

An irregular publication for members of the Townplanning Research Group (Not for general publication or re-publication)

BIG DEBATE STILL ON

1/6/7 The Big Debate:-

1. What is the future of Melbourne to be ?
2. How is this future to be organised ?

is still "on"

It is said that Hamer may bring down Bill next March.

This issue therefor, in the spirit of urgency that the situation itself evokes, concentrates on the immediate main topic.

What Is the Immediate Main Topic ?

2/6/7 Rumour hath it that the Government has already rejected the concept of arresting growth to the west and north.

It is the writer's guess that (apart from this rather predictable decision) the logic of the political situation (illogical like most acts of history) is that the order of official decision is likely to be a cart-before-the-horse procedure.

Parliament is likely to be asked to adopt machinery provisions without adopting any clear-cut long-term development policies or plans. Cabinet is hardly likely for example, to pick one of the 6 MMBW patterns of growth or the TCPB concept either. It would not want to stir up an outcry from one or the other big private investment groups nor entrenched public authority conservatives

For the same reason the Government may not even be as bold as to postulate broad principles of development, as distinct from a plan (e.g corridor development along rail lines, district centres, etc)

3/6/7 It is more likely to set up some new planning machinery, or refurbish the old, leaving it to "the machinery" to thrash out and recommend later to Cabinet what it is to plan for.

The "immediate main topic" therefor, for TEG members too, should be "the machinery"---not because it is the most important, but because it is the matter most likely to be decided at this stage.

And as the machinery, whatever it is, is likely to be charged with recommending in the future the decisive questions covering the scope and quality of development, the minor question of the composition and character of the machinery may have an important bearing on the major question of what sort of growth.

4/6/7

Clear the Decks !

If this is right, then the argument of the best principles for Melbourne's future will proceed for years within the framework of the new machinery, and, properly, in Parliament and in the community.

22 If this is right, then, right now, we should clear the decks for discussion on machinery provisions.

5/6/7 Even this statement needs qualification.

Organisational machinery is notoriously a creature that can take an infinite variety of shapes and forms.

There are certain radical proposals, radical, that is, in relation to existing Melbourne traditions of organisation.

6/6/7 For example there is the concept coming from some ALP circles for amalgamation of Councils into bigger groupings. These deserve close study, as does the plan of Town Clerk Rogan for a greatly expanded Melbourne City Council area. Associated are ideas that, to compensate for Councillors representing far more electors, there should be representative citizen consultative committees to advise Councils on development ideas.

7/6/7 These ideas meet up, or could meet up, with an idea of dividing Melbourne into "sub-regions" from a planning point of view, consisting of 300,000 or so, and abolishing the MMBW altogether.

8/6/7 Or again there is the concept, not necessarily contradictory, that the MMBW should have an expansion of Melbourne-wide direct administrative control over standard-type services involving big capital, more efficiently organised on a metropolitan-wide basis than on a local one, such as rubbish disposal, street cleaning, street and footpath construction and repair, as well as water and sewerage.

9/6/7 Some query whether local government should be entrusted with planning at all; others consider that private planning consultants get things done better than Government planners.

10/6/7 Also formulas tend to infiltrate from other States with capital cities of smaller sizes and with different institutional traditions.

11/6/7 For example, from Brisbane, the concept of one all-Brisbane Council controlling trams, water and sewerage as well as local government functions normal for Victoria.

12/6/7 From N.S.W in 1963 and S.A in 1967 come new State Planning Authorities on which are represented various service authorities, and a few nominees of local government. In S.A the Authority is to "consult" with every council which falls within a planning area for which it is preparing a development plan. In N.S.W the Authority requires local Councils to submit to it plans of all areas which it determines should be released for development and these plans have to be approved by the Authority. But in neither case is there ~~xxxx~~ anything equivalent to our MMBW, representative of all councils, and metropolitan-wide in respect to a ganglion of functions such as water-sewerage-highways-planning.

