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Summary

The Hague (pages 70–84)

Within the space of a hundred years the city of The Hague has grown from a peaceful provincial town of 75,000 inhabitants to a city in which more than 600,000 people have to live, surrounded by a number of suburbs which have to accommodate yet another 100,000.

The Hague's residential area—The Hague agglomeration—is a complex of communities which have grown up together. They are mutually dependent in their sources of livelihood and living requirements.

On the basis of estimates stretching over a period of years, it can be reckoned that by 1980 The Hague agglomeration will have a population of 950,000, as long as no unexpected developments occur. To house this population round about 270,000 habitations must be available. If it is desired to satisfy the appropriate future housing requirements and at the same time to meet new demands which are being made today in the fields of traffic, housing, work, education, recreation and culture, then in this area in 1980 there will only be room for approximately 217,000 habitations. In these only about 770,000 people will be able to be accommodated (III. 17).

The inner city was no longer capable of meeting the present demands, in spite of the isolated cases of resettlement and breakthrough in the twenties and thirties. The small core of the city will be able to be reconstructed and altered following the imposition of some town-planning regulations, on account of its charm as a high-class residential district (III. 18); this does not apply to a wide peripheral area where timely reconstruction is out of the question owing to a long period of crisis arising out of the war and the post-war housing shortage.

The reconstruction plans developed up to now cover a area of 600 hectares (the total area of The Hague amounts to 7,600 hectares). Within this area lie 500 hectares in the inner city, and a 100 hectares in Scheveningen and Loosduinen. An area of 160 hectares within the inner city will have to be completely reconstructed before 1975.

The intention exists to break up for the greater part a wide area around the present-day city within an estimated forty years and to replace part of the town with a completely new configuration. The residential quarters which by modern standards are totally unsuitable (III. 20) must give way to another style of building which harmonises better with the city. Industrial premises, offices and residences should be included, and room should be allowed for commerce as well as traffic to an extent hitherto undreamt of by earlier administrators, architects and city-planners.

The south-west city expansion comprises a residential area for more than 100,000 people—this is broken up into a number of districts.

The district is to be divided and articulated by traffic arteries and green belts to render it visually comprehensible by the inhabitants.

If the most recent construction plans are realised, The Hague will have a total of approximately 175,000 habitations, leaving reconstruction to one side. Some years later Voorburg, Wassenaar, Rijswijk and Leidschendam will be fully built up. Here the definitive housing resources will amount to 50,000 habitations. If the agglomeration of The Hague's population climbs to 950,000 by 1980, one would then have to have a total of about 270,000 habitations. This means that either 45,000 habitations will be lacking by that date, or that there will be round about 160,000 "surplus" inhabitants.

The reconstruction of the greater part of The Hague is not possible, if new housing space is not made available for the population residing there. This is only technically and administratively to be realised through the construction of either a new housing settlement core or a satellite town.

The satellite town will, at first at any rate, remain dependent on the mother city from various points of view. As soon as possible, the new town should stand on its own feet socio-economically, culturally, and perhaps even administratively.

City Planning (pages 85–94)

The Development of an Idea from 1948 to 1958.

A project of the former CIAM Group "opbouw," Rotterdam 1948–1956, and the architects J. B. Bakema and J. M. Stokla, 1956–1958.

Is it true to say of modern city planning that, apart from a few happy examples, up to now it has been a failure? It would hardly be just and in fact unpardonable to remain silent on this subject seeing that the reconstruction of the devastated cities has proceeded so "well" and especially so quickly. Nevertheless, what city, new or old, does not suffer from afflictions of the "internal organs"? Every one has a diseased diaphragm — seat of the soul according to the old notion.

The problem confronting the city planner cannot, to be sure, be surveyed at one glance so long as we ask how a city is to be made use of. This manner of use is apparent in the actual appearance of a city. This manner of use, however, does not depend solely on material and cultural requirements but on human modes of behaviour, which are operative outside the realm of human consciousness. Function and modes of behaviour indicate properties of human communities. City planning is at its best when these properties, in the individual and in the group, are given optimum expression. No such city has yet been planned in Europe. Le Corbusier has established many of the basic principles, along with Gropius, Sert, Hilberseimer, as well as Wright, in short, all who have concerned themselves not only with architecture as such but also with human living problems.

