



**VICTORIA UNIVERSITY**  
MELBOURNE AUSTRALIA

*Ecoso exchange newsletter 2/32; Sep. 1994*

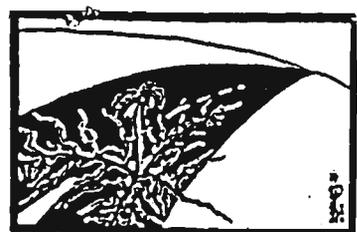
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# Ecoso Exchange Newsletter

Crow Collection Association Incorp.  
Ecological, Social and Political Discourse

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## News About the VUT.

### TWO NEW COLLECTIONS

The Victoria University of Technology has recently acquired two new library collections both of which will supplement the Crow Collection.

As a memorial to their father the family of Jock Reeves has donated his library to the Victoria University of Technology. Jock Reeves was a professor of economics at the Melbourne University. He had a wide range of interests in politics, social science and the labour movement.

The other collection has been acquired from western suburbs' resident, publisher and writer Hugh Anderson. It has been described as "a comprehensive treasure trove of left wing newspaper articles, journals, literature from Australia, some European countries, Britian and China from the 1930s onwards. Attitudes, politics, policy and thoughts - in short outpourings are captured in these documentms."

The Chinese section of the Hugh Anderson collection which features art, novels and commentaries is more literary than radical and it will be at the Footscray Campus. The rest will be at the Werribee Campus.

## THE UNIVERSITY'S STRATEGIC PLAN 1994 TO 1998

The Victoria University of Technology's Strategic Plan for 1994 - 1998 has recently been published in Nexus (the University's newsletter). Here is a quote about tertiary education in the Western Region.

The University will continue to provide leadership in access, equity and participation on post secondary education. Its regional endeavours will assist in increasing participation in tertiary education in the Western Metropolitan Region municipalities which have traditionally experienced low levels of access to University studies. By encouraging students from non traditional backgrounds, and supporting these students in their studies, the University will produce graduates of a uniformly excellent standard.

In 1990 the Victoria University of Technology was Victoria's fifth university, the first since 1975 and the only university in the North West of the metropolis. It was created from the Footscray Institute of Technology (formed in 1916) and the Western Institute (formed in 1986 with campuses at Melton, St Albans and Werribee) joining together. It has recently acquired a campus at Sunbury.

Here is another quote from the Strategic Plan :-

The University will make a significant contribution to the Western Metropolitan Region in fulfilling its unique role. The region's population is expected to grow at a rate of double the rest of Melbourne. Secondary schools in the region are expected to maintain their historically high Year 12 student enrolment and retention levels. However, unemployment levels in the region are higher than the rest of Melbourne as is the proportion of residents with Non English Speaking backgrounds. These demographics, coupled with the low tertiary education participation rates by the people in the region also represent a significant challenge to the University.

For further information see "Nexus" Volume 4 Number 12, a special edition on the Fielden Report and the response of the Principal Officers, and "Nexus" Volume 4 , Number 13 a special edition on the Strategic Plan. "Nexus" is available from the VUT, Box 14428 MMC, Melbourne 3000 or phone (03) 688.0000.

### A DREAM COME TRUE ?

It is useful to look back to find out what have been some of the community aspirations about a University for the Western Region. Reports to the 1972 "Deprived West Seminar" showed that residents in the Western Region, as compared to the State as a whole had half the chance of attending a university and compared to south-eastern suburban residents the chance was one third.

These facts are stated in "Plan for Melbourne" written by Ruth and Maurie Crow in 1972 (Plan for Melbourne, Part 3, page 44 and Appendix No 7. This publication was submitted by Ruth and Maurie Crow as an objection to the Board of Works Melbourne Regional Plan... Crow Collection).

Here is a quote from "Plan for Melbourne" (1972) :-

No doubt some gains will be won to improve the worst anomalies. "More-of-the-same" is needed and can be won.... but even positive discrimination will not provide for the west the facilities which are wanted not only to overcome the obvious deprivation, but to make a qualitatively more appropriate contribution to the life of its citizens.

