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# WHAT KIND OF CITY DO WE WANT?

**T**HIS is the most urgent question facing urban America today.

Everybody is talking about it, writing about it, making speeches about it. But the more they talk and write the greater the confusion about it seems to grow. Much of the talk seems to come from people who don't like cities and just want to get away from them; and too much of the talk comes from people who think the local needs and problems of our cities can only be solved from Washington.

In the hope of bringing some order into all this confusion the National League of Cities joined The American Institute of Architects, the Lincoln Foundation, and the Luce magazines in sponsoring a roundtable conference of 33 experts described by New York's Mayor Lindsay as "The Who's Who of Urban Development". Purpose of the conference was not to seek new ideas and new solutions, but rather to explore how broad an area of expert agreement already exists behind all the seeming confusion.

The roundtable panel represented many different disciplines and many different viewpoints. Perhaps surprisingly, perhaps not so surprisingly, the roundtable revealed a broad area of almost unanimous agreement on almost every urban problem.

No one panelist subscribed to every conclusion and every recommendation in the consensus. Nevertheless, this conference report reflects hundreds of comments and suggestions by the participants during the months which followed the original roundtable discussions. More than an expression of personal opinions and experiences, it stands as a collective document which attempts to confront honestly the widely diverse elements of the contemporary city.

# PANEL

## From the American Institute of Architects

MORRIS KETCHUM, JR., F.A.I.A., President 1965-66  
WILLIAM J. CONKLIN, New York  
BERTRAND GOLDBERG, Chicago  
VICTOR GRUEN, F.A.I.A., Los Angeles  
RICHARD W. SNIBBE, New York  
MAX O. URBAHN, President, New York Chapter  
NORVAL C. WHITE, New York

## From the National League of Cities

JEROME P. CAVANAGH, Mayor of the  
City of Detroit—President 1965-66  
PATRICK HEALY—Executive Director  
HENRY W. MATER, Mayor of the  
City of Milwaukee—President 1964-65  
ARTHUR NAFTALIN, Mayor of the  
City of Minneapolis—NLG Advisory Council

## From the American Institute of Planners

DAVID LOEKS, President 1964-1966

## From the American Society of Landscape Architects

LAWRENCE HALPRIN, San Francisco

## From the Bureau of Public Roads

EDWARD H. HOLMES, Director of Planning

## From the Chamber of Commerce of the United States

DR. CARL MADDEN, Chief of Economics

## From the Federal Government

WILLIAM COLMAN, Executive Director,  
Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental  
Relations  
WILLIAM L. SLAYTON, Urban Renewal Commissioner  
(Now Executive Director of Urban America)

## From the Ford Foundation

PAUL YLIVISAKER, Director, Public Affairs Program  
(Now Commissioner, Dept. of Community  
Affairs, State of New Jersey)

## From the Institute of Public Administration

LYLE C. FITCH, President

## From the Lincoln Foundation

RAYMOND MOLEY, Adviser

## From the National Association of Home Builders

LEON D. WEINER, President 1967

## From the National Housing Center

THOMAS P. COOGAN, Chairman

## From the National Association of Real Estate Boards

WILLIAM H. DOLBEN, JR., Chairman,  
Build America Better Committee

## From the New York City Government

WILLIAM E. R. BALLARD, Chairman,  
Planning Commission  
THOMAS P. P. HOVING, Parks Commissioner

## From the Tri-State Transportation Commission

DR. J. DOUGLAS CARROLL, JR., Executive Director

## From the Universities

DR. CHARLES ABRAMS, Chairman,  
Department of Planning, Columbia University  
DR. M. MASON GAFFNEY, Chairman,  
Department of Economics,  
University of Wisconsin in Milwaukee  
DR. WILLIAM L. C. WHEATON, Director,  
Institute of Urban and Regional Development,  
University of California, Berkeley  
DR. ARCHIBALD M. WOODRUFF, JR., Provost,  
University of Hartford

## Developers

ROBERT B. PEASE, Pittsburgh, Pa.  
ROBERT E. SIMON, JR., Reston, Va.

## Moderator and Rapporteur

PERRY PRENTICE, Time, Inc.

Our urban problems would be hard enough to solve in a static urban economy with a static urban population, a static racial and social mix, and a static transportation method and system—but our urban economy and population are anything but static. On the contrary, our urban economy, society and technology are all undergoing great simultaneous changes; our urban population is doubling to a projected 1999 level well over 250 million-plus, and before 1999 our urban wealth will at least quadruple, as the average income of twice as many families doubles to a projected \$15,000-a-year-plus-of-today's-purchasing-power. And even now, before these increases, our urban transportation system is already near the breaking point.

So within the next generation, our cities will have to be almost completely rebuilt twice as big and, we hope, at least twice as good. Within a generation we will have to erect and find the money for more new urban homes, business buildings and facilities than we have built in all the years since Jamestown and Plymouth Rock. We will have to replace at least half of all today's urban dwellings because they will no longer be good enough for anyone to want to live in when the average family has sufficient income to qualify for a \$25,000 FHA-financed house. (This means we should build at least half as many new homes to replace decaying housing inside or close in to our cities as we add on the outskirts.) And we will probably have to replace half of today's business and industrial buildings because they will no longer meet the vastly different needs of 1999 business.

In addition, many of our cities will almost certainly have to be restructured to fit some new and radically different means of transportation. High-density cities like New York are finding that the additional facilities needed to bring in just one more car per day during commuter hours will cost \$21,000; low-density cities like Los Angeles are finding the cost, in money, time and space, of relying solely on the automobile equally bad.

Most of today's cities "just grew" (and often "grew" too fast) in response to yesterday's different social and economic demands. This is one reason why most central cities are already in deep

trouble with problems they have neither the money nor the authority to cure—most of them problems that call for major rebuilding and/or restructuring. They are deep in problems concerned with slums, traffic, parking, sprawl, ugliness, housing; with recreation needs; with air and water pollution; with overtaxation and undertaxation.

They are stuck with far more than their share of the costs created by national problems like education, poverty and segregation. Their municipal costs are climbing twice as fast as their local tax base.

\* They are choked by obsolete political boundaries that 1) encourage both people and industry to seek tax havens in the suburbs and 2) make coordinated planning difficult and often just plain impossible. They are losing prosperous families and their money to the suburbs almost as fast as they are herding more poor families and their costs into the slums. They are losing blue-collar jobs to the outskirts almost as fast as they can add new white-collar openings downtown. They consume four times as much land as they use. They are stuck with a tax system that penalizes improvements and subsidizes obsolescence, blight, sprawl and the spread of slums, and they are stuck with a concept of landed property that lets landowners capitalize for their own private profit all the economies and advantages of urbanism, so city dwellers must pay twice over for the multibillion-dollar values they themselves create living close together—values they have already paid for once by an enormous investment of both public and private money.

North, south, east and west, big cities and small, new cities and old, all alike suffer in greater or lesser degree from all these problems. High-density cities like New York may have more trouble with congestion; low-density cities like Los Angeles may have more trouble with sprawl, but the latter has congestion at its center and the former has sprawl on its outskirts. The bigger the city, the bigger its problems have seemed to grow; the older the city, the more deeply they are likely to be entrenched. And the former president of The American Institute of Architects adds a word of urgent warning:

"We cannot remake our cities without solving their painful social problems. As blight, congestion and lack of good-enough schools drive middle-income residents from our urban centers, the poor move in, the gap between the rich and poor grows, and the suburban noose draws tighter. If the present trend continues, the untrained and undereducated poor will become the dominant population group in almost all our major cities within the next few years. The consequences of allowing our cities to become the poor-houses of America had better be recognized while there is still time to avoid them."

Despite all these troubles and problems, there must be something very good, very compelling and very magnetic about our cities because year in and year out more and more people are flocking to live in or near them. America's whole population growth in the next generation will be concentrated in cities and their suburbs; by the year 2000 they will add something like 150 million more people. Just when our cities seem to be suffering from more troubles than ever before, they are in fact enjoying the greatest urban and suburban boom the world has ever known.

Thus the building and rebuilding of our cities becomes an enormous problem and an enormously exciting challenge—a far greater opportunity than if there were less need to do almost everything over, new and better.

## We will spend trillions

To meet this challenge and seize this opportunity, our cities will need all the help they can get—from architects and planners, from the upper-income families who have fled to the suburbs to escape the cities' problems, from the state governments and from the federal government, of course.

All of us applaud and welcome the growing interest in urban problems shown by the federal government, but, alas, this interest is still finding expression more in words than in dollars. The federal government is busy casting itself in the role of the great benefactor of cities and the great subsidizer of urban improvement; but the hard fact is that the federal government takes many,

many times more money out of our cities in taxes than it would dream of returning in subsidies.

In 24 years the Housing and Home Finance Agency and its successor, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, has not kicked back to the cities a nickel of taxpayer money for housing and urban development; in every year but two, its receipts from insurance and other nontax sources have exceeded its expenditures. For fiscal years 1966 and 1967, HUD actually budgeted minus \$100 million of tax money for housing and urban development. City dwellers pay most of the federal taxes, but the farmers still get back from Washington eight times as much money as the cities; by some calculations, 13 times as much. And most of the money the cities do get back is earmarked, not to ease the cities' present financial burdens but to encourage new municipal spending by offering to share the increased cost of meeting responsibilities the cities are not yet meeting.

This is no time to think small about the money our cities will need. It will cost not billions but *trillions* of dollars to correct what is wrong with our central cities today, while they are doubling their metropolitan populations and their more-and-more affluent citizens are doubling their demands for better everything.

Between now and the year 2000, someone will have to put up close to \$1,500 billion for new and renewal nonfarm housing alone (nearly half of it urban replacement housing); someone will have to put up at least another \$1,000 billion for new and replacement commercial, industrial and utility construction; and someone will have to put up at least another \$1,000 billion for all the new and better community facilities needed to go with the new and better housing: new streets, highways, parking; new and better schools and colleges; new park attractions, playgrounds, transportation; new smoke controls, sewers and sewage treatment, water supplies; hospitals, etc., etc., etc. (Metropolitan New York alone projects a need for 61 more college campuses for 1.3 million more students, 100 more hospitals with 45,000 more beds, etc.).

Over 33 years, the money needed to build and rebuild our cities twice as big and twice as good

will average out to over \$100 billion a year, and even in tomorrow's far more affluent economy, it is just plain nonsense to hope that even half that annual amount will be provided by any government: national, state or local. Governments will be hard pressed to find enough tax money to meet the \$30 billion-a-year need for more and better community facilities.

The rest can be found only by harnessing the profit motive, much more effectively than now, to urban renewal and urban improvement, and making as much as possible of this enormous enterprise attractive and profitable for the investment of private capital. Private capital will get its money's worth only if we make good planning, good design and good building more profitable than bad. And it will be a lot easier to interest private capital in urban betterment if the local tax system is modified to encourage new construction and better land use, instead of (as now) penalizing improvements and subsidizing blight, slums and sprawl.

