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Item 14

'Sydney 2000 AD' Gaudin  
people and more uncomfortable  
than ever?'

Article by G.C. Re  
Bulletin, 4 April 1969

OUR UNCOMFORTABLE CITIES

4.4.1964  
APRIL 4, 1964

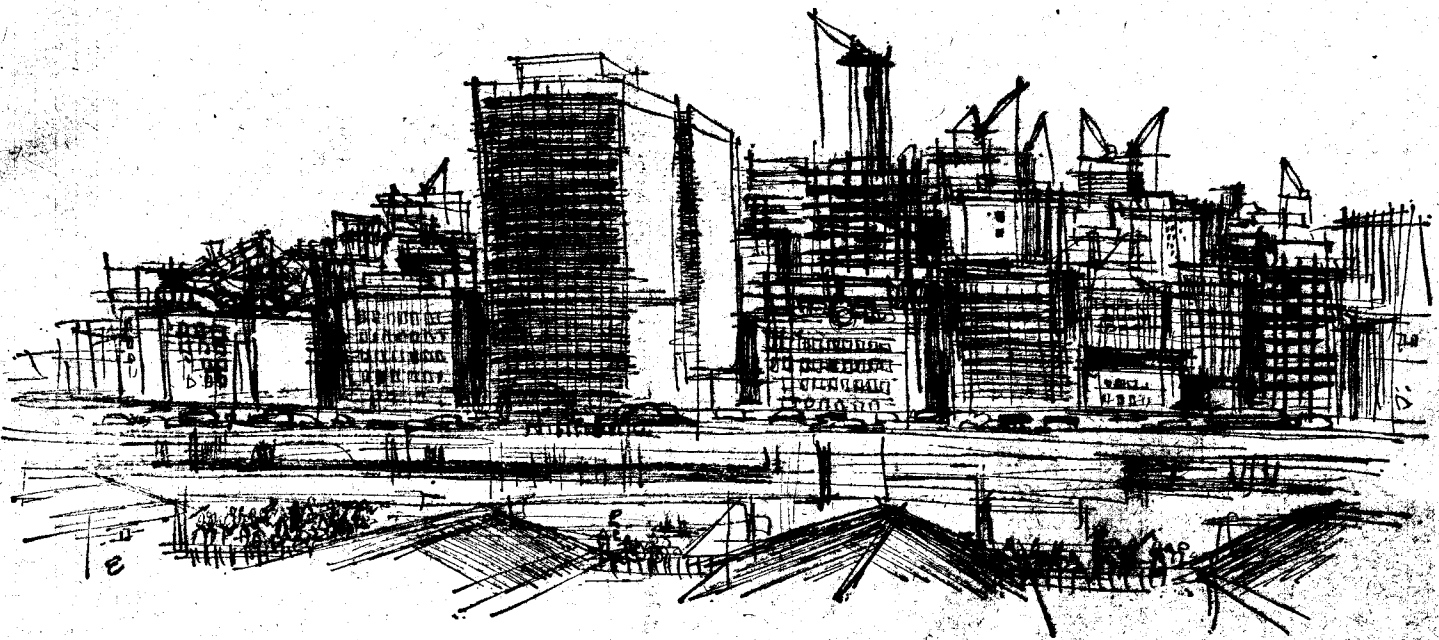
# The Bulletin

CORPORATION AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL



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# SYDNEY 2000 AD

*Six million people and more uncomfortable than ever?*

By GEORGE CLARKE

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There are only 24 more years before Sydney's 200th anniversary. There are only 35 whole years left in the second millennium AD. A majority of today's Australians can expect to live through both of these birthdays, because about half of us are still under age 30. Decisions taken over the next decade will increasingly shape and reshape our metropolitan lives, or at least the lives of our metropolitan children. Most of these most basic decisions will of course be made by people already over 30, who are currently in positions of unwitting influence and indirect control.

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The biggest, and simplest, single issue that the Authority faces is the one posed in my opening question: what will it be like to live, travel, work, play and raise a family in or near Sydney in 25 years' time?

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If these percentages hold, then Sydney and Melbourne themselves will double or treble in population within

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metropolitan Canberras, each taking, as Canberra does, about 7000 persons per annum! And if we did in fact mount such a massive national new-city effort, the task would surely create thousands of new jobs in both Sydney and Melbourne, thereby giving us faster overall national economic growth, but leaving us still to solve the problems of metropolitan expansion.

Faster and more balanced national growth could well justify a national programme for new and expanded ex-metropolitan cities, as is now commonly advocated by city and regional planners, economists, geographers and some politicians. Gladstone, Grafton, Wodonga, Townsville, Tamworth and Portland have been mentioned in this context. By concentrating investment at a few such growth points, we could give ourselves a range of new inland and port cities of up to a quarter of a million each. I believe that we not only could, but should, wherever a sound economic base can be found and exploited.

