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# THE ARCHITECTS'



## JOURNAL

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WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED THE BUILDERS'  
JOURNAL AND THE ARCHITECTURAL ENGINEER  
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The Editor will be glad to receive MS. articles  
and also illustrations of current architecture in this  
country and abroad with a view to publication.  
Though every care will be taken, the Editor cannot  
hold himself responsible for material sent him.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 1942.

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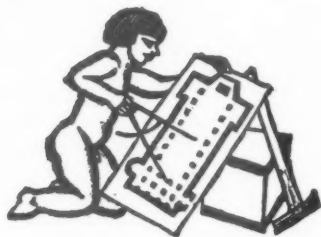
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The fact that goods made of raw materials in short supply  
owing to war conditions are advertised in this JOURNAL  
should not be taken as an indication that they are necessarily  
available for export.

Owing to the paper shortage the JOURNAL, in common with all  
other papers, is now only supplied to newsagents on a "firm  
order" basis. This means that newsagents are now unable to  
supply the JOURNAL except to a client's definite order.

In common with every other periodical and newspaper in the country, this JOURNAL is rationed to a small proportion of its peace-time requirements of paper. This means that it is no longer a free agent printing as many pages as it thinks fit and selling to as many readers as wish to buy it. Instead a balance has to be struck between circulation and number of pages. A batch of new readers may mean that a page has to be struck off, and conversely a page added may mean that a number of readers have to go short of their copy. Thus in everyone's interest, including the reader's, it is



important that the utmost economy of paper should be practised, and unless a reader is a subscriber he cannot be sure of getting a copy of the JOURNAL. We are sorry for this but it is a necessity imposed by the war on all newspapers. The subscription is £1 3s. 10d. per annum.

### from AN ARCHITECT'S *Commonplace Book*

"I hear this day that there is fallen down a new house, not quite finished, in Lombard Street, and that there have been several so, they making use of bad mortar and bricks."

Pepys.

## NEWS

- ★ Details of a competition for the design of a model housing estate page 135
- ★ Tribunal of Appeal under Architects' Registration Act has given interpretation of an "architect" page 135
- ★ Lord Reith's speech in House of Lords on the Ministry of Works and Planning page 137
- ★ House dismantled and re-erected on another site in 7 hours page 143

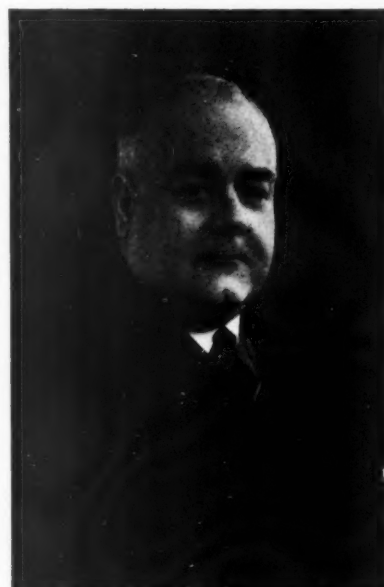
### SIR EDWIN LUTYENS, O.M.

Sir Edward Lutyens, F.R.A., was received by H.M. the King on February 3, when His Majesty invested him with the Insignia of a Master of the Order of Merit.

### SALVAGE

It was announced last week-end that more than 100,000 tons of waste paper were collected in the United Kingdom during January. This represents an increase of at least 50 per cent. over all paper salvage figures in any one month since the outbreak of war.

Complete results of the national £20,000 waste paper contest will not be known until the end of this month, as the certified returns made by 1,100 local authorities have yet to be examined.



At the annual general meeting of the London Master Builders' Association, W. E. Rice, vice-chairman of Rice and Son, Ltd., was unanimously elected President for 1942. Mr. Rice is the son of the late Sir Frederick Rice, formerly M.P. for Harwich. He is chairman of the Brixton Employment Committee, and is a leading member of the London Rotary Club.

### CLAIMING FOR WAR DAMAGE

War Damage Commission has issued a new explanatory pamphlet. Known as C.2.X., it explains the steps to be taken in making a claim on the Commission's Form C.2, for payment of the proper cost of carrying out repairs to war-damaged houses, shops, flats, tenements or office buildings.

The pamphlet will, in future, be issued free to claimants with their claim forms, or on application to the Commission's Regional Offices.