The 1972 "Plan for Melbourne" proposals to overcome deprivation in the Western Region gave pride of place to these two :-

1. Innovative community controlled health, welfare, cultural and educational services
2. Innovative community-controlled "open university" with special training in service industries.

Here is another quote from "Plan for Melbourne" (1972):-

The fact that to date, the west has been deprived of tertiary educational facilities can be turned to advantage. Completely new types of educational facilities can be provided. There is need for innovation not only in training school teachers, kindergarten teacher, but also in the training provided for the maintenance of the health of the community.

There is need not only for changes in the curriculum, but changes in the type of student attracted. We are entering a period when there will be many more people who regard education as a continuing process all through life; the provision for the education of mature aged men and women is on the agenda.

In addition new fields of employment are opening up. There is a shift to service industries. To date the main shift has been to provide individualised services for the most affluent; tourism, for example. What is needed is all sorts of services for ordinary people, and to provide the basic services and facilities trained and educated people are needed.

Such thinking turns the direction right away from education for "bright young people only" idea ..... In the Western Region there are many mature aged people, both Australian born and migrants who could undertake innovative courses and in the process the west would begin to grow its own "home spun" better educated, more highly skilled section of the population right in its very heart.

Is this dream about a Western University coming true? Well, although only three years old, in 1993 the Victoria University of Technology, was recognised as one of the ten top Australian universities. It is hoped that the Strategy for 1994 to 1998 will help it to retain this national position but at the same time fulfil its role in the Western Region as an innovative educational institution.

# Regional Employment Strategie

## THREE PRACTICAL PROPOSALS AND A DAY DREAM

(Contributed by Robert, a young Ecoso subscriber who has lived, studied and worked in rural Victoria for the past 12 years.)

In the last Ecoso Peter Gibbons wrote "the regional unemployment crisis is not well understood in Australia's major cities". I would like to present some of my ideas about Peter's proposals for resources for infrastructure in rural areas.

### THREE PRACTICAL PROPOSALS

Here are three projects which are really essential for rural primary producers :-

1. lining earthen irrigation channels resulting in less loss of water through evaporation, higher water quality, reducing infiltration into water table and less maintenance.
2. expanding the Landcare and Environment Action Program (LEAP) to include more vermin and rubbish control as well as more extensive (and more effective) tree planting resulting less salinity and better farmland.
3. construction of the Alice Springs to Darwin railway which would provide speedy regular freight for produce from irrigation areas in NSW, SA and Victoria to ships for Asia and the Pacific countries.
4. associated support projects such as the provision of temporary housing, food, transport, health and education services, cultural activities (especially library and information services and in-training programs) etc to the project workers on the remote sites.

### A DAY DREAM

Although I have a tertiary diploma I have spent too long classed as "unemployed" by DEET and other government departments. This is contrary to the fact that I am not really unemployed as such. In fact I am very busy. Unfortunatly I am not earning any wages.

I have day dreams about how I would like the opportunity to work on projects for the public good and how I would like those projects to be structured. For example, projects which :-

1. gave people "permission" to have faith in themselves,
2. fostered a work ethic where ideas are not treated as ephemeral but as useful to the industry,
3. instilled enthusiasm for getting in there, having a go,
4. assisted with building up solid theoretical, technical and practical backgrounds in other areas,
5. encouraged exchanges of skills between participants on the job but also after work hours.

Subscriptions to Ecoso and donations are the only source of income for the Crow Collection. Please check your address slip. If the letters OD or ND is on it your subscription is overdue/now due. Please send your sub to the address on the cover page

# Face to Face With Immensity !

## SMALL GROUPS WITH BIG POTENTIAL

It is easy to feel overwhelmed and powerless when so many of the past gains are being swept away. We are faced by such immense problems as the sacking of municipal councils, the re-introduction of the freeway plans (which were thrown out by Liberal Party Premier, Hamer in the early 1970s), the dismantling of schools and social services, and all the other pro-development policies which are now being implemented.

## NOT ALL GLOOM AND DOOM - NEW CHALLENGES FOR EX-COUNCILLORS

But, the future is not all gloom and despair, new organisations are coming into existence and finding new ways of involving people. And, more importantly new forms of coalitions are beginning to emerge. Humanising and thus reducing immense issues.

