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An Irregular publication for members of the Town Planning Research Group (not for general publication or republication.)

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1/25/9 Underground and Suburban Railway Development -- (by "Beta")

The "land boomers" of the 19th century used the suburban railways to help to sell their land in house lots. Although first subdivided 50 years before it was not until after the 1939-45 War that Brighton Sandringham, Moorabbin, Box Hill and many other suburbs were completely settled. In the past twenty years, the railway has been the mainstay of the development of a great many areas beyond a 15 mile radius from Melbourne again on a house lot basis.

The population of greater Melbourne has increased many times over since 1900 but very little has been done to increase the capacity of the Flinders Street Railway Station, the main terminus, to handle train travellers.

Consideration of space make it imperative that termini for city travellers be dispersed to various parts of the city.

With the present trend to redevelopment of house lots in the inner (within 6-10 miles radius from the city) suburbs into flat or home unit sites, there will be an even greater concentration of population there and a need for more public transport journeys from these suburbs as well as a total increase in demand for public transport.

2/25/9 Latrobe Street Underground

The need to disperse train travellers and to reduce the number of trains reversing their direction of travel at Flinders Street (reversing takes an average of 2 minutes longer than a train on a through route stops) appear to be the main aim of this scheme.

The stations planned for this railway can be so placed as to enable a passenger to travel to within $\frac{1}{4}$ mile of his destination.

It is my opinion that this proposed railway has already resulted in some large buildings being erected in the northern half of the city. This trend would quicken once the railway was commenced. (Such buildings are the Commonwealth Centre, several large buildings in Lonsdale Street, and in Queen Street and William Street north of Bourke Street.)

I consider that this scheme is capable of providing for intensive development of the area of the city north of Bourke Street. There are a large number of small factories in this northern part of the city which must soon be redeveloped into large office or shop premises.

The projected growth of the R.M.I.T. and various proposals for intensive development of the Victoria Market site, and a possible redevelopment of the Titles Office site in Queen Street make it necessary that city transport be re-organised.

As the Richard's Report suggests a more efficient city transport system requires an underground railway.

Some observations about the Latrobe Street Underground Railway it appears to be incapable of further expansion, or alternatively this aspect of it has never been discussed.

Secondly, that it provides services by which, by changing trains outside the city if necessary, a passenger from any line except St.Kilda or Port Melbourne can travel to any city station.

Thirdly, this scheme carried a railway service into the "four corners" of the city - eliminating the present need to change public transport and pay another fare in order to reach certain parts of city e.g. Victoria Market or Exhibition Buildings.

3/25/9 Queen Street Underground Railway

This scheme has the same professed aim as the other the relief of the burden presently placed on Flinders Street Station. Its first stage provides for interchange via Queen Street to Flinders Street for trains coming from two northern termini on to lines to two eastern termini and vice versa. Only trains on these four lines will use the underground and, as I read the scheme, passengers will be required to change trains at Flinders Street for underground destinations if not coming from one of those four lines.

I would point out that I consider that the merits of this scheme are in the connections it proposes which would serve the Melbourne University and the hospitals in that area and in its capacity for expansion by stages.

My opinion is that the great weakness in the scheme are its concentration of underground travel in the western half of the city, the probable expense of the later stages which require connections through highly developed suburbs such as St.Kilda, Caulfield and Malvern and, above all, the few routes which lead directly into the underground system.

While it is true that the major business houses tend to congregate in the western half of the city I contend that an underground railway must give attention to serving areas such as the following, each of which attract substantial numbers of people some in off-peak hours restaurants, theatres and cinemas, medical specialists, the Commonwealth Centre and Exhibition Building and the shopping heart of Bourke Street.

4/25/9 A Possible Combined Scheme

As I see it each of the schemes has weaknesses which can be cured by adopting features from the other scheme.

Thus, the Latrobe Street underground railway fails to provide for the future rebuilding of South Melbourne immediately south of the Yarra (in this area, it is probably necessary to consider whether there is a satisfactory footing for high rise development) and for possible office development along Royal Parade and the hospitals University area.

On the other hand, the Queen Street underground railway scheme, by concentrating the service in the western half of the city, ignores a substantial area having a significant trading value and attracting tens of thousands to the city each day.

