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Notes and Comments

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NOTES AND COMMENTS

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CANADIAN URBAN INFORMATION SOURCES

The Directory of Canadian Urban Information Sources published recently by the Information Resource Service of the Ministry of State for Urban Affairs, is a first attempt at gathering together in one document the sources of urban information available in Canada.

There are four main sections: urban literature, (reference sources, selected readings and current interest topics); libraries and information centres (collections of special value to researchers); urban organizations (professional associations, research councils and special interest groups); universities, (faculties, programmes and research institutes).

The Directory will be revised annually and users comments and suggestions are welcomed. The 1975 edition will expand coverage of the "libraries" section to include information on municipal archives and city planning libraries; indicate audio-visual sources useful for teachers and librarians; and highlight the research activities and publications programmes of university institutes.

Copies of the Directory may be obtained free of charge from the Information Resource Service, Ministry of State for Urban Affairs, LaSalle Academy, 373 Sussex Drive, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0P6 - telephone 995-9641.

The new edition will be available in early 1976.

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SOURCES D'INFORMATION URBAINE AU CANADA

Le Répertoire des sources d'information urbaine au Canada publié récemment par le Service des sources d'information du Ministère d'Etat aux Affaires urbaines, représente une première tentative de réunir en un seul volume les sources d'information urbaine existant au Canada.

Les informations contenues dans le Répertoire sont présentées en quatre sections: documentation sur les affaires urbaines (titres choisis, sources de référence, ouvrages d'intérêt particulier); bibliothèques et centres de documentation; organismes urbaines (associations professionnelles, conseils de recherche et groupes d'intérêt spéciaux; universités (centres de recherches, programmes, facultés).

On prévoit une nouvelle édition à chaque année, et les usagers sont invités à signaler les erreurs et omissions. L'édition 1975 aura de plus amples renseignements sur des services tels que les archives municipales, les centres de documentation situés dans les villes et les communautés urbaines; les services audio-visuels utiles aux bibliothécaires et aux

enseignants; les thèmes de recherches et les séries de publications au sein des instituts universitaires.

Le Répertoire (édition 1974) peut être obtenu gratuitement auprès du Service des sources d'information, Ministère d'Etat aux Affaires urbaines, L'Académie LaSalle, 373 Promenade Sussex, Ottawa (Ontario) K1A 0M8 - téléphone 995-9641.

La nouvelle édition sera disponible au début de 1976.

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BRITISH COLUMBIA REPORT

William McKee, of the Vancouver City Archives, has a tantalizing report of the recent acquisitions of that institution ranging from the records of the Vancouver and District Joint Sewerage and Drainage Board to the Vancouver Poetry Society and the Vancouver Community Arts Council. In addition to the records of such city agencies as the School Board and Planning Department, the Archives has obtained the records of regional agencies including the Greater Vancouver Water District, the Lower Mainland Regional Planning Board, the Greater Vancouver Regional District and the Hospital Advisory Board. Another collection of regional interest is that of the Fraser Valley Milk Producers Association.

Labour historians will be interested in the records of the United Fishermen and Allied Workers' Union, the Painters and Allied Trades, the Sign and Pictorial Painters (1889), and the microfilmed records of the Vancouver and District Trades and Labour Council. The "other side" of society may be studied through the records of the Vancouver Board of Trade, the Vancouver Club, the Terminal City Club and the Shaughnessy Golf and Country Club.

Across Burrard Inlet in North Vancouver, Sheelagh Draper of the Vancouver City Archives, acting under the auspices of Capilano College and the North Shore Community Arts Council, is organizing an archives for North

Vancouver. She has already catalogued some Pacific Great Eastern Railway material dating back to 1913 and the records of the North Vancouver Land Improvement Company. These sources should be available to researchers within the next three or four months.

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VISITE CONFERENCE DU PARC DE L'ARTILLERIE ET DES FORTIFICATIONS DE QUEBEC

Dans le cadre du congrès annuel de la société historique du Canada, la section de recherche historique de Parcs Canada, bureau régional de Québec, a proposé au comité d'histoire urbaine, une visite conférence du Parc de l'Artillerie et des fortifications de Québec pour le 5 juin 1976.

