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REPORT ON URBAN DEVELOPMENT AS
SEEN FROM THE SOUTH EAST PYLON
OF THE SYDNEY HARBOUR BRIDGE.

The University of Sydney

Town Planning 1. 1954.

to
wicks.

George Clarke B.Arch.

8th June 1954.

This is an "exercise in observation and interpretation". By ~~the same~~ introduction, it would seem desirable to indicate the principles of observation and interpretation applied to the problem in the later sections of the Report, and to describe the structure of those sections.

To the native born observer, the Pylon prospect can never be approached with the detachment of a stranger; yet, at the same time, one with ties to another physical environment does not possess that sense of significance, which, it could be argued, springs from the web of intimate personal associations with these streets, spaces, and buildings; which is upheld by some realisation of historical background, and some appreciation of local cultural expression; which is reinforced by a local involvement in social conflicts; and which is carefully guarded because of a sympathy, deeply felt, for characteristic local attitudes.

For better or for worse, this significance must be weighted with the contempt born of familiarity, the lack of experience of other urbanities, and the consequent unsatisfied search for comparative standards, ~~in all~~ matters of some concern to the locally bred.

However, it would be a great mistake, and a presumption indeed, to lament the extent of one's acquired knowledge of the urban development in question. Rather should one press on in the attempt which 20th century men are making to re-establish command over their own creations, and to enlarge the lore of cause and effect interaction in physical environment.

Standing on top of the South East Pylon of the Sydney Harbour Bridge, one is literally making a survey of Sydney in the most elementary manner possible. It was perhaps the very simplicity of the synoptic view which impressed Geddes with its vital importance in making people understand city evolution.

Yet the extension of this visual synopsis into the time-dimension, which has become more and more obligatory on enquirers since Geddes, allows us to see clearly only the complexity of continuous development. Poets, mathematicians,

metaphysicians, and movie-makers of the last 40 years have pushed out the limits of our general perception just a little further. The parallel between natural organisms and the city has been much abused, but nevertheless it remains a useful tool in the understanding of the essentially dynamic quality of contemporary urban development.

In so far as Sydney in particular concerns us, and in so far as we maintain the viewpoint of 290 feet vertically above the tip of Dawes Point, it is impossible to disregard the nagging queries of "how and why, and when did all this come about?" and impossible to be unaware of the virgin state of the submerged river delta of the Harbour, reconstructable from views of a few substantially untouched lengths of foreshore.

Such considerations are in practice inseparable even from mere observation. Interpretation of the synoptic view is unnecessarily frustrated if the continuity of organic growth of the urban development is not appreciated.

Clarity can demand dangerous simplification; a reasonable presentation of the tangled webs of cause and effect as they exist in 1954, and as they could, or should, develop in the future, confronts one with difficulties.

This Report will be composed of three more main sections; a resume of particular historical causes and effects will be attempted in section "B"; a general summary of the contemporary scene will comprise section "C"; and particular issues in existing development and unsolved contemporary problems will follow in section "D". A separate section of illustrations to all these sections will be included in the Report.

SECTION "B".

The urban development of the area surveyed resolves itself for the purposes of this Report into three historical phases, each determined by a leading set of ideas. First was the penal settlement period (1788-1810, although transportation did not cease till 1839) with the expediency of British official policy as the main motivating force. Second was the pre-industrial trading and mercantile city (1810-1900) where development was ordered to suit the wealthy pastoralists and trading interests, and the dominant ideas were those of colonial exploitation and 'Laissez-faire' capitalism. Thirdly comes the real industrial era, in which we ourselves are placed (1900 onwards) ; the advent of Federation, and the victory of the Protectionists, changed the make-up of Sydney, by encouraging the establishment of large industrial undertakings in Sydney areas. Two world wars, and the threat of another have also kept up the pressure of industrialisation. This might be the place to hazard a guess that the next phase of development in Sydney's physical environment will be the era of "planning" , or maybe that of "sophisticated capitalism" (It must be noted that all the historical phases ~~set out~~ above are related to the ~~actual~~ development of the physical environment, and not directly to conventional historical developments.)

In 1810, Sydney Cove was still merely the site of a rude and unformed hamlet. In 1843 it was a city. The intervening period saw great changes in physical layout which were the reflection of the changed conception of the Colony in political, social, and economic terms. The original idea of a mere penal settlement was dropped, in the face of popular riots, trade grew, a certain measure of political stability, and economic independence was achieved, and the population resolved itself into a series of pressure groups which showed a higher degree of social development than the primary groups of militia

and transportees.

In the early period (1788-1810) the physical environment was more an expression of the immediate material needs of the infant settlement than of any cultural values. Windmills on the West arm of Sydney cove dominated the skyline, the signal station was the focus of all eyes when a ship was due bringing vital supplies, and the Tank Stream was the source of life in a most essential manner. The buildings were disposed in a naval officer's version of the military manner, the main object being to house the large number of men and the few female convicts, and to keep them under control. The stores of imported food were probably the most important buildings as such, although the Governor's house, at the present corner of Bridge and Phillip Streets, was perhaps the official Headquarters. Since no great fear of a mass attack by aboriginals was expected, no trouble was taken about fortification.