A point which has apparently been overlooked in both schemes, is the desirability of building railway transport into the redevelopment of the part of Carlton north of Elgin Street, e.g. the Housing Commission high rise flats and the T.R.B. and M.R.B. offices.^c

Consideration should, therefore, be given to either the revival of the North Carlton loop (at present used only for goods trains) to connect ^{or} the Reservoir, Thomastown line to the Queen Street, underground/preferably a railway parallel to and east of Lygon Street connecting the Queen Street underground railway through part of the North Carlton loop line to the Hurtsbridge and Reservoir lines. The latter line, in addition to the station near the Women's Hospital suggested by Mr. Richards should have possibly two more at approximately 1/2 mile intervals.

5/25/9 McAlpine's Cut-and-Cover Proposals

If we are to have a Latrobe Street loop as advocated by "Beta" and not a Queens Street underground as advocated by I.D. Richards (see Irregular No: 22, 4/22/9 - 6/22/9) consideration should be given to the scheme proposed by Mr. R.J. McAlpine for acquisition of 5-chain wide strip on north of Latrobe Street, demolition, and laying 4 tubes side-by-side by cheap cut-and-cover methods (instead of two sets double-tubes under the street with expensive underpinning of uneconomic buildings.)

Mr. McAlpine last year estimated this would save the Government \$50 million as follows:-

Costs of construction	\$80,000,000
Purchase of land	<u>\$14,000,000</u>
	\$94,000,000
Less construction savings	<u>11,000,000</u>
	83,000,000
Less conservative saleable land values after construction	<u>33,000,000</u>
	<u>\$50,000,000</u>

6/25/9 In addition to a saving, Mr. McAlpine lists the following advantages; less disruption of road and tram traffic, State Government already owns R.M.I.T., Flagstaff Gardens and some State Savings Bank land. Attractive redevelopment afterwards could be used partly for State Government purposes, could incorporate a Victoria Market redevelopment and Melbourne City Council Lonsdale-Latrobe "Redevelopment Block."

(More contributions invited by Editor on any aspect of transport)

7/25/9 "Community and Welfare Facilities in Fitzroy" - by "Gamma"

A comprehensive report on community and welfare facilities in Fitzroy has been prepared as the result of nearly two years work by a Committee initiated by the Victorian Council of Social Service. (The Fitzroy Planning Committee.)

The Planning Committee was launched at a meeting in the Fitzroy Town Hall towards the end of 1967. About 200 people attended this meeting, mostly from welfare organisations plus a few Fitzroy citizens.

In June this year about 300 people attended a meeting at which the findings of the Planning Committee were presented to representatives of welfare organisations. This was held at the National Mutual Centre.

A public meeting, in the Fitzroy Town Hall was attended by about 500 people on August 8th this year. This was convened by the Mayor of Fitzroy to present the findings of the Fitzroy planning Committee to the people of Fitzroy. The audience consisted of representatives of welfare organisations, and a large number of Fitzroy residents.

The Report of the Planning Committee is one of the first attempts to quantify the basic facilities needed for an improved quality of

life. Further than that, the report does not merely seek an extension of services, but indicates that some of these services need to be modified to suit the particular needs of the Fitzroy People.

Some examples of these modifications ... a different type of kindergarten to serve migrants; the need for centres for the casual care of children;.

In addition the Committee recommended a more effective use of existing facilities. For example better services for elderly people could result from the co-ordination of some of the present centres.

8/25/9
A significant trend in the work of the Committee is the emphasis placed on how to involve the residents of Fitzroy in community planning. The two public meetings held in Fitzroy (one to launch the investigation, and the other, two years later to present findings) is one example of this. A further example is Appendix III of the Report which proposes the setting up of a Fitzroy Community Association "for the purpose of ascertaining and advancing the common interests of residents of Fitzroy."

Now that the Planning Committee initiated by the Victorian Council of Social Services has completed its initial survey it is intended to set up a new Fitzroy Planning Committee of representatives of Fitzroy Welfare organisations. Thus the original two-fold function of the first Planning Committee... (1) Welfare, (2) Community.... are now partly separated, and the Report recommended that (1) a Fitzroy Community Association be established to maintain and develop the physical standards of the district (housing, open space, libraries sport fields etc.)