### LECTURES

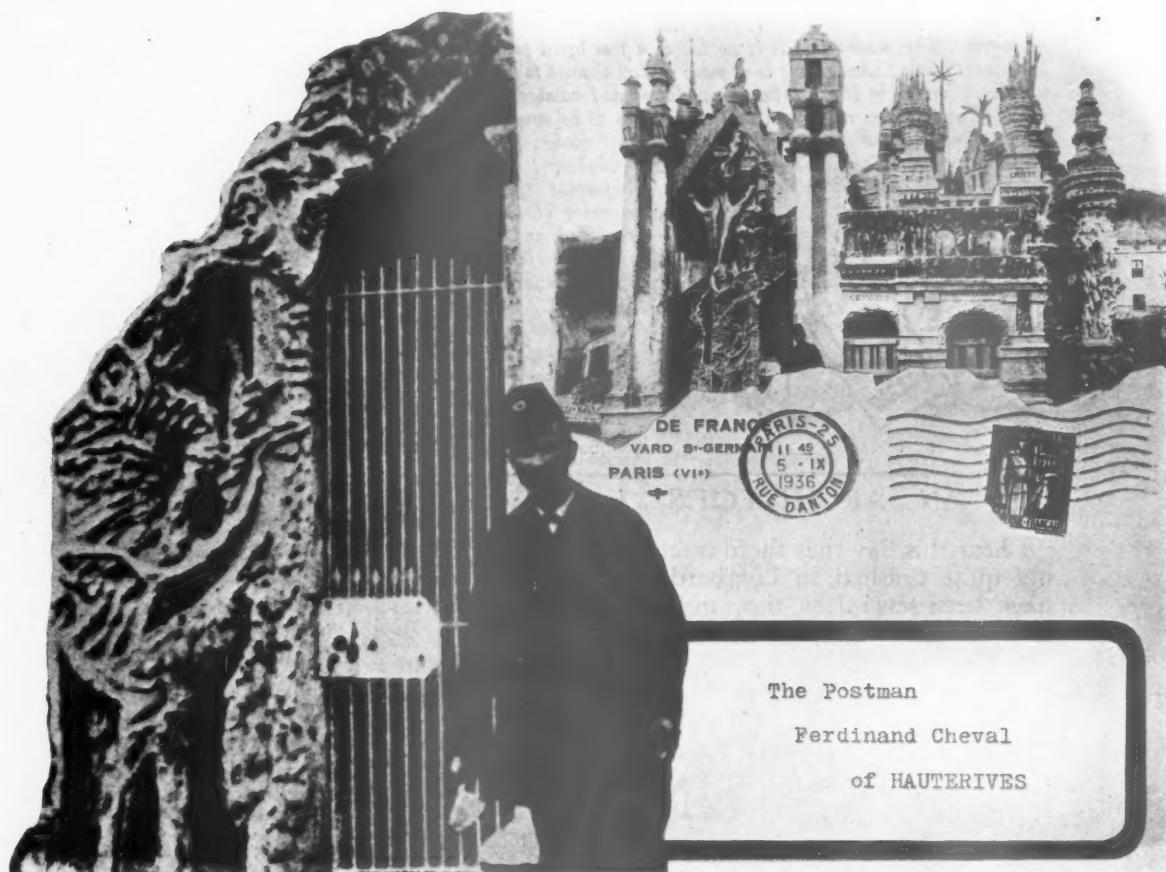
*Town and Country Planning Association*—February 19: 224, Regent Street, W.1. 1.20 p.m. "The Architect's Part in Post-War Reconstruction." By Professor A. E. Richardson. Discussion: 1.50 p.m.

*Institution of Mechanical Engineers*—February 27: Storey's Gate, S.W.1.—"Prone-ness to Damage of Plant Through Enemy Action." By Hal. Gutteridge, 2.30 p.m. Meeting open to R.I.B.A. members; apply to Secretary of R.I.B.A. for admission ticket.

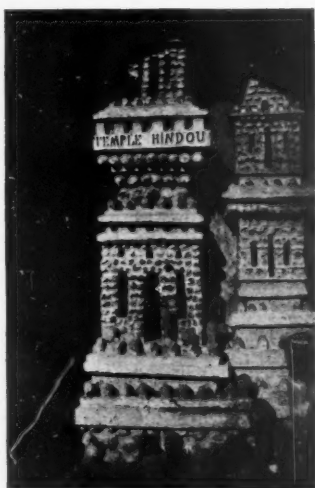
*I.A.A.S.*—February 28: 75, Eaton Place, S.W.1. 2.30 p.m. Military Matters in Relation to Architects and Surveyors." By Col. George Bayley, C.B.E.

*Architectural Association*—February 24: 36, Bedford Square, W.C., 2 p.m. Ordinary General Meeting. "War-Time Building Expedients," by R. Fitzmaurice, B.Sc., A.M.I.C.E. February 24 to March 7, 1942: Exhibition of Drawings on loan from the Building Research Station, illustrating Mr. Fitzmaurice's talk.

*A.A.S.T.A.*—February 19: 113, High



## postman's knock



The building ideal of which M. Cheval, the postman of Hauterives, was the outstanding exponent—the All-My-Own-Work And-Don't-You-Dare ideal—is no doubt a fundamental one, yielding as it does the opportunity for direct individual expression of the sort the architect of the immediate past valued above everything else. M. Cheval, who built the house over the envelope by picking up curious stones on his round and bringing them back in his pockets or his postman's bag (completing the job with his own hands in just 33 years), may be said to have carried the thing to the lengths we should all, in our hearts, like to carry it, but the ideal offered our own generation happens to be the antithesis of his. The rest of this issue deals with this opposite ideal under the title prefabrication, and the contrast is made here between the two principles to clear up the mistake so many people make of supposing them to be antagonistic. It is often assumed that standardization is wicked because it tries to rub out the M. Cheval in each of us. Conversely that individualism is bad because it gets in the way of high-capacity organization. In point of fact each principle is complementary to the other. The lesson to be learnt is that we can cultivate both at the same time by taking care to distinguish the proper sphere of each (not forgetting that this sphere may alter from age to age). Only, indeed, by cultivating both can each ideal be kept free, for it is just exactly the fit and seemly deployment of the one that releases the other from burdens which would otherwise inhibit its expression.

Holborn, W.C., 6.15 p.m. Discussion "T.U.C. Problems of the Building Industry." Meeting and film show, Saturday, February 21. 2.30 p.m. Lecture Theatre, School of Architecture, Liverpool University. Speaker: Bertram Hayward. Subject: "Building Technician and the War." Film: Housing (Progress and Problems), Scientific Research in Buildings. Admission 6d.