A brief survey of these pioneer projects is given here: The work of the CIAM Group "opbouw" Rotterdam under the direction of Bakema from 1948 to 1956 (Members of "opbouw" were: J. B. Bakema, J. W. Boer, J. H. van den Broek, E. F. Groosman, H. J. Hovensgreve, H. A. Maaskant, A. N. Oyevaar, Ch. Stam-Beese, H. W. Stolle, J. M. Stokla, W. van Tijen, R. de Vries, W. Wissing, P. Zwart) and the work of the architects Bakema and Stokla from 1956 to 1958. We indicate below a few of the problems which the Dutch have regarded as crucial in their pioneer projects:

various social requirements (not to be confused with social class structure); various physiological requirements; the harmonious visual integration of the individual in the community and in the physical landscape; the insulation of the individual from the community and from the physical landscape; the community as a "separate body;" balance between natural environment and city in residential areas.

The most important element in planning is active architectural space. (City planning research, along with that of the "de 8" Group Amsterdam, was preceded by research into rational dimensions in building; both teams created a small Dutch "Neufert.")

"The human community does not feel itself to be a mere agglomeration but a uniformly articulated body with its own physiological character" (The building assignment, Building + Home 1959, page 34).

This "separate body," is here, with the means at the disposal of the architect, for the first time not only represented in modern architecture but deliberately created.

Whether isolated or integrated, whether open or closed, the body of the community is a reality which is given expression, not in a linear, discrete disposition of the buildings but only in the spatial arrangement of various types of buildings and in spatial differentiation of the various groups (districts).

This spatial planning and organization represents even more: it makes possible a sharp boundary between built over areas and the open countryside but at the same time it harmonizes city and country by maintaining a close relationship between the two.

The elevation is of merely subsidiary importance. The most important thing is the space which creates space: "spatial quanta are not delimited by walls or masses of buildings but by other spatial quanta."

Toronto City Hall (pages 95–98)

The competition for a city hall in Toronto was announced on an international basis, because the authorities wished not only a building that would function smoothly from the organizational point of view and would be of high architectural quality, to serve as centre for the public administration, but also would convey some idea of the purpose embodied in a city hall: the meaning of government, the continuance of democratic traditions, the service rendered by public servants to the public.

The majority of the prize judges was of the view that the plan submitted by Revell came closest to their original conception. The City Hall Square is laid out in such a way that the present city hall and the Osgode Hall are not only meaningfully integrated within the whole program but can, by way of the Square, be brought into spatial relationship with each other. The municipal administration or the district administration offices are housed in the two round towers. In the centre of the two towers, which face each other like mussel shells, is situated the dome structure of the legislative and executive branches. The structural composition clearly expresses the function of the individual elements: The one-storey terrace structure opening on the city hall square receives the general public, one tower the municipal administration offices, the other tower the district administration offices and the dome the offices and conference rooms of the officials. The east tower is so designed as to draw the observer's attention to the site of the future court house, the west tower to draw attention to the present city hall.

A minority opinion was that the plan was defective in that the solid concrete walls of the tower structures sealed the city hall off from its surroundings; the objecting judges believe that there could be created the impression that the city hall was haughtily indifferent to the local citizens. They also object to the connection between the two tower structures by way of the lower floors and the unilateral arrangement of offices along corridors which are too long. The disposition of the council chamber and of many subsidiary rooms has not yet been worked out organizationally, and many people using the dome are deprived of a view. The minority also criticizes the very high costs entailed by the construction of the two towers.

The Residential District in Relation to the Place of Work (pages 99–104)

The integral density of home-to-work movements.

