

# NATURE

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## LAND USE AND SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT

THE scheme outlined in the White Paper on the Control of Land Use\* issued by the Government in June last, together with a Bill facilitating the public acquisition, at 1939 prices, of damaged and decayed urban areas in Great Britain for planned redevelopment as single units, although following closely the recommendations of the Uthwatt Report on this aspect of the problem, had a poor reception. The merits of the Government scheme as a means of solving the particular problem of compensation and betterment have in fact been obscured by dissatisfaction with its attitude towards the wider question of land-ownership, and with its unwillingness to adopt a positive planning policy. The importance of the latter has been emphasized by events during the recess.

It is now accepted on all sides that planning control is necessary to secure the best use of the land in the public interest, that planning control is frustrated by the practical impossibility of balancing compensation and betterment under the present system of land ownership, and that therefore this system must be modified to the extent required to make effective planning control possible. Meanwhile, the question of the best use of land, as between the claims of housing and farming, of commerce and amenities, is a matter of the utmost urgency and importance. It is no longer a question of merely saving land: it is a matter of saving and using.

The news that Britain is to be increasingly searched for oil-fields, while welcome from the point of view of self-sufficiency in war, at least carries the risk of loss to our countryside which may outweigh any commercial advantage in the long run, and is clearly a matter to be determined by national considerations and planning. So too the controversies aroused by the proposed power-stations at Durham and Lincoln, the Highland water power scheme or even the City of London Plan and the Plymouth Plan, emphasize the imperative necessity of some real national planning of resources. Each plan proposes alterations, for the benefit of specific interests, to scenes which are generally regarded as part of the national heritage, and except in the Plymouth plan, where the proposals cannot be implemented effectively except as part of a national plan backed by national resources, there is little evidence that the wider national or regional interests have been considered.

The strong criticism advanced by Mr. Hugh Quigley of the North of Scotland Hydroelectric Board Scheme approved by the Secretary for Scotland in March has never been effectively answered and indicates the unsatisfactoriness of the general situation. Constructional Scheme No. 1, covering Lochs Sloy, Morar and Lochalsh, Mr. Quigley points out, forms no part of any plan for the Highlands. Provided with inadequate maps, it contains no reference to town and country planning schemes or to economic development of any kind. The Board, instead of

\* The Control of Land Use. (Cmd. 6537.) Pp. 16. (London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1944.) 3d. net.

preparing its own schemes, appears to have accepted those prepared by consulting engineers or requested them to prepare such schemes, and, according to Mr. Quigley, there is no evidence that the final scheme was submitted to or approved by the Amenities or Fisheries Committee. Even now the main development scheme has not been published.

Mr. Quigley's criticism cannot but arouse profound misgivings as to the whole hydro-electric development scheme for Scotland, in any event while the Minister of Town and Country Planning possesses such inadequate powers. At present, instead of drawing up a broad master plan of how such areas of national concern as Durham, Lincoln, Plymouth and Oxford, the Highlands and London, the caravan camps and the housing estates, shall be handled for the good of all, he must depute the task piecemeal to representatives of those very interests at whose hands the community and the landscape have suffered much. Local authorities have not necessarily incentive or resources to weigh with strict impartiality the national against the local, the individual against the general issues.

In a small island such as Great Britain, the liberty of the community can only be achieved by some sacrifices of individualism, and the guardian of the community's landscape can only be a national ministry. Unless, however, Mr. W. S. Morrison's office is given much greater preventive and constructive authority than at present, local and individual interests may well continue to trespass in the names of freedom and progress upon that scenic heritage which is irreplaceable.

The situation is in fact even more serious than this might suggest. Despite the acknowledged need for regional planning and for redistribution and reform in local government, the Government has indicated that it has no present intention of embarking on local government reform. It may well be doubted, in fact, if the necessary inquiry could be brought to fruition in time for effect to be given to any recommended scheme of reorganization before action on immediate post-war reconstruction and development is necessary. Reorganization cannot be postponed indefinitely, as each successive measure of reconstruction in fields such as education and health and town and country planning shows, and Prof. and Mrs. J. R. Hicks' recent study, for the National Institute of Economic and Social Research, of the problem of valuation for rating indicates that the whole system may well break down for financial reasons.