Some former municipal councillors are playing key roles in pioneering these groups. For example, Martin Brennan, a "sacked" Melbourne City Councillor is helping to form a coalition of action groups in North and West Melbourne where there has been a mushrooming of single issue campaigns. Recently, Melanie Eagle, (a former Mayor of St Kilda) was one of the conveners of a new-type organisation called CRAMP. (Campaign of Residents Against Ministerial Planning). Other CRAMP conveners represent organisation from quite distant places such as the Dandenongs and Muswell as well as inner urban groups such as Carlton South.

One of the first, recent council amalgamations took place in the Bellarine Peninsular. The community organisations in Geelong and the other Bellarine towns and shires now have had several years experience in trying to maintain some democratic way of protecting their urban environment. Rod Charles, who was, some years ago, on the Geelong Council, recognised the need for a "watch dog organisation". He helped to form the Geelong Urban Forum. This group consists of people with many diverse backgrounds and includes some former municipal employee such as architects, planners and community workers. It thus has a wide range of experience. This group is now part of a very wide coalition which is called "The Geelong Environment Council".

(Here are three phone numbers where those who would like to be involved in helping to pioneer these campaigns can find more information. For CRAMP.. Melanie Eagle 534,6866, for neighbourhood Coalition... Martin Brennan 329.0395 and for the Geelong Urban Forum , phone Rod Charles (052) 29.8494.

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## Another World Conference !

### OECD TO MEET IN MELBOURNE

Nearly twenty years ago Professor Manuel Castells warned of the terrible consequences of the dominant urban policies in the "advanced " countries and he appealed to the progressive forces to develop major movements, with enough social and political

support to rectify the dominant trend. Otherwise :-

"The suburbs will remain fragmented and isolated, the single family homes close over themselves, the shopping centres a bit more expensive and a lot more surveyed, the highways more crowded and less maintained, the central business district still crowded during office hours but more deserted and curfewed after 5 pm, city services increasingly crumbling, public facilities less and less public, the surplus population more and more visible, the drug culture and individual violence expanding, gang and high society ruling the bottom and the top, in order to keep the 'top and bottom' social order, the urban movements depressed and discouraged and urban planners eventually attending more international conferences in the outer safer world. What would emerge of a failure of urban movements to undertake their task is a new and sinister form... the Wild City". (Quote from "The Urban Question- a Marxist Approach" by Manuel Castells, published as long ago as 1976 by Edward Arnold).

Castells correctly prediction that more and more international planning conferences would be held. Melbourne will be hosting the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) in November this year. The State and Federal Governments are supporting the gathering. It is welcomed by Melbourne's chief commissioner, Mr Kevan Gosper who describes Melbourne as "a livable city in transition... it is the urban core of a state undergoing rapid change as the nature of the new global economic order impacts upon it."

Martin Brennan (a former Melbourne City Councillor) points out that the OECD is meeting in Melbourne when so many of our metropolitan councils have no elected representatives... "you can't divorce that from the city's future. The OECD will be mainly dicussing global economic issues while Melbourne residents want to discuss social issues - local democracy, public transport, city development, the environment, cultural identity, employment and sustainability. Who will be representing the community? Who will be raising these issues?"

Martin, as the spokes-person for the Coalition of Community Organisations in North and West Melbourne, has proposed that an alternative conference of community organisations should be held.

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## Another Community Conference !

### IT'S UP TO THE ORDINARY CITIZEN

Two years ago the United Nations held a world conference on sustainability. As the gathering was held in Rio its findings have become known as Rio Agenda 21. Here are two quotes :-

Humanity stands at a defining moment in history. We are confronted with a perpetuation of disparities between and within nations, a worsening of poverty, hunger, ill health, and illiteracy and the continuing deterioration of eco-

systems on which we depend for our well being.

Prevailing systems for decision making in many countries tend to separate economic, social and environmental factors at the policy, planning and management levels ... An adjustment or even a fundamental reshaping of decision making ... may be necessary if environment and development is to be put at the centre of economic and political decision making.