## **People can have fuller choice if we stop looking backward**

"Tomorrow's cities can be designed to provide much greater efficiency, much greater joy and delight than people have any notion of," says city planner Ballard.

Adds Mayor Naftalin: "Right now today few cities measure up to their greater opportunities for better living."

And Mayor Maier: "We can and must make tomorrow's city a far better place for its people. All our urban institutions must work together to make tomorrow's city a place where each citizen will have a chance to achieve his own full potential in an atmosphere of freedom, opportunity, openness, community and, let us hope, culture."

And ex-Parks Commissioner Hoving: "Cities should be much more fun for everybody—poor and rich alike."

With our fast-growing affluence and our fantastically expanding technology, there is no earthly reason why American cities should have

to be dull or ugly or dirty or polluted or traffic-choked or expensive to live and work in.

There is no reason why cities should sprawl far out beyond their boundaries to blight the countryside with leap-frogging and premature subdivision.

There is no reason why cities should let slums and other inadequate, obsolete or decrepit buildings clutter and pre-empt most of their good close-in locations.

There is no reason why our cities should waste most of their land, most of their streets, their parks, their open space, their waterfronts, their rooftops.

There is no reason why cities should waste most of the third dimension that could multiply their convenience and their livability at much less cost than sprawl.

There is no reason why people who like high-density living should not also enjoy open-space recreation quite near at hand, nor any reason why people who prefer low-density living should not enjoy it much closer to where they work and shop.

There is no reason why good urban planning should constantly be frustrated by obsolete political boundaries.

There is no reason why city governments should be kept too broke to make their services good and desirable instead of just cheap and tolerable.

There is no reason why our cities should not be good places to bring up children, with good schools and provision for safe outdoor play nearby.

There is no reason why our central cities should be abandoned to the poor and the disadvantaged, or why they should be stuck with so much more than their share of the problems of poverty and segregation.

There is no reason why all our thinking about cities and city living should lag 60 years behind our time.

Making our cities twice as livable for tomorrow's twice-as-big and twice-as-affluent urban populations will take a lot of money; it will take a lot of replanning, redesigning and rethinking—both thought and forethought.

But we are all agreed that tomorrow's city could, should and would offer its people far better, easier, healthier, more convenient living closer to where they work, shop and play, IF.

We are likewise agreed that tomorrow's city could, should and would offer its business far better and more profitable working conditions closer to bigger markets, closer to supporting services, and closer to more abundant and more specialized labor, IF:

*If we accept the simple mathematical fact that for most people, urban living has to mean living close together, and if we focus our planning and spending on practical ways to make living close together more rewarding and less expensive.*

*If we stop looking backward and dreaming that tomorrow's urban life could be more like yesterday's village life, and relinquish the notion that low density is somehow better for everybody.*

*If we make good use of the new tools offered by today's fantastic new technologies—new tools so numerous that we can mention only two:*

1. Airconditioning, which the ex-vice president of the National Association of Home Builders calls 'the greatest improvement for indoor living and indoor working since we brought the toilet indoors,' an improvement that makes cities as livable in summer as in winter.
2. The electronic elevator, which—almost unnoticed—is changing the potentials of urban living almost as much as the automobile.

*If we make sure the city has a vibrant downtown to draw people and business from far and near to live, work, shop and have fun.*

*If we give some governmental agency the responsibility, the authority and the money needed to coordinate and make sense out of today's chaos of conflicting urban and suburban planning.*

*If we stop asking local government to pay costs that are not essentially local—costs that are borne by the central government in almost all other lands.*

*If we restructure our biggest cities as radiating clusters of high-density land use.*

*If we persuade or compel city people and city industry to stop trying to get something for nothing at other people's expense, i.e., stop trying to save a little of their own money by choking the*

city streets, polluting the city water, polluting the city air, etc.

*If we harness the profit motive forward instead of backward to good land use and good planning, so private enterprise will find it profitable to assume, without subsidy, most of the cost of rebuilding our cities bigger and in every way better.*

*If we stop letting landowners make city living expensive by capitalizing, for their private profit, all the benefits of today's huge urban investment of other people's money.*

*If we stop waiting for massive state and federal aid before tackling all the little jobs that need doing first.*

*If we give more thought to making cities good places for rich and poor to live in and enjoy, and less thought to getting out of them.*

*If we can find a cure for the problems and costs of segregation and one-class neighborhoods.*

For people, this means living closer together to maximize their freedom of choice in housing, career and employment opportunities, direct personal contact and confrontation, meeting people and making more kinds of friends. This closeness also increases freedom of choice in places to shop, and places to pursue leisure-time cultural and recreational activity.

The more people who live close together, the greater their variety of choices should be and the greater their chance of being able to get what they choose to want. The more people who share the cost of each choice, the smaller its cost to any individual, and the greater the combined ability of the group to support cultural activities and special services they could not otherwise afford.

Some people like to live closer than others. Some people choose high density because they want to be closest to the center of urban life; people who work downtown have an added reason for living close to downtown. Other people choose lower density because time-saving is less important to them than having their own little half-acre; people who work in an outlying re-

search center, university or factory have an added reason for living farther out.

But these differences are only differences in degree. Cliff dwellers and suburbanites alike are drawn to the city to enjoy advantages only closer-in living can offer, and most suburbanites wish they could enjoy their kind of living without traveling so far each day to get it.

For business, minimizing the handicaps of distance means easy access to more abundant and more specialized labor, to a greater variety of supporting services, to government offices, to low-cost mass transportation, to supplies in greater volume and greater variety, and to more customers and bigger markets.

For business as for people, the consequence of closeness and concentration should be greater efficiency, greater economy and lower costs.

Some kinds of business have to locate closer to the center than others. Some must locate downtown for maximum access to markets, to clients, to supporting service or to a great variety of labor. Other kinds of business are more self-contained and so find it more profitable to trade maximum access for greater space—to accept less accessibility on the outskirts in order to get more space than they could afford at the center. Still others may find easy access to a freeway more important than easy access to downtown.

But once again, the difference is only one in degree. The advertising agency downtown and the factory in the suburbs are both drawn to the city for advantages only closeness can offer, and most suburban industry would relocate closer to the labor center and the transportation hub if closer-in land were cheaper.

The shape and pattern and density of our metropolitan areas are changing as cars and trucks lessen our urban dependence on mass transportation to a single center, and the telephone makes semipersonal contact fast and cheap over great distances. Motorized road transportation has made, is making and must continue to make an enormous contribution to ease and flexibility of urban movement and urban contacts. And it is no longer necessary to go to the transportation center for so many kinds of shopping, or to find employment in those kinds of industry that are least de-

pendent on quick access to markets or supporting services (notably big factories).

But however their pattern may change, the reason and purpose of cities remains unchanged and unchangeable—the same today as in the railroad age, the canal-boat age, and the stagecoach age—to bring people and businesses together for ease and variety of access and contact.

## High central density would help preserve close-in amenity

Overcrowding is no problem at all on Park Avenue with up to 1000 people to the acre. Overcrowding had nothing to do with the explosion in Watts, where the density was not much more than 20 to the acre.

At the urban densities that command the highest rents from those best able to afford to live as they like (i.e., on New York's Park Avenue, Chicago's Gold Coast or San Francisco's Nob Hill), there are only three US cities whose entire population could not live, work, shop, skate, swim, play tennis, worship, attend concerts and go to the movies on the 18,000 acres within three miles of the center, leaving all the land outside that three-mile circle for heavy manufacturing, golf courses, market gardening, low-density living and acre zoning.

For example and specifically: At the density proposed for New York's new World Trade Center and Battery Park Addition, the biggest city's whole population could live and work and shop and play in Manhattan Island and the close-in quarter of Brooklyn, leaving most of Brooklyn and all of Queens, the Bronx and Richmond for open space. At the density which tenants seem to like in Chicago's Marina City, the whole population could live and work and shop and find plenty of recreation within two blocks of the Chicago River between Lake Michigan and the Merchandise Mart.

We are not suggesting that all our cities should be rebuilt for any such concentration. And most certainly we do not recommend that all the people of any big city should concentrate downtown, for

many people would do better to live closer to some satellite density planned and developed around some activity that benefits from being near the city, but does not need to be right at the hub (such as a university, a big manufacturing plant or a shopping center).

Nevertheless, we think the simple geometric and mathematical facts about living close are important to remember. And we are all agreed that our cities should be planned for living and working as close together as is compatible with the other requirements of good business and the good life.

None of us is against low-density living with private outdoor space around each home. On the contrary, all of us wish people who want low-density living could enjoy it much closer to town than they can today, to save them the countless hours they now waste getting to and from their homes, and we all agree with landscape architect Halprin that "Low density offers people something that high density doesn't, especially for families with young children."

But we wish more people would face up to the obvious fact that as our urban population doubles, the only way to bring low density close in is to develop much higher density at the center, with much less land waste everywhere. Says city planner Ballard, "With rising population we will have to design our central cities to much higher densities to make any sense at all." Mayor Naftalin adds, "The test is how we combine high density and low density."

And almost all of us sympathize with the former AIA president who says, "Sprawl city—and by that I mean the great megalopolis spreading from Boston to Washington, from Pittsburgh to Milwaukee, from San Francisco to San Diego—is too wasteful because you duplicate your services, your streets, your utilities, all the civic functions people pay for in taxes. You spread them out thin; you use up your land. In the process you destroy the countryside and waste our heritage."

If the No. 1 reason and purpose for cities is to maximize the advantages of closeness and overcome the handicaps created by distance, it follows that sprawl is the direct denial of that reason and purpose.



**1. CAVANAGH:** Too many people fled to the suburbs to escape the cities' problems.

**2. GRUEN:** Our city boundaries are 100 years behind the times.

**3. ABRAMS:** The tax power has never been coupled with the planning power.

## Urban growth will be vertical

Two generations of urban Americans have been obsessed, bewitched, dazzled and blinded by the outward explosion touched off by the automobile, which made millions of outlying acres newly accessible and deflated the price of close-in land by temporarily lifting the pressure to maximize its use.

Ninety years ago, the limit on urban spread depended upon how long it took to get to work by foot or by carriage. Sixty years ago the limit had been doubled, defined by how long it took to get to work by foot and train or trolley. Thirty years ago the spread limit had doubled again, to how long it took to drive to work on streets laid out for horse-drawn traffic. Today the spread limit has doubled once again, and now depends upon how long it takes to drive to work with an assist from our multibillion-dollar expressways.

We have been so obsessed with this two-dimensional explosion that we have given far too little thought to the third dimension. Average building height in every city except New York and Chicago is still only about two stories; average ground coverage is still only about 15 percent; in some central cities, nearly half the ground is preempted by streets and parking lots. Many municipal costs per family are multiplied as the urban radius sprawls farther and farther out; average families spend more than half as much money on their cars as they spend to eat, and almost two-thirds as much as they spend to own or rent their homes; and millions of workers spend a quarter as much time getting to and from their jobs as they spend actually working.