Les thèmes qui seront abordés lors de la visite sont les suivants: l'évolution structurale et l'occupation du Parc de l'Artillerie 1710-1945; la stratégie de défense et l'évolution des fortifications de Québec; l'architecture urbaine domestique des maisons de la côte du Palais; la vie militaire à Québec; l'impact de la présence militaire sur la ville; le projet Dufferin, la préservation et la restauration à Québec au XIXe siècle.

La visite conférence est organisée par Marc LaFrance (chef adjoint, histoire militaire) de la section de recherche historique, Parcs Canada (Bureau régional de Québec). Pour de plus amples renseignements, contactez-nous (694-7722) ou écrivez au Parc de l'Artillerie, 2 rue de l'Arsenal, Québec. La visite conférence sera limitée à cinquante personnes. D'autres renseignements seront disponibles au centre d'inscription du congrès de la société historique du Canada.

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URBAN PROFILE SERIES

In 1973 the Ministry of State for Urban Affairs provided a research grant to a group from the Université du Québec à Montréal for a factual study of the political and administrative structures of ten Canadian urban regions. These ten metropolitan regions -- Vancouver, Edmonton, Calgary, Winnipeg, Toronto, Ottawa-Hull, Hamilton-Wentworth, Montréal, Québec and Halifax-Dartmouth -- were chosen on the basis of 1971 Census data. The common thread to the governing of these ten centres is the presence of some two-tier form of government, ranging from the urban community model in Montréal and Québec, to the regional planning commissions of Alberta, to the regional government system introduced in Ontario over the past few years.

Publication of the Profiles was prompted by the enthusiasm and recommendations of those local elected and administrative officials who assisted the research team as well as the recognized need to make municipal information more generally available. The series was published over a period beginning November 1974 and ending July 1975.

A researcher is presently undertaking the preparation of an update booklet for each Profile, reviewing the most important changes which have occurred in each region, as well as incorporating new statistical information and including a bibliography of recent reports and studies.

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SERIE DE PROFILS URBAINS

En 1973 une équipe de l'Université du Québec à Montréal reçut une subvention du Ministère d'Etat aux Affaires urbaines pour une étude des structures politiques et administratives des dix agglomérations canadiennes.

D'après le recensement de 1971, ces dix agglomérations sont identifiées comme étant Vancouver, Edmonton, Calgary, Winnipeg, Ottawa-Hull,

Toronto, Hamilton-Wentworth, Montréal, Québec et Halifax-Dartmouth. Dans chacune de ces dix agglomérations existe une formule deux-niveaux de gouvernement tel que le modèle des communautés urbaines à Montréal et Québec et les commissions de planification en Alberta.

On n'avait pas prévu la publication de ces Profils, mais l'urgence de rendre disponible les renseignements municipaux, ainsi que l'enthousiasme des personnes ressources ont persuadé le Ministère à changer d'opinion. La série fut publiée de novembre 1974 jusqu'à juillet 1975.

Attachant beaucoup d'importance à la précision de ces renseignements, le Ministère a embauché une recherchiste pour effectuer la mise à jour de cette série. Le Ministère prévoit en 1976 la parution de dix opuscles indiquant les changements les plus importants de chaque Profil. Les nouveaux renseignements comprendront des nouvelles données statistiques, ainsi qu'une bibliographie des rapports et études parus au cours de l'année

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THESIS ABSTRACTS

Harvey J. GRAFF, "Literacy and Social Structure in the Nineteenth Century City", Ph.D. Thesis, University of Toronto, 1975.

