it may be removed from the
goal-setting process and the use of its other resources may be
nullified. These four aspects of resource allocation within a
system of organisations underlie all other considerations which
have already been discussed.

The influence of "resource allocation" on goal/objective-
setting can be fundamental in certain circumstances. In Case A the
system resources are concentrated in the central city parliament
and its subsidiary bureaucracy and there is no question of inter-
organisational competition. There may however be interaction
between the internal divisions of the bureaucracy and it is
possible that basically the same processes will go on within the
managerial structure as between different agencies. This is a very
real possibility but as the main difference between the two types
may be the hierarchial nature of the internal processes, no
special attention needs to be given to this point in addition to
what follows. One important factor is however the fairly direct .
relationship between the cost of and funding of investment
programmes in Case A, with a land tax depending on the spatial
distribution of the benefits of, for instance, railway
construction[45] being supplemented by triennial funding and user
charges. This combination provides an adequate degree of certainty
and evenness between different services and can help to overcome
initial financial handicaps in particular areas. From the point
of view of organisational interplay then, Case A represents an
ideal framework for the determination of goals and objectives,
with the only competition for attention coming from within
bureaucracies. This latter factor is independent of governmental
structure in this case only to the extent that the greater
metropolitan council allows its _apparat_ to influence its community
policy-making.

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45.   See N. Clark, "Analysis of the Melbourne underground railway
proposals", in N. Clark (ed.), _Analysis of Urban Development: the_
Tewkesbury Symposium (Melbourne, 1970).

The governmental structure of Case B introduces the possibility of separate organisations influencing the central co-ordinating mechanisms through the employment of system resources. The organisations can try to influence the Government through the Minister, directly or indirectly, especially if more than one Minister has transport and other urban responsibility; then the personal resources of the Ministers are relevant. The fact that there is effective co-ordination between the separate agencies does not imply that the goals and objectives of a study dealing with the general range of transport administration will necessarily be "balanced" between the needs of the authorities, nor does it imply that the only major value-judgements will result from political decisions relating to the urban human environment. One qualification is, however, that the existence of an effective co-ordinative mechanism will tend to minimise the divergence of resource holdings between the agencies, so that at the outset of the planning process there is a fair probability that no particular authority will be severely handicapped and therefore be excluded from the goal-setting procedures. The system for funding investment allows adequate scope for the Government to help a specific service authority to overcome an existing debt burden, although the inbuilt flexibility is less than in Case A.

The potential for inter-organisational competition in Case C is basically the same as in Case B but with the difference that there is not necessarily any mechanism to restrain the divergence in resources between authorities in the long-run. An authority with a large debt burden, for example, will not be able to participate as fully as necessary in new works programmes and may as a consequence lose patronage and thus revenue. Even where extensive new planning is not involved, the reliance of each authority on user revenue and the inevitable differences in revenue and costs between services will lead to a progressive imbalance in system resources. To some extent therefore, the conventional notions of interest group interaction, as applied to inter-organisational systems, will not hold true: some agencies could be so badly disadvantaged as to be excluded from the bargaining processes. This would be reflected in the goals and objectives expressed in the planning brief.

The main conclusion to be drawn from the foregoing analysis is that the determination of the goals and objectives of major transport studies can be influenced substantially by the structural characteristics of the urban governmental system. While the main structural features (including, for the present purposes, finance) have been grouped into specific combinations, the influences have been traced both to the combinations and to the individual features

themselves, and so the analysis is more general than may at first appear.[46]

Similar analyses can be developed for each of the decision stages identified earlier but the central point is clear. While planning might be judged to be inadequate at a particular time, the causes of the weaknesses may not be so much in temporary or superficial or short-term factors. These might be important but are in turn caused to a great extent by more basic forces which arise from the way the political system works. As an example of the need to reach basic causes, too many explanations of why contemporary transport planning has been inadequate stop with a conclusion that conventional methodologies cannot embrace economic, social, political and technological complications. This conclusion implies a search for better methods yet it should be obvious that it would be better to ask why was a particular methodology used? Other causes are given as shortages of finance or the failure of politicians to adequately define a particular objective, yet again while these factors might have some inherent validity they are otherwise subsidiary to the more basic forces of how finance is raised and allocated, or how organisations influence politicians, and so on. Such essentially co-ordinative factors are endemic to the working of a political system.

It is the purpose of this thesis to examine transport administration and planning in Sydney with particular reference to the period after 1945 in order to assess the influence of co-ordinative factors on corporate and system performance. There are three main tasks inherent in this undertaking. First, the historical record of planning is established in the broad sweep. In terms of the policy classes distinguished earlier, most atten-. tion will necessarily be given to strategic planning although an attempt has been made to document performance in other areas. Second, the main co-ordinative factors are identified empirically, using the discussion which has been presented in this Introduction as a framework. This amounts to critically evaluating the governmental system of New South Wales as it applies to transport and related fields. Thirdly, an attempt is made to identify and relate the features of planning and governmental structure to test the proposition advanced earlier, that transport planning has relatively stringent co-ordinative requirements, that organisational behaviour tends to be closed and "egocentric", and that

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46. The relaxation of the previous assumption that the brief is adequate for the planning team's purposes, taken with a realistic presumption that the team is not isolated from political processes, would not appear to modify the preceding analysis very much. The influences on goal-setting would be extended in a basically unchanged form to the deliberations of the team, and the end result would probably be essentially the same as when inter-organisational pressures were confined to the formulation of the brief (as input to the team).

co-ordinative agencies might not be able to provide adequate
input to achieve results which meet the requirements of inter-
dependence and effectiveness.[47]

Each of the three tasks has been challenging, particularly
because the respective literatures of public administration, town
planning and related disciplines have not critically addressed the
question of co-ordination in New South Wales, let alone transport
planning generally. Even in comparatively famous planning episodes
significant misconceptions and inaccuracies have emerged and
persisted. The research programme has consisted of extensive
literature searches and formal and informal interviews and
discussions. The findings reinforce the view of the importance of
co-ordination for effective policy-making that has already been
expressed. While the thesis necessarily consists of a range of
subjects and sub-themes, the central conclusion is that the
government system of Sydney has been deficient as to the organisa-
tion of administration and planning and the mechanisms of co-
ordination, and that consequently closed value systems have
developed in organisations, biased planning methodologies have
occasionally been used, inadequate consideration has been given to
social and political priorities, and imbalances in resources have
emerged. Other contributing causes are identified. A number of
definite suggestions are made for improvement in the Conclusion.

The thesis is organised in ten chapters of which this
Introduction has been the first. The period before the Second
World War is dealt with in four chapters in Part 1 which relate to
the main contemporary planning and administrative developments.
The period after 1945 is also treated in four chapters, the first
providing an analysis of the general governmental framework and the
rest dealing with the main functional areas of main roads, public
transport and explicit co-ordination. The final chapter, the
Conclusion, evaluates the detailed discussion in terms of the
overall theme of the thesis and presents a prognosis for reform in
several critical parameters. The chapters will now be briefly
discussed to indicate the progress of the argument.

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47. It has already been said that there are great difficulties in
defining what constitutes a deficiency in policy. This matter is
often far more clear in historical perspective. Otherwise in this
thesis effectiveness is taken to mean that the outcomes of policy
processes accord with the objectives of policy-making and that
the initial goals and objectives are consistent with the wishes of
the elected Government. For a more limited definition see Report of
R.C.A.G.A., op. cit., pp. 31 ff; also Self, op. cit., p. 264. This
is not intended to constrain the equally vexacious question of
defining co-ordinative influence. I shall follow Crenson, op. cit.,
chapter IV.

Chapter Two deals with the first and in some respects the most significant strategic planning study, the Royal Commission for the Improvement of the City of Sydney and its Suburbs (1908-09). A combination of political, social and economic circumstances produced an awareness of the causes of previous urban management problems and created an ideal environment for a comprehensive planning and (in a limited sense) administrative programme of reform. The Commission's Report contained recommendations for physical works (roads and railways) and planning powers which constituted the beginning of "modern" planning in Sydney. The Commission was independent of narrow organisational ties and was able to produce a Report of high technical quality which also integrated the contemporary conceptions of social improvement and environmental standards. The Commission was a model for comprehensive decision processes and its success (as defined) will be compared with later attempts.

Chapter Three is concerned with the subsequent developments to the Improvement Commission and especially with the contribution of Sydney's most famous planning advocate, Dr J.J.C. Bradfield. Bradfield's impact is examined critically in the context of the planning lobbies of the time and the actual contributions of others to the design and planning, rather than advocacy, of the Harbour Bridge, the innercity underground rail system, and the electrification of the Sydney railways. This chapter is apparently the first attempt of its type and produces conclusions which challenge the conventional understanding of the planning processes of that time. Chapter Two performs a similar role in relation to the Improvement Commission although it is possible to present a more definitive analysis there than in the Bradfield chapter. There is a comparative and in some instances absolute absence of complementary secondary sources for Chapters Two and Three and these are the most thoroughly documented in the thesis for that reason.

The 1920s were to a large extent a technological climacteric for Sydney in that private road vehicles replaced public transport modes for many uses and this resulted in new emphases and pressures in urban planning. Chapter Four examines the main elements in the road planning movement, namely the "planning" of main road improvements on a fairly progressive and integrated basis, and the management of traffic to achieve goals of "control" and efficiency. Attention is naturally focussed on the Main Roads Board which was established by the Main Roads Act of 1924, but several other actors who have been largely forgotten in the subsequent literature are studied, particularly the Traffic Advisory Committee. The chapter will also deal with the tram Vs bus controversy insofar as

it is relevant and will summarise the contributions of Sir Michael
Bruxner as Minister for Transport. This period is comparatively
well covered by secondary sources and the treatment is predominant-
ly interpretative.

Chapter Five consists of a brief analysis of the main
administrative reforms of the period 1930 to 1932 in which Premier
Lang and Lieutenant-Colonel Bruxner alternatively juxtaposed their
ideas on the administrative system, with Bruxner finally deciding
in 1932 what sort of system would survive, virtually without major
change, for forty years. Again the treatment is interpretative
and attention is concentrated on the main points of conflict and
agreement on organisational design. The evolution of the transport
governmental system is touched on in some way in every chapter in
Part 1 and Chapter Five rounds out the discussion.

One very interesting observation that can be made on the basis
of Part 1 is that in the case of major urban rail works there was
a long period of gestation in which organisational and popular
commitment was gained, followed by a period in which legislative
backing was obtained, and then implementation. By the time that
the city underground and suburban electrification were tackled in
force, the railways had lost their basic technological imperative
although the hard-won commitment was strong enough to sustain the
programme of construction almost to completion. A similar pattern
obtained in the case of the comparable road works, the Department
of Main Roads' Main Roads Development Plan (that is, the freeway
programme), which will be discussed in Chapter Seven, except that
the commitment was in the end not strong enough to overcome adverse
societal trends. None the less there were parallel factors of
organisational specialisation and commitment, progressive societal
and political endorsement, and partial eventual irrelevance. These
factors point to what are perhaps fundamental features of the
governmental system of Sydney which have not been previously
analysed to this writer's knowledge.

Part 2 consists of four chapters, the first of which is
Chapter Six. This is a general discussion of the postwar evolution
of Sydney's governmental system and particularly of such matters as
the succession of bodies concerned with central land use management,
local road planning, Commonwealth and inter-governmental relations,
and transport funding. This chapter provides the background to the
more specialised analyses which follow.

Chapter Seven deals with the planning of the Department of
Main Roads, the organisation's internal values and drive, and the
success which it had in having its philosophy (that is freeways)

endorsed in the wider context of metropolitan planning. Although
the Department was not very successful in terms of bricks-and-
mortar and has not influenced urban development as much as other
statutory authorities, its experience poses fundamental questions
of political accountability and Ministerial control, organisational
dynamics, and inter-corporate co-ordination.

Chapter Eight is concerned with similar subjects of planning,
organisation and co-ordination but in the context of public
transport administration. In this area the statutory authority
has been the dominant form of organisation but there have been
recurring questions of efficiency and operational co-ordination.
In 1972 the Askin Government experimented with the amalgamation of
the Departments of Government Transport (buses) and Railways in the
form of the Public Transport Commission. That experiment has
answered none of the earlier questions and has posed new ones of
organisational control and adaptation: it has to 1977 been a
pronounced yet irremedial failure. Chapter Eight will briefly
analyse the P.T.C. and its predecessors with regard to their
planning of rail and bus systems and their administrative
experience.

Chapters Six to Eight in effect are concerned with the
performance of the operational components of the transport system.
Chapter Nine deals with the agencies which at times have had
nominal responsibility for co-ordination, at times effective
responsibility, and at times not even nominal responsibility.
Political institutions such as Cabinet and Ministers are discussed
briefly as are the Traffic Authority of New South Wales, the
Ministry of Transport and Highways, and the main interdepartmental
committees, CUMTAC and its successor URTAC. In each case actual
roles are defined and performance is assessed as far as possible.
It will be seen that political will and task specialisation are
the crucial elements in inter-corporate co-ordination, and that
political will has been notably absent for most of the postwar
period, until the mid-1970s when the elements of a basic effective
system emerged.

The final chapter, the Conclusion, is predominantly focussed
on the main concern of the thesis, namely the identification and
assessment of co-ordinative influences on decision-making and the
consideration of improvements to the existing governmental system.
It is suggested that there are compelling reasons for retaining a
functionally specialised administration system, through statutory
authorities unless the Departmental form can be significantly
improved, but in a very firm framework of organisational
accountability both to the Government and to each other (in line

with functional and other interdependencies). Suggestions are made
to improve the administrative system through the full use of inter-
departmental committees and special purpose task forces, but more
importantly through an improved budgetary system and a conscious
effort to appraise the distribution of "system resources".
Specific reference is made to the Departments of Main Roads and
Motor Transport, the Traffic Authority, the Public Transport
Commission, the Ministry of Transport and Highways, the Urban
Transport Advisory Committee, and the Cabinet system of government.

In a thesis covering a complicated topic it is perhaps
inevitable that several sub-themes will emerge. The main ones in
this thesis are concerned with organisational specialisation and
external planning; the roles of specific actors such as the
Improvement of Sydney Commission and Bradfield; the validity of
the theoretical emphases of the present chapter; and the adequacy
or inadequacy of specific planning efforts. Such a range of sub-
themes is in large part the result of the paucity of critical
analyses of Sydney's twentieth century experience. It became more
and more apparent as the research for this thesis progressed that
many problems which politicians and administrators are now facing
can only be properly understood through historical study.

One disclaimer can be entered at the outset, namely that this
thesis is concerned with a complex topic which does not have
adequate theoretical[48] or empirical precedents. For example
transport planning methodology is quite technical in content and
has been very poorly covered by political and social analysts.
Obvious faults such as the bias of engineering models towards
measurable data are widely recognised, but there has been no
comprehensive analysis of the various models employed and the
importance of the data processing methods in policy terms. More
importantly, very little critical material has been published on
transport planning in Sydney, especially on the rationale of major
planning decisions but more generally on interdepartmental
relations, the operation of interdepartmental and Cabinet
committees, budget-making and finance,[49] relations between

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48.   In some respects Friend, Power and Yewlett, op. cit., had a
similar task to the present thesis but their analysis has not been
particularly helpful. One reason for this was their comparative
emphasis on reticulist (or inter-personal) co-ordinative linkages
at the expense of the formal communication, allocation and
accountability channels which this thesis must be concerned with.
Reticulists will however be dealt with in Chapter Nine.

49.   A partial exception is K.W. Knight and K.W. Wiltshire,
Formulating Government Budgets (St. Lucia: University of Queensland
Press, 1977). This has excellent general discussions of several
aspects discussed later but unfortunately appeared too late to
enable full use to be made of it. Another valuable general source
is R.S. Parker and P.N. Troy (eds), The Politics of Urban Growth

ministers and departments, and the operation of statutory bodies.
Each of these areas has been researched more or less successfully:
some areas are regarded as politically confidential or as not
worth publicising, some have only bits and pieces of information
scattered in the various archives and libraries, and of course some
have inherent difficulties. For these reasons the analysis will be
qualified as necessary. As far as possible interviews have been
used and indeed the thesis has benefitted greatly from the
generosity and perspicacity of those listed (and not specifically
listed) in footnotes and the Bibliography; however deficiencies in
information availability will be recognised as the occasion
requires.

(Canberra: A.N.U. Press, 1972), especially the chapters by Parker,
France and Hughes, and Harrison.

HISTORICAL LEGACY 1900-1945

Chapter Two

First Planning: The Improvement of
        Sydney Commission 1908-09

In (our) Interim Report... we referred to the
difficulties of evolving a symmetrical scheme of
improvement of the City of Sydney and its suburbs.
Further inquiry and deliberation have convinced us
that those difficulties cannot be wholly overcome
without great sacrifice on the part of the citizens.
Our aim has been to ascertain how, at a reasonable
expenditure, the transit facilities of Sydney and its
suburbs may be improved, while at the same time adding
character and dignity to a city in harmony with its
situation on one of the finest harbour sites in the
world.

                    Improvement of Sydney Commission,
                           Report (1909).

The first decade of the twentieth century saw the beginning
of planning in Sydney. The past development of the metropolis
had been completely unregulated and there were critical backlogs
of services and civic works as well as weaknesses in controls over
housing and building standards, pollution and the like. These
problems had been recognised in the past but in this decade they
received intense scrutiny in connection with the introduction of
overseas ideas of urban improvement and the critical element of
governmental reform. In fact there was an almost continuous
debate in the decade over the functions and form of local
government: social improvement was linked by politicians and
publicists to the realisation that effective solutions would be
based on controlling future development, and that the government
system of the past could not provide that control. The result of
general acceptance of these propositions was an environment
conducive to planning and Australia's first true planning enquiry,
the Royal Commission for the Improvement of the City of Sydney and
its Suburbs.

The decade started with two extremely important influences.
First, general recovery from the drastic depression of the 1890s
was well under way and Australians were becoming more and more
aware of the social weaknesses of their habitats.[1] Secondly,
the work of Haussman in Paris and the English municipal reform of
1888 (the formation of the London County Council) inspired a
relatively small number of well-travelled politicians and public
figures to evaluate conditions in Sydney in terms of overseas
perspectives, and to make good use of improving internal
communications to spread their knowledge.[2] Thus the major
deficiencies of Sydney's development, and these had long been
recognised,[3] were given a sharper focus and a popular consensus
developed among journalists, politicians and the prosperous
professional classes, and in various public meetings and in the

1.   See E.C. Fry, "Growth of an Australian Metropolis" in
R.S. Parker and P.N. Troy (eds), The Politics of Urban Growth
(Canberra: A.N.U.P., 1972), p.15. See also R.P. Gibbons, "The
Development of Sydney: the Improvement of Sydney Commission
1908-09" (unpublished undergraduate thesis, Department of Economic
History, University of Sydney, 1972), pp.6-15 for general economic
and social background. This is hereafter cited as: Gibbons,
"Improvement Commission".

2.   There is a good section on overseas ideas in F.A. Larcombe,
"The History and Development of Local Government in N.S.W. 1857-1919
(M.Ec thesis, Department of Government, University of Sydney, 1944),
vol.II, pp. 308 ff. The activities of the "advocates" is dealt with
in R.P. Gibbons, "An Improvement Programme for Greater Sydney"
(unpublished postgraduate essay, Department of Government and Public
Administration, University of Sydney, 1974), which is hereafter
cited as: Gibbons, "Greater Sydney".

3.   See E. Irvine, Sydney As It Might Have Been (Sydney: Alpha,
1974), throughout.

press, along two main lines. These were respectively the need
for planning and the need for governmental reform.

The physical deficiencies of the metropolis were obvious,
even if commentators were sometimes rather weak on analysis.
There were no structural means of communication between the city
and the north shore: there was severe congestion on the Harbour
and the development of the prestigious areas to the north was held
up. The suburban railway terminated at Redfern Station until 1906
and then at Central, worsening tram congestion on the innercity
streets. Substantial areas in the eastern and western suburbs
were not served at all by railways. The innercity streets were
ugly and lacked distinction; government buildings were scattered
and offered no scope for beautification (unlike in overseas cities).
It was later realised that the pattern of city streets was extremely
deficient and caused congestion (see below). Atmospheric pollution
on the Harbour and on land was uncontrollable given the absence of
sufficient municipal powers and resources; the same applied to
hoardings and public advertisements. There had never been housing
and building regulations and attempts at slum eradication were
expensive and basically counter-productive because adequate housing
could not be found for the purposes of relocation. New suburbs
were unimaginative and unplanned. And so on.[4] There was a quite
general recognition that many of these problems were caused by the
weaknesses of regulatory powers and by the lack of resources and
cohesion among government bodies. Hence while the range of issues
was confusing, there was a genuine consensus about the main policy
areas which needed action and disagreement within the metropolis was
centred mostly on details.

Consensus extended to many aspects of governmental reform.
Much attention was given to the differing policies and quality of
local government bodies in whom a great deal of the responsibility
for urban affairs was vested. State Governments were generally
favourably inclined to the main metropolitan issues with Premiers
such as Carruthers taking an active interest but facing strong
opposition from country representatives and the Legislative
Council.[5] Throughout the decade there was widespread support
from nearly all quarters of the city for one major prognosis of

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4.   See J.D. Fitzgerald, <u>Greater Sydney and Greater Newcastle</u>
(Sydney: N.S.W. Bookstall Co., 1906); Gibbons, "Greater Sydney",
especially pp. 1-4, and "Improvement Commission", pp. 63-75.

5.   Quite apart from the anti-city prejudice that was common at
the time, it should be remembered that rural development was an
overriding priority in the pre-1939 period and fundamentally
affected Government policy. Cf W.A. Sinclair, "Capital Formation"
in C. Foster (ed), <u>Australian Economic Development in the Twentieth
Century</u> (London: Allen and Unwin, 1970), pp. 14-15 and elsewhere.

problems and one major proposition, namely Greater Sydney. The
Carruthers, Wade and McGowen ministries all included Greater
Sydney in their platforms and even many local councils, whose
status was potentially threatened by the proposal, favoured the
basic concept. This subject is extremely important and warrants
careful attention.[6]

Greater Sydney was argued in two basic forms. As developed
along the London precedent it referred to the consolidation of
municipal boundaries to form a single area of "continuous
settlement", governed and serviced by an elected central parliament.
A federal Greater Sydney on the other hand would leave the
responsibility for purely "local" issues in the hands of municipal
councils but with a co-operative central body of council
representatives to manage the main system services (transport,
water and sewerage and perhaps gas) which were then in the hands
of separate statutory authorities. The dominant stream of thought,
as reflected in Government policy and most popular agitation and
City Council policy, was "centralism", but local councils could
not only see advantages in "federation" but diverted some of the
popular force of Greater Sydney by adapting the concept to protect
themselves.

The first concrete steps towards Greater Sydney were taken in
1900 by two "conferences", one supporting a unificationist reform
and attended by (among others) three men discussed later, namely
Thomas Hughes, Dr James Graham and John Barlow. In the second
local government interests countered with a recommendation for
federation. There was substantial common ground between the two
groups for they both wanted (i) a strong central body; (ii)
municipal ownership and control of the great common services;
(iii) initiation of experiments in humanitarian and aesthetic
policies along new overseas lines; (iv) wider municipal powers;
(v) slum clearance; and (vi) a workingmen's rehousing programme.[7]
In 1902 a Select Committee on Greater Sydney was appointed but its
investigations were interrupted by the prorogation of Parliament
and there was ostensibly insufficient interest to reappoint it;
its Minutes of Evidence were not published until 1912.[8] Then in

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6.   A different but more detailed treatment will be found in
Gibbons, "Greater Sydney", passim.

7.   Fitzgerald, op. cit., pp. 37 ff.

8.   Report of Select Committee on Municipal Government for
Greater Sydney, V.P.L.A., Session of 1911-12, vol. III. See
Hughes's statement on p. 14 that the government system provided
for too many aldermen to "misgovern the metropolitan area", also
Fitzgerald's analysis of financial problems at p. 94.

1906 Sir Joseph Carruthers, the self-professed champion of local government,[9] presented his Local Government Act including what was known as the Cities Extension Bill. Carruthers was forced to drop this Bill because of opposition to the proposed mode of municipal consolidation and franchise and it is only partly true that the unificationist Greater Sydney which was implied in it was the cause of the opposition.

The 1906 Act rationalised the local government system in New South Wales but disadvantaged the City of Sydney because it was the only municipality in the metropolis to be denied the independence of the land tax (the rate on unimproved capital value). Between 1906 and 1908, when the tax was transferred to the City along with certain responsibilities which had previously been tended by the State Government, the Council was able to arouse considerable sympathy for its programmes and problems. It was generally acknowledged to be the best-run and most progressive council. It was dominated by Lord Mayors Thomas Hughes and Allen Taylor, who alternated every few years, and was served by aldermen of the ability of J.D. Fitzgerald, Edward O'Sullivan and James Graham.[10] The Council was on the whole strongly unificationist and provoked complaints of central-city imperialism, and the land tax issue aroused interest in its philosophies. In 1907 moreover an acrimonious public debate between Thomas Keele, President of the Water Board, and the Government over the health problems arising from the division of responsibility for dams between the Board and the Department of Public Works attracted attention to what were known as the "evils of divided control". The debate ended in Keele's transfer from the Board and further sympathy for governmental reform.

"Divided control" was central to the political economy of Greater Sydney. The rationale of the movement lay in the growing "irrelevance" of the existing system in relation to the pattern of development. To paraphrase the basic philosophy (which was common to unificationist and federalist interpretations): metropolitan services were necessarily inter-municipal in an age of metropolitan expansion and communication but municipal polities could not maintain control of inter-municipal institutions. Even if bodies such as the Water Board were "representative" of local government, they were not "responsive" and would not be unless the

9.   See F.A. Larcombe, The Stabilization of Local Government in N.S.W. 1858-1906 (Sydney: S.U.P., 1976), pp. 273 ff.

10.   See Gibbons, "Greater Sydney", pp. 8-9. This paragraph is based on contemporary newspaper reports.

electors controlled the bureaucracies involved; as for the
Harbour Trust, said Thomas Henley, member of the Water Board and
leading anti-unificationist, because it was an elected body it was
"naturally autocratic, unpopular, and out-of-touch with the
people".[11] The inevitable result of such a system of central
bureaucracies, it was agreed, was a multiplicity of controlling
bodies set up on an ad hoc and unco-ordinated basis, unresponsive
and inefficient.[12]

As has been said, even local government interests agreed with
the bulk of the above prognosis if not the (centralist)
prescription. The distinction between centralism and federalism
was maintained throughout the decade and beyond. As Colonel Onslow
of Waverley remarked on a Greater Sydney bill in the third reading
stages in the Legislative Assembly in 1911:

> Here we are committing ourselves to a scheme that
> means overcentralisation, because unification always
> means that. In saying that, I do not wish it to be
> inferred that I do not approve of a Greater Sydney,
> but the Greater Sydney I believe in is a federalisation
> of municipal government instead of a unification.[13]

The unificationists basically did not accept this argument because
of their view of the inherent requirements of regulatory functions
and also because of the financial and institutional weaknesses of
local government, even after 1906. While the federalists countered
the slogans of "economy" and "efficiency" with "local democracy",
few could deny the judgement of J.F. Fraser in 1910 that "many of
these local municipalities (in Sydney) are in antagonism one with
the other, with the result that there is an absence of desire to
work together for the benefit of the city as a whole".[14] The
federalist Henley had circularised local councils in 1907 to
organise opposition to unification; some municipalities had
rejected his advances but most of the replies "favoured retaining
control of local works, and electing experienced and trusted
aldermen to form a Metropolitan Board of Works to control
inter-municipal services".[15]

The importance of the movement as outlined is obvious,
especially in terms of governmental and planning perspectives, and
moreover the movement was truly important in contemporary terms.

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11.   Daily Telegraph, June 3, 1907.

12.   The best contemporary analysis was Fitzgerald, op. cit. See
also J.D.B. Miller, "Greater Sydney 1892-1952", Public Administ-
ration (Sydney), vol. XIII, no. 2-3; F.A. Bland, Greater Sydney
(N.S.W. Government Printer, 1943).

13.   N.S.W. Parliamentary Debates, 2nd series, vol. 45, p. 4215.

14.   J.F. Fraser, Australia (Cassell, 1910), p. 163.

15.   Daily Telegraph, 15 July 1907, p. 3; also 3 July 1907, p. 13.

It was the dominant issue in urban politics (even at the State
level) and had very widespread support, from newspapers,
professional commentators, politicians and especially the Sydney
City Council.[16] However from the first it lacked unified support,
its political force was dissipated between various major civic
issues as well as internecine conflict between councils and
unificationists versus federalists. The most important proponents
such as J.D. Fitzgerald[17] and Thomas Hughes[18] had a comprehen-
sive conception of their movement but they had considerable
difficulty in marshalling the diverse interests as well as arousing
the masses. However from the middle of the decade, as far as can
be judged from a careful reading of all major newspapers and
journals and other sources, the tone of the Greater Sydney movement
began to change somewhat. As one newspaper commented in early 1907
on Hughes's performance as Lord Mayor:

> A Greater Sydney, under whatever constitution, is not
> attainable while the people are apathetic. Mr Hughes
> evidently recognises this very clearly. He puts forward
> a practical and suggestive programme of necessary
> reforms, and essays to arouse the indispensable force of
> a consolidated public opinion in support of it...[19]

Hughes recognised the links between civic reform and urban
improvement and the greater political potential of the latter. He
was part of a lobby which was centred on the City Council and
included E.W. O'Sullivan, John Sulman (who published The Improvement
of Sydney, first in the Daily Telegraph then in book form in 1908),
J.D. Fitzgerald, Sir James Graham and the like. They developed the
link as a deliberate strategy, with the help of newspapers (such as
the Daily Telegraph, the Sydney Morning Herald, the Sydney Mail,
Building, Art and Architecture and the Bulletin) which ran frequent
stories on specific problems and editorials intended to arouse
politicians and the populace. As the demands for improvements

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16.   Cf Gibbons, "Greater Sydney", pp. 5 ff.

17.   Fitzgerald was a leader in both the analysis and politics of
municipal reform. He was President of the First and Second Town
Planning Conferences (1917 and 1918) and first Minister for Local
Government appointed to administer the Local Government Act, 1919,
which he largely drafted. He was a major force in introducing
overseas ideas including the Burns Bill of 1909 (see later). See
for example P. Spearritt, "An Urban History of Sydney 1920-1950"
(unpublished Ph.D thesis, A.N.U., 1976), pp. 24-5, 223-4. (Cited
with permission.)

18.   Hughes was Sydney's first Lord Mayor and was extremely active
in municipal politics. He was appointed to Legislative Council in
1908; educated in law at London University, director of numerous
companies and Member of the Board of Health 1902-08. See Larcombe,
Stabilization of Local Government, pp. 41-2; Gibbons, "Improvement
Commission", pp. 16, 86.

19.   Daily Telegraph, 13 March 1907, p. 6.

accumulated, the immensity of the physical investment required and
the need to approach the matter systematically reinforced the
awareness of the need for governmental reform. The following
quotes from the _Daily Telegraph_ were typical of the editorials of
the time:

(i)   Before systematic progress can be made with (road
      improvements, resumptions and redevelopment, new city
      markets and a North Shore bridge), it is requisite that
      the metropolitan constituency should recognise that it
      has a large, important, and interesting sphere of
      practical politics in the city.... So long as these
      populous (suburbs) remain divided into so many separate
      governing areas, each doing sectionally what ought to be
      corporate work, so long will the whole be inevitably
      governed inadequately and debarred from realising its
      possibilities.[20]

(ii) The system that sufficed for Sydney as a smaller city,
      almost self-contained, is not suitable to the Sydney of
      today, so surrounded by contiguous suburbs that the
      boundary line of the metropolis is imperceptible except
      in the legal sense. The metropolitan community, enlarged
      and woven together, has common requirements, and therefore
      needs a system that would facilitate co-operative action,
      for instance in the supply of services, in the homogeneity
      of methods, and so on.[21]

One consequence was a request for the appointment of a Royal
Commission into the need for an improvement programme in Sydney.

This request originated in the City Council. In the first half
of 1907 in a meeting of the Works Committee of Council, one
alderman drew attention to the desirability "of having a definite
scheme submitted for the improvement of the city generally, so that
the council might have something tangible to go upon".[22] The City
Surveyor was subsequently instructed to prepare such a plan but it
would appear from an examination of the Minutes of Council and   -
newspapers that nothing positive was done in this direction.

On the 4th December, 1907, the Hon. E.W. O'Sullivan, M.L.A.
and city alderman, asked Premier Wade (who had recently succeeded
Carruthers), the following question without notice:

      During the forthcoming recess, will he take into
      consideration the desirableness of appointing a

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20.   _Ibid._, 12 March, 1907.

21.   _Ibid._, 14 March, 1907. The _Telegraph_ was more involved in
civic issues than the _Sydney Morning Herald_ (Sulman for instance
was a director of the former, see Gibbons, "Improvement Commission"
pp. 19-20), but the editorial lines were similar. A more extensive
survey of newspaper opinion will be found in Gibbons, "Greater
Sydney", throughout.

22.   Letter to editor by G. Sydney Jones, _Daily Telegraph_
May 1, 1907. Jones was apparently paraphrasing the unnamed
alderman's speech.

> Royal Commission, consisting of Members of Parliament,
> City Aldermen, and others, to inquire and report upon
> the best means of improving and ornamenting the City
> of Sydney and its environs?

Wade replied, "This matter will be considered".[23] It is likely
that O'Sullivan had discussed this matter with others, such as
Hughes, perhaps Wade, and John Sulman, the latter of whom was about
to publish a series of articles in the Daily Telegraph called "The
Improvement of Sydney". (This was later published under the same
title.) Hughes echoed O'Sullivan in a Council minute dated the
7th January, 1908, which was presumably written before that date,
in which he recommended a Royal Commission of similar scope to the
former suggestion except that it would make recommendations as to
the best method of carrying the scheme into effect and of financing
it: Hughes was explicitly concerned with the political context of
the scheme.[24] On the 14th of January the Works Committee of the
City Council carried a motion that a deputation argue the merits
of the Lord Mayor's idea with the Premier.

The deputation met the Premier on a date not specified in the
Town Clerk's annual report for 1908. The proceedings of the
deputation were reported and they provide an important insight into
the Government's policy. The deputation urged that immediate
action was necessary to widen existing streets and plan new ones
in view of escalating land values, and that general remodelling
work should not be left to the City Council without assistance from
the State and the 41 other city municipalities.[25] Wade replied
that Cabinet had been considering a "wider form" of the
deputation's requests. He recognised that transport was the
dominant issue: the inner city area had been unplanned and costly
and chronic congestion resulted from the concentration of
commercial activity in this zone. He said,

> ... there should be some general scheme whereby the
> question of traction and passenger traffic to and from
> the city should be dealt with; secondly, side by side
> with that went the question of the thoroughfares....
> Thirdly, some provision should be made as to the most
> simple and effective method of making the place more
> ornamental.... Without committing the Government to any
> details, the Government recognised the absolute urgency
> of providing for the future of the public travelling to
> and from the city.......

But after saying that, Wade stated that "The vague references (of
the deputation) to finance appeared premature at the present stage,

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23. V.P.L.A.N.S.W., 2nd Sess., 1907, vol. 1, p. 132.

24. Reports and Proceedings of the Municipal Council of the City
of Sydney, 1907, p. 443.

25. Ibid., 1908, pp. 19-21 of Clerk's Report.

as the report must come first". He added that:

> As far as possible, at that juncture, the bone of
> contention of a Greater Sydney would be eschewed, as
> the importing of that matter might result in engendering
> the hostility of the adjoining municipalities, instead
> of widening their co-operation.

Wade took action quickly over the Council's suggestion.[26]
He announced on the 27th February, 1908, that a Royal Commission
"to be of a wide and comprehensive nature" would be appointed "to
deal not only with the city, but also with the adjoining
suburbs".[27] At the time of this announcement the exact terms of
the Commission had not been determined, nor had the personnel.
Wade stated that he intended to have "representatives of all chief
interests concerned" - commerce, architecture, the government and
the municipalities. He stated that traffic would be a main factor
to be investigated. It would seem that the announcement of this
Commission was prompted by the City Council's deputation.

The Commission's warrant and personnel were not announced
until April the 23rd.[28] There were to be 11 Commissioners, as
follows (known supporters of Greater Sydney are marked with
asterisks):

*   1. Thomas Hughes, President, Lord Mayor (lawyer);

    2. Robert R.P. Hickson, President of Sydney Harbour
       Trust (engineer);

*   3. Sir James Graham, M.D., M.L.A., ex-Mayor of Sydney,
       leader of Municipal Reform Party and Government
       representative;

*   4. James McGowen, M.L.A., leader of the Parliamentary
       Labour Party;

*   5. E.W. O'Sullivan, M.L.A., city alderman and leader
       of parliamentary Independent Party;

*   6. John Wheeler, M.L.A., Vice-President of Local
       Government Association;

    7. Edmund Fosbery, M.L.C., former Inspector-General of
       Police, representing vehicular interests;

    8. Henry Gorman, representing real estate interests;

*   9. Ernest Scott, President of the Institute of
       Architects of N.S.W.;

* 10. Norman Selfe, engineer and civic reformer;

* 11. James Wall, President of the N.S.W. Master Builders'
       Association.

(Scott and Wall are shown as known supporters of Greater Sydney
because of the policy of the bodies they represented; their
personal views are not known.)

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26. See _Daily Telegraph_ and _S.M.H._, 28 February, 1908.

27. _Daily Telegraph_, 28 February, 1908, p. 7

28. See _Daily Telegraph_, 24 April, 1908.

The warrant of the Commission read in part:

> ... to diligently examine and investigate all proposals that may come before (it) for the improvement of the City of Sydney and its suburbs, and to fully inquire into the whole subject of the remodelling of Sydney.[29]

The Commissioners were directed to three specific questions, namely: (i) the present "circumstances" of the city and its population; (ii) the expected growth of the metropolis over the following 25 years; and (iii) specific train, tram and road works. The investigation of a harbour bridge or tunnel was implicitly included in the scope of the Commission[30] but this became the subject of a separate Royal Commission on Communication between Sydney and North Sydney.

The Improvement of Sydney Commission's task reflected directly the political background to its appointment. It was assigned the major problems facing the metropolis as its province: transport, "town planning", beautification. But it was not given a warrant to investigate the financial aspects of its recommendations, nor did it investigate such aspects except in the questioning of two witnesses (see below). This was in keeping with the political intent of the Government and Hughes. It was nominally representative and reasonably expert; its labours were unpaid; and its members were well-informed and well-travelled. The Commissioners' investigations are now dealt with.

The Improvement Commission took evidence from 40 witnesses in 90 sessions over nearly a year. Its warrant was dated 14th May, 1908; it issued an Interim Report on the 3rd December, 1908; and its final Report, with Minutes of Evidence, was dated 29th June, 1909. Evidence was received from overseas authorities and local experts and pressure groups; the Commissioners themselves made specific contributions and several were called as witnesses. The investigations and recommendations can be dealt with under the three heads — transportation, beautification, and town-planning (including social welfare issues).[31]

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29.   See Report of the Royal Commission for the Improvement of the City of Sydney and its Suburbs, <u>P.P.N.S.W.</u>, 1909, vol. 5, pp. xvii, xxi. (Hereafter cited as: Commission Report.)

30.   See <u>Sydney Morning Herald</u>, 24 April, 1908, p. 8; <u>Art and Architecture</u>, vol V, no. 2, p. 49. This was apparently one reason for the inclusion of Selfe on the Commission for he was at the time the pre-eminent civil engineer. He had been described by Sir Peter Nicol Russel as "a most brilliant designing engineer and one who had lived long before his time". (P.H. Russel, "Sir P.N. Russel", <u>R.A.H.S. Journal</u>, vol. 50, pt. 2, p. 130.) See Gibbons, "Improvement Commission", p. 88.

31.   The present account largely follows the exposition in Gibbons, "Improvement Commission", parts C to E, and is accordingly abbreviated.

The Commissioners gave a great deal of attention to the analysis of obvious problems, to the physical changes needed in the transport systems, and to the societal impact of those changes. They conducted a true _planning_ enquiry of exceptional quality: they tried to establish the best base for population and land use projection, particularly the former,[32] and in their questioning revealed an active interest in the current state of knowledge of transport and urban dynamics. A programme of significant works was recommended on the basis of functional need, "beautification", popular support (in a deliberate attempt to generate symbolic identification), and to a lessor extent available resources. While their interest was mainly with the central city district the Commission was favourably aware of the suburban housing movement and fostered the values behind that movement. As a prominent planner put it recently, "In a farsighted manner (the Commission) adopted the working hypothesis that any plan for the improvement of the city must be predicated on a solution to the transport problem...."[33]

Three main structural problems were identified in the central business district (CBD). First there were 10 roads which ran north-south but these discharged into only 4 arterials (Elizabeth, George, William and Oxford Streets). The inadequacy of port roads on the western side of the CBD worsened the resulting congestion. Second, the termination of the railways at the newly-opened Central Station (1906) increased the load of trams on city streets. Finally, there was no structural access between the city and North Shore and although this question was in the hands of a concurrent Royal Commission, the Improvement Commission considered the matter at some length because it was so central to all other issues.

The solutions to all three problems (and more) were connected. The Commissioners recommended the widening of Elizabeth Street to serve the south; the extension of Bathurst Street to the west and the replacement of Pyrmont Bridge; and the widening and realignment of Cathedral, Oxford and William Streets, together with a new road parallelling Oxford Street and another through Ultimo. These roadworks were secondary and complementary to the construction of an underground rail loop in the CBD, connecting with existing systems at Central and North Sydney and with loops to the near western and the eastern suburbs. These changes were in accordance with plans for port, tram and passenger recommendations, that is with land use and related trends, and they were intended to be mutually consistent - a balanced allocation of resources. The

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32. See Gibbons, "Improvement Commission", pp. 24-27.

33. A.J. Powell, "Planning and Government" (unpublished M.T. & C.P. thesis, University of Sydney, 1969), p. 3-12.

Commissioners favoured the construction of a Harbour Bridge but
had to adopt the tunnel scheme of the Royal Commission on
Communication between Sydney and North Sydney. This affected the
placement of the Circular Quay railway station and the development
of the Quay generally. Specific roadworks were proposed to ease
port congestion. The Commissioners did not feel that trams should
be placed underground in the central city but recommended that they
should be confined to feeder routes to railways, thus reducing the
congestion caused by them. (As will be seen later traffic
congestion was an extremely important problem over the whole
period before 1939, indeed up to the removal of trams in the late
1950s and early 1960s.)

Painstaking attention was given to the geographical structure
and engineering design of the railway works, especially those for
the eastern and northern suburbs and the central underground loop
and connections. Many witnesses, from T.R. Johnson, Chief
Commissioner for Railways and Tramways, and Royal Commissioners
Selfe and Hickson to Sulman and Fitzgerald, described the systems
they preferred, with preliminary attempts at costing and explicit
attention to aesthetic effects. The Commissioners were sufficient-
ly expert to exhaustively examine the proposals.

In general the proposals of Tom Johnson were adopted, with
some modifications which were worked out between Johnson, other
witnesses (notably Sulman and Commissioner Selfe) and the
Commission. The railway was to be extended from Central Station
as outlined above. Electrification was urged. As far as goods
trains were concerned the Commission slightly amended Johnson's
proposals for the western suburbs network.

The Commission recommended the reconstruction of the suburban
radial tram system so that trams would only serve as feeders.
However they left the planning of this entirely to the State
bureaucracy and it is unlikely that they expected the enormous task
to ever be undertaken. They did seriously propose a multi-modal
development of Central Station, including trams, thus implicitly
recognising the difficulties of abolishing the radial routes. The
Central Station proposal had great symbolic importance as will be
seen later.

The train recommendations[34] can be regarded as the genesis
of Sydney's present railway system yet in terms of contemporary

34.   For maps see Gibbons, "Improvement Commission", Map 4; and
Daily Telegraph, July 1, 1909, p. 4. The map opposite p. 27 in
D. Winston, Sydney's Great Experiment (Sydney: Angus and Robertson,
1957) is inaccurate. Road recommendations are shown in Map 3 of
"Improvement Commission".

political demands the road proposals were as crucial. In general
the Commission preferred to widen existing roads than create new
ones except where a different road structure was definitely
required, and they were conscious of the relationships between
road construction, local retail economics, slum clearance and
redevelopment. Apart from the functional basis of road works,
beautification was considered as in the case of Macquarie Street
which was to be extended from Circular Quay as a tree-lined avenue
down to Central Railway via a viaduct along the new Wentworth
Avenue, and enhanced by the construction of new public buildings.
Moore Street would be extended to Macquarie Street and possibly be
developed as a Martin Plaza (as suggested by Fitzgerald).

The beautification aspect was generalised by the Commission
because they were seeking a symbolic identity in very much the same
manner as Olmsted and Haussman overseas and Bradfield later in
Sydney. The Harbour Bridge was not the issue then that it was to
become and in any case that subject was out of the Commissioners'
formal domain. They therefore gratefully accepted the notions of
"city portals" and "radial centres" which Fitzgerald had introduced
in his evidence[35] and they based many of their policies on these.
Both concepts referred to nodal centres of transport such as
Circular Quay and Central Railway Station. Fitzgerald made basic
suggestions, as did other witnesses such as Sulman, but the
Commissioners developed the idea themselves in recommending the
development of Circular Quay, the widening and beautification of
Macquarie Street, and the construction of an amphitheatre of tall
buildings around Belmore Park, incorporating the substantial
remodelling of Central Station. Conceptually the three elements
constituted a monumental landmark. The Commissioners failed to
make full use of its potential in their Report, although it
received considerable attention in the press. In any case the
concept lacked the main virtues of Bradfield's Bridge, namely
visibility, utility and urgency, and it is understandable that the
Commission gave the Bridge its unofficial endorsement in its
Minutes of Evidence and regretted the restriction on its domain.

The Commissioners did not identify the dynamic consequences
of their improvements in their formal Report with reference to
population redistribution and externality effects, but they did
show a good understanding of the social and economic effects of
roadworks in the examination of witnesses. Road construction can
"improve" blighted areas because of the need for extensive
demolition but it also affects commercial activity. The
Commissioners evaluated such negative and the positive effects when

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35.   See Gibbons, ibid., pp. 58 ff.

examing architect John Barlow (the only witness to foresee the impact of the automobile) and Government Valuer Sievers over the alternatives to widening Oxford Street.[36] Barlow emphasised the importance of goodwill in retailing and pointed out that relocation could lead to "deleterious competition"; the creation of a new road could take away trade without compensation while new businesses would be faced with competition from established rivals. He gave overseas and local examples of the difficulty of generating such new commercial development; Sievers outlined comparable experience. However the Commissioners emphasised the slum clearance and residential redevelopment potential of proposals in Surry Hills, Woolloomooloo and Ultimo in their questioning. They thought that in specific cases the combination of road and rail schemes would "open up what is a comparatively poor neighbourhood, and give an impulse to the general improvement of the whole district".[37] To a considerable extent the Commissioners balanced social costs, social benefits and physical costs in the analysis behind recommendations.

The transport recommendations were not without fault. The Commission's total population projection was remarkably accurate but insufficient attention was given to the distribution of population growth although general movements were established.[38] The effect of new works on traffic flows were not specifically analysed while no provision was made for changing technology, despite evidence of the marked changes caused in London by motor cars and buses.[39] Generally the Commissioners did not try to cost proposals although some of their "beautification" proposals were comparatively inexpensive and of obvious benefit. The propagandistic intention should be remembered in the context of costing.[40]

A wide range of miscellaneous recommendations were made including the provision of more parklands and the resumption of Harbour foreshores for public access; the planting of trees; the cultivation of vacant blocks by children and residents; the remodelling of the Rocks "with an eye to the general artistic effect of the waterfront"; the regulation of building heights and

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36.   Ibid., pp. 61-63

37.   Commission Report, p. xlv.

38.   Gibbons, "Improvement Commission", p. 26 and elsewhere.

39.   Evidence of Barlow; see ibid., p. 47.

40.   It is true that the Report contained no costing but such aspects had been at least partially considered in questioning as in Graham's comment to Sulman: "Your scheme is architecturally very good and feasible, but I fear if we recommended it it would not be carried out - the difficulties are so great?" (Commission Report, Minutes of Evidence, p. 83.)

commercial hoardings; and the construction of scenic drives around the foreshores. As in other cases some of these schemes were not original. The Macquarie Street project had been adopted from the State Government while the City Council had recommended the widening of Elizabeth and Oxford Streets. The same applied to the Council's attempts to obtain and enforce legislation over smoke pollution and hoardings; the resumption of the foreshore had been agitated for also by the Harbour Foreshores Vigilance Committee (chairman Thomas Hughes). These are among the main recommendations remembered by Winston in his praise of the Commission.[41]

The other very important area dealt with by the Royal Commission, and the one closest to government reform, was town planning. This was still regarded largely in moralistic terms in the early twentieth century but the Greater Sydney movement and overseas concepts gave the general issue a rationalist basis through for example the Building Bill and housing policies which Fitzgerald and others had campaigned for on the City Council. The Council, architects, builders and others had pressed strongly for a Building Act because this issue embraced speculative builders, fire hazards, health conditions and living areas, inspection rights, the definition of acceptable housing standards and adequate public control — all major considerations in times of health scares, inadequate fire-fighting facilities, slum eradication, rapid population growth, and housing shortages. The Royal Commission examined all these issues and recommended the adoption of the Building Act and the like. They disagreed however with Fitzgerald who favoured the promotion of tenements, for economic and "moral" reasons,[42] and wanted workmen to be encouraged "to reside in separate houses in suburban areas".[43] Moreover they wrote that "(we) fail to see how (housing) can be adequately dealt with while a system of divided control obtains in the metropolitan area".[44]

While the Commission endorsed such progressive policies their central contribution to the development of town planning thought was their attempt to devise a consistent policy package which recognised the interconnectedness of institutional deficiencies, development control, planning and present problems. Apart from their other proposals they recommended the adoption of the 1909 Local Government Act of Mr John Burns which to them represented the most advanced thinking in the Western world. Fitzgerald had

41. Winston, op. cit. pp. 26-28.

42. See Gibbons, "Improvement Commission", pp. 64-68 for a full analysis.

43. Commission Report, p. xxix.

44. Ibid., p. xxviii.

introduced the Act (in Bill form) at his third and fourth appearances, when he supported both it and Greater Sydney in very strong terms.[45] The Bill was recommended without qualification by the Commission even though it would have put all planning issues (including road, water and sewerage, lighting, park and similar planning) in the hands of a central "Local Government Board".[46] Apart from Fitzgerald the only witness questioned on Greater Sydney was Osgood, Mayor of Marrickville (the sole municipal witness — it would seem that the Commission avoided hostile opinion on this matter), who said that he did not favour Greater Sydney. However he was pressed by Hughes with a short statement of classic federation:

> Q.4334. Hughes: You are against the unification of the municipal (sic) area, but you are not opposed to the creation of an overlording body in connection with general improvement works, to raise its own revenue, leaving the local municipalities to conduct local affairs themselves? Yes.

Apart from the implications of the Burns Bill and innuendoes in questioning, the Commissioners gave a definite indication of their political intent in their Report in the following terms:

> Seeing, therefore, that the interests of the State, the city and its suburbs, are so intimately associated in the scheme of improvement which we have outlined, your Commissioners are of opinion that a central authority should be appointed to initiate and carry out street improvements which extend beyond the boundaries of any one municipality, and that the State should bear its due proportion of the cost of improvements of a general character.[47]

The Commission's Report was greeted with great enthusiasm by the various reform interests and aroused little opposition as far as can be seen in newspapers, journals and contemporary writings. The Report was not seen as a political document: most attention was focussed on the improvement proposals and the references to Greater Sydney received no prominence. To that extent the expectations of Wade and Hughes as previously quoted were borne out: the Commissioners and others used the Report as a major justification itself for metropolitan reform. Hughes himself said the following at a meeting on Greater Sydney on July 19, 1909, little more than two weeks after the release of the Report:

> He had just finished a very long inquiry on city improvement, which, he thought, furnished the basis of a (improvement) scheme. The real bogey in the way was that of divided control. The remedy appeared to be either unification or some form of federation, as they had in London.[48]

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45. Fitzgerald's evidence is analysed in Gibbons, "Greater Sydney", pp. 22-3.

46. Ibid., p. 22.

47. Commission Report, p. lx.

48. Reported in Daily Telegraph, 20 July 1909, p. 7.

The Daily Telegraph and Sydney Morning Herald appraised the
recommendations very carefully and although they concentrated on
transport and gave little attention to town planning, their
editorials correctly pointed out that the overall scheme was
predicated on intermunicipal organisation. George Taylor wrote
in Building that "The immediate effect of the report of the
Commission will be the establishment of a Greater Sydney".[49]
Hughes moved a motion at the July 19th meeting "That in view of
the report of the Royal Commission... it is necessary that
immediate steps should be taken to create a Greater Sydney in some
form".[50] The convenors of the meeting included Hughes and Wheeler
(both Commissioners), Sulman, Fitzgerald, George Taylor, William
Morris Hughes and a number of suburban mayors. (Perhaps because
the Commissioners had not officially opted for a centralist
Greater Sydney, criticism from local government interests was
minimal.) That meeting set up a Greater Sydney League. By one
measure then the Royal Commission was very successful; even as
late as 1913 the Royal Commission for Greater Sydney agreed that
the "urgency (of improvement and town planning) is a strong reason,
both for a Greater Sydney being brought into existence and for the
new body giving (them) immediate and earnest attention".[51]

The Commission's impact on planning philosophy cannot be
clearly assessed because as has been said they adopted proposals
which were already popular. However to the extent that they tied
specific progressive policies into a consistent package (and they
succeeded in doing this to a large extent[52]), they were a major
influence in shaping the planning consensus which Spearritt has
analysed in a later period.[53] The Commission was the first major
step in the introduction of town planning and public housing
legislation and they "foreshadowed"[54] every major planning
initiative that was taken up to and even beyond 1939.

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49.   Building, July 12 1909, p. 35.

50.   Daily Telegraph, 20 July 1909, p. 7.

51.   Report of Royal Commission into the Constitution of a Greater
Sydney (1913) N.S.W.P.P., 2nd Session 1913, vol. 2, p. xix.

52.   Sandercock's statement that the Commission's recommendations
were based on an "odd amalgam of values and conflicting approaches"
which made "concerted action unlikely" lacks logical or empirical
foundation. See L. Sandercock, "Property, Politics and Power: A
History of City Planning in Adelaide, Melbourne and Sydney Since
1900" (Ph.D. thesis, A.N.U., 1974), p. 17. This statement was
repeated in the same author's Cities for Sale: Property, Politics
and Urban Planning in Australia (Melbourne: M.U.P., 1975).

53.   P. Spearritt, "The Consensus Politics of Physical Planning in
Sydney: Case Studies from the Interwar Years" (unpublished B.A.
(Hons) thesis, Department of Government, University of Sydney,
1972), especially pp. 1-2.

54.   Ruth Atkins agrees with Winston's assessment, "Sydney", in
W.A. Robson and D.E. Regan (eds), Great Cities of the World,
Vol. II (London: Allen and Unwin, 1972), p. 934.

The success of the Commission in terms of their transport recommendations will be discussed in the next chapter in connection with Bradfield's planning but it can be said that they were well-received and in the end adopted. (The tunnel proposal was abandoned in 1911-12 and this eventually necessitated the amendment of the Commission's underground railway.) The recommendations were only debated in Parliament once and then three years after the Commission had reported, in an adjournment debate in the Legislative Assembly on "The extension of the railway into the city" in early July, 1912. There was virtual unanimity in demanding that the Commission's scheme be effected at once. The Hon. C.A. Lee, Secretary for Public Works, was stimulated by the gentle criticism of government members and harsher criticism of others to declare that definite steps had been taken to implement two major recommendations. First, a Martin Place - Lavender Bay railway, estimated to cost $1,500,000, had been referred to the Public Works Committee in December, 1909, for its attention in connection with the Harbour tunnel. Second, the goods train recommendations had also been referred to the Committee at the same time, cost $1,414,000; these works had been suggested by Tom Johnson who was largely responsible for railway planning in any case. Sir James Graham remarked rather sadly in the debate,

> We tackled the work (of transport planning) as far as we could in that spirit (of urgency), and one has been waiting and watching, and hoping that the day was not very far distant when the Government would see its way to take action.(55)

The Improvement of Sydney Commission of 1908-09 was unquestionably a watershed in the planning of Sydney. It was the first of very few inquiries to take a comprehensive view of urban planning and it did that in an explicit context of governmental reform. It was significant in terms of Greater Sydney, transport and town planning generally. The Commissioners were a group of dedicated people of mixed backgrounds and skills. These factors and their status as an independent Commission enabled them to overcome the dangers of technical narrowness of vision and to achieve an integrated planning perspective.

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55. N.S.W. Parliamentary Debates, 2nd Series, vol. 37, p. 590. See pp. 596-8 for Lee and 587 ff generally.

The Impact of Bradfield

Neither the City Railway, the Sydney Harbour
Bridge, nor any scheme of Suburban Railways can
really be claimed to be the thought or the work
of an individual. These works, when completed,
will be the materialization of the best thoughts
of a considerable number of able men...

James Fraser, Chief
Commissioner, N.S.W. Government
Railways and Tramways (1926).

The late years of the 1900s were especially favourable to urban planning and the Improvement of Sydney Commission enhanced the prospect of effective government action on the more obvious infrastructural deficiencies of Sydney. That Commission had not been set up to forestall such action and in fact the first positive steps were taken about two years after its Report, as will be seen. Perhaps more importantly in view of the imminent War, the Commission had encouraged the formation of a better informed planning lobby which was able to keep the main issues in the political arena while circumstances were temporarily unfavourable. The man who was to benefit most from the planning "consensus" was John Job Crew Bradfield.

Bradfield was born in Queensland in December 1867, completed his primary and secondary education there and came to Sydney in 1886 to matriculate at the University of Sydney.[1] He completed the Bachelor of Engineering course in 1889 with First Class Honours and the University Gold Medal. He worked as a Railways draftsman in Queensland for two years and then joined the N.S.W. Department of Public Works as a draftsman in the Roads and Bridges branch. In 1896 Bradfield graduated Master of Engineering with First Class Honours and medal at Sydney University and published a paper (his first) on Australian timbers. He worked on general design tasks including dams and in 1909 became Principal Designing Engineer in Public Works' Drawing Office. (In fact Bradfield was classed as a draftsman until 1909 when he was appointed Assistant Engineer 2nd Class, this making no difference to his then salary of £400 p.a.)[2] He had been a founding member of the Sydney University Engineering Society in 1895 and was President in 1902/03

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1. Dr Peter Spearritt is to date the main biographical source on Bradfield. His following works were used in this section: (i) "An Urban History of Sydney 1920-1950 (op. cit.; hereafter cited as: Spearritt, "Urban History"); (ii) chapter II in "The Consensus Politics of Physical Planning in Sydney", op. cit., hereafter cited as: Spearritt, "Consensus Politics"; and (iii) "J.J.C. Bradfield 1867-1943", draft entry in N.B. Nairn and G. Serle (eds), Australian Dictionary of Biography Vol. 7 (to be published by M.U.P.), which will be cited as: Spearritt, "Bradfield". All are cited with permission.

2. Details provided by Ms L. Yandell from official records. Ms Yandell is preparing what will be the first complete critical appraisal of Bradfield and his impact in her "The Life and Work of J.J.C. Bradfield" (Ph.D. thesis in preparation, School of Transport and Highways, University of New South Wales).

and 1919/20. In his Presidential Address in April 1903 he
discussed the Harbour Bridge competitions of that time and apparent-
ly maintained an interest in this subject.[3] So by 1908-09
Bradfield had demonstrated unusual academic ability and had
established a strategic work position for the critical developments
that were to follow. Although he moved in the highest professional
circles,[4] he was not known then as a planning advocate. He was
not mentioned in the Improvement Commission's documents and did not
prepare his first proposal for an underground railway until 1909,
after the Commission's Report and under its stimulus.

From 1909 Bradfield apparently used his position within
Public Works, which was then the main planning and construction
authority for railways, to turn his personal interest in the main
urban projects into an occupation. In July 1911 the Acting Premier,
W.A. Holman, announced at an extremely perilous stage of N.S.W.'s
first Labor Government[5] that Cabinet had decided on a bridge for
tram, vehicular and pedestrian traffic and a tunnel for the railway.
This was a political decision. As principal designing engineer[6]
Bradfield advised the Minister for Works that both structures would
be navigational hazards and he was given permission to prepare his
own designs.[7] He presented designs and estimates for cantilever,
suspension and cantilever arch types of bridge (he preferred the
cantilever) to the Public Works Committee in 1912-13; the
Committee's Report of July 1913 endorsed his preference and design.

Bradfield's initial internal and subsequent public work on the
Harbour Bridge proposal won him increased influence and in July
1912 he was promoted to Engineer-in-Charge of the Sydney Harbour
Bridge and City Transit section of the Public Works Department
(salary £1000 p.a.) and in 1913 to the position of Chief Engineer,

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3. Bradfield in fact had become involved in 1900 when he checked
the calculations of entries for the Minister for Works. See
J.J.C. Bradfield, "History of the Bridge, Largest Arch Type in the
World", Sydney Harbour Bridge. Official Souvenir and Programme
(Sydney: N.S.W. Government Printer, 1932). It was not until 1911
that he began to take an active interest in the design of a bridge.

4. Spearritt, "Bradfield", p.2.

5. G.N. Hawker, The Parliament of N.S.W. 1856-1965 (Sydney:
N.S.W. Government Printer, 1971), p.204. Some background is given
in C. Pearl, Wild Men of Sydney (Sydney: Universal, 3rd ed., 1970).

6. Bradfield had been appointed 1st Class Assistant Engineer at
£450 p.a. in 1910 and in two steps in 1911 went to Principal Design
Engineer at £630. Information supplied from official records by
Ms L. Yandell.

7. This is Bradfield's account: J.J.C. Bradfield, "Sydney Harbour
Bridge", Commonwealth Engineer, 1st March 1932; reprinted by
Department of Main Roads (n.d.), p.2. Spearritt's account is
somewhat different.