**R.I.B.A., 1941**  
The Ashpitel Prize, which is a Prize of

Books to the value of £20 awarded to the candidate who, taking the Final Examination to qualify as an Associate, shall most highly distinguish himself among the candidates in the Final Examinations of the year, has been awarded to Mr. Leonard Howarth, A.R.I.B.A.

### PRACTICE

Mr. William Tocher, A.R.I.B.A., has opened an office at 8, Blenheim Terrace,

Leeds, 2. Any correspondence or matters arising in connection with the firm John C. Procter, Architect, of 40, Clarendon Road, Leeds, 2, should be addressed to Mr. Tocher, who has instructions to deal with them.

### I.A.A.S.

Mr. Victor S. Peel has been re-elected President of the Incorporated Association of Architects and Surveyors.



## I.A.A.S. COMPETITION

A competition for the design of a model housing estate, complete with housing and communal buildings, has been announced by the Incorporated Association of Architects and Surveyors. The promoters, through the medium of this competition, stress the need to make provision in post-war building programmes for changed and changing social conditions, which embrace a greater degree of communal life and communal facilities and which, initiated by war conditions, may well become a permanent part of the people's life. Indirectly, therefore, the trend of the competition would be toward the abolition of much "class distinction."

The regulations offer competitors wide scope. There are no restrictions as to style or material, but the economic standpoint must, of course, be borne in mind.

To encourage the full use of communal facilities, more particularly the communal kitchen, restaurant and laundry, merely a scullery is to be provided in the dwellings with equipment for preparation of light meals and the washing of light articles only. On the estate itself, provision must be made for communal buildings—kitchen, restaurant, laundry, crèche, garages, allotments and accommodation for physical and cultural recreation. The kitchen must be in two sections, one to be managed by a permanent staff for the provision of meals to be served in the restaurant or taken away, the other to contain a range of stoves and sinks for the use of residents.

Full details of the competition, which will be open for a period long enough to enable architects and surveyors serving away from their offices to compete, are obtainable from the Secretary of the I.A.A.S., 75, Eaton Place, London, S.W.1.

## REGISTRATION

The Tribunal of Appeal under the Architects Registration Act, 1938, sat on Thursday, January 29, at 66, Portland Place, W.1, by courtesy of the Royal Institute of British Architects, to hear appeals against decisions of the Architects Registration Council not to admit applicants to the Register.

The Tribunal consisted of Mr. J. H. Thorpe, K.C. (Chairman); Sir Richard Allison, F.R.I.B.A.; Mr. William Charles Crocker.

2 Appeals were allowed, 6 dismissed and 3 adjourned.

The Chairman announced that the Tribunal interpreted the words "practising as an architect" in Section 2 (1) of the Act as follows, and stated that their decisions were based on this definition:—

An "Architect" is one who possesses, with due regard to aesthetic as well as practical considerations, adequate skill and knowledge to enable him: (I.) to originate; (II.) to design and plan; (III.) to arrange for and supervise the erection of such buildings or other works calling for skill in design and planning as he might, in the course of his business, reasonably be asked to carry out or in respect of which he offers his services as a specialist.

"Practising," in this context, means: Holding out for reward to act in a professional capacity in activities which form at least a material part of his business. A man is not practising who operates incidentally, occasionally, in an administrative capacity only, or in the pursuit of a hobby.



# PREFABRICATION AND M O B I L I T Y

**P**REFABRICATION and standardization are terms that are often loosely used. Prefabrication may mean all or one of three things:—*a*, factory-made parts; *b*, dry assembly; *c*, standard plans. Standardization may mean:—*a*, reducing the variety of factory-made parts; *b*, simplifying the design of factory-made parts; *c*, standard plans. In either case the standard plan is not essential because the benefits of mass production can be secured without it. Some people may like the implied simplification but in actual fact there is no corresponding increase in speed or quantity of output because buildings, unlike motor cars, cannot be assembled on a conveyor belt. Provided that individual plans make use of standard parts so that these can be mass-produced and rapidly assembled without alteration there is no reason whatever why the process of preparing separate designs to suit different sets of conditions should hold up output, particularly if one group of technicians is made responsible for the design of a whole district so that within each building scheme a good deal of repetition is possible. One scheme can be built while the next is being designed. The whole thing is merely a matter of timing.

The real purpose of standard plans in fact is not to speed things up by simplification (if buildings are not altered to suit sites, sites must be altered to suit buildings) but to avoid difficulties caused by lack of it; difficulties which always arise immediately one tries to adapt a plan which has not been worked out in terms of standard units. The tremendous advantages of using standard factory-made parts and of designing to multiples of a single unit are now universally recognized. It seems possible that we will actually start doing so soon. The advantages of inflexible standard plans are correspondingly reduced. The standard plan is not new. On the contrary we have suffered from it for more than a century.

There is of course no object at all in having every building

different from its neighbour. Arguments against this are æsthetic as well as practical. Buildings need to be designed together with their surroundings. However, in order to achieve real unity two things are necessary both of which imply some departure from the standard and put a premium on flexibility.

First it is important for the scheme as a whole to show sympathy for local climate and site and for the traditional way of living of the people who use it. For instance Lancashire women who work in mills need differently designed houses from Yorkshire women who bake at home. Secondly there must be variety of design to achieve unity as opposed to uniformity—to mark the difference between Georgian squares and bye-law streets. The work of the jerry builder is a wonderful example of the disadvantages of a standard plan combined with very few of the advantages of standardization—so are the housing schemes of the L.C.C.