I also trust that we will see the steady continued growth of Brisbane, Adelaide, Perth and Hobart, together with more such special-purpose new towns as Elizabeth, Hazelwood and Coleambally. Projects in such places as the Snowy and the Ord and the Latrobe Valley may well increasingly generate minor urban centres. Mining development will continue to build up places like Mt Isa, which anticipates population growth of more than 50 per cent over the next five years.

But even if all these things happen, they will not significantly restrain the continued expansion of Sydney and Melbourne. Whatever other city-building we may do, we cannot for much longer avoid the issues of how to cope with megalopolis as well.

#### Learning the hard way

SYDNEY as a whole can no longer be adequately described as a metropolis or mother-city. That term can now only illuminate the functions of the original core city on the central shores of Sydney Harbor. The whole regional unit is now in a state of violent structural change, from a single-centred urban mass to a many-centred cluster of cities or city-districts. The new unit may be called "megalopolis", or "the regional city".

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In 1945, the new professionals of Sydney's Cumberland County Council had no proven British or American experience in successful megalopolitan planning to guide them. Over that Council's life, from 1945 to 1964, they had to educate themselves, and their public, in the school of hard megalopolitan knocks. The CCC is now about to disappear as a political body and its staff will be absorbed into the new State Planning Authority. The Authority will inherit all the benefits of an aroused public awareness which the CCC created, but it mercifully escapes the odium of political failure which, however heroically, surrounds the CCC. Members and staff of the Council, over its 19 years of life, have in effect sacrificed themselves on the beachhead of megalopolitan planning in New South Wales.

#### The CCC legacy

OFFICERS of the CCC, first under Mr Sidney Luker and then under Mr Roderick Fraser, took upon themselves the long and thankless task of making the public aware that real problems of public social and economic policy existed in the form and direction of urban expansion. They have stimulated the Press, politicians and the academics to think and talk seriously about the economics of suburban expansion, the high social and private financial costs of sprawl and scatteration, about the division of costs for sewerage and water reticulation in new areas, and about the social justice and economic sanity of allowing the fortuitous owners of raw fringe land reap the harvest of unearned increments in land value.

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The most sacred item of our Federal policies has been to build and sell the absolute maximum of detached houses. The quantity of houses built and the percentage of them owner or mortgagee-occupied have so far been the dominant considerations. In consequence it can now be demonstrated that a scattered collection of small houses does not alone make a healthy or happy community. With infrequent bus services which cease at 7.00 p.m. and do not

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#### The future shape of megalopolis

THIS emphasis on the creation of housing in coherent and comprehensively designed communities has steadily, since the war, become the major emphasis of British, Continental and US policies and programmes. In this field, as in others, Australia suffers from cultural lag.

This is the emphasis that the NSW State Planning Authority is intended to give — as witnessed by the repeated use of the word "co-ordination" in its brief. Perhaps one of the first tasks of the Authority will be to co-ordinate plans for massive investment in an integrated metropolitan system of transportation by rail, bus and private car. By its membership, the Authority should be ideally constituted to solve this overall problem of co-ordinated planning and investment in all forms of transportation.

But future transportation must be designed to serve a future pattern of living and a pattern of land use. The Authority's biggest task of all will be to decide upon a coherent pattern of

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If we are to cope with a potential 6 million in Sydney Region by the year 2000, then they can't all focus for their everyday needs on the old Sydney central city. Somehow or other, we must break up and reform the main congested mass of the metropolis into a series of distinct city districts, each focused on its own commercial and civic centre. Beyond the present built-up areas, we must find sites for new city districts, temporarily resume the land, and develop those new city districts to some comprehensive design, separating each from the other by networks of open space.

The new centres will be like Parramatta and Bankstown are today, in the range of their services and facilities. But they will have to be comprehensively planned and designed for either redevelopment or new construction on open land. Perhaps in some of them we will achieve a new city centre like those designed by the British for the new towns of Cumbernauld and Hook, in places like Campbelltown, Penrith, Katoomba or in the Gosford district. Then we will have one of Colin Buchanan's "3-tier" city centres, with public transport and vehicles on the bottom, pedestrians and shops above, and commercial and residential buildings rising over the malls. Let us strive to shorten the cultural lag.

