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Crisis in the Town

by Lucius Burckhardt

For a long time it was imagined that the question of express highways could be solved by using the same method as the railways adopted last century: the establishment of connections between urban centres. But this was to leave out of account the development of the modern industrial town, where the agglomeration devours more and more of the countryside so that it is no longer possible to distinguish clearly between internal urban traffic and interurban traffic. The number of bodies commissioned to decide on the question is no more than a crisis by derivation, for it is a function of the crisis in what we know as the town. If we wish to be able to handle the problems arising from modern trends, amongst others that of traffic, we must first see that we restore to the town its multiplicity of functions in opposition to the disintegration implied by the dream house in the suburbs. Well thought-out town planning implies the existence of true towns, themselves capable of producing citizens.

The Problem of Urban Express Highways

by Robert Ruckli

In Switzerland the phrase "express highway" refers to arteries partly serving rapid traffic within a town but also to road connections between towns and the network of highways and express highways. The official road planning project, which envisages the construction of high-speed urban roads before the construction of express highways, has come up against opposition from many quarters, amongst others the FAS, which wants the questions relating to roads and town-planning to be handled simultaneously. According to the writer, this would be to fail to take the measures most urgently needed at the present time, that is, measures against the present traffic chaos, which is most rife in towns. For this reason he thinks it worth while that a start should be made now on the building of high-speed urban roads.

In Opposition

by Hans Marti

Going along with the Zurich group of the FAS—the Zurich group of engineers and architects—the writer has been in opposition since 1955 to the National Council's plan for roads. By adopting a report which has not yet even been published, this plan allots to Zurich a network of express highways before the problems of town-planning and internal urban traffic have even been broached. In his eyes, this method is completely absurd and its consequences can only be avoided by taking the questions of town-planning into consideration within the framework supplied by a genuine regional plan.

The Planning of Express Highways in Berne

by Albert Gnägi

Each town, by virtue of its history, structure and topography, demands a separate solution. Thus, for example, the topography of Berne excludes the creation of a "belt". The writer examines in detail the advantages of the system put forward, which has been left tangential so far as is possible. He shows that certain of its elements are intended to relieve internal urban traffic, amongst other functions.

Variant of the Projected "South" Express Highway to Berne

by Prof. P. Waltenspühl, architect FAS/SIA, Geneva, and G. Berthoud, architect SIA, Geneva/Berne

Three branches of express highways with junctions but no cross-roads. In thinly populated areas these make for a system which is as independent as possible.

The National Highways in the Urban Agglomeration of Geneva

by Marc J. Saugy

Although it does take into consideration a certain number of previous studies, the present official project of the Office of Works is hampered by the fact that it follows the chaotic development of the city instead of proceeding to an analysis of its logical development. After a first group (ARGA), a group comprising fifteen architects and town-planners have produced the plan called "URBAT" which is intended to cope with the town of the future. One of its essential elements would be to move the Rhône crossings up-river: building a new bridge starting at the (new) Place du Mont-Blanc.

The Position of Traffic Planning in Zurich

by Rudolf Steiger

A sign of the times: there are no architects or town-planners on the Federal Traffic Planning Committee. It is, therefore, to "traffic specialists" in the main that we owe the above-mentioned plans, to which the writer in his turn is in opposition, hoping that qualified town-planning groups will enable reason to triumph.

Counter-Project for the Zurich Express Highways and the New Sihl District

Zurich Town-Planning Working Party

Unlike the official plan, this counter-project makes a clear distinction between the function of drainage in internal urban traffic and that of transit and avoids carrying express highways into the future "city". As regards the new Sihl district, such as it could be with the disappearance of the barracks, etc., it offers the present business centre a maximum opportunity of extension without its being cut off from the living town by a viaduct for an express highway, as is the case in the official project. To the contrary, if well thought-out, this new "city" (serving both business and residential purposes) could make the urban face of Zurich worthy of the future.

Town-Planning Study for Neuchâtel

Architect: P. Waltenspühl FAS/SIA, Geneva

On the initiative of the town of Neuchâtel, a basic plan has been elaborated which lays down the general outline of an over-all town-planning scheme. It is to be hoped that the collaboration between the public bodies and the interested parties will enable the town of Neuchâtel to fulfil its role in the future as a small metropolis for a huge and vital region whilst still retaining its aesthetic and spiritual capital.

The New Garden of Sculpture at Otterlo

by J. P. Hodin

Adjoining a famous museum, this 5-hectare garden groups together 51 pieces of sculpture carried out by artists from 42 countries. Taking his inspiration from the ideas of Henry Moore, Professor Hammacher, the present director, has been successful in giving these works the complementary frame that they demand: natural surroundings.

The Sculptor in Iron Oscar Wiggli

by Florens Deuchler

Born at Solothurn in 1927, O. W. has been living at Montrouge near Paris since 1956. His works have been shown in personal exhibitions and group shows in Solothurn, Berne, Bienne, Zurich and Paris. Made from sheet metal, his works are organic entities subject to the counterpoint of line and surface and constantly aided by the play of light.

Michail Larionoff and Natalia Goncharova and "Rayonism"

by Henryk Berlew

The growing interest in the origins of "avant-garde" art makes the two Russian artists Michail Larionoff and Natalia Goncharova—both were born in 1881—eminently suitable for study today. In 1909 M. L., who went from discovery to discovery and was a fore-runner of the "fauves" at the beginning of the century, founded "rayonism", the "manifesto" of which appeared in 1913. This idea, which was based on the idea of the radiation of objects and the intersection of the luminous rays in space, was all the more novel in that abstract art had not yet been put forward as a programme. A comparison of "rayonism" with its contemporary Italian futurism has often been made but although both have the quality of dynamism in common, they are distinct in that futurism is in essence linked to industrial urban civilization and is part of its time, whereas "rayonism" elicits a form of contemplation that is extra-temporal and extra-spatial. Moreover, Larionoff never attempted to systematize this point in his artistic career. His famous "Soldiers" comes before Dubuffet in the discovery of the rawness possible in art.—As for Natalia Goncharova, her superb talent, it could be called Eurasian, not only produced décors and costumes for the ballets of Diaghilev but culminated in canvases that were rayonistic and futuristic. "Rayonism" is unique by virtue of the fact that it had no precursors nor successors.