Metropolitan Railway Construction.[8] Bradfield did not neglect
the railway aspects of the innercity transport problem and
participated in an extended cycle of modifications to the
Improvement Commission's underground railway, starting in 1912 with
the appointment of an English consultant, Mr David Hay.[9] Hay
recommended a highly complicated and expensive rail system which
attracted nothing but criticism. Separately Bradfield had suggested
a minor amendment to the Commission's plan to the Public Works
Committee Inquiry on the Bridge, namely a small connecting loop
between the Town Hall and Liverpool Street Stations. This was
adopted by Tom Johnson, the Chief Commissioner, in December 1912
when he amended his 1909 scheme (as approved by the Improvement
Commission) to allow for the Bridge instead of tunnel and a
realigned route to the sports grounds and zoo (then on Cleveland
Street). Bradfield came back very quickly with a suggestion that
the alignment of the city railway be changed at Central and Town
Hall Stations and Johnson accepted this almost immediately on the
31st January 1913. This amended scheme was acceptable to the
Government except that it was desired to postpone the expense of
electrification of the suburban railways for five years, so tunnels
carrying the Eastern and Western Suburbs trams onto the under-
ground were incorporated.[10] A Bill for the construction of these
works was presented to Parliament in 1913 but it failed in the
Legislative Council. That Bill did not include the North Shore
or Balmain rail connections and it left the railway entirely below
ground in the low-level scheme adopted in 1909. There is no
evidence that the Government was induced to introduce the
legislation for any reasons other than political advantage and
long-established need; at that point Bradfield's public influence
was minor. The Government's decision to underground the trams,
a highly undesirable if not unworkable scheme as Bradfield was to
show in 1915, perhaps indicated the limits on Bradfield's internal
influence.

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8.   Spearritt, "Bradfield" p.2. Bradfield's salary was £1,000 p.a.
from 1st July 1912, to 1920 when it was raised by increment to
£1,200 p.a. His official title did not change until his retirement.
(Information supplied by Ms Yandell.)

9.   See J.J.C. Bradfield, "Report on Proposed Electric Railways
for the City of Sydney" (N.S.W. Parliamentary Papers, 1915-16,
vol. 6), Plate 65 and elsewhere. Hereafter cited as: Bradfield,
"Report". (As quoted below this was also issued separately by the
Government Printer in 1916; some copies in that issue included an
important foreword by the Director General of Works.) The
following sentences are based on this source, pp. 42 ff.

10. Ibid., p. 59 and Plate 68.

So far Bradfield and Johnson had modified the Improvement of Sydney Commission's scheme by increments, accepting the original structural framework. The only significant initiative was made by Johnson in December 1912 when he proposed that the tramlines from the Broadway be run underground below Pitt Street to Circular Quay and that those from the Eastern Suburbs (Oxford Street) be run under Oxford Street, Hyde Park and Elizabeth Street to the Quay.[11] This was basically an internal scheme and its rationale was apparently not made public except for Bradfield's later analysis (see below). It was not included in the 1913 Bill.

By late 1913 the Bradfield Bridge had been accepted by the Public Works Committee and an underground rail scheme had been endorsed by the Departments of Railways and Public Works and by the Government. The proposals entailed a scale of innercity construction (and disruption) that had never been attempted before and so in January 1914 the Government decided to send Bradfield to Europe and North America to investigate changing construction methods, materials technology, railway management, and "the conditions adopted in various countries to prevent excessive claims for damage to property by blasting during the progress of the works".[12] He left by sea on the 21st March and returned on the 19th September, 1914. The War delayed the delivery of papers and photographs he had collected until November that year and the German information did not arrive at all.

Whether on Bradfield's initiative alone or using investigations carried out in Railways and/or Public Works while he was away, as seems more likely, in December 1914 Bradfield announced major modifications to the railway scheme. Instead of the comparatively low-level underground railway, a higher-level underground route (following the old alignment) was adopted, with open air stations at Central and Circular Quay, underground stations at the other four locations, and above ground lines from Redfern to Goulburn Street and at Circular Quay. This scheme included much improved rail crossings and the same underground tram routes as proposed by Johnson although Bradfield added two tram lines on the Bridge. Running conditions and the general quality of service were improved by Bradfield's amendments which however had been basically foreseen by all main proponents of a city railway up to the Improvement Commission (with regard to the Central Station end) and by that Commission (regarding the Quay).[13] The 1914 Bradfield scheme was important because it was the first to propose several important features of the lines that were actually built. Further, up to

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11. Ibid., Plate 66.

12. Ibid., p. 1.

13. An invaluable source is E. Irvin, Sydney As It Might Have Been, op. cit., especially Ch. XI. Cf ibid., pp. 55-8.

this point the progress of the design of and advocacy for the
train system reflected the competitiveness which existed between
Bradfield and the Railways Department. The organisational frame-
work which allowed such open interplay with its associated benefits
(including greater, not less, pressure for effective Governmental
action) was of obvious importance for contemporary policy-making.

Bradfield "presented" his "Report on the Proposed Electric
Railways for the City of Sydney" in February 1915, as a report on
overseas construction methods and railway operational standards as
well as a comprehensive analysis of the underground rail scheme
and associated works. (A chapter was included on the Bridge but
this dealt entirely with procedures for the calling of contracts.)
Bradfield went further in developing even his scheme of December
1914 and he provided details of railway working, costing and design
which had been absent from previous analyses. While the Report was
a very competent engineer's statement and contained a more detailed
analysis of current population and transit trends than did the
Improvement Commission's,[14] it was not a comprehensive planning
document and could not be taken to establish Bradfield as anything
but a technical expert — it lacked the societal and symbolic
understanding of the Commission's Report, although admittedly
Bradfield was dealing with basically the same works. The Report
was not published until 1916, well after the City and Suburban
Electric Railways Act, 1915, had passed through all legislative
stages and in fact Bradfield was hardly mentioned in Parliament
during the passage of the Bill. The scheme was regarded more as
that of the Improvement Commission, especially because by that time
Sir Thomas Hughes, Sir Allen Taylor and J.D. Fitzgerald were on the
Government benches in the Legislative Council. As in 1913
Bradfield had not been a prime mover in persuading the Government
(and this time the Legislative Council) to take major action.

The 1915 "Plan" scheme followed the same line and level as
that of 1914 but it was basically a two-track instead of three-
track loop. (For various reasons Bradfield estimated that the two-
track system would have a capacity 50 per cent greater than the
three-track system at 54 per cent less cost.[15]) Bradfield made
provision for the future relocation of Sydney Terminal (Central
Station) below Hyde Park, underground but on top of the St James
Station, as well as a terminal at North Sydney. He also provided
two tracks between Central and Wynyard to meet future capacity

14. The basis of projection was however far more arbitrary and
less careful. See Bradfield, ibid., p. 87.

15. Ibid., pp. 62-66.

needs and to form the basis of a quadruplification of the under-
ground system if required. In purely technical terms the Bradfield
loop was superior to the previous schemes although it is not known
why he had waited until then to develop it; the influence of other
parties can be imputed (perhaps overseas influence although this is
by no means certain). It might be mentioned that the much-maligned
Hay loop of 1912 was double-track and above ground as far as
Goulburn Street, although underground at Circular Quay.

Bradfield also proposed substantial new suburban rail works
including a double-track loop to the Eastern Suburbs and a double-
track loop to Petersham via Balmain (including a high-level bridge
only 250 feet or 16 per cent shorter than the Harbour Bridge).
New lines to Mosman/Manly/Narrabeen/Pittwater, Ryde (from the new
Western Suburbs line via two bridges), Watson's Bay, and La Perouse
were expected to be required "at a later date".[16] These works
were not regarded as "urgent" and received no priority in
Bradfield's Report.

An essential condition of the underground railway was that
operations would be based on electric traction. Bradfield
recommended that the "inner zone suburban" lines should be
electrified immediately (a total of 200 track miles or 64 route
miles), followed by the "outer zone suburban" (200 track miles or
95 route miles) when warranted by the development of traffic.[17]
Bradfield was far too optimistic in the Report as to the extension
of the electric system elsewhere in the State and the voltage that
would be practicable.

The 1915 "Plan" included the undergrounding of the same tram
routes as were approved in 1914. Bradfield explained that the
removal of the trams from the street surface was justified on the
basis of facilitating vehicular and pedestrian traffic "rather than
as a means of satisfactorily relieving the dense passenger traffic",
because he said that only trains could be justified on a cost basis
for the latter purpose.[18] He offered no analysis of significance
for the development of tram routes unlike the Improvement
Commission. (A new tram route connecting the Haberfield Tramway
and Summer Hill Station was included in Bradfield's costing but was
not mentioned elsewhere. This represented an expenditure of 10,000
pounds.) He suggested however that expenditure on trams and tram
tracks be reduced so that by 1920, when Bradfield expected trams to
have lost 37 per cent of their total patronage, the tram systems

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16. Ibid., pp. 75 ff and Plate 74.

17. See ibid., pp. 66 ff.

18. Ibid., p. 75.

would not be overcapitalised. "From the year 1920 onwards, the tramway position should steadily improve, as the traffic must again grow in the City proper, though not at the present rate of increase, but the traffic on the outlying tramways, which will be feeders to the electric railways, will increase at a more rapid rate than at present."[19] (There was an implicit assumption, though no explicit discussion, of the impact of works on housing.) Needless to say Bradfield's forecasts of patronage were well astray.

Bradfield's Report was accompanied by a Preface written by the Director General of Public Works[20] in which in the ambiguous manner of the time it was stated that "The work recommended in this Report... has been approved". The cost of the "approved" works amounted to 20 million pounds sterling (exclusive of land costs), which can be compared with the estimated cost of the Harbour Bridge and railway from Wynyard to Waverton at less than 3 million pounds. The "approved" order of construction was given as:

(i)　　the electrification of the inner zone suburban railways to Parramatta, Hornsby, Sutherland and Bankstown;
(ii)　　the City Underground and the Eastern, Western and Northern Suburbs lines;
(iii)　　two long span cantilever bridges of 1,600 feet and 1,350 feet centre spans respectively;
(iv)　　the electrification of the outer zone suburban railways; and
(v)　　the construction of the underground tramways (this accounting for less than 2 million pounds).

The Preface also stated that the City and Suburban Electric Railways Act 1915 had already authorised a programme of 10 million pounds, excluding the bridge and the North Shore railways. The Preface and the Act illustrated the willingness of the Holman Labor Government (soon to become the Holman/Wade National Government[21]) to take effective action. The source of finance for the Act was an agreement between the Government and Norton Griffiths & Company of England by which the Company received a guaranteed 5 per cent on construction costs.

In terms of being a staged programme of works which had been analysed and found to be justified, Bradfield's Report was more a "plan" than was the Improvement Commission's. His was not however as comprehensive nor as politically attractive and indeed in many respects Bradfield's achievements would not have been possible without the earlier Royal Commission and its contribution to the planning consensus. Bradfield had placed little emphasis on

19.　Ibid., p. 103.

20.　See n. 9 above.

21.　See Hawker, op. cit., pp. 204-5.

societal impact or political acceptability and obviously did not
himself have to publicly work for the acceptance of his plans.
Bradfield's work in short was a product of the underlying
consensus.

The implementation (as distinct from Government acceptance)
of Bradfield's plans did not proceed smoothly. The Harbour Bridge
Bill was rejected in the Legislative Council in April 1916 because
of anxiety for war finances. The financial agreement with Norton
Griffiths was cancelled in March 1917 and the Railway Commissioners
continued the work. However in June the Government decided to
discontinue construction and property which had been resumed for
the Eastern Suburbs Railway was returned to its original owners by
a Recission Act. As for the Bridge, Governments didn't lose sight
of the basic need, as Premier Storey told one deputation from the
expanding North Shore in 1920.[22] A Bill was presented in 1921
but had not been dealt with by the Council when Parliament was
dissolved. The subsequent Fuller Coalition Government succeeded in
having the bill passed in September 1922 and it was assented to in
November. The design of the Bridge had not been finalised when
tenders were called in 1923, although while Bradfield had been sent
overseas in 1922 to further investigate cantilever types, he "had
come to the conclusion that there were no insuperable difficulties
to the erection of an arch type bridge... (which) would cost
350,000 pounds less than a cantilever".[23] (The Bridge Act was in
fact framed in terms of a cantilever bridge and was only amended
after its introduction. The selection of the arch bridge rested
entirely on the construction ability of Dorman Long and the design
ability of their consultant, Ralph Freeman.) Bradfield had
repeatedly revised the design details of various components in his
plans, notably the Bridge (roadworks and capacity) and the
Circular Quay Station.[24] One reason for this was no doubt that
Bradfield wanted to keep the issues alive and in public view.

In 1921 the Government decided that the Eastern and Western
Suburbs rail links proposed by Bradfield earlier were too complex
and costly and the Railways Department (which had been responsible
for railway planning from January 1917,[25] Bradfield and his

22. Irvin, op. cit., p. 112.

23. See for example Bradfield, "Sydney Harbour Bridge" (1932),
op. cit., p. 2.

24. Cf Irvin, pp. 133-6 and elsewhere. Bradfield made many
incidental changes in his popular articles (a list of which is
given in P. Spearritt, "Selected Writings of Sydney Planning
Advocates, 1900-1947: A Preliminary Bibliography" (A.P.S.A.
Monograph No. 13, 1973), pp. 4-6).

25. The divided control between Railways and Public Works had
been a legacy of nineteenth century confusion over the best way to

branch having been transferred at that time) was asked to prepare amended plans in preparation for the resumption of works.[26] In 1921 the amended plans were completed. The Western Suburbs line was originally to have been linked with the main loop at the northern end of Wynyard Station and progress across a high level Bridge to Balmain. The amended line ran from the southern end of Town Hall Station to near Central and then west parallel to Parramatta Road to Homebush or Flemington. The Eastern Suburbs line was to run under the Domain and connect with the main loop at both Circular Quay and St James. This was replaced by a more simple line from between St James and Museum Stations and then under Hyde Park and Oxford Street to Bondi Junction. Most importantly, both the Western and Eastern Suburbs lines would connect easily with a new "inner loop" on the underground system which would run from between St James and Circular Quay Stations to Town Hall Station via stations at O'Connell Street and Pitt Street (between King and Market Streets).[27] This loop would have filled in the middle ground in the CBD not served by the main loop and as well would have offered considerable operational advantages. The "inner loop" had not even been mentioned before by Bradfield or the Improvement Commission, and it was not widely publicised at the time of its design, unlike the earlier "plans". (The 1921 scheme also contained changed "details", such as the alignment of St James Station: these were refinements of the 1915 works.)

The Harbour Bridge scheme proceeded quickly once the 1922 Bill had passed. Tenders were called world-wide in 1923 on plans and specifications prepared by Bradfield (these were sufficiently

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achieve efficiency, reduce corruption and yet retain political control. Incredibly until 1912 the Engineer-in-Chief of Railways (and by implication other branch heads) had a legal and official status equal and in some respects superior to that of the Commissioner for Railways. "Extremes of mismanagement" resulted. I.M. Laszlo, "Railway Policies and Development in Northern N.S.W." (Ph.D Thesis, University of New England, 1957); R.L. Wettenhall, "Early Railway Management Legislation in N.S.W.", Tasmanian University Law Review, July 1960; and other sources as quoted in J.B. Sheehan, "A Consideration of the Legal Origin and Structure of the Bureaucratic Hierarchy of a Statutory Corporation as Represented in N.S.W. by the Former Commissioner for Railways" (unpublished essay, Department of Town and Country Planning, University of Sydney, 1976).

26. This paragraph is based largely on H. Silverton, "Sydney's New Underground Railway", Australian Transport, November-December 1972. Mr Silverton and Mr J. Forsyth have also assisted through discussion, their knowledge of departmental records being most helpful.

27. The lines are shown in simple form in James Fraser, "The Railway System, Past, Present, and Projected of the City of Sydney and its Suburbs", p. 10, in The Electrification of Sydney and Suburban Railways (Sydney: Institution of Engineers, Australia, 1927). Mr Fraser was Chief Railway Commissioner from 1917 to 1929 and his paper was one of a series given before the Institution in 1926 on electrification.

general to provide for different design and workshop practice).
The tender of the English company Dorman Long & Co. was formally
accepted in March 1924 for a two-hinged arch bridge, the contract
price being about $8,436,000 and the period of construction six
years. (The estimate of total cost was $15 million.) Work
commenced on 28th July 1923, the two halves of the arch were
joined in August 1930 and the lower chord and approaches were
completed two years later, the Bridge being opened on 19th March
1932. The extended period of construction was a major factor in
pushing the cost of the Bridge (at 30th June 1933) to $20,114,340
($12,500,000 for construction and the rest for resumptions and
interest during construction).[28] The 1922 Act had provided that
the Railway and Tramway Commissioners would meet two-thirds of the
final cost, with the remainder coming from a levy of ½d. in the £
of unimproved capital value in the City of Sydney and the
municipalities and shires of Manly, Mosman, Lane Cove, North Sydney
Willoughby, Kuring-gai, Warringah and part of Hornsby. (This
provision was unique in Sydney's twentieth century history at
least.[29]) From 1932 however the arrangement was varied so that
a toll was charged for rail-borne passengers as for road traffic,
thus making user charges the principal source of finance, while
the council levy was reduced to 1/3d. in 1933 and was cancelled at
the end of 1939. By 1938-39 the levy had yielded $1,503,200
compared with $3,098,000 in road tolls and $1,864,800 in rail
contributions. (The toll rates favoured rail passengers quite
substantially.) In the same period loan capital charges totalled
$5,930,600 (91 per cent of total expenditure). (In 1931-32 there
was apparently a scheme to sell the lease of the Bridge for ten
years to raise finance![30] Nothing apparently came of this.)

The construction of the underground rail system recommenced
in 1922, excluding the western side of the main loop. The eastern
section from Central to St James was opened in late 1926. The
western side was authorised and started in late 1925 and finished
in time for a concurrent opening with the Bridge in 1932. (At
that stage suburban electrification had just been completed, the
Illawarra line having been the first finished, in 1926. The total
cost of conversion of existing suburban track was a very
substantial $22,288,000 which compared with Bradfield's 1915

28.   N.S.W. Year Book, 1932/33, p. 585. Other statistics in this
and the following paragraph have been taken from the Year Book.
There is a superficial evaluation of economic aspects in B. Lennon,
"The Development of the N.S.W. Government City and Suburban
Transportation System, 1914-39" (unpublished B.Ec (Hons) thesis,
Department of Economic History, University of Sydney, 1970),
pp. 104 ff.

29.   See N.S.W. Year Book, 1932/33, p. 585.

30.   B. Irving, "Lang in the N.S.W. State Archives", in H. Radi
and P. Spearritt (eds), Jack Lang (Sydney: Hale & Iremonger, 1977)
pp. 274, 281.

estimate of $7,500,000. Electric rolling stock cost an extra
$12,302,200. Electrification cost much more than the Bridge.[31])
However the loop was not completed at that time — work continued on
Circular Quay Station until 1935 but then ceased until the late
1940s. Circular Quay Station and the loop proper were opened in
1956. The same thing happened to the "inner loop": substantial
portions of its tunnels had been constructed from Wynyard and
especially St James Stations by the early 1930s but the loop has
not been completed. (Part of it near the Public Library of N.S.W.
served as General Macarthur's Headquarters during the Second World
War.)

The War and particularly the Depression intervened at crucial
stages. The Depression was more significant because it emphasised
the economic weaknesses of the railway-based strategy. The number
of trips on metropolitan railways fell from a peak of 140,158,000
in 1928/29 to 119,016,000 in 1930/31, followed by steady recovery
to 161,061,000 in 1935/36.[32] This was probably not as serious as
the longer-term failure of patronage to meet official expectations.
Prior to 1914 the bulk of growth in patronage (and capital
invested) occurred on the tramways which at the time of Bradfield's
1915 Report accounted for about 70 per cent of passenger journeys
(20 per cent were carried by trains and 10 per cent by ferries).
Bradfield expected the tram/train ratio to be reversed by the
programme because electric railways were faster, cheaper and more
attractive. As Fraser, the Chief Commissioner, put it in 1926,[33]
electric traction would reduce the capital needs of rolling stock,
locomotion and ancillary services while it would reduce the average
train trip from 35 minutes to 25 minutes. Taking everything into
account it was predicted that by 1930/31 railway patronage would
total 185,256,000 trips (compare with actual figure above) of which
111,000,000 would be to or from the new city stations. The latter
traffic would produce a revenue of $1,600,000 (on 1926 fare levels),
about 32 per cent greater than capital charges on the Bridge and
underground and more than enough to cover working expenses. Fraser
went further in saying that

> In the year 1930-31 the time saving to the suburban
> travelling public, as a result of acceleration of
> services, will amount to no less than 20,000,000 hours,
> or a time value of no less than ($2,000,000) per annum,
> assessing each hour at the low value of (20¢).
> Capitalized, this saving equals nearly four-fifths of

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31.   Spearritt, "Urban History", p. 188 is incorrect on this
point.

32.   Lennon, op. cit., Table 10, p. 81.

33.   Fraser, op. cit., pp. 11 ff. Also G. Reynolds, "The
Development of the City and Suburban Railway in the 1920s"
(unpublished undergraduate essay, Department of Economic History,
University of Sydney, 1969), pp. 3 f. Cf Bradfield, "Report",
pp 5 ff.

> the total cost of all the works, and there must be added to this the appreciation of land and property values, probably many times in excess of the above figures.(34)

Fraser was the only speaker in the 1926 "Electrification" series to deal with economic questions (Bradfield was entirely concerned with construction progress). However by 1929 the Treasurer, Mr Stevens (Premier from 1932), found the railway situation to be "becoming very embarrassing".[35]

A basic cause of the railways' unexpectedly slow gains was severe competition from road-based private transport. In 1921/22 there was one motor vehicle for every 55 persons in Australia: by 1929/30 the ratio was one in 11 persons and falling rapidly.[36] In these circumstances the Railways changed their strategy to consolidation rather than expansion and they succeeded in this until the late 1950s with the help of their new works. The authorities and governments took their chances with the new technology in 1922 and later. In 1926 for example Fraser wrote that for the purpose of estimating 1930/31 patronage, the period 1914-25 would not be a good base because of the War and the fact that "in the later years of the period... there has been loss of business to the Railways by competition of other transport services". He continued, "The actual increase in passengers carried from 1914 to 1925... (was at) rather less than a compound ratio of 4% per annum. In view, however, of the fact that from 1907 to 1914 the total increase in passenger movement was (at)... over 11% compound ratio per annum, an estimate of the probable increase during the next six years at a rate of 9% per annum compounded should not be regarded as unduly optimistic".[37] This was a simple case of lying with statistics. Bradfield had received the D.Sc (Hons) from Sydney University in 1924 for a thesis on "his" City and Suburban Electric Railways and the Sydney Harbour Bridge and he did not challenge the direct economic basis for the works, either then or thereafter.

It was noted in the previous chapter that it was most unlikely in 1909 that the Herculean task of reorienting Sydney's extensive tram system to form a feeder network would ever be undertaken. This particular aspect weighed heavily against Bradfield and his colleagues because the two rail modes continued to compete rather

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34.   Fraser, ibid., p. 23.

35.   Reynolds, op. cit., p. 19.

36.   Cf. C. Forster, Industrial Development in Australia 1920-1930 (Canberra: A.N.U.P., 1964), pp. 29 f.

37.   Fraser, op. cit., p. 22.

than complement. In fact from the First World War buses
challenged trams as the most efficient, economical and flexible
feeder and medium distance mode of public transport but the
various governments regarded trams as an investment asset to be
protected rather than a service. The conflict between the
privately owned buses and the Government trams was resolved from
1929 by the taxation of the former on the basis of "unreasonable
competition" with the trams.[38] Finally in December 1932 the
Government acquired its first buses, to be run on a very limited
basis, after a delay which was fairly typical of Sydney's twentieth
century experience. As an aside, the period from the Improvement
Commission's Report to 1914 saw an extremely rapid expansion of
Sydney's tram system, which was electrified and profitable, on a
fairly uniform geographical basis.[39] The principles laid down in
the Commission's Report were disregarded largely because of
necessity; an Eastern Suburbs Railway bill had been narrowly
defeated in the Legislative Council in 1879 and Governments were
consistently unwilling to invest in major rail works. In fact the
first line designed for suburban use rather than as part of an
inter-regional trunk system was the St Leonards to Hornsby railway,
completed in 1890. This contrasted strongly with the Government's
eagerness of 1913 and 1915.

The construction of the Harbour Bridge and the city under-
ground and the electrification of the suburban railways were
mammoth undertakings which required excellence in design and
construction and a commitment to urban investment that could never
be matched in later Sydney, at least to the present.[40] A series
of very important questions are suggested by the decade of
construction which started in 1922 and the Government commitments
of 1913 and 1915. What had happened in Parliament and society
that permitted the initiatives, at those times?[41] How strong was

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38. See Lennon, op. cit., chapter 2/3; Spearritt, "Urban
History", pp. 195-200; also chapter 5 below.

39. B. Lennon, "The Growth and Development of the Sydney and
Suburban Tramway System, 1860 to 1914" (unpublished undergraduate
essay, Department of Economic History, University of Sydney, 1969),
pp. 13 ff.

40. The total cost to 1932 of the Bridge, underground railway
(excluding the Circular Quay section) and electrification was about
$55 million which was 22.4 per cent of actual loan expenditure in
N.S.W. from 1922/23 to 1931/32. A comparable proportion of actual
loan expenditure from 1968/69 to 1977/78 (estimate) is $839 million.
(This comparison is intended for illustration only.) Statistics
calculated from Year Books and Treasurer's Loan Speech 1976 and
1977. The present construction cost would be much higher than $839m.

41. Economic conditions were generally in favour of urban
construction, for which see Sinclair, loc. cit.; and
C.B. Schedvin, Australia and the Great Depression (Sydney: S.U.P.,
1970), especially pp. 68 ff. The political background to this

the push from planning lobbies? and how strong the pull from potential beneficiaries? Why were the rail planners able to design their works at an ambitious level of technical standard especially after the initial impact of the motor car and bus had been felt? And how important had Bradfield been in the design of the major works and the persuasion of governments? Complete answers to such questions cannot be given on present knowledge — the questions have not been seriously asked before[42] — but at least a partial assessment can be advanced.

The first major point is that the programmes and policies which Bradfield espoused had common acceptance and were in particular consistent with the organisational thrust of the largest and most expert bureaucracy, the Government Railways. Railway design was an art at that time and there were many men inside and outside the Department who had received the best of training and who were characteristically dedicated. The construction of an adequate rail system was their primary goal. While Bradfield was officially Chief Engineer from 1912 this did not mean that he was solely responsible for rail plans, and it would seem that his personal working style placed a great load on his colleagues in any case.[43] As has been indicated in the preceding analysis at two points at least it appeared that major alterations to Bradfield's plans were made in circumstances which suggest a very strong organisational input, the most important being the changes of 1921. Bradfield's public reticence on those changes is suggestive. This aspect cannot be definitively settled at this stage but it can be concluded that Bradfield's rail planning was heavily dependent on the Railways/Public Works organisation. The 1915 "Plan" was not really Bradfield's plan at all — it had been a co-operative effort as Bradfield admitted in his Report.

The other sections of the "rail lobby" were extremely influential also. There were retail interests in the CBD and speculators in the southern and northern suburbs, as well as the

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fundamental change has not been adequately explored generally. Country prejudices and rural priorities remained important.

42. Spearritt concentrated on Bradfield's publicity campaign and did not so much deal with actual planning or the relationship between Bradfield and his "world" — especially work environment, action groups, politicians and the like.

43. Personal communications with Mr W.K. King who joined Railways in 1929 and is well acquainted with the background to this statement.

better-housing movement[44] (for some reason the general "planning movement went into decline in the twenties"[45] although the planning consensus apparently did not). There is evidence, quoted by Spearritt, that the "pull" of potential beneficiaries was very strong particularly in the case of the Harbour Bridge, the East Hills extension (and all lines from the First World War on), and Circular Quay Station.[46] These interests supported Bradfield for their own purposes. Electrification had a tremendous effect on operations generally as did other major programmes.

In the case of the Bridge, it would definitely appear that Bradfield's role was largely confined to three major elements: defining general design parameters; advising on design tenders; and overviewing construction. This was basically his role as draftsman/engineer in 1900. Construction supervision was in the hands of Dorman Long and Company and design in the hands of Ralph Freeman. The latter was highly indignant that Bradfield allowed his name to be "connected" to the design and Freeman had substantial support within his own British and the Sydney Institution of Engineers.[47] (Bradfield in fact retired on special leave in mid-1931[48] and retained his title as Chief Engineer in an advisory capacity only. He remained engineer-for-contract until the final reports on construction in 1933.)

Bradfield's fame rested on the articles he wrote for various sections of the press and popular articles written about him. From the mid-1910s he built on his existing public standing through a series of articles which were intended to consolidate public opinion by emphasising not so much the inherent quality of the works but rather their potential impact on urban development and life styles. From the early 1920s the articles largely lost their political purpose and became more descriptive and laudatory. Through the public campaigns (which were extraordinarily active for a public servant) Bradfield's name became firmly associated with the works. It was only in the heat of trying to arouse public support that Bradfield embellished his central "plan" with the less justifiable elements attributed to him by local advocates such as the Warringah peninsular railway. After his retirement Bradfield engaged widely in local publicity through a slide show he took from

44. Cf Spearritt, "Urban History", chapter 3 especially pp. 47 ff.

45. Spearritt, "Selected Writings", op. cit., p. iii.

46. See Spearritt, "Urban History", various places but especially chapter 9, pp. 185-7, 190, 192-3; also pp. 50 ff. This is a subject which requires further critical analysis.

47. See Institution of Engineers (Great Britain), Minutes, 1935 (reference supplied by Ms Yandell).

48. Information provided by Ms Yandell.

hall to hall with the help of an assistant. His extrovert drive
was a very important characteristic: winning promotion and status
comparatively late in life (his mid-40s) and then going without
promotion for the last twenty years of his career, with other
personal factors, must have had their effect.[49] The respect which
Bradfield earned within the Railways Department was specific to
his specialist skills and should not be overestimated.

Bradfield was unquestionably an important part of a crucial
period of Sydney's history. In his time Sydney was given a series
of invaluable assets, not necessarily because they could be
justified on hard economic or even operational grounds but because
a set of ideas gained common acceptance through a long process of
"advocacy" and organisational commitment. Perhaps the pragmatists
outnumbered the visionaries but the Bridge alone was an investment
which was to prove to be of inestimable value to later generations.
Those generations, with their political polarisation, fundamentally
different priorities and political uncertainties probably could not
have afforded the social as well as economic costs ("the great
sacrifice") of such a mammoth structure. (This is quite apart
from the concomitant railway projects.) Thus the importance of
the period did not lie in any one man. When Bradfield was
praised, it was society praising itself.

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49. Ms Yandell (as cited above) has suggested in personal
communications that these were possibly very significant factors.
Mr W.K. King has agreed in discussion with the present author.

Road Planning and Traffic Management

The Committee consider it desirable in the first
place to invite serious consideration of the complete
lack of effective machinery to ensure the carrying-out
of any co-ordinated scheme of traffic or transport
improvement in the city or throughout the State. ...

It is not suggested that (the various specialised
authorities) are not performing efficient service in
their respective spheres, but there is a lack of
harmony and co-ordination and in some instances at
least an aloofness.... Their efforts, the information
they possess, and the result of their actions should
be entirely subservient to general State requirements.

Traffic Advisory Committee, Report (1928).

The construction of the Harbour Bridge and most of the city underground railway marked the end of the golden age of rail investment in Sydney. In the 1920s the road lobby emerged as the most energetic and politically important component in metropolitan planning, both with respect to road construction and route improvement and also traffic control and co-ordinated transport system development. While the rail lobby was not dead, as will be seen later, it had lost its technological monopoly and was quickly forced into second place. This chapter will examine the formation and pre-1939 planning of the Main Roads Board and its successor, the Department of Main Roads, as well as the overall urban road transport movement.

Until Carruthers' reform of local government administration in 1906, main roads were administered by a Commissioner for Roads within the Department of Public Works (from 1862) and by municipalities and local trusts.[1] At 1862 there were 820 miles of main roads which had been proclaimed under an Act of 1857, the costs of construction, maintenance and administration of which were met from Consolidated Revenue. From 1862 Public Works also controlled 2,627 miles of other roads. The Shires Act of 1905 left the City of Sydney, existing municipalities and the Western division of the State under the Department but the Local Government Extension Act of 1906 brought existing municipalities into the revised local government system and gave them primary responsibility over their main roads. (The City of Sydney remained separate until 1948 while main roads in the western region were controlled by Public Works until after the Machinery of Government Review of 1975.) Thus from 1906 central control of main roads was largely abolished although the same legislation specified minimum subsidies to councils which were apparently used more for local than main roads.

From that year problems of divided control, financial differences between areas and lack of planning led to calls for unified administration, especially from the 1910s when the volume of traffic, lack of regulation of standards and vehicle design shortcomings caused excessive dust and community disturbance.[2]

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1.   The main historical sources are: H.H. Newell, "Road Engineering and its Development in Australia 1788-1938" (Reprinted by D.M.R. from The Journal of the Institution of Engineers, Australia, February and March 1938); F.A. Larcombe, A History of Local Government in N.S.W. Vols 1 and 2 (Sydney: S.U.P., 1973 and 1976); and especially Department of Main Roads, The Roadmakers: A History of Main Roads in N.S.W. (Sydney: D.M.R., 1976). Also R.J. Thomas, "Some Aspects of the History of the Roads of N.S.W.", J.R.A.H.S., March 1967.

2.   The best source is The Roadmakers, Chs. I.5 and II.1.

One aspect of the problem, the control of the use of vehicles, was partly ameliorated by the passing of the Motor Traffic Act of 1909 which was enforced by the Traffic Branch of the Police Department; but the concomitant problem of road standards increased with time.

The first attempt to introduce consolidating steps was made in 1912 when the Holman Government tried to set up a Main Roads Board of four members under Ministerial authority. It was intended that councils would retain construction authority but that State grants would be conditional.[3] The Bill was withdrawn because of local government opposition but much the same effect was achieved administratively through the allocation of subsidies on a needs basis by the Department of Local Government. The motoring interests, specifically at that time the Royal Automobile Club of Australia, still sought central representative administration.

Another legislative attempt was made in 1918, this one adding motor vehicle taxes to the Main Roads vote and differentiating between Sydney and the country. Country interests defeated that attempt and a subsequent proposal in 1919. The National Roads Association (N.R.M.A. from 1923) was set up in the following year and their statement of policy centred on the need for the establishment of a Board. The Storey Government agreed and introduced the Metropolitan Main Roads Bill of 1920, incorporating a Board headed by the Minister for Local Government, a Metropolitan Main Roads Fund, a levy on councils (first suggested in the previous year) and a betterment tax on land fronting a main road. That Bill lapsed after its First Reading, partly because it was regarded as too representative and unwieldy and would spend its whole time talking rather than working.[4]

The Coalition Nationalist Government was having difficulties in achieving a majority in 1923 and Premier Fuller adopted a "suddenly conciliatory" attitude to country interests, specifically the Progressive Party (Country Party from 1925) led by Lt.-Col. Bruxner. Bruxner asked for "a Main Roads Bill which would satisfy country members and money to make it effective. He got (all he asked for), and gave control of the House back to Fuller."[5]

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3. See ibid., pp. 76-77. From this point on, Don Aitkin, The Colonel: A political biography of Sir Michael Bruxner (Canberra: A.N.U.P., 1969) is essential background. The following discussion of the early planning of the M.R.B. and D.M.R. is largely based on those two sources, as well as H.M. Sherrard, "Sydney Metropolitan Main Roads Planning 1925-1962", Australian Planning Institute Journal, July 1964.

4. Minister's speech notes (unused), as quoted in The Roadmakers, p. 79.

5. Aitkin, op. cit., p. 76, see further pp. 81 ff.

Apparently Fuller's willingness to take action was due to the
passing of the Commonwealth Main Roads Act in 1923 which required
the States to make matching grants (see Chapter Six below). This
implied the formal allocation of motor taxation[6] to roads but
Fuller intended to retain a third of taxation revenue for
Consolidated Revenue. However in November he was denied supply
and by the time that the revised Bill had been prepared and
Bruxner's requirements met the entire taxation proceeds were to go
to roads. The Main Roads Bill was introduced in August 1924 and
retained the principles of city/country dichotomy and subsidisation
of the country by the city which had been incorporated in previous
Labor and Nationalist attempts.

The debate over the 1924 Bill showed clearly that metropolitan
roads were regarded as the most needy of attention but that the
country held the strings. As the Minister for Local Government
said,

> If both the metropolitan and country main roads are
> dealt with from the one fund the country districts may
> very rightly fear that, in view of the proximity of the
> metropolitan roads to the seat of government, in view of
> their infinitely worse condition, and in view of the
> great pressure which the metropolitan area can bring to
> bear, there would be grave danger of the metropolitan
> area receiving the lion's share of the expenditure of
> whatever funds were provided for the Main Roads Board to
> expend, and the country districts not receiving due and
> adequate attention.[7]

Separate accounting arrangements were made in the form of a
County of Cumberland Main Roads Fund, a Country Main Roads Fund and
a Developmental Roads Fund. A Federal Aid Roads Fund was estab-
lished in 1927/28. The overall effect was as stated, a subsidisa-
tion of the country by the city, as is shown in Section 3 of
Chapter Six.

The 1924 Act set up a Main Roads Board of three full-time
members, the President being the former Under Secretary for Local
Government, the others being engineers, one from the Department of
Public Works and the other from the Country Roads Board in
Victoria. (The Shires Association had requested a Victorian
appointment.) The Act provided that "councils should continue to
build and maintain the roads, and that the board would only finance
the works and have some say in what works were to be done.... An
important feature, in view of subsequent developments, was that,
where necessary, the proposed board was to be empowered to buy and

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6. That is, on a substantially extended base. A Motor Vehicles
(Taxation) Act was passed concurrently with the Main Roads Act,
providing for taxes to be calculated on the weight of the vehicle
and the class of tyres used.

7. Quoted in The Roadmakers, p. 81.

hire tools and equipment to carry out work should this prove necessary".[8] The Board was dependant on the Public Service Board for staffing until 1929 while in the same year the Board was made wholly responsible for servicing its loans because the Government withdrew Consolidated Revenue contributions and repealed its previous liability for at least one-half of the repayment of loans.[9]

The Board depended on council submissions on necessary works but largely because of a shortage of engineers the councils fell well behind and the Board found itself accumulating a large cash reserve. Premier Lang noticed this and had the Finance (Taxation Management) Act passed in December 1926 — this was denounced as the "main roads grab".[10] (The Lang Government was soon defeated and that Act was repealed a year later. Lang also transferred the Board to the Minister for Labour and Industry between October 1926 and October 1927.) In the end the Board assumed the main responsibility for main roads: whereas in the first fifteen months the Board paid five times in grants what it spent on its own roads, by 1929-30 it spent four times what it paid in grants. "In the three years from its foundation the M.R.B. had become the principal road-building authority, a metamorphosis that had not been intended by its founders."[11] This development had been authorised by Lang.

The M.R.B. also had to contend with a fairly desperate attempt by the Department of Public Works to regain its role as the sole central road construction authority. This was resolved in 1927 by a compromise whereby the Department assumed complete control in the Western Division. As noted already this parallelled earlier local government arrangements. (Lang had intended that the Roads Branch of the P.W.D. would be transferred to the Board.)

Thus by 1930 the Main Roads Board had been established as the main design and construction authority for major roads in New South Wales. The Board retained its close links with local councils,[12] particularly from 1928 when under the current Minister for Local Government, Lt.-Col. Bruxner, a hierarchical classification of roads was introduced to assist in the division of work. Country Main Roads were divided into State Highways, Trunk Roads and Ordinary Main Roads. In the County of Cumberland there were Highways and Ordinary Main Roads as well as lessor

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8. *Ibid.*

9. *Ibid.*, p. 88.

10. For details see *ibid.*, p. 87; cf Aitkin, *op. cit.*, pp. 110 f.

11. Aitkin, *ibid.*, p. 110.

12. See Section 1 of Chapter Six below.

Secondary Roads which qualified for assistance on a discretionary basis.[13] A great many transitional changes were made in the Board's first five years which were confirmed when the Stevens Government created the office of Commissioner for Main Roads in 1932.[14] Attention can now be directed to policy and planning.

The Main Roads Board held its first meeting in March 1925 and decided to circularise councils to "stocktake" the existing main roads and then set an allowance per mile for maintenance, "leaving questions of construction or reconstruction to be dealt with separately on individual special proposals, until we have time to consider construction on a systematic basis".[15] In the country Bruxner imposed his own ideas of decentralised administration and country ascendancy on the Board:

> Bruxner directed that divisional offices of the Board be set up, each in the charge of a resident engineer, who was to have authority to deal with local municipal and shire councils, to authorise the expenditure of M.R.B. funds in his area, and to supervise all work financed by the M.R.B.[16]

In the end the internal structure became highly decentralised, to the extent that decentralisation became more important than central control.

In the metropolitan area though central planning became a paramount necessity. Resources were limited and demand was great. There was already an established pattern of Highways and other main roads, and although the Board had received requests for the proclamation of 78 new main roads in the County by mid-1926, it was decided that a pragmatic programme of strategic improvements was more desirable. Every Highway had either a "missing link" or "missing end". Some of the major routes had been reconstructed in segments while others had been reconstructed only to the suburban border. The first Annual Report of the Board (1926) had a map of the missing ends and links and expressed a strategy based on eliminating these in conjunction with the provision of circumferential roads to connect the radial routes.[17] In both construction and maintenance the need for planning was recognised. At an early

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13. Cf The Roadmakers, p. 107.

14. This change is dealt with in the next chapter. Basically the Department of Main Roads was based on a corporation sole rather than corporation aggregate. The significance of this is also touched on in the Conclusion.

15. President's Minute at First Meeting on 24th March 1925, in "From the Minute Book", Main Roads, June 1975, p. 101.

16. Aitkin, op. cit., pp. 113-4.

17. See The Roadmakers, Ch. II.2 and map opp. p. 103.

stage the Board assumed practical control of major lengths of
Parramatta Road, Liverpool Road (Hume Highway), Windsor Road and
Woodville Road. It was found economical to adopt quite high
construction standards and was forced to widen and realign roads
through the realignment (that is specific development control)
powers of the Local Government Act rather than by quicker methods.
Greatest emphasis was placed on arterial routes rather than inter-
suburban or local trunk routes.

From 1925/26 to 1929/30 the Board spent $8,569,000 in the
County of Cumberland, of which 11 per cent came from the
Commonwealth. Of the Board's funds, 74 per cent was spent on
construction; about 55 per cent of construction went on the five
Highways (1926/27 - 1929/30) while almost all the Federal Aid Roads
Agreement money was similarly allocated. Even before the
Depression commenced the Board decided to restrict loan finance in
the interest of soundness and in any case this would have been
necessary. Otherwise the Board (Department of Main Roads from
1932) was substantially protected from severe financial stringency
by the stability of its main funding sources, namely council con-
tributions, motor taxation and Commonwealth grants. Total income
increased in all years except 1931/33, when it fell by 5 per cent.
Generally from 1930/31 to 1934/35 income rose by 10 per cent, and
in the next four years (before the War) by 16 per cent. In the
nine years to 1938/39 construction accounted for 54 per cent of
County of Cumberland expenditure and maintenance for 45 per cent.
Within the period priorities fluctuated widely, from virtual
equality in 1931/32, 1933/34, 1935/36 and 1936/37, to construction
being twice maintenance (1930/31, 1937/38 and 1938/39) and
maintenance being almost double construction (1932/33).[18]

The D.M.R. continued in the 1930s in much the same manner as
in the '20s. Its record has been traced in other places[19] and
was quite impressive, as the Minister for Transport, Lt.-Col.
(later Sir Michael) Bruxner stressed to a deputation from the
N.R.M.A. in 1938.[20] That deputation sought the appointment of a
special co-ordinative body to investigate various plans for the
improvement of access to the city centre. The N.R.M.A. President
(ex-Prime Minister of Australia), the Hon. J.C. Watson, finished
with an expression of confidence in the Department.

18. Data calculated from M.R.B. and D.M.R. Annual Reports. For
a more detailed (but narrow economic) analysis see Lennon, op. cit.,
Ch. 4/1.

19. Lennon, ibid., and The Roadmakers, chs. II.5 and III.1.

20. See Appendix 1 throughout. The record of the deputation has
been included in the appendices because of its importance and also
to reduce the treatment needed in this chapter.

Watson had consistently been one of Bruxner's most persistent critics[21] and it is possible that the comments of the deputation stimulated the Minister (who was nearing the end of a total 11 years in the portfolio) and the Department (which had been improving metropolitan roads to a 13-year-old elemental 'plan') to consider a more comprehensive approach. In any case,

> Just about the time of the outbreak of the Second World War (1939), the Department of Main Roads was ready to commence its re-appraisal of future metropolitan main road needs. Although there was no statutory town planning in New South Wales at the time, it was decided that, nevertheless, road planning should be conducted in accordance with comprehensive town planning principles, and have a logical foundation.(22)

This was more important as an organisational commitment rather than an actual policy process because the planning study was cut short by the Second World War. It was resumed some four years later and had significant postwar results, as will be seen in Chapter Seven, but it is equally important to note that the concern for planning had earlier roots. Main roads construction was balanced by a concern for traffic (or road) management, not only in a limited technical sense but including transport system co-ordination and public transport management.

The Police were responsible for traffic control and the Chief Secretary was their Minister. In late 1927 Chief Secretary Bruntnell set up a Traffic Advisory Committee of three principal members, the chairman being J.C. Watson and the Secretary and Executive Member Sydney Aubrey Maddocks, the Secretary of the Police Department. Obviously Bruxner might have regarded this Committee as an afront from his colleague but in any case the Committee was given three months to report on the causes and possible remedies for "the present unsatisfactory position in regard to traffic", including "The desirableness or otherwise of creating a central authority for transport to be designated 'The Transport Board'".(23)

The Committee's Report of 2nd April 1928, was definitely the product of personal preconceptions but it was nonetheless very significant. The central problem was stated thus:

> It is impossible to study the question (of traffic congestion) comprehensively without realising that traffic is but a smaller phase (sic) of the larger

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21.   See Aitkin, ibid., pp. 114-5.

22.   Sherrard, op. cit., p. 12.

23.   Report of the Traffic Advisory Committee (Sydney: Government Printer, 1928), p. 5.

problem of transport, and that traffic congestion is largely the result of an ill-considered transport system.(24)

To remedy this it was recommended that a Ministerial portfolio should be created called Transport, Traffic and Highways, and that transport administration should be centralised under that Minister and his Under Secretary. The Main Roads Board, the Railways and the Sydney Harbour Trust would come under the Minister (the Board and Trust would have to be transferred from Local Government and the Treasurer). The Government had already decided to separate trams from Railways so therefore a "Metropolitan Transport Board" could be created to run Government trams and buses and thus maximise their respective potential. (The Under Secretary of the Ministry would be chairman of the Board.) A State Transport Committee or Commission would be established "To make a comprehensive survey of the transport needs of the State as a whole (excluding perhaps Metropolitan agencies...) and the correlation of the various transport agencies". Registration and licensing would be controlled by the Ministry which would also be the principal agency for the allocation of resources. The Ministry would also regulate private buses, commercial vehicles, taxis and so on; and have central responsibility for traffic control, including policy with regard to the relevant Police activities. The Minister would be assisted by a permanent Traffic Advisory Committee, ad hoc technical committees, a Transport and Traffic Research, Statistics and Public Safety Bureau, and an annual Transport and Traffic Congress.

This was a radical and somewhat unrealistic hotchpotch but it found some support in Bertram Stevens, then Assistant Treasurer, who saw financial benefits in co-ordination of services and who sponsored Maddocks[25] to the eventual heights of head of the "Metropolitan Transport Board" as Commissioner for Road Transport and Tramways. (Stevens was Premier after Lang's defeat in 1932.) In fact Bruntnell died and Bruxner took over traffic, first as acting Chief Secretary and then as Minister for an enlarged Local Government portfolio, now including the licensing of private buses which had seen a farcical exercise of Ministerial discretion.[26] Part of the reforms of 1930-32 were founded on the organisational proposals of 1928.

The Committee's Report did not resolve many of the practical

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24. Ibid., p. 6. Regarding the following account see further pp. 7-12.

25. Aitkin, op. cit., pp. 118-9.

26. Ibid., p. 117.

problems in traffic control but some of its principal recommenda-
tions were as follows:[27]

(i)   retention of tram routes with trials of buses to
relieve peak loadings;

(ii)   completion of city underground (but doubt its capacity
to reduce street congestion);

(iii)   parking facilities at public transport nodes should be
encouraged;

(iv)   parking restrictions are necessary but should receive
further careful consideration;

(v)   more traffic police should be employed while electric
control signal systems should be fully investigated;

(vi)   white lines should be placed across streets at
dangerous places to "encourage pedestrians to cross by definite
routes";

(vii)   overhead pedestrian bridge to be built at Railway
Square, together with suitable "by-pass" roads (also for other
locations);

(viii) an experiment should be made on one major Highway with
Stop signs on all intersections to give arterial flows the right-
of-way in accordance with some overseas practice.

Numerous specific location improvements were suggested including
several proposed by Dr Bradfield.

The Committee's Report was primarily directed to organisation-
al effects on planning rather than planning itself, and the key
question of the respective roles of trams, buses and to a lessor
extent automobiles was evaded because it had become "a matter of
Government policy".[28] Nonetheless at the time the Government was
grappling with a Transport Bill which would replace the nominal
licensing power of the Chief Secretary (and then Bruxner) with an
effective means of control over private bus operations. Bruxner
was fully committed to restoring the viability of the trams
because of their trunk route capacity and permanent capital
debt[29] and from 1929 he and Lang in turn penalised and restricted
private bus hauliers. This was the most controversial urban issue
of the time[30] and led to the commissioning of Maddocks on the
17th April 1929 to visit Europe and America to inquire into
transport generally, particularly into

> "1. The methods adopted to co-ordinate motor omnibus
>   and other forms of transport.

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27.   Cf T.A.C. Report, op. cit., pp. 12 ff.

28.   Ibid., p. 14.

29.   Aitkin, op. cit., pp. 180 ff.

30.   There is an excellent section on the tram/bus controversy in
Spearritt, "Urban History", op. cit., pp. 195-200.

2. Conditions under which such forms of transport are allowed to operate upon the public streets.

3. The latest methods of traffic administration and control.

4. How far experience in other places justifies any alteration in the policy laid down in the Transport Bill now before Parliament..."(31)

Maddocks' Report on Transport and Traffic Control Abroad (October 1929) was very influential among Bruxner's circles and still stands as a technical document of historical significance, for example it was perhaps the first Australian study to evaluate and commend the "superhighways" being developed in the United States of America, and Maddocks praised trolley bus systems. Again however the main theme was organisational, that the problems caused by motor traffic required a co-ordinated approach to road construction and management (traffic control), and to public transport modes. The Transport Bill proposed that trusts would be established in Sydney and Newcastle to run Government tram services and license private bus services. (It was also intended that they would run Government bus services but the first of these was not started until the Government acquired its first buses in December 1932.) The Road Transport and Traffic Fund was also to be set up and the office of Commissioner of Road Transport created.

The Transport Bill was duly passed in 1930 in amended form and Maddocks was established as the principal Government advisor in traffic (if not more generally), in the position of Commissioner for Road Transport. He had said in his 1929 report that buses should be used to ease peak tram congestion and that the buses should bear their proportion of tram capital charges. This was not the solution because a semi-ideological controversy developed around unified ownership and control. A special Transport Advisory Committee released a report on the question in 1932 (which led to a spirited attack on Bruxner by one Fred H. Kennedy[32]) which recommended that a public utility company be set up to purchase and run the Government tramways and private buses at "fair present-day valuations". This need not be discussed further here.

In short, the fifteen years preceeding the Second World War saw two significant road planning developments. Firstly a

31. S.A. Maddocks, Report on Transport and Traffic Control Abroad (Sydney: Government Printer, 1930), p. 5.

32. See the most interesting documents by Kennedy: Metropolitan Transport Co-ordination and its Supplement (Sydney: published by author, n.d. but probably 1935).

central main roads organisation was established and commenced a programme of improvement and eventually modern planning, the latter well ahead of other urban authorities. Secondly a great deal of attention was focussed on traffic problems with explicit attention to traffic as being indicative of more fundamental organisational and planning weaknesses. In the end the two streams were not united except through the establishment of a Ministry of Transport in 1932, and even then the reform was limited by existing corporate domains. Nonetheless in the period a quality of road planning and awareness of road transport problems existed which was in some respects higher than in the thirty years from 1945-1975 which might be called the Automobile Age of Sydney.

Administrative Experimentation

I am prepared to support a complete scheme
of transport co-ordination, but I will not
support any proposal that vests the full control
of the management, the staffing and general
administrative direction of the operations of
the State's public utilities in the political
head. In this bill the meanest contract, the
smallest transaction, the most detailed activity
of these great public assets, the public utilities
of the State, can be subjected not only to the
scrutiny but the decision of the Minister, and that
is... an entirely new departure in the administration
of these great public assets. I am not prepared to
support any scheme that will place all these
activities and every section of them under the
domination of the political head of the Government.

B.S.B. Stevens, in Debate on State Transport
(Co-ordination) Bill, 1931.

The late 1920s and early 1930s saw an exchange of
vituperative words and organisational reform in transport between
the Lang Labor Government and then Opposition, and the Stevens/
Bruxner coalition Government. Very substantial issues were
involved, from the point of view of State politics and political
economy, the transport sector, and personal philosophy. At the
end the defeat of Lang enabled Stevens to establish his own ideas
on what was to prove to be virtually a permanent basis. This
Chapter will briefly examine the conflict and the concepts which
formed the foundation of the New South Wales transport administra-
tion from 1932.

The immediate dimensions of the technological challenge facing
the Government public transport systems from the 1920s have already
been seen. Motor buses and trucks challenged the traditional
preserve of rail passenger and freight operations and threatened
the security of an enormous State capital investment and roughly
half the State Government workforce. Lang was loud in his determ-
ination to protect the railways and tramways and was attacked for
his "Sovietism"; but more fundamentally he was seen as undermining
the efficiency of management by "interferring" with the transport
executives and by making explicitly political appointments. As
Lang and his colleagues repeatedly pointed out, Stevens was far
from blameless on the latter count and agreed with the former but
this ex-Under Secretary of the Treasury[1] championed the cause of
managerial independence from Ministerial actions. This was a
period of tremendous importance in the development of the New
South Wales political system but the principles and policies which
were debated have been neglected by subsequent writers.[2]

The treatment here will be basically chronological and as far
as possible the disputants' own words will be quoted as to their
philosophies.

It has been seen that a great deal of controversy preceded the
setting up of the Main Roads Board and that there were also issues
of administration regarding tram and bus operations. If anything
Railway administration was even more politicised, although Parkes'

1.   See Aitkin, The Colonel, op. cit., p. 103, Ch. 6 and elsewhere;
and J. McCarthy, "After Lang, 1932-35", in H. Radi and P. Spearritt
(eds), Jack Lang (Sydney: Hale & Iremonger, and Labour History,
1977), and references cited there.

2.   Lang's second Government in general and the transport bills in
particular are a major gap in Radi and Spearritt (eds), ibid., and
other Lang histories. Aitkin, ibid., dealt with the issues in
passing. Lang's own The Turbulent Years (Sydney: Alpha, 1970),
has some background but his ideas were spelt out more fully in
Parliament as discussed below.

action on political logrolling in 1888 had stabilised that aspect.
Parkes had established a Board of three Commissioners who had full
delegated power for administration, while approval for financial
and construction policy remained with Parliament. The Department
of Railways was by far the largest State enterprise and the focus
of development policy, and it was found after the death of Chief
Commissioner Eddy in 1897 that agreement was too difficult to
achieve on the Board. After a Royal Commission in 1905 authority
was concentrated in the Chief Commissioner. Ten years later it
was thought necessary to reduce that "autocracy"[3] and major
changes resulted on various principles in 1917 (twice), 1924 and
then 1931 when the Chief Commissioner was restored as sole
authority. (A Minister for Railways was appointed in 1916.) Other
major changes followed which will be discussed shortly. The Great
Strike of 1917 also had recurring internal and external repercus-
sions. In this area then the issues of efficient administration
and autonomy had long been important and New South Wales'
politicians were used to thinking of Railways as an area for
capricious debate and experimentation. In addition the advent of
the common use of motor vehicles and the concomitant work of the
Main Roads Board aroused the political theorists to consider the
parallel development of roads and railways, tram and bus routes,
and road-based public transport and suburban railways.

Maddocks was sent overseas in 1929 to advise Stevens and
Bruxner on the terms of the Transport Bill which they had
apparently had Maddocks draft, because of the hostile reaction [4]
when it had been introduced in that year. (They had opposed a
Lang Transport Bill previously.) Maddocks favoured local control
over State-wide control. The Bill was passed in 1930 and provided
for a Commissioner for Road Transport, who would be chairman of
the Sydney and Newcastle trusts for trams and buses, and who was
also the State registration and regulation authority.[5] The
relevant officers of the Police and Chief Secretary's Departments
were transferred to him. Trams were to be run by an operating
board which was autonomous in staff matters but under the trusts
regarding policy and finance. Various advisory committees were
provided for. Lang's former Chief Secretary, Lazzarini, condemned
the separation of train and tram administration in his First
Reading speech and said that previous Nationalist Governments had
licenced private bus operators to run in competition with trams
while requests from the Railway Commissioners since 1918 and beyond

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3. Railway Centenary History, op. cit., p. 212, see pp. 210 ff
generally.

4.   But see Aitkin, op. cit., pp. 120-1.

5.   See Bruxner's First Reading speech, N.S.W. Parliamentary
Debates, Session 1929-30, 2nd Ser, Vol. 120, pp. 2973 ff.

to run their own buses had been repeatedly refused.[6]

In his Second Reading speech Bruxner justified the separation of trams and trains because the former needed co-ordination with local conditions, but he did not recognise other co-ordinative needs relating to trains. Lang condemned the Bill on four grounds. First, he saw a fundamental and inequitable innovation in the taxation of bus proprietors on gross turnover rather than income (that is profit). Second, he objected that the cost of administration of Maddocks' bureau would be taken from traffic revenue till then available to the M.R.B., and third that the bureau and traffic police would have "autocratic" and "Prussian" power over the licensing of road users. Finally and most importantly from the present perspective, he said that the new body would be independent of Parliamentary control and elections and that "Day by day the Government is handing over the functions of Parliament more and more to boards and officials".[7] The new Commissioner and trusts would have control over tramway construction and management, of which Lang said:

> There is before the House another bill to transfer the Railway Construction Branch from the Railway Commissioners to the Public Works Department, because, it is stated... Parliament and not the Commissioners should decide where and when railways should be built.... If it is wrong to entrust Mr Cleary, the Chief Railway Commissioner, with railway construction, how is it right to entrust Mr Maddocks with tramway construction?... The public interest should be the chief point considered in the conduct of the tramways, and if Parliament loses all authority over this public utility, then I am sure the public will not be served as they should be."[8]

Apart from Lang's specific objections, which were certainly substantial in several respects and some of which were to be developed later, the Transport Bill approached a cross-party consensus although there were several laissez-faire Government members (including Sir Thomas Henley who was mentioned in Chapter Two) who were totally opposed to any trading in the name of the Government. The private bus operators were naturally opposed to the Bill but there was certainly wide agreement that some action was needed in one direction (free enterprise) or another ("co-ordination").

In November 1930 Lang succeeded the Bavin/Buttenshaw Government and in 1931 passed a State Transport (Co-ordination) Act which he regarded as an immediate post-electoral but otherwise

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6.   Ibid., pp. 2977 ff.

7.   Ibid., p. 3216. His speech is at pp. 3214-3220.

8.   Ibid., p. 3218. (Aitkin, op. cit., p. 192, explains the withdrawal of the proposal regarding the Public Works Department.)

interim step and which retained the arrangements of the Transport
Act. A State Transport (Co-ordination) Board of four Commissioners
was set up to regulate road and air transport with particular
regard to Government rail services, and to improve and co-ordinate
corporate performance. This was the first of three truly
controversial reforms. The special object of the Act was to
redress (in Lang's words) "the spectacle during the past few years
of an extravagant and unprecedented expenditure on road construction,
mainly parallelling the railways, and depriving them of the
passenger and goods traffic, for the conveyance of which they were
primarily constructed.... If there was one thing more than another
which we pointed out when putting our policy before the country it
was that the Government would take control of transport. There was
no mistake about it. The statement was made from every platform.
Everyone understood that it meant that in order to solve the
State's difficulties in connection with transport we would make a
Government monopoly of the whole of the transport system."[9]
Lang also indicated that developmental or cross-country roads
would be considered rather than extensions of the rail system.

Lang did not really relate these intentions to the structure
and powers of the new Board, and obviously had a limited notion of
monopoly. The Act provided for the licensing of all journeys of
ten miles or more on specific routes which were in competition
with the railways, together with a ton/mile charge. Only services
run for reward were subject to the regulation and they were
penalised rather than banned for competing with the Government.
Lang did not change the provisions of the Transport Act of 1930
and so the regulatory powers over buses of the bodies established
under that Act remained in force. Of the technical provisions
only the ten mile limit attracted substantial criticism and
Stevens and Bruxner raised the limit to 50 miles when they regained
office in 1932 but they kept the Co-ordination Tax. (Lang
regarded this partly as an "obsolescence" tax and compensation for
an investment already made as well as a charge against road costs.)

Two particular aspects of the Bill enraged the Opposition.
Firstly the Bill gave the responsible Minister full powers of
control and direction over not only the State Transport
(Co-ordination) Board but also over all the other authorities and
committees in transport. In the Parliamentary debates over the
transport Bills of this time the most frequently cited source was
a Commonwealth Transport Committee which was set up by the Bruce-
Page Government in January 1929 and which reported in May of that
year. The report was apparently not printed[10] but Lang quoted

9.   N.S.W.P.D., Session 1930-31, 2nd Ser., Vol. 127, pp. 3415 f.

10.   See Votes and Proceedings of House of Representatives
(Commonwealth), 1929, p. 111. Cf W.A. Sinclair, "Capital Formation",

two of its recommendations (as did Opposition speakers) as follows: (a) that "all transport activities be grouped under one Ministerial head, who will be responsible for the whole transportation policy", together with (b) "the establishment of a co-ordinating authority which would be responsible for carrying out the transport policy approved by the Government".[11]

The State Transport (Co-ordination) Bill met the second item but only as an interim measure. The Bill also provided that:

> As soon after appointment as practicable the Commissioners will be required to present to the Minister a draft bill setting out the legislation necessary to give effect to their proposals for the general regulation and co-ordination of traffic, and incorporating the management of the railways, Main Roads Board, Commissioner of Roads Transport (sic), the management board and transport trusts under one corporate body in a Ministry of Transport... When the bill that these gentlemen draw up is passed, it is the intention of the Government to appoint a Minister for Transport".[12]

(This Minister would combine Transport with an existing portfolio and Lang intended to take the post himself as an interim step.) Lang and other Labor members repeated the overall theme of Ministerial control in other words and with different emphases, but the details (such as whether the Ministry idea parallelled British practice) will not be treated here.