**RATIONAL ALTERNATIVES TO ECONOMIC RATIONALISM**

The problem is how to implement such fine words. Well, last year a group of ordinary people (not politicians and bureaucrats) took matters into their own hands and held a conference called "the Other Economic Summit" which is now affectionately known as TOES.

A Second TOES Conference is to be held in Melbourne on November 24, 26, and 27th. This is a few days after the OECD Melbourne Conference. It will provide a popular forum to :-

- \* discuss new economic developments
- \* develop solutions to current economic problems
- \* identify major elements of a socially and ecologically sustainable economic system
- \* propose effective ways to promote and advocate these.
- \* focus on ways to effect government policies.
- \* challenge the growth fixation of the G7 nations.

The organisers of the second TOES Conference believe that :-

*It is now up to the ordinary citizens to demand that economic systems are humane and in alignment with life processes on this planet and that there are rational alternatives to economic rationalism.*

More information about the Second TOES Conference from Chris Mar 03, 870.0242; Dr Graham Dunkley, 03.380.2382; Peter Carroll, 059.89.8475; Bernie Bourke, 053.694.316; Snez Plunkett, 059.79.1969

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Those who have been involved with the Crow Collection since it was first acquired in 1990 will remember how the launch of the Collection took the form of an alternative conference to official Metro 90 International Planning Conference which was held in Melbourne in October 1990. The alternative was called Metro 2000. Students were the main speakers and work-shop conveners. Some of the papers from this seminar are available (\$5 plus \$1,50 postage) from the Crow Collection Association (address on cover page).

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**THE SUSTAINABLE CASCADE**

Green innovations have coined the words The Sustainability Cascade to describe the network of supporters it is organising. More information about this new type of environmental mobilisation from Philip Sutton, Green Innovations, 3 Madden Grove, Kew 3101, Telephone and FAX (03) 853.9983.

# Whose Vision for Melbourne ?

Contributed by Angela Munro

There is an Orwellian flavour about the Melbourne City Chamber of Commerce's vision for Melbourne which was released in the press early in May.

Naming the city's "major players" as the Building Owners and Managers Association (BOMA) the Chamber and the Committee for Melbourne are simply selectimng an organisatiion representing a special interest group, albeit, one which the present government sees as its main constituency.

## A FEW QUESTIONS NEED ANSWERING

Which "planning authorities and other organisations" did the researchers survey in seeking a response to their assorted development proposals ?

Were the view of the Inner Metropolitan Association of Councils, academics, professional institutes, arts bodies, heritage trusts, public transport and resident associations sought ?

Were women well represented amongst the respondents on all counts ?

How can the Chamber, seriously, claim that "Melburnians are beginning to find common ground" ... saying that the Domain Tunnel is high on the agenda of most organisations and that the City Square Regent Theatre "solution" are almost unanimously supported ?

Indeed the City of Melbourne seems to have been reduced to an insignificant branch office of the State Government and its ratepayers "temporarily" denied democratic representation, Was this chiefly at the behest of the Chamber of Commerce ?

Cleverly, the Chamber has borrowed the language of planning, calling for "strategic and sustainable development". However their proposals are piecemeal, project-based and site specific. Planning is surely more than a game of Monopoly. Furthermore the Chamber's "transport infrastructure" propsals gaurantee increased reliance on the car - by definitioin an unsutiabkle development. Even Los ASngeles has learnt that lesson.

## A FINAL QUESTION

Is the Chamber deliberately misrepresenting the situation, or having contributed to the elimination of dissent from the planning process, does it really believe consensus has been achieved ?

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WORDS TO REMEMBER :- "After all, when we are giving public property to private interests, we must respect their privacy. (Max Nankervis in a letter to the Age protesting about the Grand Prix.)

## The AGE of Unreason.

The Age of Unreason is the apt title chosen by Mike Salvaris in the front page feature article in the July issue of "Frontline". Mike says there are good reasons why the Age is losing its readers... it is boring and devoid of content, Before it changed owners and editors in 1972 "it had been a paper somewhat middle-class, middle-of-the-road - what's the word ?- Victorian".

Here is one of Mike's discription of the recent changes :-

What they did was right out of the Chomsky text book; they set about shifting the parameters of the debate...they recruited a swag of right wing commentators and simultaneously downgraded others who could conceivably be described as left wing.