During the last two centuries, carefully structured provision of literacy has become a universal goal. Literacy, however, has never been defined with precision as either an essential skill for social and economic life or a harbinger of attitudinal changes. Nevertheless, it has been commonly assumed by educators, reformers, social scientists, and governments that a population trained properly in literacy would form a contented, moral, skilled, prudent, hard-working and responsible working class. Proper social values would thus be effectively and efficiently transmitted through instruction in reading and writing. Moreover, a promise of individual success and advancement was often tied to the achievement of literacy, although this represented a goal secondary to the maintenance of social order,

class cohesion, and economic development, which literacy and education were to serve. Consequently, nineteenth century spokesmen established certain truisms which have been maintained to the present including: (1) the promise of individual success through schooling, (2) the denigration of the illiterate or uneducated as poor, resourceless, and socially disorganized, and (3) the urban and industrial problems of North America as a result of the immigration of poor, illiterate European peasants.

Part One, "Literacy and Social Structure", tests these prevailing notions through a quantitative examination of literates and illiterates in three Ontario cities. Contrary to the "mystique" of literacy, the data reveal that social stratification and inequality were primarily tied to ascribed social characteristics, such as ethnicity, age, sex and race. Achievement of literacy hardly influenced the ranks of structural inequality, as illiterates were occupationally and economically stratified in patterns paralleling the ordering of literates. Moreover, educational opportunity was stratified in ways similar to the distribution of literacy, occupation, and wealth. Therefore, while fully four-fifths of the Irish adults were literate, they remained lowest ranking. Achievement of some education barely affected the barriers of structural rigidity.

Immigrants, though, were not the dregs of their places of origin. Indeed, their rates of literacy were well above the mean for their homelands. Literacy, it would appear, is one factor which contributes to long-distance migration. Moreover, illiterate immigrants were not prisoners of a "culture of poverty"; they were adaptive men and women rationally utilizing their available resources for stability, survival, and success. Toward this end, they often purchased homes and modified their family organization in remarkably useful ways. When persistent for a decade in one city, their illiteracy did not prevent maintenance of skilled and higher ranking occupations; furthermore, they experienced upward mobility in wealth and property-ownership. Their children, moreover, did not suffer unduly from parental poverty and illiteracy as they surpassed the occupational attainments of their fathers. While literacy did not meet its promised role for individuals, illiteracy was not the disadvantage it was presumed to be.

Moreover, the relationship between literacy, jobs, and industrialization was hardly the linear one commonly assumed. The connection remains at best ambiguous, as workers could gain skilled or small proprietary positions without literacy and since industrialization appears to depend on many other factors than merely a literate workforce. What literacy does do is prepare workers in attitude, conduct, and personality for factory labor, rather than in skills. Similarly, the supposed relationship joining illiteracy to criminality is less than direct. Patterns of prosecution and conviction were tied to class, ethnicity, sex, and form of crime more firmly than to the education of the suspect.

Finally, the quality of literacy in mid-nineteenth century society is confronted. High statistical levels of literacy belie lower qualitative levels, producing commonly-held imperfect skills. However, even this literacy was probably sufficient for many of the demands placed on it; though imperfect literacy held on a broad popular base, met the social demands for a trained, safe population, while specific individual or class needs could go unanswered.

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Paul-André LINTEAU, "Histoire de la ville de Maisonneuve, 1883-1918",
Thèse de Ph.D. (histoire), Université de Montréal, 1975.

Cette thèse s'inscrit dans le cadre de l'histoire urbaine. Elle vise, grâce à une étude de cas, à mettre en lumière le contexte dans lequel s'inscrit l'urbanisation du Québec à la fin du 19e siècle et au début du 20e siècle et à expliquer quelques composantes de ce processus. La municipalité étudiée, Maisonneuve, est une ville industrielle de la banlieue montréalaise qui connaît une croissance particulièrement rapide pendant la quinzaine d'années qui précèdent la Première Guerre Mondiale.

L'interprétation de l'auteur est centrée sur le rôle organisateur du capital foncier qui, grâce à ses liens avec le conseil municipal, réussit à mettre en place une véritable politique de développement urbain.

Celle-ci repose en premier lieu sur une politique industrielle qui vise à attirer dans la ville des entreprises manufacturières et, ultimement, les travailleurs de celles-ci qui deviendront les nouveaux résidents de Maisonneuve. L'appui à l'industrie prend diverses formes: bonus en argent, exemption de taxes, gel de l'évaluation foncière, garantie d'obligations, sans compter les mesures indirectes comme l'amélioration des services publics.

