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November 1972

(An irregular publication for the Town Planning Research Group, not for publication or republication)

This may be the last of the old-style Irregulars. We are planning to circulate a new type of information sheet in 1973.

This Issue :-

Hamer's Budget Speech.

Prince Phillip and the Ecological Angels.

Planning as a Learning Process

Community Action in Britain.

I.

Hamer's Budget Speech

Here is a direct quote from Hansard, 12 September 1972 (page 174)

"..... This leads directly to the first budget decision we have taken... that in present circumstances the Government should hold costs firmly down. For 1972..73 there will be no increases in State taxes or charges.

"These basic decisions ... the Commonwealth's and ours... determine the amount available for spending. What are the goals we seek? How can they be achieved? The answers to these questions demand that resources at our disposal are applied through the budget in the directions which promote the greatest good for the people of this State. Therefore we have looked to the needs of those things already being done to judge how much more should be done, and how it can be done better. We have looked at new things that ought to be done, particularly those which go to lifting the quality of life, itself, as distinct from mere material achievements or rewards.

"In the last two decades the world has seen the most dramatic period of growth in terms of the development of resources and rising material living standards in the whole history of mankind. Yet more and more the world over, people are calling into question the validity of this material growth as an end in itself. Growth of what, and at what cost, are the questions people and in particular young people... are asking. What is the profit they say, in steadily expanding and improving man's supply of material things, if the things of the spirit are dimmed, and the very environment in which we live is threatened. These are proper questions for all of us. Indeed it is not the first time in history they have been asked, though the urgency of the asking is perhaps greater. Economists gave us the concept of "Gross National Product" and interest has centred on the rate at which that grows. Is it time to think more about "Gross National Well-being"? Is it time that our proper concern with growth should be tempered with greater emphasis on the very essence of the quality and purpose of life itself ... of the relationship of man to his environment and the world in which he lives?"

Later, speaking of the new Ministry of Conservation Mr Hamer said ..

"The very real consideration for the future is how far the community is prepared to go, given a lead from the Government, and how much material advance it is prepared to forgo, to preserve and conserve the world we live in. The quality of living, and the endeavour to preserve the very ability of man to live, must become the increasing concern of all peoples and all Governments. To emphasize quality is not to ignore quantity.... the two will need to go hand in hand."

Hamer's Budget Speech contd...

Note.. Mr. Hamer concedes that the Government should give a lead.

How can such fine sentiments be put into practice ?

2. The Prince and the Ecological Angels.

The 1971..72 Annual Report from the Australian Conservation Foundation has some very wise words from Prince Phillip. We quote here the concluding paragraphs of his presidential ~~ad~~ort.

"The words " conservation" and "environment" are used by many people to mean different things. The conservation movement started with the need to protect nature and wildlife in all their forms. It soon spread to include the human environment, that is to say the conditions under which people live and work and enjoy their sport and recreation. It does not take a great leap of the imagination to realise that the major threats to both the natural and the human environment are the very rapid growth of the human population and the even more rapid growth of technology and hence the material environment. The next step is the realisation that population growth coupled with economic and technological growth at exponential ~~r~~ ^{rate} means that the growth in the exploitation of the world's natural and mineral resources is also going on at an exponential rate.

"It is therefore very tempting to equate conservation with limitation of human population and economic growth rates and the slowing down of the rate of the exploitation of resources. I believe we in the conservation movement should make sure we have our priorities right. Limitation of growth is an essential long-term requirement, but in the meantime there is a mass of detailed issues which must be tackled immediately and vigorously. If our attention is diverted from the immediate, but perhaps less dramatic, issues we may well find that by the time we have achieved limitation of growth the damage to the environment will be beyond repair.

"The deserts, beaches, forests, and mountains and their remarkable and fascinating wild inhabitants desperately need our attention now. The air, the land and the waters of Australia must be kept clean and healthy for all life. This is an immense task for the A.C.F. and it will need all the enthusiastic help, and support it can get."

Comment... An apt comment on the Prince's remarks was made by Maurie Crow in an article printed in "Lot's Wife" (Monash University Student Newspaper) 20. 3. '72 and reprinted as an appendix in Plan for Melbourne Part 3. More than six months before the A.C.F. Annual report was printed Maurie Crow wrote. ...

"The Ecological Angels. (Sub head to article The Ecology and Capitalism, by M.S.Crow)

"Big corporations are already showing they are prepared to spend a small fortune on mass media propaganda to create the illusion that they are ecological angels, rather than spend the big fortunes that are going to be needed to prove their credentials.

"To make these controls work at all, persistent vigilance and pressure will be needed by conservationists to ensure that the public is not deluded into a false security in the belief that reliable and influential authorities can be counted on to automatically protect the public's interests.