None the less, the conception of such schemes as the plan advanced for Plymouth, with its striking evidence of the vision of at least some local authorities, should not lead us to forget the danger that such breadth of vision and national outlook may not be characteristic or universal. Furthermore, as the debates on the control of land use in the House of Lords and on the Town and Country Planning Bill in the House of Commons have shown, progressive local authorities may not be in a position to implement their own plans. It was made clear when the Plymouth Plan was first published that support on a

national scale would be essential if some of its proposals were to take effect: it must be part and parcel of a national plan.

The position of Plymouth was described in the House of Lords by Viscount Astor, who pointed out that to carry out the Abercrombie-Watson plan meant that the future population of Plymouth would be limited to a maximum of 180,000 as compared with 220,000 before the War. It is impossible to expect a population thus reduced in size and with its rateable value further reduced as a result of war damage to bear the burden of such replanning; to preserve the values and population which are commonly described as 'overspill', Viscount Astor urged not merely financial help but also an amalgamation, so that people who earn their money in Plymouth but live outside continue to be citizens and that the values which move from Plymouth to the adjoining districts are preserved within the area as a whole. Lord Woolton, it is true, during the House of Lords debate, promised that some form of financial assistance would be made available for the acquisition by local authorities of approved open spaces where such acquisition would impose an undue financial burden on the authority, but this provision does not meet the situation created by 'overspill'.

Other cities and towns, such as Bristol, Cardiff, Dover, Great Yarmouth, Hull, Portsmouth and Sunderland, are in a similar plight, and their local authorities have appealed for legislative help by an amendment to the Town and Country Planning Bill to enable them to replan these cities on modern principles. While the devastation of war has facilitated an immediate recasting of layouts, such cities have insufficient land to house their citizens if they plan according to modern ideas by including green belts and open spaces. To avoid serious loss and incurring heavy liabilities, they call for security now by an extension of their borough boundaries. They cannot afford the delay and uncertainty of another Bill for the general revision of local authority boundaries, which the Minister of Health hopes to introduce in a later session.

The amendment which was requested is of more than local interest. By it, if the Minister, on representations by a borough in which there has been specially heavy and widespread damage due to enemy action, was satisfied that the carrying out of an adequate planning scheme would be delayed or frustrated because the scheme would lead to a serious loss of population, he would be empowered to initiate an inquiry. The tribunal set up, after taking evidence from all interests likely to be affected, would have power to recommend an extension of the borough's area. With such an amendment the 'blitzed' cities would be able to go ahead and to act as planning laboratories for the whole country, providing an invaluable practical test of bold, up-to-date planning. To this amendment Lord Justice Scott has lent powerful support, pointing out that it averts the imminent danger of the country losing a splendid opportunity of putting into practice the Scott Report and the Barlow Report. The debate on this amendment showed clearly the difficulties involved in dealing with this particular

situation separately from the general question of local government boundaries and areas. Support for the amendment was not unanimous, although the urgency of the situation was generally admitted, and Mr. W. S. Morrison gave a convincing reply in indicating his inability to accept the amendment. The danger of prejudicing a settlement on broad and permanent lines of a wider question which is already under consideration by the Government is clearly great, and much of the force of the argument in favour of the amendment was withdrawn when it was announced by Mr. Morrison and by the Minister of Health that a White Paper on Local Government would be laid before Parliament before Christmas and that legislation would follow in the next session. The amendment was withdrawn; but the situation is a severe defeat for the Government's attempt at piecemeal measures and forces it back to first principles, by which alone the dilemma of the 'blitzed' cities can be resolved.

It cannot, of course, be maintained that the Bill and the White Paper are not very incomplete. The Bill deals with the particular problem of the acquisition of land in large blocks by local authorities for the purpose of planning the redevelopment of areas as units. The White Paper deals with the more general problem of seeing that the use made of land by its owners is not contrary to the interests of the community, that values created by the community are recovered for the community, and, conversely, that property acquired in good faith is not arbitrarily or discriminately confiscated by the actions of the State. In the atmosphere of prejudice created against the Bill, something less than justice was done both to it and to the White Paper, and their reception cannot but arouse misgivings as to whether the problems of reconstruction will be tackled in a scientific manner and with knowledge and realism. At least, with the qualification already noted, the Bill gives the local authorities the essential minimum of what they require and, freeing them from their paralysing uncertainty, enables them to proceed with their plans, even if in circumstances not quite so favourable as they had hoped.