Making today's urban area twice as big horizontally for tomorrow's twice-as-big urban population would be impossibly costly in dollars, intolerably costly in wasted land, unbearably costly in added travel time to and from work and to and from open-space recreation. Doubling their area by growing up instead of out would cost far less and add only seconds instead of minutes to everybody's travel time.

Whether we like it or not, most urban growth in the next 30 years will have to be up, not out. The problem is not whether we would like to



grow upward, but how to grow upward in a way everybody would like.

Even sprawling Los Angeles is finally learning this simple lesson and building three times as many new apartments as single-family detached homes; even in suburbia, the trend from coast to coast is to two-story houses instead of one.

Today's greatest land waste is not the vacant lots and underused acreage of suburban sprawl. It is our failure to put more high-value, close-in land to more than one use, on more than one level. For example, in Chicago only half the land inside the downtown Loop is profitably rented above the retail level, and right beside the Loop, land enough for half a million people to live and work and play on is used only for railroad yards that would better be covered over. Los Angeles actually squanders nearly a quarter of its downtown on single-level parking.

Architects, planners, builders and civic officials were all too slow to grasp the full significance of two great changes:

1. Today's high-speed automatic elevators make vertical transportation much quicker, cheaper and more convenient than horizontal and
2. Whereas most products can be used only once at a time, the new economy of vertical transportation makes it possible to use land simultaneously as often as a hundred times, with each repeated use apt to be more desirable than the use below (i.e., with the highest floors commanding some of the highest rents). The lower levels are best for stores, parking, schools and other places of assembly, but the upper floors are much more valuable for offices and apartments.

Just because land has been used once for a railroad yard is no reason why it cannot be used again for a sports arena or an office building or an apartment or all three. Land used once for a store on the lower floors can be used again for a residential hotel. Land used once for a block-size parking garage can also be used for a block-size city park. A school building site can be used again for a football field on the roof.

Now, at last, architects, planners and developers are beginning to correct this multibillion-dollar waste by learning the economics and applying the economics of horizontally stratified

land use. They would have stopped the waste sooner had it not been subsidized by today's ubiquitous practice of underassessing and undertaxing underused land. Chicago's Loopside railroad yards and Los Angeles' one-level parking lots would have been built over for multiple use long ago had they been taxed at more nearly their potential multilevel land-use value, instead of a fraction of their actual single-level value.

Twenty years ago, examples of stratified land use were hard to find, except that in nonprestige neighborhoods people "lived above the store." New York had an office building built over a church; Chicago had a church perched on top of an office building. Chicago had the Merchandise Mart and New York had a dozen luxury apartments and the Waldorf-Astoria sitting over the New York Central tracks; New York had one luxury apartment with a small swimming pool and two tennis courts in the basement. Cincinnati had a new hotel terraced on top of a department store.

But now the change is coming with a rush. New York is tearing down its monumental Penn Station to make room for a new below-ground terminal under a new sports arena and a new office building; covering the Pennsylvania yards with an office building wrapped around a terminal warehouse; and getting set to recover the land cost of new schools by letting private builders erect high-rise apartments above them. Washington is wrapping high-rent offices around parking garages that occupy otherwise hard-to-rent interior space and seeking free land for public housing over new expressways. Philadelphia is running pedestrian malls block after block below street level. Bartlesville has a Frank Lloyd Wright tower—half apartments, half offices.

Chicago offers the outstanding example of stratification's potential in Marina City, which puts 40 stories of apartments on top of 20 stories of parking on top of two levels for shopping on top of a marina for 200 pleasure boats, all integrated with 16 floors of offices, a theater, bowling alleys, tennis courts and a swimming pool, thereby setting a precedent that New York, Denver, Pittsburgh and San Francisco have been quick to follow. Hartford has bridged two avenues to create a three-city-block open plaza, two

stories up on the roofs of the street-level stores, banks and garages. Apartments in many cities are including swimming pools and other recreation in space that would otherwise be wasted. And most cities are beginning (not always wisely) to require off-street parking under all new high-rise buildings, even in areas where more parking facilities can only serve to bring in more cars and create more congestion.

Examples of multilevel, multipurpose reuse of the land are still too few, but the trend is obvious and the potential for making high densities much pleasanter, more efficient, more economical and more convenient is enormously exciting.

This exciting potential includes the much broader use of many devices, such as:

- arcaded sidewalks to permit wider downtown streets
- decked-over streets to create pedestrian malls between one-floor-up shop windows
- nursery and primary school classrooms, day-care and babysitting centers built into every high-density apartment block (already standard practice in Russia)
- coed bachelor apartment houses with swimming pools and other recreational centers on the lower floors, to solve that most urgent middle-income urban problem—boy meets girl, girl meets boy
- outdoor play and recreation space high above the streets, either on the rooftops, on an open floor or in interior courts built over street-to-street lower levels
- underground sidewalks running for blocks, as in Rockefeller Center
- ample off-street loading facilities replacing the almost-unrentable ground floor under central-city loft buildings (like New York's now-almost-impassable garment center)
- highways decked over railroad and rapid transit rights-of-way.

Whenever land is put to stratified multipurpose use, human activities should get top priority on light and air; service functions should go underground (as in Victor Gruen's revolutionary plan for rescuing downtown Fort Worth).

## Vibrant downtown is magnet

The essence of urbanism is variety, and only a vibrant night-and-day "downtown" (i.e., center of urban life) can provide and support the variety of shopping, services, contacts, job opportunities and culture and recreation needed to make the city a magnet, drawing people and business from far and near. Without such a magnet, there is no good-enough reason for people to want to live in the city instead of outside. And without such a magnet, it will be difficult, perhaps impossible, to persuade enough middle-class families to return from the suburbs to the central city.

Downtown variety needs thousands of people to support it; it takes great variety to bring in thousands of people. The bigger the crowds, the greater the variety they can support; the greater the variety, the bigger the crowds. To support this maximum variety, downtown needs people not just 9 to 5, but all day long and far into the night; and it helps to have people living and sleeping close in, as they do in most of the cities whose downtowns have the strongest pull: New York, Chicago, San Francisco, Denver, New Orleans, Washington, Boston and Philadelphia. The more attractions downtown can offer, the more people will want to live close; the more people who live



**WHEATON:** We must plan for a future when incomes exceed \$10,000 and most people will be college graduates

close, the easier it will be for downtown to support more attractions, night and day.

The more compact downtown is kept, the easier it will be for more people to take advantage of its variety for business and pleasure. The easier downtown is to get to, the less pull it will need to draw people in, and the farther it will pull from.

A strong downtown magnet is well worth spending money to create, if the city has none. It is well worth spending money to preserve and strengthen, if such a magnet is already present and pulling. But there is a limit to how much public money should be spent to protect the real estate investment in pre-Depression buildings, in what used to be—but no longer is—the heart of town.

Downtown is not a location; it is an activity; it is where the action and variety are *today*—not necessarily where the action and variety *used* to be. New York's Wall Street area has not been a true downtown since before the Civil War. Today it is just a high-rent, one-purpose satellite in an off-center location, miles from the nearest railroad station, bus terminal or airport connection; miles from the shopping center, the amusement center, the cultural center and the fastest-growing commercial center. Likewise, what calls itself downtown Los Angeles has not yet been remade

into a true downtown, even though the multimillion-dollar public investment in expressways has made it the easiest-to-reach spot in that hard-to-find-yourself-anywhere metropolis, and even though the multimillion-dollar investment in new office buildings shows promise of making it once again the business center.

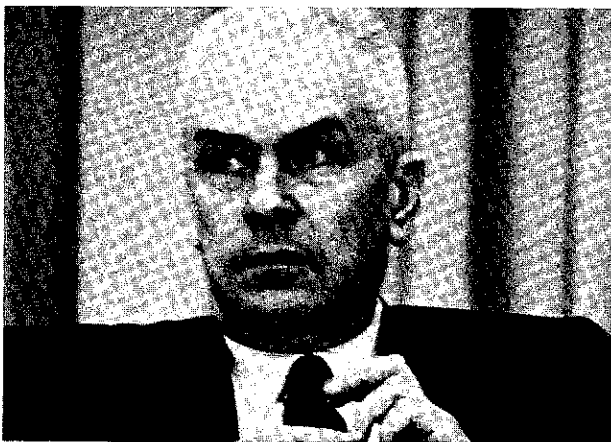
Says architect Gruen: "In Los Angeles, if you want to find the best hotel, you don't go downtown. If you want to see a first-run movie, you never go downtown. If you want quality and variety of merchandise, you never shop downtown, for the stores there are just a shabby second-rate shopping center, catering to the low-income areas south and east. Everything connected with the better way of life has moved away. Until just recently, Los Angeles downtown has been supported mostly by the huge civic center, which employs 10,000 people on the public payroll, and by the political lawyers and financial lawyers and the like who feel they must stay close to the seat of government."

As for New York's Wall Street, there are no big stores there, for stores cannot live on the lunch-hour trade; there are almost no restaurants there other than quick lunches, for restaurants cannot prosper on one meal a day. There are no hotels there, no theaters, no movies; even the aquarium is gone; and after 6 p.m. and on weekends there are almost no people.

## Urban responsibility is chaos

A more chaotic chaos would be hard to dream up than the chaos over what government should do what, and what government should pay for what, to meet our urban needs.

Responsibility is divided horizontally four ways between local, county, state and federal government. It is divided vertically scores and sometimes hundreds of ways, first between the central city government and all the surrounding town and village governments, and then again between all these governments and a still greater proliferation of special tax districts, administrations and authorities—bridge authorities, park authorities, water districts, sewer districts, fire districts, school districts, library districts, gar-



**COLMAN:** Parked cars dilute the central business district. This is self-defeating.

bage districts, hospital districts, etc. Within the local governments, authority is often divided still further, with the school board going its own way to spend more money than anyone else. In Washington the same confusion is repeated. Both the Senate and the House scatter responsibility for urban affairs legislation among half a dozen uncoordinated committees. Fifty different federal agencies are now working on the problem of water supply and water pollution (up from 25 found by the Hoover Commission in 1955). Grants for urban renewal come from one department, grants for roads come from another, grants for pollution control from a third. The Interior Department is spending \$25 million to preserve and beautify the historic heart of Philadelphia, but the millions of dollars needed to cover over the expressway that will cut it off from the river will have to come (or not come) from the Commerce Department.

No city government collects anywhere near enough money of its own to take on the whole job of coping with all problems that confront it. One reason no city government has enough money is that few states let the cities collect enough taxes, even if they want to. The second reason is that few cities like to collect any more taxes than they have to; they would rather get grants-in-aid from the states or from Washington. The third reason is that most cities are afraid to raise taxes for fear of speeding the exodus of industry. The fourth reason is that the cities' only exclusive revenue source is the property tax, and most states make their cities collect most of their property taxes, not on land (which is undertaxed) but on improvements (which are already so overtaxed that the tax inhibits even some of the most needed improvements). The fifth (and perhaps the biggest) reason is that in this country, local government is stuck with enormous costs that in other countries are paid as a matter of course by the central government, so, paradoxically, the local tax burden in most cities is too high even though the tax take is too low!