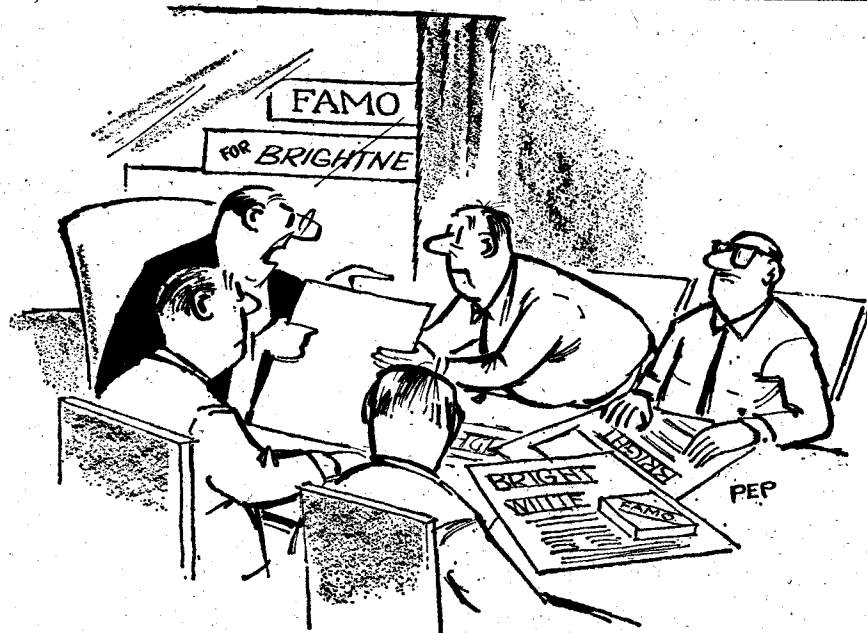


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OUR UNCOMFORTABLE CITIES

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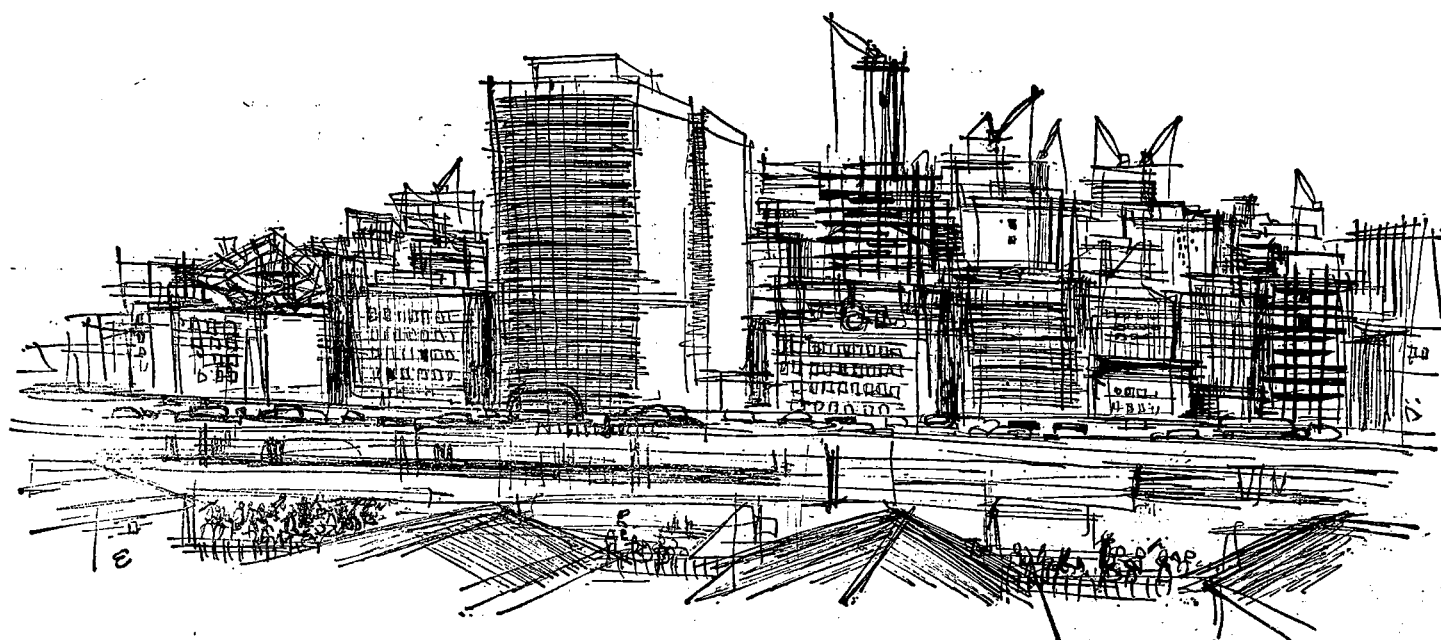
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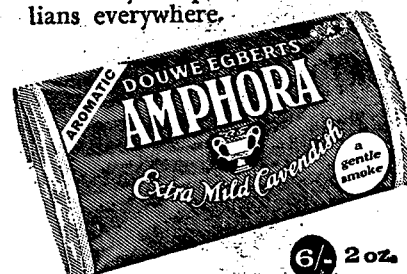
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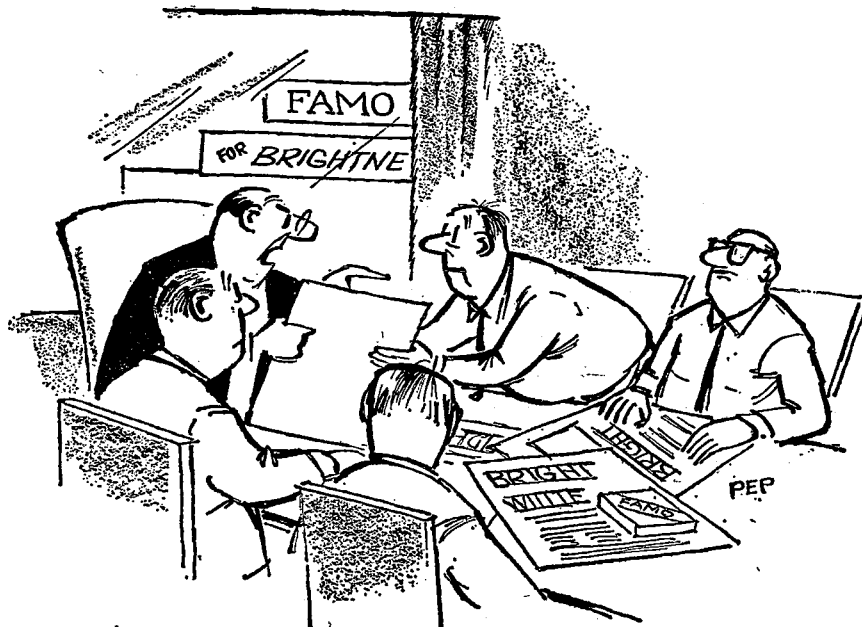