The spectacular difference between the Sydney of 1810 and the Sydney of 1821 is in the main due to the magnificent efforts of Governor Macquarie, the first soldier Governor. The buildings of the emancipist architect Greenway, the opening up by exploration of the hinterland, the establishment of proper agriculture, the regional concept in embryo, the regularised street plan, the attempts to establish social justice, social cohesion ("the team spirit") and a balanced economy (secondary exports)..... all these and more stand to Macquarie's credit. However this man of vision was well and truly out of step with his time. The Bigge Report, comprised mostly of the opinions of Capt. John Macarthur, encompassed his recall to England in disgrace.

It was the recall of Macquarie that opened up the state of New South Wales to "Men of real Capital --- really respectable settlers, not needy adventurers" These were the Men who should have "Estates of at least 10,000 Acres". This Report of Bigge's that propounded the theory of free convict labour for the "M of real C". These aristocratic entrepreneurs were to receive preference over the agriculturalists whose profession required too much labour.

The early and persistent concentration on the wool industry is the central fact of Australian history. It has been responsible for the country's prosperity to date, and also for ~~the~~ most dire problems and regional disruptions.

"There can scarcely be imagined a finer situation for a large mercantile city" wrote the historian Dr Lang in 1836; this statement crystallises the new vision that possessed the leading social groups. It is from this period that we can trace a strong line of continuous development in urban Sydney. The new City of this period already had its eulogisers who trumpeted that it was "the Queen of the Southern Seas, the Metropolis of a new world".

In 1823 a Legislative Council of nominated members was established in Sydney; 20 years later, a Legislative Assembly of restricted property franchise was begun. The Sydney City Council was set up in 1842, transportation having been abolished in 1839.

Sydney by 1843, was all set up in business, and was enjoying its first mature economic depression, following the land boom of the 'thirties; it was soon to experience the turmoils and population increases of the gold rush period.

The young cityscape was an examinable physical entity in

its first year of official existence, and when this is contrasted with the present day scene, is of great significance. The young city was still in harmony with its natural environment; topography was still recognisable; it was still in harmony with all traditional concepts of city building. (So much was it in harmony that these principles were followed in such matters as defence when there was no real threat of attack).

It is easy to be sentimental about "old Sydney" but there is much evidence that the physical set-up of this time expressed a more satisfactory social "organism" than does the Sydney of our time. Naturally, the community was relatively simply constituted, social conflicts were often violent, but were not yet so ~~unhappily~~ complex and obscure as to be beyond the comprehension of people in general; development of the industrial era has given us the A.W.A. tower as the highest physical aspiration of Sydney (just a few feet higher than the Bridge arch) , in place of the spire of St James Church which, from its Southern ridge dominated the infant cityscape. (The intermediate dominant was the Sydney Town Hall, symbol of civic prosperity and grandiloquence in the "golden age" of mercantile and trading Sydney.)

"The paltry cottages" of 1810, "sprinkled sparingly over the West neck of Sydney Cove", had given way, by 1843, to "large wharves and stores--- the crowded buildings of a populous town". Note the contemporary writer's pride in the word "crowded". The population was then 30 to 35,000. Most of the earlier important structures, the military barracks, Dawes Battery, Fort Phillip, St Phillip's Church, the first food stores, were on the West neck of the Cove. George Street, running into Parramatta Road, and George St North, formed the backbone of the city.

A re-orientation of public buildings had to take place because of space limitations on the West arm of Sydney Cove, and because of topographical features of the harbour, causing certain economic pressures to narrow the peninsula even more. In 1843, a clearly established axis of the "new" Government House St James' Church, the Hyde Park Barracks, took shape. St James, as already noted, dominated the skyline. It stood with its "finger pointing towards heaven" on the highest Southern ridge of the city. The Governor's "palace" was surrounded by the new Botanic Gardens and the Domain, while the new and quite grand Fort was on the Eastern point.

The small and shallow Farm Cove was not wanted for commerce; the warehouses, stores and wharves were already clustered around the West arm of the Cove (Sydney) which had deep water all round it (the deepest part of Port Jackson is just off Dawes Point, five miles inside the heads, where the depth is 157'0") There was also growth of maritime activity along the shores of the excellently situated Cockle Bay (Darling Harbour) which was early recognised as the "most extensive cove in Port Jackson". However, Sydney Cove, (South and West shores mainly) did not lose its place as main docking area until 1880. It is possible that the somewhat unpleasant business of the Western afternoon sun beating on the East shore of Darling Harbour had a contributing effect on its development as a "work place" up to the top of the hillside.

The East arm of Sydney Cove became the formal "front garden" of an ambitious city. Following this analogy, it can be seen that the division of the Harbour into "front" and "back" yards began about this time, the dividing line being where the Bridge now stands. This was made possible by the comfortable depths for navigation which occur on the West of this line. This natural formation has greatly favoured the preservation of beauty in the Eastern approach

up the Harbour to the central city area, and is to be contrasted with the normal layout of seaport cities, which usually have to place their untidy adjuncts at their "front gate".

The "new" Government House was commenced in 1837 and completed in 1843. Its facade was proudly stated to be "178'0" long and 44'6" high. The ante-room, drawing room, and ballroom could be thrown together into one vast room 135'0" by 28'0" " and it "possesses a tower 20'0" square, 70'0" high, topped with a flag-staff 50'0" higher again."

"Who, (asked a contemporary writer) can ever forget the sensation produced on his mind, on rounding Bradley's Head for the first time, when this building bursts unexpectedly into view glittering under the clear rays of a Southern sun, and its whiteness contrasting so finely with the blue water of the harbour.?" It is to be assumed that the water of Port Jackson was bluer in those days than it is now.