There is scope for standardization of plans but it is chiefly in connection with temporary building—a kind of building in which Englishmen, conservative ever, are not particularly interested. If a building is temporary in the sense that it can be taken down and built again somewhere else it cannot have regard for its neighbours or its surroundings or for local habits and customs any more than a tent. A genuinely temporary building is a nomad with all the advantages and disadvantages of mobility—freedom and self-sufficiency. It can therefore be completely standardized.

It is tremendously important that the possibilities of temporary buildings with completely standardized plans should be realized now as they are the ideal way of meeting an emergency. (The bye-law street would have been an excellent solution for problems created by the rapid growth of manufacturing settlements if only it had been temporary.) This is not because they can be completed from start to finish more rapidly than buildings of the other type (Ove Arup has shown the fallacy of this idea) but because parts can be stored ready for rapid assembly; and also because when the crisis is past they can be taken to pieces and used again somewhere else. Their advantage in fact is not speed but mobility.

It is equally important that the object of this kind of standardization should be clearly understood and that we should not have distinguished architects advocating as Mr. Graham Dawbarn did recently in the *Architect and Building News*, standardization of plans *without* prefabrication, an arrangement which makes the worst of all possible worlds by combining a low degree of adaptability with a high degree of permanency, while maintaining methods of producing and assembling parts at their present low level of efficiency. Even if a building is constructed of brick or reinforced concrete there is no reason why everything except the carcass should not be standardized and prefabricated.



*The Architects' Journal*  
45, The Avenue, Cheam, Surrey  
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## N O T E S & T O P I C S

### BIG NEWS

News of the week is of course Reith - Greenwood's Parliamentary statement. Just exactly what it is going to mean we shall probably have to wait to know. Sufficient for this week that the Ministry of Works and *Buildings* is now the Ministry of Works and *Planning*.

### KANE AND CHEVAL

The suspicion that Xanadu, the seat of Citizen Kane, star of the current film of that name, is a portrait of Mr. Hearst's own residence is widely held in America, but nowhere more firmly than in the mind of the newspaper magnate himself, who has forbidden his many papers to mention either the film or its chief personality Orson Welles.

★

Kane, like Mr. Hearst, it will be remembered, was an indefatigable collector of European antiques. So many crates of bric-a-brac would arrive that often they were never unpacked and sometimes were resold unopened. Both Kane and Mr. Hearst in fact didn't care much about art but knew what they ought to like and saw that they got it, though in the creation of private Xanadus neither had anything on M. Cheval, the postman of Hauterives.

★

Among the recent Hearst re-sales was an item "Georgian Interior, Painswick." This was in fact the

walls and ceiling (neatly done up in parcels) of the Drawing Room in the Beacon House, Painswick, a fine stone mansion in the main street of this pleasant little Cotswold village. Its sturdy plain 18th century façade gives no hint of the astonishing interiors it conceals, for it is no exaggeration to say that the plaster decoration in this almost unknown house cannot be equalled for their technical mastery in the whole of the country.

\*

The drawing-room ceiling, for instance (now in America), bore upon its surface a life-size Lycian Apollo in full relief encircled by an elaborate oval of lyres, sprays and garlands, while the walls exhibited a fabulous display of plaster urns, baskets of flowers, scrolls, musical instruments, birds, weapons and animals, carried out in exquisite detail. This fantasia was repeated in the hall, landing and dining room all of which remain, together with a fine mahogany staircase, of unusually elaborate design, facsimiles of which have been found in Derbyshire, Norfolk and Virginia, U.S.A.

\*

The Beacon House was built about 1765 for a family called Wood, and certain heraldic details hint

that it was the same Wood who gave us The Crescent at Bath. To-day the house is converted into flats and the denuded drawing-room houses a tea-room. The owners, however, seem more aware of their treasure than do the majority of local guide books, who in their usual flatulent way speak at length of the churchyard but not one word of the strangely ornate apartments by which it is overlooked.

#### A CORRECTION

Several people have told me that my opinion of the distinguishing characteristics of a Cost Plus contract differs sharply from theirs; and on rereading my last week's note called *Cost Plus v. The Rest* I found that an unhappy error had slipped into print.

\*

To cut a good story far too short, the symptoms of "Cost Plus" should have read: "—money expended, one third more than the other (*a Schedule of Prices contract*); labour strength, one half more; progress a little less."

#### ASTRAGAL

Besides his ideal house *M. Cheval* completed one other commission, his own tomb (shown here) which he worked on until his death in 1924. It stands in *Hauterives* churchyard—a monument to the world's most romantic postman, easily outdoing the most exotic of *citizen Kane's* creations and in its own way a little masterpiece.



## LORD REITH'S NOTES

for his speech  
in the House of Lords  
on February 11, 1942

*In the House of Lords and House of Commons last week Lord Reith and Mr. Arthur Greenwood announced that the name of the Ministry of Works and BUILDINGS is to be changed to the Ministry of Works and PLANNING. Lord Reith's notes start below; the debate on his speech appears on pages 146-148; Mr. Greenwood's statement is printed on page 139.*

SOME may think it should have come sooner, but here it now is—a decision of major policy importance. What planners and all anxious to see the best use of our limited resources have desired: central planning authority.

*Retrospect of things already done.*—Uthwatt Committee established and its interim report accepted. Committee is now on main reference of "objective analysis of subject of payment of compensation and recovery of betterment in respect of public control of use of land."

This is a fundamental problem of great complexity. Chairman can't or won't say when report will be presented, but they're working hard.