13/6/7 Even less feasible formulas still penetrate from other countries. The Council-Manager Plan for municipal government originated in America 50 years ago in reaction against corrupt Tammany Hall system of Mayors with no special qualifications who employed the Council's employees and administered the city. Like the U.S President these mayors were elected direct from the city electorate, not from the elected Councillors. In such circumstances, the qualified Council-Manager, a paid official brought from

another part of the country and unconnected with local politics appointed by an elected council and fully responsible to the Council was no doubt a useful reform. But the City-manager is something like a cross between our town-clerk and city engineer, both of whom, in Victoria, are qualified. Rumoured moves by Liberals in the Civic Reform Association in N.S.W to dislodge Councils, including Labor Councils by installing Council-Managers to displace elected Councillors therefor would have nothing in common with American history, but to the extent it might replace petty corruption here and there, it would bring in grand political corruption, like the blatant high-handedness and gerrymandering of the Sydney City Council by the Askin Government

11/6/7 It is important that all these "machinery" experiences and ideas come up for consideration. Even those not feasible for Melbourne or even Australia nevertheless may have the germ of important principles which can be profitably adapted to modify some of our own institutions. (e.g even the element of higher qualified full-time technical and administrative staff borrowed from the Council ~~plan~~ manager plan may have merit---the Hogan report-wants higher-qualified men)

15/6/7 But just right now--Dec. 1967--is not the time ! Raising controversies insoluble in the short-term and which are not "on the political plate" at the moment, could throw too much into the melting pot at once. It could assist the ~~same~~ conservatives who want nothing done at all.

For the moment then lets clear the decks of future development plans and of extraneous machinery discussions (including even the all-important topic of finance except so far as it relates to the financing of the planning machinery itself). Clear the decks for the discussion of the moment, namely, strategic planning or not ?

Strategic Planning

17/6/7 Maybe the TCPB's choice of the word "strategic" is not the best, because the "physical" planning of the MMBW for the present Melbourne area, or of the local councils, each for its own area, each on their own scale involves, or should involve "strategic" considerations.

18/6/7 If we regard it as "framework planning" even this is deceptive because the local so-called "physical plans" of the MMBW and local councils are also "framework" at least in the sense that they leave to private owners the actual buildings, their size, their siting, their character and their relationship to each other.

Leaving aside the difficulties of terminology, however, the essence of the TCPB'S report is clear:-

19/6/7 (1) Transition to Many-Centred Urban Complex

Melbourne is in transition from a single metropolis to a conurbation posing organisational problems of greater complexity and of a new order.

20/6/7 (2) Melbourne a State Government Responsibility

As so much of Victoria's wealth and population will be concentrated in this area, it is inescapably a direct responsibility of State Government and planning of this area should have the serious direct attention of Cabinet

21/6/7 (3) Compulsory Comprehensive Automatic Co-ordination

The authorities supplying the services i.e "the infrastructure" for both residential and industrial

development e.g. SEC, CRB, MMBW, PMG, Transporta Committee etc have (and have to have) forward planning but each plans in isolation from the other. In place of fragmentation of specialist planning, there must be automatic compulsory comprehensive planning that co-ordinates all the plans of all these and other service authorities with the Port Phillip District Development Plan

12/6/7

(4) Framework Plan & Statement of Planning Policy

This body would be the Council for Co-ordination of Regional Planning thrashing out its plans through "max working committees" representing all interested bodies on different facets of the over-all plan which would be recommended to Cabinet, together with a Statement of Planning Policy. After adoption it would form the framework for the planning by the regional (i.e MMBW) or local government authorities.

22/6/7

(5) Regions

Within the Port Phillip District there should be for the future five planning regions---the Melbourne region (the present area considerably expanded), the Geelong region, Westernport region and X and Y regions---one to the east of Ringwood and one to the east of Dandenong.

23/6/7

(6) Extent of District Framework Plan

- The strategic plan is structural, laying down the:
- (i) outer limits of urban growth.
- (ii) defined conservation features outside the urban limits.
- (iii) main channel for communications and public utilities.
- (iv) location of major establishments of greater than local or regional influence e.g air, sea and land transport terminals, universities etc.,
- (v) estimated population capacities of regions
- (vi) nature and extent of expected industrial development.
- (vii) possibly general location of major centres of economic administrative and social activity (p42)

In addition however there would be

- (viii) development standards and ruling principles

24/6/7

(7) Relation of District Plan to Regional & Local Authority

"these directives would act as guidelines for physical planning" (i.e MMBW, Geelong etc or local councils)  
"representing government decisions on policy, major works and ruling principles and standards" p 39.