Again, the White Paper, while lacking the simplicity of outright nationalization, differs from the Uthwatt proposals in several respects, but on the whole, the new proposals seem to be more clear cut and for that reason to be preferred. With the Bill, the White Paper represents the first major advance into a region that has been much discussed but little explored, and the Government's plan has the major merit of treating both urban and rural land on the same footing. Moreover, the decision to transfer responsibility for paying compensation and collecting betterment to a national land commission relieves local authorities of the need to permit as much development as they prohibit within their own areas, regardless of the dictates of good planning. The proposals do not foreshadow the appearance of that national plan which has also been promised, and the need of which has been emphasized by the inquiries at Lincoln and Durham as well as in the debates. In fact, the power given by the Bill to a few local

authorities to start the positive planning of the use of land in their cities increases the urgency of the need for a national framework within which such local efforts can find their place.

Moreover, the matter becomes more urgent as the problem of employment is faced. The latest report of the National Trust\* indicates the tendency. The most recent additions bring the area owned by the Trust up to 100,000 acres, with another 39,000 areas controlled, but the increase is less than in recent years and the rate of increase is likely to diminish in future. This is a probable consequence of comprehensive control by the State of the use of land, and the Trust will clearly require to give careful consideration in such circumstances before accepting large tracts of land, especially when situated in the neighbourhood of densely populated areas with potential demands for residential or industrial development. Again, if national parks are to be set up under the control of a statutory body of commissioners, the work of the Trust in those particular regions may diminish in importance.

What is clear from this report is that if the importance of the National Trust in saving land, such as beauty spots, for the nation is decreasing, its importance as a land user is increasing. With the large area now under its administration, the National Trust is concerned with estate management, farming and forestry on the grand scale. It has to see that preservation does not mean sterilizing our scenic heritage. Its policy, as in national parks, must be to combine the maintenance of the countryside at its best as a historic legacy, a place of recreation and a source of food, timber and minerals.

The combination of the highest efficiency in farming and forestry with the greatest measure of public access and with the fostering of bird, insect and plant life is no simple problem, and for the Trust is enhanced by the low fertility of much of its property. The report emphasizes the exceptionally experienced administration and control that are required. Yet another problem is that of the use to which many of the larger houses acquired by the Trust could be put, and difficulties in the way of adapting them either to institutional use or for recreation while preserving their character unimpaired.

This tendency, noted in the report of the National Trust, is even more marked when we come to consider the questions of industrial development and the re-location of industry. The replanning and rebuilding of our war-damaged towns and cities, like the planning of the countryside of Britain and the housing problem generally, as was well shown in the recent *Planning* broadsheet, "Location of Employment", is linked up with the question of employment. The houses must be built where the men and women who are to live in them will find their employment. Hence the importance of those proposals for the development of the north east of England advanced by the Northern Industrial Group, and of Lieut.-Colonel W. C. Devereux's proposals for the industrial reconstruction

\* National Trust for Places of Historic Interest or Natural Beauty. Report of the Council for the Years 1943-1944. Pp. 62+8 plates. (London: National Trust.)

of South Wales, and more recently for the industrial development of West Cumberland.

What is significant here, however, is the consciousness in these plans in the *Planning* broadsheet and in the debates in the House of Commons on the Town and Country Planning Bill, that not merely is a better balance of industry and labour required, as is declared in the Government's White Paper on Employment Policy, but also the development of real communities.

This is the essential point brought out in a report of the Social and Industrial Commission of the Church Assembly, "The Church and the Planning of Britain"\*. Emphasizing that physical planning alone is not sufficient and that industrial mobility has an inherent threat to domestic life and the stability of urban life, with consequent social disintegration for which no degree of physical planning, however wisely directed, can compensate, it directs attention to a problem which has frequently been overlooked. As the report notes, the liability of employees of banks and certain types of firms, especially those who have reached managerial positions, to be moved from one place to another, while frequently unavoidable, is adverse to the development of civic and religious responsibility and stability. Moreover, to the extent to which the incidence of such mobility is heaviest on those who have proved their capacity for responsibility and leadership, it tends to deprive the local community of those who would be its natural leaders.