One result of keeping city governments poor is that too few city services are good enough. A second is that few suburbs want to be annexed to cities that can't afford good schools and other

top-grade services. The third result is the proliferation of special tax districts to pay for services the cities have no money to provide (Los Angeles has 246 of them). Fourth, cities are afraid to raise more taxes even if they could, for fear of driving still more people and businesses to tax havens in the suburbs. Fifth, many industries are moving to suburban tax havens anyhow. Finally, the sixth result is that nobody can tell just who is responsible for what. Schools, for example, are paid for partly by the local school district, partly by the state, a little by Washington, with the state setting the standards, the local authorities picking the teachers and the federal government decreeing the racial balance. Streets and highway costs are split four ways, and the city cannot control how new state and federal highways cut them up. (Says the past president of the AIA, "We rip our cities with motorways and delude ourselves that we are doing it in the name of progress.") Too many in-city expressways are allowed to split neighborhoods like a Chinese Wall; even depressed roadways like Detroit's divide the two sides like a river.

Most of us agree that the political boundaries of our cities are archaic and should be brought in line with today's realities by annexation, by metropolitan federation or otherwise. All of us agree that the tax limitations and tax policies forced on our cities are archaic and should be corrected.

Too many planners today are planning at cross purposes. Highway planners plan new roads and new interchanges with too little regard for the way they destroy neighborhoods and cut cities to pieces, and how many families they dislocate. City planners plan for urban growth while suburban planners too often plan to block it by large-lot zoning. Suburbs want upper-income families planned in, factory workers planned out, city money planned in, city problems planned out. New York's bridge authority plans \$21,000 per car to bring more cars into a city already half-paralyzed by too many cars which nobody plans to park. San Francisco's Bay area plans a billion-dollar transit system that is sure to force rebuilding everything near each station, but nobody plans what to rebuild. Neighboring Oakland and Berkeley each make great plans so uncoordinated

that they leave streets dead-ending at the city line; plans that would put Oakland's heaviest industry right next to Berkeley's waterfront park.

And the minute any plan starts taking shape, speculators too often double its cost by skyrocketing the price of land needed to carry it out. "Good land planning is impossible in the face of land speculation," is the dismal dictum from the International Housing Center in Rotterdam.

Getting anything done about good plans is difficult and discouraging at best. It is doubly difficult and discouraging in urban America, where it is next to impossible for any government or government agency to get the clearly recognized responsibility, authority or money needed to coordinate scores and hundreds of conflicting plans and see that a coordinated plan is carried out.

## Why must cities shoulder twin burden of poverty, education?

Perhaps the worst consequence of today's chaos and confusion over what level of government should do what is this: The federal government is being asked to get involved in a lot of local problems that could better be handled locally, while the local governments are being forced to pay a lot of not-really-local costs they cannot afford.

One big reason so many city governments are too poor to pay their full part in making their cities pleasant for people and profitable for business is that, in the US, most of the cost of public education is charged to local government (sometimes the city itself; sometimes the school district). These costs were small enough for local government to carry when few children went beyond eighth grade, and schooling meant mostly the three Rs; they are now far too heavy to charge against the revenues traditionally reserved for local government (i.e., the property tax), and they will soon redouble.

*The United States is almost the only country on earth where the central government does not pay all the costs of free public education.*

So instead of saying that our state and federal governments are helping our local governments

pay for schools that are a local responsibility, it might be more correct to say that our local governments are crippling themselves financially to help our central governments pay for schools, whose support should be the responsibility of the central government.

A second reason why our city governments are too poor to make their local services good is that the local property tax is still being tapped for many of the costs of poverty and many of the costs required by today's much-more-generous spending for poor relief. These costs are set by state and federal policy, and most of us think they should all be paid out of state and federal taxes. Urban poverty is now concentrated in the central cities, so Professor Netzer's research for the Brookings Institution states flatly that "Before the tax differential between cities and suburbs can be erased, the cost of poverty services will have to be taken off the back of the property tax."

Poverty and education are not local problems or local responsibilities in the same sense, or to anything like the same degree, that police and fire protection, water supply, garbage collection, sewage disposal, parks and playgrounds, local streets, off-street parking, suburban commutation and urban mass transportation are local problems and local responsibilities. Half the people on relief in almost every city and half the ward patients in the city hospitals came there from somewhere else; half the children in the city schools came from somewhere else and will grow up to work somewhere else.

The director of the Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations stated it: "Because welfare and educational programs have lost their essentially local character and have acquired critical importance for the well-being of state and nation, they should no longer be left to the vicissitudes of local boundaries, the geographic distribution of taxable properties, the policy leanings of tax assessors, or even the political courage of local governing boards."

Poverty and education now account for more than 60 percent of all local government spending. They cost local government more than all the revenue now provided by the only revenue source reserved for local government—the property tax.

If these not-primarily-local poverty and education costs were all paid by the state and federal governments that call the tune for them, our local governments would have plenty of money of their own to cover all their own, strictly local costs and make all their own local services good without sending their mayors to the state capital or to Washington, hat in hand, to beg for subsidies.

The first rule of good management is to fix responsibility (including financial responsibility) where it belongs. Instead of asking the state and federal governments to subsidize strictly local costs like parks and sewage disposal, it might be much wiser to ask the state and federal governments to face up to their own primary responsibilities—the states on education, the national government for poverty. With some 60 percent of the property tax load thus removed, cities and counties could pick up the difference and meet their own clearly local responsibilities.

Shifting the basic cost of education to the states would not necessarily require giving the states any more control over local schools than they now exercise, and communities that want better schools than the statewide standard could still afford to supplement what the state was willing to spend.

## Attitudes must be broader

Living close requires more, rather than less, willingness to cooperate, to share the cost instead of trying to get away with something for nothing at somebody else's expense (usually the taxpayer's). The implications are enormous. For instance:

Industries, utilities and apartments should not expect to hold down their own costs by pouring tons of soot and garbage ash into the air to fall on somebody else's property, for someone else to pay for cleaning up. (In New York, this cleaning bill is officially estimated at \$500 million a year; almost as much *each year* as it would cost to put smoke control devices on all the city's garbage incinerators and factory and utility chimneys.)

Towns and factories should not expect to save money by pouring untreated sewage and waste into our streams for someone else to purify for

eventual reuse elsewhere downstream.

Drivers should not expect to foul up traffic by parking free or cheaply at other taxpayers' expense, on land priced up to \$100 a square foot. As long as motorists can park free, or almost free, on busy streets, how can we expect them to pay by the hour for off-street parking?

If the primary reason for cities is to minimize the handicaps of distance and maximize the advantages of easy access, it is almost unbelievably foolish to subsidize traffic congestion by letting parked cars cut four-lane roadways down to two.

Transit riders should not expect to ride long distances for a fraction of the cost, by getting the city to subsidize most of the fare.\*

(But all of us recognize that as long as commuting to the cities by expressway gets a subsidy running as high as 10 cents a car-mile, mass transportation will also have to be subsidized. It is much cheaper to subsidize mass transportation than to subsidize driving to work at the present scale.)

Most notoriously, upper-income commuters should not expect the state or federal government to subsidize their flight to the suburbs by paying half the cost of their commutation.

Urban landowners should not be allowed to get rich by getting other taxpayers to pay the cost of all the public facilities without which their land would be good only for market gardening, and not much good at that.

We all sympathize with the cities' money problems; we all agree that the cities need money relief from state and federal governments.

But too many of our cities' money problems are of their own making. Cities would need less money help from above if they could screw up their courage to stop subsidizing obsolescence, blight and sprawl by undertaxing valuable underused land, and subsidizing water waste, traffic jams, air pollution and water pollution by far-below-cost user charges. We could get much better cities much sooner if our cities would just stop subsidizing their worst faults.

The purpose of cities is to maximize the citi-

\*Panelist Gruen dissents. Says he: "Mass transit is such an essential city service that it should not just be cheap; it should be free, like the sewers. And this would save all the money now wasted collecting fares, which can run more than a quarter of the total cost of the transit system."

zens' freedom of choice, but that does not mean citizens should be free to do as they choose at somebody else's expense (specifically, that of other taxpayers). Most of us think the best way to let people decide for themselves what they want and what they don't want is to let the market govern their choice, by letting them pay for it.

People who choose to drive to work should be willing to pay what it costs to park their cars. People who choose to burn their garbage should be willing to pay for adequate smoke-control devices; industries which choose to dump industrial waste into our streams should be willing to pay the cost of first purifying their own waste; landowners who want a neighborhood park which would increase the value of their property should be willing to pay an annual assessment to buy the land. (This neighborhood assessment policy is one big reason why Minneapolis citizens enjoy the best neighborhood park system in America.)

## Advice for satellite towns

Metropolitan New York will have more than 30 million population within a generation; metropolitan Los Angeles will reach 15 to 20 million.

Small cities can and should be centered around a single high-density hub, but big cities must inevitably be structured or restructured as close-in clusters of high density, radiating from a still-higher-density hub, for obvious and complementary reasons.

There is no reason why low-density land users such as one-floor factories or suburban shopping centers should pay for central-city space. These land users benefit by being near the urban center but need not be right in it, for they are largely self-contained, i.e., they do not need maximum access to supporting services, markets, diversified labor, etc. (Central-city colleges should adapt themselves to central-city land use in compact buildings like those around them.)

There is no reason why assembly-line workers, shopping center customers, etc., should travel all the way downtown 200 times a year. For them it is much more efficient and economical to relocate their destination closer to where they live.

Low-density land use in a maximum-density

center defeats the whole purpose of the center. There is no reason why lawyers or admen, for example, should have to waste time crossing a ruralistic college campus to reach a client's office.

Each of tomorrow's clustered satellites should combine good high-density living at the center with good low-density living between satellites. Each should make multilevel, multipurpose use of its most central land. Each should have a quick and economical connection to downtown by highway and/or mass transit. Each should include as great a variety of shopping, services and amenities as its area can support (but obviously this local variety will seldom be anywhere near as great as the variety made possible in downtown, which has the whole metropolitan area to draw on and serve).

Recognizing the need of high-density cluster development close in, Paris is planning six new suburban centers, each with 250,000 to 400,000 population, with a strong regional government overall. This French scheme of high-density subcenters close in is almost the direct antithesis of the not-too-successful British attempt to grow low-density, garden city "new towns" far out beyond the green belt. It follows quite closely the precedent set in Sweden, where Stockholm has already built two close-in model satellites, Vällingby and Farsta, both within nine miles of the center. Now New York's Regional Plan proposes rationalizing the metropolitan sprawl around 12 suburban subcenters, each of which will soon have a million people living within a 10 mile radius.