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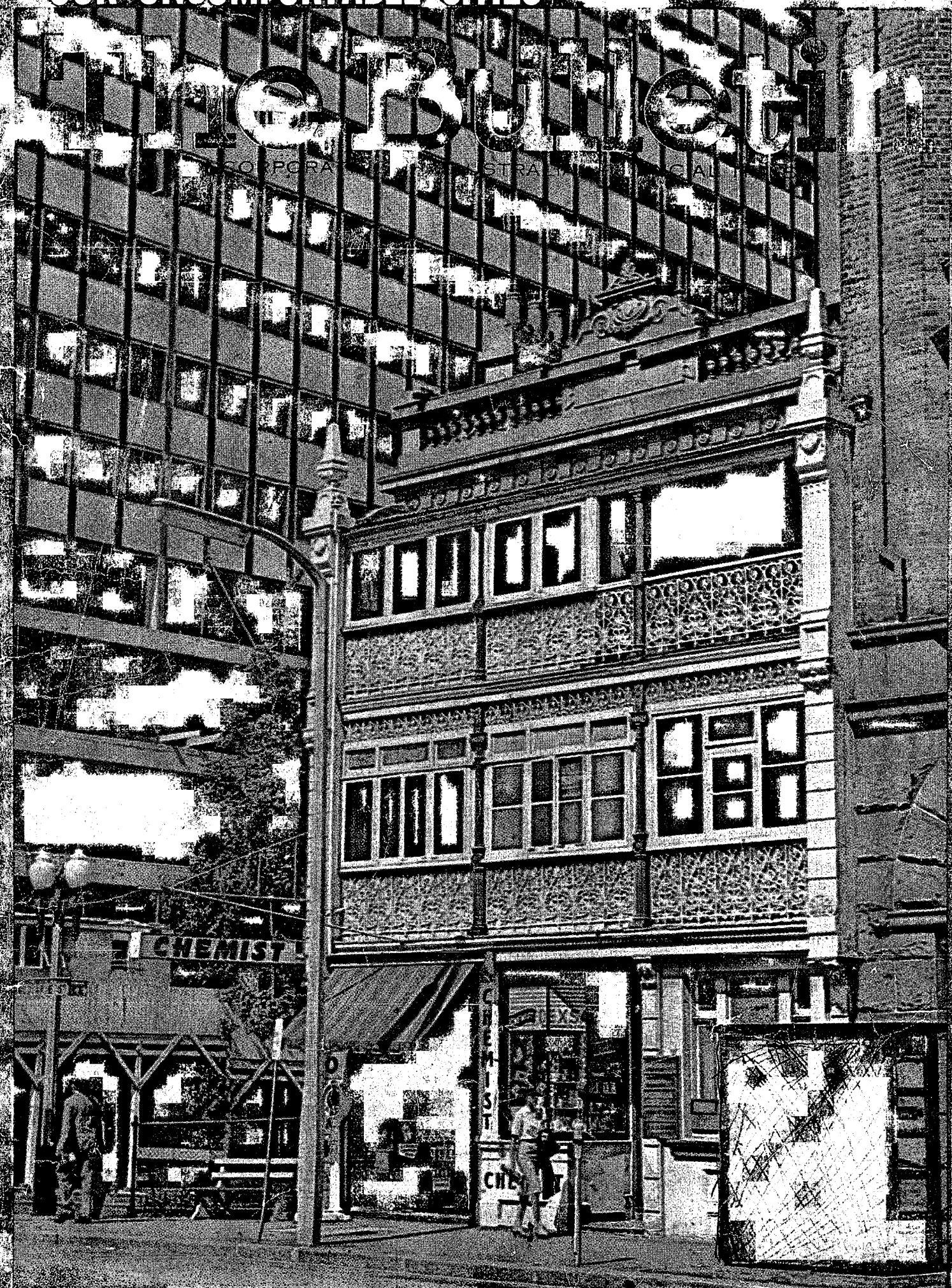
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APRIL 4, 1964