If it is true that greater mobility must be part of the price we have to pay for social security and full employment, as Mrs. Gertrude Williams has suggested, it is important that every effort should be made to minimize any ill consequences. The Church Assembly report points to five ways in which the present housing situation and social and economic background fail to satisfy the basic psychological needs of men and women: the limitations imposed on family needs by its restriction of domestic space; the lack of connexion with man's vocational life; the encroachment upon leisure and the imposition of 'rush-hour' conditions involved in its remoteness from the scene of work; its false isolation and lack of facilities for a natural communal life; and the cramped character of the environment it creates, which denies opportunities for withdrawal.

From this point of view, the report concurs with Mr. Lewis Mumford's view that good planning in the post-war period will rest on the solid foundation of the family, and the region; it will emphasize the biological and social needs of the people, and treat industrial and financial needs as subordinate. Quoting the Barlow Commission's conclusion that the disadvantages in many, if not most, of the great industrial concentrations alike on the social, the strategic and the economic sides constitute serious handicaps, and even in some respects dangers, to the nation's life and development, the report urges that more important than the size or area of a town or conurbation is the expression of size as a function of the social relations to be served. Proper planning and

adequate spacing must be demanded in old towns and in new units, and apart from amenities the report urges that those migrating from congested towns must be welcomed into real communities with social life, established or in contemplation, and with proper provision of churches and chapels, schools and playgrounds, halls and social meeting centres and theatres.

The insistence in this report that dispersal or decentralization must be based on the principle of the living community, with adequate facilities not only for housing but also for living, working, and recreation—a community in which local life is developed and generous provision made for the moral and spiritual needs of the population—is a welcome reminder that the problem of the right use of land is linked up with the central problem of democracy, namely, that of securing the framework within which its essential spirit can have the fullest possible play. It is the problem of morale which confronts us here, that of securing a better balance between industry and agriculture, between public control and private enterprise, and the fuller integration of industry with the needs of the community. Already the debates on the Town and Country Planning Bill have demonstrated the need for effective machinery for adjustment, and the complexities of modern life make the problem increasingly difficult and important. Whatever solution may be found to the immediate problems of the control of the use of land before reconstruction can proceed, there will be no final solution until we have solved this wider and deeper problem of developing the organization or mechanism by which a living community can adjust itself continuously to its changing conditions, retaining both firm control over its environment and at the same time the freedom which the human spirit requires for its intellectual, moral and spiritual development. The proper way of planning things, as the Church Assembly report notes and experience has shown, is to secure the kind of structure which ensures that individuals and small groups in co-operation shall learn to control the material and the administrative adjustments of their own immediate surroundings, and so gain larger insights into, and control over, the wider world of affairs. If we are to save freedom we must proceed, as the late Archbishop of Canterbury has reminded us, from democracy of the individual to democracy of the person, and recollect that personality achieves itself in the lesser groupings within the State—in the family, the school, the guild, the trade union, the village, the city, the county. No physical planning will serve the needs of the post-war world which does not provide for the fostering of these and like loyalties, which have sprung up in civil defence and other activities under the stress and demands of war.

Such objects of loyalty can and do contribute to the wealth of tradition and inheritance of the State and thereby to its stability. Already the storm over the compensation clauses in the debate on the Town and Country Planning Bill has shown that, unless such loyalties are subordinated to, or rather integrated into, a higher loyalty, there can be no hope of solutions to problems so essential in the national interest. As

\*The Church and the Planning of Britain. Report of the Social and Industrial Commission of the Church Assembly, 1944. (C.A. 753.) Pp. 32. (London: Church Assembly.) 2s.

the Prime Minister rightly said, for all its shortcomings the Bill is needed, for without it planning and reconstruction cannot proceed. The appeal to national unity and to a spirit of reasonable compromise will, it is to be hoped, be heeded. That such an appeal should have been necessary at this late hour is an unmistakable warning of the urgency of much greater attention to this question of public morale, and the fuller integration of group interests and loyalties with the larger and wider interests of the community. Important as may be the service which science can render in different ways to the planning of the use of the land and other material resources, it might make an even more significant contribution to the vast field of post-war reconstruction by an adequate attack on the problems encountered in the field of public relations—what Lord Stamp described as the science of social adjustment.

## THE STORY OF ANATOMICAL EXPLORATION

### A History of Comparative Anatomy

From Aristotle to the Eighteenth Century. By Prof. F. J. Cole. Pp. viii+524. (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1944.) 30s. net.