Sometimes whole new towns like Baltimore's Columbia and Washington's Reston will be needed. More often, existing centers (like Newark, New Brunswick, New Rochelle, Yonkers, Jamaica and White Plains around New York) will have to provide the nucleus for tomorrow's clustering satellites, for the costs of starting a brand new town are staggering. People hesitate to move there until jobs and shops are ready; shops and jobs try to wait for people; and the developer of a medium-size town may well have to sink \$60 million before he turns his first profit.

Brand new towns can profit by one great advantage: They can be coherently planned to offer

better living in tomorrow's world than older communities handicapped by having "just growed" to meet yesterday's needs.

But—to those who would sponsor new towns or new suburban centers, we offer these three bits of caution and criticism:

- Too many of today's new towns are too far out to give people easy access to the variety only the central city can provide. And each passing year makes it harder and costlier to assemble a big enough acreage close enough in.
- Too many (if not all) of today's new towns are planned just to siphon off what is best in the central city, leaving behind all the problems like poverty and segregation. The greater the success achieved in this escapist maneuver, the greater the danger that the new towns will destroy themselves, by destroying the central city on which they must all depend for many essential services and attractions.
- Too many of today's new centers are planned too small, and will soon be a mess. For example, the Northland Shopping Center on Detroit's city line was such an outstanding success that what was planned for a million square feet of stores is now 1.4 million, and around it has grown a whole new urban complex of high-density apartments, hotels, laboratories, restaurants and even Detroit's only legitimate summer theater—all requiring parking and sitting in a lake of parking five times as big as the building it surrounds. People living in the high-rise apartments can see the shopping center nearby, but they cannot get there on foot because they find it unbearable to walk through these vast parking areas and cross the multiline highways constructed to make the center accessible.

This development now sprawls over 450 acres. It could have been achieved with much greater convenience and economy on a hundred acres, if only the planners of Northland could have foreseen what a magnet their model shopping center would be and had had the means to implement that foresight.

As for new cities (as distinct from new towns), all of us think they are a fine idea, for there is a limit to how much population today's metropolitan areas can accommodate pleasantly, and how

much industry they can accommodate efficiently. When, as and if a new city is built, we hope it will escape all the mistakes our older cities have made. But the hard fact is that no new community big enough to be called a city is being built and only one is being planned; and Bill Levitt, who ought to know, says it will require at least a billion dollars to finance the development of a new city of 100,000 population.

## No quick cures for congestion

Big old cities like New York, Philadelphia, Boston and Chicago, tightly structured by railroads and mass transit, find it hard and perhaps impossible to adjust to the street parking needs of the automobile. Whether New York elects to spend another \$21,000 per car for new approaches to bring more cars into lower Manhattan, there is no room on the streets for more cars, and no parking space off the streets for them, and the more people who come in by car, the more people who decide just to stay out to avoid the congestion.

Conversely, new cities, loosely structured by the automobile, will find it hard and perhaps impossible to adjust to reliance on mass transit, which is efficient only if many thousands of people want to get to a reasonably small number of destinations from a reasonably small number of points of origin. Los Angeles shelved its mass-transit plans when a traffic survey showed 230 points of destination, some of them spread over a three-mile diameter and few of them important enough to justify track-bound transportation to reach them.

In Washington, Gruen's transit survey for the National Capital Planning Commission projected a need of first restructuring the District around a dozen new urban subcenters at the major stations of the proposed transit system, each incorporating a bus terminal and a big parking garage to make the station an easy point of interchange from other means of transportation, and each providing the incentive for a 150-acre high-density development incorporating housing, retailing, cultural entertainment and employment facilities.

Meanwhile, the Bay area around San Francisco is going ahead regardless, with an \$800 million,



75-mile mass transit project that could have some startling results. For one thing, it will give landowners around the 30 stations a windfall profit of more than \$800 million, i.e., an unearned increment that could (but won't) be recaptured to pay off the entire cost of the system. (Most of the cost of the Erie Canal 140 years ago was paid off by a special tax on the lands whose value it multiplied.)

BART will also start a building boom around each station that could, for example, rebuild San Francisco's Market Street 30 stories high, with something like an eight-square-block platform providing direct access to 2 million square feet of office space and shopping. (Nothing so coherent will happen, because no one is planning for it.)

Some kind of subcentered restructuring will probably be necessary anyhow to make big cities livable as they redouble their population, but it is foolish to think mass transit can replace the private car (especially on the periphery), or that any single means of transportation can meet all the needs of tomorrow's big cities. The Bay area transit system is not expected to absorb more than 10 percent of the trips now taken by auto. Says economist Wheaton: "People accustomed to the convenience of driving direct to their destination will take a lot of persuading before they will walk to a bus, bus to rail transit, ride to their station, and then bus and finally walk again to where they want to get." But others cite examples in New York, Chicago and Philadelphia where better mass transportation has brought thousands of commuters back to the rails.

Moving jobs to the outskirts is no cure-all for highway congestion in commuter hours, for there is no use expecting people to make nearness to their jobs the No. 1 consideration in choosing where to live. In New York thousands of commuters from Westchester ride the subway from Grand Central to Wall Street, passing on their way thousands of commuters from Staten Island and Brooklyn who work near Grand Central. In Los Angeles, thousands from the valley jam the freeways on their way to work in Orange County and vice versa. Almost everywhere, morning and evening rush hours find some freeways traffic-jammed in both directions.

The bigger the city, the bigger the cost of put-



1.



2.



3.

**1. HOLMES:** Suburbanites don't want the same things as city dwellers.

**2. URBAHN:** Central city parking lots should be underground.

**3. SNIBBE:** FHA incentives made it possible to destroy Long Island.

ting primary reliance on automobiles to handle the commuter rush. A three-lane expressway, costing up to \$95 million a mile, can carry no more workers to their jobs in an hour than a single seven-car train, and New York's estimate of \$21,000 for the capital cost for bringing in one more commuter car is exceeded by Washington's \$23,000. Neither figure includes any money for adding more parking facilities, though each added mile of expressways requires seven times as much space to park the cars it brings in. Already parking lots and local streets give over to the automobile 54 percent of the downtown area in Atlanta, 50 percent in Los Angeles, 40 percent in Boston, 44 percent in Denver.

Sooner or later—and we hope sooner—most big cities will have to work out their own new balanced solution to their traffic and transportation problems. This solution will almost certainly involve some return to much more use of man's original means of locomotion: walking. It will also involve much more reliance on high-speed vertical transportation, and wide acceptance of moving sidewalks and the revolutionary new low-cost systems for automated mass transit that are already well past the design stage. It will also reflect some equally revolutionary but still visionary changes in cars and trucks.

In many cities, traffic and transportation will probably entail keeping cars off some of the busiest streets and reserving them for pedestrians, as in Gruen's very successful reshaping of downtown Fresno, California.

One part of the realty tax is the tax on improvements. The other is the tax on the unimproved value of the land on which the improvement stands. It would be hard to imagine two taxes whose impacts on urban development are more different.

## **Tax policy cries for revision**

Heavy taxes on improvements are bound to discourage, delay or even deter owners from making improvements; the bigger the improvement tax, the smaller the owner's incentive to spend good money to improve his property, instead of investing the money somewhere else or putting

it to some other use.

Contrariwise, heavy taxes on unimproved land values (more correctly, site values, or perhaps still more correctly, *location* values) tend to encourage, speed or sometimes even compel improvements. The bigger the land tax, the bigger the leverage on owners of underused property to do something to increase its earning power—or sell it to someone who will.

Heavy taxes on improvements are bound to lower the supply and raise the cost and rent for improvements, but land taxes heavy enough to bring more land on the market are bound to lower the price of land.

The dualism of property was recognized by the classical economists, and few students now question the conclusion reached long ago by Turgot and Adam Smith that taxes on unimproved land values cannot be passed on (except under rent control, which survives only in New York State), so it is nonsense to suggest that heavier taxes on the land under slum properties would make the poor people who live in slum buildings pay more rent.

Almost all of us agree with the conclusion reached by Dr. Netzer's research for the Brookings Institution that "the present property tax tends to discourage investment in new construction and rehabilitation. A change to the site-value tax will encourage building and rehabilitation. . . . Heavy taxation of land values would increase substantially the holding costs of land, and thus encourage more intensive utilization." More than two-thirds of today's property tax now falls on the improvement, less than one-third on the land. So shifting the whole weight of a 3 percent-of-true-value property level to the site would require a 10 percent rate on the land to produce the same revenue.

Nothing less than a 10 percent rate would be adequate to make the owners of underused land release it when it is needed for more intensive use, instead of holding it off the market waiting for higher and higher prices. And with the federal government absorbing more than half the local levy as a tax deduction, and the present euphoric expectation that land prices will continue to soar 15 percent a year compounded, many believe that

the land-tax rate would have to be even higher than 10 percent to be effective.

If we want private enterprise to make its maximum contribution to rebuilding our cities bigger and better, it is foolish to penalize and discourage that contribution by overtaxing improvements. As all bankers can figure, but too few tax men seem to realize, a 3 percent-of-true-value tax on improvements actually costs improvers almost as much as a 50 percent sales tax paid off on the installment plan over 60 years at 5 percent interest. And it should be obvious to everybody that, in an economy where every business decision must first be checked against its tax consequences, the equivalent of a 50 percent sales tax can be a mighty powerful and effective deterrent.

An improvement tax like Boston's 6.1 percent-of-true-value is the installment plan equivalent of a 10 percent sales tax, and such a levy can make improvements so unprofitable that even prime building sites will have a negative value (i.e., be worth less than nothing). So the only way Boston could induce Prudential Insurance to pay \$3.7 million for 28 prime Back Bay acres for Prudential Center was to cut the maximum tax on new buildings to about half the tax on existing structures—a concession worth much more than \$3.7 million to Prudential. No other industry's products—except liquor and tobacco—are taxed as heavily as the building industry's product.

If we want to get rid of slums, it is foolish to subsidize them by assessing and taxing slum properties only half or a third as heavily as good housing with the same market value (i.e., by tying the land assessment to the building assessment and assessing the land as almost worthless because the building on it is almost worthless, instead of assessing the land high because the location could be valuable if put to a better use). In the words of New York City's 1961 adviser on housing and urban renewal: "No amount of code enforcement or tenement rehabilitation can keep pace with slum formation unless and until the profit is taken out of slums by taxation." Almost all of us agree with the Joint Economic Committee of Congress, which found that "state and local governments have failed to make maximum use of the enormous potential inherent in the prop-

erty tax for either the prevention or the cure of poor housing and other blight conditions. In fact, since today's property tax is based mostly on the value of the improvements, those who permit their property to deteriorate, reducing area property values, are rewarded with lower property taxes. Landlords who enhance the value of their property have their assessments raised."

