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L'AMENAGEMENT SUR LE PLAN NATIONAL ET
REGIONAL DES VILLES ET DE LA CAMPAGNE

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DENMARK
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(A) REGIONAL PLANNING IN DENMARK

By KAI HENDRIKSEN, *Town Planning Adviser to the Building Ministry*

DENMARK has a population of just over 4 million (1945); more than 1 million people live in Copenhagen, the capital, and approximately 1.5 million in 182 urban communities with more than 1,000 inhabitants each. Seventy Danish towns are seaport towns. Denmark extends 355 kms. from north to south, and 285 kms. from east to west.

The condition of the soil is practically uniform and its quality makes it possible to build almost everywhere in the country. Climatic variations, likewise, have little effect on building activity in the different municipalities.

According to the Town Planning Act of 1938 every town with more than 1,000 inhabitants has to prepare a town plan. The town plan has to comprise provisions as to the situation of roads and squares, public buildings, public grounds (e.g., sports and play grounds), the different categories of buildings and their distribution (e.g., residences, shops and industrial plants), etc. Apart from this, further details may be included according to the requirements and needs of the individual town. All these provisions are imposed through the plan, but without any compensation to the landowners, except in the case of actual acquisition of land.

It rests with the municipal councils to draw up proposals for these town plans. The proposals have to be submitted to the Building Ministry for approval.

The Town Planning Act does not prescribe for the preparation of *regional plans*. Nor does the Act give the county councils (district councils with limited tasks and superior to the local municipalities) any authority with regard to the preparation of the town plans, apart from the authority conferred upon them by the Road Acts.

The Ministry has not drawn up a general plan for bigger parts of the country.

The fact that the Town Planning Act does not contain provisions by which the planning of larger regions is secured is partly due to the administrative tradition, and the structure of the self-government of the local boards. But it is especially due to the fact that Denmark had already established central planning in several important fields, prior to the Town Planning Act.

Instances of such central planning, covering the whole country, are for instance, railways, main roads, ports, aviation, important objects of historical interest and natural beauty, etc. Under the jurisdiction of the county councils rest certain matters obtaining to roads, as well as to the hospitals.

Thus it will be seen that central planning is carried out in the aforesaid important fields, and the municipal boards have to take this into account when preparing plans for their towns. Sometimes difficulties may arise when the development of a town creeps near the municipal boundary and thereby makes planning in the adjacent municipality necessary; or if a town comprises several municipalities, each of which has to prepare a town

plan for its area. In most towns where an urban community comprises several municipalities, or co-operation may be desirable for other reasons, the interested parties will agree to co-operate in the planning. However, the Act contains provisions according to which the preparation of a joint town plan may be imposed upon several municipalities.

To secure co-ordination of the planning in the municipalities and in the individual central institutions, and the preparation of the town plans on uniform lines, the Town Planning Department of the Ministry participates to a great extent in meetings and inspections with the individual local boards all over the country. Experience has shown that this procedure is of paramount importance as a guide to the town councils in preparing the town planning scheme.

In Denmark the head of the municipal self-government is a publicly-elected Mayor, and great importance is given to local self-government in every respect.

Most of the questions that are to be settled in the town plan—for instance, the location of residential and industrial areas, parks, streets, etc.—are of local importance to the town in question and have no bearing beyond the town itself. This is the reason why the local board, with its thorough knowledge of local conditions, has been charged with the preparation of the proposals. Thereafter it lies with the Government administration as the approving authority to see, that among other things, due consideration is taken of the whole region, and that inter-municipal interests are not ignored. Centralised planning would no doubt facilitate the preparation in many cases, and it would be possible to establish a more uniform basis, but in that case the value of the above-mentioned local knowledge would not be fully utilised. Further, it should be borne in mind that the realisation of the proposals embodied in the plan, and its daily administration, is greatly facilitated by the fact that the local board itself is responsible for the plan, and that the plan has been finally adopted by the corporation of the town. In the long run this is an obvious advantage despite the drawbacks and difficulties decentralised planning may involve at the beginning.

For Copenhagen, the capital, conditions are especially difficult on account of the intricate municipal conditions caused by its historical development. The whole region consists of about thirty municipalities with a greatly varying number of inhabitants (from about 730,000 inhabitants in the City of Copenhagen, about 114,000 in Frederiksberg, and down to approximately 3,000 inhabitants in the smallest municipality). Further, there is not central body for the region which can take care of the common interests of the municipalities.