At this time the harbour was directly accessible to all people and was indeed the natural local manifestation of spirituality that must have vied even then, as it undoubtedly does now (the sailing and surf "cult"), with the imported ideologies of Church and State. The harbour was the main highway to the interior, to the small settlements up the Parramatta and Lane Cove Rivers. A rapidly expanding village was established at Balmain in the years 1840-42.

The views of the harbour was then, as now, of great impress to new arrivals; "first beheld, last forgotten", and the view which "in short, which all the persons in the Colony, old and young, rich and poor, bond and free, of whatever profession, rank, or creed, have looked upon and admired so much that its coves, islets and whole features are indelibly engraved on

as household words."

In 1843, Cockatoo Island, now the site of vast shipbuilding and dock facilities, and only just visible from the S.E. Pylon, was the last surviving penal station in the Colony.

Grain silos of 100,000 bushells capacity had just been completed there by the convicts' labour, as a precaution against the bitter experiences of the early famines. Goat Island, nearer to Dawes Point, standing guard at the entrance to the two rivers, was the site of the Water Police Headquarters and the Powder Magazine. Over to the North East, Mr.

Mussman had built extensive stores and ship building yards at Great Sirius Cove, now Mosman; these activities in this beautiful bay have fortunately long since disappeared.

A strong new gaol had been built on the hill plateau at Darlinghurst; Sydney College (Sydney Grammar School) had been established; Woolloomooloo was a pleasantly timbered valley, carrying a racecourse, bathing facilities, and leading around to the dramatically shaped and placed Garden Island.

Garden Island was the chosen burial place of a Judge Advocate of the Colony, and his Secretary, a Brigadier General; their choice was extolled in 1843 in these words "..... this little isle, where they had often wandered to contemplate and admire the beauties of nature; indulging a wish so natural and so common among mankind that their last resting place should not be disturbed by the noisy hilarity of a busy world, but be visited by an occasional pilgrim attracted to the spot by its loneliness and beauty. Their wish has been granted them, and their requiem is now sung by the soft ripple of water breaking on the pebbly beach and the sighing of zephyrs among the trees that overshadow their graves."

At the time that was written, the first few fine mansions had already appeared on the high ridge of Pott's Point, which dips down into the harbour and reappears as Garden Island. The lengthy quotation is justifiable as an illustration of the tragi-comic irony that must assail the observer of 1954 developments.

Our favorite essayist now describes the city proper : ---
 ".... the principal mass of buildings stand on two ridges of land, with an intervening valley, which form the boundaries of Sydney Cove. The principal streets are tolerably regular.... George Street may be considered the main artery of the city."
 "..... the buildings are composed of brick or sandstone, of which there is an abundant supply..... the new buildings however are creeping in, so that in another generation we may look in vain for a relic of the class of houses that prevailed in the good old times when people were allowed to build according to the caprice of their fancy."
 "..... this contrast of new houses with old is not confined to George Street, but characterises the streets of Sydney generally, and has by no means an unpleasant appearance. It communicates variety, which is so grateful to the eye, and breaks the uniformity that becomes almost tiresome in streets that have been constructed on a regular plan."

This sort of thing may be the literary equivalent or expression of the economic theories of the day. It should convince us that the present day confusion is due as much to deliberate design on the part of our forefathers as it is to the unfortunate exigencies of hurried building. It leads us to consider the peculiar jumble of our Spring, Bent, O'Connell and Bligh Streets; these make up our present commercial and shipping and financial centre, set behind the Royal Exchange, the Wool Salesrooms, Lands Department, and Union Club. Bent Street is indeed bent; the whole

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complex pattern was caused by the area of very low-lying ground, carrying a spring, ~~on the sides of~~ the Tank Stream. Bridge Street is in line with an old bridge across the Stream around this area, but until the Tank Stream was completely covered over, a triangular area could not be built on. Another very characteristic feature of Sydney streets, the lines of which were in the main laid down by this time, is their winding nature, which gives the inhabitants a series of closed or semi closed vistas, much in the fashion of the just so slightly crooked high streets of the traditional English villages. ~~Sydney owes this feature~~ a considerable part of the exciting and unknowable air of ~~haughty femininity~~ that intrigues visitors to Sydney, or makes ~~the~~ outback people long for their next visit. ~~the outback~~

Sydney's urban development is related intimately to the growth of the State of New South Wales..... in practical terms, is inseparable from it. The development and exploitation of the inland areas was the chief preoccupation of leading Sydney men for the rest of the 19th century. The way they went about this task, the fortunes they built up, the problems and setbacks they encountered, are all faithfully recorded in the stones of Sydney town. The legacy of wealth, waste, and corrupt practices they passed down is still with us.

The root cause of the anti-organic, anti-human scale of Sydney in its regional relationship was the bitter rivalry between the six Australian colonies, all of which were primarily sea-ports. The struggles for colonial independence were primarily struggles to get as much area as possible around your sea-port, so that you could exploit it via your sea-port. As a natural consequence of the early property franchise, and the Government headquarters

being at the sea-ports, city interests, and absentee landlords, controlled the Government's policy. After the cities had grown in population, and the franchise extended, the weight of city voters was sufficient to maintain the city ascendancy. As noted previously, the whole process started with the Bigge Report. Agriculture was not the most immediately profitable employment, and had no appeal for aristocrats. "The country's not fit for anything except grazing". Certain unforeseen developments like the gold rushes disturbed the pattern. The richness of the Victorian "strikes" somehow compensated that State for the defeat it suffered over the fixing of State boundaries. Apart from the flow of money from these fields, the main effect of the gold rushes was the influx of new population types attracted here. Major governmental problems were created when the unsuccessful hordes of miners demanded land..... in fact, whole classes of people were continually demanding land, and the Land Policies were the most vital of all for over 50 years, when the issues of Free Trade or Protection broke out violently.

