

Return to G. Clarke  
Channel Ten TV Statement

SYDNEY LACKS EFFECTIVE CIVIC LEADERSHIP

by G.C. 1.6.1965 p1 of 2

1.6.65  
file GC  
personal

THERE ARE WIDE GULFS BETWEEN OUR CITY ALDERMEN, ON THE ONE HAND, AND THE LEADERS OF FINANCE AND BUSINESS ON THE OTHER, ~~AND~~ NEITHER GROUP MAINTAINS ANY REAL CONTACT WITH THE PROFESSIONAL CITY PLANNERS.

UNTIL THESE THREE GROUPS ARE UNITED IN A PRACTICAL WORKING RELATIONSHIP, UNDER FAR-SIGHTED POLITICAL LEADERSHIP, THE SYDNEY CITY CORE WILL HAPHAZARDLY BECOME UGLIER, MORE UNCOMFORTABLE AND LESS WORTH VISITING.

AUSTRALIANS NOW HAVE PLENTY OF CARS AND WASHING MACHINES. WE ALSO HAVE PLENTY OF SHINY NEW AIR CONDITIONED OFFICES IN THE NORTHERN HALF OF THE CITY. BUT OUR STREETS AND CITY SPACES ARE DIRTY, NOISY, FUME RIDDEN, DANGEROUS AND INEFFICIENT. WE HAVE PRIVATE AFFLUENCE AND PUBLIC SQUALOR.

WHILE SYDNEY'S NORTHERN HALF HAS ECONOMICALLY FLOURISHED IT HAS BEEN DISGRACEFULLY DEHUMANISED OVER RECENT YEARS. THE SOUTHERN HALF, BETWEEN PARK STREET AND THE RAILWAY, HAS LOST ITS ORIGINAL RETAIL AND ECONOMIC FUNCTIONS. IT STAGNATES, AND GETS SHABBIER EVERY YEAR. IT NEEDS CAREFUL RESEARCH, PLANNING AND SKILFUL REDEVELOPMENT FINANCING BEFORE IT WILL LIVE AGAIN.

TO CREATE A FINE CITY CORE, WE MUST PUT TO WORK MANY PEOPLE SKILLED IN URBAN ECONOMIC RESEARCH, CITY-PLANNING, URBAN DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT FINANCING.

THE CITY COUNCIL SHOULD HAVE A PROPER CITY PLANNING DEPARTMENT WITH A TOP MAN AS CHIEF CITY PLANNER. THIS DEPARTMENT SHOULD BE INVESTING AT LEAST £200,000 A YEAR IN URBAN RESEARCH, PLANNING AND THE NEGOTIATING OF CO-OPERATIVE BLOCK REDEVELOPMENT PROJECTS.

→ see p 2

THE CITY COUNCIL COULD FINANCE THIS NEW DEPARTMENT BY A SMALL PERCENTAGE LEVY ON THE £20 MILLION BEING SPENT EACH YEAR ON NEW SYDNEY OFFICE BUILDINGS. IF THE CITY COUNCIL CAN'T OR WON'T PLAN THE CITY, THE MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT SHOULD GET IT DONE BY THE STATE PLANNING AUTHORITY OR BY SOME NEW BODY SIMILAR TO THE NATIONAL TRUST.

AT THE MOMENT, WE DON'T HAVE EFFECTIVE PROFESSIONAL PLANNING FOR THE CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT. INSTEAD WE SUFFER A CONTINUOUS STREAM OF WOOLLY COMMENTS IN THE PRESS ON DETAILS OF WHAT IS WRONG.

WE NEED POLITICAL LEADERSHIP WHICH WILL SEE THE PROBLEM COMPREHENSIVELY AND WHICH WILL PUT A COMPREHENSIVE TEAM TO WORK ON ITS SOLUTION. THIS TEAM MUST UNITE LABOUR AND BUSINESS, AND MUST BE WELL SUPPLIED WITH PROFESSIONAL ADVICE.

June 1965.

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