"Assume, however, that the Prince-Hamer-Hunt type reformers have a win over those who represent the more immediate interests of the big corporations. Assume the conscientious implementation of all

The Prince and the Ecological Angels cont.

the above mentioned policies (these are statements of planning policies for Western Port, Monnington Peninsular, the Dandenings, the Yarra Valley; the Land Conservation Council,; the Environment Protection Authority, . . . ed. Irregular) in Victoria, will the menace to the ecology be finished ? "

The article then lists such clean up tasks as cleaning the beaches and the Yarra and states...

"These, and such like objectives, our local capitalists can, in my opinion, go a long way towards achieving, provided there is a vigorous, popular movement. I will call this class of ecological problems the "surface" conservation problems.

"But this is not the full extent of ecological problems. There is another class which I will call the "Survival" conservation problems. There are many of these. In the short term they are associated with problems of food supply for the growing world population and with the always insatiable and often insensate demands for raw materials.

"In the long term they are related to growth in the demand for power which according to scientists at present, growth rates calculated only on those of the presently industrialised countries will, within perhaps three generations, make such a significant contribution to the heat balance of the earth, that as the temperature rises, the sea-level, presumably of a polluted ocean, will rise.

...."This distinction between "surface" and "survival" pollution I draw to make political judgement. On scientific and technological grounds they are obviously inter-connected.

"The Hamer Hunt legislation can be used to achieve "surface" conservation, but the very formation of the "survival" conservation problems demonstrates how far the framework of such legislation fall short.

..... Maurie Crow's concluding paragraphs state....

"The miracle of industrialising the whole world has been achieved by capitalism. But the system has no brakes. It is a system adapted to quantity rather than quality.

"Capitalism can guarantee neither peace nor ecological survival and mankind is confronted with a race to replace this system before it destroys him.

"The answer however, though it lies certainly with socialism must as certainly does not depend on any old sort of socialism. Socialists of all brands in all countries, socialist countries and otherwise, must take stock of the world's ecological crisis only recently apparent. Marx and Lenin never contemplated socialism as anything other than a transitional stage to communism conceived as a system where men and women liberated from the alienating shackles of degrading toil inseparable from feudalism, capitalism or even socialism itself, can have restored to them, classless and human creative associations.

"Such perspectives, which will remove not only the competition for aggrandisement between capitalists and nations, but along with that the competition between workers themselves to "keep up with the Joneses" in consumption status symbols are the only sure foundation for the permanent conservation of nature."

.....

3. Community Action in Britain

Friends in England have sent us "Community Action No 2" (April 1972) It costs 90 p for six issues, 15 p per issue (English currency) The address to send to is... Community Action
9 Pattison Rd.,
London.. England.

Community Action in Britian

Issue Number one contains brief articles from Cardiff, London, Liverpool, West Midlands, Sheffield, Nottingham, Edinburgh, Lincoln, Manchester, North Paddington, Liverpool, Notting Hill, Wolverhampton

To give a taste of what can be read in such a new-style magazine here is a quote from an article by Bernard Evans (his address is given as 48 Windermere Ave, Eastcote Ruislip, Middlesex... therefore he is not to be confused with others of the same name!)

Mr. Evans writes of Voluntary Planning Centres

"Professional planners, both inside and outside the Royal Town Planning Institute, are becoming increasingly aware of large numbers of people, particularly in the inner areas of large cities, who lacking planning advice and assistance, are passed over by the planning process. Many young planners, in particular, feel that planning expertise should be readily available to all sections of the community, whatever their social or financial situations, and that official action is necessary to achieve this.

"..... We have been concerned with explaining what planners actually do, and how they could help the community. It has been equally important to discover how members of local communities feel planners could help them to participate in the planning process."

.....
 4. Town Planning as a Learning Process.

The 1972 April issue of the Royal Australian Planning Institute Journal (R.A.I.P.J IO. 2.) is a special issue on the future of town planning and town planning education. It was prepared by a Guest Editorial Board of students.

In their editorial they state....

"Town planning is a process, it is not what planners do. The skills involved are those used in other creative, co-operative activities. These skills are possessed by anyone who has not been de-gendused at school (as Fuller puts it) and they are developed by exercising them. Their effective use depends on an understanding of the problem and a commitment to do something about it."

The whole of the April issue of R.A.P.I.J is devoted to a discussion in which about 150 people from all walks of life participate (students, councillors, trade unionists, committee members planners, architects and so on) Single copies and back numbers of R.A.P.I.J. are available from West Publishing Corporation G.P.O. Box 3429, Sydney. The April issue is a valuable text book for all.

.....
An Eco-soc Exchange.

This is the 49th issue of "Irregular". Our first issue was circulated in June 1967.

We are now planning quite a different type of publication for these reasons...