To settle these problems a committee has been appointed in order to consider an alteration of the municipal boundaries, etc. In February, 1948, the committee completed its work. The proposed alterations, however, are to be submitted to Parliament. Further, a Ministerial committee was appointed in 1944, charged with the task of establishing co-ordination in the town planning work of the individual municipalities, especially for the western part of the Copenhagen Region, where the greatest town development is expected.

This committee agreed upon fundamental lines for the town development that ought to be secured with regard to dwellings, mass transport and other problems of a social-economic nature. At the same time, towards the end of the war, a hitherto unknown speculation in building sites occurred, which threatened to prevent the desired development of the city. This speculation would result in such a sporadic town development that a social-economic waste was to be apprehended by unnecessary extensions of the road system, the traffic facilities and technical plants for sewers, water, gas, etc.

Consequently the committee had to concentrate its efforts on preparing a proposal for new legislation, by which a sporadic town development could be prevented. A Bill to this effect can be expected to be laid before Parliament in the near future.

At the initiative of the Danish Town Planning Institute ("Dansk Byplanlaboratorium") the Copenhagen Regional Committee was appointed in 1945, comprising representatives from all the municipalities in the Copenhagen Region, and from various Government authorities, etc. The technical office of this committee published in January, 1948, a preliminary proposal. Architect Peter Bredsdorff who is in charge of this work gives an account below of the principal lines in this plan.

(B) A REGIONAL PLAN FOR COPENHAGEN

A PRELIMINARY PROPOSAL

By PETER BREDSORFF, Architect, M.A.A.

The Copenhagen Regional Planning Committee was established in 1928 at the initiative of "*Dansk Byplanlaboratorium*," an unofficial body similar to the British Town Planning Institute.

The Committee includes representatives from each of the individual municipalities of the region, from certain Ministries and from transport bodies, etc. It has dealt for a number of years with various urgent individual problems, but has, until now, only submitted a conclusive proposal on one problem, namely on open spaces.

In 1945 the Committee decided to press for the preparation of a general regional plan, intended, amongst other things, to co-ordinate the town planning now incumbent on each of the thirty municipalities of the Copenhagen Region. The requisite funds were granted to the Committee (half the amount from the Exchequer, the other half from the municipalities) to establish its own technical office, the *Regional Planning Office*. The office immediately started to prepare a preliminary but nevertheless quite comprehensive plan as a kind of working hypothesis. This plan was published in January, 1948, and now serves as a basis for inquiries to and negotiations with the interested municipalities, Government authorities, institutions, etc. Simultaneously, special investigations are made to examine more closely the suppositions on which the scheme has been prepared.

At the moment it has been accepted as a primary supposition, that Greater Copenhagen, today with 1.1 million inhabitants, will continue its growth throughout the near future, without, however, exceeding a population of 1.5 million. It was considered desirable not only to plan for this final development, but also for an intermediate stage of development. For this reason the proposal includes two plans, one comprising a population of 1.3 million inhabitants, and one comprising the maximum population of 1.5 million.

According to its structure Copenhagen is a *centralised city of the ordinary Continental type*. Mediæval Copenhagen forms a clearly-marked business and administrative core, with the additional built-up area—supported by an extensive network of tramways—forming concentric layers around this centre. The city is situated on the coast (with the sector available for its growth limited to about 120°).

Conflicts characteristic of central cities appear consequently in a more aggravated form here: main radial streets with extremely heavy traffic, especially long distances between the outer residential districts and the work places in the centre, and vice versa from the centrally-situated residences to the open spaces outside the city, etc.

The harbour has the character of a river port with an almost radial situation in relation to the concentrically built-up city. This results in the usual conflicts between intersecting land and sea traffic.

A local physical feature of the greatest importance to planning is that all woods and lakes, hills and valleys and the best bathing beaches, i.e., *all natural places of recreation for the population are located to the north, the western region forming one large, fertile plain*. No wonder that the migration from the city—beginning with estates and big villas, up to the mass migration following the electrification of the first suburban railways—has been directed mostly to the northern parts of the region.

Due to the intensive building activity here the first houses have, however, been deprived of their original access to the benefits of nature. But what is worse, the distances are continuously extended between the major parts of the city and the real open country with recreational value.

