



**VICTORIA UNIVERSITY**  
MELBOURNE AUSTRALIA

*Irregular no. 46; Apr. 1972*

This is the Unpublished version of the following publication

UNSPECIFIED (1972) Irregular no. 46; Apr. 1972. Irregular (46). pp. 1-5.  
(Unpublished)

The publisher's official version can be found at

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(An irregular publication for the Town Planning Research Group; not for publication or republication.)

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Transport

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I) R.A.C.V Figures... A different conclusion . by Goliath

The R.A.C.V 1971 Traffic Survey published last week and reported in the Age (30th March) is an example of how logic can go astray when "experts" with preconceived ideas about freeways take a look at transport costs.

A mass of detailed ( and no doubt accurate) information on speeds and delay times for various peak -hour commuter routes was assembled, some very dubious arithmetic was used to show that freeways cost less to the user than do alternate surface streets, and the totally unjustified conclusion is drawn that :

"More finance is required to improve the existing surface streets system, and to enable the present twenty miles of freeways essential for the high volume of commercial and commuting traffic , to be increased by 200 miles."

The "total cost" of each trip is calculated, incorporating fixed costs (depreciation, registration, insurance) and running costs (petrol, tyres, maintenance) and also the cost of the traveller's time. This cost (3.8 cents per minute) is included only for cars travelling slower than 25 miles per hour. This is absurd: if traffic averages 26 m.p.h. on an urban route, passenger time is worth nothing, but traffic averaging 24 M.p.h on a parallel route costs its passengers 3.81 cents per minute.

If time is to be included in the cost of a trip, the only way to do it is to use the total trip time, irrespective of what speeds various parts of the journey were made at.

A major omission from the costing is the cost of parking at the city. The cheapest parking available is about 50 cents, but a more reasonable figure would be 70cents (To park at the Exhibition Building and take the tram into the city costs 75 cents a day)

The most obvious omission from the study is a comparison between road and rail travel. This comparison in fact gives some very interesting results.

<u>I) Return Trip: Pascoe Vale... City ( 5.5. miles)</u>		
a) by train		
1/5 X weekly Ticket ( \$2.70)	=	0.54 cents
Time (21 min.in + 20 min. out)	=	1.56 cents
" " at 3.81¢/min	=	
		<u>Total    \$ 2.10</u>
b) By Tullamarine Freeway and Flemington		
Fixed costs at 5.7 cents per mile (*)	==	0.62 cents
Running Costs at 4.5 cents per mile (§)	==	0.49 cents
Time ( 14 in , 15 min out)		
at 3.81 X 1.2 (**)	==	1.32 cents
Parking	==	0.70 cents
		Sub. Total    \$3.13
Reduce this cost per car by 1/1.2		
(1/1.2 is cost pwe passenger)		<u>Total Cost = \$2.61</u>

Notes (\* from R.A.C.V report  
(\*\*) 1.2 persons per car average  
Train times and fares from railway literature.

R.A.C.V. Figures continued.

2) Return Trip : Toorong to City (5.0 miles).

a) By train

1/5 weekly ticket (\$2.50)	=	0.50 cents
Time (17 min in + 14 min out)		
at 3.81 cents per min.	=	1.18 cents
		<u>1.68</u>
		<u>Total \$</u>

b) By . S. E. Freeway and Batman Ave

Fixed costs at 5.7 cents per mile (*)	=	0.57 cents
Running Costs at 4.5 cents per mile (#)	=	0.45 cents
Times (21 min in, + 16 min out )		
at 3.81 Cents per min.	=	1.69 cents
Parking	=	0.70 cents
		<u>Sub Total \$3.41</u>
Reduce by 1/1.2 for cost per passenger		<u>Total Cost \$2.84</u>

It could be argued that the fixed cost component of the car trip cost would be incurred whether the car is left at home or not. This would be true for one-car families, but where the choice of car for commuting purposes forces the purchase of a second car, the fixed costs are justifiably debited against the commuting trip cost. However if the fixed costs are excluded the figures for the car trips become....  
 Pascoe Vale to City and back \$2.09  
 Toorong to City and back \$2.36

It could also be argued that the train passengers can use their time (reading, studying, bird watching, knitting) whereas the car driver merely wastes his time. If the train travellers time is charged against the trip at half rate (1.90 cents per minute), the figures for the train journey are reduced to :  
 Pascoe Vale to City and back \$1.32.  
 Toorongo to City and back \$1.09.

There figures can be summarised :	<u>Pascoe Vale</u>	<u>Toorongo</u>
(I) By car (including fixed costs )	\$2.61	\$2.84
(II) By Car (excluding fixed costs)	\$2.09	\$2.36
(III) By train (time at 3.81 C. per min)	\$2.10	\$1.68
(IV) By train (time at 1.90 cper min)	\$1.32	\$1.09

Time trains given are for ordinary services, express trains would reduce time costs further. The conclusion is clear : Public Transport is cheaper to the user than private transport even with freeways.

Be a Brain.... Go by Train !

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 2) Three Readers' Contributions on the Plan.