Ministerial control was a distasteful proposition for Stevens and Bruxner because (in the former's words) it would "open the door very wide to log-rolling, intriguing and corruption in the administration of these great undertakings".[13] However Stevens took a public servant's stance, wanting a full-time Minister and "a small permanent staff gathered from the service":

> Greater co-ordination and regulation of railways, roads and other forms of transport is, I admit, highly desirable. Single ministerial control should be an advantage. From my experience of railway ministerial work I am convinced that this could be brought about by the appointment of a competent and skilled administrator, who would in relation to transport matters function for the Minister of Transport as every Under Secretary does for the Minister of his department. In my view there is not any need for the creation of any new board or department, or for an army of assistants. The necessary organisation could be built up from existing services, and this form of centralization should result rather in a reduction than an increase in the number of officers required. The nucleus of such an organisation already

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in C. Forster (ed.), <u>Australian Economic Development in the Twentieth Century</u> (London: Allen & Unwin, 1970), p. 21.

11. <u>N.S.W.P.D.</u>, vol. 127, p. 3420, also Stevens at p. 3443.

12. <u>Ibid</u>., p. 3421.

13. <u>Ibid</u>., p. 3443.

exists at the Treasury. When I took office as Minister for Railways a small section of two or three officers who were detached from other branches was set up to handle the submission of railway matters. This work is now being efficiently done.(14)

Bruxner was typically forthright:

That is Sovietism, lock, stock and barrel. It takes away those powers that this State has placed in the hands of those bodies over the years. If they were to be handed over to the control of Parliament there might be some excuse, but it is not. This is handing it over to the control of the Minister, whom Parliament cannot get at. He can do as he likes.(15)

In Bruxner's view as with other Opposition members the role of the Minister and Government was to set down "general policy" without interferring with the expert and nonpolitical administration of the statutory undertakings. "General policy" ranged from overall labour and operating conditions, financial policy, broad priorities and the like. Bruxner feared a loss of "effectiveness" because of political control:

During the time I was Minister for Local Government no member of this House dogged my steps more than the Minister for Agriculture did in order to get the Main Roads Board to build a concrete road from Sydney to Mudgee running parallel with the railway all the way. Under this bill the hon. member will be able to go to whatever colleague of his takes control of transport and get the concrete road all the way to Mudgee whether the Main Roads Board likes it or not. That is a principle we do not want to introduce into the administration of the Main Roads Board, which has been successful because Ministers have had no more to do with it than to provide the money and to lay down the general policy. This Government is departing from that, because it is going to take control.(16)

Among others the member for South Coast, Mr Bate, supported Bruxner and Stevens by saying that "What I want to see done to the bill more than anything else is to eliminate all suspicion of ministerial control".(17) It is seen elsewhere in this thesis that Bruxner did not think that formal Ministerial powers were needed to ensure that the Minister's wishes would be implemented, and Lang in fact accused Bruxner of his own "interference" with the M.R.B. programme in Bruxner's electorate, and Bruxner was certainly a most active Minister. It should be noted that Stevens' statement quoted above accepted one notion of "single Ministerial control".

The other major area of controversy was that of personality. Most importantly in 1929 William James Cleary had been appointed

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14. <u>Ibid</u>., p. 3445.

15. <u>Ibid</u>., p. 3572.

16. <u>Ibid</u>., p. 3573.

17. <u>Ibid</u>., vol. 128, p. 4873.

as the Railways Chief Commissioner to replace James Fraser.
Cleary was a brewer and a very respected businessman who had many
qualities but who was perhaps too conscientious in fighting the
financial problems of the Railways through heavy manpower
economies (because of Government decisions).[18] When the State
Transport (Co-ordination) Bill was being discussed it was known
that Cleary was being partly superceded by the Board, and
Opposition spokesmen complained of the uncertainty which the
existing executives were faced with. While the most contentious
decisions were to come after the Bill was passed, two issues were
especially objectionable to Stevens _et al_. Employees had to be
members of an approved union, and members of what were then known
as the "loyalist unions" were to be discriminated against in favour
of the Australian Railways Union. Secondly, Railways staff to be
transferred to the new Board had to apply to the Board rather than
to their superiors as in the case of the other transport
organisations.[19] These two aspects were to be dwarfed by later
complaints. A further threat to Cleary was seen in the Board's
charter to draft a consolidating bill, but Bruxner disregarded this
by saying that Lang's ulterior motives would be satisfied by the
1931 Act and that the Labor Government would go no further with
efficiency-oriented legislation.[20]

Bruxner was quite incorrect because in early 1932 Lang introd-
uced the Ministry of Transport Bill. The Premier said that while
the "deplorable conditions" which the transport authorities had
drifted into were partially caused by motor competition, there
were other factors. The principal of these was "the lack of co-
ordination in the control and administration of our railways,
tramways, and main roads, both from an operation, maintenance, and
construction point of view. Instead of being efficiently co-
ordinated, it is found that these arms of transport are controlled
by three separate bodies; huge and expensive organisations have
been built up for administrative purposes, and not infrequently
they are in active competition, both in construction and operating
policies."[21] Lang claimed that the State Transport (Co-ordination)
Bill had prompted the Queensland Government to take parallel action
and had attracted a great deal of interest elsewhere in Australia
and in Canada, South Africa and the United States of America. He
also quoted the Commonwealth Auditor-General on the costs of rail-
road competition. However, he thought that there was needless
overlapping and duplication in the transport enterprises and that

18. See Aitkin, _op. cit._, pp. 190-2.

19. For both aspects see Stevens, _N.S.W.P.D._, vol. 127, p. 3443.

20. _Ibid._, p. 3572.

21. _N.S.W.P.D._, Session 1930-32, 2nd Ser., vol. 132, p. 8418.

a reorganisation was required "to complete the Government's policy and effect complete co-ordination".[22] The Board set up under the 1931 Act had reported on the "co-ordinating of the activities of (the transport agencies) under one corporate body", and Lang accepted their ideas. Therefore he set up a Ministry of Transport consisting of a Minister and an integrated Department of Transport, without changing the basic regulatory powers.

Lang pointed out that there were eighteen commissioners and members of boards as well as numerous senior executives in the four State transport areas. In 1931 the term of office of one member of the M.R.B. and the two Assistant Railways commissioners had expired and not been renewed but administrative duplication and expense were of serious concern.[23] It was "the intention of the Government to centralise control and thus ensure a more economic administration without in any way reducing the efficiency of (the) great public utilities".[24]

The new Department was set up on a "common service" basis, so that for example there would only be one construction and one personnel bureaucracy. There were a Chief Commissioner and seven "head of branch" Commissioners, while the Commissioner of Police was an ex-officio member as well. The seven branches were in short:

(i)   railway and tramway transportation (traffic operations);

(ii)   highway and roads transportation (registration, licensing and regulation of aircraft and road vehicles, and traffic matters);

(iii)   power and mechanical (locomotives, rollingstock, workshops etc.);

(iv)   way and works (all construction and maintenance, etc.);

(v)   commercial (freight and passenger traffic);

(vi)   finance (accounting, audit, statistics and stores); and

(vii)   staff.[25]

When asked who the Commissioners would be responsible to, Lang said the Chief Commissioner and thence the Minister. He emphasised that in the case of dissent the Minister would have the final decision. The Chief Commissioner was to be appointed for seven years but the others were to be permanent officers of the Department.

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22.   Ibid.

23.   Cf ibid., p. 8419.

24.   Ibid.

25.   Ibid.

Simultaneously of course the specialised statutory authorities
(such as the Main Roads Board) were abolished.

Stevens in reply repeated his earlier idea:

> What is wanted is expert direction of each of the
> separate transport activities, and a small co-ordinating
> authority, not with supreme management powers, but with
> powers to ensure that all aspects of policy shall be
> considered.[26]

After an interjection in which it was suggested that Cabinet
Government gave all Ministers a share in the control of their
organisations, Stevens added:

> I have yet to learn that the function of a Cabinet
> Minister per se is to deal with the details of the
> administration of the department. As a matter of fact
> the hon. member's suggestion rather proves my contention.
> The principle of taking a huge enterprise and allowing a
> controlling board to handle every detail of management
> is unsound. There should be staff control of detail,
> leaving to the co-ordinating authority the question of
> policy....[27]

As examples of the subjects which should be free of political
influence Stevens mentioned staff control, discipline, "management"
and the "technical and economic control" of corporate affairs.
He also said,

> If you give the management of the separate activities
> duties in which they are specialists, you are more likely
> to secure efficient management than if you group all
> those activities in one department and place it under
> the supreme control of one man who owes allegiance only
> to a Minister of the Crown. If we would set up a really
> co-ordinating body, we should not rest merely at the
> establishment of a purely official board. In that co-
> ordinating body there should be found a place for inter-
> ests other than those of purely Government activities.[28]

Bruxner's Second Reading speech was vituperative and condemned the
Bill and Government policy generally without proposing any
substantial argument relevant to the present discussion,[29] except
that he lauded road services as the technology of the present and
future and described the rail operators' (and by implication his
own) reaction to the new competition as "lay(ing) down and
squeal(ing) and howl(ing) to heaven".[30]

In the debate on the Ministry of Transport Bill the personal-
ity aspect of the series of organisational experiments began to

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26. Ibid., p. 8429.

27. Ibid., also pp. 8429-31.

28. Ibid., p. 8430.

29. See ibid., pp. 8439 ff.

30. Ibid., p. 8440 (also Aitkin, op. cit., p. 178).

emerge as a most important factor. The Chief Railways Commissioner, Mr Cleary, had been usurped by the 1931 reform, both by Lang and by the new Board which was headed by Mr E.C. Goode and which included Mr Fraser who had been recalled from retirement. The Opposition claimed at some length that the Railways (and other) organisations had been interferred with in a wide range of matters, and Lang agreed. As he said, "I will admit that since the Transport Co-ordination Act was passed we have been in control and not the Railway Commissioners".[31] However he said that when he had first gone into Parliament he had researched the Railways for six months and concluded "that the Government and the people were being fooled",[32] and that inefficiencies had not received adequate attention since. Stevens instanced Lang's refusal to allow the Federal wage award reduction of 20 per cent to apply to the Railways as a major consequence of the interference and dissipation of the Chief Commissioners powers.[33]

Stevens also pointed out that the Ministry of Transport Bill was intended to allow the repudiation of the contracts of certain statutory office-holders, notably Cleary, Maddocks and the two members of the Main Roads Board. Members of the Tramways Management Board and officers of the Co-ordination Board and Commissioner of Road Transport were given statutory protection of rights, but the other statutory office-holders were merely eligible for appointment to the new Department. In fact Cleary and Maddocks had their positions abolished and were not re-employed until Stevens passed the next major piece of legislation. Because these officers had benefitted from their affiliations with Stevens[34] and Bruxner, the Opposition expected that they would not be appointed and although Lang did not repeat earlier perjoratives about Maddocks (the "ex-policeman"), the Government did not see that Cleary had any special ability or experience.[35]

However Goode himself was not a particularly sound choice as the new Chief Commissioner. Labor pointed out that he had had

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31. <u>Ibid</u>., p. 8421.

32. <u>Ibid</u>., p. 8423.

33. <u>Ibid</u>., pp. 8430 f.

34. Later Lang quoted a letter of reference from Stevens to the Commonwealth Minister for Trade and Customs in favour of Maddocks. Stevens wrote there that "I was largely responsible for his appointment as Transport Commissioner, and at my suggestion we sent him to tour the world to get the latest information." <u>N.S.W.P.D</u>., 2nd Session of 1932, 2nd Ser., vol. 134, p. 868.

35. <u>N.S.W.P.D</u>., vol. 132, p. 8438. It was claimed that in Cleary's 2 years the Railways deficit (which was some $9 million p.a., compared with the cost of the Harbour Bridge at about $20 million), was almost equal to the total deficit of the previous 19 years. Cleary and the 1972 experiment with P.H. Shirley (Chapter Eight below) were both financial disasters, in different circumstances of course.

about forty years of experience in the Railways without blemish
on his record, that is until convicted of accepting a bribe and
being demoted from Chief Traffic Engineer. That did not stop
Lang, but after he had appointed a Royal Commission to examine the
charges against Goode, he was probably not pleased to find that
Goode had to resign in late June 1932. At the time of the Bill
though the Government was entitled by the circumstances of Cleary's
administration's action to say that Goode had been "sandbagged".[36]
Again, the debates on personalities had not yet reached their full
intensity.

Lang was dismissed by Governor Game in May 1932 and Stevens
was confirmed as Premier at the subsequent June general election.
The new Government proceeded quickly to restore the corporate
identity of the previous specialised transport organisations and
abolish the unitary Department of Transport. This was achieved by
means of the Transport (Division of Functions) Act which was
assented to on the 19th November, 1932. That Act again was
reputedly drafted by Maddocks. Prior to that a proclamation trans-
ferred the administration of the Main Roads Act back to the former
President of the M.R.B. and in early August 1932 Maddocks was
appointed Acting Commissioner for Tramways and Road Transport.

The Stevens/Bruxner Act created a Ministry of Transport
consisting of a Minister and three statutory authorities, namely
the Department of Main Roads, the Department of Railways, and the
Department of Road Transport and Tramways, each under a
Commissioner. In his Second Reading speech Bruxner pointed out
specifically that the provisions of Ministerial control had been
removed[37] and therefore the principle of independent expert
administration had been restored. The name "Department" was mis-
leading in that the three organisations were statutory entities
with a varying degree of the characteristic freedom (this is
examined in the next chapter), while "Ministry" was misleading to
the extent that the level of structural integration achieved was
very low. The sole provision of this type was Clause 19 which
gave the power of final decision to the Minister where there was a
dispute between the Commissioners.

There was a good deal of personal obloquy in the debate which
will not be dealt with and otherwise the issues were consistent
with the previous occasions. Bruxner said that the Bill would
only deal with administrative organisation and that it did not
really effect Government transport policy generally. He expressed

36. Ibid., p. 8434.

37. See N.S.W.P.D., 2nd Session of 1932, 2nd Ser., vol. 134,
pp. 797 ff.

the general principle of the reorganisation thus:

> The best that one can hope to gain is to provide, as
> far as possible, machinery whereby those placed in charge
> of these services shall have the fullest freedom in the
> actual details of their administrations and control of
> staff, and that the representative of Parliament —
> namely, the Minister — shall only exercise his influence
> in matters of broad Government policy; and in doing this
> it is very necessary that the Government itself should
> accept full responsibility for any actions on the part
> of the administrators that may be necessary to put this
> policy into effect, and that it should not make use of
> those officers to shoulder the responsibility which is
> essentially the Government's. After the passage of this
> measure, the several commissioners to be appointed will
> be as free as it is possible to make them from political
> control in the actual administration of the
> departments.(38)

He said that in the Department of Transport the Commissioners were
so placed as to concentrate on a particular sphere of transport
policy rather than regard the system as a whole. Therefore, he
said, separate businesses should be separately controlled and that
there was a need for "co-operation" rather than "co-ordination".(39)

Lang regretted that he had been somewhat out-manoeuvred by
Stevens, Bruxner and their intimates:

> The Government only wants to remove the board appointed
> by its predecessors so that it may find positions for
> its own political supporters. I do not say that in any
> spirit of cavil, because with the principle of political
> appointments to chief administrative positions the
> Labour party is in complete and absolute accord.
>
> In the past the trouble has been that Labour
> Governments have not acted to the extent they should have
> acted upon this principle, while our opponents have never
> failed to use it. In the future the Labour party, as far
> as I am concerned, will never be remiss in this direction.
> In fact, it is my personal opinion, for what it is worth,
> that within a very few years we shall find that the
> first legislative act of every incoming Government will
> be to dismiss from office all the political appointees of
> its predecessors, and to appoint in their stead followers
> of the party in power. That system, at least, is
> justifiable, because it ensures to the Government
> sympathetic administration, and prevents public officers
> and public departments being subjected to the treatment
> that the principal officers of the Transport Department
> have received from this Government.(40)

While he had little to complain about in the circumstances, Lang
had identified the principal theme of the successive reorganisations.
Whatever the merits of the two opposite philosophies, they had not
been adequately tried because of the personal politiking involved,
nor had they been adequately appraised. Personal issues

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38. Ibid., p. 802.

39. Ibid., p. 806.

40. Ibid., p. 866.

predominated. Lang claimed administrative and co-ordinative advantages for his system[41] while Bruxner claimed that it had produced excessive delays and inefficiency, but the only real issues were those of personal and Party preference. Later Bruxner was to admit that Maddocks' idea of local control _via_ the trust system had been unsuccessful[42] but other issues of functional specialisation, political control and organisational dynamics were not resolved.

The Transport (Division of Functions) Act represented a triumph of the peculiar brand of conservatism applying at the time in New South Wales. In continuation of the earlier concern for political interference with expenditure, resulting largely from gross excesses rather than a proper evaluation of the Westminster system, Bruxner and especially Stevens chose organisational independence and a nominal reliance on "co-operation" (rather than co-ordination), and this system basically still obtains in the 1970s. Some conservatives, such as Professor F.A. Bland, thought a greater degree of separation of "politics" and "administration" should be achieved (together with the protection of popular interests through an appeals tribunal[43]), but this was one opinion which subsequent experience has demonstrated was substantially incorrect. The consequences of unfettered organisational independence will be seen in the following chapters and the obvious conclusion to be drawn is that statutory independence is inconsistent with the New South Wales system of government. It is unlikely that the 1932 Department of Transport would have been efficient over time, especially from the point of view of political control over transport modes as is argued in the Conclusion, but again there was no particular justification for the Stevens solution. The design of the transport administration was based on Party, personality politics.

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41. Ibid., pp. 869 f.

42. See Aitkin, op. cit., p. 179.

43. F.A. Bland, An Administrative Approach to Australian Transport Problems (Sydney: N.S.W. Centre of the Institute of Transport, 1935).

THE POSTWAR EXPERIENCE

Chapter Six

The Administrative Framework

The political institutions of the
country may be classed among the accidents
of history... for even when it would seem
that the design of institutions was a
calculated and deliberate activity... the
appropriateness of the design for regulating
the phenomenon of large urban centres was
neither considered nor achieved by
inadvertance.

G.H. France and C.A. Hughes,
"The Role of Government" (1972).

Transport administration takes place in a wider environment of societal and political influences, institutional constraints, complex inter-governmental relations and so on. Such factors affect the quality of transport decision-making through uncertainty, fragmentation in related areas of administration, State budgetary and related political priorities, and so on. As has been said, the urban governmental system is extremely complex and attention cannot be confined to the transport sub-system if transport is to be properly understood.

This chapter will briefly analyse three important aspects of Sydney's political environment. First, the general structure and texture of governmental relations will be examined, including the role of local authorities and Commonwealth-State interaction. Second, the successive central metropolitan planning agencies will be discussed. Third, the budgetary and financial system of N.S.W. will be related to decision-making in transport, partly in continuation of the typology of structural co-ordinative influences developed in the Introduction. (The third aspect is complementary to Chapter Nine which deals with explicit co-ordinative mechanisms.) The treatment will be as brief and interpretative as possible. A fair range of secondary sources is available for most topics (although in some cases the conventional interpretations will here be challenged). The three subjects have been selected for special treatment: other topics (such as specific societal constraints and the like) are dealt with elsewhere.

1.   The Structure of Government

All three tiers of government in Australia have responsibilities in Sydney's transport. The Commonwealth is a fundamental influence on airport policy and on aviation-based commerce and tourism. It has also accepted a role in financing main and local roads and recently to a minor extent rail works. The State Government controls, funds or regulates public transport, private vehicles, main roads, maritime facilities, and has a dual licensing role with the Commonwealth in intra-State aviation. Local government bodies are involved in local and some main roads, parking, some traffic facilities, and the regulation of trucks on local roads (and private buses in the country).

The above is not a complete catalogue but the dispersal of responsibility can be seen. Authority is even more dispersed and confused because "co-operative" federalism extends to relationships between all levels of government. Arrangements have emerged between State and local government over parking and local roads,

between Commonwealth and State on a wide range of Constitutionally
exclusive matters, and so on. Rose's description of an "intricate
and confusing network of institutions" which lacks a single
dominant concentration of power as "a maze without a mace" is most
apt.[1] It is not necessary to define or trace the evolution of
the intricacies but at this point only sketch the features of
intergovernmental relations which impinge most closely on the
specific areas of responsibility discussed in following chapters.[2]

The main area of urban transport responsibility for the
Commonwealth under the Australian Constitution is airport policy.
The Commonwealth (through its Department of Transport) is solely
responsible for the provision of airports for domestic and inter-
national use, the State's formal role being confined to the
provision of ground access and joint licensing of intra-State
traffic on the grounds of community value. Although the State has
been excluded from considering questions of airport economics or
environmental impact in regulating its share of air traffic, the
Commonwealth has taken a co-operative stance. Growth pressures
have been tremendous in airport policy but the preference of the
Commonwealth, the increased utilisation of the Kingsford Smith
Airport together with the diversion of minor traffic to Bankstown,
has been unacceptable to the Wran Government in particular but also
to the previous Governments because of effects on port development
and the environment. Long delays, political chess and uncertainty
have characterised decision-making. Power will continue to be
shared because of the political aspects but also because of the
great investment that will be needed on both sides, whatever
airport development strategy is adopted.[3]

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1. Richard Rose, "The United Kingdom as an intellectual puzzle",
in D. Jaensch (ed.), The Politics of "New Federalism" (Adelaide:
A.P.S.A., 1977), p. 22 and generally. This Special Issue of
Politics contains very useful background.

2. There is a wide range of literature on federalism which will
not be referred to here. Some especially relevant works are:
R.L. Mathews and W.R.C. Jay, Federal Finance (Melbourne: Nelson,
1972); R.L. Mathews (ed.), Making Federalism Work (Canberra:
A.N.U., 1976); Report of R.C.A.G.A., Appendix 2. G; R.N. Spann,
Public Administration in Australia, op. cit., chs. 7-9; and
K. Wiltshire (ed.), Administrative Federalism (St. Lucia: Q.U.P.,
1977). Also Commonwealth Bureau of Roads, Roads in Australia 1973
and Roads in Australia 1975; and Commonwealth of Australia Budget
Paper No. 7, Payments to or for the States and Local Government
Authorities, 1975-76 and 1976-77.

3. More comment will be made on the characteristics of airport
decision-making in Chapter Nine. This author prepared a detailed
case study on this subject in Painter, Gibbons and Brezzo,
Sydney Strategic Study (Report for Commonwealth Bureau of
Roads, 1975), the conclusions of which will be discussed in
Chapter Nine below.

The Commonwealth has assumed de facto responsibilities in urban and non-urban transport works, originally (from 1923/4) because of the developmental impact of roads (and to a minor extent railways), but more recently because it has been accepted that a more reasonable basis should be established between the tax base and urban responsibility — the Commonwealth having the money and the States the problems. The roads grants have been made on various bases as will be seen in Section 3 of this chapter, but generally they have been a key element in the funding of the Department of Main Roads.

Federal funding of railways dates from a scheme initiated in 1920 by which the cost of inter-State rail standardisation would be shared between the Commonwealth and States in the ratio 20:80.[4] Very little indeed was actually done then; payments recommenced in the late 1950s with the construction of the standard-gauge link between Albury and Melbourne. Other ad hoc agreements followed on other specific links. In 1974 however the Whitlam Government undertook to pay two-thirds of the cost of approved urban public transport projects (including research and planning). The details of arrangements have changed over the last few years but it seems at present that the Fraser Government has accepted and will continue the Urban Public Transport Improvement Programme (UPTIP). The respective levels of road and rail funding are examined later in this chapter. (In 1974 the Commonwealth offered to take over the N.S.W. railway system. That offer was of course rejected.)

Such Commonwealth "optional" responsibilities are funded by grants made under Section 96 of the Australian Constitution, which enables the Commonwealth an almost unlimited ability to attach conditions. Thus programmes have to be submitted in advance for main and local roads, rail works, planning and research, minor traffic and related works, and so on. This arrangement is normally a significant, and at times a critical, constraint on State allocative policies. The most obvious example was the federal Labor Government's strenuous objections to the D.M.R.'s inner urban freeway plan in 1974. That case was not totally exceptional. State administrators find that their programmes and policies are consistently conditioned by expectations of Commonwealth standards, and in fact in 1977/78 the Commonwealth Minister for Transport withheld approval for the Victorian road submission because he felt that State funds were not being properly allocated.[5] That

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4. This is simplified. See Commonwealth of Australia Budget Paper No. 7, Payments to or for the States and Local Government Authorities 1975-76, p. 205.

5. See The Hon. P.J. Nixon, M.P., Opening Address to 1977 Australian Road Transport Federation (Townsville, 26 September, 1977), p. 5. The Commonwealth has sought greater State allocations

precedent has now been firmly established.[6]

It might be noted that the Commonwealth pays for two-thirds
of the cost of the Urban Transport Study Group which is a fairly
autonomous arm of the Ministry of Transport and Highways, and for
research and planning in the P.T.C. and especially the D.M.R. and
Traffic Accident Research Unit. The Whitlam Government wanted to
directly participate in urban planning decisions and insisted on
representation on a top-level inter-departmental committee. The
Transport Development Committee was set up by the N.S.W. Government
for this purpose but has met infrequently and is ineffective.[7]

The Commonwealth has provided a direct input into two major
sub-regional planning issues, namely the development of Parramatta
as an alternative metropolitan centre to the CBD; and the
residential development of the Manly-Warringah sub-region. The
Whitlam Government offered to build and operate a rail system for
the encouragement of corridor development around Parramatta, and
paid for an expensive consultant study of demographic factors.
The Fraser Government did not maintain this policy and in any case
severe doubt was cast on the desirability of the rail-based
solution, in the State sphere at least. Secondly, the Whitlam
Government discouraged the extension of sewerage and water
facilities in the Warringah peninsula because of the infrastructural
costs that would be imposed on transport and other authorities.[8]

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to local council roads and the Victorian Government had reduced
their commitment. Mr Nixon went on, "I want to say that while I
have only withheld approval for the Victorian road programs
submitted to me, I will be examining very carefully future programs
submitted from other States in order to ensure the Commonwealth's
commitment to assist local government through supporting the local
roads categories is adequately met". Needless to say the States do
not have comparable ability.

6.   Commonwealth funding has in particular broken State allocative
discretion over urban/rural spending, partly through specified
grants, partly through the National Highways grants (which are
exclusive of urban areas), and partly through the refusal to fund
rural railways. There have been several State complaints at
meetings of the Australian Transport Advisory Council that
Commonwealth practices are causing or perpetuating misallocations
of resources.

7.   Interview with K.J. Trott of 21st December 1976 (Appendix 6),
p. 6.

8.   See for example, T. Uren, "Urban Development", in J. McLaren
(ed.), Towards a New Australia (Melbourne: Cheshire, 1972),
pp. 135-136. Mr Uren, who became the Minister for Urban and
Regional Development in the Whitlam Government, in that place
specifically attacked the D.M.R. and the Warringah Expressway.

It can be seen that the Commonwealth's exclusive airport
authority and de facto authority derived from Section 96 grants
have given the national tier of government an influential but
basically restrictive role in urban policy. That de facto power
was largely gained by the Whitlam Government but its control
aspects have been retained by the subsequent Fraser Government.
In general, the airport power has only been of substantial
importance since the late 1960s while the other urban powers date
from the mid-1970s.

The New South Wales Government has primary responsibility for
the quality of government in Sydney, both in the sense that its
agencies provide a wide range of services and also because the
State Government aids and supervises the various local government
bodies. The structure and operations of the two levels of
government are generally well known and cursory attention only will
be given to select aspects here.(9)

In most respects the Constitution and related conventions of
New South Wales follow the Westminster model regarding the formal
roles of Governor, Government and Cabinet and Opposition, and
Public Service. Virtually every institution has co-ordinative
functions, and taken with the range of inter-departmental, judicial
and specialist co-ordinating bodies, a high degree of formal
integration is intended. However in practice even many of the
co-ordinative bodies like Treasury have limited jurisdiction or
limiting conventions, and it is often argued that even direct
Ministerial connections to organisations such as apply in the
Public Service do not ensure adequate communication, responsiveness
and advice.(10) Parliaments themselves have major shortcomings.(11)

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9.   There is a wide range of sources. A basic description is
L.J. Rose, The Framework of Government in N.S.W. (Sydney:
Government Printer, 1972), throughout. The best single source is
still Spann, op. cit., throughout; but see also Mayer and Nelson,
op. cit.; and K. Wiltshire, An Introduction to Australian Public
Administration (Melbourne: Cassell, 1975), Part A. Parliament
itself is analysed, with greatest attention to historical aspects,
by G.N. Hawker, The Parliament of N.S.W. 1856-1965 (Sydney:
Government Printer, 1971).

10. Every one of the recent major inquiries into various govern-
mental systems was critical of normal Departmental arrangements,
and many saw statutory authorities as being also deficient in
control aspects but superior in financial, managerial, personnel
and like arrangements. All favoured the modernisation of the
Departmental form and Public Service practices. See Royal
Commission on Government Organisation (Glassco, Canada 1962),
especially Vol. 5, p. 56; The Civil Service (Fulton, U.K., 1968);
Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Public Service of South
Australia (Corbett, 1975), pp. 112 ff; and R.C.A.G.A. Report,
op. cit., pp. 82 ff. There are many other references on this
point — see especially the articles by R.L. Wettenhall, L. Peres
and others in the special issue "Government Department or
Statutory Authority", Public Administration (Sydney), 27(4),

A special feature of the N.S.W. system though is the predominance of statutory authorities. These typically have non-elective chairmen (instead of Ministers) at their head and are able to internalise a far greater proportion of operational and interpretative decision-making than can Departments. While they are formally under the control of a Minister, they normally have to consult him or her on a restricted range of matters only and have extensive discretionary powers under the relevant Acts. They are also relatively independent as a rule in financial, personnel and related matters.

As a consequence of these and similar factors, strong lines of specialisation rather than integration become evident in the political system. Administration is organised on specialised client or functional bases as are Ministerial arrangements. (The effectiveness of co-ordinative bodies is discussed in Section 2 and especially Chapter 9 below.) Ministries have been established for Local Government, Planning and Environment, and Decentralisation and Development, all of which are functionally interdependent, as well as Public Works, Transport and Highways, Housing, and so on.[12] The task-orientation of these arrangements does not help the determination of policies in policy areas (such as cities) which cut across departmental lines.[13] Partly as a consequence, in 1975, in the course of the Machinery of Government Review a system of five standing committees was introduced into the N.S.W. Cabinet structure. The composition of these has changed[14] but at late 1977 it was as follows:

December 1968. N.S.W. has been poorly served by analysts in this area, see Spann, op. cit., p. 498.

11.   See S. Encel, Cabinet Government in Australia (Melbourne: M.U.P., 1962); also "Cabinet and the Bureaucracy", in J. Wilkes (ed.), Who Runs Australia? (Sydney: A.I.P.S. and Angus and Robertson, 1972). A most important reference on N.S.W. is K. Turner, House of Review? (Sydney Studies in Politics No. 8, 1969).

12.   The historical development of N.S.W. Ministries is traced in various places in Hawker, op. cit.; and C.A. Hughes and B.D. Graham, A Handbook of Australian Government and Politics 1890-1964 (Canberra: A.N.U., 1968).

13.   M. Painter, Introduction, in Painter, Gibbons and Brezzo, op. cit., pp. 3 ff. An excellent overview of Sydney's government is France and Hughes, "The Role of Government", in Parker and Troy, op. cit.

14.   Compare the following with B. Moore, "Machinery of Government Changes in N.S.W.", Public Administration (Sydney), 34(2), June 1975, pp. 117-8, 127.

1. <u>POLICIES AND PRIORITIES COMMITTEE</u> (Senior)

> Premier (Chairman)
> Deputy Premier & Minister for Public Works and Ports
> Treasurer
> Minister for Transport & Highways
> Attorney General
> Minister for Industrial Relations, Mines and Energy
> Minister for Planning & Environment (and Vice President of Executive Council)

2. <u>INDUSTRIAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE</u>

> Deputy Premier & Minister for Public Works and Ports (Chairman)
> Minister for Transport & Highways
> Minister for Industrial Relations, Mines and Energy

3. <u>DEVELOPMENT CO-ORDINATION COMMITTEE</u>

> Deputy Premier & Minister for Public Works and Ports (Chairman)
> Minister for Planning & Environment
> Minister for Decentralisation & Development and Primary Industries
> Minister for Local Government
> Minister for Lands
> Minister for Justice and Housing
> Minister for Conservation & Water Resources
> Minister for Services and Minister Assisting the Premier

4. <u>JUSTICE & CONSUMER AFFAIRS COMMITTEE</u>

> Attorney General (Chairman)
> Minister for Consumer Affairs and Co-operative Societies
> Minister for Justice and Housing
> Minister for Services and Minister Assisting the Premier

5. <u>SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE</u>

> Minister for Education (Chairman)
> Minister for Health
> Minister for Sport, Recreation & Tourism
> Minister for Youth & Community Services
> Minister for Services and Minister Assisting the Premier

(The Treasurer is also an ex-officio member of Committees 2 and 5.)

These Standing Committees do not have terms of reference and only deal with matters referred to them by Cabinet. Special purpose Sub-Committees (such as that on Land Valuation) do have terms of reference.

Most if not all major Government initiatives and policy decisions are referred to Cabinet for approval and this provides a reasonable opportunity for affected Ministers to make an input to the final decision, but in terms of adequate information and organisational participation, Cabinet is not nearly as good a forum as the Standing Committees. Apart from such formal decisions however many decisions are made by the Minister or Premier without consulting other Ministers (or officers) while many decisions also do not need Ministerial approval. As well many programmes become entrenched and persist without question; in particular the pricing policies of many statutory authorities would be opposed by State Governments of either hue if it was realised how anachronistic and even inefficient they had become.

The organisation of Cabinet committees into such a structure is of considerable value when major issues affecting the Government as a whole arise but otherwise it is a "good indication of the lack of political concern for comprehensive metropolitan policies at the State level".[15] As will be noted later co-ordinative responsibilities have been more effectively exercised in the last few years, largely as a consequence of the politicisation of several major urban issues, but at the State level there is no real integration in urban affairs.

Fairly detailed analyses follow of decision-making in a number of transport and related areas in which many of the characteristics of government at the State level are discussed. While each organisation and each administration is different in New South Wales owing to historical factors, many of the conclusions from the specific studies apply more generally.

Local government is the third, and in most respects the inferior, level of government. It is inferior in that it exists basically at the pleasure of and is the "creature" of the State; it is typified by parochial and reactive (rather than positive) approaches to policy; and it has very limited powers and responsibilities. Because the main tax base of local councils and shires is the rateable value of their districts, spatial inequalities tend to be accentuated. As well, although a major theoretical virtue is the directness of accountability, this fact also militates against the quality of decision-making on issues of more than local significance and can affect the degree of co-operation that even State agencies can expect. Again such factors are well documented[16] and the following treatment is selective.

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15. Painter, in Painter, Gibbons and Brezzo, op. cit., p. 3.

16. Some important sources are: R. Atkins, "Local Government", in Spann op. cit., ch. 11; M. Bowman, Local Government in the

There are about 40 local councils in the Sydney region (slightly more for instance in the Sydney Water Board's area), which basically have individual, unco-ordinated responsibilities. A measure of integration is achieved through seven main mechanisms: the activities of the successive central land use authorities discussed later; judicial review; minimal supervision (basically administrative auditing) of the Department of Local Government; limited co-operative arrangements (the electricity County Councils as well as some waste handling facilities); several limited-purpose committees; and relations with central operational authorities such as the D.M.R. and Water Board. A final co-ordinating influence is the effect of Commonwealth and State Grants Commissions (and at times other Commonwealth agencies) which basically allocate funds according to relative merit. The five County Councils are now virtually the only surviving manifestations of the movement for a Greater Sydney; the Water Board until 1972 consisted of elected local government representatives but now has very limited non-elected representation, while the Cumberland County Council (1945-63) was entirely a creature of local government (reversing the usual dominance of the State).

Local government's main urban transport responsibility is the construction and maintenance of local roads. These represent almost 90 per cent of Sydney's road system[17] and cost local councils about 30 per cent of their total annual expenditure (about 20 per cent of the Sydney City Council's expenditure).[18] Part of this effort is funded by the Commonwealth and part by the State. Since 1969 the Commonwealth has nominated funds separately for urban arterial and urban "sub-arterial" (later "local") roads in its road funding and as well councils receive (or received) substantial assistance from the Grants Commission from 1973, Area

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Australian States (Canberra: A.G.P.S. for Department of E.H. & C.D., 1976); France and Hughes, in Parker and Troy, loc. cit.; Joint Study into Local Government Finances: Australia and New Zealand (Canberra: Report of the Joint Steering Committee, 1976); M. Neutze, "Local, regional and metropolitan government", in R. Mathews (ed.), Intergovernmental Relations in Australia (Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1974); and M. Painter, "A Comparative Analysis of the Decision-Making Processes in Six Local Government Councils in Sydney" (unpublished Ph.D thesis, A.N.U., 1973).

17. This figure is based on D.M.R. classifications; see S.A.T.S., Vol. 1, Table 3.1.

18. Atkins, op. cit., p. 240 and elsewhere; Official Year Book of N.S.W., 1974, ch. 9, especially Table 252.

Improvement Scheme and R.E.D. scheme. The other main sources of
revenue for roads are rates which arc set basically at council
discretion except to the extent that constraints on overall annual
increases apply, and loans which are determined by the State
Treasury and Loan Council in the first instance and then by the
Department of Local Government. Individual councils thus have
little discretion in the size of their loan programmes.[19]

As a general rule, roads expenditure is a greater proportion
of total council expenditure for municipalities and shires which
have experienced rapid population growth in the last twenty years
and which still have mainly rural or semi-rural infrastructure,
compared with the more established councils which are able to spend
relatively more on community facilities. In council areas such as
Blacktown, Penrith, Fairfield and Liverpool rapid urban development
was superimposed on relatively weak financial and infrastructural
bases, and relations with State instrumentalities became crucial.
The Housing Commission and S.P.A. for example placed great
pressures on Blacktown Municipal Council which until 1969 had
qualified for Commonwealth road assistance as a rural area.
However no special State assistance was given to the Council for
the upgrading of through and local roads which carried greatly
increased traffic, and as a consequence the quality of the roads
deteriorated to critical levels. In 1974/75 the Grants Commission
gave Blacktown more than any other municipal body in Australia,
except Brisbane, and all of that allocation of $984,000 was applied
to roads (as well as $300,000 in the previous year for Area
Improvement — none in 1974/75 — and $94,000 in 1974/75 under
R.E.D.). State policy was attacked in Federal Parliament and by
local resident action groups, especially the Mt Druitt Action
Committee and the Australian Transport Study Group.[20]

Against this background, and it might be remembered that such
council areas are "transport disadvantaged" with respect to public
transport as well as roads, the policies of the Department of Main
Roads are extremely important. The D.M.R. is "responsible" for
roads which carry heavy traffic, are of particular design, or have
special developmental or tourist impact. Being responsible in many
cases means paying for construction and/or maintenance, and the
Main Roads Act leaves the question of classification almost
entirely in the hands of the Commissioner for Main Roads. Two
principal effects arise. Firstly, country councils generally have
greater control and discretion than their metropolitan

19.   See R.P. Gibbons, "Blacktown Council: A Case Study of Local
Road Planning", in Painter, Gibbons and Brczzo, op. cit., ch. 9.

20.   Cf ibid., pp. 127-131.

counterparts;[21] and secondly, the latter are disadvantaged
vis-à-vis the control of the D.M.R. over classification (an
important factor in adapting to changing urban conditions).

While the first factor is important on a State-wide scale, the
second is more directly relevant to the urban situation. Blacktown
for example depends for access to the main rail and road corridors
on several quasi-trunk roads, some of which are classified as Main
Roads, some as Secondary Roads and some as local. Secondary Road
is a special category which applies only to the County of
Cumberland; it refers to roads which carry "substantial" volumes
of through traffic and relieve Main Roads. The D.M.R. pays only
half the cost of construction and maintenance and more significant-
ly has the discretion of declaring a road as a Secondary Road.
Apart from gaps in the classification system which perhaps have
been produced by time, Blacktown Council has argued over the years
since 1969 that several of its roads should receive the assistance
of reclassification. Such arguments have been unsuccessful, at
least partly because of D.M.R. priorities and funding policies.
As the Department stated in its pamphlet Guide to Main Roads
Administration (1970):

> For some years the Commissioner has usually withheld
> support of /‾reclassification requests_7 because the
> amount of work required at present to bring existing
> Main Roads to the standard required to meet rapidly
> expanding traffic is usually so great that available
> Main Roads funds need to be concentrated on this task...

This was a major factor in the Council's inability to cope with the
pressures placed on it by planning decisions and metropolitan
development, and also helped to elicit the special ad hoc
Commonwealth support from the Whitlam Government.[22] State and
Commonwealth policy has adjusted to this to some extent but the
basic difficulties in fringe co-ordination remain.

The second major role for local councils is the provision and
control of parking facilities, generally on the basis of formal
co-ordination with affected authorities through Parking Advisory
Committees set up under Section 270D of the Local Government Act.
The first of these was established in the City of Sydney in the
mid-1950s and since then some ten more have been set up, especially
in commercial areas with parking and access problems. Represent-
atives include the Departments of Local Government and Police, the
P.T.C., the local authority and the Planning and Environment
Commission. Some of these committees are inactive but otherwise

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21.   One source for this is "Main Roads and Local Government",
Main Roads, December 1976, p. 36.

22.   Cf. the Hon. P. Nixon, loc. cit.; and interview with the
Hon. P.F. Cox of 29th November 1976 (Appendix 5), pp. 7-8.

they in effect shift local decision-making away from the council towards the functional authorities because the decisions of the Committees are binding, subject to appeal to the Minister for Local Government. The Council of the City of Sydney has been especially active in planning in the last ten years or so and parking has been a focus of its policy, in respect of which it has come into conflict with the views of State authorities over the use of parking supply to control traffic to the CBD.[23] It would seem that the Council was parochial in its attitude and did not have the ability to prevail. That is not to underestimate the operational importance of councils' role more generally, especially with regard to parking spaces and meters.

Councils' control of parking is the most positive element in their role in traffic control generally, the administrative complexity of which is mentioned elsewhere. Councils have the ability to restrict the mass (size) of vehicles using local streets and have circumscribed powers in other policy areas, such as street closures. Traditionally councils have shared control with Police, the Department of Motor Transport, the D.M.R., land use planning bodies and so on (even down to the Maritime Services Board and various servicing authorities). Until 1976 co-ordination was tenuous and fragile, and often lacking. The Traffic Advisory Committee had been set up in 1964 with much the same membership as CUMTAC, with a preponderance of State organisations but with co-opted local council representation as required on specific subjects. In late 1974 as part of the Machinery of Government Review a "Committee of Enquiry into Roads and Traffic Administration and Related Matters" was set up with the Under Secretary of the Ministry of Transport (as it was called until January 1975) as chairman. This produced a report of reputedly high quality which inter alia regarded the administration of traffic as excessively fragmented, with co-ordination being dependant on individual good-will. The formation of a statutory "Traffic Authority" was recommended and subsequently endorsed by the then Government, leading to implementation about two years later.

The Traffic Authority can be regarded as an innovative development in administration and is assessed as such in Chapter Nine below. At this point it can be said that while the Authority has overall control over road management (as distinct from construction), it has delegated a great deal of responsibility to local councils for the planning of minor traffic facilities on

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23. For a brief account see France and Hughes, op. cit., pp. 53-4. Cf Urban Systems Corporation Action Plan No. 4: Car Parking Stations on the Western Perimeter of the CBD (Council of the City of Sydney, 1972); and P. Casey, "Forum 12" in Action Planning Forum (Council of the City of Sydney, 1972). It might be added that councils have attracted frequent criticism of their conservatism and tardiness in planning.

roads other than Main and Secondary Roads. It retains the right
to erect facilities on council roads (through the D.M.R.) but has
decided that this will only be exercised in exceptional circum-
stances. Generally councils have set up joint "Traffic Committees"
to involve Police and D.M.R. officers as well as the local M.L.A.
In a few cases councils have defied the Traffic Authority but
consequently the Authority's powers have been confirmed and it
functions as a co-operative body of great potential.

It can be seen that councils have a rather residual role in
transport planning in Sydney and this can be regarded as a weak
link in the State administration. Generally however the State
Government's operational agencies are the primary actors in the
policy field although the roles of the Commonwealth and local
tiers are important and at times critical, especially in the
former's case.

2. Central Metropolitan Planning

The nexus between the quality of urban living and integrated
urban planning and administration had been widely accepted from the
early 1900s as was seen in Chapter Two. The domination of
metropolitan administration by separate functional organisations,
usually with statutory incorporation as well, was frequently
criticised and the creation of a Greater Sydney Council remained
Labor policy through to after the Second World War.[24]
Reconstruction conditions in the 1940s and William McKell's
Government's policy led to the creation in 1945 of the Cumberland
County Council (C.C.C.), the first of three quite different and
generally unsuccessful postwar experiments in integrated urban
planning. These are important background to the chapters on
institutional planning which follow.

In 1945 McKell and J.J. Cahill introduced the Local Government
(Town and Country Planning) Bill which provided for the establish-
ment of a Town and Country Planning Advisory Committee to assist
the Department of Local Government in preparing a broad plan to
serve as framework for detailed local council land use plans.
Mr Stan Haviland had become Assistant Under Secretary of the
Department of Local Government and Housing in 1941 and he was known
as a man of strong ideas on metropolitan government, and while the

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24. See J.D.B. Miller, "Greater Sydney 1892-1953", Public
Administration (Sydney), 23(2) and 23(3), 1954; Spearritt, "Urban
History", op. cit., ch. 10; and P. Harrison, "Planning the
Metropolis — A Case Study", in Parker and Troy, op. cit., ch. 4.
Harrison's chapter and Painter, Gibbons and Brezzo, op. cit., ch. 2
are important sources for the main historical details which follow.

bill provided for local government representation on the Committee it made the "third tier" inferior to the State Government.[25] The Minister for Local Government was to be fully in control of both the Committee and councils when they subsequently submitted their plans. (At the time there were 67 councils in Sydney; in 1948 the number was reduced, through compromise of stronger Government proposals, to 39.)

The Bill was strongly opposed in Parliament and by the Local Government Association which wanted the planning scheme to be drawn up by its members. The Government gave way on this point and set up a County Council to consist of ten members, one from the Sydney City Council and nine elected by constituencies of the other councils (on much the same basis as the Water Board's membership). The C.C.C. was to be funded by councils by means of a special rate. However the Government did not give way either on overall Ministerial control or on the Planning Advisory Committee. The C.C.C. was not subject to the direction of the Minister, a fact which later proved to be an invaluable weapon for the Council, but it had to submit its scheme within three years to the Minister and the scheme had no inherent statutory status that would allow the C.C.C. to dissent from his wishes. Second, the local council schemes were to be submitted not to the Council but to the Advisory Committee or Department of Local Government (in practice these were very close), which advised the Minister. If a local scheme was inconsistent with the Council's guidelines but the Minister accepted the former, the Council's plan would have been superceded. The Committee and the Department were understaffed and overwhelmed by detail and "took no part in bringing about co-ordination... nor were they in any position to secure Government sponsorship of planning".[26]

The planning system was therefore drawn up on very poor lines if one accepts that it was the Government's desire to make the C.C.C. work.[27] Further the Council was given no practical powers such as to acquire land, and it was specifically excluded from intervening in urban works programmes. There was in fact a very

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25. The Committee consisted of three professional representatives (architect, engineer and surveyor), an officer of the Department of Local Government, an alderman nominated by the Local Government Association, and two Ministerial nominees.

26. R.D.L. Fraser, "Planning and Government in the Metropolis", Public Administration (Sydney), 31(2), 1972, p. 135.

27. There is no doubt that Mr McKell and Mr Cahill supported the C.C.C. strongly but nonetheless they handicapped the Council. They no doubt did not intend to relinquish Ministerial control and adopted fairly traditional Ministerial support systems even though there was an inherent contradiction.

limited degree of co-operation from most established authorities, with the exception of the M.W.S. & D.B. (even that body was an uneasy partner at times), and there was occasionally open conflict.[28] The statutory authorities were jealous of their individual sovereignty. Several councils withheld their share of the C.C.C. levy after the initial three-year period had finished because the C.C.C. had by then alienated sections of the local government community.[29]

The Council presented its Planning Scheme Report in July 1948. This was a comprehensive survey of the present circumstances of the County and a prescription for future planning. The Council had employed a substantial team of planners and geographers and also relied on the population and land use statistics which the D.M.R. had collected in preparing its Main Roads Development Plan.[30] The Report's prescription generated a great deal of controversy as did its modus operandi later.

The basic strategy of the Report was to restrict the outward sprawl of the metropolis to the existing urban area and select "new towns" (Campbelltown for example), and preserve urban amenity, by setting up a "green belt" on the urban fringe and designating large tracts as open space. The transport systems then planned by the respective authorities were almost entirely adopted and the Water Board's systems were of primary consideration.[31] The CBD was designated as County Centre and sixteen district centres were also identified.

The Planning Scheme Report was adopted by the Government without change but only after a delay of three years which caused fundamental problems and which was a major constraint on the effectiveness of the C.C.C.'s planning.[32] The Scheme was unique in Sydney's history in that it was given legislative substance through being incorporated as a Schedule to the Local Government Act in 1951. At the same time the Council was made the

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28. See Harrison, op. cit., especially pp. 69 ff.

29. Ibid., p. 66; Fraser, op. cit., p. 131.

30. See Chapter Seven below. The planning outputs of the three successive land use authorities are discussed briefly in that and following chapters.

31. Cf R.P. Gibbons, "Finance and Planning: the Sydney Water Board and the 1959 Green Belt Releases", A.J.P.A., 35(2), June 1976, pp. 149 ff. For more detail see Harrison, ibid., pp. 67 ff. Also R. Bunker, Town and Country or City and Region (Melbourne: M.U.P., 1971), ch. 10. L. Sandercock, Cities for Sale, op. cit., ch. 8, is a useful summary of other sources.

32. Painter, Gibbons and Brezzo, op. cit., p. 24.

"responsible authority" for certain aspects, including the
acquisition of land, the control of the Green Belt, and the
reservation of land for County Roads and open space. (It should be
noted that the Government and constituent councils paid half each
of the cost of such land.)

The main philosophical opposition to the Plan somewhat
paradoxically came from the local councils whose rating capacity
(or potential) was affected by limitations on growth and the open
space commitment (which was in any case to be substantially
reduced). The best demographic projections were also to prove to
be far too low, and the Plan to therefore be "inflexible", and
opposition from the land development lobby was in 1959 very
important in having the Green Belt abandoned. Some councils, and
especially the Minister to 1959, Mr Cahill, and the C.C.C.'s two
aldermanic chairmen, gave strong support[33] and the Council had the
benefit of an excellent (ex-D.M.R.) Chief County Planner who was the
driving force behind the adoption of developer contributions for
various services for example. It was in fact in connection with
the 1959 Green Belt releases and the Council's fight for developer
contributions that the C.C.C. showed that being free of direct
Ministerial control was invaluable in enabling it to overcome short
term (but fierce) political pressure in achieving the implementa-
tion of necessary planning powers; the operating authorities,
principally the Water Board, were chary of fighting their own
battles.

Two aspects of the modus operandi were important. Firstly the
Council was flooded with enquiries about the routes of the
extensive system of proposed roads (see the next chapter), most of
which could not be definitely answered because the Department had
recommended the roads without detailed surveys being undertaken.
This was a necessary evil and could not be avoided at that time
without neglecting the road needs of the metropolis, although the
Chief County Planner later wrote that the problem would have been
easier to resolve if the D.M.R. had been given "a taste of front-
line experience".[34] Secondly local councils were unco-operative
in preparing their detailed planning schemes. The Areas Act of
1948 required all councils to prepare schemes but it also conferred
discretionary powers which the councils would have lost, so that by
1963 only three schemes had been prescribed. The City of Sydney
scheme was not promulgated until 1971 because of an extended cycle
of compromise.[35]

33. Fraser, op. cit., p. 131.

34. Ibid., p. 133.

35. Harrison, op. cit., pp. 72-3.

It can be noted, on the question of whether local government was a satisfactory basis for central planning, that the Chief County Planner and one of his staff planners have disagreed subsequently whether the Council was capable of achieving a "synoptic" viewpoint. Rod Fraser has argued that the Council had been well-served by the local government system in electing able men,[36] but Peter Harrison believes that the Council's staff generally persuaded the Council to overcome a parochial perspective.[37] It is impossible to settle this here because while the Council definitely took a synoptic view and held to it through their <u>political</u> battles, at risk to their individual electoral prospects, the role of Rod Fraser cannot be underestimated. However there was a great difference between the planning of the C.C.C. and the State Planning Authority in that the former's was much more pragmatic and related goals to means far more success- fully, and this difference was to a large extent achieved because of the nature of the C.C.C.'s management. (There were also possibly critical differences in staff resources.)

In 1951 the Town and Country Planning Advisory Committee, which had earlier decided that it was unnecessary to give the C.C.C. statutory powers of inter-corporate co-ordination,[38] decided that a comprehensive method of "co-ordinated planning" was required and later recommended to the Minister for Local Government that a State Planning Authority should be set up.[39] This was accepted by the Government which announced in March 1962 that the S.P.A. would be set up to "plan and co-ordinate the development of the use of land and provision of essential services". Over a year-and- half passed before the C.C.C. gave way to the Authority and the Council continued to operate with that threat over its head. In its final Annual Report it said that its task had been to "enforce new legislation which infringed upon the vested powers and responsibilities of existing statutory bodies and adversely affected the financial interests of many citizens", and that its basic dilemma was how to be effective and popular at the same time.[40]

The State Planning Authority Act differed very little from the C.C.C. legislation in terms of planning role and powers, although the S.P.A. was given a larger legal status in implementation. No extra co-ordinative power was given. It had to "submit to the

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36.   Fraser, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 131.

37.   <u>Op. cit.</u>, p. 73.

38.   <u>Ibid.</u>

39.   <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 77.
40.   Quoted in <u>ibid.</u>, p. 79.

Minister proposals for the development and use of land, including
development and use in conjunction with the provision of utility
services and public transport facilities" (Clause 3 of S.P.A. Act),
but it was under the control of the Minister, unlike the C.C.C.,
and thus the only overall co-ordinative power came not from "the
Minister" but from Cabinet. Ministerial (cum organisational)
specialisation was preserved.

In effect, the S.P.A. legislation proved that most importantly
the C.C.C. had been a thorn which the statutory authorities and
Minister wanted to rid themselves of. The new S.P.A. was a
creature of the State and of the other statutory organisations.[41]
The Authority in fact was originally proposed to consist only of a
chairman and deputy chairman, one of whom was to be a professional
planner, and four part-time members from the Ministry of
Transport,[42] the D.M.R., the Department of Local Government, and
a public utility authority respectively. To these six were added
five local government representatives after the Bill had been
introduced and a twelfth member nominated by the professional
Institutes (Architects, Engineers, Surveyors and Planners). Co-
ordination was therefore seen in terms of participation and shared
control within the State governmental system, although local
government power via the Legislative Council at least partially
defeated the initial intention. In 1972 four new members were
added (commerce representative, Treasury, Director of Decentralisa-
tion and Development, and Lands). This was done to widen
representation and thereby ostensibly improve co-ordination. At
about the same time the Under Secretary of the Ministry of
Transport for some reason was replaced by the Commissioner for
Railways.

In the ten years of its existence, the State Planning
Authority fulfilled its apparent role of "internalising" planning
and making it subservient to corporate goals, but this was found to
be eventually undesirable. The Authority was a large group of
part-time officials and suffered all the disadvantages of
compromise, artificial consensus and delays which poorly designed
committee structures can be subject to. In 1973 a Government
Parties' backbench committee was set up under Mr R.O. Healey,

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41. It is possible that the S.P.A. was seriously intended to take
a positive approach to inter-corporate planning and if so it was a
case of very poor organisational design. However given the
C.C.C.'s experience and the nature of corporate specialisation, it
is far more likely that the S.P.A. was an attempt to control
planning.

42. As will be noted in Chapter Nine, at this time the Ministry
was merely a "letter box" and the appointment of the Under
Secretary is somewhat difficult to understand. It was no doubt a
result of the then Minister for Transport's personal preferences.

M.L.A., to investigate various complaints, including (in the
Minister's words) that "planning in this State was being carried
out by public servants who are not answerable to Parliament". As
a member of the Committee said in debate, the part-time members
had to rely excessively on their employees — Healey himself went
much further and said that the pattern of representation was
undesirable. "My Committee could see no reason why such persons as
the Commissioner for Main Roads, an officer of the Treasury, and
others, should be members of a planning authority..."[43] Even
Ministerial control and responsibility had been lost in practice.

There is no doubt that this prognosis was "correct" according
to the political philosophy of planning which then prevailed. The
S.P.A. had published a revised planning scheme in 1968, the Sydney
Region Outline Plan, which most importantly replaced the compact-
ness of the C.C.C.'s strategy with linear sprawl along major
transport corridors.[44] The Plan's language was technocratic and
euphuistic and abstract goals abounded — without any meaningful
discussion of how goals would be achieved, how particular problems
could be overcome, how existing infrastructural and social
facilities could be best utilised, or how co-ordination would be
achieved. Moreover in practice the operational authorities were
unquestionably tricked by the technocrats. In the early and mid-
70s problems emerged which revealed the delusions of the S.R.O.P.
but which were not resolved. For example the extensive land
release programme which the S.P.A. said would overcome land short-
ages and reduce prices, in fact assisted speculators, increased
prices and in the end found the Water Board for one to be over-
committed to release areas which had not developed because the
S.P.A.'s expectations (and abilities) had been grossly
unrealistic.[45] This happened even though the Water Board had been
represented on the S.P.A. throughout its history. Development did
not go where it was meant to go, nor could it be controlled, and
considerable incompatabilities between land use and transport
planning resources emerged. As has been indicated above the
composition of the C.C.C. had enabled it to both aim high but be
reasonably realistic; the S.P.A. had aimed somewhat lower but been
unrealistic.

It must be said that the Authority recognised the clumsiness
and co-ordinative weaknesses of its structure and the State

43.   Painter, Gibbons and Brezzo, op. cit., pp. 19, 23.

44.   See Harrison, op. cit., pp. 86 ff; S.P.A., Sydney Region
Outline Plan 1970-2000 A.D. (Sydney, 1968).

45.   Cf Gibbons, "Finance and Planning", op. cit., p. 158 for
brief detail. This statement is otherwise based on the writer's
practical experience.

Planning Authority (Amendment) Act of 1972 besides expanding
membership also (on the advice of the Public Service Board)
provided for the delegation of authority to specially-constituted
committees as well as to S.P.A. sub-committees. In June 1972 a
purely advisory Transportation Planning Committee[46] was set up
under the chairmanship of the Commissioner for Railways, Mr Neal
McCusker, and it included the S.P.A.'s Chairman (Mr Ashton) and
Associate Chairman, Commissioner for Main Roads, Under Secretary of
the Treasury, City Council nominee and Under Secretary of the
Ministry of Transport. (In fact Mr McCusker retired before the
Committee's first meeting about a year later and Mr Ashton took
over.) In the end this Committee was judged to be an usurpation
of the transport administration's responsibilities and duplication
of URTAC. The committee system was cumbersome and did not save the
S.P.A.

The Planning and Environment Commission (P.E.C.) was created
by an Act passed in April 1974 (effective from November). It was
given the same basic responsibilities and powers as the S.P.A.
with the exception that Clause 2, Section 20 called for it to
produce a report within a year on "organisational, administrative
or other changes and adjustments which, in its judgement, are
necessary in the public interest for the purposes of improving,
restructuring, integrating or co-ordinating the planning of the use
of land..." It was apparently intended that this would be an
impartial review because the infrastructural authorities were
excluded from the formal structure of the Commission; in fact two
of the three full-time members were brought in from outside
established planning circles. The initial Chairman was an overseas
academic geographer, the other two were the Government Architect
(not previously on the S.P.A.) and the Associate Chairman of the
S.P.A. (The former Chairman was excluded via an appointment as
Special Advisor to the Minister for Planning and Environment.) It
was recognised that the goals and intentions of planning had been
lost and the Government decided to give greater planning powers to
local government to improve the efficiency of detailed planning
processes. (Two part-time members were appointed to the
Commission, one representing the Local Government Association and
the other community interests.)

The P.E.C. produced two booklets in November 1974 and June
1975, entitled "Towards a New Planning System for N.S.W." and

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46.   Other committees were: Executive, Management, Statutory
Planning, and State Regional and Project Planning. The committee
structure was a good attempt to make the most of the existing
framework.

"Proposals for a New Environmental Planning System for N.S.W."
(Green Book and Blue Book respectively). The Green Book was
intended to raise issues and arouse community response, while the
Blue Book was intended to be somewhat more definite although it
was stated in its Introduction that legislative changes would only
be drafted after the reception to the modified proposals was
assessed.

The Green Book proposed that the P.E.C. should withdraw from
local land use planning as far as possible, but that an inter-
mediate tier of Sub-Regional Groups of councils (and outside the
metropolitan area there could also be regional planning councils)
should be created to implement guidelines established centrally.
It was clear otherwise that no co-ordinative breakthroughs were
proposed: while an "Advisory Committee" would assist the P.E.C.,
functional organisations would hopefully ensure "that their actions
(would) conform to the State Government's planning and environ-
mental policies and guidelines" (p. 17).

The State bureaucracies apparently reacted reasonably
strongly[47] to the idea of an intermediate State/local tier of
the sort proposed: as the Blue Book put it, "There was general
opposition to the introduction of another level of bureaucracy or
government" (p. 11). Regional development councils were proposed
for extra-metropolitan areas in conjunction with the decentralisa-
tion of P.E.C. offices and the formation of an Advisory Co-
ordinating Committee and Environmental Planning Advisory Committee
for each region. In Sydney councils would be "encouraged" to form
sub-regional groups to advise the P.E.C. (possibly on a compulsory,
statutory basis) and perform functions delegated by the constituent
councils. More significantly, it was stated that greater inter-
corporate planning was advocated in many responses to the 1974
booklet, possibly via the P.E.C., Treasury or Cabinet. The Blue
Book avoided the real issues involved and said that "A willingness
to share power and co-operate will be essential", and that "It is
expected that the State Government will adopt environmental
planning policies and objectives which will bind all government
agencies, as well as councils and regional bodies" (p. 26). It was
stated that legislative changes would be made to "bind all
government bodies to planning and environment controls and policies
in their development and works programmes. Moreover, provision
will be made allowing them to participate in plan formulation and
environmental protection" (p. 29).

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47.   P. Harrison, "Regions and Parishes or How the Green Book
Turned Blue", paper given to Conference on the Proposals for an
Environmental Planning System for N.S.W. , University of Sydney,
August 1975.

The latter proposal is extremely significant in theory but it is more valid as a statement of intent rather than of purpose or practice. There is sufficient power in Cabinet now to achieve most of the co-ordination that is sought. In any case in its three years the P.E.C. has proven to be apparently ineffectual — no progress has been made towards the passing of a new "policy style" planning Act, no effective action has been taken to implement new planning procedures or regionalisation,[48] and the S.R.O.P. has not been replaced (although a review of S.R.O.P. is well advanced). As often happens a change in Government and leadership (a new Chief Commissioner was appointed, again from outside the existing planning establishment, in 1977) has possibly restored centralist philosophies.

