

IN SEARCH OF A POLICY

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GC 1955

1. Herewith we begin an enquiry aimed at the clear statement in words of a policy for the Cumberland County Council.
2. Policy is hereby defined as a simple system of principles designed to guide action upon a complex problem.
3. The particular complex problem upon which the Cumberland County Council is required to act is hereby defined as the three dimensional character of land-use within the County as it changes over time.
4. The three dimensional character of land-use as it changes over time is hereby defined as the collective social, political, economic and technological peculiarities of successive uses of the same parcels of land.
5. Therefore we seek a simple system of principles which will guide our actions regarding successive uses related to criteria arbitrarily divided under four headings.
6. We believe that previous action regarding successive uses has been guided by restricted and/or fallacious assumptions about the social, political, economic and technological peculiarities of the character of land-use.
7. The maker of policy must first try to discover what is, in fact, the existing situation: it is vital to the success of our enquiry that we should tend to discover this rather than invent it.
8. Unfortunately such discovery is either impossible or beyond our present capacity: even if the latter is postulated, it is impossible to examine a continually changing succession of uses at any one point in time: all we can do is study trends over periods.
9. "The social world is not devoid of a measure of rationality if approached with the expectations of Macbethian cynicism. It is this measure of rationality which can justify social planning. Since this rationality consists of a limited number of potential trends, one of which is bound to materialise, social planning, correctly understood, is the marshalling of human and material forces in rational anticipation of those potential trends."
10. Rational anticipation can imply either the rejection or acceptance of a potential trend: if designated "undesirable", a trend can be resisted or diverted: alternatively, it can be accepted, either passively or positively.
11. Most positive of all is a policy which seeks to create new trends.
12. However, successful policies do not ignore the realities of power.

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13. Hence, in search of a policy, we must:---

- (a) establish social, political, economic and technological trends - empirically wherever possible, but also arbitrarily and intuitively;
- (b) decide on moral and ethical grounds whether we should either:-
 - (i) reject, (ii) divert,
 - (iii) accept passively,
 - (iv) accept positively, each trendor whether we should seek to create any new trends.
- (c) measure our moral and ethical decisions against the realities of power and consequently either:-
 - (i) modify them, or
 - (ii) seek more power.

G.C. 16/7/55.

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PROBLEMS INVOLVED IN THE DETAILED FORMULATION OF A PROGRAMME
DESIGNED TO ESTABLISH TRENDS WITH A MINIMUM OF EFFORT AND A
MAXIMUM OF EXPEDIENCY.

1. The detailed programme must be capable of completion within a specified time, say twelve months after formulation: therefore it will be necessary to anticipate results to a limited extent by setting researchers to work checking preconceived questions.
2. Supervision of workers will be necessary to ensure that (a) time is not being wasted (b) objective enquiry is not being restricted or distorted by the preconceived questions.
3. Once the detailed programme is formulated, efforts should be made to have joint research projects on particular parts of it initiated with:---

(a) University departments:-

- (i) Economics (ii) Sociology/Psychology
- (iii) Education (iv) Anthropology
- (v) Engineering, Highway, Traffic, Mechanical
- (vi) Town and Country Planning;

(b) State Government Departments:-

- (i) Local Government (ii) Education
- (iii) Main Roads (iv) Health
- (v) Agencies like the M.W.S. & D. Board;

(c) Commonwealth Government Departments:-

- (i) Regional Development Division of National Development,
- (ii) Bureau of Census and Statistics;

(d) other bodies as:--

- (i) Real Estate Institute (ii) Retail Traders Association
- (iii) Local Government Association
- (iv) Chambers of Commerce and Manufactures;

(e) private companies, banks and capitalists;

(f) trade unions.

4. It is not suggested that all of these bodies could be invigled into helping us with their work. Some would not be much use anyway. However, many of the above have their own research programmes and these could be slanted to throw light on some part of our project. If half a dozen joint projects could be organised:--

(a) the Council would save time and money;

(b) the Council would gain the confidence and co-operation of the particular groups concerned in the future on other matters;

(c) the Council would be exercising a function of leadership in the metropolitan community.

5. Consideration should be given to the appointment of one highly qualified and experienced research manager to head the team for

twelve months. His job would be to see that the original purpose of the project was constantly being forwarded, and that the principles of scientific and statistical methods were adhered to.

6. It is not the intention of the project to waste time on high-falutin' research, but rather is it intended that :---

- (a) existing haphazard work be co-ordinated into a purposeful and controlled "grand design";
- (b) properly supervised scientific method be employed;
- (c) that a long range policy be formulated in considerable detail;
- (d) that such a policy be so well backed by the findings, of the Council and of other bodies perhaps at present antagonistic, that it could ~~xxx~~ be publicly propounded without fear of crippling attack.

7. Staff members whose work could be co-ordinated on such long range review are:- ~~Mr~~ Hain, Arnot, (Wall,) Parago, Kennedy, Clarke. These staff are at present primarily concentrated on long range surveys and research anyway. Other staff remains for planning administration work.

8. Some of the basic features of the investigation would be:--

- (a) a pluralist view of society: a view which considers the metropolitan community as a complicated pattern of groups with peculiar and conflicting patterns of self interest whose common equity in Sydney forces them into compromises for the common good;
- (b) an attempt to go further than ~~xxxx~~ before into the question of measurable efficiencies of land use;
- (c) an investigation (top secret) into ways and means of rationalising the present distribution of metropolitan political power in favour of the County Council;
- (d) the working out of a series of incentives and persuasive techniques to implement broad land-use proposals instead of deliniating inflexible boundarie lines.

9. Mr Hain has already sketched a programme of fact finding which he considers should be undertaken. I consider this a good basis on which to start working out the detailed programme, but this schedule covers only financial, employment and polulation trends in detail. In my opinion, his Net Social Product of Land Use hypothesis requires further discussion. I should like to work out a sketch of the social political and technological questions besides those already included by Mr Hain.