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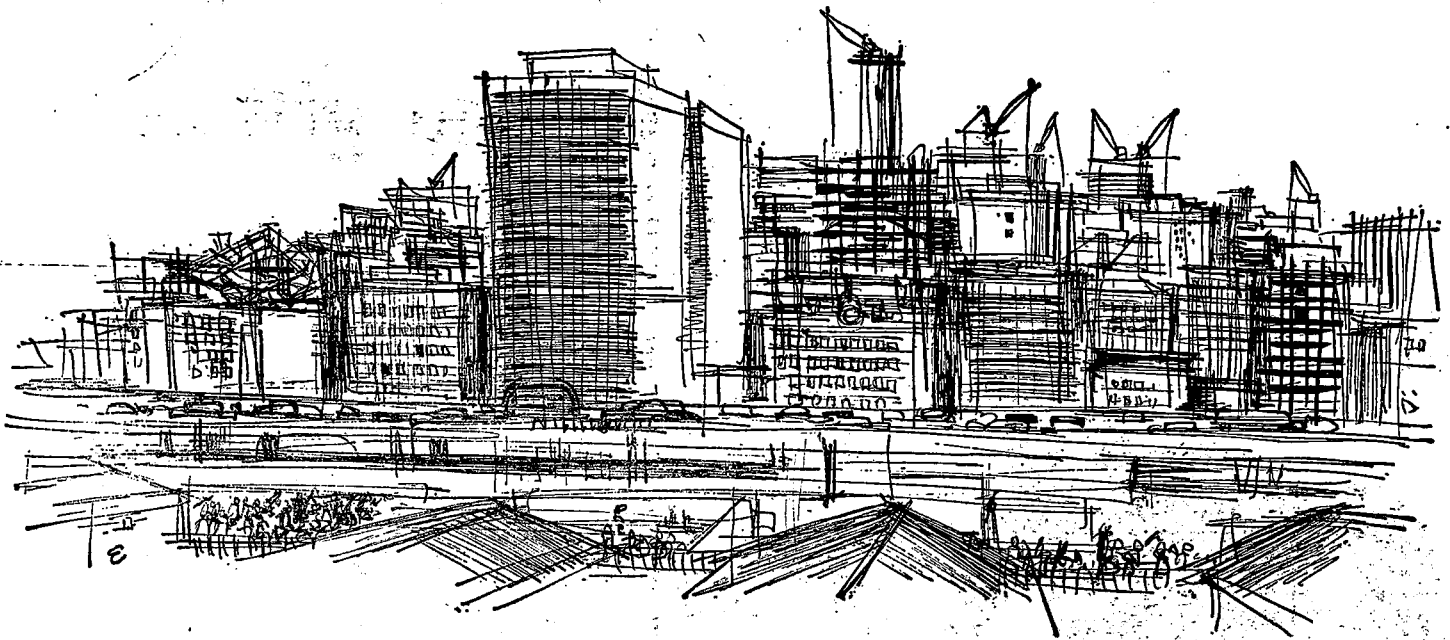
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Many people still hope that this scale of growth around Melbourne and Sydney can be avoided by massive "decentralisation". But no matter what we do about expanding smaller cities and towns, we will still have to plan for greatly increased growth in our two major conurbations.

## Fourteen Canberras

**I**F we wanted to drain off this year's population increase in both Sydney and Melbourne, we would need to have the equivalent of fourteen non-

metropolitan Canberras, each taking, as Canberra does, about 7000 persons per annum! And if we did in fact mount such a massive national new-city effort, the task would surely create thousands of new jobs in both Sydney and Melbourne, thereby giving us faster overall national economic growth, but leaving us still to solve the problems of metropolitan expansion.

Faster and more balanced national growth could well justify a national programme for new and expanded ex-metropolitan cities, as is now commonly advocated by city and regional planners, economists, geographers and some politicians. Gladstone, Grafton, Wodonga, Townsville, Tamworth and Portland have been mentioned in this context. By concentrating investment at a few such growth points, we could give ourselves a range of new inland and port cities of up to a quarter of a million each. I believe that we not only could, but should, wherever a sound economic base can be found and exploited.

I also trust that we will see the steady continued growth of Brisbane, Adelaide, Perth and Hobart, together with more such special-purpose new towns as Elizabeth, Hazelwood and Coleambally. Projects in such places as the Snowy and the Ord and the Latrobe Valley may well increasingly generate minor urban centres. Mining development will continue to build up places like Mt Isa, which anticipates population growth of more than 50 per cent over the next five years.