But whatever happened, no matter who was fighting who... squatters, farmers, selectors, miners, shearers, &c... the towns men of Sydney prospered, Sydney grew, and took care that no other ports were allowed to develop on the N.S.W. coast.

Railway building began in N.S.W. in 1855, and has been fairly continuous ever since. The N.S.W. Government seems to have deliberately set out to ensure that Victoria and Queensland would have different railway gauges. An agreement was reached, and N.S.W. waited until their neighbours could not ~~change~~ their gauge; apparently then proceeding to announce several changes of intention..... anyhow the nett result is that all railway lines lead to Sydney, and that the radial lines from Melbourne and Brisbane cannot filch any of the Riverina or North Coast trade from Sydney

Early N.S.W. was decentralised to some extent because of the slowness of transport. The railways had an immediate and powerful centralising effect. Railway freight concessions were, and still are manipulated to prevent the growth of seaports on the North and South coasts.

Australia has never been free of wrangles regarding state boundaries; it has never been completely free of agitation for new states, although the last successful movement achieved its aim in 1861. Even the existing boundaries are in places ill defined and still subject to dispute.

Sir Henry Parkes, the "Father of Federation" saw the dangers inherent in the administration of huge inland areas by Governments intent on seaport developments. Federation was opposed by those who rightly guessed that it would weaken the investment they had centralism within each State. However, in spite of great opposition, Federation was achieved, and Australia has surprisingly kept a Federal policy along the lines laid down by Deakin for a good 50 years.

The swing to a Protection policy after Federation gave a tremendous impetus to the development of Australian secondary industry. In Sydney, it increased by a third in a few years. Two wars have helped it along; as also has the general growth of nationalism..... it is these factors which have changed Sydney from a city of wealthy pastoral and shipping interests into a major industrial phenomenon.

This changing ascendancy of different activities is clearly expressed in the changing rings of development radiating out in almost concentric circles from the original settlement at Sydney Cove.

To carry this hypothesis through would require a study of great magnitude, but a few rough indications of what is meant will follow . To mention that Kurnell development as being the most Southern and latest segment, (including the B.O.R.A.L. and other relatively older oil company areas on Botany Bay) may or may not be facile; however it is certain that the large sprawling industrial belt South of Sydney did come about in the segments-in-time-series manner.

This development in horizontal layers occurred because of the quick and cumulative growth of Sydney activities; in other older cities, the layer growth was vertical, not horizontal; this indicated a slow and gradual superseding of different activities rather than a quick (160 years is small time indeed in city evolution in traditional notions) and cumulative growth. Sydney does exhibit an elementary series of vertical layer growth; it is, as one would expect, deepest at Circular Quay, and dies away quite quickly. A non traditional form of vertical expansion is represented by the construction of railway tunnels, which are quite intricately involved in Sydney's substrata.

The old pastoral and shipping interests, by no means destroyed by later events, are still strong in the segment immediately behind Circular Quay, although an interesting streak of decay has run along the East arm of Sydney Cove, along the old strip of warehouses that until recently housed Carl Thomas' restaurant. This streak of decay has already struck into the "financial" centre; the Farmers' and Graziers' mammoth building at the East end of the Quay was sold last year, and will be turned into offices probably as soon as the Quay Railway viaduct is completed. (The same revitalisation will probably occur within a generous radius of the new Railway Station; notwithstanding that the monstrosity in itself will probably completely destroy the "piazza" quality, possessed by the Quay open space for about a century. It will become a mere inhuman traffic artery.) The sale of the Sydney Morning Herald building to a business and banking interest, is another sign of the operative pressures, this time at the Southern perimenter of the centre of power.

This sort of movement is going on all the time in cities, and in Sydney in particular these movements constitute a fascinating display of social and economic interaction on physical environment.

The second segment south of Circular Quay is the business centre; it is seeking to expand, and is moving Southward and slightly Eastward and Westward. The new Commonwealth Bank in Market Street, new Berger House in Elizabeth Street, are two unmistakable pincers of the business world, closing in on what was once the premier retail trading centre.

The recent coup by Waltons Stores in Park Street, and the general revival of retail trade south of Waltons,

indicates that the retailers are responding to these self same pressures in the way we would expect. The retail centre is now by far the largest in mere area, and this is a reflection of the needs that brought it into such prominence, i.e. the great increase in consumer population following the growth of an industrial proletariat, which as we have seen in previous pages, followed the setting up of Sydney in the big-time industrial field, which followed the victory of the Protectionists, which followed Federation, which was caused by a whole heap of things, some of which owed less than is usual to the profit motives, e.g. nationalism, common sense, etc.....

Going further southward, we come to the marketing area, containing such places as the Haymarket, Paddy's Market, Fishmarkets, Fruit and Vegetable markets. This is likely to get squeezed out any year now, since it is blocked on all sides, and the lines of transportation and communication on which it depends are being slowly strangled.