If we want to speed up the replacement of obsolete buildings such as now pre-empt most of the land in and around most central business districts, it is foolish to keep them standing and profitable by taxing not only the aging buildings but also the land under them, less and less as the buildings get older and more and more rundown. Tract-by-tract research conducted by the Urban Land Institute, with the cooperation of the Milwaukee tax commissioner, showed that it would be profitable for private enterprise, *without any subsidy*, to tear down and replace practically all the obsolete buildings downtown if the property tax were all on the valuable land they cover, so the tax burden on the replacement would not be many times heavier than the tax burden on the relic. Says Professor Gaffney, who conducted the research: "Today's property-tax practice is slowing down the replacement of obsolete structures by 20 to 30 years."

One very big reason so many cities are in trouble downtown is that they "grew" like Topsy without, at the same time, cleaning out the decay of age at the center.

The horses and carriages of our grandfather's day are gone with the wind, along with the cobblestone streets, trolley cars, steam trains and coal stoves, but most of the buildings our grandfathers knew are still standing today. Nearly a third of all the people of Manhattan still live in railroad flats that were banned before 1900, and these slums are so underassessed and undertaxed that it has cost an average of \$486,000 an acre to buy them up for demolition!

Too often, renewal has come too late. Too many cities have let old buildings stand so long that their neighborhood has died around them. St. Louis is not the only city whose core is ringed with rubble because it waited too long for the bulldozer to force a renewal that should have

gone on year by year and piece by piece while the area was still alive.

If we want to minimize suburban sprawl and stop blighting the countryside with premature subdivision, it is foolish to assess and tax pressure to release their land at a reasonable price when it is needed for orderly urban growth. Too many assessors seem to confuse the property tax with the income tax; they assess valuable land far below its asking price as long as it is producing no income. On Long Island, idle land priced at \$20,000 an acre is commonly assessed as low as \$500 an acre.

If we want to lessen the cost of slum clearance, it is almost unbelievably foolish to inflate the price of land needed for urban renewal by undertaxation. Once again, consider how New York has had to pay an average of \$486,000 an acre for the slum properties condemned and demolished for public housing. One reason for these high prices is the low tax these properties had been paying. At land costs like that, how can anyone expect private enterprise to provide good housing for low- or even middle-class families without enormous subsidies?

If we want to check the land-price inflation that threatens to price good new homes out of the market, it is foolish to subsidize that inflation by assessing and taxing land lightly, and then penalize the homebuyer who has just paid too much for his land, by taxing him too much on his house. Since 1954, while all other homebuilding costs have been held steady or actually lowered, land costs have been soaring 15 percent a year compounded, and before the 1966 tight-money crisis, a three-to-one majority of homebuilders voted this their most urgent problem.

Likewise, if we want to make low-density living possible closer to downtown, it is foolish to subsidize the waste of central-city land by undertaxation. The Urban Land Institute research referred to before showed that full utilization of the land within three or four miles of the center of Milwaukee would satisfy most of the demand that is now proliferating sprawl, thereby making land available for low density less than half as far out as now.

If we want to hold down the cost of municipal

services, it is foolish to undertax underused urban land and so encourage sprawl right inside the city limits, for almost all these costs—water supply, sewage disposal, garbage collection, streets, fire protection, police protection, as well as gas, electricity, telephone connections and other utilities—are multiplied by distance.

In brief, there is hardly an urban problem today that is not aggravated by today's practice of undertaxing land and overtaxing improvements.

State governments must take much of the blame for the undertaxation of land and the overtaxation of improvements, for most states presently compel cities to apply the same tax rate to land as to improvements, and most states condone the practice of assessing land half as heavily as improvements.

## States deserve much of blame

The states must take full responsibility for the shocking proliferation of suburban tax shelters, where the tax rate is sometimes only one-tenth as high as the city rate because the suburbs can get away with bringing in industry while keeping out industrial workers with children to educate.

Local assessment inequalities are made worse by state-sponsored exemptions. These include the limit of a few hundred dollars which some states impose on the assessment of any land that is farmed (even when it may be held for development at many thousands of dollars per acre), and the homestead, veterans' and senior citizens' exemptions, by which some state governments have sought to subsidize favored voters at the expense of local tax revenues. The limit on homestead exemptions is usually set at or below \$5,000 of assessed value, but where assessments run to only 25 percent of market value, this means that a home worth \$20,000 may be completely tax-exempt.

Federal tax policies (or practices) likewise make urban problems worse:

- Speculative land profits are taxed not more than half as heavily as ordinary income, provided the landowner does nothing to improve his property for sale (i.e., provided he does nothing to earn his profit).

- The 25 percent capital-gains tax makes land assembly for large-scale development difficult, for a locked-in owner can often mortgage his property for almost as much as he could realize on a sale after deducting the gains tax.
- Letting each new owner depreciate the same building all over again is one more serious deterrent to replacement. The older and more decrepit the building, the shorter its life expectancy for tax purposes, and the bigger the depreciation the new owner can take.
- Shoddy construction is encouraged by the accelerated depreciation-allowance which makes it advantageous for the builder to sell out within seven years.
- Neighborhood assessments are denied the income tax deductibility enjoyed by local taxes. This is just about the most serious deterrent to neighborhood financing of neighborhood improvements.
- Federal corporation and income taxes dilute the impact of the property tax by letting corporations deduct 52 percent of the local levy from their federal tax bill, and letting individuals deduct up to 80 percent. (On the good side, it should be recorded that this helps make the tax on improvements tolerable by cutting its impact in half.)

But on the bad side, it should also be recorded that it helps inflate the price of land, by absorbing more than half the tax cost of holding idle land off the market.

With the federal government absorbing 50 percent of the local land tax, and assessors assessing idle land at not more than 20 percent instead of the theoretical 100 percent, the effective yearly tax cost of holding a \$100,000 tract off the market is not the \$3,000 it is supposed to be but a quite negligible \$300.

Good living in the city should be inexpensive, because there are so many people to share the cost of the multiplicity of community services, amenities and attractions that the city offers.

Actually city living is more expensive than country living, and one big reason is that we let landowners capitalize all the economics of urban cost-sharing for their private profit. The greater the saving achieved, the more the landowner can

add to his ground rent. Of this, the simplest example is cited by Winston Churchill: When London abolished the penny toll which workers had to pay for crossing the Thames to reach their jobs, rents on the workers' tenements were promptly raised a shilling (12 pence) a week.

By definition, the unimproved value of urban and suburban land derives, not from anything any past or present owner has done to improve it but from an enormous investment of other people's money to create the community around or near it. Some of this investment is made by private enterprise; some is made by those who support hospitals, museums, colleges, etc.; much of it is made by government.

No matter who makes the investment, the landowner cashes in on it. When New York extended the subway beyond Spuyten Duyvil, land prices in Riverdale zoomed upward. When taxpayers spent \$350 million to bridge the Narrows to Staten Island, landowners there got a much-bigger-than-\$350-million windfall. Spending \$800 million taxpayer dollars for Bay area rapid transit will almost certainly enrich landowners around its stations by at least an equal amount.

For a smaller-scale example, consider the prediction by the New York Regional Planning Association that taxpayers will have to invest \$16,850 in highways, schools, water, sewers, etc. for each family added to the metropolitan population. Change that "per family" to read "per lot" and it becomes clear that *other* taxpayers will have to invest \$16,850 in community facilities to enable a landowner to sell his suburban lot for \$8,000.

What all this adds up to is that citizens and suburbanites must pay twice over for all their community facilities. First they pay for them on their tax bills, their charitable donations or their business investments. Then they pay for them all over again, in higher ground rents to landowners who have been allowed to capitalize all this investment of other people's money into the price of their land.

Under today's tax and assessment policies, the owners of idle and underused urban and suburban land make only a minimum contribution to the huge community investment needed to make their land reachable, livable and richly salable.

The less they do to improve their property and the longer they keep it idle or underused, the less they are taxed to help pay for the community facilities needed to multiply its value. Said Winston Churchill: "The landowner's profit is often in direct proportion to the disservice he does the community by holding his land off the market until other people's investment has multiplied its price."

Many municipal costs are multiplied by distance, and correspondingly reduced by reducing distance. Consider, for example, water distribution. If demand for water doubles in a fixed area, all we need is to expand pipe diameters. But if demand doubles by doubling the service area, we must double our pipe mileage; increase the cross-section of our old system at its base to transmit the extra load to the new extension; increase pressure at the load center to maintain pressure at the fringes; and increase the allowance for peaking.

Or consider the far more urgent problem of streets and highways, which now cost local taxpayers more than any other item except schools. The greater the sprawl, the more miles of streets needed to get from A to B, and the more cars that will have to travel more miles along those streets. Fewer people can get where they want to go on foot, and fewer can get to and from where they want to be by mass transit. Residential sprawl does not take cars out of the traffic centers; on the contrary, it brings in more. Sprawl is not a flight from traffic congestion but its principal cause.

Multipurpose high density can even out the peaks and valleys of demand and utilize municipal services seven days a week around the clock; conversely, specialized areas waste these costly services most of the time. For example, New York's Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts comes to life only from 8 p.m. to midnight and during matinees; New York's Wall Street area is alive only from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. five days a week. The rest of the time it is so dead that the girl arrested for posing nude on the Sabbath on the steps of J. P. Morgan was acquitted because there was no one within blocks whose morals could be corrupted!

With high-density stratification, private enter-

prise seeking tenants and customers can be expected to absorb many costs that are otherwise borne by the taxpayers. For example, private enterprise pays *all* the costs of transportation and utility services above the street level (a cost that runs close to a third of the first cost of high-rise construction); and private enterprise is beginning to find it profitable to offer built-in amenities and recreation (swimming pools, etc.) that might otherwise have to be provided by additional facilities in public parks.

High-density stratification often permits major savings through round-the-clock use of facilities. For example, Chicago's Marina City owes much of its \$200,000-a-year garage revenue to triple use of part of its parking space for apartment tenants by night, for business tenants by day, for bowling alley and theater patrons in the evening.

The renaissance that saved Pittsburgh started when its business and political leaders decided their city was worth saving and took on the job of saving it. The first thing they did was tackle a local problem no one else could correct for them—the air pollution that had made Pittsburgh almost synonymous with smoke.

The same kind of civic leadership made Fresno the model of what small cities can do to revitalize their downtown—a model which is bringing visitors from all over the world to study, praise and imitate. The same kind of civic leadership inspired (but alas could not execute) the plan for saving downtown Fort Worth, and the same kind of civic leadership explains the award-winning project for clearing the oil derricks out of downtown Oklahoma City to create the most beautiful, the most practical and the most fun downtown in mid-America.

Some of our cities' problems may be too big for the cities to meet without outside help (most specifically, the problem of poverty, which is a national rather than a city problem); but most of our cities' problems are too small and too local for any outsider to take on. Consider, for example, the first six things the slum dwellers in Pittsburgh's notorious Hill District asked the Redevelopment Agency to get done for them. They requested that the city:

- collect our garbage



**MADDEN:** Some manufacturing can move to the suburbs; some kinds can't.



**CONKLIN:** We need a performance specification for the urban environment.

- repair our streets
- put in more street lights
- tear down 357 vacant and boarded-up buildings as a neighborhood nuisance
- provide safe playgrounds for our children (perhaps on the boarded-up building sites)
- give us a voice in determining what is to be done with our own neighborhood instead of having all the decisions made for us by somebody else—perhaps somebody in Washington.