*My consultative panel.*—Some of the things they've been working at:

(1) Under the Ordnance Director-General, with Dr. Dudley Stamp and Professor Eva Taylor maps for planning, showing physical features, land uses, movement of population, industry, communications. Base maps for the whole country. For first time a co-ordinated series of maps will be available to planning authorities and others.

(2) Demand for and training of technical planning staff, in consultation with R.I.B.A., T.P.I. and Universities and technical schools. To avoid shortage of skilled assistance.

(3) Examination of means to improve planning control over design and external appearance of buildings. As planning will cover all land, powers will be sufficient so adequate expert advice is needed for better standards of design. Some local advisory panels



exist—they can be strengthened and extended. The Royal Fine Art Commission should be fully used.

(4) Experience of individual members drawn on in variety of ways.

*Lord Justice Scott's Committee.*—Appointed in October "to consider conditions which should govern building and other constructional development in country areas consistently with maintenance of agriculture and, in particular, factors affecting location of industry having regard to economic operation, part-time and seasonal employment, the well-being of rural communities and the preservation of rural amenities." Members have experience of industry, agriculture, scientific applications and social services. Working hard, but they have a vast field to survey.

*My Interdepartmental Committee.*—Co-ordinates views of all departments concerned and many departments are in fact concerned which inevitably makes progress slower. Among its activities:

Prepared the new Bill which the Uthwatt interim report recommended; prepared a scheme for redevelopment of "reconstruction areas" in legislative form—a system for areas substantially damaged and requiring re-planning—for discussion with local authorities. Examined improvements in long-term planning system, including operation of Restriction of Ribbon Development Act. Considered safeguards against disfigurements—advertisements, petrol stations, etc., and means of preserving amenities (such as woodlands) in town and country.

*My little group of special assistants.*—Among their activities:

Work of the Interdepartmental Committee above; special research a foundation of national planning.

(1) Collation of information for survey of land resources and uses. Possibilities of development or conservation. Survey must precede all planning, central, regional or local. Not done hitherto nationally. Now nearing completion as basis for consideration of main lines of land use.

(2) Collation of information from all quarters on components of town and country and standards of provision in planning schemes—professional bodies, amenity and welfare societies. Principles emerging of community planning, industrial and residential zoning, open spaces reservations; contact with planning authorities in damaged areas. Most visited to ascertain conditions and discuss lines of replanning with local authorities.

Greater London. City Corporation and L.C.C. each with outline plans in touch with each other and now authorities all round being brought in to discuss co-ordinated planning.

*Ministry of Works and planning.*—Central planning authority as promised.

Powers and responsibility transferred from Ministry of Health.

But further—that town and country planning will be extended to give effect to principle that planning will be national policy.

It won't be a subsidiary activity. What we do will satisfy hopes of those who have urged importance of national plan over use of land resources and of a competent organization working on a system of partnership with local government administration.

Very important this partnership, local initiative and the elements of national planning applied to localities. Co-ordination of local plans fitting into wider framework. Hence:

(1) Encourage further combinations of planning authorities over areas which demand planning as a unit.

(2) Have experienced officers ready for consultation.

(3) Hence propose to set up on small scale, in urgent areas first, local offices for advice and help in co-ordination of planning.

(4) Ask individuals of standing, with experience in public administration to promote co-operation between authorities in planning over wide areas, and in contact with various interests affected. In many parts need for collaboration over wider areas has been recognized but no one is responsible for effecting it.

*Legislation.*—In addition to Bill transferring powers, I have another nearly ready. A first step.

To strengthen planning control over building and other development so that properly conceived reconstruction isn't prejudiced by present action.

Uthwatt recommendations to be implemented:

(1) Extension of planning and planning control over the whole country;  
(2) improvement of planning areas;  
(3) strengthening of interim development control.

As to (1), 1932 Act left certain types of land outside planning, notably built up land unlikely to be redeveloped or land so remote as not to need planning. The whole country should be covered.

As to (2), encourage planning authorities to group in areas suitable as units. Many Joint Planning Committees in existence pre-war, but too many too small units were being separately planned. In new or further groupings local authorities will be consulted.

As to (3), I will seek to strengthen system of interim development control, i.e. control before a planning scheme is operative. This will obtain during war and some period post-war.

But with new legislation must go efforts to improve administration. Not all past troubles due to imperfections of Act. Authorities haven't made full use of powers, e.g. in placing, design and character of buildings.

Much depends on qualifications and adequacy of central and local staff to deal with questions of land utilization in broadest sense.

I said a year ago that *planning must work to national policies*—to be determined—for agriculture, industry and transport. These have to be decided (as it were) outside planning; but planning issues have to be taken into account in formulating economic policy.

But local and area planning can't wait for national policies to be determined. They must proceed according to conditions and needs of areas related to larger areas.

Planning is a long and often difficult process. Once there is a plan adjustments can be made to meet changing circumstances, national or regional or local. A plan—plans—urgent need for plans.

*Why works and planning.*—In addition to planning must be execution or anyhow aids, to execution, including all the organization to implement and ensure that plans materialize.

Much sense in association of Ministry of Works with Ministry of Planning as a single Ministry of Works and Planning.

Perhaps I shall be given an opportunity later to describe the many activities of the Ministry of Works which have an essential, sometimes predominant, sometimes solely post-war orientation.

Meanwhile, mention the Cement Industry Committee under the late Mr. George Balfour and the Brick Industry Committee, under Mr. Oliver Simmonds whose first report is to be published shortly. Supply of other materials is being examined.