En second lieu, la politique de développement urbain s'appuie sur les investissements réalisés par la municipalité ou les compagnies de services publics: rues, aqueduc, égouts, électricité, tramway, gaz, édifices municipaux et parcs.

Ainsi la valeur des terres est en hausse rapide, ce qui permet d'obtenir un profit substantiel. Et quand le marché des terrains s'effondre, avant la Guerre, on lance le grandiose projet du parc Maisonneuve qui permet au capital foncier de se débarrasser -- avec profit -- des terrains les moins bien situés.

La figure centrale de ce capital foncier est le promoteur urbain. A Maisonneuve, ces promoteurs sont majoritairement des hommes d'affaires canadiens-français, appartenant à la moyenne bourgeois montréalaise. Ils se distinguent par leur dynamisme, leur recherche du profit et leur idéologie qui valorise le progrès et la prospérité. Les Alphonse Desjardins, Charles-Théodore Viau, Isaïe Préfontaine, Oscar Dufresne, Alexandre Michaud et quelques autres ont conçu et organisé ce développement. Jouissant de fortes exemptions de taxes, n'hésiant pas à intégrer les investissements religieux à leurs projets, ils sont souvent aussi directement impliqués dans certaines entreprises industrielles qui s'installent dans la ville. Leurs propriétés sont pour eux source d'un pouvoir considérable qui se manifeste surtout dans le contrôle du conseil municipal.

Le résultat de leur action planificatrice est l'émergence d'une ville fortement industrialisée, où plusieurs secteurs sont représentés et où se dessine une concentration dans celui de la chaussure.

Maisonneuve sera par conséquent une ville de travailleurs d'usine. Ceux-ci représentent une forte proportion de la population active. Ils ont cependant peu de choses à dire dans l'organisation de leur ville. En effet, 90% des chefs de ménage sont locataires ce qui laisse le pouvoir municipal entre les mains d'une minorité, les propriétaires.

La thèse permet également d'étudier les difficultés d'une municipalité de banlieue face aux grandes entreprises privées qui exploitent les services publics. Les méthodes que ces dernières emploient pour obtenir un monopole d'exploitation sont exposées en détail. Il en ressort un constat d'échec des pouvoirs municipaux face à ces trusts.

L'étude de Maisonneuve permet de mieux comprendre la formidable expansion urbaine que connaît l'agglomération montréalaise entre 1880 et 1914. Plus globalement, elle apporte des éléments nouveaux permettant de réinterpréter l'évolution de la société québécoise au tournant du siècle et la place qui y occupe la bourgeoisie canadienne-française.

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Walter van NUS, "The Plan-Makers and the City: Architects, Engineers, Surveyors and Urban Planning in Canada, 1890-1939", Ph.D. Thesis, University of Toronto, 1975.

This work is a study of the reasons for and content of town planning advocacy among architects, engineers and surveyors in Canada between 1890 and 1939. The chief primary sources were the journals to which these professional men contributed regularly, the proceedings of the meetings of their associations, and the planning reports they helped draw up.

Their assumption that one could formulate general planning principles applicable across Canada was based on the fact that fast-growing centres largely shared certain basic developmental problems. Town planning appealed to members of the three professions partly because of foreign example, partly as an extension of their everyday business of drawing plans,

and above all as a partial solution to two professional frustrations: powerlessness to order urban development according to their ideals, and underemployment. By 1918, town planning enjoyed a national popularity as a way to increase the efficiency of suburban development, in order to help both ease the severe shortage of decent worker's housing, and end a widespread crisis of municipal finance. This popularity, coupled with severe professional underemployment, encouraged the creation of the Town Planning Institute of Canada in 1919. The nature of public support, however, also led these professionals to condemn the costly city beautiful schemes with which town planning had so often been equated before 1913, and to depict planning as mainly preventive suburban regulation. In the 1920's some public support was sustained by home-owners' requests for zoning and motorists' desire for improved streets, and these concerns became high priorities for the professional advocates of planning. In the 1930's, low-rental housing projects attracted both general and professional interest.