- 1) In the past we have stipulated that articles are not for republication. In future articles will be especially written to provide material for republication or for them to be directly republished.
- 2) In future much more attention will be directed to the twin problems of the ecological crisis and the sociological crisis.
- 3) We also intend to use our mailing list to include circulars from various organisations (We have included several with this issue) Eco-soc Exchange.. .. exchange of ideas on ecological and sociological problems.. What are your ideas ?.

Draft
Brief Resume of Fresh Perspectives

New Guidelines

1. A value-judgement in favour of regeneration of community participation meaning that the prime objective is people relating to each other in respect to one form or another of voluntary participatory activity both on the job and off the job.
2. A consequent recognition of necessity for change in life-style and behaviour patterns that sees the quality of life consisting in one form or another as an alternative to consumerism understood as production and consumption of wasteful and unsatisfying consumer goods and services based on compulsion or manipulation.
3. Accordingly a policy of reducing energy and non renewable resources per head and hence a planned design of community where man can better relate to man and nature in order to reduce wasteful goods and services at the same time ; guaranteeing an adequate minimum subsistence to all which objectives cannot be achieved either on the basis of partial linear one-level, ecological remedies or with authoritarian or manipulative control of production or affairs.
4. The recognition that such regeneration and planned designs of community as an alternative to consumerism is an indispensable and integral part of a comprehensive multi-directional all-level effort required to achieve global ecological equilibrium.

New Functions

1. To act as an exchange of ideas between any individuals or organisations whatsoever which subscribe to all or any one of the above four points (irrespective of which of the four may be regarded as the prime value judgement) with a view to mutual increasing of understanding of what is needed to implement the above guidelines.
2. To invite other kindred organisations or movements to consider transforming themselves along the above lines, and if they agree to the whole four points, to pool resources, membership and effort.

New Name for Organisation and Publication

ECOSO EXCHANGE

("eco" for "ecological" and "so" for "sociological" and "exchange" because it will be non-authoritarian and non manipulative.)

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EKSTASIS

Ekstasis is the title of the journal of the Fitzroy Ecumenical Centre, a centre for urban research, training and action set up by the Methodist and Presbyterian churches of Fitzroy with some support from the Anglican Church and the Church of Christ in Fitzroy.

Our aim is for the journal to be a vehicle for informed and enlightened social criticism. Because of our situation it is envisaged that each issue will contain some theological content or perspective, however articles used from other disciplines will stand in their own right.

Our readership is basically comprised of individuals involved in the fields of social welfare, social policy and planning and liberal minded churchmen. As we do not see 'Ekstasis' as replacing the more professional journals, we prefer articles which are imaginative and which involve innovation rather than scholarly definitive works.

Our first dealt mainly with planning, with particular attention to the social values and goals implicit in the planning process. The major contribution of our second issue was concerned with poverty in Australia. In all issues we, briefly, touch on the work of the Centre and issues and problems of the inner city. Our third, forthcoming issue, will deal with the broad theme of the law and social planning.

Ekstasis

Subscription Form

Subscription to Ekstasis is \$2 annually and can be made by completing the form below and returning it to:
The Editor, 'Ekstasis', Box 94, P.O. Fitzroy, 3065.

Name.....

Address.....

.....

Cheques should be made payable to: Fitzroy Ecumenical Centre.

FITZROY RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Brooks Crescent Report

Brooks Crescent is an area basically of modest terrace houses and cottages in North Fitzroy. On July 27th, 1970 the Housing Commission sent notices to residents in the area informing them that their area was to be treated as a slum reclamation area. This was the official opening shot of what has come to be the most significant campaign against the Commission in the inner city area.

The residents and industrialists in the area decided to take legal action against the Commission and in February 1971, Mr. Justice Newton granted them an interlocutory injunction preventing the Commission from using their powers of compulsory acquisition under the slum reclamation provisions of the Housing Act. That injunction is still in force and the residents' case has still to be heard in court. Meanwhile the Commission is attempting to sap the morale of the residents and obtain the area by stealth.

The Brooks Crescent report is an attempt by the Fitzroy Residents' Association to tell the complete story of the Housing Commission's slum reclamation activity in this area. The 24 page report has been reproduced with photographs, maps and charts, giving a comprehensive picture of the area and its destruction, by the Commission.

The Fitzroy Residents' Association is releasing two reports. The first, without photographs or charts, is a roneoed but more fully documented account. The second one is designed for a more general audience and contains photographs, maps and charts. The roneoed report is available for 60c. while the illustrated edition costs 75c and 10c for postage. Both may be obtained for \$1.00 post free. All proceeds, after costs, will be used to help the residents with their court costs.

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Please forward to: NAME.....

..... ADDRESS.....
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..... copies of the roneoed report @60c. \$.

..... copies of the Brooks Crescent Report (illus.)
@ 85c (75c + 10c postage) \$.

..... copies of both reports @ \$1.00 \$.

Total _____
=====

I enclose a cheque or money order for \$.

Cheques should be made payable to 'Brooks Crescent Pamphlet'

P.T.O.