The area on the East of George St, south of the proper retail centre is more or less a void, which will be filled very soon. Whether it will be filled by one of the aforementioned pressure groups, or will be divided among them, and others (Catholic Church, Commonwealth Govt, Opera Houses,) remains to be seen. Several recent pieces of renovation are of interest; namely the renovation of Marx House by the Commonwealth Bank, the new Catholic Sanctuary, The Palladium Theatre, a small Bank, McIlraiths, and the recent move of the R.A.I.A. offices to Rawson Chambers.

Going back to observe some possible developments that may upset the general trend, we must remember the proposed extension of Elizabeth Street at its northern end,

and the proposed Qantas-Commonwealth block, the new Law building in Phillip Street, the changing character of William Street, the threat of business development in King's Cross, the big query that still somehow hovers over Woolloomooloo and many other factors which are beyond the range of this present section of the Report.

Reverting to the historical phase three, it must be remembered that the most potent force moulding Australian development today is the Federal Public Service; this is not the Federal Parliament, but a vast complex organisation destined to play a major part in the future of Sydney's physical environment. Allied with the Commonwealth Public Service, come such bodies as State Public Services, Electricity Commissions, City Councils, County Councils, Planning Authorities, Hydro Electric Authorities, and other various organisations of the new order.

SECTION "C"

Mumford writes of the "city as theatre"; and it is in this sense that the prospect from the pylon tower must be felt by the surveyor.

"The city creates the theatre, and is the theatre." Sydney then is obviously a city; what finer setting could any drama want? Perhaps the historical phases referred to in the previous section would have been better considered as Acts in the play. (arguing by analogy, to reinforce previous conclusions, how better is it to be acquainted with the synopsis of the early Acts, when one enters a playhouse half way through the performance? How else would a great play be explicable to one not born before curtain-rise?)

It may be of some value to search for comparisons and enlightenment regarding Sydney in other cities of approximately 33 degrees South and North latitudes. Would such comparison with Valparaiso, Buenos Aires, Shanghai, the Nile Delta, Bermuda, Baghdad, Haifa, Tripoli, Charlestown, Los Angeles, offer any enlightenment to a stranger viewing this scene? Could there be perhaps a similarity or some constant factor in the attitudes of these cities to work and wealth?

"This has a slight smell of Paris about it, don't you think so, Bell," "Yes sir, and there's a trifling smell of America in the air too"; this was the slightly pompous running up of Seymour Hicks' novel of 30 years ago, "Hullo Australians". Even then, or perhaps, in those days, it was taken for granted that no one could arrive in Sydney

purely on business bent". Eric Linklater, a recent and particularly alert commentator wrote of Sydney under the chapter heading "The City of Youth", in his book, "A Year of Space".

Linklater was impressed with Sydney's "tolerant acquiescence...

...always in an undertone was the tolerance of people who knew that extravagance of any sort, in almost any degree, could be paid for by the incalculable and hardly touched riches of their land. Australia is untidy to look at ----

geologically untidy, agriculturally untidy, and in some of the remoter urban districts a gallimaufry of disorder--- but it is the untidiness of ease, of carelessness, the unbuttoned state of people who live well by right of inheritance, and care little for appearances."

Writing of a crowd in George St, near Wynyard, on a Saturday morning, Linklater is delightfully penetrating, "It was a youthful traffic, the youngest crowd that ever I was caught in; and if indeed corruption, and the economics of cloud-cuckoo land financed them, their bloom was strangely sweet."

The climate is most commonly held responsible for Sydney people's laziness, and it is obviously a contributing factor of major importance. This laziness has been much much discussed from many angles, from preachers to publicity agents..... an interesting note is that the George St of today follows the original meandering bullock track of the early settlement, and that the railways and highways from Sydney to the South and West follow painfully in the original explorers tracks. "To build for posterity" does not seem part of the Australian vernacular.

On the eastern coast of Australia, the south-east trade winds are the principal factor deciding the weather, but their course is so modified by the sun's summer influence, and to some extent by the Great Dividing Range, that on a large part

of the coast, including Sydney, they become north-east winds. It is this north-east wind that is the "prevailing" wind in Sydney. The familiar "Sydney Southerly" wind is a direct result of the Blue Mountains. West of that region, the general direction of the wind is easterly; the sharply rising block of hills deflects the current upwards, and normally it flows over Sydney at a high level. When for some obscure reason the north east current slackens, the westerly drops in to fill the vacant space; this Sydney westerly can be blazing hot or bitterly cold.... it is the most unpleasant wind of all. At the same time as the westerly is operating the same causes that slackened off the sea wind are operating further south to bring in its stead a cold southerly, which drives the west wind back again over the mountains; this description is of a typical summer cycle. In the twenties of this century, and into the thirties, the approach of a cool southerly "change" would be signalled up the coast from Twofold Bay to Jervis Bay to Wollongong, and be announced to Sydney people by a flag or light on the defunct Post Office tower; this would be of great assistance to those who wanted to know what sort of an evening to prepare for.... the glorious refreshment of the south, or torture of the west wind. In winter the southerly is less vehement, and may be contending with the west wind for several days before it drives it back up the mountainsides.

Sydney has no ice formations, no snow, it has no excessive periods of clouded skies. In fact, it is said that Sydney skies are among the bluest in the world; ~~this~~ ^{is to} be taken literally, not metaphorically.

Sydney people have always been conscious of the aesthetic qualities of their "blue water" city; in earlier times the harbour was universally accessible, and was of

crystal clear quality; now the misuse of the foreshores, the pollution of the water, the spread of living areas has focussed attention more and more on the ocean beaches. And we have the fantastic enthusiasm displayed for the surf live-saving clubs, swimming, sailing, and sun-tan.