"---physical planning---could as in the past, be carried out at a regional level or municipal level as appropriate in the particular circumstances." p. 34.

Thus by definition "physical planning" is detailed land-use plans as at present and "physical planning authorities" whether regional or local would continue as at present with the added advantage that they would have what they had never had before "an appreciation of the policies and intentions regarding development of public authorities."

Thus there would be a "form of leadership which requires the 'handing down' of major policies as a prerequisite to the 'handing up' of detailed plans for review and

and approval " (p.28) This is a two-way process which has not existed before, because all the TCPB had authority to do was to approve plans "handed up" and the MMBW had no authority over electricity, transport, conservation etc plans

25/6/7 (8) Four Components of Planning

There are four components essential to this modern framework planning 1. urban land use 2. conservation resources outside the urban area 3. transport and 4. other utilities.

Of these the use of land (presumably both for urban and extraurban conservation purposes) are the primary ones, transport and public utilities relatively incidental.

25/6/7 (Our comment: are not these components integral to all modern planning at all levels, not just at the "strategic" level? There after all the local park, the local bus and a local reticulation system)

The above synopsis of the strategic "synoptic" concept of planning has been given at some length for two reasons:

1. Most TRG members can't get a copy of the TCPB report to read
2. The TCPB report has been subjected to a campaign of distortion by pre-MMBW interests, or perhaps it is by someone using the MMBW for their own interests.

However, most members have read or have access to the MMBW report, the TCPA report and the ALP "Role of Town-Planning", so the ideas in these will not here be elaborated except to remind you:-

27/6/7 MMBW Report

- (1) One metropolitan planning authority with Geelong separate (i.e 2 regions and not 5)
- (2) Co-ordination between re-development and fringe development as argument for one authority.
- (3) Melbourne statistical division of 2360 sq. miles the area (o.f 7000 sq. miles proposed by TCPB)
- (4) 3-tier planning i.e State level, regional level and local with regional being representative of local
- 28/6/7 (5) Relationship between the three tiers

"Within the framework of the State policy the Regions would make their own plans and policies and co-ordinate the activities in each Region between the various municipalities which would exercise control at the local level, desirably with considerable autonomy within the Regional framework."

(Error: the following sentence should precede the one you have just read):-

29/6/7

"Major policy decisions affecting both the State and Melbourne will be taken at Cabinet level but there should be a State Authority advising Cabinet and responsible for broad matters of State planning and development policy. This authority should recommend and bring into effect population and industrial policies for the State and co-ordinate activity between regions" p.21

(6) Long-term Policy Statement for Region

"In preparing this, considerable consultation will be

29/6/7

needed with Government Departments and local government authorities. In addition there will be an increasing necessity to seek advice from outside bodies such as the Chamber of Manufactures, Chambers of Commerce, Retail Traders, Real Estate Institute, builders, developers, private industry and research establishments."

31/6/7

"One suitable way to achieve this would be for the R&G Regional Planning Authority to establish some permanent Advisory Group of representatives from various departments and other bodies to advise on some of the particular aspects of long-term development"

2/7/7 (7) Building Densities and Types

The MMBW report has organisational proposals not dealt with at all by the TCPB report e.g

1. Siting of buildings to be part of planning schemes and not Uniform Building Regulations.
2. Changes on lines of Development Code recently adopted in Perth.
3. A Redevelopment Authority to acquire land, assemble it in suitable areas and make it available for private enterprise redevelopment and public housing
4. Development Corporations for satellite cities (if adopted) or major growth centres in the Corridor growth pattern p.25

3/6/7 (8) The A.L.P Report

- (1) State Planning Authority combining the TCPB and Central Planning Authority in liason with a State Development Department and a State Development Corp.
- (2) "Outline Planning" to be prepared by the State Planning Authority "showing proposed residential and industrial areas and major open space lands-- also information on proposed population densities --

P 8.