Much else being done, with *post-war implication and effect*, in the present Ministry of Works. Standardization of materials and of design for war purposes, but with some interest at least post-war.

Technical institutions of all sorts asked to co-operate in investigation. But full statement can be made later if desired. It will show, I venture to believe, a splendid effort on the part of the Ministry of Works to do what it can and may for the future as well as for the war.

Realization of responsibility and of opportunity.

Maximum benefit to country of limited land resources. This is a new and high objective.

No previous study on national scale of these resources, nor of grouping of communities, nor of balance of land utilization for various requirements—livelihood, home, services, food, recreation.

Evils of increasing urban concentrations and congestions; obscene encroachments and disfigurements of countryside. These will be dealt with.

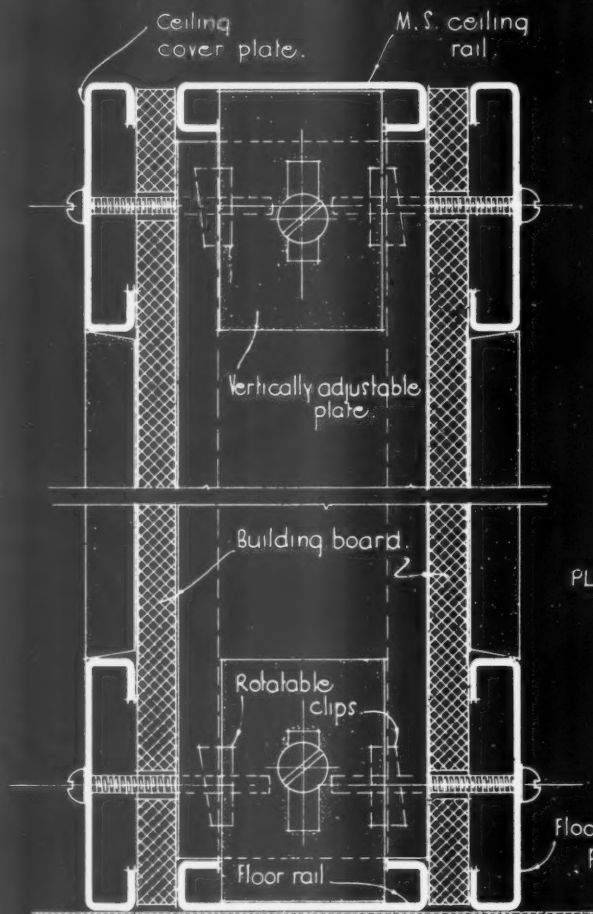
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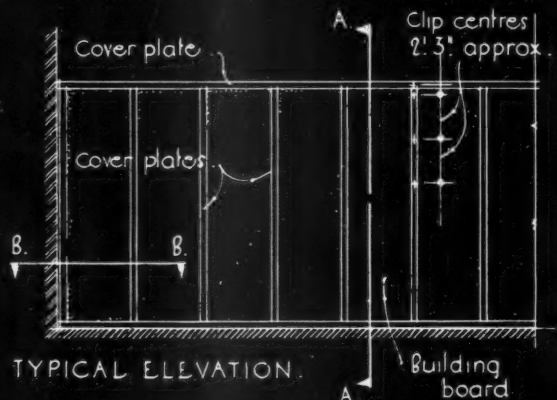


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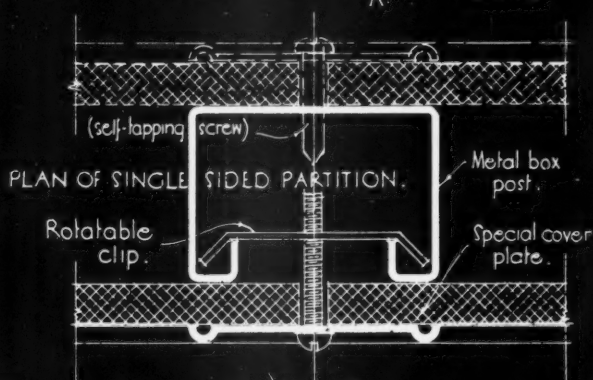
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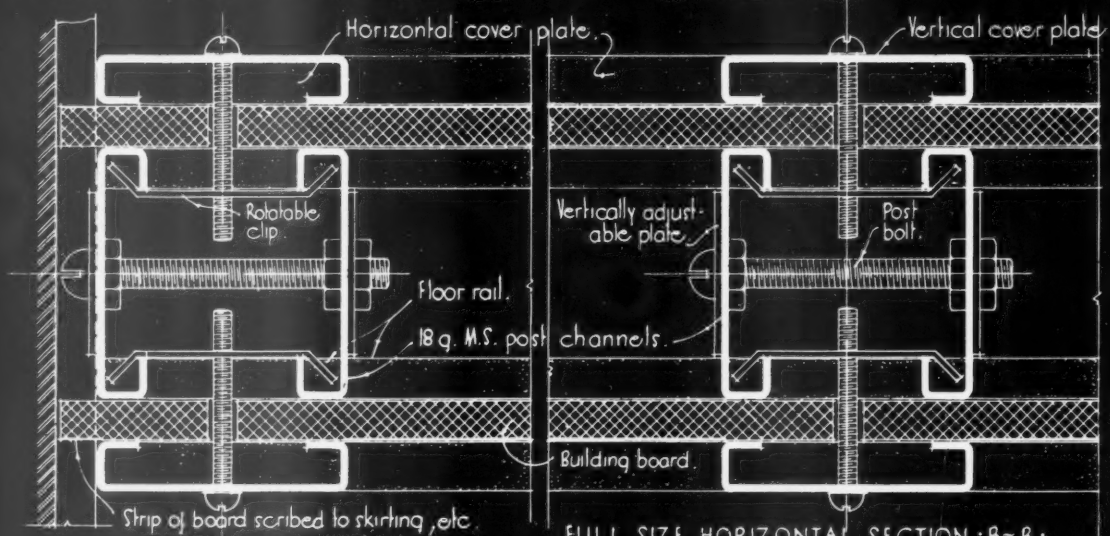
TYPICAL ELEVATION



PLAN OF SINGLE SIDED PARTITION



SKETCH OF ROTATABLE CLIP



FULL SIZE HORIZONTAL SECTION - B-B

Issued by P.I.M. Board Co. Ltd., & T.T. Trading Co. Ltd.