Only the city itself can clean the streets. Only the city can stop the multimillion-dollar waste of free-for-all air pollution (much of it from the city's own chimneys). Only the city can stop the multimillion-dollar waste of make-work and conflicting building codes—a waste that adds at least 10 percent to the cost of building and rebuilding. Only the city can ease downtown street congestion by coordinating traffic lights, designating one-way streets, requiring all street and under-street repairs to be done at night, banning on-street parking and otherwise discouraging the downtown use of private cars. Only the city can lower the foolish minimum ceiling height for parking garages to cut their cost and maximize their car capacity per cubic foot. Only the city can

make streets and parks safe at night. Only the city can end the scandalous and underassessment and undertaxation of slums and other ill-used and underused land.

There are hundreds of other small things our cities could and should be doing to help themselves without waiting for outside help—small things whose cost could be proportionately small, but whose cumulative value could be very big indeed.

## Better recreation in the city

Everybody talks about the need for open space, but most of the talk is about special tax concessions to help farmers keep on farming on close-in land that has become too expensive for farming, or to help golfers keep on golfing on close-in land that has become too expensive for private links.

Some of us think farms and private golf links belong a few miles farther out, where thousands of people won't have to drive added miles past their "no trespassing" signs on their way to work.

All of us support the movement for wildlife preserves, state parks, national seashores, etc., but all of us wish there could be more talk, more

action, and more private and public spending for the kind of *close-in* urban open space without which only the rich can enjoy the good life in our cities.

The open space our cities need most of not just something green and shady to look at. The open space our cities need most is open space people can use and have fun in, and its use-value will depend on how many people can use it how much, how often, how safely and how near home.

Every neighborhood needs its own neighborhood park and playgrounds. The denser the neighborhood's population, the greater its need for nearby outdoor recreation; and the poorer the neighborhood, the more urgent this need is apt to grow. A dozen small parks close to home can often be more important than one big park too far away.

Neighborhood parks must always be tailored to neighborhood needs. One that would be fine in a high-class residential area might be no good at all in the slum. Good neighborhood parks need not be expensive to equip or maintain; imagination and clear thinking about what kind of park facilities the neighborhood needs can sometimes make a small budget go a long way toward both first cost and maintenance cost. New York is budgeting only \$37,500 apiece for 200 small new parks in crowded areas, most of them on tax-defaulted lots the city already owns.

Neighborhood parks are beneficial in other ways than merely providing recreational space close at hand. They are also good indeed for neighborhood property values, so property owners petitioned for one and volunteered to finance its first cost by a special neighborhood assessment at so much per front-foot. (This plan may need some subsidy in the poorest sections.)

But neighborhood parks and playgrounds can meet only part of the urban need for outdoor recreation. There are many activities and enjoyments for which only the bigger central parks can provide the needed space and draw the crowds needed to support them. For example, only a big central park can support frequent outdoor concerts or a zoo or a large skating rink or space enough for riding and hiking, etc.

For city children, safe outdoor space to play in

is almost as important as good schools to learn in, but most cities spend 50 times as much for schools as for parks and playgrounds. New York, for example, allocates only seven-tenths of 1 percent of its budget to parks and recreation.

As for city adults, those who can afford it show how much they want open space and open space recreation by moving to the suburbs or by jamming the expressways for their weekend exodus; either way, they spend far more money to get to open space and open space recreation than it would cost to provide good open space and open space recreation close at hand right inside the city—private open space for those who can afford to be exclusive, public open space and recreation for everybody. In a recent survey in Milwaukee, most people put better recreation facilities in that city's fine park system first on their list of desired civic improvements.

We all agree with the director of the Institute of Public Administration that "Instead of spending millions of tax dollars for highways to help people escape from the city to find outdoor recreation, we should pay more attention to providing recreational facilities inside the city." In San Francisco, enormous numbers of suburbanites drive into the city to enjoy the city's parks and beaches; some say that as many suburbanites drive in as citizens drive out for recreation. More cities should study and follow San Francisco's lead.

New York could serve as a good example of what needs to be done (and has recently begun doing something about it). New York has more waterfront than any other city in the world—540 miles, much of it city-owned, with 35 miles of beaches—but the city pours in nearly half the untreated sewage that makes almost all its waters unsafe for swimming and even kills off most of the fish. New York has 37,750 acres of park land, most of it underdeveloped and way out where few people can enjoy it. Says the former park commissioner: "Most of the people of New York have to get their recreation on vacant lots that are stinking with garbage and littered with old cars and mattresses. The ball fields our kids have to play in are ridiculous and disgraceful."

Until last year, New York has wasted most of



its billion-dollar-plus investment in Central Park; says the former president of the AIA: "Central Park has been a big wasteful space that people couldn't use, a beautiful dead spot in the daytime and a dangerous place at night." New Yorkers still get less use and fun out of Central Park's 846 acres than the Danes get out of 22 acres in Copenhagen's Tivoli Gardens, among whose trees and flowers are six big restaurants, an open-air theater, a dance hall, two bandstands providing almost continuous afternoon and evening music, a lake and an amusement park complete with miniature railroad, etc.

In Russia the government builds all the new apartments around big hollow courts that provide safe play space for the tenant's children (as well as nursery schools and shared baby-sitting and day-care facilities). In America it is hard to find examples where the open space around new high-rise apartments is widely used.

Sooner or later, as urban population swells, the logistics of moving millions of people out of the city for weekend outdoor enjoyment will become intolerably costly. It is high time to start giving much more thought and spending much more money to make our cities good places for outdoor as well as indoor living, instead of devoting so much thought and money to getting out of them.

We need to develop a whole new urban package that will give people with children what they need inside the city, instead of making parents who can afford to go move out. And we need to give much more thought to making city life pleasant and rewarding for the poor, who are now pouring into our cities, not so much because they want to but because they have no other place to go for jobs.

## The ghetto: a national problem

Racial segregation is not a local problem; it is a national problem. In origin it is not an urban problem, but it has been dumped on our cities to solve, with nearly 95 percent of all Negroes outside the South urbanized. It is now many cities' No. 1 problem, and one city governments cannot cure without many kinds of help, including all-out cooperation from state and national governments.

It is a problem nobody can solve until millions of people, both white and nonwhite, understand it better and pitch in to play their own large or small part in the solution.

And unless somebody solves it, many great cities like Washington, Philadelphia, Detroit, Baltimore and Chicago may find themselves deserted by the white middle-class and abandoned (except for small enclaves of luxury housing for the rich) to the nonwhite poor, trapped in the slums by their poverty, and the nonwhite middle-class, trapped on the border of the slums by segregation and the lily-white suburbs' refusal to let them in. Already Washington has become 63 percent nonwhite, Detroit 39 percent, St. Louis 37 percent, Philadelphia 30 percent, Chicago 30 percent. Between 1950 and 1960, as everyone knows, Washington offset a growth of 181,000 Negroes with a loss of 226,000 whites; Chicago, a growth of 321,000 Negroes with a loss of 399,000 whites; New York, a growth of some 700,000 Negroes and Puerto Ricans with a loss of some 800,000 other whites.

Racial segregation is not a single problem but the sum of many different ones—a different community problem for almost every city and neighborhood, a different personal problem for every segregated nonwhite. Different as all these are, they are all parts of two basic problems—one almost new and seething with new bitterness, the other old and deep rooted in old prejudices.

One problem is the plight of the 5 million-odd urban nonwhites who are almost desperately poor—the plight of the 45 percent of all Negroes the 1960 census found living in "deteriorating" or "delapidated" housing.

The other problem is the frustration of the other 5 million-odd nonwhites who are no longer poor—5 million-odd urban nonwhites who, against great handicaps, have earned their way up to family incomes over \$6,000 (up from 4.74 million indicated by census in 1963). These million nonwhites have adjusted their lives to middle-class aspirations but still find themselves denied middle-class acceptance and status.

These two very different problems call for equally different housing solutions, money solutions, opportunity solutions, timing solutions—

and nothing but more confusion can result from confusing the two.

It is just plain nonsense to think all nonwhites are alike and to act as though their problems could be solved in the same way. The fact is that there are more differences among nonwhites than among whites because on top of all their other differences is superimposed a wide range of difference in how many white ancestors they have and what social, educational and financial advantages this white blood may have given their grandfathers. Caste lines among nonwhites are at least as strong as among whites, not just in lands like Haiti and Jamaica whose population is nearly 100 percent nonwhite but in this country too.

College-educated nonwhites (and there are more Negroes in US colleges today than white men in English universities) have the same aspirations as college-educated whites, and have good reasons for feeling they should be accepted for what they are, instead of being rejected for what their great-grandfathers were. Middle-class nonwhites (and nonwhites have to work a lot harder to achieve middle-class incomes and values) have the same aspirations as middle-class whites, only more so. After long years of frustration they are more eager for status; market surveys show that they spend more of their incomes to be nicely dressed, spend more for "personal care," buy more expensive shoes, spend more for their home entertainment equipment. They limit their families to fewer children, work harder on their lawns and planting, and seem to have made good neighbors in every tract where they are accepted, from Levittown on the East Coast to Eichler on the West.

These people do not need special relief or special subsidies. They do not need special schools for their children, for their children have little trouble keeping up with white classmates. What they need now is recognition of their past achievements, freer access to better-paying jobs (Negro incomes still average 47 percent lower than white), a wider door to escape their present segregation on the edges of the nonwhite slums, and a better chance for further progress toward assimilation into the rest of our social and economic life.



These nonwhites moving up have little in common with the poor nonwhites sunk in the slums except their color and their common resentment of segregation. They have so little in common that when New York tried to speed desegregation by moving poor Negroes out of Harlem's slums into new public housing in middle-class areas, the middle-class Negro owners of nearby homes protested as angrily as their white neighbors.

Most of the Negroes now crowded into urban slums are newly arrived fugitives from the farm mechanization that wiped out a million field hands' jobs in the South, and sent them fleeing to the cities to seek jobs for which they had neither skills nor training. On top of this came a mass migration of 700,000 penniless Puerto Ricans, mostly to New York, and a mass migration of Mexican peons that made Los Angeles the world's sixth largest Spanish-speaking city. For this huge and sudden influx, the cities—north, south, east and west—were completely unprepared, without jobs, housing or schools ready to receive them.