4/6/7

TCPA Report

- (1) "--continue the present arrangements and to reject any idea of a centralised planning authority which would be concerned with the actual physical business of preparing planning schemes "
- (2) "--the advantage of restricting the State authority to its present advisory and general supervisory role is that the actual planning work is decentralised and brought much closer to the people affected by the decisions of the planners"
- (3) Advantage of MMBW being planning authority because it is also an implementing authority (water, sewers, highways etc)
- (4) A special new division of the Housing Commission for redevelopment.

15/6/7

Returning to the question: is strategic planning an advantage ? Clearly it is. Really, in principle, there is no fundamental opposition to it in any of the above reports.

The MMBW report is keen on a State Authority advising Cabinet on "broad matters of planning and development policy" (and its hard to see what strategic planning is if it is not "broad" (See 23/6/7) ) The MMBW wants "considerable consultation---with government departments (30/6/7) They even suggest "-- the Regional Planning Authority to establish some permanent advisory

group of representatives of various departments-- (31/6/7)  
 It is indeed hard to see how the MMBW in the light  
 of its own report can attack strategic planning  
 which in the TCPB's report suggests the systemisation  
 of the very principles the MMBW espouse.  
 Subsequent MMBW opposition seems to derive from a  
 narrow jealous Power-complex of pique because the MMBW  
 was not suggested as the key-stone of strategic planning.  
 (Incidentally, at the Latrobe Uni. "workshop forum"  
 TCPB Chairman Fraser showed a second organisational  
 chart on the screen--not shown in his report--which  
 clearly indicates the regional authority i.e MMBW,  
 Geelong, Westernport region etc to be at the very heart  
 of the Workshop Committees for all planning affecting  
 the particular region.)

27/6/7 Both MMBW & local councils are left with their present  
 a "physical planning" powers in the TCPB's report. They  
 would be aided by having a framework of policy and  
 development plans within which to work (24/6/7)

27/6/7 The ALP report, if anything, gives even more weight and  
 importance to a State Planning Authority than does the  
 TCPB. It too, with its "outline" plan, has the concept of  
 a strategic framework.

28/6/7 The TCPA's report, which on the surface may look  
 contradictory, is not so. It is against the "physical  
 business of preparing planning schemes" from being  
 centralised. But then the TCPB's strategic planning  
 specifically excludes this "physical business".

In fact, at the workshop forum at the Latrobe Uni, the TCPA  
 supported the TCPB report, the only organisational  
 difference being in relation to regions (see below)

28/6/7 None of the 4 reports contemplate anything but the  
 current 3-tier system

29/6/7 The April TRG-ACSPA Seminar considered "co-ordination  
 of all public authorities to secure the best overall  
 efficiency and amenity in balanced development".  
 The November meeting of our own TRG considered this  
 aspect of strategic planning merits support.  
 There has emerged however one facet of strategic  
 planning which seems more highly contestable: regions.

Regions--a region of uncertainty

29/6/7 Here is the record:-

- 1. TCPB favors 5 regions (Melb, Geelong, Westernport, X & Y)
- 2. MMBW " 2 " (Melb & Geelong)
- 3. TCPA
  - (1) At Nov. Workshop Forum At Latrobe announced 3  
 (Melb, Geelong, Westernport)
  - (2) At annual meeting in Dec. decided on 2.  
 (Melb & Geelong)

What do you think is correct ?

This is a complex issue because it produces arguments  
 on 4 (maybe more) levels:-

29/6/7 1. The grand political level

If the present MMBW were to cover the whole Port Phillip  
 District, for example, it would cover the bulk of the State's  
 population, and the State Government and (an expanded)  
 MMBW could be almost rival governments.

43/6/7 2. The petty political level

The "power politics" outlook someone is trying to wish onto the MMBW, itching to "take in" Westernport and the Gippsland corridor at all costs. It would seem such tacticians decide to exclude Geelong from their empire not so much from logic, but because it seems tactically unattainable, and likely therefor if pushed to produce a reaction against over-centralisation of regional areas.