But even if all these things happen, they will not significantly restrain the continued expansion of Sydney and Melbourne. Whatever other city-building we may do, we cannot for much longer avoid the issues of how to cope with megalopolis as well.

#### Learning the hard way

**S**YDNEY as a whole can no longer be adequately described as a metropolis or mother-city. That term can now only illuminate the functions of the original core city on the central shores of Sydney Harbor. The whole regional unit is now in a state of violent structural change, from a single-centred urban mass to a many-centred cluster of cities or city-districts. The new unit may be called "megalopolis", or "the regional city".

The evolution from one form to another is perhaps proving slower and more painful than it might otherwise have been, because we were caught both sentimentally and intellectually unprepared by the first big surge of post-war growth. Planners now agree that this growth surge must be frankly accepted as *continuous*, perhaps even infinitely so. Dr C. A. Doxiadis, the Athenian

Ekistician, goes so far as to predict *Ecumenopolis*, the linking up of regional clusters or networks of cities so as to cover whole continents.

Planners also now agree that the general direction of the basic structural evolution must be accepted, and that regional development plans and programmes must attempt to refine, guide and give clear physical expression to spontaneous social and economic forces. Their only problem is, then, to uncover and anticipate, by research and intuition, just what those "spontaneous" forces are, and to decide how they should be guided and expressed.

In 1945, the new professionals of Sydney's Cumberland County Council had no proven British or American experience in successful megalopolitan planning to guide them. Over that Council's life, from 1945 to 1964, they had to educate themselves, and their public, in the school of hard megalopolitan knocks. The CCC is now about to disappear as a political body and its staff will be absorbed into the new State Planning Authority. The Authority will inherit all the benefits of an aroused public awareness which the CCC created, but it mercifully escapes the odium of political failure which, however heroically, surrounds the CCC. Members and staff of the Council, over its 19 years of life, have in effect sacrificed themselves on the beachhead of megalopolitan planning in New South Wales.

#### The CCC legacy

**O**FFICERS of the CCC, first under Mr Sidney Luker and then under Mr Roderick Fraser, took upon themselves the long and thankless task of making the public aware that real problems of public social and economic policy existed in the form and direction of urban expansion. They have stimulated the Press, politicians and the academics to think and talk seriously about the economics of suburban expansion, the high social and private financial costs of sprawl and scatteration, about the division of costs for sewerage and water reticulation in new areas, and about the social justice and economic sanity of allowing the fortuitous owners of raw fringe land reap the harvest of unearned increments in land value.

They have also kept nagging away about the disintegration of family and social life largely brought about by the physical conditions of low-density premature subdivision in the new slums on Sydney's far western fringe.

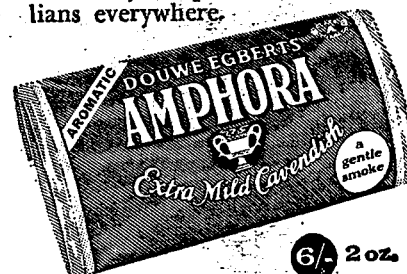
One of the Council's yet unpublished legacies will be a report by social anthropologist Mrs Caroline Kelly, entitled "Social Aspects of Planning in the New Suburbs". This summarises a sur-

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vey of six outer suburbs, involving interviews with 1,020 housewives, and with a sample of tradespeople, doctors, bank managers and teachers.

Perhaps the most ominous thing seeming to emerge from this survey is that our universal policy, of pushing lower income families into mortgages on detached houses in isolated and unserved fringe settlements, is tending to damage the very institution it was meant to preserve — that is, the social orderliness of family and community life.

The most sacred item of our Federal policies has been to build and sell the absolute maximum of detached houses. The quantity of houses built and the percentage of them owner or mortgagee-occupied have so far been the dominant considerations. In consequence it can now be demonstrated that a scattered collection of small houses does not alone make a healthy or happy community. With infrequent bus services which cease at 7.00 p.m. and do not

run at all on Sundays, without paved roads, without sewerage or proper drainage, without convenient shops or work places, without meeting-halls, nearby schools or sports and entertainment facilities, it is not surprising that the incidences of hepatitis, teenage crime, vandalism, neurosis and worse, seem to be increasing on Sydney's outermost fringes and decreasing in almost all other suburbs.

The remedy seems to be a shift in emphasis from the building of houses to the development of new communities, comprehensively designed and equipped.

#### The future shape of megalopolis

THIS emphasis on the creation of housing in coherent and comprehensively designed communities has steadily, since the war, become the major emphasis of British, Continental and US policies and programmes. In this field, as in others, Australia suffers from cultural lag.

This is the emphasis that the NSW State Planning Authority is intended to give — as witnessed by the repeated use of the word "co-ordination" in its brief. Perhaps one of the first tasks of the Authority will be to co-ordinate plans for massive investment in an integrated metropolitan system of transportation by rail, bus and private car. By its membership, the Authority should be ideally constituted to solve this overall problem of co-ordinated planning and investment in all forms of transportation.