The thesis describes the tactics suggested in pursuit of urban beauty, maximum economic efficiency of the urban organism, and the most economical provision of workers' housing. One finds in these discussions a failure to recognize explicitly contradictions among colleagues' ideas. Zoning engineers tended to equate beauty of streetscape with symmetry, while others emphasized the principle of visual variety and stimulation; yet no debate ensued. There was little recognition of the importance of the division between those who advocated a rigid long-term plan and those who saw planning as a continuous administrative process. As well, some entertained an inflated assessment of the potential of certain planning strategies. They over-emphasized the savings which efficient subdivision development could effect in the provision of sanitary and pleasant workers' housing, and expressed excessive confidence in their ability to prepare general plans for future growth. In addition, while wide agreement existed on certain specific and limited restrictions on land developers, there was much less support for radical changes needed to make planning much more than the co-ordination of the development projects of private interests. Finally, it was only occasionally that planners challenged the widely-held beliefs among property-owners in the desirability of social segregation among residential districts and in the private citizen's right to own urban land.

Planners were much concerned over how planning ought to be implemented in a democracy. However, they ignored the dilemma posed for those who believed not only that the citizenry must participate in the preparation of plans, and also that most Canadians were selfish economic individualists.

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THE JOURNAL OF URBAN HISTORY

In the mid 1950's the entire university community in the United States had some six persons who regularly offered courses or wrote on the history of cities. The appearance of the Journal of Urban History in November 1974, along with the proliferation of urban courses, programs, seminars, newsletters, institutes and the publication of a host of articles and books leaves no doubt that the field of urban history has undergone a vast change in the last two decades and has come of age.

Editor Raymond A. Mohl noted in his introductory editorial that "urban history is a big tent" and went on to point out that whether potential articles dealt with specific cities, the relationship of cities to broader regions, new research techniques or methodologies, interdisciplinary approaches, comparative studies, or historiography they would all be considered. On the basis of the first four issues there is no doubt that this broadly inclusive policy has been followed. Twelve of the original fourteen articles deal essentially with the American city, but there is a great diversity within these articles, while about half of the twenty-four books reviewed focus on European, British and Asian developments.

Among the articles worthy of specific attention is Tamara Hareven's study of the role of the French-Canadian family in the textile factories of Manchester New Hampshire. Based on a sampling of employee files, with additional evidence from city directories, marriage records, oral interviews and company records it captures the strength and perseverance of the family unit as it changed and adapted to the demands of an industrial

society. In their well reasoned, carefully developed assessment of the problem of biased underenumeration in census manuscripts, John B. Sharpless and Ray M. Shortridge flash a warning to all researchers who treat such evidence as the ideal source material. For whether the underenumeration of specific groups amounts to five, ten or twenty percent, it can bring into question all sorts of conclusions about the apparent uniqueness of that group. Similarly the articles by Darrett Rutman on the critical importance of population density and economic opportunity in 18th century New Hampshire towns, Leo Schnore's "Uneasy Marriage" of urban history and the social science, and Samuel P. Hays' suggestive comments on the nature and importance of forces making for decentralization, and those making for centralization in the urban community, are all worthy of careful study.

An especially valuable and readable component of these early issues are the detailed interviews with Sam Bass Warner, Stephan Thernstrom, and Eric Lampard. The reader might be familiar with their written work, but the candid, informal nature of the interviews with Bruce Stave provide a unique insight into the backgrounds, ideas, self-assessment and plans of these authors. One might worry about the number of urban historians worthy of such an interview, but while the supply lasts, it makes an excellent feature.