The P.E.C. has not significantly affected formal mechanisms of co-ordination. An Advisory Co-ordinating Committee has provided the traditional access for authorities such as the Sydney Water Board. (The Under Secretary of the Ministry of Transport and Highways replaced the Commissioner for Main Roads in late 1977.) The committee structure in transport planning has not been changed and URTAC has kept developing as the main transport/land use co-ordinative forum.

A central theme runs through the three experiments with metropolitan planning bodies in Sydney, that the State Government has never really tackled the dilemma inherent in the planning function. If strategic planning is to be achieved then compelling co-ordinative mechanisms and loss of corporate autonomy have to be effected; otherwise the planning function is in reality merely partial land use management.[49] The C.C.C. was able to divorce its policy-making from the State political base to a considerable extent, enabling a start to be made on the integration of policy but reducing the possibility for compulsory or co-operative co-ordination. The S.P.A. was a reversion to autonomy (including the autonomy of the Authority's own technocratic policy processes) and at best achieved little. So far the P.E.C. has avoided having to face the dilemma because of the need to build support, especially

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48. In fact the P.E.C.'s poor administrative record among other things led Professor Wilenski to conclude that land use planning should be decentralised while overall planning and co-ordination should be done in quite different places. See Review of N.S.W. Government Administration (P. Wilenski), Directions for Change (Sydney: N.S.W. Government Printer, 1977), pp. 74-5 and Parts A and B generally. (Also see Conclusion below.)

49. Fraser saw the principal defect of planning in the C.C.C. period as the failure of the Government to take a proper lead (op. cit., pp. 135, 137). Planning is too close to local political processes for politicians to allow effective independent involvement although the environmental movement and similar factors might force a change.

in Cabinet (where so far support has been lacking) if a frontal
assault is to succeed. However this would not be the correct
direction for reform as will be argued in the Conclusion. The
direct impact of the central planning bodies on transport planning
will be mentioned in later chapters.

3.   Finance and Budgeting

The budgeting system of a governmental network is important
from a number of viewpoints. Line-item budgets have different
effects to performance budgets and the fact that New South Wales
has the former type has significant implications for Government
control of organisational performance and programmes and so on.[50]
Equally important, the financial system is not designed to
facilitate co-ordination in that it has evolved in steps and is not
homogeneous. Some organisations are tightly constrained by
Ministerial and Treasury supervision while others are all but
completely independent (especially in an historical if not current
perspective). All have different sources of revenue and different
liabilities. Some are subject to external constraints while others
are virtually able to determine pricing and budgeting strategies
internally.

The features, strengths and weaknesses of the State budgetary
system are generally very well documented and no attempt needs to
be made here to outline them.[51] Rather the appropriate background
will be given in the course of sketching the history of financial
control of the transport organisations (Department of Main Roads,
Public Transport Commission, Department of Motor Transport,
Traffic Authority, and Ministry of Transport and Highways).[52]
Only one of these organisations is a normal Department, the

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50.   Major references are Knight and Wiltshire, op. cit.,
especially Chs. 2, 5 and 6; P. Wilenski, "Budgeting: Political
Processes and Accounting Imperatives", in Jaensch, op. cit., pp.
196-205; (Wilenski) Directions for Change, op. cit., chapter 2;
and A. Wildavsky, Budgeting: a comparative theory of budgetary
processes (Boston: Little, Brown, 1975), Chs. 11-12 and elsewhere.

51.   See (Wilenski) Directions for Change, ibid., various places
but especially Ch. 2; Manual of Governmental Accounting in N.S.W.
(Sydney: Government Printer, 1967), Ch. 2 and elsewhere; Spann,
op. cit., Ch. 17; W.J. Campbell, Australian State Public Finance
(Sydney: Law Book Company, 1954); W.R.C. Jay and R.L. Matthews
(eds), Government Accounting in Australia (Melbourne: Cheshire,
1968); and Rose,L,op. cit., pp. 91 ff.

52.   Statistics given in the following are from Annual Reports,
Reports of the Auditor-General, and Year Books. Continuous series
were compiled for the main parameters, which will be generalised
rather than treated at length. D.M.R. statistics (excluding
Payments) to 1972 are given in The Roadmakers (D.M.R., 1976),
Appendices. The assistance of Mr J. McDonnell, Ms K. Madden and
Mr P. Slater in the compilation of public transport loan data from
public sources is gratefully acknowledged.

Ministry, and all the rest are individually unique.

The Department of Main Roads is an unorthodox statutory authority in many respects. It operates under the Main Roads Act, 1924, as amended, which gives the Commissioner for Main Roads wide discretionary powers over internal financial, administrative and operational matters, but which defines broad spending priorities between metropolitan and "country" (including non-metropolitan urban) areas. The Commonwealth also contributes a very large part of the Department's revenue, again with specified priorities between a range of area- and road-type categories. Thus the D.M.R. is an unusual mixture of delegation of decision-making and statutory restrictions over spending.

As has already been seen the original Main Roads Board was the product of urban-country antagonism and pork-barrel politics on the part of country representatives. In order to gain legislative approval to the replacement of fragmented local council administration by a central expert organisation, the Government set up separate accounting arrangements in the form of a County of Cumberland Main Roads Fund, a Country Main Roads Fund, and a Developmental Roads Fund. By guaranteeing the revenue sources for the two former Funds in set proportions, the Government guaranteed that money would not be diverted to the metropolis.

The early financial history of the Main Roads Board was very unsettled, but from 1925 to 1933 the County of Cumberland Fund was allocated on average about one-third of total receipts; thereafter the proportion was fairly steady at 26-28 per cent (including Commonwealth funds which were allocated directly from 1932). As an example of the imbalance, until December 1950 the County of Cumberland Fund received half the motor vehicle taxes collected in the County, while the Country Fund received the other half and the taxes collected outside the County (the respective proportions were therefore 23½% to 76½%). From 1951 to the present the Country Fund has received 80% of tax proceeds. The Country Fund receives 80% of Road Maintenance charges and 50% of motor vehicle tax levies. Loans and borrowings are distributed on a discretionary basis, year by year.

The first Commonwealth legislation for road assistance was passed in 1923 and applied to main, trunk and arterial roads; this provided for £ for £ contributions but did not divide the funds between the various road types in advance. A Federal Aid Roads Fund was created in 1927/28 into which all Commonwealth contributions were paid, to be allocated to councils for approved works later. From 1931 the need for the States to make pro rata payments

and the need to seek approval of projects were dropped and the
Commonwealth legislated that its contributions would be paid
straight into the County of Cumberland and Country Main Roads Funds
in the same ratio as State motor vehicle taxation receipts.
Legislative requirements were varied fairly frequently thereafter,
with regard to State contributions, petrol tax allocations,
strategic roads and so on. The 1954 Commonwealth Aid Roads Act
provided that at least 40 per cent of funds made available had to
be spent on rural roads other than highways, main roads and trunk
roads; this was repeated in 1959 and 1964. The rest of contribu-
tions were allocated directly to the Funds. From 1969 a needs
element was introduced into the distribution of Commonwealth assist-
ance and specific allocations were made for urban arterial and sub-
arterial roads, rural arterial roads, rural roads other than
arterial roads, and planning and research. It was decided to re-
establish the Commonwealth Aid Roads Fund in 1969 and although
names have changed since then the basic principle for the alloca-
tion of Commonwealth grants has remained the same.

It can be seen from the foregoing that there has been a great
deal of inflexibility in the funding arrangements of the D.M.R.
because of the establishment of specific-purpose Funds. These
Funds are mutually exclusive and inhibit the transfer of available
capital between changing priorities and needs. At various times
the D.M.R. was unable to match the share of funds that councils
were able to provide as their share of the cost of works on Trunk
and Ordinary Main Roads, so that one council was able to tell the
Department in the early 1950's that "generally speaking, Councils'
ordinary roads are in a far better condition than the main roads".
(See the D.M.R.'s Annual Report of 1956/57 for further details.)
At times, the Department claimed that a disproportionate amount of
funds was going into urban areas, at other times that it had been
unable to allocate enough to urban freeways.

However within the overall constraints the Commissioner has
fairly wide discretion. The Main Roads Act contains numerous
provisions for the Commissioner to decide on funds for maintenance,
renewals, research and development, and classification. As will be
seen the Commissioner for Railways could not initiate or authorise
construction works, at least in practice without specific
legislative approval, and all funds were and still are subject to
specific annual Parliamentary appropriation. The Commissioner for
Main Roads on the other hand until 1975 did not even inform the
Government of the details of its annual and advance programmes,
even in respect of urban freeways. The Minister for Transport from
1965 to 1975, Mr M.A. Morris, has said the following of the D.M.R.:

> Their estimates were never seen by a Minister or by
> Parliament or approved. (Mr Fife) changed that. Their
> road policies often, by luck, coincided with the
> Government's road policies, they never had to explain or
> justify them.(53)

Since 1975 the D.M.R. has submitted an annual programme of works
for approval to the Minister for Transport and Highways but there
is no real statutory compulsion for it to do so and so far the
appraisal has been hurried and superficial, as generally happens
with sizeable computer-produced organisational works programmes.

A related matter is that the D.M.R. has always had to submit
a works list to the Treasury in connection with annual loan
allocations.(54) However one of the major advantages of the D.M.R.
is that its Funds basically consist of current revenue and
Commonwealth grants, and the D.M.R. policy has been to avoid using
loan funds whenever possible except on revenue-producing roads such
as toll works. In the period from 1950/51 to 1976/77 loan revenue
as a proportion of total revenue only exceeded 10 per cent once and
in the period as a whole accounted for only 5.6 per cent. (It
only became a significant source of funds in 1963/64.) In the same
period Commonwealth funding under the Commonwealth Aid Roads Act
and succeeding legislation (National Roads Act 1974, Roads Grants
Act 1974, and Transport (Planning and Research) Act 1974) was
reasonably constant and averaged 38.1 per cent. Motor vehicle
taxation and fees fell in trend and averaged 37.1 per cent of total
revenue. From January 1972 councils in the County of Cumberland
became exempt from a special Main Roads levy; Section 11 revenue
(as it is called) has fallen to negligible levels but averaged 3.8
per cent for the period. Road maintenance charges have been levied
on heavy vehicle operators since 1958 and have contributed on
average about 13 per cent of annual receipts in that time. In the
27 years the D.M.R. only borrowed $144 million (compared with the
P.T.C. total loan allocation of $921 million).(55) The important
point to note is that a relatively small proportion of the D.M.R.
programme had to be submitted through the Treasury for approval and
Loan Council action.

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53.   Interview with the Hon. M. Morris of 1st September, 1976
(Appendix 2), p. 5.   See also interview with the Hon. P.F. Cox and
Mr K.J. Trott of 19th November, 1976 (Appendix 4), p. 1.

54.   An interesting aspect of loan borrowings is that the
Department administers the Sydney Harbour Bridge Account which was
established in 1932. The cost of the Cahill and Warringah
Expressways was met from this Fund which was a vital consideration
at the time of construction.

55.   The D.M.R. inherited liabilities of about $1,400,000 when it
was set up (see The Roadmakers, p. 86 for brief detail). The
public transport systems (railways and tramways) had been financed
entirely by borrowing, at a net cost of $235,970,000 at 1927/28.

The Treasury operates several trust funds for the D.M.R. into which annual surpluses are paid; these can be drawn on (as a bank account) to meet contingencies and special expenses. In the five years to 1976/77 the surpluses were $13,197,000 (1972/73), $7,267,000, $3,609,000, $566,000 (deficit), and $2,426,000 (1976/77). Such reserves are often regarded as a sign of organisational opulence. (Further evidence of the financial record of the D.M.R. is given in the following.)

The financial system which the Public Transport Commission works under is quite different to that of the D.M.R. When the Commission released its Looking Ahead in 1974, it regarded the introduction of consolidating legislation, including greater financial independence for itself, as essential to its managerial responsibilities. However no action has been taken and the Commission still operates under the same legislation as the former Departments of Railways and Government Transport.

Up until 30th June 1928 the Railways paid all receipts into Consolidated Revenue and all funds for administrative, operational and capital expenditure had to be appropriated annually by Parliament. From 1928/29 a separate Government Railways and Tramways Fund was established (simply Railways from 1930) for a similar purpose. This gave a marginally greater degree of autonomy to the Commissioner for Railways but still retained the same basic controls over policy, particularly pricing (fares and freight rates) and construction. A Royal Commission on Railway administration in 1924 had recommended that the Department should have the ability to raise and spend its own capital and control revenue and expenditure, but after an unsuccessful attempt to introduce legislation in the same year no further action was taken.[56]

The Government Railways Fund operates in the same manner as Consolidated Revenue, that is all receipts are paid into it and all expenditure from it must be appropriated for nominated purposes by Parliament. There is some discretion for the P.T.C. but not nearly to the same extent as the D.M.R. or M.W.S. & D.B. and like bodies. The various Trust General Funds for bus and formerly tram operations (Metropolitan Transport, and Newcastle and District Trust General Funds) work in the same way. The Funds are like banking accounts in that payments and receipts only are recorded by the Treasury, the operational details being kept by the P.T.C. and its predecessor Departments. Contributions towards interest, sinking

56. See Manual of Governmental Accounting, op. cit., pp. 40-42; also various N.S.W. Year Books under heading "Railways". The Department of Railways' centenary history, The Railways of N.S.W. (1955) Ch. 18 has some brief background.

fund and other charges on the services' capital debt are nominally met from the Funds but because annual deficits have traditionally been the rule, the Treasury makes up the Funds to record an actual annual balance. Any profits are credited to a Government Railways Reserve Fund and can not be used as a trust account (as the D.M.R. does) for carry-over but could only be applied to losses or reduction of rates and fares. (A parallel General Reserve applies to bus operations but does not exist in practice because there is an accumulated deficiency.)

The 1928 Act also provided for the creation of a Government Railways Renewal Fund to cover depreciation but this was not activated until June 1960 when the capital debt liability was reduced by $146,490,183 to account for accrued obsolescence. This made a difference of only $7 million per annum to debt charges.[57] An additional Special Reserve was made available to the Commissioner who could determine the annual funds to be set aside, but this could only be used for works of specified types which were not chargeable to working expenses and which had been approved by Parliament. In 1976/77 $9 million was thus reserved, representing for example about 10 per cent of the cost of maintenance of track and structures in that year.

Capital expenditure is undertaken by the P.T.C. from various types of loan revenue, principally from allocations from the State's share of the Commonwealth borrowing effort. The Commissioner has never had the power to authorise the construction of railways (or tramways in the case of Government Transport) and has only had the ability to raise loans (in small amount at that) since early 1974. The Government Railways and associated Acts stipulate that the Government, through the Minister, may seek to have the P.T.C. carry out survey and design work for the construction of any rail line or extension thereof where the cost is estimated to exceed $40,000, the cost of such survey work to be met by Parliament. In the case of trams, the works had to be specifically approved by Parliament but the control of research did not apply. It can be seen that the Commissioner for Railways had very little power indeed with regard to the extension of the rail system, although it must also be said that he was given wide discretion in contract matters and in the upgrading of existing services (including quadruplication, repairs and alterations).

The Railways had always been a powerful policy instrument for

57.   See interview with Mr N. McCusker of 13th September 1976 (Appendix 3), pp. 3, 9-10. As will be seen there, from 1956 a Treasury official was seconded to Railways (as special Assistant Secretary), partly to cement the hold which Treasury had always had over the Department.

rural and urban development and politicians were only willing to
delegate power for efficient administration, not the really
politically potent issues, and even then the budgetary process
offered great scope for control of administration. In one very
minor case, the Commissioner for Railways was compensated for
uneconomical country developmental services at the nominal rate of
$1,600,000 p.a. to 1952/53, $2,000,000 p.a. to 1961/62 and again
$1,600,000 thereafter. More generally the role of public transport
has changed in the 1970s and Governments have been willing to make
a positive contribution in the form of greater loan allocations and
more recently grants for track upgrading following the Granville
disaster of January 1977.[58] As well more scope has been given for
improvements in bus services in the form of leverage leasing
arrangements for the current programme of 200 (and later 550)
Mercedes-Benz buses. This arrangement evades Loan Council restric-
tions because it is not strictly borrowing.

In the period from 1950/51 to 1976/77, the record of the
Railways in terms of resources for investment is quite different to
that of the D.M.R. On one measure, the loan allocation for all the
various public transport services reflected the fall in priorities
of State governments. To generalise, after the War the Labor
Government invested quite heavily in Railways especially until
1952/53 (see Chapter Eight below) when allocations fell from $47
million in 1951/52 and $41 million in 1952/53, to $28 million in
1953/54, then relative stability to $21 million in 1960/61 and a
further general fall until the last year of Labor Government in
1964/65. (Using 1950/51 as a base, the funds expressed as an index
fell to 80 in 1956/57, 60 in 1960/61 and 54 in 1964/65.) As a
percentage of the total State loan funds, public transport's share
reached a peak of 42 per cent in 1950/51, fell from 37 to 23 per
cent between 1952/53 and 1953/54, and bottomed at about 11 per cent
in 1963/64 and 1964/65. In the last five years the Railways
Renewal Fund gave an extra $22 million, or 24 per cent of the
public transport loan allocation for those years, plus of course
the capital debt remission.

It should be noted that total revenue or annual surpluses are
not realistic measures of the Government public transport sector's
ability to fund new works, for the several reasons stated above.

Although the loan allocation fell during the Labor years, the
low point came in the first year of the Askin Government. In that

58. In addition N.S.W. has received about $68 million (excluding
research and planning) since 1974 as grants on a 2:1 basis under
the Commonwealth's Urban Public Transport Assistance Program. See
Payments to or for the States and Local Government Authorities
1976-77, p. 72.

year (1965/66) the index of loan allocation reached a trough of 45 while the allocation was only 8.7 per cent of total State loan funds. In the following years the allocation rose very slowly, to index number 77 in 1969/70 and 1970/71, 112 in 1972/73 and 171 in 1974/75. The proportion was 10 per cent in 1971/72 and 13 per cent in 1974/75. Thereafter changing political pressures raised the index to 259 in 1975/76 (16 per cent of the loan allocation). The incoming Labor Government raised the index to 351 (410 including Renewal Fund) and the proportion to 20 per cent in 1976/77. The 1951/52 index figure was only passed in 1974/75, the 1950/51 proportion has never since been achieved. (State contributions to operating losses have however been very heavy since the P.T.C. was set up in 1972.)

By contrast the total revenue of the D.M.R. rose consistently in the whole period, from 100 in 1950/51, to 318 in 1959/60, 580 in 1965/66, 785 in 1969/70, 1903 in 1975/76 and 2124 in 1976/77. An index for construction funds is not available. It might be noted that receipts for the County of Cumberland Main Roads Fund rose to index number 1089 in 1967/68, fell to 642 in 1969/70, and rose to 993 in 1973/74 and 1276 in 1976/77.

The Department of Motor Transport is basically a revenue-collecting body for motor vehicle and road haulage taxes, and a regulatory authority for private buses and intra-State aviation. Hence the Department has not had a positive urban role to be effected by revenue-raising apart from the installation of traffic control systems (now the responsibility of the Traffic Authority and D.M.R.). It has had a basically reactive role in "allowing" private bus operators to service outlying metropolitan areas and Wollongong, and in the past it and its predecessor, the Department of Road Transport and Tramways, regulated the interplay of Government trams and buses versus private buses. In short while the D.M.T. has had intrinsically significant functions, these were not comparable to the planning (and non-planning) of the P.T.C. and D.M.R.

Having said that, the D.M.T. collects a range of taxes, fines and charges, basically all of which (except administrative costs) is passed on to the D.M.R., the Traffic Authority and other bodies. The Road Transport and Traffic Fund was established in 1930 and again is a banking account for revenue which is divided by statute between various purposes. (Motor vehicle registration fees are retained by the D.M.T. as are G.I.O. commissions on insurance premium collections. The motor vehicle weight tax and levy are allocated fully to roadworks, that is to the D.M.R. and the Traffic Authority.) It is not particularly meaningful to trace the record

of receipts because of this distribution of funds but the comments which follow on the Traffic Authority apply generally and it can be concluded that the Department has been reasonably well-off in terms of funds.

In the last five years all of the foregoing except perhaps the P.T.C. have been disadvantaged to varying degrees by the declining real value of motor vehicle taxes, changing priorities and in the D.M.R.'s case by the reversal of Commonwealth funding policies after the defeat of the Whitlam Government. These very recent trends will be discussed later in the evaluation of the URTAC Report of 1976 but they are otherwise of marginal historical interest from the point of view of this thesis.

The last operational organisation is the Traffic Authority (referred to in Section 1 of this chapter), which is basically a statutory co-ordinative committee which has a full-time Director and secretariat, part-time Chairman and members, and an arrangement for operations and construction with the D.M.R.

When the T.A. was set up in 1976 a special trust fund was opened in the Treasury's Special Deposits Account called the Traffic Facilities Fund. This Fund and associated arrangements for Ministerial control and co-ordination are unique in this State. In general most of the revenue for the Fund comes from sources which are named in the Traffic Authority Act but in amounts which are to be determined by the Minister for Transport and Highways (and in some cases the Treasurer). This is unlike the restrictive conditions of the D.M.R. Funds. Moreover although Parliamentary appropriation is not required for construction, Clause 24(2) states that "No payment shall be made from the Fund without the approval of the Minister". The Minister can also revoke approval. Clause 25 provides that "The Authority shall, as directed by the Minister, and at least once in each year, submit to the Minister proposals in relation to expenditure from the Fund, together with a statement of the amounts necessary to be paid into the Fund to implement the proposals".

The Traffic Facilities Fund has streamlined the administration of traffic since the time when traffic control resided in several Departments and authorities. The Fund has been in heavy deficit since it was set up because of the need to reimburse Police for their attributable costs. Police traffic responsibilities are becoming increasingly regarded as part of Police duties proper and the reimbursement is unlikely to continue, at least in the traditional form. One other problem that has emerged is that giving the D.M.R. construction responsibilities and nearly all traffic planning resources has allowed that Department to have a

disproportionate influence in what is meant to be an inter-organisational Authority. Again the future may bring reform through the reallocation of traffic resources back to the T.A. or through the reform of the D.M.R. itself to make it more representative.

Since 1976 and the publication of the URTAC Report the general area of traffic management has become the central thrust of metropolitan road administration, as will be seen later. Sydney has always had a progressive traffic administration and as a generalisation resources have been sufficient to meet changing priorities without undue difficulty. It has not been possible to draw up an index of financial performance to test this for the long-term however.

Finally, the Ministry of Transport and Highways is a (small) Government Department, that is, it is funded by annual vote from Consolidated Revenue. It passes some of its revenue on to the Traffic Facilities Fund and to the operating authorities for concessions of various types for veterans, pensioners and so on; in other words, it is the agent for subsidies from Consolidated Revenue. The Urban Transport Study Group forms part of the Ministry vote, although the Group is three-quarters paid for under the Commonwealth Transport (Planning and Research) Act. (The Ministry is responsible for the co-ordination of the N.S.W. effort under that Act.) Otherwise the Ministry's role is non-operational and co-ordinating and will be examined in Chapter Nine.

It has been seen that the five organisations presently in the transport administration (and the same can be said of their predecessors) have different sources of finance, different types of financial control and degrees of independence, and different "allocative" histories. These factors have significant implications for co-ordinating organisational performance.

The D.M.R.'s revenue sources have generally been beyond its control in terms of magnitude but they have been highly stable and predictable, both because of the statutory division of State revenue and because of Commonwealth term commitments. Generally the Department's financial system has denied the Government discretion over annual and even longer-term priorities to a great extent, and although corporate discretion was also compromised the Department adapted by setting up country arrangements which exploited the constraints. (See Chapters Five and **Seven.**) Resources were limited but certainly no more than for other N.S.W. authorities. Thus the D.M.R.'s situation can be characterised as certain, independent and quite solvent.

The Government public transport services on the other hand relied heavily on user charges (which are unstable and have substantial market constraints), and loan funds. In both respects certainty and independence were greatly lacking. In addition their administrations had substantial capital debts which severely limited the extent to which loan funds (that is, investment funds) could be utilised. In summary, the situation was characterised by uncertainty, complete lack of discretion, and resource scarcity. (All that need be said of private public transport services is that they have never been effectively co-ordinated with Government road and rail investment and services.)

In the case of traffic control, resources were always limited but the overall standard of achievement suggests that major needs could be met without undue difficulty, especially recently. However the location of investment expenditure (such as traffic control lights) was subject to close political pressure and corporate discretion was moderate. The Ministry of Transport and Highways had no real financial resources and its role was limited as will be seen. Its resources were institutional, especially with regard to access to its Minister, although it had no complementary statutory standing.

In Chapter One a typology was outlined which identified a number of structural factors which might encourage and enable organisations to act independently of political, mutual and other co-ordinative forces. This typology has been reflected in this chapter through the discussion of the financial and related institutional features of the New South Wales transport administration. It is possible to develop a behavioural typology based on financial factors, and in fact Wildavsky has done this to show how resource availability ("wealth") and certainty can affect budgetary processes.[59] His analysis is not directly relevant to the cases discussed here and will not be repeated but it can be seen from the preceding discussion that financial parameters are fundamental to organisational and system performance, especially with regard to new planning commitments. The importance of such parameters in practice will be seen in the following chapters.

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59.   Wildavsky, op. cit., especially pp. 260 ff. He uses terms such as wealth, predictability of income sources, political "capacity" (basically meaning stability) administrative capacity, growth rate and partisanship to analyse the circumstances under which his four main types of budgetary behaviour will develop. These types are: incremental, repetitive, supplemental and revenue. See especially his Fig. 13.1.

Main Roads and Traffic Post-1945

... in my nine years and eight months as Minister for
Transport, one of the continual festering sores was
that the D.M.R. was a law unto itself. It could be
at times co-operative, when it didn't want to be it
had the let-out of saying, well we're under another
Minister, you'll have to see him. Then because the
D.M.R. was an attachment to an important Ministry of
Local Government..., it meant that the D.M.R. virtually
made all of the decisions and that the Minister was the
cipher. Every now and then the Minister was invited to
take a ride in the helicopter or to go and open a
bridge or to go and open a four-lane highway, the band
would be out, the Minister would be suitably duchessed
and then he went back to his desk to do the other more
onerous tasks and the D.M.R. went happily on its way.

> Interview with the Hon. Milton Morris, M.L.A.
> (Appendix Two).

... in my view there was a great weakness on the
Government's side.... engineers being what they are
and trained to it I suppose, their main measure of
success in life is what they build and how much money
they spend in building it and it's very difficult to
change them.... Some of the planning for the main
road development of Sydney was in my view quite out of
this world and quite unnecessary.

> Interview with Mr N. McCusker, C.B.E.
> (Appendix Three).

The dominant feature of post-1945 transport planning in Sydney was the uncontrolled spread of usage of the automobile. The private ownership of the increasingly dominant transport technology had enormous effects on every aspect of urban administration but it was generally not matched by the development of adequate transport construction and management philosophies. That is not to say that there were no significant achievements; but even more than in the prewar period the governmental system was not capable of making positive, effective adjustments to basic change. There was a turning point in the early and mid-1970s primarily because of cumulative "external" societal pressures. This chapter will briefly examine the planning, construction and management of Sydney's network of major roads with particular attention to the effects of organisational factors.

After the War the Department of Main Roads continued to establish itself as the foremost planning organisation in Sydney. The land use/transport study which it had commenced in 1939 was resumed in 1943 and was well-advanced by the formation of the Cumberland County Council. (The Assistant Chief Engineer was appointed as the C.C.C.'s first Chief County Planner, while the Assistant Commissioner became a member of the Town and Country Planning Advisory Committee referred to in the preceeding chapter.) The land use and population surveys were published in 1946 as Part A of the "Main Road Development Plan for Sydney Metropolitan and County of Cumberland" and this became the basis of the C.C.C.'s own investigations. At the time the D.M.R.'s established expertise was an invaluable asset and it was almost totally successful in having the C.C.C. adopt what was nominally Part B of the M.R.D.P. (which has never been published), namely a system of proposed major urban roads. The M.R.D.P. became the core of the County Planning Scheme but it was not publicly analysed or justified by the D.M.R. or the C.C.C.[1] It was however the starting point of a continuous line of development of the D.M.R.'s urban planning philosophy.

The essential objective was explained in the C.C.C.'s Planning Scheme Report as the "cardinal planning precept of traffic separation", that is the provision of specialised roads for different types of traffic flows (for example to keep through

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1.   Sherrard, op. cit., p. 13, erroneously implied that the analytical Part B had been published and that the need for freeways had been indicated in the published section of the Main Roads Development Plan.

traffic off residential streets) and the concomitant establishment of environmental precincts.[2] The road hierarchy was to consist of seven types, namely National, Regional, Intra-Regional, Scenic and Tourist, Special Access (ports and airports), District (or transit) and Neighbourhood (residential access). The latter two were purely local.

The actual roads which were recommended were ostensibly derived by an elemental planning methodology which used the existing patterns of travel (as indicated in overview by an origin-destination study conducted by the Joint Committee on Traffic and Parking in 1947) as the basis for essentially supplementary new roads. The strategy was the total replacement of the existing radial road pattern, plus extra provision for inter-district movement by the construction of ring-roads. The plan called for new roads rather than the disruption of ribbon development along existing routes. The 8 National and Regional Roads, which were to have limited access from lower-category roads,[3] were generally aligned for convenience and least expense (possibly more than urban design), as indicated below:

(i)　　Northern Expressway (national) to Newcastle and Brisbane, through Drummoyne, Lane Cove Valley;

(ii)　　Western Expressway (national) to Parramatta running to the north of Parramatta Road on the line of minimum disturbance to existing development and then south to Penrith;

(iii)　North Western Expressway (national) branching from Western Expressway to Singleton;

(iv)　　South Western Expressway (national) leaving the Northern and Western Expressways at Broadway, "south through lines of weak development in Alexandria" and then via Wolli Creek Valley to the Hume Highway;

(v)　　Southern Expressway (national) south through Rockdale Peninsula "bordered by open space" and Taren Point crossing of Georges River;

(vi)　　Warringah Expressway (regional) to Manly and Warringah, drawing off Mosman transit traffic, with Middle Harbour bridge;

(vii)　South Eastern Regional Road connecting south-eastern suburbs and industrial area to the city centre. The development of Dowling Street was being investigated as an alternative (because of minimal commercial disturbance);

(viii) Eastern Regional Road from city by-passing Bondi Junction.

Moreover while the Expressway system was later extensively criticised because of its effects on traffic concentration in the

2.　C.C.C., _Planning Scheme Report_, op. cit., pp. 154, 162 and elsewhere.

3.　That is they were "expressways", the main characteristics of which are access control, grade-separated intersections and relatively high design speed. Freeways are a more sophisticated form within the same genre.

Central Business District, at that stage it was intended to effect such a concentration rather than by-pass the CBD. As the Planning Scheme Report said, "Recognising that an expressway system cannot collect or distribute traffic at one single point in a City Centre, a distributor road system is proposed around the Centre, providing expressway conditions to the immediate vicinity of city destinations". Beyond this the roads were presented without specific justification.

The D.M.R. expressed a flexible attitude towards the new roads, saying that they should be constructed only if immediately needed and ceased if expectations were not met.[4] The Department stated later in the 1950s that

> "When the future development of the system was planned, it was not intended that the construction of the freeways in the plan should necessarily be first undertaken, and, in the Department's view, that is still the position. The construction of freeways... should be undertaken only at the stage when further traffic relief cannot be obtained by other and less costly means."[5]

However three main points need to be made in this context. Firstly, the Department's traditional protagonist and principal client group, the N.R.M.A., had argued since the early 1940s at least that while the primary postwar task was "the removal of bottlenecks from main routes", in the future local circumstances could require a more ambitious approach (that is, freeways) along the lines of overseas precedent and "decisions should not be made that would block the path".[6] Secondly, the Department basically accepted this as its 1944/45 Annual Report showed, again with reference to the segregation of through traffic:

> From the studies made of traffic flow in pre-war years, it is apparent that the present Main Roads system of the County of Cumberland calls for substantial alteration and improvement both as regards the lay-out and the type of roads required. Estimates of future traffic movement indicate the need for the development of a complete system of radial and circumferential road routes, with special provision for the distribution of traffic in the city area and, as regards certain of the more important arterial routes, provision for the segregation of fast-moving motor traffic from slow-moving vehicular and pedestrian traffic.[7]

And finally, the Department became increasingly committed to its expressway plan. It obtained the basic legal ability through a 1945 amendment allowing the proclamation of "motorways", which

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4.   See Main Road Development Plan, Part A (1946), p. 13.

5.   D.M.R. Annual Report, 1956/57, p. 18.

6.   See "Post-War Road Works", Open Road, 22(4), 20th April, 1944, p. 1.

7.   D.M.R. Annual Report, 1944/45, p. 10.

contravened the traditional right of unlimited access by
residents and others to main roads. The motorway concept was
consistent with the initial M.R.D.P. Expressways but the
Department became increasingly committed to not only expressways
but the higher form, freeways, which represented the epitome of
overseas road technology. This happened at the same time that
the road strategy of the C.C.C.'s Planning Scheme was being
questioned, even by the C.C.C. and the Minister for Transport.
This divergence highlighted co-ordinative weaknesses.

The first Chief County Planner of the C.C.C. had been an
ex-D.M.R. officer and this was an important aspect of that
Department's institutional resources. However Mr Luker was
succeeded by Mr Rod Fraser, who has been discussed already. Fraser
returned from an overseas study tour in 1957 and concluded that
while the D.M.R.'s planning had been technically satisfactory, it
was unlikely that sufficient funds would ever be found for the
expressway system, while it was doubtful that it could be justified
anyway. He said that freeways were not a "permanent" solution to
traffic problems as demand was highly responsive to supply and
overseas freeways were already congested and inefficient for that
reason; while it seemed possible that "surface highways kept free
of roadside commercial development and with cross streets control-
led and reduced to a practical minimum would serve traffic needs
effectively".[8] As well the overseas planning profession was
predominantly looking to public transport rather than freeways on
the basis of economy, efficiency and better service to a wider
range of citizens. Fraser concluded,

> "I spent a good deal of my time studying the subject of
> arterial road planning .... and I am now more strongly
> of the opinion that a review of the County Roads in the
> Scheme is an urgent necessity".(9)

The Cumberland County Council followed this with its
Economics of Urban Expansion in 1958 in which it said:

> As the number and use of private cars increases,
> congestion and parking difficulties become more acute.
> Remedies in the form of expressways, parking stations
> and other improvements in highway construction and
> control are expensive and (according to overseas
> experience) merely intensify traffic and parking
> problems by encouraging even greater use of private
> transport...
>
> In the United States and Canada, the view is
> gaining support that public transport offers the only
> solution to traffic problems which threaten to choke

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8. R.D.L. Fraser, Report by the Chief County Planner on a Tour of
Europe and the United States in 1957 (Sydney: C.C.C., June 1958),
p. 10.

9. Ibid., p. 47 (emphasis added).

and paralyse metropolitan centres...[10]

(It must also be said however that its Annual Reports continued to lament the lack of progress with the 1948 County Roads.)

Following this, the Minister for Transport, the Hon. George Enticknap, M.L.A., visited North America and Europe in mid-1959 with the object of "ensuring that the Government would be fully informed of broad policy and practices in other parts of the world, having regard to the vast sums that are being spent in this State on the various forms of transport...".[11] Enticknap had succeeded the Hon. E. Wetherell (who had died in office) in March 1956, apparently on the condition that the heavy workload would be eased.[12] Premier Cahill agreed and the D.M.R. was transferred back (as before 1930) to the Minister for Local Government (Mr Renshaw) who then took the additional title of Minister for Highways. Enticknap and his successors were thereafter disadvantaged, as will be seen. He was particularly concerned after his trip that overseas freeways had proven to be failures without complementary development of rapid public transport systems, and that the congestion and accidents on (and costs of) American freeways denied their basic purpose. Enticknap made this point at length and in the same words that the D.M.R.'s critics used more than ten years later.[13]

Such criticisms, which had some community support, did not discourage the D.M.R. at all. It was now free of the formal land use influence of the Cumberland County Council and even of the Minister for Highways who had more onerous duties than the D.M.R., as the quote from the Hon. M.A. Morris at the start of this chapter indicated. The Department was able to proceed on a cycle of intensified design, preparedness (through financial reform) and construction.

Firstly, in the mid-1950s the Department decided that the major freeways should not terminate at the edge of the metropolitan area (as originally intended) but should extend as inter-urban roads as done in the U.S.A., England and Europe. Thus the length of freeways within the County of Cumberland was increased from the 1947 figure of 87 to 147 miles. Secondly,

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10. C.C.C., Economics of Urban Expansion (Sydney: C.C.C., 1958), pp. 12-13.

11. A.G. Enticknap, A Report by (the author) on his visit to North America and Europe, May to September 1959 (Sydney: roneo, 1959), p. 1.

12. See interview with the Hon. M.A. Morris (Appendix 2), pp. 2-3. This account has been confirmed by other sources, although the possibility of other factors cannot be precluded.

13. Enticknap, op. cit., pp. 7-8.

funds for new construction were limited but in 1956/57 the
Department called for tenders for the construction of the
Gladesville Bridge on the route of the North Western Freeway.
Tenders were to be on the basis of finance being provided by the
tenderer with repayment over not less than ten years.[14] The
design eventually was amended to consist of the largest single
span concrete arch bridge in the world, completed in late 1964.
This was a continuation of the strategy of "filling gaps" in the
existing main roads, using bridges of very high design standards —
other bridges designed and committed at about that time included
the Taren Point Bridge and the Tarban Creek, Fig Tree and
Silverwater bridges. These had very considerable value, including
a popular symbolic effect which must have had a positive impact
(possibly intended) on political opinion. To give some illustra-
tion of the intrinsic importance which was given to bridges
because of past low standards and the existence of two major (and
one other substantial) rivers, in its 1960-61 Annual Report the
D.M.R. included a map which showed the actual or proposed sites
of 29 "of the more important bridges in the Metropolitan area".
Of these, 6 were existing; 13 were existing bridges which were
intended to have greater width; and 10 were yet to be built.

The Department was not however successful in terms of the
construction of freeways in the 1950s, partly because of the
failure of road funds to match cost increases at a time of rapid
traffic growth and thus road wear.[15] The first stage of the
Cahill Expressway was finished by the Department of Railways and
Sydney City Council in 1958, this being the Circular Quay overhead
road referred to in Chapter Eight. Between 1959 and 1962 the
Council extended the road to Woolloomooloo, this representing the
total freeway construction of the 1950s, apart from bridges.
(Half the cost of that Expressway came from Harbour Bridge funds.)
Until the Hon. P.D. Hills became Minister for Local Government and
Highways in 1959, no real progress was made. Then however,
partly under his impetus, two major changes occurred, namely an
extension of the Department's financial base, and a start on the
final design and construction of a number of major expressways but
to higher design standards (American freeway standards in fact).

In 1959 the D.M.R.'s Design and Urban Planning Engineer,
Mr M.V. Douglas (the officer largely responsible for the
M.R.D.P.[16]), went overseas to compare Sydney's planned express-
ways with those of America. Subsequently, as the D.M.R. Annual

14. See D.M.R. Annual Report, 1956/57, p. 10.

15. See ibid., p. 11, also nearly every other A.R. of the period.

16. See Sherrard, op. cit., p. 13.

Report for 1959/60 noted,

> The Department has continued with the preparation of
> outline designs for proposed new roads so that the
> boundaries of the land required for road purposes may
> be fixed. On freeway design, base maps for 110 miles
> of freeway have been completed. During the year a
> large proportion of the outline designs has been
> reviewed to incorporate, where necessary, improved
> standards of design now being adopted in similar work
> overseas and investigated by the Department's Design
> and Urban Planning Engineer during his visit abroad in
> 1959.(17)

This was only part of the story of the development. The
bridge design work had been largely internal but now the require-
ments of the freeway standards led the Department to start a long
relationship with American engineering consultants, De Leuw,
Cather and Company. The same Annual Report advised that during
that year the "Government (had) decided in principle to proceed...
with lengths of the Warringah Expressway (portion from Sydney
Harbour Bridge to Ernest Street, North Sydney) and the Western
Distributor (portion from near city markets area to Ultimo)".
Neither the Department nor the City Council had sufficient staff
to undertake the survey and design work while the local consult-
ants did not have appropriate experience. It was claimed that for
these reasons De Leuw, Cather had been called in.

De Leuw, Cather's role was much wider than that. They were
to prepare designs and investigations of virtually all of the
inner M.R.D.P. expressways,(18) namely:

(i)   Western Distributor between Harbour Bridge and city
markets;

(ii)   Eastern Distributor from the Cahill Expressway to
Moore Park;

(iii)   the Southern Expressway from Glebe to Alexandria;

(iv)   the Western Expressway from Ultimo to Annandale;

(v)   the interchange in Ultimo of the Southern, North
Western and Western Expressways; and

(vi)   the Warringah Expressway to Cammeray.

They were also to prepare designs for vehicular overpasses at
Anzac Parade and Allison Road, Kensington, and at Wakehurst
Parkway and Warringah Road, French's Forest; and as well to
advise on the design of the outer-metropolitan Expressways. The
concurrence of the Sydney City Council had been obtained where
needed. In terms of specific commitments, tenders were called for
the first stage of the Warringah Expressway in late 1964, the

17. D.M.R. Annual Report, 1959/60, p. 111.

18. Ibid., p. 12. Cf D.M.R. Annual Report, 1961/62, pp. 15 ff.

expressway to Newcastle in 1963; and in September 1963 Mr Hills
announced that the North Western Expressway from Druitt Street,
City, across Darling Harbour to Pyrmont, Glebe and then by
tunnel (apparently Mr Hills' own contribution) to Annandale would
be started by the D.M.R. Some principal bridge and related
sections of the North Western and Southern Expressways (and so on)
were well in hand. (More will be said about the magnitude of these
commitments later.) Prima facie, the D.M.R. had answered the
criticisms of the Cumberland County Council and Mr Enticknap and
others with attack rather than defence.

De Leuw, Cather's first formal report consisted of an origin
and destination (travel pattern) survey in 1960;[19] the second was
an assignment study, essentially of the gravity type,[20] including
a general location study (no details given), capacity analyses,
preliminary geometric designs and the establishment of
elementary road design criteria, for the Western and Eastern
Distributors, Ultimo Interchange and portions of the Western and
Warringah Expressways only.[21] These roads were to "comprise the
initial stage of a more extensive expressway system". The general
method of assignment was the projection of traffic flows to 1980
(using an expected metropolitan population of 2,900,000) and then
allocation between designed routes on the basis of relative travel
times on the expressway and non-expressway routes — a very simple
analysis if compared to overseas studies of the Chicago Area
Transportation Study type. The inner portions of the original
Main Roads Development Plan were tested for the projected 1960 and
1980 traffic flows: it was adequate for the former but found to
accommodate only 45 per cent of the 1980 load if operated as part
of the overall 1948 scheme.[22] As well, "Too many routes would
converge in the Ultimo area, and additional expressways would be
needed to bypass traffic around the City of Sydney". De Leuw,
Cather therefore removed the connection of the North Western
Expressway into the Ultimo Interchange and rather extravagantly
added a north-south expressway and a new harbour crossing, an east-
west expressway, and a new expressway link between the North
Western and Western Expressways near Haberfield. They deleted a
number of access turns at interchanges between freeways. The
initial stage system then consisted of 10.7 miles of expressway,

19. De Leuw, Cather & Co, Sydney Area Origin and Destination
Survey (December 1960).

20. See R.P. Gibbons, "Transportation Planning in Sydney, Post
1945: Politics, the Environment, and Sociospatial Dynamics"
(Colloquium paper, Department of Government and Public Administra-
tion, University of Sydney, April 1975), for brief discussion.

21. De Leuw, Cather & Co, Geometric Design Study Sydney Area
Expressways Sydney, Australia (San Francisco, August 1961).

22. Ibid., p. vii; cf pp. 13-17.

costing an estimated $154,126,000 (being $68,726,000 for right of way and $85,400,000 for construction). These were the only costs considered, but the consultants said the following of benefits:

> The economic justification for the large capital outlay required for the expressway program is clearly provided through our analyses. Estimated savings in time and operating costs amount to some ($222,000,000) during the first 20-year period. These direct benefits will continue for many years in the future. Less tangible, social and economic benefits will be experienced from the expressway development. Through traffic on the existing street system will be diverted, traffic accidents will be reduced, public transit operation will be benefited, and, finally, growth of new and existing centres will result in the enhancement of property values throughout the metropolitan area.[23]

A third report was presented in typescript to the D.M.R. on July 20th, 1962, being a report by Captain Charles M. Noble of De Leuw, Cather on the remainder of the Main Roads Development Plan, with special reference to future loads on inner city streets and to an additional Harbour crossing at Greenwich. It was not a critical appraisal:

> The original concept twenty years ago was a system of surface arterials that would serve each segment of the Sydney Metropolitan area. As time passed and highway development in other parts of the world progressed, the planners in the Department concluded that the backbone system of the metropolitan highway network must be of the full expressway or freeway type of facility capable of carrying with safety and dispatch five times as much traffic as an ordinary street. This was a wise decision.

And,

> Because the automotive vehicle promotes an expanding economy and creates wealth, it is in the national interest that additional funds in substantial amount be allotted the Department of Main Roads for highway construction. Inasmuch as the urban areas contain the great majority of the population of the country a large portion of available funds should be allotted to such areas for critically needed highway improvement programs.[24]

Noble made several suggestions (in prose akin to the above), an interesting one being that the D.M.R. had designed too many interchanges on the routes being considered. Noble stated that the reason why overseas expressways became congested was that their designers had fallen into the trap of aiming at high benefit-cost ratios and easy access to the roads.[25] He also wanted the planning of the second bridge to proceed so that the right of way could be preserved.[26] Noble made no suggestions

23. Ibid., pp. ix-x.

24. C.M. Noble, "Report on Review of Expressway Plans Sydney Metropolitan Area" (typescript, De Leuw, Cather & Co, 1962; held in D.M.R. Library) pp. 2-3.

25. Ibid., pp. 9-10.

26. Ibid., pp. 16-17.

as to the location of the proposed freeways and largely confined his report to technical design matters.

De Leuw, Cather presented a study completing the preliminary geometric design of the freeway system in May 1965. This report recommended the addition of the following roads to the Main Roads Development Plan: an east-west and Eastern Belt Expressway; an additional north-south expressway and new harbour crossing; the elimination of the eastern section of the Eastern Expressway and the extension of Oxford Street in lieu thereof; and an additional highway along Port Jackson. They also suggested extensive modifications to the surface road system.[27] There are signs in this report that De Leuw, Cather considered some of the original freeways undesirable in terms of environmental disturbance. The new Eastern Belt Expressway, for instance, "will serve most of the eastern and southeastern suburbs. It will collect and distribute traffic from streets radiating from the city and relieve congestion on the major streets intercepted. Located on the periphery of the heavily developed industrial, recreational, educational and residential areas, the Eastern Belt Expressway avoids the extensive property damage which would be required on other alternative locations considered".[28]

In this report the consultants also gave the first indication of the type of analysis that they had used when making their critical traffic assignments. The analyses were based almost entirely on the United States Bureau of Public Roads' Highway Capacity Manual 1950 and similar rule books; result:

> As input data for the computer, the existing arterial street network was coded by assigning numbers to each intersection within the study area and assigning cost and distance values for each link between intersections. Similarly, the proposed surface roads and expressways for each alternative system tested were coded for the computer. The most economical arterial route and the most economical expressway route between each zone centroid were determined by the computer. The origin-destination data were then assigned to the selected street and expressway networks...[29]

Obviously this analysis must produce a very limited notion of "economical". However the main weakness was that too few competing alternatives were tested: there was no discussion of different modes, different purposes of travel, or different individual cost and demand functions. (It is a self-fulfilling expectation that freeways are needed if travellers are forced to use the freeways when built.) This type of assignment study effectively assumed the need for freeways because freeways were

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27. De Leuw, Cather & Co, Recommended Expressway System Inner Metropolitan Area Sydney, Australia (May 1965), pp. 1 ff, 25 ff.
28. Ibid., p. 26.
29. Ibid., p. 43.

"fastest" and the arguments of the C.C.C. and Enticknap were
completely ignored. This was characteristic of the D.M.R.'s
independence.

The construction of the Cahill Expressway and the first stage
of the Warringah Expressway belied the basic financial abilities
of the D.M.R. because of the Harbour Bridge funding and, to the
extent that the M.R.D.P. had been officially adopted earlier, the
abilities of the overall urban planning system. The Department
was of course constantly conscious of this and frequently
published prognoses in its Annual Reports of the effects of
inflation on the real value of its revenue. We come now to the
second major development while Mr Hills was Deputy Premier and
Minister for Local Government and Highways, namely the evaluation
and extension of the D.M.R.'s financial base.

In 1961 the National Association of Australian State Road
Authorities published a survey of road investment needs for the
1960s, consisting of sub-surveys by the D.M.R. and N.S.W. local
councils and their counterparts in other States. The survey showed
that "to carry out a reasonable and needed programme of Main Roads
works during the next ten years would require a revenue about 60
per cent greater than that in sight from present sources at
current tax levels".[30] (Expenditure needs were estimated at
$1,030 million and revenue at $400 million.) The Commonwealth had
just decided to divert grants to rural roads other than Main Roads
while the Department pointed out in its 1958-59 Annual Report
that "The discontinuance of a relation between grants and petrol
tax receipts is contrary to the most logical method of financing
of Australia's principal roads, i.e. by road users and property
owners, and disregards the highly successful example of the
United States".[31]

Then in late 1960 Mr Hills convened a meeting of road user
organisations and local government bodies to discuss the D.M.R.'s
ten-year programme and its financing. "The programme was accepted
by those present as being satisfactory. The conference then
addressed itself to the problem of raising the additional funds
required to carry out the programme."[32] Fuel taxes were
favoured and the meeting agreed that the Commonwealth should
return more money from this source. However it was thought that
an extra $310 million could be raised over normal revenue in the
decade (excluding fuel tax). This comprised: State Government

30. D.M.R. Annual Report, 1960/61, p. 18.

31. Pp. 16 ff. See The Roadmakers, various places, on such
extremely important aspects of overall Commonwealth policy which
cannot be discussed here.

32. D.M.R. Annual Report, 1960/61, p. 18.

grants ($100 million or 32 per cent); increase in drivers'
licences of 200 per cent ($60 million or 19 per cent); finance
from private investment sources, local and overseas ($40 million,
13 per cent of total); loans ($40 million also); increase of
one-quarter in motor vehicle taxes ($50 million or 16 per cent);
and revenue from private operators in competition with the
Railways under the State Transport (Co-ordination) Act ($20
million, 6 per cent). Regarding the third item, the Government
had promised in its election campaign in 1959 that private
investors would be allowed to tender for the Sydney-Newcastle
Expressway and this was done, but in the end the Government
allocated special loan monies for this work. (It will be recalled
that a similar arrangement was proposed for the Gladesville Bridge
but expectations had not been met then either.)

Near the end of 1962 Mr Hills announced a reduced (but
committed) version of the earlier programme, this one covering the
six years to 1968. The programme provided for an expenditure of
$200 million on Country Main Roads (including part of the Sydney-
Newcastle Expressway), $55 million on metropolitan Main Roads and
a separate $53 million on metropolitan expressways. The latter
allocation comprised the following:

(i)   Warringah Expressway to Cammeray;

(ii)   Tarban Creek and Taren Point Bridges;

(iii)   North Western Expressway to Glebe;

(iv)   Road tunnels under William and Oxford Streets at
Taylor Square; and

(v)   By-pass roads around Parramatta, Sutherland and
Penrith.(33)

This was still regarded as insufficient by the D.M.R. A second,
more extensive, N.A.A.S.R.A. survey was published in 1963 for the
ten years from 1964 which showed that $1,090 million "should" be
spent on Main Roads of all types in N.S.W. (other than expressways),
$650 million on local roads, and $730 million on expressways in
and between Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong.(34)

Significant steps were however taken by Mr Hills to improve
the D.M.R.'s financial abilities. The Sydney Harbour Bridge
(Further Works) and Main Roads (Amendment) Act of 1960(35)
provided that the cost of conversion of the tram tracks to road
lanes on the Bridge, the first stage (and half the cost of the
second) of the Cahill Expressway, and the land needed for the

33. D.M.R. Annual Report, 1962/63, pp. 14, 16.

34. Ibid., p. 14.

35. See The Roadmakers, p. 242 for other relevant legislation.

first stage of the Warringah Expressway, would all come from the Harbour Bridge Account. It also enabled the payment of the cost of design and investigation of the Inner City Expressways from the County of Cumberland Main Roads Fund, and also the cost of "planning the construction of and designing any such road which the Commissioner for Main Roads has determined shall be an Inner City Expressway" (Section 12 (1) (C) of the Main Roads Act, emphasis added). (The Commissioner obtained statutory control of Main Roads within the City of Sydney in 1963.) The authority to use Bridge revenue for the acquisition of properties for the next stages of the Warringah Expressway was given by legislative amendment in 1962. Then in December 1962 motor vehicle taxation rates were increased by one-third (rather than the one-quarter discussed in 1960) to yield an expected increase of $6 million a year. At the same time vehicle ownership was increasing rapidly and with it motor taxation receipts.

The most important step was taken in 1963 when the Commissioner for Main Roads was empowered to raise public loans under the new Part VII A of the Main Roads Act. This was apparently done because of the work load in the metropolitan area. Until then all loan funds had come from allocations from the State's General Loan Account. The degree of additional discretion was small at best because the volume of borrowings still had to be approved by the Loan Council, but more importantly the change placed the burden of debt servicing on the Department. (Although it would have also enabled the D.M.R. to offset costs against toll revenue, especially on the profitable Sydney-Newcastle Expressway, in fact that road was funded from special State loan allocations.) Of the total cost of the first section of the Warringah Expressway (completed in mid-1968) of $25,656,000, the Harbour Bridge Account met 63 per cent, State loans only 1 per cent, and Departmental borrowings 36 per cent.[36]

This detailed account illustrates the degree of the Labor Government's commitment to urban freeways. To generalise, the rest of the 1960s followed the pattern set down in the early years of the decade. The Department of Main Roads proceeded with the design of its inner freeway system broadly along the lines recommended by De Leuw, Cather, with a major revision of the M.R.D.P. in 1967, and was able to obtain the Liberal Government's concurrence in principle to additional works. The pragmatic approach of the 1950s (quoted above) was lost.[37] For example in

36. See ibid., pp. 242-3.

37. It is doubtful that the Liberal Government kept in touch with the D.M.R.'s planning, as seen by Mr Morris' comments (Appendix 2)

1971 the Liberal Minister for Local Government and Highways, the Hon. P.H. Morton, M.L.A. sought and obtained a substantial increase in motor vehicle taxation.[38] He said in debate that in the following 3 years (in the term of the current Commonwealth Aid Roads Act), $193,000,000 would be spent in the County of Cumberland, while expressways would account for $147,000,000 ($49 million a year). This consisted of $9 million on the Eastern Distributor and Eastern Expressway, $32 million on the Western Distributor and Western Expressway, $13 million for the South Western Expressway, $26 million for the Southern Expressway and $67 million for the Sydney-Newcastle Expressway.[39] This was still seen to be well below warranted investment.

While the development of the M.R.D.P. had been largely continuous in the mid- and late-1960s there had been significant initiatives. Firstly in 1965 the County of Cumberland Passenger Transport Advisory Committee had been set up to co-ordinate metropolitan passenger transport policy. This had been in part a half-hearted election ploy which lacked power and proved to be all but totally ineffective, as will be seen in Chapter Nine. (The latter comment applies to the former split of Ministerial responsibility between the Ministers for Transport and Highways. These factors highlight the significance of the subsequent vehemence of the then Chairman of CUMTAC, Mr McCusker, and then Minister for Transport, Mr Morris.[40]) Nonetheless when the Sydney Region Outline Plan was released in 1968, the lack of a strategic transport plan was appreciated[41] and from as early as 1966 CUMTAC took the establishment of the Sydney Area Transportation Study (SATS) upon itself.

The SATS investigation was essentially a straight-line extension of the De Leuw, Cather methodology, being based on the same types of data collection and processing and using standard American computer-package methodology. In fact the SATS analysis was entirely false. It contained a reasonable amount of wider analysis (environment, societal considerations, public transport

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and those of Mr McCusker (Appendix 3, pp. 5-6). Other interviews have supported this view. The theoretical discussion in the Introduction regarding internalisation of values and organisational independence has direct relevance.

38. See the excerpts from Parliamentary Debates in P.H. Morton, "Funding Finance for Main Roads Works", Main Roads, 37(4), June 1972, pp. 102-105.

39. Ibid., p. 105.

40. Interview with Mr N. McCusker (Appendix 3), pp. 5-6; interview with the Hon. M. Morris (Appendix 2), pp. 1-2.

41. State Planning Authority, Sydney Region Outline Plan (Sydney, 1968), p. 36 and elsewhere.

and so on) and ostensibly "produced" a best combination of new roads, public transport and related policy initiatives. However the recommended road programme was all but totally the current Main Roads Development Plan, that is the D.M.R. submission. (This is especially so if the phasing of the recommended expenditure is considered.) To a great extent this was a consequence of constraints imposed by past planning, the relatively superior financial position of the D.M.R. vis-a-vis the P.T.C., and the influence of the Department. Of the expenditure recommended to take place between 1974 and 1990, that is $2,833 million, 46 per cent was devoted to urban highways (30 per cent to the 340 miles of new freeways and expressways). Virtually identical proportions applied in respect of total recommended expenditure to the year 2000.[42]

The SATS road programme was a far more extensive and intensive system of expressways than had been suggested in the 1940s or 1950s but importantly it was very similar to the M.R.D.P. as revised internally by the D.M.R. and was fully consistent with the grid highway system espoused in the Sydney Region Outline Plan. However by the early 1970s the Department had begun to encounter substantial social opposition to the disruptive effects of road construction, starting in Paddington and extending to the established working class inner western suburbs. While the impressive technical presentation of SATS was intended to legitimise the M.R.D.P., in fact it helped to concentrate attention on the extent of the threat which that internal Plan posed for residential districts of all types. The immediate point of conflict was Ultimo and Glebe, where the Australian Labor Ministers for Transport and for Urban and Regional Development were able to use the pre-approval clauses of the Commonwealth road grants legislation to help halt the demolition of certain condemmed (and not immediately intended for construction)terraces. However the implications of the M.R.D.P. were felt in many quarters, in the Lane Cove Valley, Woolloomooloo, Royal National Park, Paddington and so on, and which contributed substantially to discrediting SATS and to a reappraisal of the overall direction of road (and public transport) planning in 1975-76.[43]

CUMTAC had been replaced by URTAC in 1973 and while this was

42. See SATS, Vol. 3, Passenger Transport Systems, pp. 1-36 ff.

43. The importance of the social reaction to the D.M.R.'s planning is not underestimated but it cannot be traced here. See Gibbons in Painter, Gibbons and Brezzo, op. cit., pp. 48-9; also on various aspects A. Jakubowicz, "The City Game", in D. Edgar (ed), Social Change in Australia (Melbourne: Cheshire 1974); M.M. Camina, "Public Participation - An Australian Dimension", The Planner, 61(6), 1975; and numerous other similar works.

essentially a cosmetic change, URTAC began to develop so that by
1975 it was able to break down institutional barriers to a
significant extent and produce a realistic report on the short-
term planning situation. In 1975 the Transport and Highways
portfolios were reunited under the Hon. Wal Fife, M.L.A.,
successor to the long-serving Mr Morris, and he reputedly recognis-
ed the weaknesses of the then Government's transport policy and
sought two things from URTAC. First, he wanted advice on short-
term policy needs to clear up the confusion which had resulted
from SATS. Secondly, the current conditions of resource scarcity
had to be reconciled with many pressing needs in a way that would
not prejudice future action and would maximise short-term benefits.
URTAC was generally successful in these two objects and produced
a Report in February 1976 which was immediately adopted by the
Liberal Government (it was in fact an election year).[44]

The URTAC Report shifted emphasis away from freeways and
expressways, principally because they were regarded as excessively
expensive, towards selective investment in new road works but more
importantly towards policies designed to make better use of the
existing investment in roads and public transport systems. The
Report avoided mentioning the SATS/M.R.D.P. arterial road
programme and instead proposed a 10-year programme of $27 million
a year on 14 nominated major construction projects and $13 million
a year on smaller works. It stated its long-term objectives as:

> "(a) the development of cross-regional routes where it
> is unrealistic to expect major public transport
> facilities other than buses to be provided, even in the
> long term;
>
> (b) the development of routes which redirect the growth
> of traffic away from the Central Business District to
> major regional centres;
>
> (c) the development of arterial roads to by-pass the
> major regional centres."[45]

The 14 major projects were still consistent with the D.M.R.'s
current expectations (and were in fact the works nominated by the
Department) but they were nonetheless in marked contrast to the
SATS recommendations. To assist the essentially pragmatic
approach, URTAC recommended the postponement or abandonment of
some major works such as the Eastern Suburbs Railway past Bondi
Junction, North Western Expressway past Darling Harbour, the
Glenfield-East Hills rail connection and several quadruplication
projects, and the Eastern Freeway beyond Darlinghurst.

An extremely significant feature of the URTAC Report was the

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44. See Chapter Nine below for general background.
45. URTAC, Report (Sydney, 1976), p. 11.

emphasis it gave to traffic management as a complement to construction projects. Traffic planning will be examined shortly but it is essential to note that URTAC extended the role of traffic management past the traditional domain of road safety and intersection "control" and the like, to being an essential element in positive planning. URTAC's major recommendations and identification of measures of further potential in this area were "in principle" only because the Traffic Authority had not yet been set up and such policy issues were left to it, but increased funding was sought and a wide range of specific local improvements were listed in the Report's Appendix 2.

Since the 1976 URTAC Report the new Labor Government has substantially changed the context of main roads planning in Sydney. It had undertaken to review the D.M.R.'s expressways and on taking office it investigated the long- and medium-term needs of the metropolis, apparently with the aid of the Urban Transport Study Group (a continuation of the SATS effort under the direction of the Ministry of Transport and Highways and URTAC). Consequently the abandonment of some sections of the M.R.D.P. and the modification of others were announced, subordinating expressways without ignoring their potential role. The Wran Government has so far completed the cycle of reassessment started by the C.C.C. and Enticknap in the late 1950s, although it is too early to judge whether a "balanced" investment programme will be achieved or whether external or political factors will force a change in emphasis. In particular the enormous expenditure on public transport systems in recent years has not been matched by suitable policy initiatives, especially in the use of buses to serve specific geographical deficiencies, and expressway and public transport investment have not yet been reconciled fully.