In consideration of the fact that the population working in and resident in Zurich, at place of residence exhibits approximately the same spatial distribution as on Chart 1 (however, about one-half smaller in respect of numbers), we ascertain that the ratios of place of residence to place of work (disperse-homogeneous to thickly concentrated) fluctuate widely depending on residential and working district (Chart 3). All place of residence—place of work movements, which bear on the city centre, are relatively great in respect not only of numbers but also of distances; on the other hand, place of residence—place of work movements in peripheral districts are relatively small both in respect of numbers and of distances. The city centre therefore draws its working population from great distances and in great numbers. Chart 4 shows how this attractive force exerted from the centre can be measured with the aid of movement densities. This chart is drawn up by calculating for any desired unit of the urban area (in this case the hectare) the sum of the movements effected by all persons who proceed to work on this given area, i.e., by deriving for each hectare the density of personal movement in persons multiplied by km./ha. per working district (and that for each trip from place of residence to place of work per person). If we analyze more closely the integral density of home-to-work movements where it attains a maximum value of approximately 1740 persons km./ha., namely along the middle stretch of the Bahnhofstrasse, we discover that this maximal density is to be accounted for not only on the basis of an extensive dependent area but also of the quantitatively high influx of persons (Chart 5).

The differential density of movement.

Chart 6 shows all the movements (place of residence—place of work movements included) of a man of the middle classes for a typical segment of his working life: one week. These movements are, depending on how frequently they were repeated, represented on the Chart by more or less dense flow lines. In this investigation there was involved an office employee in a position of intermediate responsibility: age 26, married, 1 child; place of work: the above-mentioned city zone with the highest density of movement (Chart 5).

Result of the Investigation.

There can be derived from the norms here represented certain conclusions of interest to the planner, conclusions which are of fundamental importance in siting and especially too in traffic planning of housing projects (or working areas):

1. On the average the differential movement density for movement place of residence — transport — place of work attains by far the highest value. All other movements are subordinate in character and to a far-reaching extent are adapted to the first-mentioned.
2. In the planning of projected residential zones, that integral place of residence—place of work direction of movement, or flow, is given preference which tends toward the points of most concentrated flow. The determination of these integral lines of flow is among other things the indispensable basis for any further traffic planning: only by this means can all traffic movements to and from other zones be estimated in advance with + or — 10% accuracy.
3. The integral movement density place of residence—place of work decelerates with increasing distance from the associated point of most concentrated flow.
4. Zones—however they may be sited—with average place of residence—place of work movement densities of more than 70 persons km./ha. are not suited for new housing settlements.

Berlin: Capital City (pages 105–116)

A Political Competition.

Considerations of publicity were decisive in the selection of a large, public competition. The precarious situation of Berlin at the junction of the two great power blocs which differ so enormously in political outlook and the weak policy of certain quarters in the German Federal Republic and in the West at large require Berlin to seize upon every possible opportunity to draw world attention to its ultimately untenable position; to the desperate position of a city without economic hinterland that is artificially maintained by the West, to the complex situation of an island of territory which is further subdivided into two parts each pursuing diametrically opposed political, economic and cultural aims.

A competition involving the political forum, the cultural and economic heart of the city, the centre of Berlin, was bound to arouse the interest of the entire German people, indeed of all people everywhere who have the ideal of freedom close to their hearts.

Thus this undertaking, which has been under preparation for years, created the possibility for conducting a political information campaign on the grand scale, and behind the practical aspects of the program there are implied the following goals: Help Berlin to become once again the capital of a re-unified Germany! Help to put an end to the partition of Berlin, for only Berlin possesses the atmosphere, the tradition and the importance entitling it to be the capital of a united Germany.

The competition was announced in order to stimulate and put to the test the already existing plans for the city centre. In this connection the problem was not so much to get proposals applicable to all the minute details but rather to elicit large-scale ideas involving reconstruction in general.

Architects of the German Democratic Republic, the USSR and satellite countries were barred from participation. Gratifying though the high degree of participation by the Western nations is—the absence of representation on the part of the other half of Europe (or the world) constitutes a gap which is likely to have appreciable psychological repercussions on the people of East Germany. The result of this regrettable situation is the announcement of a second competition devoted to planning the centre of Berlin, on the part of the German Democratic Republic. This is a truly grotesque state of affairs! The eastern undertaking endeavours, with regard to externals, to be a mirror image of the western competition.