INFORMATION SHEET: METAL-FRAMED PARTITIONS  
SIR JOHN BURNET TAIT AND LORNE ARCHITECTS ONE MONTAGUE PLACE BEDFORD SQUARE LONDON WCI

## INFORMATION SHEET

• 854 •

### PARTITIONS

**Product :** Pimco Systems metal-framed Partitioning. (Patent applied for).

**Description :**

18 gauge sherardised mild steel sections  $1\frac{1}{8}$  in. by  $\frac{1}{4}$  in. Posts bolted to top and bottom rails by adjustable plates.

Building board panels, frame sections and cover strips held rigidly in position by use of special rotatable clips. These clips are inserted through slot between channels, rotated to engage walls of channels, and used as nuts to screw cover plates firmly against channels. The screws are "doped" to provide a hold to rotate clips.

Various post sections, door and window trimmings, are available for use as single or double-sided partitions, post sections being dependent on height of partition required. Cover plates obtainable in a variety of designs or in flat strip. Intermediate horizontal cover plates can be provided. Where existing walls are interrupted by skirtings or other projections, a scribing piece is provided to take up irregularities; where existing walls are flush the cover plates may be arranged to finish close to wall. Any type or thickness of building board, plaster board or asbestos board may be used. Provision can be made for electric light conduits.

**Erection :**

A minimum of noise involved.

Partitions may be dismantled and re-erected without waste or damage.

Individual sheets may be removed and replaced without interfering with adjacent sheets.

**Sequence :**

1. Fix ceiling and floor rails.
2. Bolt posts to rails.
3. Fix cover plate at floor level loosely in position.
4. Boards positioned and vertical cover plates fixed.
5. Floor-level cover plate tightened up.
6. Ceiling-level cover plate fixed.

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**Address :** Aldwych House, London, W.C.2.

**Telephone :** Chancery 8150 and 8159.

**Telegrams :** Sprufibre, Estrand, London.

Post-war planned foundation for physical reconstruction, and all the various forms and kinds of development to the aim of better and fuller and happier living. Speed us on our way.

It is a war aim, a notable and urgent war aim, not a distraction from war effort. "Let not England forget her precedence of teaching nations how to live."

## House of Commons

*The detailed statement on the Central Planning Authority was made by Mr. ARTHUR GREENWOOD, Minister without Portfolio, in the House of Commons on the same day as Lord Reith's speech in the Lords. He said:*

The Government have had under consideration the best means of carrying out their pledge to establish a Central Planning Authority, and have reached the following decisions. The existing statutory duties in regard to town and country planning, exercised by the Minister of Health in England and Wales, will be transferred to the Minister of Works and Buildings, whose title will, with His Majesty's approval, be changed to Minister of Works and Planning. The Minister's planning functions will be to guide the formulation by local authorities in England and Wales of town and country planning schemes which will adequately reflect the national policy for urban and rural development. The Ministry will be recognized as the Department which local authorities in England and Wales must consult on the general lines of town and country planning, and it will exercise the powers of the central Government under the Town and Country Planning Acts, including the powers which will be available under forthcoming legislation to give effect to the First Report of the Uthwatt Committee, and it will lay down the general principles to which town and country planning must conform. The Secretary of State for Scotland will be responsible, as heretofore, for the exercise in Scotland of the functions in regard to planning to be exercised in England and Wales by the Minister of Works and Planning.

It is evident that the work of the Minister of Works and Planning and of the Secretary of State for Scotland will touch upon the work of other Departments of State at very many points. The Minister of Works and Planning and the Secretary of State will, therefore, be assisted by a Committee of senior officials representing the Departments concerned. The main functions of this committee will be to ensure that, so far as possible, the national policy of urban and rural development is carried out as a single and consistent whole. Much of the work of interdepartmental co-ordination will be carried out by means of this committee of officials. Questions which cannot be settled by this committee will be dealt with by a committee of the Ministers concerned, under the chairmanship of the Minister without Portfolio, by virtue of his special responsibilities for reconstruction matters generally, and will be settled by them unless reference to the War Cabinet is necessary. The Council of Ministers, the appointment of which was announced on July 17, 1941, will be dissolved. It will of course be under-

stood that these arrangements do not divest individual Ministers of their responsibility for taking action within the spheres of their respective Departments.

In reaching these decisions, the Government's intention has been to secure the most appropriate development and use of the land of this country, and they believe that by a procedure of this kind the various activities of the Departments concerned in post-war reconstruction, including the speedy provision of houses for those who need them, the redevelopment of devastated areas, the clearance of slums, the relief of overcrowding, the provision of all necessary public services and the general promotion of rural development in the light of a positive policy for the maintenance of a healthy and well-balanced agriculture, can be welded into a single and consistent policy. The Government will review, having regard to subsequent developments and experience, the objectives stated in paragraph 4 of Section 428 of the Report of the Royal Commission on the Distribution of the Industrial Population, namely:

"(a) Continued and further redevelopment of congested urban areas, where necessary.