It was seen in Chapter Four that in the inter-War period a conscious effort had been made to investigate the potential for traffic management in the realisation that it was not sufficient to build roads, their use had to be managed and fitted into the total transport context. This effort was apparently not renewed to any significant extent after 1945, at least not publicly. The tram/bus controversy had lost its impetus. A reputedly high standard of expertise was maintained in the Department of Road Transport and Tramways and then the Department of Motor Transport, although responsibility was shared with the Police Department and local councils (particularly in the CBD). However attention was focussed on the reduction of the fatality rate in accidents and on local traffic measures such as the introduction of traffic lights. Unfortunately this area of urban policy has been extremely poorly documented but as already noted the traffic authorities appeared to

have performed well. Traffic signal investment was always in backlog but this was inevitable because of definitional arrangements of "needs". SATS noted that at the end of 1971 there were 569 intersections controlled by traffic signals and there were 263 additional locations at which lights were "warranted".[46] However both in terms of technology and total effort the traffic signal programme had progressed well, although such a judgement must be tentative.

More fundamentally, the post-1945 period is best regarded as a long period of relative inertia between the initial awareness of traffic problems under the impact of the motor vehicle, and the new awareness after 1976 induced by resource scarcity and obvious need for reform. For most of the postwar period Governments left the private motorists to make free use of the road system, only intervening when congestion was excessive or to set general safety constraints. Even the most anachronistic road rules were not changed. There is no clear or simple explanation for that attitude. Both the N.R.M.A. and motorist groups and the traffic engineering profession sought reform. In 1963 the Department of Motor Transport introduced a complex system of television monitoring and computer control to 110 traffic signals so as to ease congestion in the CBD. In June 1967 the same Department declared most of Parramatta Road as a "clearway" to eliminate kerbside parking in periods of heavy traffic and this concept was quickly applied to most other major roads. Co-ordinated signals were first tried on Parramatta Road, unsuccessfully at first, but the D.M.T. has developed its technology to a very high standard and successfully implemented it on several critical roads. (In 1971 there were 13 such systems of three or more linked sites and that programme was accelerated in later years.[47]) Most importantly, the 1976 URTAC Report recommended a revolution in road use through the extension of the priority road concept to all Main Roads and most of the important unclassified roads. This would replace the give-way-to-the-right rule almost totally. It might be remembered that the 1928 Report of the Traffic Advisory Committee suggested a move in the same direction (see Chapter Four).

Traffic management has become a very active policy field with a common philosophy of making the most of existing roads while also at least partially placing the use of the private automobile (and trucks) in a wider social context. The Traffic Authority, which replaced an ineffectual Traffic Advisory Committee which had

46. SATS, Vol. 1, Base Year Data Report, p. III-38.

47. See URTAC Report, Section E and Appendix A for a fairly comprehensive (though non-historical) discussion of traffic management.

been set up in 1964 (see below), has demonstrated the ability to deal positively with Sydney's problems although it is constrained by membership and particularly by perceived political constraints from more "radical" measures (for example traffic restraint on a special spatial basis, such as in the CBD or Parramatta) and supporting investment which have been used successfully overseas. However the Traffic Authority has been the only agency to approach a firm policy on the development of a hierarchy of roads through its attitudes on road closures[48] and this is important in historical terms.

In conclusion, main road planning and traffic management have had uneven records in the post-1945 period. The D.M.R. had great success in its own terms in the planning of an extensive system of high-standard roads, and in having that plan accepted officially by the C.C.C. and S.P.A. It was similarly successful in repelling attacks on its plans in the late 1950s. However the Department was not able to obtain substantial commitments for its expressways and then freeways for a long time, especially considering that compared with public transport administration the money costs involved were not then unreasonable. It was also not able to positively affect the pattern of development of the metropolis for while the automobile had a tremendous impact, its use was unplanned and undirected. Nonetheless the Department's planning successes were significant indicators of the relative magnitude of its institutional (that is, statutory, financial, political and societal) resources. Traffic management can be regarded to a large extent as the reverse of main roads planning — largely ignored while road planners were optimistic and dominant but favoured otherwise. This and the weaknesses of the D.M.R. planning from a system viewpoint and long periods of inertia and lack of practical achievement, were not characteristic of effective urban transport administration. The 1976 URTAC Report was a sign of the beginning of fundamental improvement and (as will be seen later) URTAC could have sufficient momentum to sustain the change.

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48. See Traffic Authority, Guidelines for Road Closures (Sydney: Traffic Authority, December 1977).

Public Transport

... the interdependencies in (British Rail)
operations are such that any precipitate
change forced by an outsider could very
easily, in the hands of an uncooperative
management, cause more real harm than
apparent good. Railways are one industry,
which must be given guidelines and constraints
within which to solve their own problems.

Stewart Joy, The Train That Ran Away
(1973).

Controversy over various aspects of organisational performance has been a recurrent feature of the administration of public transport services in New South Wales. The Public Transport Commission was established in October 1972 with the tasks of re-organising and co-ordinating train and bus (and then ferry) services and especially with the introduction of a modern managerial system into the massive bureaucracies controlling those services. The P.T.C. is the third experiment in a series of major structural reforms, the previous ones occurring in the early 1930s and early 1950s. The respective Governments acted on an assumption that the basic causes of problems of deficits, failure to adapt to changing conditions, high cost levels and the like were essentially administrative in origin. Each of these experiments failed, partly because of incorrect prescription and the inherent difficulty of the task but more importantly because the separate organisations were too separate and even different to want to or try to divert their momentum.

This chapter will examine the administrative and planning record of public transport since 1945 with particular emphasis on co-ordination and control and the explanation of the failure to maintain the effectiveness of train and bus services in a changing society. (Relatively little attention will be given to ferries because of their limited actual coverage.) A critical analysis will also be made of the Transport and Highways Commission and the Public Transport Commission.[1]

As has been seen already the Transport (Division of Functions) Act of 1932 established three statutory transport authorities, the "Departments" of Railways, Road Transport and Tramways, and Main Roads, each of which was under a Commissioner. Before 1945 only one other major change took place, apart from special wartime measures. In 1943 the N.S.W. Transport Administration Act reversed Bruxner's earlier decision and made the Commissioners for Main Roads and Road Transport and Tramways subject to the direction and control of the Minister for Transport. This provision was not extended to Railways until seven years later.

Both the metropolitan rail and tram systems had substantial problems, particularly the trams whose patronage started to fall

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1. There are no general secondary sources which cover the topics discussed in this chapter. Detailed financial statistics were compiled from Annual Reports and the N.S.W. Year Book for various years and in most cases specific sources will not be cited, to simplify footnotes and also because such sources are very obvious.

before and immediately after the War. Both had operational and
financial problems and both were subject to criticisms of
inadequate investment and suspicions of ineffective management.
The importance of such factors in contemporary and historical terms
will be discussed in the following. First however it is essential
to note a most significant development in 1947, the commitment of
the Labor Government to the expansion of the role of the urban rail
system.

As was said earlier, the rail lobby of Sydney had great
success in 1913, 1915 and the 1920s in obtaining funds for the
construction of the Harbour Bridge, city underground and suburban
electrification, and in fact succeeded to the point that railway
construction was the crux of the conventional wisdom of urban
planning even after the adverse technological developments of the
late 1910s and 1920s. The city underground was not completed in
the 1930s and this remained a work of high priority, one that was
in the forefront of deliberations in the Reconstruction preparations
of the early 1940s. However more importantly perhaps there was
still sufficient support for railways for the Government to commit
itself to the commencement of a number of significant rail works,
in addition to the Circular Quay Station and associated overhead
road, when the City and Suburban Electric Railways (Amendment) Act
of 1947 was passed. This provided for an Eastern Suburbs line to
Bondi Junction and Bondi broadly along the alignment of the 1915
route and later inner loop, being about 15 miles of single line at
a cost of $19 million excluding resumptions; and a Southern
Eastern Suburbs Railways to the Cricket Ground and Kingsford via
Oxford Street consisting of 12 miles of single track railway at a
cost of $13 million. (A line from this railway to the Airport was
apparently added.[2]) Further a Southern Suburbs line was included
to run from Redfern through the near-southern industrial suburbs to
just north of the Airport, with linkages to the established systems
at Redfern and Sydenham.[3] Construction was commenced in 1947 on
the extensive tunnelling works for the Eastern Suburbs and Southern
Suburbs lines but ceased in 1952 partly because of the obviously
excessive number and geographical concentration of routes and
partly because of unfavourable economic conditions. The 1947 Act
was a partial recognition of the structural limitations of the
metropolitan rail system but it did not provide for the northern,
western or southern areas which had inadequate services, if any.

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2. Minutes of Transport and Highways Commission, 21st January
1952, p. 146.

3. See Second Reading Speech by the Hon. M. O'Sullivan, N.S.W.
Parliamentary Debates, Session 1946-47, vol. 183, 19th March 1947,
pp. 1678 ff.

The combination of the usual problems of tram operations in the increasingly crowded metropolis and of poor financial results led the Government to import three public transport experts from London in 1948 to advise on the road passenger transport systems. The three were G.F. Sinclair, C.B.E., A.F. Andrews and E.R. Ellen and they reported in April 1949 to the Premier, James McGirr (who had been the first Minister for Transport, from March to May 1932).[4] They made extremely important recommendations in a number of areas of which three will be examined.[5] (Engineering and operational improvements were recommended but these need not be dealt with here.)

First, the Sinclair Report recommended the phasing out of tram services and their replacement by motor buses. They saw substantial operating and economic advantages as well as the greater ability of buses in the reduction of congestion and adjustment to changing patterns of development. The need for systematic replacement was overdue as the basic policy had been determined long before. They provided a programme of replacement which ended in 1960 approximately; in fact the last tram ran in early 1961.

Secondly, the Report endorsed the 1947 rail extensions rather circumspectly by saying that those works would improve the standard of service and would allow road services to be run as feeders, not in competition. It was noted that "Should the railway extensions not be proceeded with, the highly desirable benefits of saving the city from traffic congestion and the benefits of high speed travel will be lost, but even so the bus system which we are proposing will be an advantage to the community as a whole...."[6] (The tram conversion has since been lamented by some but the conditions of the time were clearly in favour of the recommendations.)

Finally and most importantly, the three experts were charged with advising on "what long-term policy should be adopted to ensure that the system (sic) is best adapted to meet public transport requirements efficiently and economically".[7] In doing

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4.   The Report was apparently prepared under the Premier and the Minister, Mr O'Sullivan. Principal acknowledgements were to the Premier's Department and Treasury. See G.F. Sinclair, A.F. Andrews and E.R. Ellen, "Report on Road Passenger Transport Services in the Sydney Metropolitan and Newcastle Areas" (Sydney: N.S.W. Government Printer, 1949), p. 50.

5.   See ibid., pp. 45-49 for summary.

6.   Ibid., p. 37.

7.   Ibid., p. 3.

so they went beyond road transport and recommended that considerations of co-ordination, efficient administration and planning required the establishment of stronger central co-ordinative agencies. They said that the Commissioner for Railways should be subject to the direction of the Minister, and more importantly sought the creation of a "New South Wales Transport Commission" and the appointment of a "Director of Transport and Highways" as its full-time chairman. As the Report said, "At this critical stage in the development of transport in N.S.W. all services should be controlled by a single authority, so that the pattern for the future can be woven to the most efficient and economical standard".[8] These recommendations had undoubtedly been fully discussed at least with McGirr and O'Sullivan.

The rationale for the proposal was sound but the prescription did not meet the Report's own standards. It was said that the development of the various services "should be freed from the competing claims of various Department (sic)", and that road and rail investment "should only be sanctioned when an overall traffic plan is approved which will ensure that... each system is operating in its own sphere".[9] More specific benefits were expected, for example the elimination of the situation whereby rail fares were reduced on weekends whereas bus and tram fares were increased.

The Transport Commission as envisaged was to "be responsible for the control" of the Departments of Railways, Main Roads, and Road Transport and Tramways, and of the Maritime Services Board, and for the co-ordination (or regulation) of intra-State airways, private buses, ferries and the road freight industry. There would be a small secretariat for the Commission which would centralise the limited research resources which then existed, while the Commission would be the central transport voice, to be consulted by councils and other authorities rather than the individual Departments (which would otherwise remain in their present form). The functions of the Commission were stated as:

(a) to review and co-ordinate the development of transport services;

(b) to consider and make recommendations on all projects for capital and (similar) expenditure proposed by the three Departments and M.S.B.;

(c) to "consider and co-ordinate" the annual budgets of the authorities;

8.   Ibid., p. 10, see pp. 9-11 and 45.

9.   Ibid., p. 10, for this quote and next paragraph.

(d) to control employment conditions in the four authorities; and

(e) to licence and control buses and other motor vehicles.

It can be seen that the Commission was to have no real power.

The Sinclair group obviously had the support of Premier McGirr and O'Sullivan for a Transport and Highways Bill was presented by the latter early in 1950 and despite Opposition claims of socialism was passed without delay. The Transport and Highways Commission was established in May 1950, consisting of eight members, one of whom was Director and Chairman. The Director and departmental heads were subject to the control of the Minister. The Chairman was Reg Winsor who had risen through the Railway ranks to become Assistant Commissioner in 1948 and Commissioner for Road Transport and Tramways in the following year.[10] The other seven members were: Commissioners for Railways, Main Roads, and Road Transport and Tramways; President of the M.S.B.; and representatives of employees, rural industry, and trade and commerce.[11] The powers of the Commission were basically as set out previously in the Sinclair Report except that the Commission could "control and direct" the heads of the transport departments. The cost of administration was to be shared by the Departments and M.S.B. but in practice the Secretary of the Ministry of Transport became Secretary and it was decided to use the Ministry as secretariat (without any of the related changes expected by the Sinclair group).

Two critical weaknesses negated the potential of the Commission. The first was foreseeable, that leaving the operational authorities separate and without adequate external controls (apart from the fact that the Commission's power was co-operative and shared and very uncertain) enabled them to internalise policy-making. The Minutes of the 22 meetings of the Commission have been read and they fully support this conclusion.[12] Secondly, in the words of a later Minister for Transport, "There were also clashes of personality that doomed it to failure before it got off the ground".[13] The Hon. W.F. Sheahan became Minister for Transport in July 1950 and he used the opportunity of the Commissioner for Railways' death in 1952 to abolish the Commission and virtually transfer Mr Winsor back there

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10.   See The Railways of N.S.W., op. cit., p. 218.

11.   See for example N.S.W. Year Book, 1950-51, p. 93.

12.   Op. cit. throughout. See also interview with Mr M. Morris (Appendix 2), p. 4.

13.   The Hon. M. Morris, Second Reading Speech on Public Transport Commission Bill 1972, in N.S.W. Parliamentary Debates, Session 1972-73, 3rd Series Vol. 100, p. 1174.

as Commissioner. Quite probably the personality question was the key — the Commission could have continued to function as a "tea club" otherwise.

The only lasting effects of the Commission experiment were that the Government Railways Act was amended in 1952 to continue Ministerial control, and secondly that a Department of Motor Transport was created in 1952 under a Superintendent (and in 1954 a Commissioner) to regulate the licensing of private vehicles and drivers, private buses, intra-State air services, and road traffic. As well the Department of Road Transport and Tramways was commensurately reduced in scope and renamed (misleadingly) the Department of Government Transport.

From 1952 the transport administration was co-ordinated through the Minister and even that degree of co-ordination (which was by interview accounts totally ineffective) was broken down in 1956 by the removal of the D.M.R. to the administration of the Minister for Local Government. Treasury had a nominal role but only in loan administration, not in functional or policy co-ordination. The Commissioner for Railways from 1956 to 1972, Mr Neal McCusker, said in interview of the period before CUMTAC was set up in 1965,

> ... there was no arrangement for formal meetings between the Commissioners and very little contact was had. The co-ordination which I felt was so vital was just non-existent, as simple as that.(14)

This statement has been confirmed in other discussions.

The individual authorities were faced with changing conditions and partly for that reason regarded their problems as internal. It has already been seen that the Department of Main Roads was in the process of developing, defending and further developing the Main Roads Development Plan. The Departments of Railways and Government Transport literally reversed this process by abandoning their planning. The reasons for this will now be examined.

In the case of trams and buses, patronage fell from 518 million trips in 1947/48 to 324 million in 1956/57 and the accumulated deficit rose from $2,681,000 in June 1949 to $18,903,000 in June 1957. In July 1956 an across-the-board increase in fares of 50 per cent reduced the annual net deficit from $8,276,000 in 1955/56 to $2,337,000 in the following year but this was regarded as a palliative only. In the ten years before 1956 the population served by the Department of Government Transport

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14. Interview with Mr N. McCusker (Appendix 3), p. 1.

remained static because development in the metropolis was increasingly concentrated in the "outer" suburbs.

The Railways' situation was similar. From 1944/45 to 1956/57 revenue had covered expenses in each year, but in 9 of the 13 years losses had been made because of heavy capital charges, and losses had become the rule. (The total net deficit for that period was $62,198,000 whereas the total surplus of revenue over operating and administrative expenses was $139,838,000.) Even in these terms there were significant contemporary doubts that adequate provision had been made for depreciation. In the ten years before 1956/57 the freight tonnage hauled increased by 4 per cent, passenger trips by 0.4 per cent, and debt charges by 60 per cent. More critically, working expenses had increased by 143 per cent compared with a 113 per cent increase in earnings. At about this time the advantages which the Railways had obtained from their earlier investment, including the opening of Circular Quay Station and the completion of the city underground loop in 1956, were negated by technological and land use changes. Urban rail patronage peaked in 1954/55 and then started to fall, with a brief recovery in 1963-65.[15]

The Government responded to this situation with the appointment of American consultants Ebasco Services Incorporated in July 1956 to conduct "A Study of Department of Railways and Department of Government Transport".[16] The Ebasco group consisted of six consultants, two for railway matters (both former presidents of American railroad systems), two for Government Transport (former Vice Presidents of large American urban transport systems), one for financial problems (an experienced accountant), and a Supervisor (former President of an American urban transport system). The Ebasco team consulted extensively with the two Departments and made numerous recommendations through memoranda before submitting their Report on 1st October 1957. Again the numerous operational recommendations (including dieselisation, electrification from Hornsby to Gosford, equipment and goods yards improvements, centralised rail traffic control facilities, and continued conversion of tram routes to bus operations together with one-man crews) will not be analysed in detail. Instead attention will be concentrated on urban passenger planning.

The basic theme of the Ebasco Report was that economic rationality should be the main criterion of capital spending, that

15.   See Base Year (1971) Data Report (Vol. 1, SATS), Figs 4.15 and 4.16 for more important per caput figures. Rail patronage has been fairly stable in aggregate.

16.   Ebasco Services Incorporated, A Study of Department of Railways and Department of Government Transport (Sydney: Government Printer, 1957); hereafter cited as: Ebasco, Report.

is, that "money should be spent where greatest savings will result therefrom in operating costs".[17] Suggestions were made for more economical urban electric operations without significant changes to levels of service. The main effect was however the diversion of funds to profit sectors (freight) rather than quadruplification or urban extensions. The consultants noted that the rail construction programme which had "been worked on intermittently for some time" would be expensive in terms of loan capital and that construction costs, population distribution and "riding habits" had changed substantially. Three formal recommendations were made,[18] that:

    (i)   the programme for the extension of suburban services should be carefully reappraised;

    (ii)   "If possible, any funds which may be required for its continuation not be appropriated to the detriment of the funds which are necessary for the modernization and improvement of the balance of the railway system"; and

    (iii) a joint Railways/Government Transport study should be set up "to determine which Department is in position to furnish adequate service with the least capital outlay and operating costs".

Obviously, bus services were preferred by Ebasco. However the Report made no recommendations regarding bus routes other than (iii) immediately above and a suggestion that better research and costing resources should be developed within the D.G.T.

The Report mentioned that the control arrangement between Commissioners and Minister had been examined, "particularly with respect to its effectiveness in securing the most efficient operation of the Department(s) and maintaining adequate controls over the spending of capital funds".[19] No change in arrangements was considered necessary. The team said that they had given serious consideration to the creation of an Authority or Board but had decided against these.

The Ebasco Report was largely adopted by the two Departments and served as part of the basis for their subsequent policies. The two Commissioners, Mr Neal McCusker and Mr A.A. Shoebridge, issued comments on the Report in late December 1957 and late January 1958 respectively and had reservations but no real objections.[20] McCusker had assumed office on 1st August 1956 and had, he said, commenced a thorough review of Railway operations

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17.   Ebasco Services Incorporated, "Summary Report" (Sydney: typescript, 1957), p. 3.

18.   Ebasco, Report, p. 19.

19.   Ibid., p. 21, also p. 31.

20.   Their comments were issued in roneo form by the Minister for Transport, Mr A.G. Enticknap, on 31st January 1958.

with basically the same conclusions as Ebasco. He also said that Ebasco's comments on metropolitan policy were "in conformity with the views of the Department". He saw a need for co-ordination especially as there was evidence of service overlapping in Sydney and Newcastle, and had already ordered an examination of Newcastle services on the lines of the Ebasco recommendation (iii) above. Apart from agreeing that the need for future suburban extensions should be very carefully appraised, McCusker said that a joint Departmental study of Sydney and Newcastle regions should have as objectives —

(a) "avoiding capital expenditure to the utmost extent possible consistent with an improved and adequate service sufficient to meet public requirements"; and

(b) advising on areas where public transport is necessary.

Mr McCusker was Commissioner for Railways from 1956 until his compulsory retirement in 1972. The nature of his administration has been researched at length by this writer and it is generally true that the nature of the capital costs, labour cost structure, operational problems and political climate of his times forced his administration to "avoid capital expenditure" as stated above to an almost extreme degree. Some aspects of this were seen in Chapter Six, such as tight external financial scrutiny and a reliance on expensive finance sources. The Department of Railways faced almost inescapable contingencies in dieselisation, some electrification, maintenance and mainline upgrading, and the like. Much of the suburban fleet had passed its economic life, most of it dating from 1926/27, although McCusker's predecessor had invested in 120 electric carriages[21] and McCusker brought in the first double-deck cars in 1964.[22] While it has not been possible to break Railways' capital expenditure down into sufficient detail to make a definitive assessment, it is clear, as Mr McCusker said in interview, that the primary priority had to be revenue, and that meant freight.

It would not be true to say that Railways' urban role was completely negated after the cessation of the 1947 works: the obvious exception was the Eastern Suburbs Railway but the Southern Suburbs line was also favoured for some time in connection with the Airport as well as the inner southern industrial suburbs.

The Eastern Suburbs Railway was made into an electoral issue in the early 1960s by the Labor Government, and principally by the then Leader of the Opposition, R.W. Askin in his 1965 campaign speech, as a means of influencing the vote in the local State seats. In

21. Base Year (1971) Data Report (Vol. 1, SATS), p. IV-11.

22. See also McCusker interview (Appendix 2), p. 2.

September 1961 the Minister for Transport, Mr J.M.A. McMahon, authorised a study of the transport needs of the eastern and southeastern suburbs by consultant De Leuw, Cather & Company of Chicago. The Report was released in May 1963 and recommended a combination of the 1947 lines.[23] This was an extremely biassed consultant report, as has been confirmed by certain of its authors in discussion. The most viable alternative, the rapid bus system, was severely disadvantaged by the selection of future roadworks but the right political output was obtained. On coming to power the Askin Government (which had not received the electoral return which it had expected) moved quickly to carry out its promise and the necessary legislation authorising the Bondi Junction/Kingsford line and cancelling the 1947 lines was passed (after much ad hoc political alteration to design) in 1967. The Opposition agreed with the measure. In this case the initial planning was artificially supported by unrealistic political expectations. In planning terms the output was disastrous as was confirmed by the next Labor Government and its Board of Review.[24]

The second major instance of post-Ebasco rail planning was the consideration of land access needs for Sydney Airport by CUMTAC and the Sydney Area Transportation Study. A detailed case study of this extremely complicated planning episode[25] (referred to also in the following chapter) showed that for a time McCusker pushed strongly for the resurrection of the 1947 Southern Suburbs line but to the Airport and had the support of the Chairman of the State Planning Authority and nominal support of other members. Several factors, such as the possibility of Commonwealth funding if the Eastern Suburbs Railway was extended and encroachment by the N.S.W. Board of Fire Commissioners on the route of the Southern Suburbs line, defeated the proposal by 1972. It was however supported, in its 1947 form very strangely, in the report of the Sydney Area Transportation Study. There was no doubt that Commissioner McCusker saw the proposal as a valid extension of the role of the metropolitan railways.

A minor development which had short-term political but no other significance was the proposal by the then Minister for Transport, Mr M.A. Morris, in late 1974, to reintroduce trams into

23. De Leuw, Cather & Company, Report on Improved Transport for the Eastern and Southeastern Suburbs of Sydney (Sydney: Government Printer, 1964).

24. Board of Review of Eastern Suburbs Railway, Report (Sydney: published by Board of Review, October 1976).

25. R.P. Gibbons, "Case Study: Mascot Airport and Regional Transport Planning", in Painter, Gibbons and Brezzo, op. cit., chapter 8.

the CBD of Sydney. This proposal was supported by a partial cost
benefit analysis which did not however compare alternatives,[26]
the main purpose of such analyses. It attracted brief attention
but was quickly rejected. But for the fact that it was so
obviously partial and transient the tram study would rank as the
most biassed postwar planning evaluation (against very strong
opposition).

The post-Ebasco experience of the Department of Government
Transport must also rate as basically non-planning. The replace-
ment of trams was completed in 1961 but no regard was paid to the
cost or route-planning advantages of buses, in that more double-
deck (two-man) buses were bought[27] and the buses were run on the
same routes as the trams. Those routes had for the most part been
determined before 1914 and the failure to adapt Government services
to changing societal conditions was no less than a disaster.
However as early as 1960/61 at least the Commissioner for
Government Transport was saying in his Annual Report that bus-
priority if not bus-exclusive lanes would be needed to overcome
congestion and chronic irregularity.[28] It would not appear that
the Commissioner or his successors persisted with their argument;
they were certainly not successful until other parties espoused
their cause and introduced Priority Lanes. That was the planning
of Government Transport — no great financial limitations (one
could argue that there were inducements), only entrenched
operational conservatism.

In short, after the Ebasco Report the Departments of Railways
and Government Transport proceeded along fairly independent and
conservative paths. However in both cases economic and operational
trends caused increasing concern as did the obvious failure to
mutually adjust services along the lines of co-ordination and
greater social relevance. Two significant developments occurred
in the early 1970s, namely CUMTAC's initiative in setting up the
Sydney Area Transportation Study, and the political decision of
1972 to again experiment with an integrated administrative
structure for public transport.

26. Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramways Board, Central Sydney
Tramway — feasibility study (Melbourne: M. & M.T.B., September
1974).

27. Although the buses were designed for one-man use and the
Department was hindered by union action, there was no need to use
double-deckers (there is a world-wide trend against them).

28. Commissioner for Government Transport, Annual Report 1960-61,
p. 3.

The Sydney Area Transportation Study analysed a wide range of
deficiencies in the existing train and bus systems, most of which
related to inadequate investment in equipment and the like and
anachronistic route structures. While the main reason for SATS was
probably the justification of the D.M.R.'s road planning and
associated land use policies, Mr McCusker in particular strongly
supported the Study.[29] SATS' main achievements were in fact in
the area of public transport and although its railway recommenda-
tions were poorly considered and have been subsequently disregarded,
the bus recommendations provided a strong case for investment and
reappraisal of routes.

A number of short- and long-term factors influenced the Askin
Government's decision in 1972 to set up the Public Transport
Commission. Among the most important of the latter was the
financial position of the Department of Railways. In the ten years
1962/63 to 1971/72 earnings increased by 46 per cent, expenses by
65 per cent, and interest charges by 52 per cent. In the period
the Railways made a net loss of $81,269,000 ($69,879,000 in the
latter four years). It might be noted however that profitability
(percentage of operating surplus to capital invested) was also
extremely high by postwar standards except in the last two years.
Labour cost was the main item of concern although it might also be
noted that the McCusker philosophies had an excellent chance of
containing such costs and of distributing scarce capital to best
meet operational needs. In retrospect it is quite safe to say that
if the annual financial result was the main criterion of
organisational performance then the conservatism (and occasional
warranted "risk" venture) of the McCusker tradition, the mainstream
and traditional operational approach, was a fairly safe base for
the future.

The second important long-term factor was the simple fact that
much of the equipment and rollingstock of the Railways was due for
replacement, and that such replacement offered scope for a new
image of administration which could have political benefits. The
then Minister for Transport, Mr Morris, had made two overseas
trips[30] and was aware of the need to reconcile strident local

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29.   See McCusker interview (Appendix 2), pp. 6-7.

30.   See M.A. Morris, "Overseas Report by the Minister for
Transport" (Sydney: Minister for Transport through N.S.W.
Government Printer, 1974, 76 pp). For example: "After my inspec-
tion of these modern transport systems, I clearly recognised that
our system in Sydney requires much upgrading. The signalling
techniques on the railways need to be improved, our stations...
also demand attention, and efficient interchange facilities must be
provided if public transport patronage is to expand. I am sure
that the next few years will see a major transformation in the
public transport of New South Wales. An amount of $80.2 million

calls for reform with the superficial features of overseas systems (such as the often misapplied term "rapid transit"). The Government had a "Government Parties Committee on Suburban Train Services" which presented a report in March 1972[31] to Mr Morris. The Committee had had extensive discussions with Mr McCusker and other officers, leading unionists and others, and largely confined their attention to operational improvements. They referred to "the crippling interest burden (on) the State railways", regarded present urban subsidisation levels as comparable with overseas cities (rural subsidies were much greater), recommended that separate metropolitan passenger accounts should be kept, and noted that the Department was "aware of the desirability of many suggestions and recommendations in this report and would no doubt have adopted them if it had the money to do so". The Eastern Suburbs Railway and two extra lines between Erskineville and Tempe were regarded as essential.

Superficially the Committee's Report was a triumph for McCusker. However Mr McCusker was apparently too closely associated with Railway traditionalism, and was himself too powerful,[32] for the Government to renew his term after he turned 65 years of age on 20th October 1972. The Commissioner for Government Transport was due to retire several years after as well and the Under Secretary of the Ministry of Transport suggested to the Minister that October 1972 would be a good time to consider implementing ideas which had been around for some time.[33] Mr Morris recognised the basic weaknesses of the former Transport and Highways Commission and instead initially favoured the creation of an urban and country dichotomy in administration by combining urban rail with Government Transport to form a Greater Sydney Transport Authority. The Treasury opposed this and so the issue was referred to a Cabinet sub-committee.[34] (The Treasury opposition was based on the fact that the separation of financial results would not reduce capital requirements for urban passenger

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will be spent this year on modernisation and re-equipment representing an increase of 45 per cent on spending last year" (p.8).

31.   "Report of the Government Parties Committee on Suburban Train Services" (Sydney: roneo, March 1972). This Report contained considerable analysis of historical changes in fares, standards of operation, etcetera.

32.   Mr McCusker was undoubtedly an extremely able and influential man, who necessarily perhaps made enemies. See the comments of his Minister for about 7½ years, Mr Milton Morris (Appendix 2, pp. 5-6).

33.   Interview with K.J. Trott of 21st December 1976 (Appendix 5), p. 9.

34.   Ibid.; also Morris interview (Appendix 2), p. 6.

services but would cause pressure for more expenditure in the country. As was said in Chapter Six, Treasury was a major influence in Railway policy.) The final recommendation was for a "Public Transport Corporation" — Mr Askin changed the title to Commission — to consist of three full-time and two part-time members.[35]

The Commission Bill attracted a great deal of criticism from the Labor Opposition when it was debated in the Legislative Assembly in late September 1972.[36] The Opposition spokesman was Mr P.F. Cox who described the reform, which was based on the total amalgamation of the two public transport Departments in one statutory authority, as extreme and unnecessary. The appointment of Mr Philip Shirley as Chief Commissioner was attacked by the Opposition because Mr Shirley had been Deputy Chairman of the British Railways Board from 1962 to 1967, in which time extensive service cutbacks and closures had been effected. (Shirley was already 60 and therefore unable to complete his seven-year term. From 1967 he had been Deputy Chairman of Cunard.)[37] Although it was not really known at the time, the administrative record of Shirley's Board was highly questionable as became evident when Stewart Joy's The Train That Ran Away was published in 1973.[38] (That book would have given the Government the opportunity to properly evaluate the nature of the problem it was tackling. It has certainly given subsequent readers the sad knowledge that history repeats itself.)

The other full-time Commissioners were Dr Robert Nielsen, then Director of the Sydney Area Transportation Study and former executive of several American transport companies, and Mr Joshua Trimmer. Trimmer was then President of the State Superannuation Board and had formerly been Treasury representative in Railways under the 1956 arrangement discussed earlier and in fact special Assistant Secretary of the Department in charge of financial affairs. Like Shirley, Trimmer's qualification was that he was an

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35. The evaluation of the P.T.C. which follows has been based on many formal and informal interviews and represents a fair and minimum level of criticism. Most such interviews cannot be specifically acknowledged.

36. See Second Reading speeches, N.S.W. Parliamentary Debates, Session 1972-73, 3rd Series, vol. 100, pp. 1173 ff.

37. The Government had not been able to recruit its first choice, a retired London administrator, and had trouble meeting its recruitment deadline. Mr Shirley however seemed to be an excellent choice.

38. S. Joy, The Train That Ran Away (London: Ian Allan, 1973). Dr Joy's prescriptions have been widely accepted in Australia and he has become an influential consultant and adviser. This author would argue however that Joy is a better economist than general organisational analyst.

accountant with limited experience in transport administration; Neilsen was the only transport specialist.

The part-time Commissioners were a representative of the Labour Council of N.S.W. and the chairman of Rothmans. This basic pattern of representation has been maintained. Dr Neilsen resigned in December 1973 and was successively replaced by two operations-oriented officers of the Commission. Mr Trimmer was appointed Deputy Chief Commissioner in late December 1974.

The Commission was established with the same basic powers and responsibilities as the preceding Departments, with the exception that Clause 15 of its Act required it to make a report on the problems of public transport and the proposed remedies within two years of its inception. The Commission was plainly told that its primary responsibility was to curb the financial drain of transport deficits on State finances. Two of the three full-time Commissioners were apparently selected for this task on the basis of their financial experience and acted accordingly. It might be expected that this objective would conflict with the Commission's planning tasks.

The formation of the Commission was quickly followed by the limited amalgamation of the Departments of Railways and Government Transport. The respective personnel structures and accounting systems (as well as the various operational units) were too different to be amalgamated totally and in fact after over five years little progress has been made in some areas.[39] The amalgamation was however the most critical aspect of the early P.T.C. experience because of the disruption that was caused and the derived effects on organisational performance.

From the very first the approach of the Commission alienated a great number of top and middle executives and others and broke down the traditional lines of accountability and management without providing an effective alternative. Dr Nielsen took charge of bus operations and marketing and established a close rapport with his employees. Otherwise the security of various management levels was disrupted and a considerable amount of hostility and bitterness

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39. Some changes have been reversed, particularly (in 1977) the distribution of executive responsibility. Also engineering activities were combined under a Director of Engineering, to be separate from operations, as in the Department of Railways. These have since been integrated to improve efficiency. Train and bus operations were combined only to be separated and now bus operations and engineering are together (but separate from trains and ferries). Some experimentation was no doubt essential.

generated.[40] The number of senior posts below Commission level was increased on specialised branch and section lines and most of the new posts were filled from outside in a brusque and heavy-handed manner.[41] Managers with little or no public transport experience were given complementary and sometimes overlapping roles, and at the same time Mr Shirley greatly increased delegations. Mr McCusker and his Secretariat had co-ordinated affairs on a tight basis but the former arrangements were abandoned, often resulting in chaos. Several senior administrators resigned or retired early, especially because the "new order" was positively prejudiced against the traditional railwayman and also because its decision-making style was haphazard and at times violently anti-historical in several respects.

These disorders had significant effects on overall performance. At the policy level there was a lack of internal co-ordination and conflicting decisions often resulted. At the operations level, the complex manpower systems which were required to enable the train and bus systems to function efficiently were disrupted. The standard of service provided fell noticeably, not because of strikes or a long-term rundown of facilities, but as Freeman has said, the fundamental causes were incompetence, inefficiency and failures of communication.[42] There were also conflicts of policy and Nielsen finally resigned.

It is important to note, as was said at the beginning of this chapter, that one of the intentions of the 1972 reform was that a more modern management structure would be introduced. As the P.T.C. said in its Report under Section 15, Looking Ahead (1974):

> ... within the railway each branch was virtually a self-perpetuating identity. Thus there was no cross-fertilisation of experience and in each there was a substantial tendency for a static approach to problems. The Departments tended to recruit at the lowest levels, and the staff had little exposure to outside management and techniques.[43]

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40. Cf R.P. Gibbons, "The Public Transport Commission", in Painter, Gibbons and Brezzo, op. cit.; and Peter Freeman, "Why Sydney's Public Transport is Going Bust", The National Times, August 2-7, 1976, pp. 48-9.

41. See for example Morris interview (Appendix 2), pp. 3, 4-5.

42. Cf Freeman, op. cit., for more detail.

43. Public Transport Commission, Looking Ahead (November 1974), p. 2. The Report noted that the basic legislation had enshrined promotion by seniority and commented that "Governments in the past may have relaxed some of the constraints on the then Commissioners if they had understood the opportunities for improving the efficiency of the undertakings through better middle level management".

McCusker had in fact said in his comments on the Ebasco Report that a branch structure was essential. However, while Shirley set out his ideas in several publications as to the need for a "highly geared, quick thinking, cost conscious and positive management"[44] and justified reforms in some areas such as marketing and perhaps planning, he could not demonstrate that his style of management was more suitable than McCusker's in public transport operations.

In urban operations, the P.T.C. put emphasis on reducing labour costs and workforce, cutting back on some forms of maintenance and renewals expenditure, and raising fares. Falls in patronage were thereby accelerated apart from falls in levels of service. An attempt was made to replace archaic suburban train timetables in May 1975 but this failed disastrously because of internal failures of decision-making, not because reform was impossible. (The P.T.C. did not analyse its urban role in Looking Ahead because the Sydney Area Transportation Study was still in progress.) The performance of the P.T.C. in the metropolitan bus and rail services was a major embarrassment to the Liberal Government.

In the rural areas, the Commission closed 361 stations in four years[45] and "heavy-handedly" tried to close uneconomic branch lines. Shirley was particularly enthusiastic about introducing a modern inter-capital container service and was the prime mover in the formation of Railways of Australia Container Express (RACE), using the (in many respects) unsuccessful British experience as a model.[46] The P.T.C. has been widely criticised for its container policies and has lost ground in the market place, mainly because it was and is severely disadvantaged in labour conditions and infrastructure costs vis-a-vis road hauliers.

One very important factor should have been taken into account when the P.T.C. was conceived. Even if the two former Departments had been efficient, their amalgamation would still have been all but beyond the ability of one management structure that was either oriented to the new or the old (strict hierarchical) ways. It has been found that the P.T.C. is simply too big for even its top executives to master the policy-making processes especially as they

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44.   See P.H. Shirley, "Management in Public Transport" (Chartered Institute of Transport, W.A. Section, roneo, March 1973), and "Management in Transport" (Institute of Directors of Australia, roneo, April 1973), both in P.T.C. Library.

45.   Freeman, op. cit., p. 48.

46.   Joy, op. cit., pp. 135-137. Again the parallel in British and P.T.C. problems is astonishing.

are so fragmented. This has also affected political control.
Co-ordination of services would not have required a complete
administrative amalgamation but it would seem that co-ordination
definitely became a minor consideration[47] in an accountants'
world.

All in all the Commission experiment was a short-term failure.
Instead of reducing losses, it resulted in an operational loss in
1972/73 (the first since 1855): compared with 1971/72 revenue from
rents and passengers rose by 1.5 per cent (although patronage fell),
earnings from goods and livestock fell by 7.8 per cent (tonnage
fell), total earnings fell by 4.6 per cent, working expenses rose
by 13.2 per cent, earnings per train mile fell by 3.7 per cent,
and the profitability ratio (defined above) fell from 0.35 per cent
to -5.33 per cent. Capital charges rose by only 3 per cent. The
overall loss in 1972/73 was $80 million; the following year $126
million; and in 1974/75 $167 million. For 1977/78 it is estimated
to be about $400 million. There is no prospect of the loss falling
off, although the level of urban subsidisation is not yet excessive
by overseas standards. The operating loss in 1972/73 would have
resulted even if the P.T.C. had not been set up but almost certain-
ly the rate of increase would have been contained by McCusker's
combination of accounting and operational skills.

There is no doubt that the Railway and Government Transport
administrations had ossified by the time that the P.T.C. had taken
over but it is also fairly obvious that there was no need for
revolutionary managerial or philosophical changes. By Philip
Shirley's resignation in December 1974 the base which constructive
change could have started from had been destroyed and the P.T.C.
had become an organisation that would need to be rebuilt before its
external challenges could be met. This was essentially the
diagnosis of Shirley's successor, Mr A. Reiher, who has by all
accounts been able to restore a certain degree of stability even if
the P.T.C. does remain clumsy, closed and uncontrollable. Further
structural reform would have to be extremely carefully considered
if it was not to worsen the P.T.C.'s problems.

The Granville disaster of January 1977 committed the newly
elected Wran Labor Government to a substantial programme of
maintenance and improvement which with carriage and bus replacement,
container investment, new lines in the Eastern Suburbs and freight
systems, and signalling investment, will give the P.T.C. a better
operational base than Railways and Government Transport ever had.

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47. Freeman, op. cit., p. 49.

Despite all the earlier promises, nothing had been done to appraise and rationalise rail, bus and ferry[48] services until SATS and no action has been taken since then. In effect the public transport authorities (including the P.T.C.) abrogated their planning responsibilities and these have been taken up by the central land use and transport authorities such as URTAC. The P.T.C. has yet to prove that it can meet the expectations of its makers.[49]

Several points stand out in the last thirty years of public transport administration in Sydney. Most importantly, while "co-ordination" was a frequent concern of Governments and others, almost no operational and even less policy co-ordination was achieved. The planning potential of buses was lost and in general rail planning was impracticable, partly because of its expense but perhaps also because there was no attempt before SATS to draw up the type of strategic plan which the Sinclair group sought. While various politicians in the 1960s and early 1970s lauded the structural spread of the existing rail system, the praise was basically pharisaical because no real consideration was given to the positive use of rail versus buses and road investment or to the relatively minor works needed to complete the rail system. The only major structural suburban investment was the Eastern Suburbs Railway, the planning of which typified the lack of co-ordination and bias in postwar planning.

The willingness of several Governments to identify organisational specialisation with lack of co-ordination, and their reliance on superficial administrative co-ordination to achieve operational and planning co-ordination, indicated the lack of understanding of the nature of public transport and public administration alike. More will be said of this in the Conclusion. Decision-making and non-decision-making reflected the internalisation of organisational values to an extreme degree, as in the pre-1939 period. Even the consciousness of this did not produce effective solutions. Thus in this area co-ordinative influence has been negative and substantial.

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48. Ferries were brought into the Commission's domain in late 1974 because of the withdrawal of the Port Jackson and Manly Steamship Co. Pty Ltd from the previous arrangement with the Sydney Harbour Transport Board. While ferries are an invaluable part of Sydney's transport system, they are of minor significance compared with buses and trains and have not been treated here. In any case ferry policy has been very operational, the major policy decisions being very few and ad hoc and investment minimal in historical terms. See Sydney Area Transportation Study, Vol. 1 Chapter IV, and Volume 3 Chapter V.

49. Several other public transport proposals, including an inner-city underground tram and high-speed rail link to Campbelltown,were discussed in CUMTAC/URTAC and will be mentioned in Chapter Nine.

Co-ordinative Agencies

I was brought in as an honest broker at one
stage, at the suggestion of the Minister by
the way, to make both the D.M.R. and the P.T.C.
aware of what each was doing to the other by
their ad hoc decisions.

> Interview with Mr K.J. Trott
> (Appendix Five).

Would you agree, Mr Minister, that policy
co-ordination is necessary in transport above
all else? In my thinking it is incredible that
it hasn't been done before. There has been no
policy co-ordination, of making sure that all
Departments speak with one voice. I think there
is only one person who can do that and in my
experience in the Ministry, the Minister has had
to be more closely involved in pulling the
undertakings together at the highest policy level.

> Mr K.J. Trott, in interview
> with Mr Trott and the Hon. P.F. Cox,
> M.L.A. (Appendix Five).

The broad co-ordinative needs of urban transport administration were established on both theoretical and empirical grounds in the Introduction. It was seen that co-ordination is not a simple concept because it involves considerations of formal political accountability versus practical administrative responsibility, formal and informal influence and "power", obscure patterns of behaviour and so on. It was argued in the Introduction that in interdependent policy fields the nature of specialised organisational behaviour would tend to break down co-ordinative ties, resulting in deficient policy outputs. Here co-ordination will be defined (as previously) in a manner which reflects the essentially unitary stream of accountability of Governments in a Westminster system. The records of the main co-ordinative institutions will be examined with special attention to their actual ability to enforce the two considerations of political accountability and functional interdependencies over the wishes of established specialised agencies.

Modes of Co-ordination

Co-ordination in such a political system as New South Wales' essentially is the rationalisation of corporate behaviour in line with centrally determined guidelines. Such co-ordination is effected by three main modes, from above (superior political authorities such as Cabinet and the courts), laterally (inter-organisational adjustment), and from below by community pressure.[1] "Central" can mean that an organisation conforms with an individual Minister's wishes on a bilateral basis because the Minister and Cabinet, and also the judicial system (acting on legislation), and the Treasury and Public Service Board (with delegated authority), are central agencies.

For practical purposes the highest authority is Cabinet which is the primary co-ordinating institution. All major Government initiatives are referred to Cabinet and it is supposedly organised so that all Ministers and administrations affected by a decision can, among other things, raise appropriate issues for adjudication by their peers. A review function is performed by Parliament and where applicable by Caucus from the point of view of political acceptability. (In countries where parliamentary standing committees are more prevalent, they perform a more intensive scrutiny by such criteria as equity and efficiency.)

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1. Co-ordination by combined organisation, namely the Transport and Highways Commission and the Public Transport Commission, was dealt with in the preceding chapter.

Many decisions are taken by Ministers, especially decisions
not or how to refer an issue to Cabinet. Similarly a larger
range of issues in most if not all administrations is "decided"
by the organisations in the filtering and influencing processes
described by all analysts of bureaucracies. The respective roles
of Ministers and bureaucrats are determined by a number of
factors, including the quality of advisory services available to
the Minister and the statutory and traditional rights of the
organisations.

The central public service authorities (Treasury, Public
Service Board and Auditor General) fall between the Premier and
Cabinet, and the Ministers, on an important set of issues.
Nominally such bodies are subject to superior political whim but
in historical reality they are independent and individually
powerful. It is particularly the case in their areas of speciality
that such organisations affect the services provided to Ministers
and the governmental system, and thus achieve a dominance,
whereas there is a void outside the specialisations which
imbalances the whole government network. Thus for example invest-
ment decisions are overly influenced by the narrow range of
criteria which Treasury is concerned with, at the expense of other
(often more important) values. Co-ordination is attempted by such
authorities in a very limited sense.

Only a partial picture has been presented here; more detail
is given in Chapter Six and the references cited there. The
three main modes of co-ordination have various mechanisms, ranging
from the highly formalised documentation of the courts and Cabinet
through to the relative informality of the reticulist[2] networks
which operate in inter-corporate communication.[3] The three
modes have not been equally developed in New South Wales in the
past, although the transport administration is somewhat unique.
It has always received special attention on some issues from the
legislature, and has received intense although uneven scrutiny
from Treasury as seen already. It has been dominated by large
statutory corporations and has generally not had the same

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2.   Reticulist essentially means manipulation of interpersonal
networks and a professionalism and highly concentrated motivation
are implied. See J.M. Power, "The Reticulist Function in
Government: Manipulating Networks of Communication and Influence",
in Public Administration (Sydney), 32(1), March 1973; and the
same author's "Organisational Technology and Public Planning", in
Public Administration (Sydney), 30(1), March 1971.

3.   J.M. Power has tended to overconcentrate on reticulists at
the expense of other forms of informal co-ordination. In an
established Public Service like that of N.S.W. reticulists are
unquestionably important but not dominant. See below.

Ministerial resources applied to it as smaller, less complicated
portfolios.   Moreover while specialisation was the predominant
rule of organisation, the potent functional interdependencies
stimulated occasional attention in operational co-ordination. It
has been seen that several experiments were attempted in
transport administration and from the mid-1960s the outstanding
interdepartmental committee in the State operated, later in its
life being a model for other administrations. There have always
been specialised lobby groups as well.

The main vehicles of co-ordination were in short: (i) the
Minister(s) and his immediate support agency, the Ministry of
Transport; (ii) lateral agencies such as the Transport and
Highways Commission and the Public Transport Commission, the
Traffic Authority and perhaps most importantly the main IDC,
CUMTAC then renamed URTAC; (iii) ancillary authorities such as
Treasury and the land use agencies (discussed in Chapter Six);
and (iv) popular political pressure. Item (iv) has been discuss-
ed in the preceding chapters and most attention here will be given
to items (i) and (ii). The following discussion is highly
empirical and because it covers almost untouched ground a fair
degree of detail is required in some areas.

Ministerial Roles

The Traffic Advisory Committee foreshadowed substantial
improvements in State transport administration when it recommended
the creation of a Ministerial portfolio of Transport in 1928.[4]
While the change was not as radical as the T.A.C. had originally
hoped for, the appointment of the Minister for Transport in 1932
helped to consolidate the organisational reforms of Lang and
Bruxner as least as far as unified political accountability for
land transport was concerned. Generally this made little
difference to organisational independence, the co-ordination of
services and the actual accountability (rather than delegation to
statutory authorities) for policy and administration. It is not
possible to trace the history of the portfolio in detail because
of a lack of primary and secondary sources but some outline can
be given, based largely on oral sources.

The pre-1945 period was dominated by Lt.-Col. (later Sir)
Michael Bruxner who replaced the Labor Minister, McGirr, in May
1932 and who resigned in May 1941. Previously Railways had come
under the Minister for Public Works and the Main Roads Board under
Local Government, except that the Board was part of Labour and
Industry for a year from late 1926 and had been directly

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4.   See Chapter Four above.

responsible to Premier Lang from September 1931 to March 1932.
Transport was thereafter allocated to senior Ministers (Premier
Cahill for a week in 1953) although it was not a popular
portfolio because of the representational workload, union pressures
and financial problems. As Bruxner's biographer, Professor
Aitkin, has written, "Fifty years ago there was little competition
for the post of Minister for Transport, and the attractiveness of
the post for the aspiring politician has declined each year".[5]
That is not to say that dedicated Ministers have not been found
but it is noteworthy that no Minister for Transport has gone to
Premier or Leader of the Opposition in marked contrast for
example to Ministers for Local Government. While there have been
long-serving Ministers for Transport (Michael Bruxner, Maurice
O'Sullivan for over nine years from 1941, and Milton Morris for
almost ten years from 1965), the average term has otherwise been
very short. (Excluding Bruxner, O'Sullivan and Morris it is
slightly more than 1½ years, and including those three almost 3½
years. Both averages exclude the present Minister, the Hon. P.F.
Cox, M.L.A.)

When the portfolio was created in 1932 a Ministerial Office
was also established (without statutory status under the Ministry
of Transport and similar Acts) to assist the Minister. The
Office was known as the Ministry of Transport until 1975 when it
became the Ministry of Transport and Highways (MOTH). Its
permanent head until August 1949 was Mr Leo Grose, replaced then
as Secretary by Mr Eric Holt. On 1st January, 1960, the position
was upgraded to Under Secretary status. Mr Ken Trott replaced
Mr Holt in June 1970. Obviously there has been a higher degree
of continuity in the Ministers' closest advisers than in
Ministers.[6]

From an early stage to recently a policy of noninterference
with corporate policy was adopted by both Ministers and the
Ministry. It is clear that Ministers were involved with only a
limited range of transport issues, as political auditor rather
than active participant and even then on a predominantly ad hoc
basis. The main areas of interest were: labour relations,
operational results, fares and freight rates, safety standards,
and new rail lines and the like. Ministers were not concerned
with consistent long-term or even short-term planning, with co-
ordination, or with the appraisal of transport services with a
view to adequacy, expense, equity or relevance (and so on).

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5.   D. Aitkin, "The Decline of N.S.W. railways: a lesson in
expediency", National Times, 31 January, 1977.

6.   A general outline will be found in the interview of
29th November, 1976, with Mr Trott (Appendix 5), pp. 1-3.

Information was limited. The Ministry of Transport was a "letter box" only, handling correspondence, deputations and other secretarial services without providing independent policy resources or developing and using informational facilities.[7]

From a modern viewpoint this is perhaps a devastating judgement, and it would no doubt have also seemed thus to the Traffic Advisory Committee, but it must be realised that that was the contemporary tradition of both the Public Service and the majority of politicians. Transport had been a highly politicised subject so long as it dominated the State's developmental effort but it waned once the statutory authorities had progressed to a point where they had the principal responsibility for operations and administration, subject to key legislative controls over loan expenditure and financial policy. (The exception was the main roads authority because the M.R.B. (then D.M.R.) was set up in a peculiar climate of country and local government dominance, as seen in earlier chapters. The consequence was minimal rather than close control.) The Ministers certainly worked under great constraints but they had chosen their own role. The same traditions applied in other policy areas where statutory authorities dominated administration except that generally there was no attempt to develop Ministerial resources even to the "non-departmental" Ministry[8] which operated in transport. The picture that has been presented here corresponds with Aitkin's portrayal of Bruxner's conception of the Ministry as a small subsidiary body only. It seems that while Bruxner might have been able to achieve his own standards to a limited extent, in that he saw the Minister as policy-maker and the statutory Commissioners as administrators only,[9] later Ministers did not.

A most significant episode in the history of the portfolio and Ministry began in 1975 with the restoration of the Department of Main Roads to the Transport family. This had a number of aspects. As already seen in Chapter Seven there had been no substantial reason for the original split while the effects on policy output were substantial indeed. The first of the Liberal Ministers for Transport, Mr Milton Morris, sought the restitution strenuously, at least at a later stage when the SATS/freeway

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7.   See interviews with Mr Trott of 29th November and 21st December, 1976 (Appendices 5 and 6) for a comprehensive overview of the Ministry's roles.

8.   See the important survey article by Roger Wettenhall, "Modes of Ministerialisation Part 1: Towards a Typology — the Australian Experience", Public Administration (Britain), Spring 1976. A similar criticism is one of the main themes of the Review of New South Wales Government Administration's Interim Report, cited previously.

9.   Aitkin, The Colonel, op. cit., pp. 204 f.

controversy was raging, both in public[10] and within his party.
It was not approved because Premier Askin did not want the change.
Askin's successor, Tom Lewis, was more committed to efficient
government and as a part of his Machinery of Government Review,
in January 1975 he replaced Mr Morris with Mr Wal Fife and gave
the latter both the D.M.R. and road construction in the Western
Region of the State. Thus for the first time the Minister for
Transport (and now Highways) had comprehensive "control" of
transport in N.S.W. (but still excluding maritime matters).

That control was still very much constrained as Mr Fife
discovered. The Ministry had never performed an analytical or
review role in assistance to the Minister but as a result of
Mr Fife's interest and Mr Trott's conception of his own role, and
of Mr Trott's presentations to the Machinery of Government Review,
in 1975 a Development Co-ordination Division was organised within
the Ministry. The permanent head of the Ministry had always been a
junior associate of the Commissioners in the administration and
the only time that the Ministry had been built up at all (by the
Hon. C.E. Martin in 1953), and that to a minor extent within the
traditional organisational role, Premier Cahill had himself
taken the portfolio to "bring it back into line". He was argued
out of that. As well when Mr Holt retired in 1970 there was
apparently a move to downgrade the Under Secretary to Secretary
status but this was countered by Mr Morris and others.[11]

The new Development Co-ordination Division was the first step
in a break from the conceptual constraints. It was essentially an
internal regrouping but with an imported and highly-qualified
engineer at its head.[12] More recently (and well before Professor
Wilenski's recommendations to the same effect), a small Policy
Analysis Section was also set-up. This Section is apparently seen
as an aid in raising the quality of "normal" advice while adding
a critical new element of long-term appraisal. The present
Minister, the Hon. P.F. Cox, M.L.A., has taken the same
direction[13] as his Liberal predecessors in seeing the Ministry

10. Mr Morris received a great deal of coverage for his campaign,
while Sir Charles Cutler was overseas, in S.M.H., April 30, 1973;
Daily Mirror, May 2, 1973; S.M.H., May 1, 1973, etcetera. The
editorial in the last-named issue said in referring to the D.M.R.'s
independent stance on freeways that "A takeover by Mr Morris could
be one way to break down the bureaucratic isolation of the
department that is causing this competition". See also interview
with Mr Morris (Appendix 2), throughout.

11. See Mr Morris in N.S.W. Parliamentary Debates, 45th Parliament,
2nd Session, 20th October 1976, p. 2080.

12. Again see interviews with Mr K.J. Trott (Appendices 5 and 6).
I am grateful to Mr Trott and Mr G.F. Messiter for other
assistance in this area.

13. See interview with Mr Cox and Mr Trott of 19th November 1976
(Appendix 4), p. 1 and elsewhere.

as an important central agency at his disposal, with a functional importance at the centre of the whole, very complex, transport system. It is understood that current developments (including Wilenski's recommendations) are moving the Ministry in the direction of positive appraisal and co-ordination of all types. As the Deputy Chief Commissioner of the P.T.C. has said, "the co-ordination of transport in the broader sense is a function very specifically for the Ministry of Transport..."[14]. This is especially true when superior direction is required as in the case of the allocation of costs of major projects.[15]

A minor point which should be mentioned is that from 1965 to 1969 the Government leader in the Legislative Council, the Hon. A.D. Bridges, was Advisory Minister for Transport, apparently because of his financial experience rather than because he was expected to share the Minister's workload. This unique arrangement lapsed with Mr Bridge's death.[16]

Co-operative Co-ordination: the IDC

The Ministry of Transport and Highways has resources and a role which place it in an intermediate high-level co-ordinative position. It is an agent of and adviser to the Minister but is also a separate organisation with its own specialisation in a system of three large statutory authorities and one major statutory committee (the Traffic Authority). These authorities intermingle at the second major level of co-ordination, the lateral or co-operative mode. In very approximate terms this type of co-ordination could be called "partisan mutual adjustment".[17]

Superior co-ordination occurs when one actor is in a position to issue enforceable instructions to other actors; in this case it is not the role of the inferior actors to audit each other. In co-operative co-ordination a group of actors observe each other's actions and consider them in relation to their own intentions, because the actions are interdependent or because a measure of delegated responsibility is part of their tradition. A prerequisite is that the actors must be willing and able to reach a common judgement and adjust their respective actions

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14. Quoted in W.B. Paterson, "The Coordination of Policymaking in N.S.W. Public Transport in the 1970s" (unpublished dissertation, University of New England, n.d. but about 1977), p. 42.

15. See interviews with Mr K.J. Trott of 29th November, 1976 (Appendix 5), p. 4, and 21st December, 1976 (Appendix 6), p. 4.

16. See Hawker, op. cit., p. 353, n. 36; and France and Hughes in Parker and Troy, op. cit., p. 53.

17. Lindblom's famous term, op. cit., pp. 25 ff.

accordingly. For the present purposes it will suffice to say that there are seven other requisites for effective co-ordination (or a total of eight major areas of possible problems):

(i)   a forum for adequate communication;

(ii)   close relationship between planning discussions and operational responsibility and knowledge;

(iii) some control over resources and knowledge thereof;

(iv)   authority to adjudicate;

(v)   adequate coverage of relevant interdependencies;

(vi)   minimal role ambiguity; and

(vii) adequate control of implementation and role definition, and support, from superior levels.

In New South Wales transport while the superior co-ordinative role has always been underdeveloped, the co-operative mode had (until the mid-1960s) been almost totally neglected in practice.[18] The individual Commissioners had distinct (and in some respects poorly-designed) responsibilities which they internalised, without outside consultation let alone consideration. In 1964 the Labour Government created a Traffic Advisory Committee to deal basically with the interfaces between councils and specialised authorities in traffic. Responsibility in this narrow area had been very dispersed and the formation of that advisory committee apparently had little effect.[19] More importantly in 1965 a passenger transport advisory committee was set up which after a long period of gestation proved to be a solid basis for co-operative co-ordination in transport. The Traffic Authority will be briefly discussed after CUMTAC and URTAC.

The County of Cumberland Passenger Transport Advisory Committee was set up on 11th March 1965, partially on the advice of the Commissioner for Railways, Mr Neal McCusker.[20] In a joint press release of that date Premier Renshaw and Deputy Premier Hills (not the Minister for Transport, Mr. J. McMahon) referred rather incidentally to the creation of a permanent consultative and advisory body to deal with "such matters as future development, land use, staggering of hours and co-ordination of existing and future services".[21] Four of the five pages of the

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18. See quote from interview with Mr McCusker (Appendix 3, p. 1) and related discussion in Chapter Eight (n. 14).

19. The membership and modus operandi of the Traffic Advisory Committee (the name was probably coincidental with that of the 1928 Committee) and CUMTAC were very similar. The later T.A.C. will not be analysed because of these factors and its lessor role and reputation.

20. Interview with Mr McCusker (Appendix 2), p. 1. Note the haste with which the decision was made.

21. Press release of 11th March, 1965. This paragraph and the next one are drawn from that source.

announcement were taken up with details of a six-year "multi-million-pound programme" of transport improvement which had been drawn up by a special Cabinet sub-committee consisting of Mr Hills, Mr McMahon, the Minister Without Portfolio, the Commissioners for Railways and Main Roads, the Chairman of the S.P.A., and representatives of Treasury and other departments. The plan, which was said to be based on suitable origin-destination studies, "proposed the co-ordination of land development in the Metropolitan and other areas with all forms of transport whether private or public". This was not in fact achieved in the nominated programme which was dominated by railways (no costs given for the main items), as follows:

(i) electrification to Campbelltown;

(ii) construction of the Eastern Suburbs Railway (already promised by the Liberal Opposition);

(iii) an East Hills to Liverpool rail link (virtually East Hills - Glenfield as presently proposed);

(iv) improved carriages and rollingstock and ancilliary improvements (e.g. the replacement of the Como railway bridge within about three years); and

(v) "Augmented and new feeder bus services to cover the areas which could eventually be serviced by a Warringah Railway". (Provision could be made for this where necessary in the Warringah Expressway.) Bus transfer stations would be provided at select stations on the North Shore line.

These works were coupled with expressways costing $64 million over six years, namely the North Western to Rozelle and the Warringah to Cammeray; underpasses at Taylor Square; sections of the Western Expressway to by-pass Parramatta and Penrith and a new bridge over the Nepean; and an extension of the Southern Expressway from the Taren Point Bridge. (See Chapter Seven for further details of such works.) The appearance of inter-modal co-ordination was purely superficial.