Port Jackson covers an area of 21 square miles, and penetrates 13 miles directly inland. It has between 150 and 180 miles of foreshore, and is slightly less than a mile in average width. The Pylon lookout blurb claims a five million acre view from the pylon summit; it is a horrifying thought that all this and much more seems covered in urban development. Indeed the problems of Sydney's uncontrolled sprawl, in common with similar problems of cities over the world, is now a well recognised one; and as we have already seen, this polypus growth has causes in economic and technical fields.

sub-

Australia is perhaps the most urbanised country in the world; the "drift to the cities" is another much discussed problem. Australia has never possessed a peasantry anchored to the soil, and so the term is perhaps a misnomer; there cannot be drift, when there has never been proper anchorage. The antagonism and anti-human qualities of the land masses of the continent interior have discouraged all but the strongest souls from coming to an understanding of it. Politico-economic cycles of the last century positively acted to stop any coming to terms with the environment.

The mystic qualities of the continent and its outback areas are not to be defined here; suffice it to say that the national psyche of large land masses like Australia, could be expected to develop over a long period of time more like that of other large land masses (cf Russian psyche as demonstrated in Dostoevsky) than of small sea-locked island nations like Great Britain. Australia is still not keeping its development

in spiritual qualities up with its political and technical development.

The city of Sydney has always played an important role in the spiritual comforting and refreshing of outback people. Lawson writes that he "would often 'shout' in bars outback for souls that are athirst". Round about the nineties, there was a series of poems published that together made up a rhymed debate on "City versus the Bush". Paterson, city bred, indulged in somewhat puerile eulogies of the "bush", and the outback life generally. Lawson, ever more realist, and with a passion that put Paterson to shame, born on the goldfields, with wide and deep experience of both city and outback life, spoke of his search for "the Southern Poets land whereon to pitch my tent", and of his hatred for what he found instead. He was bitter in his descriptions of the ~~shearer~~ who is driven and the shearer who is shorn". The use of the words "hatred" and "bitter" is certainly unjustified in relation to Lawson's work as a whole; for his conclusion indicates his essential qualities:---

"I believe the Southern poets land will not be realised

"Tills the plains are irrigated, and the land is humanised."

Reverting to Sydney's role as the place to head for with a "cheque", Lawson demanded of Paterson "if the bushmen, down on pleasure, miss the everlasting stars, when they drink and flirt, and so on, in the glow of private bars?"

Sydney depended for its existence and prosperity before industrialisation almost entirely on the wealth of its hinterland. It was the holiday city for people from the outback loneliness with money to spend. It still is.

25.

These aspects of the "city hunger" problem are directly related to the regional problems of N.S.W. The "region" is defined as "an area exhibiting some unifying characteristicit must be of sufficient resources, and yet of one mind on vital issues..... it usually has a focal point of high population density..... it has geographic boundaries."

Both in the development of N.S.W. as a whole, and of Sydney in itself, geographic, or topographical factors have been over-ridden rough-shod. The onrush of mechanical capabilities can accelerate this process. It is certainly time "for the preparation of a regional Plan covering the state of N.S.W., and that matters such as decentralisation of communications and land use should be considered on a State basis." (N.S.W. Chapter, R.A.I.A., Report on the City of Sydney Planning Scheme)

Questions of scale have been a constant source of discontent to immigrants to Australia. Tremendous distances in a continent bigger than Europe as we commonly know it, vast potentiality that laughs at the intensive cultivation and traditional conservation techniques and thought patterns of older and more restricted societies, have an unsettling effect on newcomers.

26.

SECTION "D"

It has been pointed out that the function of Sydney as a seaport was fundamental to its growth and prosperity. It would be as well to observe the present condition Sydney's port facilities, and to try and make some assessment of Sydney's future role in this field.

Wharf footage decreased from 51,000 feet to 51,000 feet in the twenty years to 1950. (The building of the Captain Cook Dry Dock at Pott's Point entailed demolition of some wharves during the war.) There is now a famine of warehouse space. Sydney cargo handling facilities are less mechanised than other Australian ports. Dry cargo tonnages and "ship trips" have fallen since before the war; This seems to be a fair indication of some decline in activity; however the maze of port statistics contains many facile and misleading figures. Contrary to popular opinion, the most critical problems of the port of Sydney are due to inefficient management by wharf owners, ~~and~~ insufficient mechanisation, and the frightfully obsolescent storage facilities. Whenever wharf labour strains itself, a crisis in warehouse stangulation occurs. An excellent example of rare managerial efficiency is the firm of James Patrick and Co, generally recognised all along the waterfront as such.

The "Hungry Mile" of the depression (1932) days was the line of interstate wharves between Walsh Bay and Pyrmont Bridge. The still disrupted and unhappy state of labour relations is reflected in the unhappy state of wharf facilities.

It seems that the area at present devoted to port facilities is quite sufficient. What is needed is complete renovation of these areas, and the diversion of excess future

trade to other ports or docking areas (e.g. Botany Bay).

Looking S.W. from the pylon top, one can see a very heavily industrialised area that includes two powerhouses, White Bay and Pyrmont, numerous floating and dry docks, big oil company depots, innumerable noxious industries, railway yards, and traffic arteries. A pall of smoke hangs over these areas. Sydney is reasonably lucky in the matter of air pollution; the prevailing wind is north east, as previously explained, and consequently the city is not in the main wind shadow of its own industrial area. In blighted areas to the south-east, south, south west and west of the central city however, where mixed development is the source of evil, living standards are impaired by the smoke menace.