INTEREST in the structure of animals must have occupied the mind of man from remote antiquity, ever since they were the object of the chase and required to be prepared for food. Even palæolithic man indicated the surface anatomy of vital organs in his mural paintings of animals, and occasionally exercised his artistic propensities in making exquisite carvings of the flayed heads of horses, depicting the muscles with remarkable precision. From time immemorial, also, primitive communities have shown the liveliest interest in the individual variations of the visceral anatomy of domestic animals, using these variations as omens on which to base decisions of policy. But the study of comparative anatomy, which is essentially the search for common denominators in organic structure, is a scientific method, and could only be the product of philosophic inquiry into the meaning of life and living things.

It is with the history of this approach to biological problems that Prof. Cole deals in his brilliant treatise on the development of anatomical practice and thought from the time of Aristotle up to the eighteenth century. It is true to say that many biologists have been impatiently waiting for this book. Prof. Cole's erudition and scholarship as a historian of biological science are well known, and there is no doubt that in his particular field of study he stands pre-eminent to-day. In his preface the author informs the reader that he had originally intended to write an exhaustive history of zoological discovery, based on protracted and laborious searches carried on during many years. Considerations of brevity imposed by present-day circumstances, however, compelled him to put aside for the present this project, and he has contented himself with a more limited objective. But if the objective was necessarily limited, the result is highly impressive.

To the comparative anatomist whose acquaintance with the historical development of his subject is not so intimate as he might wish, a glance through Cole's

book will cause surprise at the wide field covered by the old comparative anatomists (particularly of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries), at their meticulously detailed descriptions, at the artistry and accuracy of their illustrations, and at their technical skill. A closer reading leads one to ponder on the motives and incentives which led to the development of this science, and suggests a continuous repercussion of two main driving interests. One of these is the ever-present urge in the human mind to reduce order out of chaos, to classify, and to search for a common plan underlying a profusion of variety. So arose the systematists who, beginning with Aristotle, gradually worked up to the impelling conception of the *Echelle des êtres*, which dominated the minds of zoologists in the immediately pre-Darwinian era. Belon, Rondelet, Aldrovandus, Coiter, Gesner and others represented this field in the sixteenth century. Belon's work is noted for his study of homologies in the human and avian skeletons, and he may perhaps be regarded as the initiator of the science of pure morphology. Coiter's magnificent publications on comparative osteology arouse admiration largely because of the superb illustrations executed by himself. His figure of the articulated skeleton of a capuchin monkey, for accuracy of delineation and effectiveness of technique, would be regarded as excellent in any anatomical monograph of to-day. Incidentally, it might be interesting to investigate the correlation between anatomical achievement and artistic ability, for both require an aptitude for visualization of an unusual kind. It seems not improbable that some of the anatomical books which appear in modern times really owe their origin to the pleasure which the authors obviously experience in illustrating them.

Despite the care and thoroughness with which medieval systematists conducted their studies, it is remarkable that they were often unable to break away from purely popular conceptions of classification. For example, the porpoise seems to have occupied the puzzled attention of several comparative anatomists—Belon in 1551, Ray in 1671 and Tyson in 1680. Yet, in spite of the evidence of their eyes, they continued to classify it with the fishes. But it is evident that this conservative view was accepted with some reluctance. Tyson remarks that when we view the porpoise externally there is nothing more like a fish, but when we look within there is nothing less like one. He even says he would *like* to think it is not a fish, but this is as far as he is prepared to go in the face of popular assumption. Although Tyson's anatomical studies covered a wide field of vertebrates and invertebrates (among other things he gives the first anatomical description of a marsupial), he is perhaps best known for his study of the chimpanzee, a noteworthy contribution to the study of systematics, for it brought man himself into much more direct relation with lower mammals. The chimpanzee, he concludes, is "no *Man*, nor yet the *Common Ape*; but a sort of *Animal* between both".

Comparative anatomical exploration during the latter half of the seventeenth and the first half of the eighteenth centuries was very prolific, but was pursued with little attempt at the formulation of general principles of morphology; so that, as Cole points out, Vicq D'Azyr in 1786 was concerned to direct attention to the masses of undigested and incongruous facts which had been assembled and to complain that they tended to produce a feeling of fatigue and weariness in the reader. Yet it was this