(Note; the first of these was published on page 7 of "Irregular 45". However, because of space, the "punch line" was left out. In fairness to the contributor we publish it again; This time in full.)  
Contribution No. One. (by "Merry" .)

Irregard the limitations in the M.M.B.W. plans more as a result of the terms of reference imposed on the Board than as a deficiency in the Board as planners.

The terms of reference presumably ruled out consideration of whether it is desirable for Melbourne to expand at all, and how, probably limiting the depth of planning making the plan no more than a land usage appraisal.

In so far as the plan seeks to establish an absolute demarcation for all time between rural and urban areas it is good and certainly an advance on all previous policy.

However it must be regarded as a first stage land usage plan only, to which must be added planning in depth if there is to be any marked improvement in urban environment.

I cannot see that adoption of this plan necessarily precludes later application of such planning in depth nor a flexible attitude to the extent or rate of growth corridors; nor for that matter a determination at some point to stop city growth altogether.

Readers Contributions on the Plan cont.Contribution No 2. (by "Goliath")Population Growth and Plan for Melbourne

Trend planning has been decried often enough in these pages as non-planning or even anti-planning. The most destructive trend of all... the population spiral .... has apparently been accepted as inevitable by the Board of Works and as desirable by the Government.

Australia's population is doubling every 35 years; some countries double every 20 years. This can't go on indefinitely... the earth can support only a finite population. Equilibrium must eventually be attained by either artificial reduction of the birthrate or by "Global Catastrophe"... this is the warning of many eminent (and hitherto often elitist) scientists who are entering public debate seeking urgent recognition of their viewpoint.

"To ensure the indefinite survival of our descendants as the dominant living species on this planet, (we must) first : use every incentive to reduce family size to no more than two children, ; and second ; lower all types of production that are not conducive to primary human needs."

(Sir MacPharlane Burnet, May 30, 1971)

That is, a zero population growth policy must be universally adopted, and industrialised society must completely readjust its values. The concept of "progress" (mechanisation, affluence, consumption, turnover, profit, expansion) is intrinsic to the industrial capitalist "free enterprise" system.... "the irrational value system handed down since the industrial revolution, with its emphasis on resource exploitation, growth and development" (Sir Garfield Barwick "Age" Feb. 2, 1972)

The concomitant trends of population growth, consumption, pollution and depletion of resources have been established, maintained, condoned, and even applauded in the name of "progress". However, the ravages of our profit orientated industrial society are becoming so apparent that progress for progress sake is now being recognised as anti-social even by liberal politicians.

"Much of the damage to the environment is being caused by attitudes of 'you can't stop progress'; 'my primary responsibility is to my share-holders'; and 'we simply give the public what it wants'" (Peter Howson, Minister for the Environment, Jan 26, 1972)

But the government's vested interest in growth is manifest and manifold. We have Ministers of National Development, and State Development. The Minister for Immigration (ie the minister for population growth) recently denounced zero population growth policies as "professionally expert distortions of the truth, peddled to the public under the highest scientific auspices." The Melbourne Plan reflects these attitudes.

Growth is the unquestioned basis of the Melbourne plan. For some years yet growth may in fact be inevitable, Alternative plans involving decentralisation may not be as feasible as their proponents would have us believe, and we may have no alternative but to plan for a city of 3 or 4 millions,, BUT OUR ATTITUDES TO THIS GROWTH MUST BE RADICALLY CHANGED. Our City Fathers and Politicians have too long sought Growth from motives of business profit or personal aggrandisement. (Is not the Lord Mayor of a city of 5 million twice as magnificent as the Lord Mayor of a city of 2½ million.)

The Board will no doubt claim to have been hamstrung by its terms of reference and its geographic limitations. Public debate on the plan must not be limited by the constraints which limited the planners.

Contribution No 3 (by Spider)

(This contribution was written in 1968 in connection with the M.M.B.W proposed growth patterns and planning organisation for the region. Our contributors write ; "The Board bores me with its clap trap... other methods are possible. Some of these comments still apply to the Board's present approach to planning .")

One must admire the very British method of commentary in the M.M.B.W's Summary of Planning Problem of Melbourne and the semi-detached way of arriving back at the starting point... i.e. .... the M.M.B.W as the Master Authority.



Readers' Contribution on the Plan contd.

The M.M.B.W. is to be commended for producing a common sense document that indicates the events and forces... social and economic, that has shaped Melbourne.

This shows that the Board is capable of analysing statistics and collating information. The interpretations of these facts is another matter. The Board's answer is... another plan.

It seems greater depth of understanding and greater comprehension is yet required on who is doing the planning, for whom and for what! Clearly great social forces are emerging which suggest a more comprehensive philosophy or framework is required, thus to resolve in a balanced way, our planning problems of the future.

The answer, it would seem, is not so much a plan as a system, which caters for the varying factors which occur in varying sequences against an ever changing environment.