44/6/7 3. Planning level

One thought (the first thought of the TCPA) was that ports and their hinterlands are logical planning regions. Therefor there should be Geelong, Westernport and Port Phillip.

Another thought: What logic of geography, ecology, industry or what can mark off the boundary of X and Y from Melbourne?

It is here that still other thoughts---why not sub-regions of 300,000 or so---come up. This would be equivalent to abolishing the MMBW as a planning authority altogether. It could be still a three-tier system but hardly as we know it.

45/6/7 4. Finance level

It is said X and Y and Westernport regions would not be able to sustain a planning authority from rates within their areas, now largely cow-paddocks.

Against this it can be asked: do they have to be financed by rates or rates only? And do they have to be set up prematurely?

We leave all the answers to you

An Unworthy Document

46/6/7 On Nov 16th the Camberwell Council called a meeting to which they invited 2 representatives from all metropolitan councils

The initiative seemed to come from Camberwell Council. MMBW Commissioner Dawson who is on the Planning and Highways Committee of which Sir Bernard Evans is Vice-Chairman, the Chairman of all committees being MMBW chairman Croxford. Dawson indicated that a motion of protest at the TCPB's proposals was later to be put to the meeting.

There followed a  $\frac{3}{4}$  hour address by Croxford, which has since been circulated to Councils. As it has become in this fashion a public document it merits some examination.

After queries by Cr. Ballister (Brunswick) about some of Croxford's interpretations of the TCPB'S report, no attempt was made to go ahead with any protest resolution. Local Government Minister Hamer invited all Councils to give their views no later than February.

The Croxford document is unworthy as a serious analysis of a serious report by a senior government official. In parts it reads more like a public relations job "pushing" one product against another albeit with subtlety and modesty.

Some samples:-

47/6/7 "What will be left for the regional planning authorities and the Councils to do ? It would appear that one or the other would lose their planning powers altogether, or at best become 'rubber stamps' for a strategic plan" p.8

48/6/7 "Some of them" (i.e. TCPB members) "elected by ratepayers or in any sense responsible to the ratepayers over whose property they would have such substantial jurisdiction " p8. (Comment: Is not the State Government representative or democratic ? Does it not guard property rights?)

49/6/7 "Councils would be excluded from the strategic planning" (Comment: if it means they are excluded from physical planning within its framework, it is just wrong. Surely he is not suggesting they should be on the Council for co-ordination of Regional Planning (See 21/6/7) or on the MMBW "Permanent Advisory Group" (See 31/6/7) ? )

50/6/7 "The State Planning Board would substantially expand its staff---employ consultants---but the report does not---state where the money is to come from " (Comment: No ? See TCPB report p. 44 paragraph 4. Obviously this is peanuts compared to acquisition and development finance. Co-ordination of research teams could even save finance )

51/6/7 "Strategic planning is a very comprehensive function embracing an extremely wide range of planning activities hitherto carried out by the metropolitan planning authority---would cover:  
the pattern of urban land use  
the pattern of non-urban land use  
the transport system  
the utilities system "

(Comment: bunkum, Since when has the MMBW covered transport or utilities other than water sewerage and highways ? This sentence tries to frighten the innocent and ignorant with the overtone that since the words "urban land use" are used therefore they strategic planners are going to determine all urban land use down to its last detail. See our again our comment 25/6/7. And see 23/6/7

52/6/7 "The State Planning Authority---would---take over many of the functions now being carried out by the Board of Works" (So the MMBW co-ordinates State instrumentalities does it ? Determines major transport trunk lines ? Indicates the extra-urban conservation areas ? Proposes the general location of major centres of economic, administrative and social activity ? If it has, we've missed it! )

53/6/7 "Any new arrangements---should be based on building on what we have already got " (Have we not already got State departments, the TCPB, and the State Government itself which can be "built on" ? )

54/6/7 Just one for you Mr Crawford, if you are so concerned least the Councils lose their planning authority: What happens to the Councils in the areas covered by the two new organisations proposed by the MMBW: the Redevelopment Authority (8,000 acres) and the Development Corporations (in "growth centres") ?