These four issues also contain a number of more prosaic pieces. After a study of the opinions of contemporaries about the nature of three mid-western cities of the early 19th century Carl Abbott concludes that Chicago was essentially a commercial city, Cincinnati a manufacturing city and Indianapolis a centre for public and professional services, and that "in each case the informed opinion of contemporaries was accurate". Similarly one can admire the care and rigour shown by R.M. Bernard and B.R. Rice in their analysis of the role of eight independent variables in the adoption of city manager or commission forms of government in 156 American cities between 1900 and 1924. But one must also note the conclusion that "although there were exceptions...for the most part the performance of the eight variables in our model...was consistent with the traditional interpretations of such reform". One also wonders how many research assistant were needed by Laurence A. Glasco to help transcribe and encode data from the New York

State manuscript of 1855 on the entire 70,000 residents of Buffalo. It is true that for any age from 12 to 40, male or female, native-born American, Irish, or German, one can learn what percentage were dependent children, boarders, servants, household heads, or relatives. But whether the additional knowledge on life cycles and family structure is commensurate with the time and effort involved, or whether a 5 per cent sample of Buffalo's population would have served equally well is open to question.

In short the Journal of Urban History provides a good insight into the present state of urban history in the United States. It captures the diversity in style, approach, problems and methods and indicates that quantitative research techniques based on data from manuscript, census, marriage records, city directories, building permits and assessment rolls constitute the main thrust in the field. It also shows that such techniques and sources do not automatically guarantee significant findings. Rather thoughtful, independent, creative minds are still the essential component. As long as urban history continues to get its share of such minds, the Journal of Urban History should continue to publish significant work.

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VISUAL IMAGES OF FIVE CANADIAN CITIES

Several geographers have dared to distribute photographs of six Canadian cities and to include with the slides printed guides to aid teachers. The six slide sets have been produced by the Education Committee of the Canadian Association of Geographers and each kit of 20 slides and guide booklets are available for \$6.50 each and may be ordered from the Canadian Association of Geographers, Burnside Hall, McGill University, P.O. Box 6070, Montreal, Quebec, H3C 3G1. Two of the compilers are from universities, two from high schools, and three from Boards of Education.

Twenty slides were selected for each city for the purpose of illustrating certain concepts of urban growth. Themes were selected for stress in each set: Set 1, Montreal -- Transport Centre; Set 2, Hamilton -- Steel City; Set 3, Halifax -- Changing Waterfront Uses; Set 4, Toronto -- A Complex Metropolis; Set 5, Winnipeg -- A Prairie Transportation Centre; Set 6, Thunder Bay (theme not known by me since this set was not seen).

To grasp how difficult a task each set compiler(s) faced, ask five people to select five scenes to photograph that would capture the key element's of your city's character. The combinations of scenes surely will be numerous, but hopefully there will be some overlap. To paraphrase, the city is in the eye of the beholder. Here we have an essential truth, and yet, somehow, a generalized feeling for the essential character of a place can emerge so that a shared image can be identified.

A picture is not just a pleasing diversion. It represents something of the person who took it. It is a personalized image that can be shared. Thus when selecting slides for classroom use, a specific purpose must be in mind so that a meaning is clear to the viewer. The message must be specific, not general. It must have appeal or it may "turn off" the viewer. On the other hand, the selector must be aware that photos can arouse emotions, be they of wonder, amazement, pleasure, or dislike. Somehow the selector must select photos which inform and, hopefully, stimulate. In stimulating the viewer, however, he/she must be made aware by the teacher of the problem of focussing on what is there rather than of what ought to be there. Thus the teacher, when showing his own or someone else's photos, needs to warn the viewers to beware of attributing a "reading" of the slides only to perception when in fact they may be inferring content. This problem also exists for a compiler. Content for a purpose, the purpose being, in the case of the slides under discussion, to illustrate key concepts, themes and facts on the form and functioning spatial patterning of selected Canadian cities.

How well do the slide sets reflect the above listed concerns? In short, they vary, perhaps because some of the sets have been selected and

written about by people who seem to have been aware that "outsiders" will use the sets, while other have been assembled with no clear audience in mind. Clearly, there was need for some editorial control for the series but this seems to have been lacking.

The Toronto set is excellent, followed in order of quality both of slides and accompanying booklets by Montreal, Hamilton, Halifax, and Winnipeg. The Toronto set does convey something of the city's complexity. Interesting use is made in five slides of composite shots, thus adding to the overall number of photos and also providing useful comparative photos side by side. Aerial photos are balanced with close up shots. People and animals exist in the slides -- this in marked contrast to the other sets -- and so Toronto emerges as a living city. The guide booklet is very useful, being filled with general background information and specific discussions of the slides. An aid to teachers is the list of things to consider for each slide. There is a useful annotated bibliography. Four sketch maps appear in the booklet and one highly generalized regional development plan is included as a slide.