Such an association to have unlimited membership (during August a committee of this nature, has been established in Fitzroy.)

(2) A Group or Committee of Welfare Representatives to be more directly concerned with the technical aspects of the welfare of the citizens. The Planning Committee recommended that this Committee should have ten members. Although it had been planned to elect the Welfare Committee from the public meeting on August 8th., it was in practise impossible to elect such a committee of "representatives" from such a large gathering, and without endorsement from the organisations which would be represented on the Welfare Committee. Representatives from local welfare organisation will meet to form the new Fitzroy Welfare Committee.

The Report on "The Community and Welfare Facilities in Fitzroy" is available from the Victorian Council of Social Service, 107 Russell Street, Melbourne, for the price of \$1.00. It is a valuable document for all who are concerned with the sociology of town planning, especially those concerned with redevelopment.

9/25/9 Housing Survival in Carlton - by "Alpha"

This is the title of the reasoned case prepared by the Carlton Association (P.O. Box 52, North Carlton) for the Minister of Housing in defending the area Lygon - Lee - Drummond - Princess Streets from a Housing Commission Slum Reclamation Order.

The objections, summarised by the case, are as follows:-

"It is submitted that:

1. The area should not have been proclaimed a Slum Reclamation Area. The houses are not slum dwellings, the people are not slum dwellers, and the block in no way conforms to any definition of a slum.
2. The area is of architectural and historic interest, uniquely Australian, and in accord with the character of the greater area of Carlton. Such areas should be preserved, not destroyed.

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3. The block is being renovated and rehabilitated without the need for demolition and rebuilding.
4. Urban renewal by block demolition and rebuilding is an outmoded idea, abandoned in other States and overseas.
5. Demolition will provide subsidised land for a private developer and housing for middle-income groups, It will not provide housing for lower-income groups.
6. Compensation paid to the owners will be neither adequate nor just.
7. Demolition will result in severe social dislocation for the present residents.
8. The Housing Commission has powers only for Slum Reclamation not Urban Renewal.
- 9/ There are no proven urban growth objectives, including higher density, which justify demolitions. Even so, building flats would only marginally increase population density on the block.
10. The Housing Commission has not justified its decision to demolish this block of homes. It is submitted that the onus of proving the need to demolish this block rests firmly with the Housing Commission. Such proof must take into account the social welfare of the present residents, the historic worth of the area and the cost effectiveness of rebuilding the block."

10/25/9 There follow 23 pages of reasoning. It is a document well-worth reading, because, although compiled hastily in response to an urgent political situation, it contains much original thinking.

For example, under item 9 it is stated: "the 'high cost of sprawl' thesis is one of the dogmas of our times, a 'truth' of which we have been convinced without calling for proof or re-examination. In fact the better-off sections of the community have in the past brought about and will in the future bring about 'sprawl' by demanding of the market that they be provided with what they consider desirable residences in desirable areas. It seems unreasonable that the poorer sections of the community should not be permitted to share this aspiration."

You see what we mean? Unlike the various official analysis such as those made by the M.M.B.W., The Town & Country Planning Board or the Housing Commission, there is a genuine attempt at a sociological approach. Tempered with regard to the interests of other sections which dictate certain all-over planning imperatives, such studies as these if persisted in, are bound to lead to an enrichment of dialogue, and finally of policy. Thank you Carlton!

If we could start the dialogue (and we don't think this affects the case for the retention of the reclamation area concerned, which we support). Does not the converse of the above proposition also hold good?

Namely: The wealthy and middle-income groups are beginning to regard the inner areas as desirable and are prepared to live at higher densities for the advantages they gain. It seems unreasonable that poorer sections of the community should not be permitted to share this aspiration, (which they too can only do in greater numbers if they are prepared to live at higher densities.)

In any case, what has to be faced is not merely the high economic costs of sprawl, but the high social costs.

It seems to us that the case for preservation of sound medium-density inner-area housing is best advanced not by attacking higher density as such, but by turning attention to the archaic industrial uses of land including "slumfactories" as a source for high-density residential building in place of the current policy of demolition of medium density homes.