1965 was an election year and the announcement of the programme was essentially an election ploy. Apart from the Eastern Suburbs Railway, which the incoming Askin Government would unquestionably have proceeded with anyway because of the extent of its commitment, the only lasting consequence was CUMTAC. This initially consisted of the Commissioner of Railways as Chairman (chosen because he was the most senior public servant), the Commissioners for Government Transport, Motor Transport and Main Roads, the Chairman of the S.P.A., and the Under Secretary of the Treasury. The first meeting was held on the 29th April, with subsequent meetings at monthly intervals. Representation was later extended at permanent head level to Police, the Ministry of Transport (September 1971), Maritime Services Board

(early 1973), and P.T.C. and P.E.C. when set up. In early 1973
also the Minister for Transport asked the Premier to approve a new
name for the Committee, the Urban Transport Advisory Committee,
in keeping with the wider role it had logically had to take with
regard to SATS.[22] New terms of reference were also codified:

1. To assist in the co-ordination of urban transport planning
with land use planning in N.S.W. and provision of other services
and utilities;

2. To identify and advise on ways and means of ensuring
optimum and efficient use of existing and future transport modes,
systems and corridors; and

3. To undertake any tasks allotted to it by the Government
from time to time.

CUMTAC was established purely as an advisory group with no
fixed terms of reference, no statutory powers or definite task.
The danger with such a committee is that the individual members
regard it more as a forum for incidental discussion and for
announcing decisions and policies, rather than as a place for
mutual influence and active co-ordination. In fact available
evidence suggests that the former was definitely the case. Under
Mr McCusker's leadership the discussion was heavily biased to
specific issues of routine or operations, with a narrow time and
policy orientation, while no attempt was made to raise issues that
would challenge the conventions of the individual members.
Mr McCusker had a policy of not raising questions that would not
automatically obtain a consensus[23] and thus the Main Roads
Development Plan as one example was never debated in Mr McCusker's
time, even in the course of setting up and conducting SATS. (It
is highly unlikely that an advisory committee structure would be
capable of resolving such potent issues with long-term wisdom
anyway. They relate to superior co-ordinating modes, with
advice.[24])

That is not to say that CUMTAC had no achievements for it was
at least able to establish a channel of communication which was of
use especially later but also to the Chairman of the S.P.A. who
frequently sought to have special matters investigated, such as a
high-speed rail service to Campbelltown and one of his officer's
penchant for trams (later the inner-city tram system proposed by
Mr Morris).[25] The present author was able to investigate in

22. See interview with Mr K.J. Trott of 21st December, 1976
(Appendix 6), p. 5.

23. See interview with Mr McCusker (Appendix 3), pp. 4, 9.

24. See ibid., p. 4; interview with the Hon. M. Morris
(Appendix 2), p. 2.

25. See Chapter Eight. The tram proposal stemmed from a
campaign by tram enthusiast Mr Robert Caldwell. See J.R. Caldwell,
"Transport in the Inner City Area of Sydney", A.P.I.J., 6(3),
July 1968, pp. 61 ff.

depth one of the main issues which CUMTAC attempted to resolve, with the aid of a set of CUMTAC Minutes made available by the P.T.C. This was the question of improved land access to Kingsford Smith Airport which was an exceptionally difficult topic because of uncertainty about the Airport's future role, the responsibility of the Commonwealth, and a very heavy regional traffic load (not related to the Airport) in conjunction with an inadequate regional road system which the best information then said was beyond significant structural solutions. Basically CUMTAC first wanted the construction of the old Southern Suburbs Railway (see Chapter Eight), then the extension of the Eastern Suburbs Railway. SATS for some reason finally recommended the former, indicating CUMTAC/ URTAC's lack of control over the SATS Report.

A number of significant points emerged from the case study (which finished at 1972), along the following lines:[26]

(i)   CUMTAC was not effective in producing a regional transport plan that had sufficient support from its members to be practicable, considering the unanimous agreement concerning the issue's general urgency;

(ii)   the evidence examined supports the view that the CUMTAC representatives respected each other's sphere of responsibility. However CUMTAC was able to agree on various rail plans, as circumstances required, and the two road transport organisations' representatives nominally agreed, at least until the later stages, on the need for a rail loop in the region. There was in fact surprisingly little critical discussion of the railway versus alternatives;

(iii)   the difficulties in reserving a transport corridor for the region were significant from the planning viewpoint, especially as SATS regarded such reservation as essential (SATS Vol. VII. 7-8);

(iv)   CUMTAC's rail plans changed frequently, in this case indicating strong outside political influence that militated against efficiency;

(v)   CUMTAC's attempts to design both a railway and road network for the Airport were held up by the Commonwealth D.C.A., but to some extent this was excusable. However the Australian Department should have been able to give CUMTAC greater support which would have made a significant difference to the eventual outcome;   and

(vi)   the interaction of the Sydney transport authorities on CUMTAC produced an internal awareness of the importance of transport support systems in the planning of a second airport, and this aspect was recognised by the Australian airport authority and committees largely because of CUMTAC's representations.

The Botany Port/Airport issue has been extremely complex and the above conclusions relate solely to CUMTAC. In the end a road solution has been adopted by URTAC and the Governments[27] and it

26.   Cf R.P. Gibbons, "Mascot Airport and Regional Transport Planning", in Painter, Gibbons and Brezzo, op. cit., chapter 8.

27.   See URTAC, Land Transport: Transport Administration

is somewhat unlikely that a rail link will be considered suitable for aviation passengers either at existing or new airport sites. The Simblist enquiry on the Port development showed the weaknesses of an inexpert approach but also identified major weaknesses in planning, the first of which was the lack of public knowledge and participation. Significant inter-corporate deficiencies were noted which it was thought could only be remedied by specialised Ministerial responsibility.[28] The Commonwealth Department of Transport showed its ignorance of the N.S.W. transport administration in a statement to the Simblist enquiry which was hotly contested by URTAC.[29]

On McCusker's retirement in 1972 the Chief Commissioner of the P.T.C., Mr Phillip Shirley, became Chairman but he relinquished this post in March 1975 to Mr K.J. Trott, the Under Secretary of the Ministry of Transport and Highways. This was mainly in recognition of the suitability of MOTH's position in the administration for the role and partly because of Mr Trott's personal contributions of the past. In any case from that point Mr Trott consciously followed a philosophy of confining URTAC's deliberations to strategic policy affairs rather than detailed co-ordination "on the ground",[30] in a complementary role to his other duties in MOTH. The distinction between superior and co-operative co-ordination was thus clearly distinguished. Moreover a complete turnover of membership at about that time and the over-all mood in State administration induced URTAC to define its own role more clearly than had been done in the past and in August 1975 revised terms of reference were adopted by URTAC and confirmed by the Minister for Transport and Highways. These were to:

(a) Identify and advise the Minister on ways and means, within the urban areas of Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong, of ensuring optimum and efficient use of existing and future transport modes, systems and corridors, taking into account public and private transport, and social and environmental considerations.

(b) Review regularly the broad objectives of the Government's transport policy including advice on the order of importance of the various measures planned to implement that policy.

Presentation to Botany Bay Sub-Region Community Advisory Committee (Sydney: URTAC, June 1977).

28. Report of the Botany Bay Port and Environment Inquiry (Sydney: Inquiry edition, November 1977), Section 14, pp. 136 ff. The Government Printer also issued an edition.

29. Sydney Morning Herald, 1st November 1976. Cf URTAC Report, op. cit., Section H; also URTAC submission of 16th November 1976 to the Simblist Inquiry (available from Ministry of Transport and Highways).

30. Interview with Mr K.J. Trott of 29th November, 1976 (Appendix 5), p. 5. "On the ground" co-ordination has rightly been identified by Professor Wilenski as an important weakness, see Conclusion.

(c)   Advise the Minister, when requested, on possible action which might be taken in the short term to alleviate specific problems in transportation.

(d)   Assist in the co-ordination of urban transportation and regional land-use planning.

(e)   Advise the Minister on priorities for major expenditure on transportation.

(f)   Undertake any task allotted to it by the Government from time to time.

URTAC thus moved very marginally into the critical area of resource allocation and planned co-ordination. Item (b) is a fairly usual advisory role but on a grander scale.

Since 1975 URTAC has proved able to fulfil the essentials of the co-operative mode to a reasonable degree. Some of the co-ordinative issues that have arisen, such as the dispute over the distribution of the cost of the Bondi Junction by-pass road,[31] were beyond its scope and had to be resolved at a higher level. However the production of the 1976 URTAC Report was a major step in the subjugation of corporate goals in strategic urban planning through the realistic recognition of system and long-term require-ments. While that Report was a co-operative venture the dilemma of preserving mutual confidence and goodwill and also properly fulfilling the co-ordinating role has not been, nor probably ever will be, eliminated and would seem to remain as a major constraint on URTAC's effectiveness. However the 1976 Report stated that planning for the long-term must really be well-directed short-   . term planning in series, and if this approach is maintained through regular reappraisals of goals and programmes then URTAC has a good chance of retaining Government confidence and the new-found realism.[32] Comments on URTAC's possible future role are presented in the Conclusion. It might be noted that the progress made by URTAC in a period of fairly critical need was helped by the long period of gestation under McCusker but a decade of rather fruitless discussion is hopefully not a prerequisite for effective IDCs.

A degree of disability regarding URTAC results from its lack of statutory standing. URTAC would for instance be a quite different (and no doubt more critical) forum if it had some statutory role in the allocation of transport improvement funds, a full-time chairman and a convention of majority rather than

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31.   Ibid., p. 4.

32.   It is understood that URTAC is preparing a Second Report for release in mid-1978 and that this will confirm the approach taken in 1976. Certainly frequent, pragmatic reports would help URTAC to focus on real issues rather than long-term meaningless optimism.

consensus rule. It is at the other extreme at present, having no
statutory existence, no powers of compulsory submission of policy
proposals, no resource control and a reliance on consensus (and
on favourable personal and external circumstances). It remains
the most important IDC in transport but it is not perfect. Here
one extremely important example of a statutory interdepartmental
committee will be briefly analysed, namely the Traffic Authority
of N.S.W.

It was shown earlier that an awareness of the complexity and
co-ordinative requirements of traffic administration led a
committee of the Machinery of Government Review (chaired by
Mr Trott) to recommend the establishment of a Traffic Authority
which would reduce the dangers of co-ordinative breakdown. The
Authority was set up in mid-1976 as an IDC with part-time
chairman (the Commissioner for Motor Transport) and membership,
with the assistance of the Traffic Facilities Fund (see Chapter
Six). The Minister for Transport and Highways has exemplary
statutory controls over revenue and expenditure but without
impairing the accountability of the Authority for the submission
and performance of programmes. The members of the Authority are
the Commissioners for Motor Transport, Main Roads, Planning and
Environment, and Police, with representatives of the Local
Government and Shires Associations and the Sydney City Council.
The P.T.C. and the Transport Workers Union are represented on an
unofficial basis but their membership is to be regularised.[33]
There is a full-time Director and secretariat (all provided by
the D.M.T.) and four assisting committees (a Technical Sub-
Committee and Principal Technical, Development Technical and
Finance Committees). All construction and most planning resources
are located in the Department of Main Roads which is one of the
disadvantages of the Authority.

The conception of the T.A. is not revolutionary but the
financial arrangements virtually are, at least in N.S.W. Its
statutory powers over road closures and traffic systems and the
like give the Authority ample reinforcement without compromising
its ability to delegate suitable responsibilities to councils.
No doubt the committee core has disadvantages compared with say a
corporation aggregate with some full-time membership but nonethe-
less the Authority is a very interesting mixture of superior and
lateral co-ordinative modes, which might have relevance to other
areas of administration.

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33. The Hon. P.F. Cox, in debate on Appropriation Bill, N.S.W.
Parliamentary Debates, 45th Parl., 2nd Sess., 20 October 1976,
p. 2078.

The advantage of the T.A. over URTAC is not that it is able
to take advantage of different committee structures. The stakes
of statutory decision-making are much higher than are those of
the advisory type. Because the committee takes responsibility
from the statutory authorities and departments, it opens up the
decision area and makes the different interests face each other
on a peer basis. For example the major loser when the T.A. was
set up, the Police Traffic Branch, would have been encouraged by
the split between policy-making, implementation (D.M.R.) and
enforcement (Police) to take a more open attitude than if it had
retained the exclusive role in its area of domination. (That same
split introduced dangers of loss of co-ordination which in this
case were not countered by the T.A.'s makers through countervailing
statutory power or influence or a consolidation in Ministerial
power. This is not inevitable however and would presumably not
matter if the consequence of errant action is important to the
Government.) Other parties would have also changed their roles.
The effects of the changes cannot be evaluated yet but most
indications are for more open, mutually-validated policy-making.
Representation on the Authority is heavily biased towards operat-
ional bureaucracies and this might not be appropriate in a time of
rapid societal change.

Other lateral co-ordinating mechanisms are in force in the
transport administration, particularly special purpose ad hoc
committees such as those operating on Botany Bay Port, the Major
Airport Needs of Sydney (MANS) Study and coal transport. These
are undoubtedly important, especially as a sign of changed
administrative processes in the 1970s. However they will not be
examined here because of their limited application and historical
significance, and lack of information.

The final major co-operative mode is inter-personal communica-
tion. The Under Secretary of the Ministry of Transport and
Highways fits into Power's class of reticulists very well: he has
a network of contacts built up from previous work posts,
committee activities, inter-governmental relations and so on, and
in fact is able to use select committees (notably URTAC) as a
forum for close personal negotiation.[34] These contacts can be
critical in assessing the need or direction for change, for
developing information resources, and for persuasion. Officers
at similar levels in other organisations tend to follow a similar
pattern although it should be noted that reticulist resources are
usually highly concentrated in most organisations. The Ministry

34. See interview with Mr K.J. Trott of 29th November, 1976
(Appendix 5), p. 3.

is in an exceptionally strategic location compared with operating authorities and reticulist activities are commensurately more important. Even then there are only two reticulists in the Ministry in the strict sense of the term (excluding the Minister's personal staff).

Co-ordination from Below

Client and pressure group activities can be very important in influencing decision-making.[35] Reference was made in earlier chapters to the road and rail lobbies, local councils, resident action groups and other interests which are affected by administrative action and which act as policy reviewers and co-ordinators. The most obvious co-ordinative influences arise when lobbies are in conflict and argue the respective merits of policy outputs or when the lobby is based on a particular area and seeks to maximise the effectiveness of operations within that area. Many councils fall into the latter category with regard to bus/train operations, expenditure on roads versus public transport, and traffic management measures which affect the use of roads and local shops and the like. By far the most committed group is the National Roads and Motorists' Association which sees itself in large part as the D.M.R.'s publicity agent,[36] although it has been less influential than essentially divisive forces such as land developers and motor manufacturers. (Special purpose advisory bodies of very limited relevance have been established such as the Taxi Advisory Council.)

Conclusion

The most important co-ordinating force in the transport administration is the Minister for Transport and Highways and his auxiliary, the Ministry. Historically the roles of both the individual and the organisation have been very limited, mainly because of a prevailing convention of delegated administration by expert statutory authorities. The Minister had always been important in a limited contingency sense in that he had the final option of legislative action and direct control (but not on all issues as has been seen). However the Minister did not have sufficient analytical resources to cover the full range of policy and programmes, and to some extent this is apparently still the

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35. A good deal of attention is given to this subject in most of the papers in M.R. Palmer (ed), Policy in Transport in New Zealand (Wellington: N.Z. Institute of Public Administration, 1973).

36. Mr E. Huxtable (Public Affairs Executive) in interview with Mr E. Huxtable and Mr R. Cox, N.R.M.A., 17th August, 1976.

case although substantial remedial steps have been taken. Moreover divided Ministerial responsibility for the twenty or so years before 1975 prevented the achievement of a co-ordinated transport policy even in a limited sense, until the superficially adverse conditions of the first half of the 1970s forced the integration of the administration and a consciousness of urban reality.

If a sympathetic Minister is necessary for the effective functioning of the Ministry,[37] the reverse is also true. The lack of adequate advisory services has been a major cause of the inability of Ministers to effect adequate policies, and worse, of their not realising the extent of problems. There are strong Ministers and weak Ministers as Mr McCusker has said[38] but in both cases the Ministry has been a base from which good or bad policy has been produced. It had been constrained by anachronistic traditions and conservative management again until the 1970s, but since 1975 MOTH has started to emerge as an effective advisory and support unit. It is realised internally that it has to move further in a modern direction before it will be able to meet all its tasks and as will be seen in the next chapter it is essential that it does so develop.

The co-operative or lateral mechanisms of co-ordination developed earlier than the presently defined roles of Minister and Ministry but CUMTAC was totally ineffective in resolving the fundamental issues of urban transport policy and in providing the Government with proper advice. Once more change has been substantial since the mid-1970s when the chairmanship of URTAC passed into the hands of an organisation which was professionally concerned with co-ordination rather than railways. The nature of . URTAC and the Traffic Authority limits the reliance that can be placed on their ability to coax out and resolve (or advise on) the real problems of the metropolis. However they have a valid role, especially the Traffic Authority which has a statutory constitution which could be the model for similar committees. The main element missing there is the power of referral of an internal dispute to superior levels where the dispute detracts from the Authority's overall functioning.

Finally, it can be seriously doubted if the co-ordinative advances of the 1970s would have been achieved in full measure, if at all, if community pressure had not been as strong or

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37. Interview with Mr K.J. Trott of 29th November, 1976 (Appendix 5), p. 4. Also comments of Mr Trott and the Hon. P.F. Cox, M.L.A., at p. 7.

38. Interview with Mr N. McCusker (Appendix 3), p. 6.

(in retrospect) as positive. Apparently bodies such as the
Interim Commuter Council have been disappointing to their early
proponents because of their inability to consider issues on a
comprehensive basis, among other things. Yet there is a very
strong case for developing appropriate client consultation
mechanisms because of the special input that can be added, the
greater ease of identifying the full effects of policy
alternatives, and the enhanced chances of success of an eventual
decision. Of course mechanisms capable of achieving these benefits
have been absent for most of this century.

Conclusion

Directions for Reform

A key problem is that of devising
systems that will harness the motivations
of the various actors in the decision-
making processes towards achieving
solutions that will best satisfy the
multiple interests... and will
discourage those motivations that
militate against this objective.

Introduction to The Challenge of
the Cities (A.I.U.S., 1976).

This thesis started with a statement of the complexity of decision-making in transport and the need for careful, explicit attention to co-ordination. The outstanding theme of the subsequent analyses is that while that need was occasionally recognised, very little effort was made to achieve effective co-ordination because specialisation was entrenched in the organisation of the governmental system. There was insufficient concern for overall system efficiency to enable a meaningful challenge to the vested interests of statutory authorities and even public service authorities. The need for a reconciliation of central and specialist (or managerial) requirements was and still is indisputable. An attempt will now be made to extract the principal lessons from twentieth century experience and make reasonable suggestions for the improvement of the N.S.W. transport administration.

The primary danger in passing special legislation giving a specific function to a statutory authority is that the authority interprets that function in isolation from wider considerations and over time adapts the whole organisation to a narrow set of values. Thus a bureaucracy becomes committed to a status quo and loses functional efficiency and flexibility over time as external circumstances change; while subsequent Governments find that they do not get adequate advice on alternatives to the internal conventional wisdom and that complex inter-corporate problems cannot be solved without extraordinary trouble (if at all). Thus the accountability of the Government and the Minister is compromised, the performance of the organisation becomes inadequate, and the administration as a whole and also the urban society suffer. Even when the symptoms become unacceptable to the Government it is constrained by statutory financial and corporate provisions and their wider ties, and the problem is so fundamental and in a sense abstract that effective prescription is not easy to achieve. As a further result either no action is taken or a mistake is made.

The Transport (Division of Functions) Act of 1932 established the transport administration as a system of specialised statutory authorities without even formal Ministerial control. Previously, at least for public transport, planning had been quite open and subject to political, public and inter-organisational scrutiny. The Improvement of Sydney Commission of 1908-09 could be judged a little generously because it was a pioneering effort, but in any case it was an outstanding planning enquiry and made a significant contribution to a metropolis where wider social changes were encouraging a new consciousness of the effects of government

inaction and non-planning. The subsequent Bradfield and related plans must be seen in the light of a more developmental mood in Sydney because as the effects of the depression of the 1890s faded and as optimism predominated, the emphasis switched from comprehensive planning to technological planning.

While the intention of the 1928 Report of the Traffic Advisory Committee and of Bruxner, Stevens, Lang and Maddocks was to improve co-ordination by setting up a portfolio of Transport, the opposite effect was built into the transport administration. The financial (and therefore allocative) system lacked integration, statutory independence was ensured by the extent of discretionary powers in the Acts, and no substantial co-ordinating mechanisms were provided. Bruxner saw himself as the central policy-maker but the lack of progress in systematic adjustment of the administration in his time belied his co-ordinating interests, while later Ministers were even more constrained by tradition, philosophy and statute. Bruxner had himself established the independence of his Commissioners. The Ministers lacked advisory support and in any case co-ordination was largely a "concept" which was not of great concern to politicians. As Professor Bland said in 1935,

> Real co-ordination demands that the interest of the community should be the first consideration. Our legislation and administration makes the Government's interest a primary consideration, which may be determined, by very different criteria from that which the public would use.[1]

This is a significant point which will be considered later.

The failure to achieve either operational co-ordination or a balanced co-ordination at strategic levels is adequate proof of the fact that for most of Sydney's twentieth century experience, specialisation drawfed co-ordination. This has been seen in every one of the preceding chapters, in episodes ranging from the alternate dominance of the rail lobby and the road lobby, the lack of realism of most metropolitan land use planning, the separateness of public transport modes, and the inability of the State system as a whole to appraise transport needs in relation to other urban goals and make realistic commitments to transport. The achievements of transport between the 1920s and the 1970s were minuscule compared with progress made in other areas and the growing demands on the metropolitan system generally.

Since the early 1970s there has been a trend towards closer integration in transport largely because of the increased

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1.   F.A. Bland, _An Administrative Approach_ (_op. cit._), p. 5.
Quoted as written.

effectiveness of the Ministry of Transport and Highways and several key Ministers of Transport and Highways (notably Mr Fife and the Labor Government and its Mr Cox). Some of the results were the improved role of URTAC, the formation of the Traffic Authority and the new planning approach which emerged in 1976 and which has been slowly progressing since. Ministerial control has been strengthened on a day-to-day basis. The formation of the Public Transport Commission cannot yet be regarded as an advance in these terms because of its early failures but more will be said of this later.

The first major weakness identified in the foregoing analyses relates to the performance of the superior co-ordinating agencies and the actual limits on their spheres of responsibility. Ministerial accountability was obviously defined in practice on a restricted basis as were the roles of Cabinet and the Governments as a whole and the Treasury and Public Service Board. Obviously their co-ordinative roles were not as comprehensive as convention might imply, but the functional grounds were and still are important. What should be done to fill the gap between present roles and functional requirements, remove constraints and if necessary change convention but within predominating political limitations? Similarly, it has been seen that lateral co-ordinative agencies have inherent limitations but even then their potential has not been realised. What could be done to improve their roles, and also integrate community considerations more effectively in all appropriate levels of decision-making? Given that administrative performance has been deficient in particular areas, how can co-ordination be improved by organisational reform and _vice versa_?

These are important questions and will be examined briefly in turn, but first the most important subject of all will be tackled. Co-ordinative agencies and specialist organisations are components in a system — is that overall system acceptable, and what should be done to get the basic relationships right before the components are improved? Should co-ordination between functions and administration be related by a consolidation of functions, or is the traditional concept of organisational specialisation a workable proposition at this stage of Sydney's history, considering present conditions and the probability of substantial societal change in the future?

There are two fundamental principles to be considered. The first is that central political control must be maintained, because of convention and the N.S.W. Constitution as well as for co-ordinative reasons. This does not necessarily mean that the

Minister must personally take the major co-ordinative role or even exercise the options of power — the system design should provide for delegation, auditing and built-in safeguards, all based on that initial control.

Second, it is important that task specialisation should be arranged so as to facilitate managerial effectiveness and efficiency but without splintering control to a degree which excessively hinders the achievement of co-ordination. Task specialisation in this context can apply to sub-organisational arrangements, for example within giant departments. While definite guidelines cannot be stated a priori for different policy areas, it is argued that a relatively high degree of specialisation is needed in urban transport. This is because of the impact of the main activities on the community, political processes and decision-making and because of the complexities associated with the investment programmes, employment and financial performance (etcetera) of each activity. Specialisation can promote management performance through competition and aid accountability and community access. Very importantly it can promote the full analysis of policies, the identification of issues, the evaluation of alternatives, and the scrutiny of administrative effectiveness at a level where management can be related to performance. It can also assist a central arbiter to gain a thorough understanding of complex issues. As Benham and Peres submitted to the Royal Commission on Australian Government Administration:

> The bureaucracy itself plays, and must play, a crucial part in the processes by which its own objectives are set.... Nor do the value criteria of efficiency and merit (and their surrogates) carry objectively self-evident meanings.... Both the objectives themselves and the criteria are operationalised against the influence of the values present within the particular policy context. Thus departments and other mission agencies of government should come to compete with one another on the basis of quite legitimately derived, but differently derived, policy conceptions each of which places the highest value on the traditional virtues. We share the view that in general the stimulation of such policy competition facilitates political control. Where co-ordinating techniques squeeze out the possibility of competing conceptions, however, the problem of political control is aggravated though obscured by a veil of harmony.[2]

Specialisation is usually implemented (as seen in N.S.W.) along functional lines corresponding to public transport, main roads, local roads, traffic management, policing, regulation and urban planning aspects. Even in cases where it has been decided to have cross-modal authorities, especially in metropolitan areas, such as in most American States, internal structure is normally

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2.   R.C.A.G.A., op. cit., Appendix 1.B.

specialised on modal lines. The complementary need for co-ordination mainly stems from functional interdependencies, for the pricing, investment, management, marketing and suchlike policies of each mode affect the other modes as well as the over-all efficiency of the transport sector and in turn society. In general the dilemma of specialisation and co-ordination in transport is exceptional: few other policy fields are as complex in organisational terms.

The dilemma can be expressed in the words of the Royal Commission on Australian Government Administration: "The fundamental task is to integrate the authority which comes from popular election with that which derives from professional knowledge and experience, while upholding the principle of ultimate political control."[3]

This leads to accountable management which is the central concept in modern public administration and which has enjoyed great popularity with the major recent public service enquiries. It is based on three connected propositions: that the administration of different responsibilities should reside at the most suitable level of the governmental system; that organisations should be given sufficient resources and freedom to perform their functions efficiently; and that each organisation should be accountable to its Minister and public service authorities on the basis of suitable criteria. In many respects accountable management differs little from specialisation except for its associated reforms in personnel and financial management. (Statutory authorities generally have the delegated powers already although accountability has typically been lacking.)

In the context of transport administration accountable management rests on the distinction between operational and strategic decisions, or administrative and policy[4] decisions in the traditional terminology. Main roads construction and the operation of public transport and traffic systems are relatively self-contained in administrative terms, are suitable to evaluation on the basis of pre-determined "objective" criteria, and are dominated by repetitive decision processes. However strategic decisions concerning the placement of main roads, expenditure priorities, pricing, level of service and the like are controversial and cannot be separated from the mainstream of political accountability. Such areas are the direct concern of

3.   Report of R.C.A.G.A., ibid., p. 43.

4.   This distinction has lost its traditional respectability under recent critical examination. These are however the words adopted by Self in Administrative Theories and Politics (op. cit.) and the concepts are the same.

the Minister and Government acting on advice against the background of societal constraints.

The principles which have been outlined can apply to a system of statutory authorities, traditional Departments, one or many Ministers, and so on. The combinations are numerous and it would be meaningless to propose a "perfect" combination. In fact the question of system efficiency as stated above results in three main alternatives, namely: (1) leaving the single Minister at the centre of a group of statutory authorities but with strength- ened co-ordinating mechanisms; (2) converting the statutory authorities into Departments, with various Ministerial arrange- ments; and (3) centralising all functions under one or two "giant" organisations.

There has been a good deal of controversy in the past about the relative virtues of statutory authorities and the traditional public service Department. The former usually have the advantages of freedom from the restrictive centralised financial and budgeting practices of Treasury and the personnel policy of the Public Service Board, and of statutory functions and representation on the board of management. In such cases it is relatively easy to provide a management with sufficient powers and abilities to perform their functions and to delegate repetitive decision-making without necessarily impairing the legislature's (or Minister's) powers in key areas. It cannot be claimed that political control and policy auditing are easy to achieve but this comment applies to any large organisation. The main disadvantages relate to the difficulty of achieving financial, personnel and policy co-ordination under traditional arrangements.[5] The organisations are separate in financial and personnel matters and this reduces flexibility in both areas, while a conscious effort must be made by a Minister to observe policy decisions which relate to the approval of the organisation's executive rather than the Minister. Also values are often highly internalised and managerial efficiency suffers over time. Most of these disadvant- ages are consequences of bad application rather than inherent design defects. The Glassco Commission for example was not opposed outright to statutory authorities, like virtually all of the recent major public service enquiries in the U.K., Australia and Canada, and saw them (with improvements) "not as alternatives

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5.   The most useful source is Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Public Service of South Australia (Chairman D.C. Corbett; Adelaide, Government Printer, 1975), pp. 112 ff.   Other sources used were: (Glassco) Royal Commission on Government Organisation, Report (Canada: Government Printer, 1962), volume 5; and (J.S. Fulton) The Civil Service (London: H.M.S.O., 1968).   The Reports of R.C.A.G.A. and Bland on the Victorian Public Service (1974-75) were far less useful although both placed a heavy emphasis on dangers of loss of co-ordination.

to the departmental form but more properly as species of the same genus, or associated departments".[6]

The main difference between the department and the authority is that in the former the Minister is placed directly at the head of the organisation and is more closely concerned with internal submissions, officers and management than would otherwise be possible. This supposedly makes the organisation more open and responsive. However there are very substantial disadvantages in that the department is part of a public service system in which personnel and financial responsibilities are separate from administration, and in which the respective Ministers have basic responsibility for all matters, from the most controversial and political to the most technical and routine. These are the main reasons why the public service inquiries mentioned above have sought to combine the signal advantage of the department with the advantages of incorporation. They have shown that the dangers of loss of co-ordination are just as great with a Departmental system.

Is direct Ministerial control essential? It is not required in a large range of activities, including technical design, operations, construction procedures, personnel administration and so on. In the Swedish model such functions can be "hived off" and subject to loose controls only. Transport administration abounds in such matters. The specialist advisory services which are associated with main roads and public transport planning are inarguably best placed close to operational and administrative functions, for reasons of experience, information and skills. This suggests a more complete hiving-off so long as information and control links are maintained. There are also political and functional advantages in leaving some "distance" between the Minister and his administration, because of the controversial nature of some decisions (i.e. some controversy can be hived off), because of the inherent desirability of having specialist advisory services in a Ministry,[7] and because of the complexity inherent in the functional and technological characteristics of transport.

Perhaps more importantly, the really potent control mechanisms, the financial and budgetary powers, could be more easily used with statutory authorities than with public service Departments. Other mechanisms, such as the obligation to seek

6.   Ibid., vol. 5, p. 56.

7.   Principally alternative sources of advice and different emphases regarding political and long-term implications. Cf R.A. Chapman, "The Role of Central or Departmental Policy and Planning Units: Recent Developments in Britain", Public Administration (Australia), June 1975, especially pp. 151 f.

Ministerial approval to minutes to the Executive Council, can be effective but only on the small range of matters which the respective permanent head has to report on. In general the bulk of an organisation's activities are unseen by the political master and he has enormous problems with information, for example of not knowing the criteria of evaluation inherent in a submission (especially with regard to the selection of alternatives). Many of the powers of statutory authorities are discretionary and therefore outside the formal influence of the Minister, for purely technical not substantive reasons. Even where he has effective power to direct, he often cannot ensure that action is taken promptly and properly, even if only because he only has recourse to the final power of dismissal of an official, a power which in most cases is heavily checked and which is usually inappropriate.[8] The only real power, quite apart from the question of relating goals to action in the form of a programme, is through the purse. Financial control can be absolute or can be used with tact and discretion; it can be easily recorded and applied; and most importantly it is effective.

It would undoubtedly be practicable to abolish statutory status of the transport bodies and place them under the direct control of the Minister. The Commissioners might even retain their titles and a substantial part of their present powers; it would even be possible to have multi-member management boards as in the Planning and Environment Commission. However under present institutional arrangements their personnel policies would be subject to the Public Service Board, their financial sources would be absorbed into Consolidated Revenue, their accounting and budgeting procedures would be replaced or revised, and they would be placed within the line-budget framework of the Treasury. These are all associated with problems of management efficiency, planning and political control, and even if the general arrangements were improved the Departmental status would not vary substantially from that of statutory authorities. Improvement would not be a simple matter and would require considerable institutional and constitutional effort, which could hardly be justified except in the case of existing Departments.

Several additional points need to be briefly covered following on from the earlier questions. Specialisation can be achieved within an integrated organisation, say through the

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8.   To this writer's knowledge only one head of a statutory authority has been dismissed and that in fact was S.A. Maddocks because of a criminal conviction in 1936. See Aitkin, The Colonel (op. cit.), pp. 209-210.

conversion of all or most of the present statutory agencies into one authority or Department. There are no grounds for thinking that such integration would improve administrative efficiency, in fact given present intra-organisational structures quite the opposite would occur,[9] while issues would tend to be complicated and possibly suppressed because of the difficulty and nature of internal processes. Adequate external discussion would be hindered. Further, "large departments are difficult to manage. There is also a risk that Ministers in charge of them may become so preoccupied with the work of their own departments that they are unable to share effectively in... wider policy-making."[10] Placing the responsibilities of four Departments on one Minister would severely detract from the effectiveness of that Minister unless the central Ministry was built up to a point which detracted from accountable management. The appointment of several Ministers to handle different sections of the administration would multiply problems of co-ordination, although the administration is complicated and important enough to warrant the appointment of an Assistant Minister.

Three conclusions emerge from the preceding discussion. Firstly, specialisation is highly desirable in transport administration but it must be married with co-ordinative and control arrangements. Secondly, there are no substantial grounds for advocating the conversion of the existing statutory authorities into public service Departments for the benefits that are sometimes claimed for such a policy are illusory. Finally, present institutional constraints must loom very large in the organisational architect's calculations.

The last conclusion and the preceding analysis should not be taken to be arguments for just patching up the status quo by making improvements to existing co-ordinative mechanisms. Substantial administrative changes are needed, in fact in the case of the Public Transport Commission no significant progress will be made in any direction until a number of internal problems are resolved. Nonetheless it is accepted here that the basic system of central and operational agencies which has developed in the New South Wales transport administration will not need revolutionary structural change. Organisational specialisation is on sensible lines and

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9. See interview with the Hon. P.F. Cox of 29th November, 1976 (Appendix 5), p. 6 and elsewhere.

10. P. Draper, The Creation of D.O.E. (London: H.M.S.O., 1977), p. 1. This writer would certainly argue against giant departments and extremely large organisations generally. For the structural horrors of the aborted British experiment see Draper, throughout; and a superficial account by A. Clark, "Ministerial Supervision and the Size of the Department of the Environment", Public Administration (London), vol. 55, Summer 1977.

provides the basis for definitive reform while the lines of communication and control are clear and there are no complete lacunae. A specific prescription for each of the main components of the system will now be developed.

The Minister for Transport and Highways has adequate powers deriving from formal and other arrangements, with three exceptions. Firstly, he does not have the force of convention and statute to ensure that his wishes are carried out. Perhaps it would be all but unthinkable for a direction or request to be actually disobeyed but every Minister needs to be able to order management audits, find out what decisions are made internally, and specify or approve (in a meaningful way) policies, priorities and programmes.[11] Secondly and following on, the Minister must have adequate support services to assist with policy review and initiatives and programmes. As seen already the Ministry of Transport and Highways has been developing in this direction and must continue to do so. Finally, the Minister does not have the real power of the purse in the transport administration and reform in resource allocation is needed badly.

The inconsistency of the budgeting and financial system was examined in Chapter Six. At present the Minister and Treasury do not have uniform or adequate powers of review over the various authorities; in fact the disadvantages of the State system as a whole are seen in microcosm in transport. Reform is needed in many directions but especially in ways that will improve external understanding of corporate activities and plans and allow effective specification and enforcement of Government policy. Resource allocation has three main dimensions or tasks which need development, as Professor Wilenski has said. The tasks are:

(i) "to devise policy machinery to undertake the analysis of /¯wide planning_7 issues so that decision-makers are aware of the choices /¯and consequences_7 involved";

(ii) "to develop information and budgeting systems so that policy choices can be translated into priorities in resource allocation (indeed it is only through resource allocation decisions that policy in the end will be made)"; and

(iii) "to co-ordinate the implementation and timing of these plans /¯and priorities_7 on the ground."[12]

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11. See Glassco, loc. cit., for guidelines. Glassco included a condition of control over the appointment and removal of top management. Considering the past experience in N.S.W. (Chapter Five) this has been deleted here but would have considerable merit on a special (say contract or rotation) basis.

12. P. Wilenski, "Urban Administration and Policy in N.S.W. (roneo, UNESCO Seminar on Urban Management Processes, Adelaide, 1977), pp. 3-4.

Wilenski has proposed a combination of a Priorities Review Unit, Capital Works Unit, comprehensive and integrated State annual Budget, and improved corporate and Ministerial research facilities,[13] to do this on a State-wide basis. However transport should be regarded as a sub-system for such purposes because of its functional and political interdependencies, magnitude of expenditure (a total of almost $1,000,000,000 in 1977/78), operational diversity and inherent complexity. This would not invalidate the Wilenski proposals at all but would reinforce them.

It is not possible to say how much integration would be required in the financial arrangements of the transport system because extensive consultation with affected interests would be required before a definite framework for accountable management could be worked out.[14] However at the very least provision must exist for transfers of funds (and probably other resources) between operational areas and for special funds (such as the Victorian Ministry of Transport's Transport Improvement Fund) for specifically inter-corporate projects and Ministerial initiatives. These are the areas of greatest constraint at present. As well MOTH should be equipped to actively participate in the preparation of the various corporate programmes (in the sense of annual and advance lists of works) so as to assist in the interpretation and development of Government policy and the auditing of organisational activities. This would provide excellent sources of information as well as the most powerful (yet "accountable") control mechanism for the Minister. The question of fully integrated transport budgeting is involved and will be briefly examined shortly.

Professor Bland's opinion was previously cited to indicate that there are limitations on the co-ordinative interests of many Ministers because as politicians they are not necessarily interested in a range of non-political (and sometimes apolitical) subjects. For example while some Ministers are interested in the efficiency of transport systems as a personal matter, many would not be and this was the reason for Bland's idea of separating such subjects from the politicians' domain.[15] This conclusion was a product of

13. See Review of N.S.W. Government Administration, Interim Report — Directions for Change (Sydney: Government Printer, 1977), Chapters 1, 2 and 4.

14. See R.C.A.G.A. Report, op. cit., pp. 43-4.

15. Bland thought that a statutory appeals tribunal would be suitable protection of the popular interest in co-ordination. Against this it must be said that many issues will not be of interest to politicians because they are not of popular interest. This was not the whole of Bland's point and his basic argument has

Bland's era and personal experience with politics in administra-tion[16] and it has no modern application. However when designing a system it is essential to provide adequate mechanisms (which are independent of temporary personality constraints as far as possible) to cover all important issues. Thus the Minister's personal stake in co-ordination should be complemented by an effective professional and possibly popular interest.

There are different types of co-ordination of course and different interests will be affected by say land use, timetable, and road management issues, and it is important to provide suitable inputs to allocative processes. Lateral co-ordinative agencies must continually consider major options and evaluate them from their professional viewpoint. Similarly popular participa-tion could provide a special input, in balance rather than in opposition to the co-operative agencies, although it is far more difficult to achieve effective participation in Australian conditions than in countries where ethos and education are more favourable. Again it is not possible to foresee in detail what form the participation of URTAC for example would have but in his Interim Report Wilenski rightly separated budget preparation and project analysis so as to prevent the budget process from becoming too complicated. This would suggest that URTAC would continue to make recommendations on a regular basis rather than as a specific part of the budget cycle.

In general the role of the Minister for Transport and Highways and by implication the superior governmental system as a whole have developed in a positive and useful direction recently, and they will be reinforced in the same direction by the recommen-dations of Professor Wilenski. In a way however there is an important question remaining about the respective roles of MOTH and URTAC. The former has a potentially vital role at the centre of the transport administration, not only as the servant of the Minister but as a (non-statutory) superior co-ordinative agency. URTAC also has a non-statutory but co-operative role, although it could become much more if a Government decided to follow (but hopefully improve on) the precedent of the Transport and Highways Commission of 1950-52. Wilenski has not explicitly considered that question although he has recognised the basic issue: "the Ministry and URTAC now form the basis for the establishment of a reasonable

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much merit which the N.S.W. Government is examining consequent to the Report of the Law Reform Commission on Appeals in Administration (1973).

16. See Chapter Five above; and Spearritt, "Urban History", op. cit., pp. 227-8.

co-ordination mechanism in this field if more fundamental
problems of resource allocation can be overcome".[17]

The first of these "fundamental problems" is that the State
urban authorities are highly constrained by the terms of
Commonwealth grants made under Section 96 of the Australian
Constitution. The distribution of Commonwealth funds between
urban local and urban arterial roads for example is determined
outside the sphere of influence of the Department of Main Roads
and the Minister for Transport and Highways. The broad allocative
question of country and urban expenditure is similarly compromised,
as well as by the arrangements for National Highways. The
Commonwealth funds construction and maintenance expenditure on
National Highways (which terminate at the urban boundaries) and the
State has therefore lost discretion over urban/rural expenditure
in this area as well as to a considerable extent over relative road
and rail priorities. Commonwealth funding requirements in research
and planning, and urban public transport improvement, mean that
while the State has some discretion it must meet Commonwealth
specifications which on occasions differ from State priorities and
which therefore constrain State allocative decisions. The same can
be said about port and airport works and National Commerce roads.

Secondly, there are significant institutional constraints on
resource flexibility per se within the State system. Urban
government is highly specialised generally between authorities
which have different sources of revenue, different personnel
structures, and special statutory restrictions. The various Acts
specify functions on which funds may be expended and planning is
basically confined to such functions. In some cases the major
allocative decisions are set down by statute, for example revenue
from road maintenance and various motorist charges is divided
between the Department of Main Roads' Country and County of
Cumberland Main Roads Funds, the Traffic Facilities Fund, Police
expenses, and so on. Such provisions limit the Government's
flexibility and tend to pre-empt the Government's options in the
current rapidly changing climate of community needs and attitudes.
In some respects a less than optimum distribution of finance and
capital starving of important sectors of transport have resulted.

The third major source of problems underlies the second
problem as just stated and the question of resource allocation
generally. Each of the separate organisations has its own
budgetary procedures and accounting mechanisms which make
comparisons and central analysis very difficult. There are great

17. Wilenski, "Urban Administration", op. cit., p. 17. Emphasis
added.

difficulties in <u>planning</u> allocations from the centre in accordance
with Government objectives. The budget process is one where the
Government can specify particular limited wishes but cannot
actually institute planned expenditure on an integrated basis.
This is a crucial limitation at times in urban policy where say
Government policy may call for the advancing in priority of
significant road projects to complement other transport works. An
example of this was the Bondi Junction by-pass roadworks associated
with the Eastern Suburbs Railway project (see above). In such
circumstances an integrated set of financial arrangements for all
modes is needed. This should incorporate suitable analytical
measures (such as cost-benefit and social balance sheet
approaches) to assist in determining priority and staging.

The Review of N.S.W. Government Administration has not intend-
ed at all that its strengthened central arrangements will supplant
the role of MOTH and perhaps URTAC. "It is only by strengthening
the capacity of central agencies to analyze and review policy and
concurrently encouraging ministries and agencies to more critic-
ally evaluate and review their own programmes, that more coherent
and 'co-ordinated' results will be achieved."[18] In the context
of the "fundamental problems" it is definitely intended, and
rightly so, that the major State allocative decisions will be made
at the core of accountable government, namely Cabinet and the
Premier, acting on proper information and advice. At the
transport system level it is similarly intended that allocative
decision-making should be centred on the Minister and the
Ministry's Development Co-ordination Division. In fact the bulk
of the necessary policy analysis could not be moved from the
administration to central agencies (such as a Capital Works Unit)
because of the expertise and experience needed, the complexity,
and the necessary nexus between the day-to-day processing of policy
and representational matters and the review of detailed works
programmes. (This does not apply to major projects.) Moreover as
the allocative problems are tackled the Ministerial role will
become considerably more important.

It is not necessary that a single transport budget covering
all modes should be prepared, although this would be desirable if
the effectiveness of supporting processes could be built up to a
comparable level. However at the very least the requirements of
the individual areas of operations should be understood and
related to each other; and that decisions concerning relative
merits can be made and implemented (including transfers of funds
and other resources). These tasks unquestionably require
specialist staff resources and a professional co-ordinative

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18. <u>Interim Report</u>, <u>op. cit.</u>, 4.61 (pp. 72 f).

orientation as well as proximity to the Minister and his authority. The Ministry of Transport and Highways is the logical place for these tasks and it has argued strongly for a more comprehensive and positive role for itself in submissions to the Wilenski Review, the Australian Transport Advisory Council and the former Commonwealth Bureau of Roads.[19] The concepts and role are fully consistent with the thrust of the Interim Report of the Review of New South Wales Government Administration. Supporting legislative change would be highly desirable and has been foreshadowed by the permanent head of MOTH.[20]

URTAC has a secondary role in this scheme of resource alloca-tion. If it is accepted that MOTH should be the focus of the transport administration, and again it is interesting to note that this was the explicit intention of the 1928 Report of the Traffic Advisory Committee referred to previously, then URTAC would retain its co-operative status and the associated limitations. URTAC would still involve the participation of MOTH and its present terms of reference are adequate for any reasonable expansion of role into say operational co-ordination and explicit considera-tion of and recommendations on allocative patterns. (The 1976 URTAC Report covered both areas to some extent and it is under-stood that the Committee will maintain its involvement to a full extent.[21]) There would be no need for URTAC to take a major part in resource allocation but it would be a valuable counter-part to the Ministry's analyses. While URTAC would not have direct control of resources the small extension of its role on allocative questions would improve the Committee's functioning and reduce the rule of consensus. It should not be allowed to take the leading role over the Ministry because this would detract from accountability and generate undue competition, apart from the fact that the process of conflict resolution in URTAC is necessarily more complex and generally less satisfactory.[22] URTAC's role

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19. Ministry of Transport and Highways Submission to Review of N.S.W. Government Administration (photostat, available from Ministry), together with attachments.

20. Interview with Mr. K.J. Trott of 29th November, 1976 (Appendix 5), p. 4.

21. The Interim Report of Professor Wilenski's Review said: "...there is at least one area where some improvement in co-ordina-tion 'on the ground' seems most desirable. This is in the trans-port sector where some projects, e.g. Bondi Junction By-Pass and car-bus-rail interchanges at major commercial centres sometimes fall in the 'gap' between agency responsibilities. One solution to this problem could be to extend the powers of ... (URTAC) to one of project management (e.g. through ad hoc subcommittees with a project manager reporting to it) for these special cases" (4.62, p. 73, also 4.84e, p. 77). This is a major problem area which needs special task force-type attention. However so far URTAC has rejected the idea and this writer agrees because of URTAC's limited abilities. Such task forces would probably be better as a Minister-ial responsibility, but regardless the need for some regularised action is urgent.

22. M. Painter and B. Carey, "Bureaucratic Partisan Behaviour on

would be as at present, to complement the co-ordinative interests in the administration.

Finally, there is no obvious solution to the problem of obtaining an effective community input to transport planning. URTAC has Illawarra and Hunter Advisory Committees which have value in stressing local concerns even though their representations, like those of the Interim Commuter Council and the Botany Bay Sub-Region Community Advisory Committee, are regarded as nuisances by many sections of the administration. Even though they may be regarded as selfish and incompetent by technocratic standards, their input is a politically and socially valid consideration. (Naturally there is a distinction between a politician being elected and making "responsible" decisions on behalf, and bowing to or rejecting community pressure.) A general decision would have to be made by the Government on some of the following points before the role of community groups could be properly defined:

(i)   should they have compulsory access to budgetary, information and related processes?

(ii)   should their roles be tightly defined and be of a "semi-superior" type (vis-a-vis corporate planning) on appropriate subjects? and

(iii)   should they have access to Ministers and unhindered avenues of advice on disputes?[23]

There is probably little middle ground between giving community committees a firm status and leaving them as pressure groups, because of the relative resources of the bureaucracies. It can be argued on theoretical grounds that their input should be made more effective but this subject is one for Governments to take a preference on. There are not inconsiderable avenues of access in transport and related areas at present but those avenues should be further developed.

Finally, it has been seen that the structure and definition of functions of an organisation have important effects on the way it performs its own task and interacts with other organisations. There has been some controversy over each of the specific specialised areas of transport, particularly with regard to the abilities

Inter-Departmental Committees in Canberra" (roneo paper to APSA Conference, Armidale, 1977), passim. The authors' treatment of consensus and "self-protection" (p. 5) and Ministerial involvement (p. 16) inter alia, is far too simple and inadequately founded on fact, at least as far as N.S.W. practice is concerned.

23.   The Review of N.S.W. Government Administration is understood to be developing model guidelines on these topics and others, in favour of a more powerful role for community groups.

of organisations to perform their own tasks efficiently and economically, to inform and obey their superiors, and to adjust their operations and policies to meet changing requirements. These abilities cannot be taken for granted and will be appraised now regarding the Public Transport Commission and the Department of Main Roads. Comments have been made elsewhere on the Traffic Authority (Chapter Seven) and the Ministry of Transport and Highways (Chapter Nine and immediately above).

The Public Transport Commission was set up in 1972 in an attempt to rationalise the administration of government transport services in New South Wales and revitalise and co-ordinate two large statutory authorities.[24] However it is now clear that the Commission is unable to meet the long-term needs of the administration, and that the problems which the P.T.C. faces are too complex for a single management structure which has to operate in a still fairly traditional and cumbersome organisation. There are weaknesses in adaptability, decision-making processes, efficiency, responsiveness to Ministerial requirements, "openness" to scrutiny, information services, and so on. The Commission's task was extremely difficult and it has made some progress in meeting it, but it was (as is now evident) handicapped from the first and will not be able to perform satisfactorily until its basic organisational problems are ameliorated. It will be suggested that this can be done by making relatively straightforward adjustments, using the concept of the Public Transport Commission as the basis for the further reform.

It is a valid generalisation that public transport administration is often seen by governments as being necessarily oriented to two main principles which derive from market conditions and operational characteristics. The first is that the organisation of transport administration should reflect the greatly different capital and marketing requirements of urban passenger services, and freight and country passenger services. The differences are so substantial that urban passenger services are often separated from other activities, not just within a single organisation but in a special organisation. The second principle is that the different modes are highly interdependent, at marketing as well as operational levels, within the main sectors. The requirements of these interdependencies are often seen as being more important than operating urban bus services separately from train and ferry services. Combining the two principles has led many governments

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24. The following analysis is based on personal investigation and numerous informal and formal interviews. However while the advice of others is gratefully acknowledged, all responsibility for interpretation and presentation is the author's.

to establish special metropolitan agencies (called say
Metropolitan Transit Authorities) which are responsible for the
integrated administration of public transport in cities, with
parallel arrangements for freight and other services.

In the specific instance of New South Wales each of these
respective sectors has acute problems which result in the
substantial annual deficit. The problems were present prior to
1972 but had been more or less masked by comparatively favourable
economic conditions. Not only did the Public Transport Commission
inherit unquestionably inadequate facilities but it also had to
deal with administrative mechanisms which were organised for no
more than day-to-day efficiency in operations. The administrative
systems of the former Departments were not designed to collect or
process the type of information which the new Commission required,
nor to devise or implement policies which were alien to past
management. The first Chief Commissioner instituted the new
priorities of planning and flexible management in place of the
operational orientation and in effect acted as a revolutionary
modernising force: he changed the internal structure, brought in
highly capable and progressive executives, and forcefully rejected
old customs. There was an awareness that the Public Transport
Commission's problems would require a type of management that was
not then available, and that they would not even be satisfactorily
defined and analysed let alone solved unless adequate organisation
processes and resources were introduced.

However the reforms caused considerable fragmentation and
inefficiency. The situation at present can be summarised under
three heads: first, responsibility for the various aspects of the
main problem sections is dispersed; second, there are conflicting
chains of command and sources of influence around the sectors
which detract from efficiency in decision-making; and third, the
two foregoing organisational weaknesses have hindered the develop-
ment of positive management attitudes, information resources,
analytical services and so on. Many of the outside recruits are
of high quality, as are many former Departmental officers, but are
not being fully utilised. In some cases analyses of major issues
are delayed at various stages by the spread of authority and
influence across the organisation, between different branches and
even different Commissioners. There is also a great lack of
"openness" in the organisation in that information sources are
confused, the roles of senior officials are ambiguous, and it is
very difficult for the Commissioners and the Minister to find out
exactly what is happening and get adequate advice. In some cases
reports are prepared which obscure and white-wash rather than
explain and clarify; in many cases they are simply of very poor

quality.

The internal achievements of the P.T.C. should not be underestimated, but its single most important characteristic is the inability of one management structure to handle a variety of such enormous problems as now afflict urban passenger, freight, and long-distance passenger services. These areas are not receiving concentrated attention; the officers who are responsible for them have to contend with internal competition and conflict; the Commissioners are able to excuse the Commission's weaknesses and hide its failures because of the lack of openness; and the extent and magnitude of the problems detract from the morale and effectiveness of staff.

Any move to improve the P.T.C. will necessarily have to be consistent with three main constraints. First, it must make the organisation more open to Government direction and investigation: many of the immediate past problems affecting the Minister for Transport and Highways have been caused by his inability, and even that of the Chief Commissioner, to obtain information and reports in good time, and to even find out what subjects need to be reported. (This is a problem which affects all administrations but the P.T.C. is an exceptionally difficult organisation in this regard.) Secondly, the reform must not repeat or accentuate the losses of morale and internal efficiency which followed the original reorganisation. It should make the most of existing departments and branches, after all the trouble and care that has gone into their present or projected status, and the most of personnel resources. Thirdly, the reform must do everything possible to achieve quick results but in such a manner that administrative and operational efficiency is not compromised, now or in the future.

A general direction for reform has been developed which is simple and certainly not novel (it generally follows overseas and interstate precedent as well as previous local suggestions). In short the operational core of the P.T.C. (the sections which deal with the management of physical facilities) would be left intact, except for workshops which would be hived off, but they would be given an appropriate management structure. A board (called say the Transport Operations and Management Authority or TOMA) would be constituted of representatives of various interests, both government and unions. The Chairman would be a full-time member who would be assisted by a Director while there would be representatives of the Treasury, MOTH and the Department of Public Works seconded on a half-time basis (so that involvement would be substantial). This Authority would be charged with efficient management and with the investigation of operational improvement: there would be no commitment to change for change's sake. Although

this Authority would not differ from the bulk of the present
P.T.C., there would be much greater openness and incentives
because of the auxiliary changes mentioned below.

Secondly, policy-oriented functions would be removed from the
constricting influence of operations by setting up separate
representative authorities for Metropolitan Passenger policy, and
Freight and Country Passenger policy. These would consist of
existing planning, marketing and budgeting and relating sections
and would be responsible for:

(i)   market strategies;

(ii)   appraising the appropriateness of existing services;

(iii)   evaluating new policies, proposed new services and
improvements to existing services;

(iv)   reports on various aspects of rail, bus and ferry
services (as appropriate) to the Public Transport Commission and
the Minister; and

(v)   the overall viability and utility of their services.

The two Authorities would have to "buy" their facilities on
contract to the operating authority and they would have to develop
their own information and analytical services.

The Public Transport Commission would be left virtually
unaltered as a co-ordinating body, consisting of a full-time
Chairman, the three Chairmen of the new Authorities, and
appropriate outside representatives. (An increase of one
Commissioner only would be required on current numbers.) The P.T.C.
would lose its administrative functions and would instead be respon-
sible to the Minister for the resolution of differences between
the Authorities and for their general performance vis-à-vis capital
works, labour relations, contracts, and so on. It is intended
that the P.T.C. would still be responsible for all major decisions,
with the Authorities being responsible more for efficient manage-
ment. The Joint Council of the P.T.C. would continue to work,
providing effective involvement of unions at both Authority and
Commission levels. The P.T.C. and the Minister would have
statutory power to call on the Authorities for reports within
specified time limits and the reports would by statute also be
provided to the Minister at the same time.

The composition of the Authorities and the Commission is
designed to maximise mutual understanding and communication as
well as open them to constructive representation of interested
parties, including Government Departments. Representation would
broaden the perspective of both management and the interested
parties, help generate new approaches and better policies, increase
scrutiny and mutual understanding, and provide "automatic"

mechanisms of co-ordination. The boards would be responsible for
ensuring improvements in performance of their respective
Authorities and would be encouraged to concentrate on their
problems, which would be reduced to a manageable scale (at least
in the case of the policy Authorities) by the reorganisation.
TOMA represents the biggest challenge but the general arrangement
would give the Government and P.T.C. every assistance. The
element of competition between the Authorities is deliberate and
necessary, for competition -

(i)   assists the setting of standards for planning time-
tables, economic efficiency, overall financial results, etc.;

(ii)   stimulates higher levels of performance; and

(iii)   facilitates the evaluation of alternative policies and
helps in the identification and resolution of issues.

It would be essential to choose the correct criteria of performance
for each Authority, especially in terms of improvement of both
standards of service to the community and financial results, rather
than say simple Return on Investment (ROI) approaches which have
considerable disadvantages.

A significant benefit of this arrangement would be the clear
allocation of the costs of public transport to the main operating
sectors via annual reports and the representation. In the
metropolitan area for example commuter groups and the public will
know what their services cost the Government as will rural
producers and interstate shippers in the case of freight services.
The overall deficit will be less stunning and most importantly will
be attributable to each management, so that they will be encouraged
to make a real effort to overcome their problems. Considering the
present state of the Commission it is unlikely that action to
decrease the annual burden on the State significantly could be
taken for some time, but this proposal would reduce the delay and
assist in the derivation of appropriate policies and programmes.

The principal problem with the D.M.R. is similar in a way in
that its structure has produced excessive policy inertia which
prevents the organisation from satisfactorily adjusting to changed
conditions.

When the office of Commissioner was created in 1932, main
roads was regarded as a purely technical and administratively self-
contained area of government, and it was thought that one manager
would be best able to control it. Since then, however, the
Department of Main Roads has seen its domain become politicised
and more interdependent with other State agencies; while
commissions such as the Royal Commission on Australian Government

Administration, have very emphatically decided that a major
justification for continuing the form of statutory authority
rather than adopting the normal departmental form is the
opportunity for mixing different specialisations and backgrounds
on the board of management of the former. An important question
which should therefore be considered is whether the corporation
sole is still the most suitable form of management for the
Department of Main Roads.

The Commissioner for Main Roads has invariably been appointed
from within the Department and the Commissioner's job has become
the ultimate step in the line of succession within the internal
promotional structure. This has reinforced the internalisation of
values and policy-making which resulted from statutory independ-
ence, narrow overall task orientation, and independent personnel
management status. In bodies such as the Water Board, State
Electricity Commission, Rural Bank and State Planning Authority/
Planning and Environment Commission, there has been a high level
of outside appointment at executive level, as happens in the
mainstream of the Public Service. Thus while these statutory
authorities have been faced with the same dangers of technical
narrowness of vision that the Department of Main Roads has in the
past succumbed to, the wider experience and background of the
senior executive has helped to maintain a measure of balance in
organisational values. These bodies have had the further assist-
ance of a composite board of management, whereas the Department of
Main Roads is faced with the internalisation of values at every
level.

Lately the Department has been most reluctant to assist the
various Governments to change the direction of main roads planning.
Responsiveness to Government policy is not a concept which is
easily achieved within large organisations. Even if the chief
executive was willing to assist his Minister as fully as possible,
he might have difficulty in obtaining information and results from
the lower levels of management. Management is of course basically
a filtering process: the filtering can take place at the second,
third or tenth-last link in the chain of command, so that if a
specific set of values is inculcated in an organisation over time
and an incoming Government challenges those values, it does not
necessarily matter if the top link is adaptable if the lower ones
are not. The chief manager may be faced with the same problems
as the Minister, of not knowing what decisions have been made
without his knowledge, of not being aware of the values inherent
in the evaluation criteria in analysis of alternatives (not to
mention the very selection of some alternatives and not others),
of not himself having the knowledge to answer criticisms of a
proposal that has been passed to him and approved with the best

intentions on his part. The processes of filtering and the problems of management in large organisations are very well recognised and the logical and general empirical grounds for the preceding comments can hardly be questioned.

It would seem that a board of management would be better able to help an organisation adapt to changing conditions than a corporation sole, because the chief executive (the present corporation sole) can retain the bulk of his managerial role but with help (and checks and balances) which are desirable by external criteria. Especially if a fresh start is made, a Government can put the most appropriate talents on a board as well as utilise the existing resources of the organisation, to achieve a good balance of expertise, experience and managerial ability. Two of the main benefits that would result if the reorganisation was properly handled would be:

(a) the sharing of responsibility and thus the relief from the corporation sole of the burden of personal decision on difficult matters;

(b) broader judgments due to the varying experiences of each of the members and less likelihood of incorrect decisions due to the inbuilt checks and balances.

As well, each full-time executive can be given areas of policy with which he can become thoroughly familiar, and can over-view the processes of information-gathering and evaluation down the management line. This does not apply so much to part-time members except that they would be appointed on the basis of special knowledge and could specialise to some extent on that basis. It is important to note that a common argument in favour of the corporation sole, that a Government will get quicker and more effective action if it appoints one suitable manager, has no long-term value. It is quite incorrect to base organisational design on temporary individual qualities as the policy record of the D.M.R. has demonstrated.

It is envisaged that the new board of the D.M.R. would consist of three full-time members representing the road construc-tion, road management, and societal impact areas. Additional part-time members could be appointed on the basis of expertise in financial or related management and workforce representation.

There is one further dimension to this problem. The D.M.R. is very competent within its traditional discipline but it has not developed adequate manpower resources in economic, social or environmental areas. The Review of N.S.W. Government Administra-tion has identified this. The obvious solution is to expand analytical services but the senior management reform is essential on this count as well.

Finally, a number of miscellaneous problems have been identified which relate to rigidities in the D.M.R.'s internal budgeting system and ability to adjust programmes to meet inter-corporate and Government priorities. The solution is simple and obvious, namely the creation of a single main roads fund with separate flexible sub-accounts for specific purposes.