Tanberg left, anyway, some of the new recruits were more recognisable as right wing "think tanks", rather than journalists (Gerald Henderson and Des Moore)

Mike was particularly concerned about the treatment of long-standing economic editor, Kenneth Davidson, describing the way the Age treated him as "shabby". Mike writes :-

Davidson, a brave and intelligent journalist, is by no means a left-wing economist... he could probably be best described as a committed Keynesian rationalist with a strong social conscience and a passionate opposition to right-wing fundamentalism. Yet he has been systematically humiliated, first losing his position as economics editor, then, perhaps the ultimate humiliation, losing one of his two weekly columns to Des Moore.

A cartoon accompanying the article has this quotation from the Age's owner, Conrad Black :-

My experience with journalists authorises me to record that a very large number of them are ignorant, lazy, opinionated, intellectually dishonest and inadequately supervised. (!!!)

(Frontline is a free independent alternative newspaper supported by a number of labour and community groups. It is published 10 times a year. It is well worth \$10 for ten issues. .. that is less than half a months subscription to the Age. By the way, the July Frontline had three cartoons by Bruce Petty and half a dozens other illustrations, so this newspaper keeps you abreast by words and pictures. More information from Frontline Publishing Board, 71 Cromwell Street, Collingwood 3066. (03) 419.0000 or FAX (03) 416 1303.).

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### Keeping Friends

A Tribute to Harry Stein by Ruth Crow

Harry Stein's motto was "I try to keep all my friends all my life". Well, he kept me as a friend who remembers him not only for his contributions to the country he loved but for his kindness, wit and personal courage. Harry died in May this year,

a few weeks before his autobiography was launched. (footnote)

One friend described Harry as "part of the underground history of our culture, an underground which has shaped a genuine intellectual and artistic bohemianism":

Those who might like to know more about "the underground history of our culture" can read Harry's autobiography called "A Glance Over an Old Left Shoulder".

To whet the appetite for his book here are a few of my memories of Harry :-

I first met Harry Stein in the mid 1930s when we were both in our late teens. He had just returned from working his passage to Europe by playing drums in the ship's jazz band. He had seen fascism at first hand and when he returned his passionate speeches helped me, and many others, to understand its menace.

In the mid 1940s he was a foundation member of the Eureka Youth League, inspiring it to involve the Graeme Bell Band in organising the Hot Jazz Festivals .....the world's first Jazz Festivals. After going with the band to the Prague Festival he helped to plan a similar event in Australia, the 1952 Sydney Carnival for Peace and Friendship. Its success depended greatly on Harry's ability to involve a wide range of people around singing, dancing, and other such activities which popularised Australian and international folk lore and folklore from around the world.

Harry lived in Sydney from the early 1950s, therefore I do not have any personal memories of the last 40 years of his life but I still remember the issues he raised in some of the articles he wrote for various publications during these years. For example his articles in Tribune about discrimination against Aborigines at Walgett and other northern NSW towns and his reports on parliamentary debates, especially during the Vietnam war (he was a member of the press gallery in Canberra for many years, and he visited Vietnam, taking up Air Vice Marshal Ky's confrontational invitation to members of the press gallery to fly back to Vietnam with him ).

I also remember how I enjoyed reading some of the articles on urban planning which he wrote when he was press secretary to Tom Uren (Federal Minister Minister for Urban and Regional Development in the Whitlam Government).

Footnote :- "A Glance Over an Old Left Shoulder" (ISBN 0 86806 547 12) has been published by Hale and Iremonger, GPO Box 2552, NSW 2001 Phone (02)565.1955 FAX (02)550.2012 costs \$19,50 plus \$3.50 posta

Two autobiographies which complement Harry's :- Joan Clarke's "All on One Good Dancing Leg" ISBN 0 86806 546 3. has also been published by Hale and Iremonger. Audrey Blake's "A Proletarian Life", published about ten years ago. Audrey was one of Harry's life time friends. The Crow Collection has a few documents about the early days of the Eureka Youth League.