In the preliminary proposal it is stressed *that the growth of the city in layers ought now to be stopped*. The extension from the centre of the city corresponds to that of a city of three or four times the size. The present tramway terminals for instance are about forty-five minutes drive from the centre. The capacity of the internal tramway routes is already taxed to the utmost, but even then, a considerable internal development of the tramway system is to be anticipated.

Until now only two suburban railways have been established (or rather one dual radial line to the north). The proposal advocates the idea of *gradually building a number of electric railways out into the surrounding country* with the aim that the future suburban developments, instead of forming concentric layers, will assume the shape of extensions, "fingers," along these railway lines. Around the stations on these lines local centres with shops and institutions will naturally develop. From each centre there will be frequent and convenient connections direct to the centre of the metropolis, and thereby make the individual station development an integral part of the whole city.

Between the fingers there will be *wedges of open space*, which preferably should extend right up to the built-up areas with tramway service.

It is proposed to direct the future expansion of the city principally to the west, where, amongst other things, the plain and the shores should be made more attractive by planting woods and establishing facilities for sea bathing. Simultaneously, efforts should be made to stop the expansion of the built-up areas, partly over the natural recreation grounds to the north and partly over the island of Amager, where it is desirable to limit, amongst other things, the intersection of land and sea traffic.

Altogether, care has been taken to form the preliminary proposal so as to utilise the special advantages of the large city to the utmost. For instance, the extensive freedom of choice for the inhabitants of a metropolis—kind of employment or place of employment; choice of living districts and housing types; choice of spare-time activities, and choice of acquaintances, etc. Furthermore could be mentioned the mechanical facilities of the metropolis, in many ways very effective, and because of the great demand often relatively cheap.

The proposal is based on a *primary system of public communications*: tramways, buses, trolleybuses, and suburban and underground railways. Accordingly the city will assume a coherent structure, a certain compactness. Due to the wedges, the city will at the same time obtain a very long edge in close contact with the open spaces.

Simultaneously with the proposed extension of the public communication a great development of motor traffic is anticipated, and to secure fair conditions for this traffic in the city (and a reasonable utilisation of its special technical possibilities) a *comprehensive system of special motor roads* has been planned, free of intersections with the ordinary street system, and possibly extending right to the centre of the city.

A comparatively highly-developed traffic system is necessary to enable the inhabitants to utilise fully the manifold possibilities of the capital. From all residential areas there must be easy access to a considerable number of places of employment, and vice versa. According to the proposal the major part of industry should be situated in *specialty equipped, quite extensive industrial areas, preferably at the root of the individual fingers*. Thus distributed between the different sections of the city, it will enjoy the best possible access to the town as a whole.

The composition of the residential areas is expected to change somewhat in favour of detached and semi-detached houses, which today only make up about 25 per cent. of the total number of residencies. Simultaneously, it is anticipated that flats will be supplemented to a great extent by summer cottages situated so near the city that they may be utilised far beyond the actual holiday time.

As regards the division of the city into groups, *importance has been given at present to the smallest unit, the residential groups with 1-2,000 inhabitants*. This is based on the assumption that the possibility of relieving the home from the tiresome routine work—probably one of the most important problems in future physical planning—will be found especially at this local level. The next larger unit (which in the new sections of the town should tie in to the station developments, and in the coherent, older parts of the

town should be adapted to the existing city-geographical features) will include a greatly varying number of small groups.

As to the medium group, the school group, we have not felt confident, in this first stage of the planning, to allow it to play the dominant rôle which it has been given in certain town plans.

Certain parts of this proposal may be carried out as part of the town plans of the different municipalities, but only if these municipalities are prepared to accept the total plan.

It is to be hoped that other features—for instance the building ban on certain areas which will have no collective traffic facilities according to the plan—will shortly be secured through legislation.

The future administrative re-arrangement within the Copenhagen Region is another question of paramount importance for the successful planning of this region.

FRENCH TRANSLATION OF SUMMARY

L'AMENAGEMENT SUR LE PLAN REGIONAL AU DANEMARK

La population du Danemark est un peu plus de 4 millions, dont un peu plus d'un million habite Copenhague et 1 million $\frac{1}{2}$ sont répartis parmi 182 communes urbaines, ayant chacune plus de 1.000 habitants.

Les caractéristiques et l'état du sol rendent possible la construction presque partout. Le climat, aussi, a peu d'influence sur les travaux du bâtiment.