The newcomers were equally unprepared for urban living. Old established urban Negroes wel-



**SIMONS:** Cities, suburbs must provide better opportunities for leisure.

**HEALY:** The city is still the generator of our national wealth.

**NAFTALIN:** Ease of communication is first essential of urbanism.

came the Negro newcomers with little enthusiasm, and the Spanish-speaking newcomers with even less. Poor whites greeted them with open bitterness and hostility, for they threatened their low-pay unskilled-labor employment just at a time when automation was eliminating millions of cheap-labor jobs,

Poor nonwhites need much better housing, but the sad fact is that as long as there are 6 million fewer decent homes in the urban housing inventory than there are urban families in need of homes, it is inevitable that 6 million urban families will have to live crowded into substandard units. Most of these 6 million victims of the urban housing shortage are bound to be the poor, and a disproportionate number of the very poor are nonwhite.

So we agree with HUD Secretary Weaver that the best answer to the nonwhite slum problem and the housing segregation problem is to build enough good housing so there will be a good home available for everyone. Some of this new housing will have to include building new low-rent units; but most of the low-rent need could be met better

by trickle-down work, just as the auto needs of low-income families are better met by second-hand cars than by cheap new models. With today's land costs, today's building-trades wages and today's code and labor restrictions, private enterprise cannot hope to build good enough new homes cheaply enough for poor people to buy or rent without big subsidies. Two of the wisest contributions government could make to better housing for the poor would be to help finance the purchase and resale of sound used dwellings, and to help finance low-cost modernization.

But more good enough housing is only a small part of the answer.

Poor nonwhites need freedom to move out of their racial ghettos and live closer to available jobs—but when all restrictions are ended, most nonwhites still will prefer living with their own people, just as almost every other ethnic group has tended to stick together for a generation or more; often for three generations.

Poor nonwhites need better schools and better education, but bussing white children to nonwhite-neighborhood schools cannot be a good enough answer, when it means holding white children back because poor nonwhite parents cannot give their children the advantages needed to start even and stay even. School buildings in nonwhite-neighborhoods are notoriously inferior, partly because they are old buildings in old neighborhoods; teaching in nonwhite-neighborhoods averages below the white-neighborhood level, mostly because the teacher's work is harder and the pay no more.

But in all fairness it should also be realized that New York, for example, spends as much per pupil (well over \$1,000) to educate nonwhite children in the public schools of Harlem as the tuition charged by the city's most exclusive private schools—quite a bit more money than most lily-white suburbs pay to educate their own. Furthermore, in Philadelphia and elsewhere the drive for school desegregation is tending to turn segregation upside down, with more and more white children taken out of public school, and more and more desegregated public schools getting to be almost 100 percent Negro. How will this affect the willingness of the white population, which car-

ries some 95 percent of the local tax load, to pay increased taxes for better schools that few of their own white children will be attending?

*Nonwhites need more human contact with the rest of the community.* The primary cause for the trouble in Watts was not that the housing in Watts is so bad (it isn't; not so long ago Watts was a fairly good middle-class white neighborhood). It was not because the area is overcrowded (it isn't; the density in Watts is not much more than 20 per acre). The primary cause of the trouble in Watts is the fact that it had been allowed to become an island apart. Not enough people outside had any contact with their fellow citizens walled off inside Watts. So it took a riot that cost \$40 million and 34 dead to make outsiders realize that Watts had no good hospital for 87,000 people, no modern schools for more than 30,000 children, no movie house, only one public swimming pool and almost no public transportation to let people get to the kind of jobs they could hold. No wonder 30 percent of all the job seekers in Watts are unemployed; no wonder its residents felt forgotten, bitter and almost hopeless.

*But most of all, poor nonwhites desperately need more money, more jobs and more job opportunities, particularly more jobs for male heads of families and for young people, both boys and girls.* Everybody knows that unemployment among nonwhites is more than twice as heavy as among whites, averaging out to 8.2 percent, but too few people seem to understand the peculiar pattern hidden behind the 8.2 percent average—a pattern which helps explain the bitterness of Negro youth, and also accentuates the matriachal character of Negro home life which, in turn, accentuates the school problem of poor Negro children. An unemployment rate of 8.2 percent is bad enough, but what the "average" conceals is a jobless rate that often exceeds 30 percent among some of the nonwhites most in need of jobs.

Unemployment among college-educated Negroes is actually much less than among college-educated whites, because so many companies are making a special effort to find qualified nonwhites to hire. Unemployment among middle-class Negroes has to be small almost by definition (other-

wise they could not enjoy middle-class incomes); unemployment among adult Negroes with less than a grade school education is also low, probably because they seem willing to take menial jobs that nobody else wants. And one-third more Negro women than white have jobs outside the home—despite a 34 percent unemployment rate among teen-age Negro girls (three times the unemployment rate among teen-age white girls).

In other words: Negro unemployment is concentrated among Negro men who were high school dropouts, and is heaviest of all among young Negro men, who are most likely to have young children. In big city slums, their unemployment rate often runs higher than 30 percent.

A tragic consequence of this unemployment pattern is that the No. 1 breadwinner in too many slum-trapped nonwhite families is a working mother, and in some 40 percent of these poor families there is no man at all because the working is either deserted or unwed (in Harlem 43.4 per-



**PEASE:** We should pay more attention to what city people say they want.

**FITCH:** Market pricing principle should be applied to city services—including parking.

cent of the children are illegitimate). So there is no one at home all day to care for and bring up the children. Of all Negro children, 36 percent live in broken homes; in the slums this percentage is much higher.

What all this adds up to is that the hard-core problem of nonwhite segregation is very largely a poverty problem, and it cannot be solved until employers, labor unions and the government (mostly federal) work out a good way to let nonwhites escape from poverty and male unemployment. Says Philadelphia's Joseph V. Baker: "A Negro does not need a college degree to put gasoline in an empty tank, or to turn a wrench as far as the threads have been cut, or to collect tickets on trains."

Desegregation, in the sense of living next door to white neighbors, is mostly for upper- and middle-class nonwhites. For the great mass of poor nonwhites, desegregation means mostly a chance to escape from poverty, slum housing and male unemployment, plus a chance for better education to help their children work their way up.

## Things that only cities can do

No local government can solve all the problems of the nonwhite poor, but few of their problems are likely to be solved unless and until local governments take an active part in their solution. For example and specifically:

- Only local governments can deflate the bootleg price of slum housing by code enforcement and/or taxation. Dean Abrams' block-by-block research shows that in Philadelphia, vigorous code enforcement has so deflated central-city housing prices there that a large percentage of the 14,400 row houses now vacant can be bought (or put) in decent move-in condition for \$4,000 cash or less. (Compare this with an average cost of \$20,500 for new public housing, and \$12,300 now budgeted by the Housing Authority to buy units and do them over completely, regardless of how much fixing up they really need.) If FHA or other special financing is made available, this \$4,000 cost would make it possible for even relief clients, black or white, to buy or lease decent used homes. Pittsburgh, on the other hand, has been fearful



**MAIER: A good city is where people can get together for the good life.**

**GAFFNEY: We subsidize sprawl by subsidizing horizontal transportation.**

that strict code enforcement might leave the 10,000 families homeless, and in New York the mayor's special housing adviser declared in 1961 that "no amount of code enforcement can stop the spread of slums unless and until the profit is taken out of slums by taxation."

- Only local governments can locate some of their own employment centers where they will be easy for the nonwhite poor to reach.
- Only local governments can tear down the obsolete and decaying school buildings found in most nonwhite slums, and replace them with up-to-date plants less likely to encourage high school dropouts (the average nonwhite boy quits school after the ninth grade).
- Only the local government, with financial support from Washington, can provide the nursery schools and the day-care centers needed to keep the preschool slum children of broken homes and working mothers off the streets, giving them some of the care, attention and mental stimulation middle-class children get from their families, so these slum children will be ready to keep up with their classes when they reach school age. This kind of need is already met by the state in Russia (another case where most mothers work outside the home) by including day-care centers, playgrounds, nursery schools and primary schools in the center of every new apartment block. In this respect it is high time for American cities to catch up with Russian ones. In New York, 80 percent of the

600,000 relief recipients whose support costs local, state and/or federal taxpayers \$700,000 a year belong to no-male-breadwinner families.

- Only the local government can provide or encourage the kind of bus or jitney service poor nonwhites need to get from where they live to jobs they can hold.

- Local government can provide neighborhood centers to help slum owners who want to improve their property understand and take advantage of all the various state, federal and foundation grants and aids available to them.

- Local governments can pressure the state to stop forcing them to discourage and penalize improvements with increased assessments and taxes. (Personal interview surveys in Newark and elsewhere make it clear that fear of higher assessments is a prime reason why slum property owners won't spend money to maintain or improve their properties.)

- Finally, the job needs of the nonwhite poor will not soon be met until local government cooperates in attracting and encouraging not just high-wage industries but also the kind of lower-wage industries and services in which unskilled workers could expect to find steady jobs.

Racial segregation is the worst kind of segregation because it is so rigid, so hopeless and so humiliating; but we deplore all one-class neighborhoods big enough to segregate their people from the larger community.

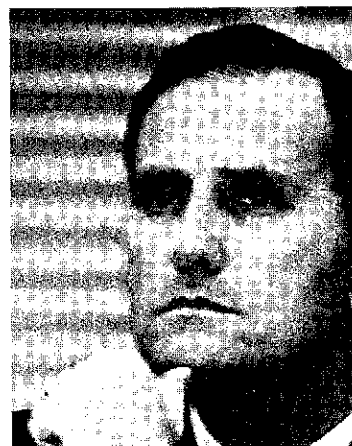
Suburbia is the great segregator, segregating not only white from nonwhite but also the lower-middle-class from the middle-middle-class, and the middle-middle-class from the upper-middle-class and the wealthy. We think this is as bad for those who are segregated in as for those who are segregated out. For example, it makes it harder for those who are segregated in to employ the kind and variety of help they need, while at the same time making it harder for many of those who are segregated out to get the kind of service jobs they need and could fill.

Small enclaves of people with the same background and about the same income are perfectly natural and no problem at all; there is no reason why millionaires should live next door to relief clients, and no reason why relief clients should

want to live between millionaires. But there are many good reasons why rich and poor, white and nonwhite should live close enough together to know how the other half lives, and to share the community of life and the openness of opportunity whose sharing is the first essential of urbanism. Big one-class or one-race neighborhoods frustrate ease of contact and ease of access; they deny variety, opportunity and the exchange of services; and the bigger the one-class or one-race ghetto, the more complete the frustration and denial.

Middle- and upper-income families pay in more ways than one for their flight from the city to one-class enclaves in the suburbs. They pay in travel time and all the extra hours they spend getting to and from the center. They pay in lost leisure, doing household chores they could otherwise find someone else to do. They pay in loss of variety and stimulation because they live too far from town. (Says the former AIA president: "One-class neighborhoods are just plain dull.") And they pay in higher prices and heavier state and federal taxes for supporting on relief millions of people who, in a better-integrated metropolitan society, might be self-supporting and helping to meet the labor shortage and up the gross national product in our full-employment economy.

It is more than a coincidence that the most underprivileged people in urban America must also be the most heavily subsidized (in Philadelphia, for example, 80 percent of the relief clients are nonwhite).



**LOEKS: We are building a very static environment for a very changeable society.**