In conclusion, a number of suggestions have been made in this chapter which have had an indicative rather than definitive intention. While the historical record of the New South Wales transport administration is replete with signs of co-ordinative weakness, its structure is fundamentally sound enough to provide the basis for final improvement to its components. As a system all that is needed is the strengthening of the major linkages together with corporate reforms which would restore accountable management and improve the external orientation of the various authorities. These would redress the balance of distribution of system resources in favour of co-ordination and improve the overall functioning of the administration, particularly with regard to modern (and changing) societal demands.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

APPENDICES

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

DEPUTATION TO LIEUT.-COLONEL THE HON. M.F. BRUXNER, M.L.A.,
DEPUTY PREMIER AND MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT, FROM MEMBERS OF
THE NATIONAL ROADS AND MOTORISTS' ASSOCIATION, IN REGARD TO
TRAFFIC OUTLETS TO AND FROM THE CITY.   9TH SEPTEMBER, 1938.

———

Present: Lieut.-Colonel the Hon. M.F. BRUXNER, M.L.A.,

The Hon. J.C. WATSON, President of the N.R.M.A.
Messrs. A.M. GRAHAM
         H.I. JOHNSON
         A. MITCHELL
         H.L. PRIMROSE, M.L.A.
Alderman James McMAHON

Mr H.H. NEWELL, Commissioner for Main Roads

———

Mr WATSON stated that the Council, during the last few months,
had been considering the question of arterial roads from the
standpoint of having a uniform plan investigated and adopted. The
Council felt that it was essential that something should be done
to evolve some coherent plan, and if it were not possible to carry
out such a plan in the course of the next year or so, it might,
nevertheless, be achieved by extending the work over a number of
years.

He did not propose to suggest any particular method of
handling the matter, except to say that his Association would like
to see a body created to go into the various aspects of the
question — the standpoint of the municipal authorities, of the
road users, of the Government and the Departments working under
Government control — and to evolve a plan in which all could
co-ordinate.

Mr. Watson mentioned that ten years ago he had been Chairman
of a Committee appointed by the Government of the day to go into
the question of arterial communications with the City. A whole
series of propositions had been set before the Committee for
tunnels, by-pass roads, etc., but in the short time at the disposal
of the Committee it could not go into the suggestions in detail.
However, the Committee had recommended the Government to arrange
for the "expert" study of the proposals. That report had been made
ten years ago, and nothing had been done....

The MINISTER: "Nothing?"

Mr WATSON said that as far as the Main Roads Department was
concerned he had nothing but praise. But the Main Roads Department
could not be expected to deal with problems in the consideration
of which a whole host of other authorities in the metropolitan area
were also entitled to be heard, and who would be expected to find
at least some proportion of the cost of bringing about the improved
position.

The Association would like to see some authority set up to go
into the various schemes suggested. There were, for instance, the
schemes suggested by the City Council, and anything the City
Council might do should be in consonance with a general scheme.

The need for something to be done was, he thought, apparent
to all. Motorists generally paid a very large sum by way of
taxation for roads, and they had been repaid in many directions.
He did not think that the motorists would object to a proportion
of the £2½ million received from them by the State Government
being diverted to pay for propositions which would facilitate
improvement in the means of access to and from the City.

His association, therefore, asked that the Minister would persuade his colleagues to set up some body of men who would agree upon a general plan of arterial or by-pass roads to improve the movement of traffic within the Metropolitan Area.

Mr McMAHON drew the Minister's attention to the narrowness of the Botany and Newtown Roads. The City Council had done what it could to widen the Newtown Road as far as Camperdown. He considered that the Pyrmont Bridge Road exit was one that required dealing with immediately, in order better to serve the people of the Northern Suburbs.

Mr GRAHAM said the Association was hopeful that the Government would adopt the suggestion for the appointment of a body, — and get on with the work as speedily as possible.

The MINISTER said that he had been surprised to receive the Association's statement. He did not think it either correct or fair to say that Sydney lagged behind other cities in its attempt the improve its arterial communications.

It was true that the City Council had inaugurated a ten-year plan for the betterment of roads within the metropolitan area; and this was largely due to the fact that he had suggested to the Premier that the City Council should be relieved of the tax it was paying towards main roads, so that it could utilise that money on major works in and around the City itself. Every time the Department had conferred with the City Council, emphasis had been placed on the Council's lack of funds.

It was wrong to say that there had been no plan for facilitating means of access to and from the City. No Government Department published its doings, or plans, or expenditure, or anything connected with it more than did the Main Roads Department. In 1926 it published its first Report, and in that Report it very definitely showed how aware it was of the need for planning City routes. Since 1929 the Department had published a Journal in which the road development of the State was fully discussed, so much so that not only in Australia but in every country of the world it was a recognised text book. A great deal of information as to the Department's activities could be gleaned from a study of the Reports and Journals.

The Association was asking that someone should plan ahead for the future. In the first Annual Report the Department had published a map of the then existing roads in the County of Cumberland, and the missing links: and in that same publication the Department had laid down what it considered should be the policy for the construction of radial and circumferential roads in the County of Cumberland. Not one of the then existing roads was surfaced to carry modern traffic. (Showed a map of the existing roads in 1925, and a map illustrating how the Department had fulfilled its plan of linking the road system throughout the City by circumferential roads.)

One of the first things the Department had had to do was to bring all the roads in the County of Cumberland, as well as all over the State, to a state of efficiency capable of carrying present-day traffic. Since that date a sum of approximately £6,000,000 had been spent in the County of Cumberland. The Department did not merely conceive the idea of circumferential roads, but roads were reconstructed and widened, and that had meant the resumption and purchase of land. For example the Princes Highway in the vicinity of Cook's River had been widened from 28 ft. to 80 ft., — with a double set of tram tracks. (The Minister showed a map illustrating the work that had been done in this direction.) (The Minister also mentioned that he had discussed the question with the Minister for Transport in England, who had been astonished to know that New South Wales had "ring" roads and by-pass roads.)

There had, therefore, been some degree of planning, and no "ordinary spasmodic" alterations. If the Department had worked spasmodically, it had been due to lack of funds: for instance there was a time when it had been denied the use of funds, but this had not been the case in the last six years.

The Minister showed a map indicating the long range plans that had already been investigated and determined upon by the Government, or else were under examination. The most complete was the re-routing of the northern side to give an express route: that route involved a tremendous amount of work and could only be done gradually. Both it and the express road to the West had been examined by engineers of the Department of Main Roads, in close touch with the City Council and with every Council in the area indicated.

The Association had said that expert engineers should be consulted, but he did not know where better engineers, so far as road works were concerned, could be found than in the Department of Main Roads. From his observations abroad he was of the opinion that our road engineering compared favourably with any in the world. And that was the opinion expressed by Sir Rees Jeffreys, who said he had come to Australia to teach, but went away having been taught a lot. Mr Newell and some of the junior men had been abroad, and every endeavour was made to keep the men up to date.

It might be asked why the Department had not published its plans. But had that been done there was the possibility of land speculating, and the cost of resumptions might be more than the cost of making the road. That aspect of the matter had been discussed in the Journals.

If the Department had had the money, it could have gone ahead more quickly. It had spent £6,000,000 already, and had borrowed £3,000,000 early in its life, which had necessitated repayment. But a stage had been reached where almost all that debt was paid off. He thought, however, that the deputation would agree that, instead of spending the money on bottlenecks that hold up the traffic at peak hours, it would be preferable to use that money on widening the roads outside of the bottlenecks, for traffic could be more readily controlled in the narrower places. He considered that work "outside" was necessary in a country as large as ours, otherwise the motorists would not have scope, whether for pleasure or business.

Just as the Department had planned for the City, so had it for the country. Most of the work had been done in conjunction with Councils. An enormous development had taken place in the construction of bridges: 825 had been built during the lifetime of the Department, making, in a running line, something like 14 miles. Besides co-operating with Councils, it was necessary for the Department to consult the Maritime Services Board, and the Railways and Tramways, in order to ensure that plans and works were co-ordinated.

The Minister thought that if a body were set up today to replan and co-ordinate the various activities and then to "come down and see that the work is carried out", this would mean calling a halt to any work in progress. He had seen one or two such committees set up outside his Departments, and work had been held up awaiting the new plan. The Main Roads Department had a plan, and if funds were forthcoming it could get on faster with its plan. For instance the Department had in hand the plans and alignments for the widening of Oxford Street. The Department had started off planning and had continued investigating and planning.

Mr NEWELL, on being questioned by the Minister as to the value of the plans in the Main Roads Department, said that the actual value would be nothing under £200,000.

The MINISTER, continuing, said that not a road was built in the State that did not form part of a definite plan. In 1928 the roads outside the County of Cumberland were planned, and the Act

amended so as to put these roads into a definite classification.
The mileage of the highway had been increased by about 1,500 miles.
The Association had said that any development outside the City
should coincide with the activities of the City Council. That had
been done, and to such an extent that the Great Western Road,
which starts in the City of Sydney, goes right out to Broken Hill,
and "meets our friends in South Australia". Queensland, Victoria
and South Australia co-operate with New South Wales, so that the
New South Wales roads meet, at the border, the important roads of
the other States. Actually speaking, this State could claim to
have started an Australian-wide system of highways. The achieve-
ment in the last twelve years had been extraordinary: the roads
were equal in surface to any he had seen while abroad: they were
perhaps, not so wide, nor, for that matter, were they as wide as
they ultimately were meant to be. However, the State had been
saved thousands of pounds by the Department realising while land
was cheap, for instance along the Parramatta Road, simply through
the foresight of those in charge of the work.

The geographical position of Sydney made the task of access
difficult. But nobody could say that the "traffic flows just like
a stream" in either New York or London.

However, the Minister stated that he was prepared to submit
the Association's proposal to his colleagues. If it meant
hastening the work or adding to its efficiency he would not get
in anybody's way so long as three or four years were not taken
over the job. He felt that the Department had all the necessary
machinery, and if the cash were available, it could do more.
"The bones were there: they only needed the flesh putting on
them." He assured the deputation that the City Council would get
all the assistance the Department could give them, and that the
Department's engineers would consult with those of the Council.

Mr WATSON, in thanking the Minister for having received the
deputation, said he was sorry if an impression had been created
that his Association was criticising, even involuntarily, the
work of the Main Roads Department. He could appreciate the
arguments put forward by the Minister. But perhaps he had not
made it clear that the Association only wished to see an authority
set up to advise in favour of some coherent plan to deal with the
immediate approaches to the City. In making the suggestion he
had felt, as a Member of the Council of the N.R.M.A., that he was
not competent to suggest a way of dealing with the difficulties.
He had been inundated with schemes and plans of every description,
many of which had seemed to him to be quite good, but he could not
pretend to examine these as closely as might professional men.
Therefore the Association had felt that if some authority — which
would not take the place of the Main Roads Board, but would
supplement its work and the work of the City Council — could be
set up, it would allow of a concerted programme being arranged.

He thanked the Minister for the good work that had been
carried out by the Main Roads Department, and he himself thought
that the work could be entrusted to the Department. But he felt
that the situation demanded that speed should be exercised for
remedying some of the bottlenecks, and if he could help in that
direction he would be very much pleased.

The following interview with the Hon. Milton Morris, M.L.A.,
former Minister of Transport, was held on Wednesday, 1st September
1976. Not to be cited or quoted without permission.
R. Gibbons.

GIBBONS: I have managed to research a fair amount of the policy
areas such as freeways, public transport, financial problems,
things like that, but it's the actual operations of the inter-
departmental committees that have been difficult to research.
I have not been able to get any information from say the D.M.R.
and the Public Transport Commission but the people in the
Ministry themselves, such as Mr Trott...

MORRIS: He's very helpful, isn't he.

GIBBONS: He asked me to give you his regards.

MORRIS: Yes, I'm glad you saw him because he's very helpful and
a dedicated officer. Sometimes in the statutory bodies they get
very nervous or suspicious and probably with some justification.
I take people on their face value and I've never been let down
in my life.

GIBBONS: Well I've certainly had a great deal of trouble with
the statutory authorities even though I'm not trying to smear
their names or anything. The first thing is CUMTAC. What was
the general intention of CUMTAC: it didn't have any statutory
powers...

MORRIS: Originally it was called CUMTAC, County of Cumberland
Transport Advisory Committee, you know the composition of the
Commissioners and so on. It was set up before I became Minister,
it was set up by the former Labor Government in the early '60s.
It was to plan, to coordinate transport and traffic flow within
the County of Cumberland. I thought it was fairly successful.
It was presided over in those days by the then Commissioner for
Railways. It had no teeth, it was purely coordinating and
advisory to the Minister. We subsequently changed the name to
URTAC and URTAC did much the same role. I, at one stage, thought
it ought to have some outside representatives on it, let's say the
retail traders in Sydney or the Sydney Chamber of Commerce for
example. I was advised most strongly against this. There wasn't
a big clamour from outsiders to participate so I just let it lie
there.

GIBBONS: No one really knew that it was going, did they?

MORRIS: Not many, it received greater mention in the last couple
of years as a result of the Report that it commissioned and which
was tabled here late last year — the URTAC Report. Then I think
people started to ask about URTAC. And of course now we have the
statutory Traffic Authority which has the teeth under the chair-
manship of the Commissioner for Motor Transport, and whilst it
hasn't superseded entirely URTAC, it will take most of its role,
I believe.

GIBBONS: It was intended to work through the power of the
Minister: to the extent that an issue came up which involved
several Departments, it was not intended to resolve the conflict
within itself, was it?

MORRIS: Often it did but the Minister was the final arbitrator,
he used to get the Minutes and recommendations from the Committee
and in those days the Department of Main Roads was with another
Minister and this sometimes made it difficult. Since January
'75 the D.M.R. has been part of Transport and so it should be
and it ought never have been separated from Transport.

GIBBONS: That's something I was going to ask you, what problems
it gave you as the Minister, because Mr Trott indicated that it
was perhaps the major problem.

MORRIS: Yes, and in my nine years and eight months as Minister

for Transport, one of the continual festering sores was that the
D.M.R. was a law unto itself. It could be at times cooperative,
when it didn't want to be it had the let-out of saying, well
we're under another Minister, you'll have to see him. Then
because the D.M.R. was an attachment to an important Ministry
of Local Government, and in earlier days under Mr Morton it was
Local Government, Planning, Valuer-General, the State Electricity
Commission, State Coal Mines, and D.M.R., it meant that the D.M.R.
virtually made all of the decisions and that the Minister was the
cipher . Every now and then the Minister was invited to
take a ride in the helicopter or to go and open a bridge or go
and open a four-lane highway, the band would be out, the Minister
would be suitably duchessed and then he went back to his desk to
do the other more onerous tasks and the D.M.R. went happily on
its way.

GIBBONS: Was there any intent to try to bring the D.M.R. more
into the fold by setting-up the interdepartmental committee?

MORRIS: Yes, and I think we did to some extent, but what I found
was, as the road-builder, the D.M.R. built the roads, their
engineers in their opinion, they were good engineers but they had no
peer , they knew all about road building. Immediately a road
went down there would be a fatal accident and everybody would be
clamouring to the Minister for Transport, what are you going to
do about it? So whilst we had no say in how the roads were built,
why they were built, what the surface was, I got the kicks. My
job was to make the traffic flow and to cut back the road toll,
and I remember the shining example was Pennant Hills Road where
there was accident after accident, where we needed some corners
shaved, an old building removed and the D.M.R. would say, well
we haven't got the money, we'll consider it in a programme in the
future. Had I been Minister for Main Roads I would have directed
them to do that work because there were serious political and
other problems in this area. The road safety aspect of my port-
folio, which I sought to make fairly supreme, it was dealing with
human lives, was the one that was often inhibited as we had no
say in the road works.

GIBBONS: Would it have helped if CUMTAC had had some statutory
authority, or maybe not?

MORRIS: Yes, I think it would have, provided the CUMTAC members
by statute were all responsible to the Minister. But the Minister
for Transport in those days had no authority to give a direction .
to the D.M.R. Despite CUMTAC, despite URTAC, in the final analysis
their Minister was someone else, and they could always convince the
other Minister, for good reasons, that he oughtn't to act other than
as they recommended.

GIBBONS: I'll ask you I think a hypothetical question, I assume
you did try to get it in but the Country Party stopped you.

MORRIS: No, not the Country Party because for seven years it was
under a Liberal Minister, Mr Morton. I spoke to Sir Robert Askin
time after time and he always felt, well he was not a boat-rocker,
he always felt well everything is going along nicely. Mr Morton
did not want to give it up, Sir Charles Cutler did not want to give
it up, it was a glamour department in those days. In the last year
or two it lost some of its glamour because the Government would not
put up the registration fees and there was a shortage of money, so
some of the glamour was tarnished. And then Ministers were more
happy to get rid of it. It should never have been away from
Transport, Labour took it away, Mr Cahill took it away, was it in
the late '50s?

GIBBONS: I think it was about 1955 or '56.

MORRIS: Yes in the '50s, because he had a Minister, Mr Enticknap,
who didn't want to be Minister for Transport, and George Enticknap
said well I am not going to kill myself; they wanted a rural

Minister in Transport because the unions were killing the city Ministers. Enticknap said I want to get rid of part of the portfolio and Pat Hills said, well I'll take the D.M.R., and that's how it was parted, just for that reason. It didn't come back until '75, some twenty years later.

GIBBONS: And the Machinery of Government review.

MORRIS: Yes.

GIBBONS: The URTAC Report was a different sort of exercise, it was a really coordinating sort of study, it had to look at the resources that were available and distribute them among the separate authorities.

MORRIS: Yes, well the URTAC Report was a good one, they all got together and worked on it as a coordinated body under one Minister and that's the sort of function I think that URTAC ought to be performing, rather than piecemeal looking at whether there ought to be a pedestrian crossing in George Street West or a new set of traffic lights at the corner of King and Pitt Streets or something.

GIBBONS: Was there a problem in getting Commissioners to debate issues that were in other people's domains?

MORRIS: What we had to do was time-wasting. Every time a problem came up that was in another domain, I had to arrange a meeting with their Minister, with them present, with our people present, we inevitably set up an interdepartmental committee to report back to the two Ministers, or sometimes three. The amount of time that was wasted to go through the motions in getting the decision that I could have made six months earlier appalled me at times, and very often we were dealing with human lives in the road safety field.

GIBBONS: I think at this time we could come to the Cabinet committees and governmental committees. From reading the Parliamentary Debates, I know that a Cabinet committee, or the transport committee of your Parties, reviewed the concept of the Public Transport Commission and what could be done there.

MORRIS: We did.

GIBBONS: What sort of role did those committees have?

MORRIS: The Cabinet committees? The Cabinet committees were very good. We had a number of them. I often thought it was a good idea to have Ministers looking deeply into a problem before it went to Cabinet, where it was an important issue, and for some years we had a Road Safety Committee in Cabinet of three Ministers and we used to meet once a month. We had the Commissioner of Police, if you get Ministers together you get all the Heads coming along, and this was good too, and we made a lot of progress. With the setting-up of the P.T.C., I think five Ministers looked at that, from memory I think it was five, and the purpose of setting up the P.T.C. was of course for one of coordination. I think perhaps some of the personnel who were first appointed, whilst they did a wonderful job, they lacked a little bit in dealing with the press and in public relations. The longer a Government is in, the more vulnerable it is to scanning by the press and of course this year the press had a field day on public transport because we didn't seem to be getting our message over at all.

GIBBONS: That was a problem with the Commission itself?

MORRIS: I felt that the Commission itself was not good on public relations. It did a good job, the goods trains, the freight trains are now quite magnificent. If you go back three or four years to the hotchpotch of composition of trains, the little four-wheel bogies, two of them would be in a train and it would mean the speed of the train was 20 miles an hour all the way to Brisbane because

three or four trucks couldn't exceed that speed. They were scrapped, we went into a big investment programme, with terminals, container trucks and so on, and Mr Shirley made magnificent progress there.

GIBBONS: With containerisation?

MORRIS: On the goods side generally. Whilst he sometimes said that passengers are our business not an interruption to our work, that was his phrase, sometimes people wondered. Of course we did place orders for passenger carriages, sometimes there were delays at Treasury in getting them through, playing with the timing to spill it over to the next financial year, but from early this year six double-decker carriages a month are coming onto the system, or nine new trains a year, and this will just transform passenger carrying in this State.

GIBBONS: Looking back historically Governments in New South Wales have seemed to regard transport as an area where they have had great administrative problems. In 1950 the Transport and Highways Commission was set up, which didn't work...

MORRIS: It should have.

GIBBONS: It didn't.

MORRIS: No, personalities were the problem there.

GIBBONS: But there was also another problem there, that the Departments weren't amalgamated. There was an overlording body set up with a funny sort of power, it was not the same power that the P.T.C. had. Everything was brought under one hierarchy.

MORRIS: That's true.

GIBBONS: Was this a lesson that was learned in the '50s?

MORRIS: Yes, I didn't want to set up another Transport and Highways Commission because as you say there was a little body superimposed over the others and it didn't work. You get jealousies and the taller the poppies the greater the jealousies sometimes.

GIBBONS: Did you have any problems in amalgamating the Departments?

MORRIS: I didn't because two Commissioners had retired and we'd have had to appoint two new Commissioners and I rather felt that buses, trains and ferries ought to be integrated. But I think if the present Government persists with the Commission concept in a little time it will coordinate. I think the new Chief Commissioner, Mr Reiher, is doing a wonderful job and will continue to do so.

GIBBONS: That's the general impression people get. It's now a matter of personalities, isn't it, because they got themselves in a tangle.

MORRIS: Yes. People down the line do get worried when you amalgamate an accounts branch — we had two accounts branches, two legal branches, two advertising branches, two real estate branches — when you amalgamate them all, well someone has to take second place, someone takes first place and you get all sorts of jealousies. This was where the original Public Transport Commission did not always give these amalgamations the time that was needed and not always the compassion extended to individuals. Sometimes you've got to give a chap half an hour to sit down and talk to him and tell him why you're doing something and to give him an assurance that his future is alright. Now if you just put a notice on the board that as from Monday this is going to happen, people are terrified.

GIBBONS: Were there problems in that direction? I am thinking of Peter Freeman's article in the National Times.

MORRIS: Yes, there were some problems because it was not always sold to officers in the Service — not the top officers but down the line a bit. A number of people were brought in from outside, I wasn't opposed to some coming in from outside but not too many. Whether too many were brought in I am still not sure.

GIBBONS: Mr Shirley had ideas on management that were, you could say, completely foreign to the old Departments.

MORRIS: Yes.

GIBBONS: Were they brought in too quickly — they were basically good?

MORRIS: The ideas were excellent, some were brought in too quickly and had an effect on morale for a while. I think that is probably over now. Mr Shirley was wise enough, you know, to say to me after I'd passed from Transport, I've had three years, I've done a lot of things that had to be done, many of them unpopular, a lot of people think that I'm a so-and-so, do you think now I ought to get out? and I said I think that would be a good idea. And that is why he got out two years before he should have. To that extent I gave him full marks. It let a new man come in who couldn't be blamed for anything that had happened but who could build on the fact that many things had been done that had to be done. Someone had to do them and become a stink-pot because of it.

GIBBONS: Could you tell me something about the role of the Minister and the Departments under him. I admit that I'm mainly thinking about the Department of Main Roads which has had a continuity of policy. When a Department has that sort of continuity is it hard to challenge it, hard to review it critically even without challenging it?

MORRIS: Yes it is hard because the D.M.R., when they came under the Transport umbrella, didn't want any Ministerial control or direction, but my friend Mr Fife in his quiet way, quickly showed them who was running Transport. They succumbed to that. Their estimates were never seen by a Minister or by Parliament or approved. He changed that. Their road policies often, by luck, coincided with the Government's road policies, they never had to explain or justify them. That is why I think some of their policies on ripping the guts out of an inner-city area to build super-duper roads were quite contrary to my thinking but they'd been able to sell them to other Ministers in the few minutes a week that they spent with them.

GIBBONS: Isn't it an advantage in that circumstance to have a Country Party Minister in charge of main roads, in this case concerning highways?

MORRIS: I don't think so. I think that what you need is perhaps the best Minister you can get in charge, I don't think it matters if he's Country Party or Liberal. As I say my own views were more on the conservation side, I would never rip up Paddington or Wooloomooloo, or some of these places, to put cars through there. I was much more on the Sydney City Council's side, close more roads and make them available to people.

GIBBONS: Mr McCusker's personal role — would you say that he was an ideal man to get people together and talk?

MORRIS: No, no, because he was a one-man band and he had around him people who were completely subject to him. Now, he was a very able man, I say that and he would have told you too if you had asked him. He'd built up really a little dictatorship in Railways

and early in the piece he didn't like any interference from the Minister or the Ministry.

GIBBONS: The formation of the Public Transport Commission — what was the Treasury's opinion of this, did you have trouble with Treasury?

MORRIS: No, no trouble with Treasury. At one stage I wanted to set up a Greater Sydney Transport Authority, like the Greater London, to run the electric trains, buses and ferries and then have a New South Wales Rail if you like. Now they opposed that strongly because the N.S.W. Rail might have showed a profit from goods if we'd cut back a few of the highly unprofitable country trains. They didn't want to, they wanted to lump everything in together otherwise they felt there would be a clamour for reduced freight charges, or there might have been a clamour for reduced fares in the Sydney area if the losses there weren't showing up as — the big losers were the country passenger trains (sic). They opposed that strenuously, I never went on with it because we wouldn't have got Cabinet approval for that.

GIBBONS: And did the Railways want to maintain their autonomy, would they have if they could?

MORRIS: Mr McCusker would have liked to but he was a realist and he was prepared to trim the sails. He would have liked to have stayed on a bit longer but we couldn't renew his term after 65.

GIBBONS: The role of the actual Ministry itself — I am not too sure about this particular area at all. It is my impression that the Ministry was a very quiet body which served the Minister rather than the organisations as a coordinative body itself.

MORRIS: Yes, most of the statutory bodies would have abolished the Ministry; the Ministry was terribly important as a buffer between them and the Minister. I would have liked to have expanded the Ministry to be more like the British Ministry of Transport. I would have liked to have had perhaps one or two engineers attached to the Ministry who could go out and give me perhaps another opinion on some of the Railway matters, or have been able to consult with a naval engineer and say, look give me your views on these ferries that we're thinking of ordering. The Public Transport Commission has recommended them and so what do you think? I think the Ministry ought to have a few more feathers to fly with. I built it up and it's much stronger now than it was when I took over. It was just regarded as a little secretariat in those days. But we built it up and it will get stronger in the future and serve a much more useful role. The Under-Secretary is now Chairman of URTAC.

GIBBONS: And is now playing a very important role himself.

MORRIS: That's true.

-X-X-X-X-X-

The following interview with Mr N. McCusker, C.B.E., was held
on Monday, 13th September, 1976. Mr McCusker was Commissioner
for N.S.W. Railways from 1956 to 1972. Not to be cited or
quoted without permission.

R. Gibbons.

GIBBONS: Regarding CUMTAC (the County of Cumberland Passenger
Transport Advisory Committee), could I start by asking you what
arrangements were in force between the heads of the various
Departments before CUMTAC was set up.

McCUSKER: There was an ad hoc arrangement which in my view left a
lot to be desired. As a result of a discussion I had with the then
Premier, Mr Renshaw, and the then Minister for Local Government,
Mr Hills, and following the suggestion I made to them, CUMTAC was
set up within two days. I felt that there was need for a trans-
portation view to be expressed prior to planning arrangements being
finalised. I held the view, and I still hold it, that transporta-
tion is the key to good planning, there is need to move people and
goods, and if transportation considerations are looked at in the
first instance it is possible to induce the kind of planning that
is best overall.

GIBBONS: Was that opinion tempered by your experience with the
Cumberland County Council?

McCUSKER: To some extent yes, I was for a short time a member of
the Cumberland County Council. It was also conditioned, I suppose,
by the experience I had as a railway man and subsequently as
Commissioner for Railways; it seemed to me that the planners were
going ahead willynilly and not paying any attention, or very little
attention, to the transportation requirements. It's virtually
impossible to provide proper and adequate transportation after
development, it's costly and never completely satisfactory. As a
result of that discussion CUMTAC was set up with myself as Chairman
and comprising the Chairman of the State Planning Authority, the
Commissioner for Main Roads, a representative of the Police
Department (in fact it should have been the Commissioner of Police),
and the Commissioner for Motor Transport and the Commissioner for
Government Transport. Mr King was the Secretary at my behest.
Subsequently we added to the Committee the Under Secretary of the
Treasury, the President of the Maritime Services Board, and towards
the latter end, more or less as an observer, we invited along the
Under Secretary of the Ministry of Transport.

GIBBONS: Before CUMTAC was set up, I take it that the Commissioners
met privately more than in an official capacity.

McCUSKER: Yes, there was no arrangement for formal meetings between
the Commissioners and very little contact was had. The coordination
which I felt was so vital was just non-existent, as simple as that.

GIBBONS: Regarding coordination, were there particular things that
worried you, that couldn't be done?

McCUSKER: This was, you will recall, a time of an upsurge in
development in the metropolitan area. The Cumberland County Council
had indicated after a survey that they were planning for a popula-
tion of five million people in Sydney by the year 2000. It seemed
to me that unless something was done, transport was going to be hard
put to it to cope. I think I was influenced, partly anyhow, by the
problem that confronted us at that stage with the peak-hour traffic
movements. We were carrying between four and five hundred thousand
commuters daily by rail, in the morning and evening peaks, and the
cost of providing those services was very high. The capital equip-
ment that we had to provide those services was in use for less than
twenty hours a week and the expenses were running away with the
situation. To have accentuated that situation by pouring more and
more people into the Central Business District in my opinion would
have created an impossible situation. The desire on my part was to
spread the load so that we could be using our existing equipment to
serve a much greater number of people going in different directions.

GIBBONS: You said "existing equipment" — I take it you also had some investment in mind. (Mr King has indicated that the Railways were in many respects greatly hampered by the relationship with the Treasury.)

McCUSKER: Yes. We had at that stage some 1,300-odd electric suburban passenger cars, we were running 128 or so eight-car sets in the morning peak and 132 in the afternoon peak, and in between times the service was being provided, or over-provided, by about 52 four-car sets. There was quite an imbalance so far as revenue production was concerned. We did have the need to revamp the fleet because some of the cars were extremely old and the maintenance costs were very high and at best they were giving a poor service. We had the added problem of not wanting to run more trains during peak hours because the capacity of the tracks and the signalling was such that it was virtually impossible to get any more in during the peaks. That led me to conceive the idea of double-decked trains. It took quite some little time to move from the conceptual stage to an acceptable design. We had quite a lot of problems, some thought they were insurmountable but in fact they weren't, we got over them. They were double-decked trailer cars at that stage. In the event we found that by replacing single-decks with double-decks we had an 82 per cent increased carrying capacity, which based on all the information that was available would have enabled the Railways Department to carry all the passengers up to the year 2000, with an increased population of up to 5 million. This seemed to me to be the proper way to do it. Money was tight. Additional to that of course was the economic viewpoint: we were buying the double-decked carriages for 24 per cent more than we were paying for the single-decks and we were getting that substantially increased capacity. Apart from that there was no need to spend countless millions on altered signalling or duplication of tracks, or the colossal proposition to lengthen the trains from eight cars to ten cars. That would have meant altering all of the signalling and lengthening all the stations in the metropolitan area, so the costs were inordinately high.

GIBBONS: In other words you were reasonably happy with the funds you were getting for investment?

McCUSKER: There were two points of view one had to look at. We had a very high interest debit from the Treasury and every additional dollar we were granted by the Treasury had to be financed out of revenue. At the same time we were expected to run the railways as a business proposition and to minimise the deficits. It was certainly not my desire to get huge capital investment which couldn't be substantiated by an economic appraisal. You have to remember that up to that time no depreciation had ever been provided for railway equipment from 1855, when the railways were started, and the capital account became cumulative. There was a small writing-off each year of redemption of debt but that was infinitesimal. This was a millstone round our necks, one that I didn't want to increase if I could avoid it. At the same time there was need for the upgrading of the service in many ways. We were not only dealing with the passenger side of it, which took about 68 per cent of our effort in train-miles and returned about 30 per cent of our revenue; the converse was the case in respect to freight movement. That was where the profits were and not unnaturally that was where I was anxious to make the investment to make sure that we kept on a reasonably even financial keel. At that stage we were also at the cross-roads with our locomotive fleet, diesel traction had just become accepted in this country and I was anxious to spend as much money as I could, having regard to all requirements, on the introduction of diesel locomotives. This reduced manpower requirements and enabled us to provide a much more efficient service to the clients we had.

When one looked at the capital requirements of the Department, one looked at a wide area of operations. By and large I laid it down, having in mind that at this time we were getting

our capital money from loan funds at about 4.3 or 4.4 per cent, that I didn't want to have any propositions put to me from the senior officers of the Department unless they could show an eight per cent saving overall. This was trying to retrieve the situation that had gone on for a hundred years or more.

　　　　But regarding the Treasury, to answer your question specifically, we always asked for more money than we got, we always could have spent more money than we got, ours was not to question the wisdom of the Government in the allocation of loan funds. All we could do was point out to the Minister the urgency of these things and hope that our representations were fairly dealt with.

GIBBONS: Do you feel that perhaps the Railways were disadvantaged to the extent that they had a substantially different relationship with the Treasury vis-à-vis the D.M.R., which had a secure source of income and which didn't rely on the same mechanisms for obtaining funds? (Mr King gave me the example of coal trucks in the early 1970s.)

McCUSKER: Yes, I felt we were disadvantaged because we were providing a community service, a social service if you like, without any subsidy of any sort. The D.M.R. were in receipt of substantial grant money that didn't have to be serviced by interest payments and they were able to go ahead. Others were in the same situation. The Government Departments, as distinct from the commissions (the Electricity Commission, the Water Board and the Railways), had no need to pay interest on the loans they received. We were regarded as a trading organisation and were distinct from the other two in that neither of them were expected to provide these loss-leader services that the Railways did. Unfortunately this was a consequence of railway development from its inception. I felt that we were at a great disadvantage because we were doing two things, we were carrying an inordinate amount of depreciated equipment for which no provision had been made over a hundred years to replace, and to that extent we could say that the charges for railway services were understated; and then we were providing these community services. We had a twin handicap if one can put it that way. There were times when we felt we could have got more money, there were also times (I must be fair about this), when Mr Oliver became Under Secretary of the Treasury, when we got a better deal. I'd had him over on my staff on loan for three or four years and he had an appreciation of the internal operations and requirements of Railways. I brought him over to set up a budget bureau, to report to me as distinct from anything else, on the economic appraisal of the various propositions that were put forward.

GIBBONS: I'm very interested in that, I've heard a little bit about it from Mr King. That was in 1957, was it?

McCUSKER: No, in 1956 I set it up, I became Commissioner on the 1st of August 1956, and one of the first things I did, in the first three weeks, was to set up the budget bureau. Mr. Oliver wasn't there initially but I set it up from within and then realised that I needed somebody who had a wider financial appreciation than was available to me, and he at that time was Budget Inspector for Railways. I arranged with Sir John Goodsell (he wasn't Sir John then), the Chairman of the Public Service Board, to second John Oliver to me for three or four years. I would have still had him only I felt when the Treasury became denuded of people that the need of the State was probably better served by him going back to become Under Secretary of the Treasury than staying in Railways. Judging by subsequent events I'm not sure if I did the right thing or not.

GIBBONS: This was a regular pattern of exchange? or did it become that?

McCusker: No, it didn't become that, I set it up to give me the information that I needed, I set out my requirements to the budget

bureau and the three or four people in there produced the relevant
statistical information for me monthly; additionally they reviewed
any proposition for capital expenditure and they were responsible for
the drawing up of the estimates each year. They gave me a second
view, I had one from the Departmental side and I had one from these
specialists. After Mr Oliver went back I didn't have anybody in
Railways who was quite able to take over from him and I got Mr
Trimmer for a while. He stayed with us for two or three years and
then we had our own people trained who were competent to carry on.
I found that very small section didn't cost me much but it was of
immense benefit to me. I asked them all kinds of questions and they
were free from the daily routine to look at these things.

GIBBONS: I might come back to the Treasury later. You were Chairman
of CUMTAC for most of its history. CUMTAC was set up with a purely
advisory role. To me this implies disadvantages and advantages in a
situation where you have a number of Departments responsible to
different Ministers. Did the operations of the Committee bear out
the original concept of it being purely advisory, or would it have
been an advantage for it to have had statutory power?

McCUSKER: I think the weakness of it was the absence of statutory
power. As it was, CUMTAC reported to the Minister of Transport and
a copy of the reports and Minutes went to the Minister for Local
Government who was also Minister for Highways. I think it would be
fair to say (and I say this with great humility) that the achieve-
ments of CUMTAC were not inconsiderable but they were only made
possible by the persuasive power of the Chairman.

GIBBONS: There is a tremendous range of potential problems that I
can see, for instance where you had a submission which was concerned
with a particular planning issue and you had two or three different
Departments involved, were their decisions made separately and then
they came and announced their decisions?

McCUSKER: No, after we got going I encouraged them to bring along
their problems before they reached the decision-making stage, we
canvassed them and thrashed them out, sought more information, got
people to work to get this and that, then finally there was invariably
a consensus. Their recommendations then in the main— there were
exceptions of course — were the kind of recommendations that a
statutory body might have made anyhow. It was difficult at times to
bring one or two of them into line because men in that position, with
their autonomy, didn't want to be told by me or anybody else what to
do. We were able to persuade them by various means to comply with
what we believed to be the right thing, and I believe that without
this, things wouldn't be as satisfactory as they are now — if one
can say they're satisfactory, I'm not sure about that.

     I'll give you an example, the Woolloomooloo development was
a case in point. The proposition there was to put some 30,000 people
in that little basin, and it was quite obvious when we discussed it
that you couldn't get them in or out, there was no physical means of
doing it. The roads had limited capability and the Eastern Suburbs
Railway had some capability but not that kind of capability. It was
estimated I think that some 18,000 would come from the Northern,
Western or Southern suburbs and the balance would come locally or
from the Eastern suburbs. This would have meant a transfer of some
18,000 people, mainly at Town Hall Station, in the peaks and that was
virtually impossible. Outside CUMTAC, but as Chairman of CUMTAC,
I saw the Lord Mayor and members of the City Council and I think they
had almost made up their minds that it was going ahead when I pointed
this out to them. The fact that for good or ill they had a major
development of their own, I found some fertile ground in which to
spread my views and as a consequence it didn't happen. That was one
case I believe where had CUMTAC not been operative and I as Chairman
had not been privy to a lot of things I would not have been privy to
as Commissioner for Railways, quite conceivably the Woolloomooloo
development would have taken place and after it had been finished
there would have been hue and cry because we couldn't get the people
in or out.

GIBBONS: On Woolloomooloo, in the Minutes of CUMTAC there seemed to

be a substantial amount of conflict between CUMTAC members on one hand, S.P.A., City Council and especially developers on the other hand. The developers saw the land there as suitable for development, it was your <u>responsibility</u> to provide transport works, therefore they do their part and the rest of it was your worry. Did you find that attitude?

McCUSKER: That was definitely the attitude of the developers there and the City Council had I believe supported them to some degree until I saw the Lord Mayor and the aldermen. There was a change of face then. The planning authority was quite conscious of the problem when it was explained to them that transport was virtually impossible. This was one example of where CUMTAC did prevent what could have been in my view a disaster.

GIBBONS: Mr Morris told me, in referring partly to CUMTAC and partly to his Ministerial experience as Minister for Transport and therefore Minister for Railways, if I may quote him, "in my nine years and eight months as Minister for Transport, one of the continual festering sores was that the D.M.R. was a law unto itself". He continued that there hadn't been a mechanism which could draw the D.M.R. into planning, that there was total reliance on Ministerial mechanisms which in his view weren't working because the Minister for Local Government was overburdened with other responsibilities. He indicated that he thought his job as Minister for Transport, with his responsibility for Railways and Government Transport generally, was quite severely disadvantaged. Would you agree?

McCUSKER: Oh yes, I would. The road transport planning of Sydney was based on a scheme that had been drawn up by the Department of Main Roads sometime in the late '40s or early '50s. Somewhat later the scheme for the development of the Eastern Suburbs Railway was drawn up. They both became schemes on paper, I believe without any complete analysis of the costs or requirements or the service they provided the people. Subsequently we were able to trim down very severely the Eastern Suburbs Railway proposals but no such trimming-down took place in the D.M.R. proposals. In that area in my view there was a great weakness on the Government's side. We did our best in CUMTAC to persuade the Main Roads to do this and to do that, but engineers being what they are and trained to it I suppose, their main measure of success in life is what they build and how much money they spend in building it and it's very difficult to change them. I had the same kind of attitude in the engineers from my own Department so I knew something about it. Some of the planning for the main road development of Sydney was in my view quite out of this world and quite unnecessary. I took the view and I still hold it that the city is for people and you must consider the requirements of people first. The more roads you build, and I'm not against some road construction, I realise that the motor car is here to stay and is part of our life and society; but it can't be allowed to dominate and if there are no restraints placed on it you finish up with a city of roads and nothing else. For that reason whether we like it or we don't, public transport must play a dominant role in the movement of people; public transport, particularly railways which operate over their own right-of-way, which take the people into the city and then take the rolling stock out of the city and reverse the process in the afternoon, that's the proper way to do it. The more facilities you provide for roads the more cars you get on them. This was borne out very much when we converted the two tram tracks over the Sydney Harbour Bridge to roads. I was responsible for that and I make no apologies for it because with the concept of the double-decker trains, there was plenty of capacity on the two existing tracks to cater for rail services and there didn't seem to be any point in holding the other two tracks with a dog-in-the-manger attitude, it was better for them to be converted to road. Then the Cahill Expressway came into being. I think I'm right in saying that within twelve months of those conversions, the motor car traffic over the Bridge in the morning peak increased to some from memory 10,500 an hour and it was claimed that was the optimum, you couldn't get any more cars on. That proved the point that I believed to be right, that the more roads you provide the more cars you get on them and you're no better off in the

finish — in fact you're only aggravating the situation. I think
there's only one way to control the cars and that's by monetary
means of imposing parking fees that are sufficient to deter the
people from wanting to bring their cars. I don't think there's any
point in trying any other way, I don't think it would work.

GIBBONS: The way CUMTAC was set up, it really couldn't do much about
the D.M.R., could it?

McCUSKER: No, it couldn't, we could only try to persuade them and
this was one of the unfortunate things. We could make recommendations,
which we did, to the Minister, but it seemed to break down at that
stage. There was not any machinery to   allow   the
matter   to be pursued beyond the Minister. We couldn't do more
than that. I think probably, and this is my own view, you had one
Minister with a strong personality, dominant, and the other one not
so strong, and the dominant personality carried the day without
looking at the pros and cons of the problem that was there. I'm sure
this was the situation.

GIBBONS: Yes, that's one of the problems of that sort of system. I
take it that this was one of the problems with the Sydney Area
Transportation Study as well. It's remarkable how you can do so
much investigation and come up with the D.M.R.'s plan as the end
result — I take it that it was a "given" from the very first?

McCUSKER: No,   the Sydney Area Transportation Study stemmed
from a lot of discussion within CUMTAC. We needed a survey, if one
can put it that way, of the transportation needs (road, rail, bus
and whatever) and of future planning, and we decided that the proper
thing to do was to set up S.A.T.S. The first requirement was to get
an individual who was competent to set up the Study, who knew the
methods and who could build up the computer models and the rest for
the project we wanted. I was given the task of finding the man and
I made enquiries throughout the world and was reliably informed by
two or three sources that about 20 people in the world had this
capability. One of them was Bob Nielsen who was in Perth at the .
time. He was a New South Welshman originally and we engaged him.
It was a wise decision. The arrangement was that he would work under
CUMTAC and he would gather the basic information and set up models
and make his projections; then it was for CUMTAC to interpret that
with him and draw conclusions. This was where the Sydney Area
Transportation Study broke down. At the time of my retirement, in
October 1972, the Study had then been under way for the best part of
two years and the data gathering had been completed, the assessment
was reaching the stage where it needed the practical members of
CUMTAC to get alongside Nielsen and draw conclusions from it. I
gather after my retirement this fell into discard and it was left to
Nielsen to draw his own conclusions. Therein in my view lay the
disaster of the Sydney Area Transportation Study. I've seen a
number of transportation studies done, one by Sir Henry Bland in
Victoria, and the information gathered in both studies(sic) in my view
was extremely good and extremely useful. But the conclusions drawn
bore no relationship to the information that was gathered. This is
an unfortunate situation. So I think it fair to say that after I
left, the influence of Main Roads became a dominant factor, it
wasn't while I was there.

GIBBONS: Seeing that a substantial amount of road planning had been
done, it would have been difficult to disregard a lot of that, as is
now being done. Would it have been almost impossible to start
afresh?

McCUSKER: True, they had a lot of planning done but I don't think
it was beyond redemption at that stage, if the proper approach had
been made. They had for example a huge road development, the
Southern Dustributor I think they called it, and they were going to
knock down I don't know how many buildings out in the Redfern area.
It seemed to me quite unnecessary and I'm sure we wouldn't have
proceeded with that. There was some need for the Western Distributor
to relieve the traffic passing from the North and the West parts out
of the city proper to relieve Parramatta Road. We did contemplate

having what we called transport "corridors", in developing areas
and in some developed areas where we could achieve it, where we'd
have provision for rail, road, P.M.G., water, gas and electricity,
in the one self-contained corridor. It seems to me that's the way
to operate. We wanted to develop a series of (for want of a better
name) "ring roads" to keep traffic out of the city and I think this
would have been possible. We were contemplating a railway by-pass
from the Northern Line to the Southern Line and ultimately to the
Illawarra; railways provide facilities for both passengers and
freight and on the information we had at that time the movement of
freight between Port Kembla and Newcastle and vice versa was likely
to increase very substantially. We didn't want to bring it in and
out of the city but to by-pass it. Passengers I believe will
ultimately grow substantially between those two cities because they
are major industrial cities, heavy industry anyway. We also looked
at the possibility of this line also serving for the movement of
commuters in the Western area which was developing rapidly. I might
add, and you may be aware of this, the pattern of development in
Sydney since its inception has followed the pattern of public
transport, and this was no better exemplified than when we electri-
fied the Western Line to Penrith in the first instance, on to
Lithgow; the way housing development took place out there was just
nobody's business. It was exemplified when we electrified to Gosford,
not for the purpose of opening up commuter movement but rather to
enable us to operate the existing line much more economically, which
we did; we avoided the quadruplification between Strathfield and
Hornsby. It enabled us to do away with an expensive bank engine
working on the Cowan Bank. I think it cost from memory £3½ million
and it saved £3/4 million in operating costs straight away. It
brought in its train this unexpected I think mass movement of people
up in the Woy Woy-Gosford area who wanted to work in Sydney. I can
well recall at the official opening up there that I made a very
strong plea to the people not to allow the Gosford-Woy Woy area to
become a dormitory suburb of Sydney, but to develop industry in those
areas. But this I think exemplifies the important influence that
rail transport has on development.

GIBBONS: There is a related matter which ties in with this coordina-
tion that I'm concerned with, firstly the Public Transport Commission
and secondly the Sydney Area Transportation Study's recommendations
for machinery changes in Sydney. I assume that the recommendations
for the revised governmental structure in Sydney were Nielsen's,
were they?*

McCUSKER: I don't know, I don't think so, in fact I don't know
where they came from. They originated as far as I know from
Government sources. Whether he had made any submissions, I don't
know. I did not and still do not advocate a Commission as such. I
don't believe, and I think experience has shown it hasn't been
successful. Experience throughout the world has shown that commis-
sions per se are not entirely satisfactory, for two reasons. First
of all, you tend to create a series of factions within Departments
when you've got more than one boss, and this isn't good. If there's
one man making the decision, everybody knows he's going to make it
and they comply or else. From the governmental point of view, if
he's not successful they have their remedies. A Commission to
coordinate, as they're trying to do now, the railways, the buses and
the ferries, is quite impracticable, quite unreal, quite unnecessary
I think. If you just look at the buses and the rail, the railways
radiate from the centre in three or four directions, the trains are
operating on their own right-of-way, it's an intensive system
operating at two minute intervals. The timetable is conditioned
largely by the junctions. There's an optimum timetable that can be
drawn and must be adhered to; if the Railway Department is operating
efficiently it must run its trains to time. Given that circumstance,
it's virtually impossible to coordinate a bus with a train because

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* Due to the wording of the question, Mr McCusker replied regarding
the recommendations (which originated from the Ministry of Transport)
re the P.T.C., not the S.A.T.S. Report itself.

most coordinating buses operate transversely whereas the railways operate vertically, and their timetable is hopefully to meet at various stations across country three or four different sets of railway operations. Anybody who's had any experience in transport will know that coordination under those conditions, particularly when the road vehicle is not master of its own destiny but is conditioned on everybody else who wants to use the road over which it operates, can't be maintained. I don't believe there was any serious lack of coordination between the buses and rail, there may have been a few instances where buses ran parallel to the rail but not many. There was and is some case for trying to coordinate buses and ferries but it seems to me that it should have started and stopped there. You've got a situation now in the Commission where the railways are the major component and must always tend to be. The commuter section of the railways is no more than 20 per cent perhaps of the whole of railway operations, but when you bring in these coordination factors you find that of necessity the emphasis of the Commission's activities is devoted to the 20 per cent, and the rest of it is just swinging free, as it were.

GIBBONS: Would there be some advantage in splitting them? As an aside, Mr Morris said he was in favour, for a while anyway, of splitting urban and the country activities. Would that lead to a more efficient concentration of effort?

McCUSKER: I wouldn't think so, because the railways, whether suburban (or urban), interurban or country, operate over one set of facilities, you just can't split them. I'd thought about this quite a deal. There may be justification for a metropolitan transport authority whose role it is to provide efficient transport for the metropolitan area, but leaving the Railways to contract to this authority for the services they require — to operate them, and for the authority not to interfere with the operations of the Railways. They would say to the Railway Commissioner, these are our requirements. Sometimes you can meet them all, sometimes you can't. For example, you couldn't allow a slight improvement in commuter operations to deny the free movement of interstate passengers, they operate over the same tracks. People who come from Melbourne or Brisbane or Perth or the country, we used to timetable the trains deliberately to avoid the peak hours but at certain times you can't avoid conflict of movement. You can't just stop everything to let metropolitan commuters have their way. On the freight side, it's equally important because looking at the overall picture it's my view that the long-distance freight should be on rail, that's its proper place, and if you don't provide the efficient services it will go on to the roads and you'll have more and more congestion, not only in the country but also in the metropolitan area. One of the problems as I see it at the moment, which I tried to avoid, is these long-distance lorries coming into the metropolitan area because they're doing more to congest the movement of vehicular traffic than anybody realises. I was very strongly opposed to the lifting of the Co-ordination Tax, for two reasons. One, because railways were providing social community services without which I believe the country generally would have been severely disadvantaged, and they needed some protection because there wasn't enough volume for both rail and road, and after I retired they lifted the Co-ordination Tax with the result that railway services to the country areas have been cut to the bone and the roads are being chewed up by these heavy vehicles. So we're losing both ways and this doesn't take into account the intense congestion that the city roads are carrying with this heavy transport. I go out to the Airport a couple of times a month and it's amazing the number of big lorries that are out there taking up road space.

GIBBONS: Now you've mentioned the Airport, can we discuss the Southern Suburbs Railway and CUMTAC's efforts to get a more efficient transport system for Mascot? Reading the (CUMTAC) Minutes, two issues came up, one was the ability of the Railways to undertake its feasibility study and reliance on Treasury for the funds, and the second was the apparent reliance on a new railway system by CUMTAC and the fact that the railway didn't go through — the difficulties CUMTAC had in carrying its planning into effect.

McCUSKER: This is true and we had the plans but plans were of no avail without Government backing, and this was where the hiatus took place. CUMTAC came up with some very sound planning but it stopped at that and the Government didn't pursue it. Taking the Airport as a case in point, I don't think there's any doubt but that there will be an increasing demand to take people to and from Mascot Airport, and there's not any doubt in the world that the current road system won't carry them. In addition the Airport problem will be compounded by the development of Botany Bay as a port; that will generate road traffic whether people like it or not. It seemed to me, and CUMTAC agreed with me, that we must plan for a railway to the Airport so that people will have an opportunity to get to it free of all congestion, missing planes and the like. We looked at two propositions, the first was the extension of the Eastern Suburbs Railway to the Airport — I still think that's a reasonable, sound idea and a good investment; and the second, in the shorter term, was a link from the Illawarra Line just south of Tempe into the Airport proper. That was feasible, relatively cheap and it provided, I think from memory, a 12 or 15 minute trip from the Airport into the heart of the city by train, on existing facilities, all we'd do is put in this link. Subsequently we hoped we'd provide a link with the Eastern Suburbs Railway so that we'd have a circle. I still think it's got to come. We're extremely fortunate in Sydney in my view in having the Airport right in the heart of the city and we want to take every advantage of it. It takes 40, 45 minutes to get from Melbourne's Tullamarine to the heart of the city, in normal times, in peak hour goodness knows how long you'd take.

GIBBONS: You didn't actually have much support from the federal authorities in trying to get that railway, did you?

McCUSKER: No, the federal people didn't want to be in it at all. There was no machinery really in the federal area to do this kind of thing. I was able to get them along with Malcolm Sommers to set up the Bureau of Transport Economics, that was initiated by me as a means of trying to get more Commonwealth money available for railways in Australia. We were successful in that but it was necessarily a long-term problem, they were interested more in inter-State than intra-State traffic.

GIBBONS: Do you feel that the members of CUMTAC were fully committed themselves to the railway, did they try to push for it?

McCUSKER: Yes, yes, it went forward as a recommendation and we didn't put anything forward unless it was unanimous. What went on behind the scenes I'm not aware of. I had a job to do to run the Railways as well as chair CUMTAC.

GIBBONS: When the Southern Suburbs Railway was being considered, I suppose in connection with the link from Tempe, you wanted to employ consultants to investigate the water table, etc., in the area to see if the railway line was feasible. You made a point in the Minutes that the Railways didn't have the ability to fund that research, that you would have to do it by Treasury grant. Was that a general arrangement, what was its significance?

McCUSKER: No, as the Commissioner for Railways, this scheme, whatever it was, was going to be a losing proposition from my operational and financial standpoint, but it could have been of benefit to the community generally. From my financial resources, I didn't have the money to engage people to investigate that kind of thing, I felt it was properly a Government responsibility, it was somewhat analogous to S.A.T.S. I saw no reason why they shouldn't fund this one. I personally didn't believe that the Southern Suburbs Railway would be built, I still believe that the proper thing is to go from the Illawarra Line across to that area, it was only a mile-and-a-half or something like that. The planning people were concerned about the Southern Suburbs Railway and one must be fair and say it had some relevance I think to the Botany Bay port development, although my view of that development, and I put this forward very strongly, I

advocated the development on the northern shores of Botany Bay because we had a goods line which could service it there, we had estimates taken out, we could duplicate it from Marrickville to wherever it was to go, it would have relieved the whole of the road movement in that area. The freight would move over the goods line as it does on all the other goods lines. I was always strongly opposed to requests that we put passenger trains on the existing goods lines because you can't mix them and run either successfully. I remind you that freight is equally important from an economic standpoint as the movement of people.

GIBBONS: You put up a proposal to the Treasury that they fund that investigation, I hope this wasn't typical of Treasury's involvement but you got a letter back from Sir Charles Cutler, then Acting Premier, saying no. You had the Treasury sitting there for years and you write to the Treasury asking for a relatively small amount of money and they write back saying no.

McCUSKER: Well this is so. It depended to a large extent on the Treasurer and the Under Secretary of the Treasury.

GIBBONS: But he was on the Committee, wasn't he?

McCUSKER: He was on the Committee, yes. I think it wouldn't be telling tales out of school to indicate that while he was in agreement with it as a member of the Committee, he indicated that there was no money in the coffers anyhow. We were bound to put it up. I found the Treasury fellows personally cooperative, we got on very well personally. They were of course influenced and advised or dictated to, whatever you like to term it, by the Minister or Government of the day, they had to conform to Government policy. My hunch is that the stronger the personality of the Minister, the more money he got for his Department.

GIBBONS: You said that you would have liked CUMTAC to have had some statutory authority, could I suggest that that would have been a substitute for the Public Transport Commission? Would it have been a more satisfactory substitute, do you think?

McCUSKER: I think it would have been. If it were a statutory authority then its views would have had more weight and it would have been responsible to one Minister who would then have been obligated to act. As it was an ad hoc and advisory authority, reporting to two or three Ministers, it got nowhere really — that's not quite true, it didn't clinch the things. Had it been a statutory authority then the whole community would have taken more notice of what it said. For example, the City Council set up a study under Clarke Gazzard and the rest; I think it fair to say that CUMTAC, through one or two of us, exercised a pretty substantial influence on that report. Clarke did come to discuss it with us, he had certain preconceived ideas which we were able to disabuse his mind about. I think by and large he came up with not a bad sort of report. I think it's fair to say that had it not been for CUMTAC, it could quite easily have been a very different report.

GIBBONS: Regarding your personal role, you've already indicated that if CUMTAC was to get something done it was through your persuading people that it was in their best interest. Would that have changed with statutory power, would it have say been a meeting of ten men sitting around and voting on an issue?

McCUSKER: No, whilst ever I was chairman I didn't see it that way. I think if you can get a consensus, getting people to do things because you convince them that that's the right thing to do, you're getting somewhere. If you take a vote and you get a majority, it's not satisfactory, because people's hearts are not in it.

GIBBONS: Isn't the resolution of conflict implied by the governmental process? If you strike at home issues which are important to the metropolis, if you have a conflicting viewpoint, then maybe it's a

matter of deciding what is the "common good"?

McCUSKER: I agree, I think CUMTAC could have done that. There would have been occasions no doubt when of necessity a decision would have had to be forced. My experience has been that it depends a lot on the chairman, whether you get the goodwill of people, or you get the confidence of them, more to the point. Provided the chairman's fair I've found that in these areas he has to take the leading role if he wants to get the organisation going anywhere. If they come to have confidence in the fairmindedness of the chairman they'll tend to fall into line pretty well. They'll express a point of view and they'll be prepared to compromise. I'm not suggesting for example that a chairman knows everything, he doesn't, but his role I think is to draw out the views of everybody and try and assess them, sum up the good and the bad and put them in such a way that the others will see a total picture. Each one comes there with his own point of view but when you put them together it's quite a different picture.

GIBBONS: Mr Trott is now Chairman. He's in a different position to the one you were in. The Ministry is now playing a more important role, especially in bringing the D.M.R. more into the fold. Do you think he has perhaps an advantage over you by virtue of the fact that he has only a coordinative function and not a vested interest?

McCUSKER: I don't know, I haven't had very much contact with him. I think the value of long practical experience in this field would possibly outweigh any advantages that an independent chairman might have. My experience has been that a chairman can lead the discussion, he can exercise (if that's the term) a degree of compromise. Human beings, being what they are, are more prone to accept suggestions from somebody with a track record behind them than they are to accept suggestions from somebody on the outside.

GIBBONS: I might misrepresent you by saying that you had a vested interest because the Railways had an established system, unlike the D.M.R. which was trying to push a new programme. The Railways already had their construction done, there were adjustments to be made but you weren't exactly in that position of vested interest, were you?

McCUSKER: I had a vested interest in one way although I feel that this was countered somewhat by the financial constraints and problems that I had as Railways Commissioner. I was looking for ways and means of easing my financial problems, and it would be fair to say that this would have had some influence on my thinking but I endeavoured to look at it on quite an impartial basis. I don't suppose anybody knew New South Wales more intimately than I did. I travelled N.S.W. regularly, I visited every railway station every two years in the time I was Commissioner, I met people and so on. I knew the problems of the country and the metropolitan area perhaps as well as most people.

Australia is a developing country, it has only a limited amount of resources. It's in the best interest of Australia and Australians if we deploy those resources where we're going to get the greatest value. It didn't matter to me if the value was in roads or rail or air or what. I was also on the committee on the second Sydney airport, I think I was able to take an objective view there. I was on the committee on materials handling, and the National Labour Advisory Council, all these things, I think very largely because it was felt I had a national outlook rather than a purely railway outlook. It comes back largely I think to individuals and my experience in life has been that the greatest success comes through somebody who has an appreciation of human relations. It's as simple as that. You can have all the academic qualifications, you can have all the other things but if you can't bring men together and get them to compromise, well what does it mean?

GIBBONS: That's the art of being a chairman.

McCUSKER: I've always had that philosophy and I practised it in

Railways. I started off as Commissioner for Railways with 56,000 and finished up with about 43,000 people, it was what they did. I could bring their individual efforts into collective operation, I could lay down the policy and inspire them or lead them, but they were doing the work, not me.

GIBBONS: I don't want to go into great detail but that's where the P.T.C. failed, isn't it?

McCUSKER: Oh my word, railwaymen are a peculiar race of people for the reason that they operate in a service industry unlike any other you can find. It's necessary for them to have confidence in the man who leads them, whoever he may be, and they will only have that confidence, irrespective of what kind of individual they may be, if they feel that he knows what their business is all about. When I was there we had about one thousand locations and these fellows, living all over N.S.W., had a necessity to have confidence in the administration because their lives and those of their families were **tied-up** inextricably, they had no other job to go to. I've always felt a tremendous responsibility rested on me to make sure they were not let down. I think it's as simple as that. They'd do anything for you, those fellows, if they respect you.

GIBBONS: It was disappointing as a student to have contact with people who saw the Railways being virtually destroyed and quite deliberately. Mr Shirley had his ideas, and perhaps they were good ones, but it seemed to be a waste.

McCUSKER: It was. The proof of the pudding is in the eating. The Railways are only as good as the men in them and as you can appreciate 99.8 per cent I think of railwaymen come from no higher educational standing than the Intermediate Certificate, the other .2 per cent or whatever are better than that. When you sift through this and you've got to bring men through into responsible positions, the opportunities for the administration to select good men are especially restricted. They only bob up here and there and part of my task was to make sure that the likely ones were given the opportunity. I had some particularly good men, they weren't academically qualified but they were very good, they had a flair for it. Most of the efficient operation rested heavily on these fellows. They're all getting out at sixty now, they're disillusioned; this is tragic, I feel sorry for the new man, he's denuded. I believe from what I know you would be hard put to get half a dozen fellows who could manage the operating side of railways and it is the key side. The engineering side, the accounts side, the legal side, the signals side, they all service the operating section. I inculcated this into them. Now to pick somebody who could get their overall concept and performance isn't looking very easy.

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The following interview with the Hon. Peter Cox, M.L.A.,
Minister for Transport and Highways, and Mr K.J. Trott,
Under Secretary, Ministry of Transport and Highways, was
held on the 19th November 1976. Not to be cited or quoted
without permission.

Robert Gibbons

GIBBONS: Mr Cox, can I ask you first about your idea of
transport policy generation and evaluation — what is the
role of URTAC in formulating transport policy?

COX: Its role is in investigating: at the present moment
I've got them dealing with the urban corridors. I look on
them as a vital adjunct to this Ministry in as much as they're
there to make an evaluation of the existing programmes and
future works.

GIBBONS: Do you find it helps you to co-ordinate the various
Departments and put them in a perspective that is fair to all
and yet is effective?

COX: In the brief period I have been Minister I've found them
to be extremely useful on the basis that if I've got any
concern or proposal I can refer it to them and I have the
opportunity of making the final assessment as to what should
take place.