La Loi de 1938 sur l'Aménagement Urbain exige que chaque ville ayant plus de 1.000 habitants prépare un plan d'aménagement. Ce plan doit prévoir la location de rues et de squares, d'édifices publics et de terrains de sports et de récréation, des différentes catégories de bâtiments et leur répartition parmi les zones d'habitation, de commerce et d'industrie. Les exigences et les besoins individuels d'une ville peuvent, aussi, être détaillés dans le plan. Toutes les provisions sont imposées aux propriétaires fonciers, sans indemnité, sauf sans les cas où le terrain est définitivement acquis. Les plans des villes sont étudiés par les Conseils Municipaux, et sont assujettis à l'approbation du Ministère de la Construction.

La Loi sur l'Aménagement Urbain ne prescrit pas la préparation de *plans régionaux*. Les Conseils Généraux n'ont qu'une autorité de surveillance sur les plans urbains, par suite de leurs pouvoirs, d'après les lois sur les communications routières. Le Ministère n'a pas étudié un plan général pour les grandes régions du pays. Cette omission de la loi sur l'Aménagement Urbain de toutes prévisions pour l'Aménagement Régional est due, en partie, aux traditions administratives et à la structure autonome des Conseils Municipaux. La raison principale, cependant, est qu'avant la loi de 1938, le Danemark avait déjà établi l'aménagement centralisé dans plusieurs sphères importantes, telles que chemins de fer, grandes routes, ports, l'aviation et les objets d'intérêt historique et de beauté naturelle. Au cours de la préparation de plans urbains, les Conseils Municipaux devraient prendre en considération les plans nationaux. Dans des cas de communauté urbaine, comprenant plusieurs municipalités, la coopération dans l'aménagement est assurée par accord. La Loi prévoit, également, la préparation obligatoire d'un plan urbain commun, par plusieurs municipalités.

Un autre moyen de coordination entre les municipalités et les diverses institutions centrales est assuré par le Département de l'Aménagement Urbain du Ministère qui s'associe, dans des réunions et des inspections, avec des Conseils Municipaux. Cependant, le pouvoir principal du Gouvernement National se trouve dans son autorité de sanctionner. Le Gouvernement est responsable de l'arbitrage entre les divers intérêts locaux et régionaux. Malgré que l'Aménagement sur le plan national pourrait, en maints cas, faciliter la préparation d'un plan, il empêcherait l'utilisation des connaissances précieuses des conditions locales possédées par les autorités locales.

Le développement historique de Copenhague présente un problème d'aménagement sur le plan régional qui est particulièrement difficile et compliqué. La région comprend environ 30 municipalités, dont le nombre d'habitants varie considérablement, s'échelonnant de 730.000 dans Copenhague, à 3.000 dans la plus petite municipalité. Il n'y a aucun conseil général d'administration.

Un Comité nommé pour étudier le changement des limites de la municipalité a achevé son travail en Février 1948, et il a fait des propositions qui seront soumises au Parlement. Un comité ministériel a travaillé depuis 1944 dans le but d'établir une coordination dans l'aménagement urbain des municipalités individuelles, surtout dans la partie Ouest de la région de Copenhague, où l'on attend le développement urbain principal. Ce Comité est tombé d'accord sur les principes fondamentaux de nature sociale et économique de l'aménagement urbain.

Vers la fin de la guerre, une spéculation, jusqu'ici inconnue, est survenue dans les terrains à bâtir. Elle menaçait un agrandissement sporadique de la ville, qui aurait entraîné beaucoup de gaspillage social et économique, des extensions inutiles des réseaux routiers, des moyens de communication et du matériel technique pour les égouts, l'eau, le gaz, etc. En raison de ce danger, le Comité a dû concentrer ses efforts sur la préparation pour la nouvelle législation, afin d'enrayer cette spéculation. Une loi est actuellement prête à être soumise au Parlement.

Sur l'initiative de l'Institut Danois de l'Aménagement Urbain ("Dansk Byplanlaboratorium") le Comité de la région de Copenhague fut nommé en 1945. Toutes les municipalités de la région de Copenhague et les départements du Gouvernement intéressés sont représentés dans ce Comité. En Janvier 1948, le Comité a publié un projet préliminaire qui sert actuellement de base d'enquête et de négociation avec les diverses corporations publiques et privées intéressées. En même temps, des études sont en cours pour examiner de plus près les hypothèses sur lesquelles le projet a été basé. L'Architecte Peter Bredsdorff, qui a été chargé de ce travail, donne une description du projet qui paraît dans la section anglaise de cet exposé.