But future transportation must be designed to serve a future pattern of living and a pattern of land use. The Authority's biggest task of all will be to decide upon a coherent pattern of

development for the whole central coast urban region, from Port Stephens to Kiama. The Authority has, say, about 5 to 7 years to research and plan the next major structural shift towards the regional cluster of cities. Existing urban zonings will give the developers of sprawl plenty of choice until about 1969 or 1971.

If we are to cope with a potential 6 million in Sydney Region by the year 2000, then they can't all focus for their everyday needs on the old Sydney central city. Somehow or other, we must break up and reform the main congested mass of the metropolis into a series of distinct city districts, each focused on its own commercial and civic centre. Beyond the present built-up areas, we must find sites for new city districts, temporarily resume the land, and develop those new city districts to some comprehensive design, separating each from the other by networks of open space.

The new centres will be like Parramatta and Bankstown are today, in the range of their services and facilities. But they will have to be comprehensively planned and designed for either redevelopment or new construction on open land. Perhaps in some of them we will achieve a new city centre like those designed by the British for the new towns of Cumbernauld and Hook, in places like Campbelltown, Penrith, Katoomba or in the Gosford district. Then we will have one of Colin Buchanan's "3-tier" city centres, with public transport and vehicles on the bottom, pedestrians and shops above, and commercial and residential buildings rising over the malls. Let us strive to shorten the cultural lag.



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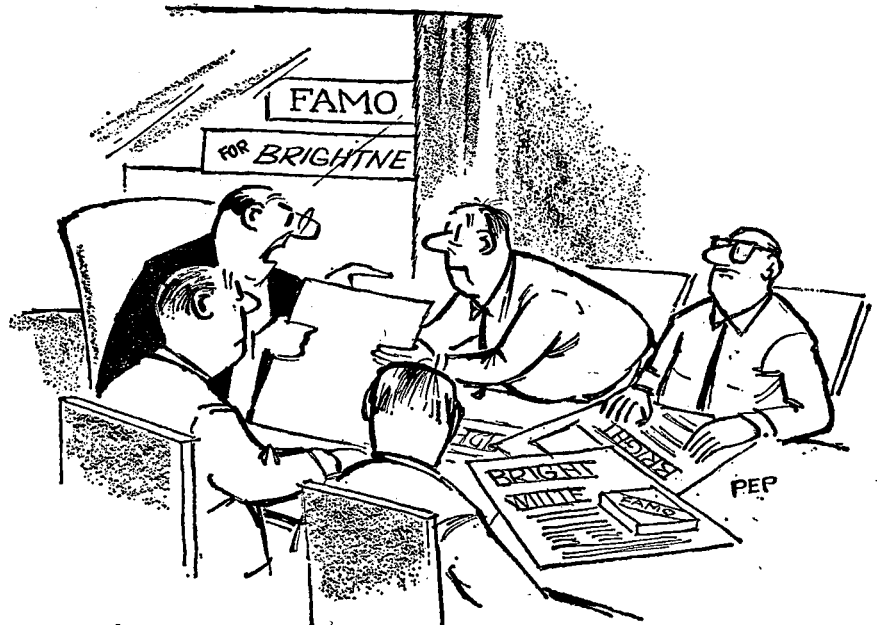
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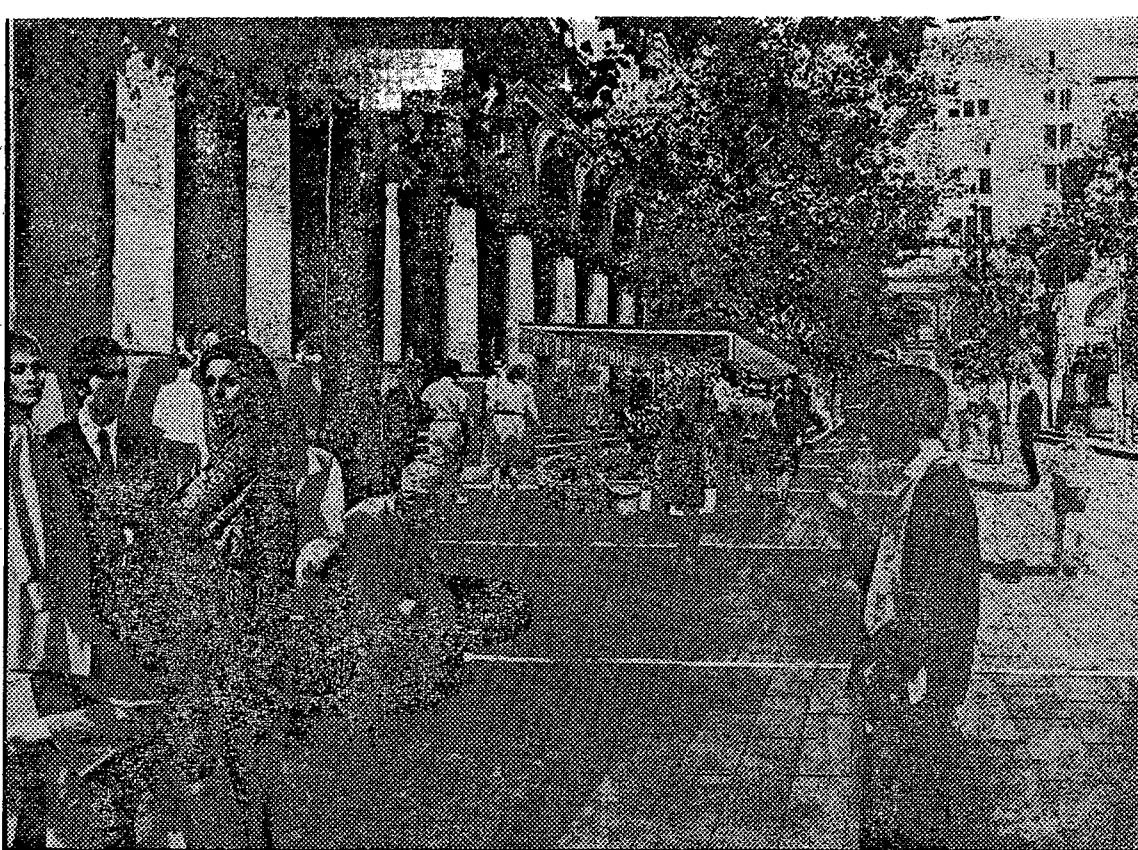
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"Speaking of brightness, how come your shirt is that dull, tattle-tale grey, Fenton?"