Montreal emerges as a cold place with few people -- just the works of man are shown. But the theme is transportation, so the Lachine Canal, the harbours, the Seaway, railway yards, and the disruptive power of expressways are much in evidence. A few "other" slides are included that do not relate directly to the theme but, as with too many slides in this and other sets, they were obviously taken on Sunday mornings. The guide booklet provides short background paragraphs that are suggestive. One inadequate map of land use is included as is a very short bibliography.

The Hamilton set includes some good photos of steel works, and the viewer quickly develops a feel for the prevailing presence of heavy industry. Some useful contrasting photos of residential areas and "downtown" are included. Again, however, people are absent. The guide booklet has good, brief descriptions but has no map and the bibliography is to generally inaccessible local government reports.

The Halifax slides are good -- although few people are present,

even in the street scenes -- but the guide booklet is inadequate. The changing waterfront uses are illustrated by several of the slides but too little is made of the exciting landscape evidence of Halifax's fascinating trading past, whether in slides or text. The poor text is supported by a suggestive bibliography but no maps.

Winnipeg, "a prairie transportation centre" also emerges as a "works of man place" with no people. This set has 14 aerial shots, several of which are repetitive. The image that emerges is of a featureless urban mass that could be almost anywhere North America. The guide booklet has a brief essay on the city's site, situation, and functions, and also on the population, but the discussions of the photos are poorly developed and simplistic suggestions are made for class discussion. A bibliography is included but most of the items are not generally available. Two general maps are printed.

Too many of the slides in the several sets are "dead" and, judging from some "test runs" with my students, simply do not appeal, educate, or even stimulate. Repetition detracts both within some sets and also between sets -- there are eight shots of railway yards for example. The character of Toronto and Hamilton emerge from the slides, but such does not happen with the others. What bothered me was that too many of the slides could be interchanged from set to set, but this may be more of a comment on the trend of urban growth than on the selectors of the slides.

I had a problem when discussing the slides with my students -- I and most of them had not been in Winnipeg. We thus were at the mercy of the guide booklet. It failed in its purpose. With each of the other cities I called upon personal experiences, knowledge and observations, and thus could interpret the slides for the students. When doing so, I purposely confined myself to the themes identified by the compilers of the slides, but I found only the guide books on Toronto, Hamilton and Montreal to be of use.

A major failing of each of the sets, but less with Montreal, was that they were essentially ahistorical in their written material. A

functioning landscape emerges, it does not just exist, and yet this fundamental fact seems to have been only weakly present when the compilers were at work. What a pity strong outside editorial guidance was absent, for perhaps both the selection of slides and more especially the guide booklets could have been strengthened.

The quality of the slides vary but all of the sets can be used for teaching by the discriminating teacher. An instructor may prefer to insert his own slides that "better" (how relative this term is) illustrate the essential character of a place and the fundamental processes that have operated through time.

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CANADIAN URBAN HISTORY CONFERENCE

A three day conference will be held at the University of Guelph on May 12-14, 1977, hosted by the History Department of the University of Guelph and the Urban History Committee of the Canadian Historical Association. Sessions will be designed to facilitate an interdisciplinary approach to the historical development of particular Canadian cities and towns or to the broader aspects of Canadian urbanization in the past. Tentative sessions include the following:

1. metropolitanism and regional urban development
2. the economics of urban growth
3. development and planning
4. housing and housing policy
5. local government and services
6. social structure in 19th century communities
7. resource-based communities
8. preserving the urban past
9. the visual record and urban history
10. the city in history

In addition, two panel discussions will be scheduled, perhaps during lunch hours, dealing with the question of the preservation of historical buildings and of community records. Walking tours and exhibits are also planned.