It would be unreasonable to expect an industrial area on a waterfront to be particularly tidy in its operations. Certainly the South West view is a messy one; great welts and scars of traffic ways, railway lines; foreshores cluttered in a most inefficient manner.

It would be unreasonable to expect ~~that~~ the waters of Port Jackson to be as clean now as they were in 1787. Nevertheless the pollution of Harbour water is a serious problem; intelligent planning can help to reduce the likelihood of excessive pollution.

The hilly nature of the ridges, necks, arms, which intertwine with the waters of the harbour have always made transport difficulties for all the city's functions. Main roads in Sydney have mostly seemed to run along the tops of the ridges; this has left the foreshores and hillsides open for built up areas.

The shocking waste of harbour foreshores around Port Jackson, and of ocean foreshores to a lesser extent, is one of the worst aspects of this scene from the town planning point of view. There are particularly noticable exceptions to the general rule of squalid residential or industrial development.... the Botanic Gardens, Cremorne, and inner Mosman Bay are good examples of intelligent foreshore protection for public use.

The few islands that dot Sydney Harbour are almost completely inaccessible to the public. This is understandable where Cockatoo and Goat Islands are concerned, but Shark and Clark Islands could be popular reserves of considerable general amenity.

Promontories are difficult to approach also; where not covered with private development so that no view is even possible, military reserves, tramsheds, naval bases all take their share of important cultural assests and destroy them.

If one could look directly north from the South East Pylon, one would see reasonable use made of the foreshores of Milson's Point where there are an Olympic Swimming pool, a Luna Park, and a banal set of electric train parking lines.

Taronga Zoological Park and Ashton Gardens to the North East, and Ball's Head to the North West are promontories similar to Cremorne in their treatment, only they are entirely reserves, while Cremorne is a residential area with protected foreshore.

The use of water transport on the harbour is one of the most pleasing amenities of the city. Yet this avenue does not seem to be fully exploited; with the recent

Government acquisition of Sydney Ferries, it might be expected that, freed from worries of profit making, the ferry transport system will become a more lavishly endowed convenience,

The worst areas of Sydney slums beyond the smoke haze can only be imagined by the Pylon observer; however there are other types of urban blight very readily to be seen. The foreshores of Kirribilli, for example, and those of Balmain, very different in character, but offensive all the same. Then over to the North West, are the decayed living areas of Greenwich and Woolwich, and the grand old district of Lane Cove, merely a shadow of its former self.

Turning to the main city area, one can notice the reasonable compactness of the high building area, formed physically perhaps by the 150'0" height limitation. One wonders whether proper implementation of the Floor space index will be carried on with, and what difference it will make in what period to the skyline of Sydney. As already noted, the A.W.A. transmission tower is the highest point in view. This is the high point of our civilisation to date, quite literally. One can expect the changing land use patterns of the city area as outlined in section "B", to bring about some transformation in the present semi void area between say St Phillip's Church and Dawes and Miller's Points. The old Observatory park is well placed next to the Bradfield Highway or Southern approaches to the bridge, but less happy are the residential areas that still cling to the old areas of Millers Point and to Lower Fort Street.

The southern and northern approaches to the harbour bridge were the first instance of enormous traffic arteries in the 20th century manner to be built in Australia. We are now threatened with several more super highways, namely the Eastern and Western distributors to the Southern approaches of the Bridge, and another rail viaduct, already rearing its haunched platforms in the centre of Circular Quay.

This brings us to the general question of traffic congestion; without going into the details of practical measures to deal with an immediate critical problem, a few comments ~~on the long view~~ on the long view are called for. One of the greatest threats to contemporary cities is that the cure for traffic congestion may be worse than the disease. Vast, inhuman, out of scale, expensive monuments to an activity which in itself is of no value whatsoever, cannot be afforded by a civilised community; expenditure on war preparations are of this nature; so are super highways and parking areas of colossal size.

Professor Denis Winston, returning recently from overseas, pointed out that traffic problems in London were different to those in American cities, and to those in Sydney, because the efficient public transport system in London rendered it unnecessary for people to use private cars to such a large extent.

The largest single item to the South West of the pylon is the Grain elevators on Glebe Island. One would expect to see such structures in the seaport of an important wheat growing hinterland. They remind one of Le Corbusier's "New Vision" and the new beauty to be found in the richness and simplicity of some mechanistic developments. In fact, the handling of such materials as bulk wheat in the port of Sydney is well and efficiently handled.

Advertising signs are numerous, and are an outstanding feature of the view from the Bridge at night. They are merely a reflection of Australia's acceptance of American values.

Questions of scale are particularly worrying when one regards the Circular Quay ferry wharves from the Pylon, or the Harbour Bridge from the ferry wharves. The latter are well in scale with human dimensions, but the Sydney Harbour Bridge is a gigantic, heavy, clumsy ugly fabrication, notwithstanding the lacy excitement of some partial close views.

The "new" Maritime Services Building is well placed for its function, and is the product of much pride in its supposed beauty by its owners. But it could be argued that it is of an architectural style found usually only in authoritarian surroundings tainted with meglomania. In scale, it does not help the Quay area, being unhappily somewhere between the ferry wharves and the Harbour Bridge.