A system which allows for shifts in ideals, goals, and survival factors in a greater region than is now encompassed by the M.M.B.W report. It would seem that in order to integrate a house in an area, we must consider the community. In order to plan a community we must consider the city, and in order to develop a city we must consider the region. The Board's report is lacking in the supply of the major regional considerations and is lacking in the variety of proposals.

The Board's report does not convey what is the optimum size of a city.... a Harbour city.... in this region. What are the limits or cut out points of growth...? what are the factors that determine the biological size of a city?

The Board sees Melbourne as "The City". Any extensions are either corridor growth, an extension of the tentacles into the rural belt or permissible subservient satellite cities.

To discount or exclude Geelong and yet absorb all other cities needs some substantive reason. To absorb or ignore any city seems unrealistic when all are dependent on the one region and Port.

The possibilities of cities being related but separate instead of subservient has not been allowed for. The varying shades of relationships within a hierarchy of cities is something of which the Board seems blissfully unaware.

Economically, socially, administratively as well as for the transport and communications considerations, Melbourne could be better served if the region were served by three cities. A Dominant City... such as Melbourne... a Major City.... such as Geelong, and a Minor City... such as Hastings.

The population of Melbourne could then level out at 3.5 million people, Geelong and the Bellarine Peninsula at 1.75 million people and Hastings and the Mornington Peninsula at 1.25 million people. This would allow for a total population of 6.5 millions.

Greater access to the rural region could be afforded for more people and create a greater sense of identity. A greater possibility for fulfilling life potential having regard for the quality of life in these more ecologically balanced cities.

The development and growth of cities in this region calls for the building of pilot communities both agricultural and urban, and the development of self-generating and self-correcting systems rather than the master planners dictating and imposing plans that become static.

The advent of Hovertrains and even Hovercraft as an interim measure, and a tunnel under the Port Phillip Heads would place cities nearer to each other than would the 90 miles breadth of the Greater Melbourne Development proposed.

A system of this sort would allow for better distribution of such services as universities, and a wider distribution of the work force of the region. This would provide a greater incentive for decentralisation, with its consequent improvement in the quality of life.

3) How Public is the Participation. ?

The M.M.B.W has run its well-attended, subsidised, general public seminar on the regional proposals. ( to be followed by various "sector" seminars.)

A jarring note was struck by the M.M.B.W. Chairman, Mr Croxford in closing the seminar.

After remarking that this was the first time that the Board had conducted such a public airing of views on its own proposals ( fair enough), he then went on in an almost threatening tone to warn that comments had to be constructive.

The Minister for Local Government, Mr Hunt, although in milder, non threatening tones, struck the same note at the presentation of the Barrett Medal ceremony of the Town and Country Planning Association in March.

One is tempted to ask whether either Mr Croxford or Mr Hunt really understand what the participatory method in planning is all about ?

It is hard enough for a professional to produce a workable alternative to such a comprehensive study as a regional plan! To an interested worker it would be impossible,. To a dis-interested worker such remarks would merely increase the degree of his dis-interest. The Croxford -Hunt formula seems to exclude workers from participation entirely ! Maybe that is what their real position is, consciously or unconsciously ? ( It would be interesting to know what percentage of seminar attenders were neither professionals nor Municipal Councillors.)

Planners really concerned with stimulating public participation would welcome "negative" as well as "positive" or "constructive" criticism. They would try to get beyond the circles of professionals. They would advance alternatives with clearly-stated value judgements so that ordinary citizens could readily understand the issues, and respond.

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4) Town and Country Planning Association View.

Mr. R.. A. Gardner, the last speaker at the afternoon seminar, called for withdrawal of those aspects of the M.M.B.W. regional plan relating to provisions for growth and a new plan based on the following

- 1. Decentralisation instead of population of 4,750.000
- 2. Peg population to 3 million
- 3. No more urban growth in Yarra Valley or Dandenong Ranges
- 4. Melbourne's reduced growth to be accommodated by 2 satellites (Melton and Sunbury) and 2 reduced corridors... northern, following the Hume Highway and southeaster, beyond Berwick.
- 5. Inner suburban population densities not to be increased and a reduction in planned inner suburban freeways.
- 6. Massive redevelopment in over-crowded parts of C.B.D. to be controlled.

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Who Runs this Town ?

The Fitzroy Ecumenical Centre is holding a series of six lectures entitled "Who Runs This Town ?" commencing on Wednesday, 12th April/. The series will be held at the Centre, 124 Napier Street, Fitzroy. Cost \$1.00 per lecture or \$5.00 for a series of six lectures. Enquiries.. phone 41.2050.

Enquiry on Preschool Welfare.

The State Government has appointed a Consultative Council of Preschool-Child Development. The terms of reference of this enquiry are available from Mr A. McVeigh, Secretary to the Council, Dept. of Health 295 Queens Street Melbourne.

One of the contradictions about such enquiries is that those who are missing out on the distribution of the services ( for examples migrants and those who live in the north and the west of Melbourne) have few organisations that can voice their plight.

The Consultative Council has indicated that it will take evidence from organisations and individuals. Submissions should be made in writing, and personal elaboration of the submission may be invited.