For more information regarding registration, accommodation, program participants, etc., write:

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THE URBAN HISTORY COMMITTEE OF THE
CANADIAN HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

The committee held a highly successful meeting at the Université du Québec à Montréal on October 31st and November 1st. Although fog prevented our colleagues from the Maritimes from attending, our representative from Victoria managed to be there. Our hosts, Paul-André Linteau and Jean-Claude Robert, provided a stimulating explanation of their impressive project on Montreal society in the 19th century. They also organized a visit to the record collection of the Montreal City Archives and led a walking tour of Old Montreal. Our accommodation in the fading Victorian splendor of the Windsor Hotel and a memorable dinner at Les Halles provided the proper background for an appreciation of urban history in Montreal.

The urban history committee decided to limit its participation at the 1976 C.H.A. meetings in Québec City to the following session:

Canadian Urban Reform

Chairman: Richard Jones, Laval University

Michel Gauvin (University of Ottawa), "The Reformer and the Machine in Montreal Civic Politics: from Raymond Préfontaine to Mederic Martin."

In the 1880's and 1890's, Raymond Préfontaine forged a political machine by appealing to the following groups: paving contractors, the Liberal party, the recent French Canadian majority in the City Council and the public utilities. In response, there emerged a reform movement which at first attacked public works patronage and later concentrated its fire on the electricity trust. In 1909, the reformers persuaded the Provincial Government to appoint a Royal Commission into Montreal's administration. Following the Commission's disclosures, Montrealers voted in a referendum to institute a Board of Control. The reformers' argument was that such a change would eliminate the inefficiencies and corruption of ward politics.

Following their victory in the 1910 municipal election, the reformers were more interested in city planning than in actual administration. In 1912, Mederic Martin, a politician discredited in the 1909 Commission, was elected to the City Council. In 1914, he was elected Mayor, his platform demanding the return of the ward as the supreme political unit.

From 1914 to 1917, the Board of Control continued to govern despite the opposition of Martin and his supporters in the City Council. During these same years, declining real estate values resulted in continual deficits. In response to demands from business groups, the Provincial Government abolished the Board of Control and appointed a temporary Administrative Commission. The Commission eventually balanced the budget, but was less successful in other areas such as strikes, unemployment, housing and rents. In 1921, a referendum was held, the choices being a city manager system or a return to ward politics. The result was the victory of the ward system and the confirmation of Mederic Martin as the boss of Montreal.

John Weaver (McMaster University), "Tomorrow's Metropolis Revisited:
A Critical Assessment of Canadian Urban Reform, 1890-1920."

During a period of tremendous demographic, spatial and architecture changes in Canadian cities, a number of measures were introduced to shape the new urban communities and allegedly to meet their problems. Often labelled reforms by their supporters, they included changes in the structure of municipal government, public ownership of utilities, urban planning and social work. Viewed by students of ideas as constituting a clear struggle of decent and farsighted men with the problems of growth, reform has received very sympathetic treatment. However, a great number of the most widely adopted reforms may be seen as serving the aspirations of urban business communities busily pushing cities along the path of growth at any cost. As for those portions of reform relating to social engineering, the goals may have been more altruistic in conception, but opaque episodes intrude. Moreover, social engineering could exacerbate the very difficulties it sought to remedy. In the most pressing urban problem of the era, a severe housing crisis, reform proved of limited importance. What all of this suggests is that reform has been a term used indiscriminately; many processes accepted as "progressive" should be returned to booster ambitions, expediency, political calculation and prejudice from whence they drew their strength. To do so places them more logically in the course of Canadian urban development which, national pride notwithstanding, has shared many traits with the United States.

Commentator: Alan Artibise, National Museum of Man.

The committee also agreed to sponsor two sessions at the 1977 meetings in Frederickton, N.B. These might include one on cities of the Atlantic provinces and another on ethnicity and immigration in the cities. We would appreciate suggestions regarding these or other topics.

The committee agreed to participate and assist in the planning of a major "Canadian Urban History Conference" to be hosted by the History Department of the University of Guelph in early May, 1977. Further details on this conference are available elsewhere in this issue of the Review.

Gilbert Stelter
Chairman
Urban History Committee

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