GIBBONS: Mr Morris told me that when Mr Fife became Minister
he had a problem with the Department of Main Roads, and I've
heard the same from many sources. Do you think that URTAC
has been useful in bringing the D.M.R. more into line with
Government planning?

COX: This was before I came in but URTAC did a review of
expressways and took the initiative at that stage and even
though they didn't go as far as our policy, they certainly
made some pretty drastic changes in planning that the D.M.R.
has approved; fairly big changes took place there.

GIBBONS: Would you agree with Mr Morris's assessment that
at no stage was the D.M.R. required by the then Government to
justify its programmes, to cost them?

COX: I don't know what took place when Mr Morris was Minister,
he didn't have control over the D.M.R. at that stage. I
insisted on a works programme being submitted this financial
year, which we got; I don't know if it was the first time it
ever occurred.

TROTT: If I may add to what the Minister has said, Mr Cox
has followed the line that Mr Fife followed when the D.M.R.
came into the Transport portfolio. If he had been Wal Fife
he would have done the same. I'd agree wholeheartedly with
what Mr Morris said: what he was saying, at least by
inference, was that when the D.M.R. was brought into the
Transport family it was increasingly exposed (if that's the
right word) to Government evaluation and appraisal of their
programmes. For instance until the Department joined the
Transport fold, it was the Commissioner for Main Roads who
approved of programmes, it was the Commissioner who approved
of grants to councils, but that's no longer so. There has
been a provision in the D.M.R. Act for many years that it is
subject to the direction and control of the Minister but it
was only when they were brought into the Transport fold that
that power was exercised and they are now obliged (and they
accept it) to make submissions to the Minister for approval.

COX: They mightn't like it but they accepted it.

GIBBONS: This required fairly strong intervention from the
Minister?

COX: Yes.

TROTT: Once having had that intervention they've accepted that Mr Cox is fairly strong-minded.

COX: I supported that change, that the D.M.R. come under the Transport portfolio, I'd been saying for years that they should if we were to have a balanced transport programme. You can't have one Department operating on its own wavelength, completely independent of the major public transport systems.

GIBBONS: This would have changed URTAC's role, it's now got a far more effective role. Is it now guiding the Government in a strong way — when you get opinions from URTAC the Minister has already got a balanced view?

COX: I think it's an instrument that we use. We have a Cabinet sub-committee looking at expressways and we've come a substantial way to making a recommendation which will go soon to Cabinet. At the same time I've asked URTAC to do this complete corridor review. I think its role is one of objectivity — standing away from the Departments it makes its assessment. I think this is the proper system.

TROTT: As the Minister says, URTAC is just one instrument at the disposal of the Government for evaluating long-term transportation policy. URTAC is not supposed to deal with the detailed operations of the various undertakings. The Commissioners of those undertakings are members of URTAC; its is essentially a co-ordinating, policy advising role in urban transport. It does get ad hoc tasks from the Government of the day but it is essentially an overview role. It doesn't get involved in detailed matters. The Minister has other instruments at his disposal for implementing Government policy, such as the undertakings themselves.

GIBBONS: As for the Cabinet committees, are they very important? Mr Morris said that he liked using Cabinet committees because they cut down on the waste of time when one Department has to write to a Minister, he has to write to another Minister and he writes then to other Ministers — he thought there was often a dreadful waste of time.

COX: The Cabinet sub-committees that I've sat on, the two major ones, the Newcastle Dockyard (which was a big job and a useful operation), and the Cabinet sub-committee on expressways, have brought all the Departments together, have had discussions and got their views, and then went away as a Cabinet sub-committee and made the decisions. It does short cut the involved operations.

GIBBONS: Do you intend to leave the governmental framework basically as it is or do you think it might be desirable to say integrate the Departments more closely? I was thinking of the Royal Commission on Australian Government Administration's concept of "accountable management", where each Department is accountable for a particular function laid down centrally, versus a structural change, like the Public Transport Commission only all-embracing.

COX: What Department are you talking about?

GIBBONS: The D.M.R., Traffic Authority, Motor Transport, and P.T.C. as it is now.

TROTT: You mean a much larger operating agency, something like the P.T.C. augmented, with day-to-day control of main roads as well as running the trains?

GIBBONS: Yes, do you think it would be a good idea?

COX: No, I don't think it would be, the P.T.C. is big enough as it is now. I think it's a bit unwieldly, we're looking at getting some reorganisation in that structure. It's an immense operation and we've got to get better lines of communication, Mr Reiher is working towards that, we've had discussions on it.

TROTT: As I've explained to Robert, the P.T.C. has the function of running the Government-owned buses, trains and ferries and we reckon they've got enough to do there without getting into other areas. If we had a larger organisation it would be completely unwieldly.

COX: I shudder to think of it.

GIBBONS: I was looking back historically and the Labor Government did try something like that before but it didn't work then.

TROTT: You're talking about 60,000 people — the P.T.C. now has about 45,000 ...

COX: It's got more, 44,000 in rail and the buses on top of that.

TROTT: I thought they'd come below 50,000.

GIBBONS: Regarding new planning (this is policy as distinct from administration), are you happy with the way the bus systems are presently running, especially in the suburbs?

COX: I'm not very happy with the bus operations, one of the big problems there is that it's such an old fleet: we can't maintain services as advertised and that being the case we've got very little prospect of getting the people back to buses, if we're forced to cut services each day — this is happening now.

/‾ At this point Mr Cox was called away from the discussion._

GIBBONS: I didn't put that very well. I was thinking of the S.A.T.S. recommendations, especially in terms of the bus system currently following the old tram routes which were laid down before the turn of the century for the most part. I was wondering if that's a handicap.

/‾ Mr Cox returned._7

TROTT: Robert was saying that perhaps he could have put the question a little more clearly, with more emphasis on the rationalisation of bus operations, for instance we now have bus services parallelling train services in some areas.

COX: Do you mean mainly the new suburbs?

GIBBONS: Providing a service not just on the main routes but providing a wider range of services.

COX: It's all a matter of capital. The way we are approaching it at the moment is — let's improve what we've got. That's basically our theme. I can't see us in the next few years undertaking major new development although I can see problems in relation to private bus operations, we've had a little flak in that area. If you can believe what they say, some of them aren't going too well financially. We have a Cabinet committee having a look at that. We are doing other things, we're introducing a smaller type of bus as a pilot scheme to attract some off-peak business back, we're putting two-way radio into the newer buses, and we're introducing a better cleaning service, I hope early next year. We are just not in a position to, say, put another depot further out and

get into new areas. At the moment our losses on buses are worse than on the rail services.

GIBBONS: One of the things that the Sydney Area Transport-ation Study pointed out was that bus services follow the old tram routes of the last century.

COX: We'll have an opportunity when the Eastern Suburbs Railway starts of making some changes there, but I haven't had time enough to make an assessment of whether we should change particular bus routes which are operating at the moment. I know that whenever we suggest a change we always have petitions sent in from local residents who object. You fix up one group and disadvantage another group. There are all these factors to look at.

/‾ The discussion finished at this point due to shortage of time. _/

The following interview with Mr K.J. Trott, Under Secretary of the
Ministry of Transport and Highways, was held on Monday 29th
November, 1976. In the second part of the interview the Hon.
Peter Cox, M.L.A., Minister for Transport and Highways, joined the
discussion in continuance of the interview of 19th November, 1976
(separate transcript). Not to be cited or quoted without
permission.

Robert Gibbons.

GIBBONS: Could we start with the history of the Ministry — it was
set up I understand in 1932, is that correct?

TROTT: The legislation, called the Ministry of Transport Act, was
passed in 1932 as one of a number of Acts, but that didn't set up
what came to be known as the Ministerial Office. The Ministerial
Office hasn't been set up by statute but there has been a Ministry
of Transport formed by legislation. This Office did start as a
small Ministerial Office and for some years probably was little
more than a co-ordinating post office. It was established under
Colonel Bruxner and the first head of the Ministry was a seconded
Railway officer, Mr Leo Grose, he held the job for some years and
was succeeded by Mr Eric Holt. With the coming of Mr Holt the
Ministry started to grow in importance, partly because of the
competence of Eric Holt, partly through force of circumstances.
Eric was a graduate in Arts from Sydney University and had had some
experience in other Departments before he joined the Ministry. He
was head of the Ministry through a very critical period, he was the
permanent head who elevated the status of the permanent head's job
in the Ministry.

GIBBONS: He came in sometime in the 1950s?

TROTT: No, he came in I think in the late '40s, he had served under
Leo Grose for some period as his deputy, but when Leo retired Eric
Holt took over as Secretary of the Ministry, as he was then called.
He was Secretary and then Under Secretary for many years, I think
from about 1949 through to 1970. It was in his time that the job
was elevated...

GIBBONS: Very slowly, I take it.

TROTT: Yes, rather slowly. I came in as deputy to Eric Holt in
1965. My coming coincided with the change in government, there had
been a Labor Government in office for many years, and my coming was
of some assistance to the Ministry at the time. I came from the
Public Service, I knew my way around staffing, as well I had
personal contacts at the Public Service Board which enabled us very
quickly to build up the staff of the Ministry. I think at one time,
relatively soon after 1965, well over 80% of the Ministry were new.
We had an infusion of experience from many Departments coming into
the Ministry. Soon after I took over I joined URTAC and then
gradually the Ministry started to assume a much more positive
role in relation to the administration of URTAC which has now been
done here for some time. Eventually I became Chairman of URTAC.
The Ministry has also been strengthened to some extent by the
addition of the Highways portfolio to Transport: soon after the
transfer, after discussion with the then Minister, Mr Wal Fife, I
persuaded the Public Service Board to agree to a reorganisation of
the Ministry. The main matter of interest to you, I would think,
arising out of the discussions, and assisted to some extent fortu-
itously by the Machinery of Government Review that was current at
the time, we set up a Division of Development Co-ordination under
Gordon Messiter. We recruited Gordon, who is called the Chief
Planning Administrator, from the Federal Department of Transport,
and with his coming and the approval of the Development Co-ordination
Division, we now have a very good policy core. We have some top-
flight men who are getting better all the time, providing policy
advice to the Minister. There are still things happening that had
started before the establishment of this Division, for instance we

still have a plan to establish a container terminal at Enfield which was planned by the Public Transport Division quite understandably from its own point of view, for its own interest. It was a marvellous plan but the problem was that very little attention was given to the road works that are necessary around the terminal. It wasn't until flak started from local people that this was picked up. This would never happen again since the establishment of the Development Co-ordination Division. Similarly a freight terminal has been established at Tamworth but it's not functioning because there's a demarcation issue between the Transport Workers Union and the Australian Railways Union over who is going to drive the road vehicles as a result of rail services being cut out. Again this would not happen under our new set-up. As you probably know the Urban Transport Study Group, which is attached to URTAC, is also under the control of the Development Co-ordination Division.

I think we've got quite a good Ministry here. It's been assisted in evolving to its present state by the growth in intensity of activity in Commonwealth/State relations in transport. The Development Co-ordination Division is very much caught up with Commonwealth/State relations — the Ministry is the principal State agency concerned with relations with the Federal transport people. We're in daily contact with them and the officers of the Ministry are well known to officers in the Federal sphere. Of course Federal/State relations have increased in importance between the Commonwealth Government and other State Governments and again in turn between State Governments and State Governments. At one time, when I first came here, we barely knew the people in the other governments, Eric Holt might have known some of them, but now there's almost daily contact with other States. I think this is good for transport and good for Australia.

In brief then the Ministry is still a small co-ordinating agency. We try to ensure that we don't duplicate the work of the undertakings, we're concerned principally with providing the Minister with policy advice over the whole transport spectrum; we're particularly concerned that the transport undertakings speak with the one voice and with ensuring that one arm of the administration knows what the other arm is doing. That's harder than you might think because in some respects certain branches of the Transport Ministry — I am talking of the Ministry overall — have conflicting functions, road/rail for instance. We're also concerned with providing a legislative service to the Minister: draft legislation is prepared in the Ministry with the assistance of the undertakings. We put up proposals to Cabinet from here, either by initiating Cabinet proposals or by assisting the departments with proposals they have initiated. We try to ensure that we all work as a team. That's one of the things I've noticed improving over the years, relations with the departments. The departments still tend to regard us as an unnecessary step in their communication with the Minister but they don't feel so strongly about us now as they used to.

GIBBONS: Mr Morris hinted in his recent exchange with Mr Cox (in the Legislative Assembly) that at one time there was a danger that this Ministry was to be downgraded. Was that due to that hostile attitude?

TROTT: Yes. Many people felt when Eric Holt was elevated in status that he shouldn't have been, and I must confess that I was one of them at the time, I was on the Public Service Board. I now leave it to others to judge whether that was right or not, I think it was very necessary to upgrade the Ministry. I think it's an understandable feeling on the part of the undertakings to want to provide direct policy advice to the Minister, but in fact we're trying to work as a team, we're not in conflict. I'll come back to this matter of conflict later; I'll finish off the functions of the Ministry. We provide the legislative service to the Minister, we provide a Cabinet service to him, we're the principal State agency for transport relations inter-State, we provide the Minister with a

representational service. This I suppose you could call the
bread-and-butter area of the Ministry. We get more flak through
representational problems than any other area. Hundreds of letters
come into the Ministry weekly and we deal with a wide variety of
transport topics. The processing of these letters requires
considerable skill. We have a number of fellows here who I hope
have political nous and are aware of the political problems that
can be caused to a government by the mishandling of representations
to the minister. The ministers of the day find it hard not to
regard that work as the most important, for fairly obvious reasons.
The long-term plans and the transport "ethos" (if there is one)
are important but the minister has a task apart from this ethos,
there's not so much urgency in watching its development. He's got
to keep his government in power and in the transport area that's
terribly important because everyone's concerned with transport. So
we have quite a number of officers here, junior and senior, who
assist in the processing of this representational work. Everybody
in the Ministry gets involved in it to some extent, depending on
importance — importance is not measured necessarily by the bigness
of the matter under revue, such as the capital works programme of
the P.T.C., but also by whether the matter is blown up to some-
thing big even though it might be temporary. A strike for instance
can assume quite significant proportions; a strike in one of the
workshops can "blow-up", there might be an urgency motion in the
House which can assume some importance. I think you know what I'm
getting at.

There's one other thing the Ministry brings to the transport
administration: we regard ourselves as having an obligation to
relate transport to overall government policy and we're expected to
know overall government policy, in fact we have contact with other
policy-makers which the undertakings might not have. For instance
we have very close contacts with the Premier's Department, with the
Treasury, in fact with most of the Departments of any size. We
feel we can bring this wide perspective or we can set a larger scene
in which transport can operate. Relations with the undertakings
are improving considerably, certainly relations between the
permanent heads of the undertakings are quite good. We meet
frequently, we're on the 'phone to each other all the time, we meet
at URTAC, we meet as a group at meetings of the Australian Transport
Advisory Council; I'm frequently in the undertakings discussing
one matter or another. We're gradually becoming accepted as a
necessary part of the transport scene. I think the fact that we
survived the Machinery of Government Review is quite significant.
We've had the Public Service Board acknowledging the need for the
Ministry and, in fact soon after the Machinery of Government Review,
agreeing to its strengthening.

GIBBONS: I asked Mr McCusker if he thought that co-ordination
between the undertakings was good before CUMTAC, and he said no.
I asked him to identify the problems that arose from the lack of
co-ordination and he thought that the inability to get transport
considerations injected into land use planning was the major factor.
He said that when a new area was planned, say Campbelltown,
inadequate consideration was given to transport. Would you agree
and were there other problems?

TROTT: I do agree and there were other problems, he was referring
particularly I think to the urban area although it affected transport
planning generally. There is one other matter I can think of that
may refer to the relationship between transport and land use. The
P.T.C. had plans, and still has plans, to rationalise its services
in the country areas. It has been suggested, not necessarily by the
P.T.C., that we should chop out branch lines in the country and have
freight services formerly provided by rail now taken by road. The
P.T.C. pursued its planning but didn't take into consideration the
effect on the Council roads in the areas. I was brought in as an
honest broker at one stage, at the suggestion of the Minister by the
way, to make both the D.M.R. and the P.T.C. aware of what each was
doing to the other by their ad hoc decisions. As I said before,
that doesn't happen now and I think it's the existence of this place
that will ensure that it won't happen. I think we've managed to

build up an awareness and a rapport between the various arms of the administration, quite apart from our own knowledge of what's going on, all this will stop that sort of thing happening again.

There's another area of understandable tendency towards lack of co-ordination, the force of finance. Just recently, after some years, we've managed to reach an apportionment of cost of the works associated with the Eastern Suburbs Railway. For instance the decision to have a sophisticated bus/rail interchange at Bondi Junction meant that there was a need to provide a road bypassing the shopping centre, everyone has recognised the need for this. The road authority quite understandably said I shouldn't have to pay for that road because if it hadn't have been for the station it wouldn't have been necessary. Part of the proposal for the interchange was to close off part of Oxford Street in Bondi Junction to all but buses and pedestrians and perhaps taxis. On the other hand, very obviously too, the P.T.C. said it's a road, you the D.M.R. should pay for roads. In a similar catagory was a proposed pedestrian underpass linking Ocean Street Woollahra with the Edgecliff interchange. Everybody agreed that there should be a pedestrian underpass, including the Traffic Authority, but no one wanted to pay for it. We had a real stand-off situation. Here were two projects which were government commitments but understandably the undertakings which were concerned with the projects were standing-off and didn't want to pay for them. That was resolved and it was resolved largely through persistence by the Ministry; this persistence included taking the matter up with about four Ministers of Transport to get in touch with the Treasurer of the day. In desperation we finally got the matter to Cabinet, not as a separate issue but it got there with Cabinet's consideration of the Review of the Eastern Suburbs Railway by the Board of Review set up expressly for that purpose. We dragged this issue in, it wasn't covered by the Board of Review, but the Ministry dragged it in and largely through that we were able to solve the problem. It had to be solved in a rather draconian way, Cabinet had to say — P.T.C. pay this, and so on. But it was done in consultation, we had all the heads together, specifically we had the Chairman of the Traffic Authority, the Commissioner for Main Roads, and the Chief Commissioner of the P.T.C. The Minister informed them that it would have to be a draconian-type decision, they realised then that something had to happen because he was directed by Cabinet to make a decision: in one afternoon something was solved that had taken four years to solve. So that's another sort of lack of co-ordination.

GIBBONS: This leads to another issue we were looking at the other day, the role of the Minister. You can only have an effective Ministry if you have a co-operative Minister or one who has the needs of co-ordination in mind.

TROTT: Yes, you've raised a very important point. An Under Secretary is only as good as his persuasive powers and his ability to provide sound and acceptable advice to his Minister. He is nothing without his minister, he has no powers in his own right. The only powers I might have in my own right as Under Secretary are in relation to URTAC. This is not an unusual situation, it applies also to the Premier's Department, he might have quite minor powers in his own right. This is different say to the Under Secretary for Child Welfare who has specific powers; the Under Secretary of Mines has specific powers in his own right. The Under Secretary of this Ministry hasn't got that. We may get that, in fact we've put a proposal to Mr Cox and he's agreed with it; I can't disclose the terms to you but we'll be bringing the proposals before Cabinet as the opportunity presents itself.

GIBBONS: I do have some idea, I think you were saying that you'd like to bring UTS in as well?

TROTT: UTS I would say is with us now although some people would disagree with that. I would like to bring UTS closer to us and have them doing not only urban work but State-wide work. They're competent to do that and provide technical assistance. All the time we've got to ensure that we don't attempt to duplicate the work

of the undertakings — I don't think we do, I'm sure we don't.

GIBBONS: Well, there's nothing in them that brings them together.

TROTT: That's right. We have a counterpart, the Victorian Ministry is structured on the same lines with similar interests to our own. This emerged to some extent through our coming together on the Australian Transport Advisory Council. I've had one of my fellows down there to see what they're doing and I'm in frequent contact with my counterpart who's known as the Director of Transport.

GIBBONS: As a last question before you have to go, I'd like to deal with the growing importance of URTAC. We can't cover URTAC fully but you have been able to change it and make it a more effective body. Could you please say something on that?

TROTT: I've always felt since I've been in the Ministry that CUMTAC and its successor URTAC are bodies that are natural mediums for getting things done in transport. Obviously if you've got the heads of all the undertakings directly involved with transport, and indirectly involved such as the Maritime Service Board, all brought together, you ought to be able to do something with a group of people like that. Even if you do nothing with them directly, the mere fact that they've come together has considerable spin-off benefits. This has been demonstrated time and again. Even during the early days of CUMTAC the benefits of such a spin-off were quite evident. They still regarded themselves — the D.M.R., the then Railways, the Department of Government Transport, the Department of Motor Transport — as separate entities; they still regard them - selves as such but there's much more a spirit of "oneness" than there used to be. This has been brought about partly through force of circumstance over the years, partly through sheer association, partly through the efforts of Neal McCusker and others to guide them into this position. I think Neal McCusker had quite a job getting this organisation going. I feel that one of his greatest difficulties was that he himself was head of a large operating organisation. He had the staff of CUMTAC and the administrative work done from his own organisation; the fellows providing him with this service had a natural Railway bias and the matters that were brought up for consideration, if you look back through the old Minutes, tended to have either a Railway bias or an operating bias. We got to the stage where we were looking in detail at what traffic improvements were necessary at particular intersections. Though they may have been major intersections, we were still getting into an operating area that was patently the responsibility of the operating authority, now the Traffic Authority. I've always felt that URTAC should look at major policy issues and in fact I've done my best to ensure that this happens. If you look at the agenda now you'll find transport review such as where the URTAC Report emerged. Whether in fact one agrees with the findings of the URTAC Report, it's important and it's become accepted by a large body of people concerned with urban transport. An unanimous report of that kind would not have been possible in 1965. The fact that the present Government has accepted URTAC and has URTAC engaged in the current corridor review is indicative of the success of URTAC. I think that when the Under Secretary of the Ministry became Chairman of URTAC it became much easier for URTAC to get involved in such broader issues than it was before. For instance if the Chairmanship had passed from Philip Shirley to say the Commissioner for Main Roads, he would have had some difficulty with a broader treatment. I find as Chairman of URTAC that I am in a marvellous position, this happened during the preparation of the Report. It would be very difficult for one of the other members to assume this role and I think that they've accepted the fact that there should be an URTAC and that it is right that the Under Secretary of the Ministry should chair it. In fact after the change of government we had a round table discussion and I asked each one if they wanted URTAC and each one of them said yes. They have a worry that URTAC might get into too much detail and I understand that worry. There have been suggestions from various ministers that we should review various bus services and that sort of thing but they're not happy about that. Fair enough, I've got that message and I agree with it entirely.

AT THIS POINT THE DISCUSSION WAS ADJOURNED AND RECOMMENCED IN
MR COX'S OFFICE

GIBBONS: Last time I was going to ask you questions about the
Public Transport Commission, the Department of Main Roads and so on.
We were discussing buses and we'd more or less finished. You said
that you hadn't had time to look at the rationalisation of services,
that this might come with the Eastern Suburbs Railway, and that so
far you were thinking more of maintaining present services
efficiently.

COX: Since then, Robert, I've had the unions in with Mr Reiher and
Eric Lindon, who's manager of buses, on the basis of getting a
working party comprising the unions and the administration,
including an officer from this Ministry, to have a look at the
question of one-man bus operation and also to look at proposals
that the bus people want to put up to us for the extension of
services and the like. We're at the stage of writing to the unions
setting out our proposals and asking them to agree to a working
party being established which I think, if they agree, would be a
very significant move in that area. You can't do anything there
unless you have the co-operation of the unions. I do see the need
for some rationalisation of buses and it won't come unless we get
round the table and have these discussions. There's got to be a
bit of give and take.

GIBBONS: About the Public Transport Commission, when it was being
set up was it intended to do a somewhat wider job than it is
presently doing? I'm not sure of what the exact original concept
was but I understand it was not going to just manage the existing
services, it was intended to draw the different authorities into a
more unitary structure.

TROTT: That's not true. The original concept was what emerged,
what happened in fact. We wanted a body which would be responsible
to the Government for the management of the publicly-owned bus,
rail and ferry services. There had been moves in the past to revert
back to a transport hierarchy but the feeling of the former Govern-
ment was that the Commission would have enough to do without
getting into road administration. In the event, in the case of
buses for instance, we have that body regulating its competitors,
which seemed to be somewhat wrong in principle. The Minister can
speak for the present Government.

GIBBONS: When I asked you last time you said the P.T.C. was too
big as it is. Over the last fifty years there has been a good deal
of discussion between Lang and Bruxner, and later other politicians:
administration was seen as one of the big problems of transport,
yet they never seemed to work out a truly effective solution.

COX: I think in the few months I've been Minister administration
has been too unwieldly. We're moving now to get better lines
established as to who conducts what and still have co-ordination as
to ultimate decisions. There's no doubt that there needs to be
changes in the present administration. Alan Reiher, the Chief
Commissioner, has had discussions with me on proposals he has in
mind to establish better lines of administration, and they in turn
will go to the council of unions — in fact I think he has given
them already very broad details of what he proposes.

TROTT: I think Robert was casting his net a bit wider than that,
referring to an integrated administration in which Main Roads and
the P.T.C. were combined.

COX: If I might say, looking at what we've got at the moment, I
think it would be suicidal to grab other Departments and put them
in together because you'd have so many problems that all you'd be
doing is solving the administrative problems you'd have created.
I think we've reached a time in history that we just can't afford
that, we've got to get hold of what's there and straighten it out.

TROTT: Would you agree, Mr Minister, that policy co-ordination is necessary in transport above all else? In my thinking it is incredible that it hasn't been done before. There has been no policy co-ordination, of making sure that all Departments speak with one voice. I think there is only one person who can do that and in my experience in the Ministry, the Minister has had to be more closely involved in pulling the undertakings together at the highest policy level. If you succeed in doing that, I would think that other problems would be largely taken care of.

COX: I don't disagree with that. I would be the first to admit that there are some shortcomings that are quite apparent. We are starting to move in that direction.

GIBBONS: I would think that perhaps the Ministry, Mr Trott's organisation, and URTAC, the interdepartmental committee, would be of great help in enabling you to do your job without having to worry about administrative problems. If you give those agencies your support, and say "this is the Minister's voice speaking..."

COX: We do do that.

TROTT: It has to be that we are the Minister's voice...

COX: Yes, but when the crunch comes, it's me who has got to deliver it. It has to be done that way. I'm backed up by supporting recommendations and I've got to ensure that those recommendations, if accepted, are in fact carried out.

GIBBONS: There were days when the Cumberland Passenger Transport Advisory Committee, the predecessor of URTAC, lacked adequate ministerial support and it was perhaps little more than a discussion group.

COX: That's not so now, URTAC's very viable. We've just established an URTAC group in the Wollongong area, where we've got community involvement, so that will flow through the main URTAC group and so in turn through to me.

TROTT: It is terribly important for URTAC to know what the Minister is thinking and to have ready access to him.

COX: We are in front of the thinking in other Departments, for instance in relation to corridors we've already started — they're all talking about the need to review all existing corridors but that's already under way. It was started about four months ago but we've now got other planning groups saying they want a review of corridors.

GIBBONS: If we can change the tack a little, you've had problems in your own electorate with local roads and had hassles with the D.M.R. over the years. Blacktown has had similar troubles, as have other fringe areas where transport and land use weren't co-ordinated, where a great deal of new urban population was put into rural areas without the upgrading of the rural roads. Can you see that changed now, through the D.M.R?

COX: It's really a matter for planning, it's Paul Landa's area. My own electorate has a population of about 45,000 and it provides 45,000 jobs, which from my point of view is an overconcentration of industry. To overcome that would need a major decision at Paul Landa's level. Where do you settle new industry? You've got to look at this on the basis of existing pollution problems and the air problems we have in the Sydney basin as to where does the pollution go? There are a number of areas it goes when it leaves Auburn: do you start putting industries here when you're going to have problems in relation to pollution? All of that comes under Paul Landa's administration.

GIBBONS: It ties in with URTAC's domain, doesn't it. Blacktown Council wrote to the D.M.R. quite a few times and said that they wanted a few local roads which in their opinion were through roads upgraded. The D.M.R. had a booklet advising councils how to apply for assistance and at the end with regard to reclassification it said that unfortunately due to lack of finance in the past few years, we haven't been able to consider any applications. Blacktown was in a terrible condition and there was considerable unrest in the area. I don't know if this particular issue has come up but will the D.M.R.'s role change and assist local councils more?

COX: Well, if I can say on assisting local councils, we assist councils more than any other State. On the question of finance, they were relieved of the main roads levy a few years back and the figures that I have available indicate that as far as N.S.W. is concerned we give more assistance to local government than any other State. There are pressures now that the Act should be amended, that we should be forced to get into that area, but you would just be taking it out of one pocket and putting it in another pocket. There would be roads in the semi-rural country areas that would not get finance but I would hope that local government would now, with the grants they're getting from the Federal Government, be adequately assisted because it would appear that there is now a continuing programme; they get $53 million throughout Australia this year. We also have a programme of giving State grants to local government and I would hope that we can lift that level of assistance. The URTAC Report said that we should be spending $40 million a year on roads in the metropolitan area ...

TROTT: But we can't get $40 million.

COX: We haven't got $40 million but we are reviewing expressway proposals as you know; we've gone a long way there and the recommendations of the Cabinet Sub-committee will be going to Cabinet very soon. We'll be making significant decisions here which will be announced before Christmas. I couldn't give you a straight answer that we will be able to help local councils like Blacktown, bearing in mind the lack of funds that we've got.

GIBBONS: When I spoke to Mr Morris, he said that the only reason the expressways had been put on the planning map was because the government had never asked the D.M.R. to justify its programme. The D.M.R. has always seen itself as providing new roads: will there be a greater emphasis on improving existing roads rather than providing new roads?

COX: There will be a greater emphasis on improving existing roads, on bottlenecks in some of the suburbs. One that I've had a recent look at was Punchbowl railway bridge, I've had a look at one in my own electorate, where there are definite bottlenecks in the morning and afternoon which add up to significant delays. The very purpose of the Cabinet Sub-committee inquiring into expressways and the policy which would flow from that would be to improve existing roads.

TROTT: We'll have to wind-up...

COX: We could have another talk with you, Robert.

GIBBONS: As I've told Mr Trott, I'm mainly concerned not so much with planning except to the extent that in the weaknesses in planning you can see the weaknesses of government. It's the things you can't do in planning and so on that illustrate the weaknesses in government and administration. I've seen a greater effectiveness, and everyone I've spoken to agrees, since URTAC really got going in a meaningful way, planning processes have become more effective, considerations of planning land use and transport are now being consistently realised.

COX: Well, I'm all for planning but there are pressures exerted at times, which you know, which can stop planners. The thing that worries me, if you ask me as an individual, is that everything goes

into areas where we have more pollution. This worries me and I've spoken to the planners about it. As I see it there's got to be a shift.

GIBBONS: One of the problems with the Sydney Area Transportation Study was that the dispersal effects of air pollution were not considered, in contrast to a report by a major environmental group in 1973 or so that pollutants would concentrate around Parramatta and your own area and other areas.

COX: We have a problem in my own electorate. We have photo-chemical pollution that's higher than Japan: if you take the readings on the equipment that the Japanese use (we do a more refined reading at Lidcombe), when you make an adjustment of our readings, we're up as high as Tokyo.

GIBBONS: Yes, that's something that was dropped from the Sydney Area Transportation Study.

COX: I've had a look at a report which I got which indicates that quite clearly.

TROTT: Mr Reiher has arrived and we'll have to finish. If I may say, the present Government is very conscious of the environment and I would not be surprised if the Government kept the Cabinet Sub-committee looking at freeways going.

COX: Well, it is the Resources Committee.

TROTT: Yes, that's right, it is a standing committee.

COX: Yes, it's headed by the Deputy Premier, there's myself, there is Harry Jensen, Jack Renshaw, Pat Hills and Paul Landa on it, all pretty senior Cabinet ministers.

TROTT: Yes, it's got all those interests represented and will be able to deal adequately with the issue.

The following interview with Mr K.J. Trott, Under Secretary of the Ministry of Transport and Highways, was held on the 21st December, 1976. Not to be cited or quoted without permission.

Robert Gibbons.

GIBBONS: Last time we covered the history of the Ministry and briefly URTAC and you finished with a point that the members of URTAC felt that their job lay on the policy side of government rather than administration. They don't think that it's their role to look over each other's shoulder to make sure that they are carrying out the government's policy. You said that the prevailing feeling is that they should have a policy role rather than an auditing role. Where do you draw the line between policy and administration, and more importantly, what's the role of the Ministry itself in the other side, the checking of Departments, the Minister's job?

TROTT: I'll attempt to answer your first question. Sometimes it's very hard to draw a line, sometimes the line is drawn on an ad hoc basis — a problem will come up and a decision is made that this is something that would be better left to the department. A typical instance of that sort of thing was when Max Ruddock, the then Minister, after discussion with me, asked URTAC to undertake a review of private buses in the metropolitan area. URTAC members discussed this among themselves and we all felt (I agreed) that this sort of operational investigation wasn't a matter for URTAC. We made that decision in URTAC and we informed the Minister and he agreed. In the event there was a change of government before anything got under way and for a number of reasons nothing has yet happened — but that's another story. Another instance of on the one hand members of URTAC being pleased to receive recognition of that role, and on the other not being too anxious to get into detail was their reaction to the decision of the former Government to accept the URTAC Report. After that decision was made URTAC was asked to overview the implementation of the Report. The members of URTAC were quite pleased but the Public Transport Commission representative argued quite strongly that URTAC shouldn't be receiving progress reports on the number of train carriages they'd received under their capital works programme, or the progress of their resignalling programme. He felt that was a matter for the Commission and the Minister and/or the Ministry. We agreed with that. The sort of task that we're being given now — apart from the overall policy advice that we give to the Minister and in a way we choose our own ground there, that is we don't get many ad hoc tasks, some that we get we've engineered ourselves — our latest task is the review of transport corridors. We regard this as a proper exercise for URTAC. With the assistance of the Study Group we're looking at every corridor, major and minor, that's been reserved, either statutorily reserved or reserved more loosely in some other way. We're looking at all of those and we're making recommendations to the Government. These are not only road corridors, they are rail corridors as well. It's a major task and in some respects it's a bit like another SATS exercise, although we're trying to assure that we don't turn it into a SATS-type exercise. I can't answer you in more detail; if you have a look at our functions, they are what we're supposed to be doing. Those functions are cast in very broad terms. We're supposed to give policy advice but as with all organisations of this kind we find that we do get into the ad hoc situation, that's how we work, I don't see how we can work in any other way.

GIBBONS: When a marginal subject comes up you decide as a body...

TROTT: We decide among ourselves whether it should be left to individual departments or a group of departments operating outside URTAC. By and large URTAC works very well. I can't recall major differences of opinion amongst the members, we seem to reach a consensus quite readily on most things.

There's another ad hoc task that we've got. As you know the Government has recently received a Report from the Commissioner enquiring into Botany Bay. URTAC has a major role in responding to that and we're meeting next Thursday in fact to make a co-ordinated response. There will be individual responses as well to the findings of the enquiry.

GIBBONS: Once a matter has been decided, say it's a matter of administration, staffing or financial policy or something like that, which is a matter between the P.T.C. or the D.M.R. and the Minister, what role does the Ministry have?

TROTT: We have a major role in what follows. The day-to-day arrangement we in the Ministry have with the Minister works something like this, in say a major policy area: there may be a policy initiative from the particular undertaking or there may be a policy initiative from here, but very often once a policy issue has been raised we all get to know about it. Mr Reiher and I for instance frequently talk about the issue before it emerges as a proposal over here. When the proposal arrives here, say from the undertaking, it could go direct to the Minister or it could come to me — it could even come addressed to the Minister but in an envelope to me after discussion with the appropriate Commissioner. In any event if it goes to the Minister direct it will come out to us, either just referred to us for processing in the normal way or if it's a very important matter, something that is particularly interesting to the Minister, he'll mark it for me to discuss with him. Whatever happens we get hold of it and a Minister in most cases will not make a decision without a formal submission from the Ministry. In fact we will agree with nine major policy submissions out of ten, not because we're rubber-stamping them but because we're involved in working out the policy even though the final carriage of it might be with the undertaking. There are occasions when we can't work that way, for instance if proposals have emerged that require legislative action, very often we have to change what is proposed in not major respects — we mightn't change the thrust, but we might have to change the details, perhaps because we know something that the undertakings don't know about a particular detail. We really come into our own when matters proceed to legislation or proceed to Cabinet. We have the carriage of final proposals to Cabinet. Sometimes we ask the undertakings to give us a draft Cabinet minute, sometimes we don't, but invariably we find that the Cabinet minute that they prepare doesn't go far enough. If there's any speciality here, it's our's, we know how to present things to Cabinet. Presentation is terribly important, you've got to relate the problem to overall Government policy or to overall transport policy. Sometimes Cabinet proposals finish up with Cabinet Sub-committees and we get a piece of that action: one of my fellows or myself will serve the Sub-committee. Currently Cabinet is considering inner-urban freeway policy and we're very much involved in that. We have an instance, and I'm sure the D.M.R. won't mind my mentioning this, where we have what might be called departmental policy being in conflict with the policy of the Government of the day. This is where we have to step in. It's our job to service the Government of the day. We don't blindly follow policy, if we think policy of the day has some flaws in it, it's our job to point that out to the Minister. In fact we did point that out with respect to inner-urban freeway policy, we wanted to make sure that the Government was aware of the dangers in abandoning these freeways. By and large we agree with the policy on the inner-urban freeways, fellows like Gordon Messiter have felt this for years, but we have to suggest to the Government that they'd better make clear that they're not against freeways per se — in fact I've read somewhere they weren't — I said you'd better make that terribly clear because people seem to think you are. So we have to help them refine their policy.

In doing all this I like to think that we're working closely with the departments. The departments understandably are sometimes

not very keen on us because they feel there's no real need to have
an organisation of this type. I'm sure Mr Reiher would much prefer
to deal directly with Mr Cox; in fact he does sometimes, but most
of the time on major issues — this does not just apply to Peter
Cox but to all Ministers — the Under Secretary is invited in. We
bring to bear a much wider body of knowledge, we're supposed to have
a knowledge of overall Government policy, we're supposed to have and
we do have a knowledge of transport policy generally. In the past
it has happened that one arm of the transport administration didn't
know what the other arms were doing, and this applies particularly
to road and rail matters. That doesn't happen anymore.

On the question of detailed checking of what the departments
are doing, there's a bit of that but not a great deal, we try not to
be petty about this. We get into the vetting or investigatory area
in a number of ways. One main way is through representations that
are made to the Minister on a variety of matters. We process these
representations in a variety of ways. If it's a routine sort of
thing it's treated in a routine sort of way. If it's a major matter
I might undertake an investigatory role myself, I might go over to
see the Chief Commissioner and say, well what about this, this and
this, can we have a report on this, or what is the position, or I
don't think the Minister is going to buy that, we'll need to go
into it a lot more deeply. Or, I think you're quite wrong in what
you're doing, he won't buy that at all, you'll have to change your
policy — that sort of thing arises. We do have a vetting role in
other respects, we keep an eye on the loans programmes, capital
works programmes or expenditure programmes. For instance Mr Cox is
at present quite worried about the possibility of the P.T.C.
underspending its capital works programme, after he's put up quite
a battle in Cabinet to get them a substantial increase in their
allocation. We're dealing with that on his behalf. He's
particularly anxious to see how his fare reduction decision comes
out, what the final result of it is, and he and I and Alan Reiher
haven't been satisfied with the analyses that have taken place so
far. This is partly because sufficient time hadn't elapsed to do a
proper analysis. I don't know if that answers your question but
that's the sort of thing that we deal with here.

GIBBONS: On the budgetary side, you fit in somewhere between the
Treasury and the undertakings.

TROTT: Yes. The detailed preparation of the estimates is left to
the undertakings and the Treasury. When they're getting towards
completion we tend to buy in to find out what's going on and the
final submissions to the Treasury come through here. I think it
would be wrong of us to get too far in but because of the size of
the P.T.C.'s operating deficit and the effect of its capital works
programme on total State finances we have set up recently under the
new Government a Ministerial Sub-committee comprising the Treasurer
and the Minister for Transport and Highways, to overview finances
and means of keeping finances within bounds. That meeting is
attended by the Chief Commissioner, the Deputy Chief Commissioner,
the Treasury heads, certain of the Premier's special advisers and
myself. Arising out of the first meeting of that committee a
number of sub-committees were established to look at particular
problems. We're on about three of those in the person of Jim
McDonnell from here. As I said to you earlier we've survived the
Machinery of Government Review where other Ministries didn't,
because I think of the recognition of the fact that there needs to
be some sort of co-ordination of transport policy. I'm not suggest-
ing that we should buy in on the P.T.C.'s responsibility of co-
ordinating operational matters, such as when ferries meet buses and
that sort of thing. That's not our role and we're not competent to
do it anyway, it would be foolish if we attempted to do that sort
of thing. It's even been suggested by some that we should undertake
a professional inspecting role, for instance in assisting in the
policing of contracts, going out to the Commonwealth Engineering

Company to look at the double-deck carriages under construction, inspecting major construction jobs. I don't think that's an area we ought to get into, not in a major way but we could perhaps have one or two fellows to go out on ad hoc tasks; it's surprising what you sometimes find.

Another area we've had to come in on and in which we've had some success is the question of who pays for what. It's amazing that this should arise; I think I've mentioned this to you before. You can get into quite sticky situations and someone has to come in and advise the Minister that this or that is what he should do. The machinery for doing that varies, one way is appointing the Under Secretary as the convenor of a working group, the Minister saying you've got to come up with something, I want an answer to this tomorrow.

I think by and large we conform to the normal administrative pattern, I think you'll find most comparable organisations work this way. There is a common theme running through all the mechanisms we use, we must communicate, each party must know what the others are doing, it's a sight harder than you'd think.

GIBBONS: Do you think that your intervening in the budgetary process has helped the undertakings? Keith King for instance has told me that the Railways always had a headache with Treasury.

TROTT: No, we don't intervene enough to be of assistance to them in that way, we are more involved in protecting the Minister's interests in the budget. For instance we would want to see, if there are major policy commitments, if sufficient provision has been made for them. If we find that the estimate of expenditure for the year is revealing a greater deficit than we expected, more than we'd been led to believe, then we'd get very much interested, we'd be working with the Minister on this. We'd then seek to have fairly detailed discussions with the undertakings. We stay out of the day-to-day budgetary discussion that is necessary for the working up of the estimate, I don't think we've got a role there at all. Having said that, we've got a pretty good idea of what's going on and we have direct liaison with the Treasury ourselves, I'm in constant touch with the permanent head of the Treasury one way or the other. He's a member of URTAC. We seek his advice and he seeks ours. For instance I came back from a meeting of the Australian Transport Advisory Council on the 3rd of December and one of the first things I did when I got back was to ring the Treasury head to tell him that it looks as if the Australian Government has agreed to Section 96 grants for transport, and that is of considerable significance to him under the new federalism policy. Because they've made that decision in transport that might lead them to make similar decisions in other areas.

GIBBONS: Is there anything else you want to say about the Ministry generally?

TROTT: No, except that I'd like to see it not so much expand in numbers but I'd like to see it get more away from representational work and get further into policy. That is my personal view and many people would not agree. It is a fact that Ministers of the day are more immediately concerned with representational work because that's where the votes are. If people are unhappy about the administration of transport and make representations about it, if they don't get results they tend not to like the government of the day and that might be reflected in their voting. Ministers are very aware of that and you can't expect any Minister to accept long-term policy at the expense of this image-maintaining work. I personally would like to see the departments becoming much more alive to the importance of representational work to enable us to get more into the co-ordinative/policy-type role. I think in the long term this would have major benefits for transport. I'm trying very hard to

get the departments to operate that way but while they draft letters for us in response to representations — or we decide what we want, if someone writes in about something or makes a major representation, we decide how that's to be processed, either by calling for a report or asking for a draft letter — we find in the draft letters coming back some of the departments talking about departmental policy, the Commissioner feels this or the Commissioner feels that, but it's the Minister who matters. What the Commissioner feels might not be what the Minister wants, we frequently find this. The fellows here are in close touch with the Minister, they attend him in deputation and so on and know how he feels. The senior fellows are in a position to advise him on representational matters. For instance one of my senior men has become an expert on traffic arrangements in the Rockdale area because of the representations that arose and he knows exactly how the Minister feels, and in fact the Minister has been influenced by some of the things this fellow has put to him. We do have case work of this type arising in the Ministry and this is a good thing.

GIBBONS: Dealing with URTAC now, the first question is why was CUMTAC replaced with URTAC?

TROTT: There were a number of reasons, some superficial, some deep-seated, I had a lot to do with this change. First, it struck me as being incongruous, or at least untidy, for an organisation called CUMTAC, the County of Cumberland Passenger Transport Advisory Committee, to be sponsoring a study covering the Sydney Area, which was the area of the Sydney Region Outline Plan, which was partly beyond the area of influence of CUMTAC. I also felt that an urban advisory committee of that kind should get into other urban areas, Newcastle and Wollongong and the growth centres. It was a result of this feeling, after Neal McCusker retired, that I set about trying to influence my fellow members to change. I was then not the Chairman. I went around to see them. There were two things I attempted to get done, to get the change in name and function, and also to get the President of the Maritime Services Board on. That in fact happened. I got agreement, I didn't have any trouble at all. The actual name URTAC emerged from a discussion I had with Russell Thomas, the then Commissioner of Main Roads. I suggested something that he didn't like and then he came up with URTAC and we grabbed hold of this and that's how we changed the title. In summary the title didn't cover something we were doing and we wanted to get into other areas.

GIBBONS: How would you assess the working of URTAC in contrast to the working of CUMTAC?

TROTT: I think URTAC's better but it's probably better because CUMTAC existed. I think this group of senior people coming together has grown in that their relationship has matured. They've come to work better as a group. It hasn't been easy. You'd think on the one hand that here's a group of the most senior people in transport meeting, they must be able to come up with something. On the other hand it's very difficult to do that because you've got each department with its own area of responsibility, and each one is a major undertaking in itself, obviously they would regard their own organisations as more important than URTAC. They're not out to be putting things on the agenda of URTAC which is something they feel is their own concern. This is why there were some problems in the early days. I think also that the early CUMTAC was under the Chairmanship of the Commissioner for Railways, a respected and competent man, but having been given the job as chairman he naturally looked to his own people to service the organisation, Keith King was appointed as the Executive Secretary. The matters that emerged for discussion were often operational re traffic and the railways and the agenda was controlled by people you wouldn't expect to have a broader knowledge of what's going on in transport. When the chairmanship of URTAC came here, or even before then because the executive functions came here before I became Chairman,

the type of matter considered changed perceptibly and I think
changed for the better. The matters that are now considered are of
much more significance than they used to be so I think it is a much
better organisation. It's accepted by its members and it's helped
us enormously in my view in our day-to-day relationship on other
matters. The contact is excellent. The practice these days is to
have lunch after URTAC meetings and all sorts of problems are
resolved as a result of that contact and the camaraderie that builds
up as a result.

GIBBONS: There is something connected with URTAC, the Transport
Development Committee. What happened to that?

TROTT: It's moribund because it was only set up to meet the terms
of the agreement with the Commonwealth for the Urban Public
Transport Improvement Programme (UPTIP). The Commonwealth was
seeking to get onto URTAC and have a large slice of the action on
urban transport policy. In fact they only kicked the tin for quite
a small amount. It was a device that they agreed to to enable the
agreement to proceed. They would have liked to have got onto URTAC.
You've raised a very important point, I would think that for the
next assistance period they'll be screwing us to get onto URTAC or
at least have a better organisation than the Transport Development
Committee. That was set up under the Chairmanship of the Chief
Commissioner, he's the chairman ex officio, and they've only met
about three or four times and they're not very happy about that.
It was a device and we're using it as little as we can.

GIBBONS: As a matter connected with the way URTAC members meet and
discuss things, do you think that individual organisations, with
their own goals and specific tasks, tend to develop individual
orientations which they like to protect, and protect their
independence?

TROTT: Yes, that's natural.

GIBBONS: Firstly, has this ever been a major problem, and secondly
are the obvious conflicts that arise indicative of less obvious
differences of orientation that might affect administration
continuously?

TROTT: It's a bit hard to answer because this conflict is not
overt. I think probably each member goes back from a meeting of
URTAC and he might very well say on occasions I've got to watch
this mob, I'll have to watch this Trott, he's trying to get into
our affairs too far. That's a very natural reaction but having
said that, on matters where URTAC can be of assistance to the
organisation or if there's a clear request from the Government for
URTAC to do something, we seem to rise to the occasion. The best
illustration I can recall of this "rising to the occasion" deals
with the D.M.R. The road policy that emerged from the URTAC
investigation which led to the URTAC Report was very much influenced
by the D.M.R. attitude. The D.M.R. realised when URTAC was asked to
undertake this task that it would have to cut the suit to the cloth,
they realised that roads were not all. Other URTAC members would
ask the Commissioner, what chance have you got of undertaking your
current road programme with the money you're likely to get? The
D.M.R. responded magnificently to this concept. The $40 million
road programme which was put into the Report was substantially the
D.M.R. programme. They responded to this feeling of URTAC. They
would have had to have done something like this anyway, I would
think.

GIBBONS: They were protecting themselves.

TROTT: Yes. There were amendments to their proposals but substan-
tially the road programme was worked up by the D.M.R. after
discussion with URTAC. The point is that it was in the Department's
interest as well as URTAC's to undertake that exercise.

GIBBONS: What was the role of the Ministry and secondly the Treasury in developing the URTAC Report?

TROTT: The Report was prepared this way: we discussed the problem in general terms, we called for submissions from the organisations, we evolved a philosophy, we refined some of the ideas that were put up by the departments, then the actual drafting, the presentation, was done here in the Ministry. Gordon Messiter had a lot to do with it, I had a great deal to do with it personally and so did Bill Henry, the Treasury head. We had our differences, again presentation was terribly important — you'd know that yourself from your university assignments, unless you present the job properly you can fail in your work. We had something that had to be sold properly, this was very much a Ministry affair, Gordon Messiter and me. Bill Henry made a major contribution to the introductory sections but working mainly on the presentation of ideas that had emerged.

GIBBONS: What was the stimulus for URTAC? I know the general background but what specifically came up? What did the government tell URTAC?

TROTT: It's a long story and perhaps I'd better tell it to you. Wal Fife was the Minister at the time, when the government felt the need to develop an urban transport policy. He called me in one day and said we haven't got an urban transport policy. I said, well if you put it like that, you haven't really I suppose, these are the things your're doing...He said that's not good enough, we have to draw it all together. He asked how could we do this and I said URTAC's the body to do it for you and he said that that's alright. He then organised a meeting with Sir John Fuller, the Minister for Planning and Environment, and Wal Fife and I and Bill Henry (who incidentally happened to come in on the meeting) met with people from Planning and Environment. It was agreed that URTAC should be the body to undertake the review but it was suggested that URTAC might not be the right body to draw up the terms of reference or specification for the study. This was done — it was like a building specification — by the Planning and Environment Commission. This was totally unacceptable to Bill Henry on the score that URTAC was trying to get into far too much. So one weekend, realising that I had no hope of getting this thing off the deck unless we brought the charter within manageable bounds, it occurred to me that we should look into urban road construction, traffic management and railway civil engineering works. Bill Henry agreed to that and we drew up a charter, put it up to Cabinet and we started on our reports. When we got under way we took a little licence with our charter, we went beyond the charter. All the way through we had some difficulties, I got a little resistance from Treasury on this, I think they feared quite understandably that we would come up with something that would cost them more money — they just didn't have that sort of money. Very well, transport might need more money but so do lots of other areas. I had this sort of problem but I must say that at the eleventh hour I had tremendous assistance from the Treasury blokes, both from the permanent head and his deputy.

GIBBONS: You say the P.E.C. actually wanted you to do more?

TROTT: Yes, get into a lot more.

GIBBONS: I've had no information on this but I would expect the P.E.C. to have a funny relationship with URTAC because URTAC doesn't have any statutory power over land use and they do have. To what extent are they willing to delegate policy decision-making to URTAC?

TROTT: They've been very good and co-operative so far. There was a move at one time by the State Planning Authority, when the Government of the day was looking at planning organisation, to absorb URTAC into the S.P.A. I was engaged in talks with the two Ministers, Mr Morton and Mr Morris, and that didn't happen.

There's a move now to try to get more and more into transport but I would resist that and so would the Transport Minister of the day.

GIBBONS: Do you have much contact with the P.E.C.'s own system of committees?

TROTT: Not a great deal. I was ex officio a member of the S.P.A. for some time but all that has changed now. We have quite a close relationship with the P.E.C., mainly through URTAC, one of the Commissioners is on a sub-committee of URTAC, they're very much concerned with the corridor review and we work closely with them on that. The P.E.C. is the prime mover in the airport study that is going on at the moment, we're working very closely with them on that, there are about seven working committees and we're on quite a number of those. Other members of URTAC are also on these. So there is quite a close relationship, particularly in the transport areas, we don't get involved in statutory planning or anything like that unless it's of particular concern to us.

GIBBONS: Looking in from the outside it would seem to me that changes in the role of URTAC, the formation of the P.T.C. and later the Traffic Authority, the absorption of ferries into the governmental system (which was ad hoc), and the inclusion of Highways in the Transport ministry have all moved the transport administrative system in the same direction, that is towards closer co-ordination. Were these steps purely ad hoc and fortuitous or was there a logic behind them, a plan to improve co-ordination?

TROTT: There was a logic behind them. You'd better draw your own conclusions from that.

GIBBONS: What role did you have in those changes?

TROTT: Quite a significant role.

GIBBONS: I can understand that you can't really talk about it. Apart from the present Government's use of the Resources Committee, have you had much contact in the past with Cabinet committees?

TROTT: Yes, quite a bit, in the transport area. The former Government used the sub-committee mechanism quite a bit and I usually attended those that were formed in transport, I served the Minister in the same way as any executive officer. Sometimes if the Cabinet sub-committee dragged on one of the officers of the Ministry might have become executive officer. Since I've become Under Secretary, and even before my time with Eric Holt, we served the sub-committees in the same way. He in his own way had considerable influence on transport policy, particularly in his later days. I think he started the impetus of the Ministry and then I moved in and built on that.

GIBBONS: Looking back over the years, have many important decisions been made in Cabinet sub-committees as opposed to in Cabinet or by the Minister?

TROTT: My experience with the Liberal-Country Party Government was that they took a lot of notice of the Minister who had the prime responsibility. I can't recall a conflict with the minister of the day, they seemed to help him. This was not necessarily so all the time, sometimes I'm sure there were differences of opinion in Cabinet. The Labor Government is working its Cabinet sub-committee machinery a bit differently. They have officers attending sometimes, sometimes they just meet on their own, on more occasions than not officers have been asked to leave before the meeting finished. This didn't happen before with the Liberals but I think it was only a matter of personal style. There was more frank and open exchange with officers with the Liberals.

GIBBONS: What specific circumstances led the Askin Government to think that a major administrative reform, in the shape of the

P.T.C., was necessary?

TROTT: The notion to do something had been around for some time,
everyone concerned with transport felt that something had to be
done. There was general talk about getting back to a transport and
highways organisation. The Liberal Government wasn't too happy
with that, they felt it would be too unwieldly. The impetus —
I keep talking about myself but after all it is my job — I had a
talk to Milton Morris one day and I reminded him that Neal
McCusker was turning 65 in October 1972; that Stan Berry, a man
I had a lot of respect for, was 62; Dave Colman, the Commissioner
of Motor Transport, was about to retire. I said you might be able
to do something with that, if you don't have to await people reach-
ing retirement age it's a lot easier for you to get something done.
Mr Morris grabbed this concept and we worried around the problem.
He asked me to work something out and I came up with a proposal for
a British-type system where you have an urban authority covering
all forms of transport and a country authority looking after the
country rail. The Treasury fellows weren't happy about that; the
Treasury fellows weren't happy about having a P.T.C., they weren't
unhappy with the existing organisations. Anyway a Cabinet sub-
committee was set up after we sent a minute from the Ministry
explaining these facts. The sub-committee was given a number of
tasks and the P.T.C. emerged from its deliberations. I think I
told you once before that we actually recommended to Cabinet the
establishment of a Public Transport Corporation but Mr Askin him-
self changed the title to Commission. It was a great idea but had
disastrous results in the first few years, but with the new Chief
Commissioner it has a really good chance of working now. I still
personally favour — I've said this many times and everyone knows
it — a separate urban authority to run all publicly-owned urban
transport and have a separate organisation to run the rest of the
railways.

GIBBONS: That's what I was getting at when I asked you those
questions with Mr Cox, apart from other things.

TROTT: It's no secret, that's my strong view. Alan Reiher feels
that there's some merit in it and he's working towards something
like that within the P.T.C. structure, where he'd have separate
operating arrangements for the urban area. That doesn't obtain
now, surprisingly enough.

GIBBONS: Milton Morris said that that might lead to political
problems if you find the country passenger services losing more than
the urban passenger services.

TROTT: That could be so, the Treasury men don't like that sort of
thing for the same reason as Milton Morris, they might have to
put more money into the total system.

GIBBONS: Would you like to say something about the difficulties
the Government had in finding the Public Transport Commissioners?

TROTT: You mean when it was first set up? Obviously these are
very big jobs and you've got to pick the right people. The Liberals
decided to employ consultants, W.D. Scott & Co., I had a lot of
liaison with the consultants as you'd expect. The consultants were
saying things like the salaries are too low, can you jack them up,
in advertisements — did we want to advertise in Australia only or
did we want to go abroad? (The decision was taken to advertise
in Australia first and later on it was decided to try abroad.)
Eventually, after interviewing a number of people who responded
to advertisement and invitation, the consultants came up with a
list of names. This list was processed through to a Cabinet sub-
committee which made a decision — I can't tell you what it was —
while Milton Morris was away and he wasn't happy with it. Then the
transport administration was given the task of finding a Chief
Commissioner. Old Sir Walter Scott was asked by Milton Morris to
find someone overseas if necessary and Philip Shirley emerged from
that. I think I might have told you how he came out here to be

seen, how we kept him under wraps while I was dealing with him
very personally over a long period of time. He came out to see and
be seen; I was asked by Milton Morris to set up a luncheon with
the sub-committee and Sir Charles Cutler — I don't know how he
came into it but I suppose they wanted to influence him to get
moving and get a decision taken. We had lunch on one day, I think
it was a Wednesday, and that afternoon Sir Charles Cutler persuaded
the Premier to call a special Cabinet meeting and they selected the
three full-time Commissioners and subsequently those Commissioners
were consulted as to the part-time membership. As a matter of fact
Phil Shirley and I again in great secrecy had lunch with Barry
Unsworth in some obscure restuarant in the Eastern Suburbs to do
a deal with Barry to join the Commission. Reg Watson, the other
part-time Commissioner, was suggested to us by Scott's, Philip
Shirley and I met him and had dinner with him one night and he
agreed to serve.

When Philip Shirley retired the same process with a different
firm was adopted for getting a new Chief Commissioner. I had quite
a bit to do with the consultants but on this occasion at a
particular point I was chopped off from further involvement. I
don't quite know why that was, it was a decision of the Minister,
Tim Bruxner. It could have been for a number of reasons: I'm
pretty close to Josh Trimmer as a friend, I don't always agree with
him but I'm pretty friendly with him and probably to save him and
me further embarrassment I was eased out. Alan Reiher I think
emerged not through the consultants but from another source. You'll
find on both occasions we had the consultants and other people
working.

GIBBONS: Mr McCusker made some comments about the Sydney Area
Transportation Study. If you remember he said that after he retired
URTAC didn't supervise SATS closely enough. Would you agree with
that?

TROTT: No, I wouldn't agree.

GIBBONS: Regarding the influence of the D.M.R. on the final Report,
which is seen in the recommendations, was this a reflection of the
constraints on the Study rather than the direct influence of the
Department?

TROTT: The constraints of the Study. I think Bob was asked to
feed in the existing road planning. The only thing he went against
was the Eastern Distributor, but it was part of his charter — here's
the road system, put it in.

GIBBONS: Did the other URTAC members beside the D.M.R. have any
worries about that?

TROTT: No, not at the time. Roads didn't seem to be an issue,
it wasn't until the change of government at the Federal level
that people started to focus on so-called urban freeways. It just
wasn't an issue — sure, people could see that there wasn't much
money about and people were thinking that perhaps more money should
go into public transport, but there wasn't pressure to divert money
from roads to public transport. People still then tended to regard
the financing of roads and public transport as separate exercises.
The roads people are still unhappy of course about any attempt to
get an allocation of money for transport and then have someone say:
out of this, that much for roads, that much for railways. But
that's the way we seem to be going, federally anyway.

GIBBONS: What effect has SATS had since it was submitted to the
government?

TROTT: SATS was never formally adopted by the government. It's
used by URTAC as a basic first reference for on-going studies.
The SATS study was perhaps the last of its kind, the grand transport
study, I don't think we'll see those again, not so much because

there's anythingwrong with the people who did it, the task was a
bit unreal. But having said that I'd like to qualify it, I think
it's always advisable and handy to have an overall plan to which
you can work, on which you can fall back on and reject bits of.
It's better than having nothing. Transport planning is now much
narrower in horizon than it was, SATS was for the turn of the
century, transport planners the world over don't look so far ahead.
So it was quite useful in some aspects but it was a bit unreal.

Another disadvantage Bob Nielsen was working under, although
he didn't realise it at the time, was that the figures that he was
using were wrong. It wasn't his fault, the population figures in
particular were out; it wasn't until the so-called Borrie Report
emerged that we realised how far out they were. Consequently much
of the SATS Report was useless on that score.

GIBBONS: Was that part of the point for Jerry Arndt of De Leuw,
Cather's report on Parramatta?

TROTT: No, they were brought in under a Commonwealth initiative;
Whitlam made overtures to us as you know to build a railway
radiating out of Parramatta — we give you the money and you
operate it.

GIBBONS: However much of Arndt's work was demographic, all those
technical bulletins and so on.

TROTT: Yes, that was a major part of their work.

GIBBONS: Do you feel that UTS has been able to realise the full
potential of having an on-going transport study building on SATS?

TROTT: No. UTS has been pulled off jobs to do ad hoc studies too
often to realise its full potential, but the Group has nonetheless
been of great benefit to the government.

GIBBONS: What benefits have CUMTAC and URTAC gained from having
the Treasury on them?

TROTT: Considerable benefits. The Treasury head and all Treasury
people have a pulling-you-down-to-earth role. At the same time it
is greatly important for the transport administration, and every
other administration, to have the Treasury aware of what its
problems and proposals are. Apart from that Treasury heads tend to
be very bright people and they can make a personal contribution;
this in fact has happened with every Treasury head who has been on
the committees. The Treasury fellows are exposed to the whole
spectrum of government administration, finance impinges on every
aspect and they acquire a very useful background of knowledge
beyond finance. I can see URTAC functioning without Treasury
representation but it would be a much less effective organisation.

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