An artist's impression of how the proposed \$170,000 Martin Place Plaza will look with its new trees, flower stalls and pavement of marble.

Wed 18 SEPT 1968

# HUGE FACELIFT FOR SYDNEY MAY BE ON WAY

The proposed giant 30,000 sq. ft. Martin Place Plaza could be the first step in a complete facelift for Sydney, town planners believe.

The planners predict that, with the Plaza as Sydney's central "heart," sweeping changes in the city would follow almost automatically.

Under the plan, Martin Place, between George Street and Pitt Street, would be closed to traffic, covered in South Australian marble and would feature newly designed kiosks for flowers and books.

If the \$170,000 project is approved by the City Commissioners, town planners believe:

- Other parts of Martin Place (between Pitt and Castlereagh Street, for example) could also be opened up for pedestrians, with outdoor cafes and park benches. An underground carpark could be built under this section.

- Suggestions have been made that the buildings opposite the G.P.O. be replaced by two giant towers with plenty of room be-

tween for more outdoor eating.

- It could be possible to build a system of plazas, walkways and arcades so that people would be able to walk between the Australia Square building and the Martin Place plaza without seeing a "footpath" or traffic light.

## Gratitude

- Many more areas of Sydney could be closed to traffic and redeveloped if the Martin Place scheme proved successful. Rowe Street was one example quoted by planners.

A deputation from the Civic Reform Association put the suggestion for the Martin Place plaza to the

Chief City Commissioner, Mr V. H. Treatt, this week.

Mr Treatt's first reaction was to express gratitude and to note that something like the plan had been needed for a long time.

Mr George Clarke, a senior partner in the architectural firm of Clarke, Gazzard and Partners, who designed the plaza, listed some of the activities which could be held in the closed section of Martin Place.

## Towers

He mentioned folk dancing, official receptions for Heads of State, openings of Health Week, Education Week and Aborigines Week, an improved Dawn Service for Anzac Day and—most important—a place for Sydney people to meet each other.

"We have deliberately kept the space open, without cluttering it with fountains, statues or sculpture," Mr Clarke said.

"For the Plaza's everyday use you will have

people walking and strolling about there with the vastly improved flower stalls and kiosks coming into their own."

The chairman of the Civic Reform Association's Planning Committee, Mr Leo Port, said: "It has already been suggested that almost the whole block on the northern side of Martin Place be pulled down and replaced by two big towers."

"With the Martin Place Plaza this would mean a complete revolution in Sydney's way of life."

Mr Port said that, even if areas were closed off to most traffic, buses, garbage collection vehicles and delivery trucks could still use the streets in off-peak hours.

He said the Martin Place scheme was the best-planned development ever submitted to the City Council.

Everyone concerned had been consulted—from the R.S.L. to the P.M.G. and traffic engineers.

"Even the traffic experts are happy about this because it will speed up traffic in George and Pitt Streets."

Mr Port said.

He said the time was long overdue when planners should make parts of the city free for pedestrians to stand, walk and talk "without fear of being jostled or knocked over by cars."

"This is the type of development which makes enormous improvements in the life of pedestrians," he said.

"And this scheme cannot be looked at in isolation—it's a sign that things are really starting to happen in Sydney. Suddenly there has been a big change in all the dusty thinking that has been around too long."