A similar recent building group is the "Greenway" blocks of flats at Miller's Point, fortunately out of sight from the S.E. Pylon. Clumsy, this "largest apartment block in the Southern Hemisphere" also seems a reflection of meglomania. In unhappy proximity to the northern approaches to the Bridge, with not even the symmetrical grandeur of the Maritime Services Building, it is a blot on the landscape only too easily visible from other parts of Sydney.

This discussion brings one to the Bridge Pylons themselves. It is comforting to think that if the controversy were ~~now~~ alive today, the "no pylons" opinion

carry the day. The Sydney of the early 1930's was not of this opinion and decided to have the useless monuments to their own ~~philistinism~~ lack of perception. The barbaric amusements of the ascent up the pylon are no reflection of civilisation on Sydney.

To the East, the "largest crane" towers over the "largest dry-dock" The construction of a naval base dry dock, and repair depot at Garden Island, whatever may have been the practical exigencies of the situation, is certainly to be regretted. Pott's Point is Sydney's most densely populated area, and lacks the foreshore reservations which are by right due to it. (see illustration)

Scattered comments could continue almost indefinitely on the "good" and "bad" features of existing urban development from the "town planning point of view". However, such things are not "good" or bad in themselves but only in relation to certain yet to be acknowledged or defined meanings of the "good life".

The truth is that people will get that kind of town planning, and as much of it, as they want or deserve. Theories of town planning values must spring from the ruling set of ideas of a ruling social class; it is an examination of the changing motivations and constitution of the ruling social classes that is of value in understanding the urban development of Sydney in 1954.

If the future is to be tackled with an adherence to "pure" principles of town planning, then the leading set of ideas held by the community in general must be changed.

APPENDIX 1.

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APPENDIX 2.

MAPS.

- The Cumberland County Council Planning Scheme.
- The City of Sydney Planning Scheme.
- Gregory's Map of Sydney Harbour.
- Cumberland County Council. Aerial Photo Map No 467-119.

APPENDIX 3.

URBAN DEVELOPMENT NOTED FROM THE S.E. BRIDGE PYLON.

LOOKING EAST

Watson's Bay Peninsula. Neilsen Park. Vaucluse Heights.
 Shark Island. Rose Bay, Base South Head Signal Station.
 Ashton Park. Taronga Zoological Park.
 Mosman Heights.
 Point Piper. Clark Island.
 Garden Island Naval Base. POTT'S Point.
 Farm Cove. The Domain. Botanic Gardens. Darling Point.
 N.S.W. Government House.
 Fort Macquarie. Tram Depot.
 Sydney Cove.

LOOKING SOUTH

Sydney Cove. Wharves, East side. Old Warehouses.
 Conservatorium of Music. Art Gallery.
 CIRCULAR QUAY. Ferry Wharves. Darlinghurst hill.
 THE CITY OF SYDNEY. Commercial and Business Centre.
 The New Maritime Services Board Building. George St North.
 Wharves West side Sydney Cove. Old warehouses.
 THE A.W.A. TOWER. The T. & G. Building Tower.
 The new Central Telephone Exchange Building.
 Church Hill. St Phillip's Church.
 SOUTHERN APPROACHES SYDNEY HARBOUR BRIDGE... Bradfield Highway.
 Toll Gates.
 Three stories of terraces Miller's Point under Bridge.
 Warehouse and Dockside traffic arteries. Hickson Road.
 Observatory Park and Hill. Fort Street Schools.
 DARLING HARBOUR. Walsh Bay.
 Darling Harbour Railway Goods Yards.
 Pyrmont. Orient Line Dock. Powerhouse.
 Blackwattle Bay. Rogelle Bay. ~~Whata~~ Bay. Powerhouse.
 Glebe Island. Grain Elevators.
 The University of Sydney.
 Wentworth Park Dog Track.
 Sydney Technical College. Ultimo.

LOOKING WEST.

Balmain. The Western Suburbs.
 Mort Bay. Mort's Dock. Floating Dock.
 Ballast Point. Caltex Oil Depot.
 Snails Bay.
 Goat Island. Water Police Station.
 Longnose Point. Birchgrove. Birchgrove park.
 Cockatoo Island. Parramatta River.
 Woolwich. Longueville. Lane Cove River.
 Greenwich. Woollich Dock. Clarke's Point.
 Ball's Head Reserve.
 North Shore Gas Company Storage tanks.
 Kerosene Bay.
 Wallarah Coal Depot, and wharf.
 Waverton. Wollstonecraft. (Crow's Nest Heights.)
 Blues Point. McMahons Pt. Ferry depot. Lavender Bay.

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LOOKING NORTH

Crow's Nest Heights.

North Sydney.

Lavender Bay.

THE SYDNEY ARBOUR BRIDGE.

Milson's Point.

Train (electric) Depot. Luna Park.

Olympic Swimming Pool. (Greenway flats)

Kirribilli. Flats on water's edge.

Admiralty House.

Neutral Bay.

Cremorne Point. Cremorne foreshore reserve.

Mosman heights.

Fort Denison.

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REPORT ON URBAN DEVELOPMENT AS SEEN FROM THE S.E. PYLON OF THE
SYDNEY HARBOUR BRIDGE.

(George Clarke)

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ADDITIONAL MAPS.

Maritime Services Board. Map showing the extent of private wharf development in 1901, and the extent of reconstruction and addition by the Harbour Trust and M.S.B. subsequent to nationalisation of the waterfront.

Map showing the proposed development of Darling Harbour.

Map showing the proposed development of Rozelle Bay and Blackwattle Bay.