# The Word from WEETAG

## Message from the Convenor

The development of the White Paper has provided an important impetus for the activities of the Women's Employment, Education and Training Advisory Group (WEETAG) during the past few months, and will continue to influence its work in the next financial year. The Paper is a significant initiative by the Government to address the problems of unemployment, and WEETAG was pleased to take the opportunity provided by the Committee on Employment Opportunities to contribute to its development.

The White Paper has addressed many of the major concerns of women in the labour market, which were identified by WEETAG in its submission. Importantly, the Paper has introduced strategies which will begin to address aspects of women's hidden employment, marginal labour attachment and under-employment by recognising women's need to register as unemployed in their own right. However, the lack of additional childcare places will limit the ability of women to access these opportunities.

Women, including those who are disadvantaged in the labour market, will also benefit from strategies introduced in the White Paper to improve labour market programs, screening mechanisms and case management.

WEETAG also notes the initiatives designed to improve women's access to, and participation in, vocational education and training. Young women in particular should benefit from the provision of an additional 50,000 traineeship places, to be funded in 1995-96. WEETAG was disappointed to note, however, the omission of strategies to address women's access to, and participation in, non-traditional occupations.

WEETAG is pleased with the consideration its submission received and the inclusion in the White Paper of strategies which address many of women's concerns. The members extend their congratulations to the members of

the Committee on Employment Opportunities and others who have worked on the Green and White Papers, and offer their ongoing assistance in the development of policies arising from the Paper.

In addition to preparing its submission to the White Paper, WEETAG, together with a number of peak community organisations, has been consulting with, and providing submissions to, the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) on the development of its National Strategic Plan. The draft Plan, which was considered by ANTA's Ministerial Council on 17 May, will set the scene for the national vocational education system.

WEETAG also provided advice to the Employment Skills Formation Council (ESFC) of the National Board of Employment, Education and Training (NBEET). The ESFC has produced an issues paper on the small business sector, which has highlighted the need for training for employers and employees in the sector. WEETAG's submission pointed to the need for advisory services to the sector in relation to training, which include information about the needs and rights of women. The submission also advocated flexible training, childcare and other appropriate supports for workers with family responsibilities.

An important role for WEETAG is funding and publishing projects in priority areas for women's employment, education and training. Many of the WEETAG research projects currently being funded will be finalised and published in the next few months. The finalised reports will cover a range of areas, including women in the teaching profession, women in corporate management, employment opportunities for pregnant young



women, women in part-time and casual employment, and women workers with family responsibilities. More details will be provided about the reports in the next issue of *Women & Work*.

The following areas have been identified as priorities by WEETAG members for new research projects: women in part-time work, entry-level training and small business, and the experience and needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women in the labour market.

The next financial year promises to be an eventful one for WEETAG. In particular, members will continue to monitor and advise on the development of White Paper policies and the work of ANTA. Members look forward to continued interaction with members of the community and to working with officers of the Women's Bureau.

  
Ann Morrow, Convenor

## Ecoso Exchange Guidelines

Adopted 1973

1. Ecoso has a value judgement in favour of regeneration and promotion of community participation meaning that it is humanising and enriching for people to relate to each other through one form or another of voluntary participatory activity both on the job and off the job, exercising a measure of control over such activities.

2. A consequent recognition of the necessity for change in life-style and behaviour patterns to one that sees the quality of life as an alternative to consumerism, understood as mass production and consumption of wasteful and unsatisfactory goods and services based on compulsion and manipulation.

3. Accordingly a policy of restricting the use of energy and non-renewable resources per head and hence a planned design of community including size of population, where people can relate to each other and to nature in order to reduce wasteful goods and services and at the same time guaranteeing an adequate minimum subsistence for all, using modern technology to this end.

4. The recognition that such objectives cannot be achieved either on the basis of practical, linear, one-level ecological remedies or with authoritarian and manipulative control of affairs and requires participatory effort to achieve global equilibrium.

(Subscription to Ecoso Newsletter \$10 for 6 issues. Ecoso was first published from 1967 to 1980. It was revived in 1988. The Crow Collection Association was formed in 1990. It has adopted Ecoso as its newsletter. More information about the Crow Collection and Ecoso from the address below.)



Crow Collection Association (Incorp.)  
A Living Library to Plan for the 21st Century

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