"(b) Decentralization or dispersal, both of industries and industrial population, from congested areas.

"(c) Encouragement of a reasonable balance of industrial development, so far as possible, throughout the various divisions or regions of Great Britain, coupled with the appropriate diversification of industry in each division or region throughout the country."

The Government will study and concert, in the light of the review, the steps that should be taken to reach these objectives.

In furthering their policy for urban and rural development, the Government will seek to avoid measures which would interfere with the overriding aim of raising the standard of living to the highest possible level. In particular, the Government: (a) Will seek to ensure that fresh development is planned with due regard to the use which can be made of existing capital equipment and existing public services, and will not wantonly countenance the break-up of old and valuable industrial concentrations; (b) Will seek to avoid the diversion of productive agricultural land to other purposes if there is unproductive or less productive land that could reasonably be used for those purposes. The necessary legislation to give effect to these decisions will be introduced at an early date.

If Professor Newton ran a practice in a small provincial town he would realize that:—

1. Most private lock-up garages are either purchased from some advertising firm in a sectional timber form or built by the local man with the aid of a very sketchy plan to work to. The client cannot often afford to employ an architect even to draw a decent set of plans.

2. If the job were placed in an architect's hands, a set of plans and a brief specification should not take more than a couple of days, otherwise it would not pay him to undertake the work.

3. If the Builder were given two weeks to prepare his estimate (as Professor Newton suggests), he would put the plans on one side until a few days before the price was due in, before working it out.

I think that the design of these small garages, together with such other items as Garden Sheds, Summer Houses, etc., is one of the many problems which sooner or later will have to be tackled by the Government. The submission of a plan to the local Council (even if drawn up by an architect) is not sufficient guarantee that the building will be satisfactory when erected. I suggest one solution to this problem would be for a certain number of standard designs to be approved (possibly through architectural competition) and Local Councils to have power to turn down anything else.

Where an architect is employed to supervise, his designs could be submitted to the Local Panel for approval.

JOHN E. SEABRIGHT.

Droitwich Spa.

## GLASS IN WAR-TIME

In a lecture illustrated by cinema films and lantern slides given by Mr. J. M. Holt, of Messrs. Pilkington Brothers, to the School of Architecture, Liverpool University last month, reference was made to the importance of light and how the daylighting of a building had some bearing on the health and efficiency of the worker, particularly in war-time, when it is important to maintain a general high "tone," and when accuracy and output are so essential. It was pointed out that "glass is used for windows because it transmits light, keeps out the weather, i.e., wind and rain, and it is permanent; but in war-time the question of safety arises and it is necessary to consider the methods by which the advantages afforded by the use of daylight can be obtained whilst at the same time providing a reasonable measure of protection against windows broken by blast."

The lessons learnt from the tests and actual experience in air raids would appear to be:—

1. No protective treatment short of completely enclosing the glass in a substantial manner will prevent its being broken by blast.

2. Some forms of glass are more resistant to blast than others.

3. If an approved method of protection is applied to the glass, the danger of flying glass from windows broken by blast can be minimised.

4. The vulnerability of ordinary glass (generally associated with plain window glass) is considerably reduced if wired glass is used.

## LETTERS

### Professor Newton Talking

SIR,—On Sunday afternoon last I read in the *Radio Times* that there was to be a talk on Architecture by Professor Newton. Ah! I thought, here is a rare opportunity of bringing this vital subject before the General Public.

Alas, what did he have to say. His general remarks were, of course, true and quite interesting, but to tell the public that an architect would require two months to prepare plans and specifications and obtain estimates for a small lock-up garage (not to mention detail drawings of wood mouldings!) will about scare the general public for ever from employing an architect.

I can hear everybody saying—"Yes, and I wonder what the fees will be if it takes him all this time."



The schemes illustrated in this issue deal with three types of building: the immobile (a brick house, illustrated on this page); the mobile (a prefabricated structure, page 142); and the ultra-mobile (transportation of a house from one district to another, pages 143-146).

### 1. THE IMMOBILE IDEA.

This little house, charming in its way, does not appear to merge into its surroundings, but is, in fact, part of them. From subsoil to roof trees there is no break in continuity; structural parts once separate have grown together in a way that makes it impossible to move or dismember it without destroying the whole. This is our traditional method of building.

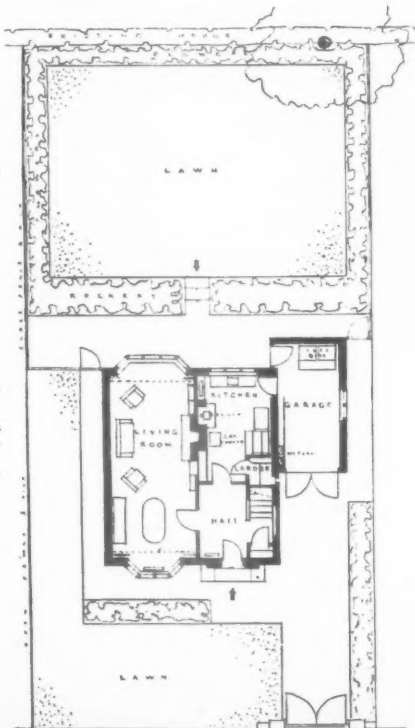
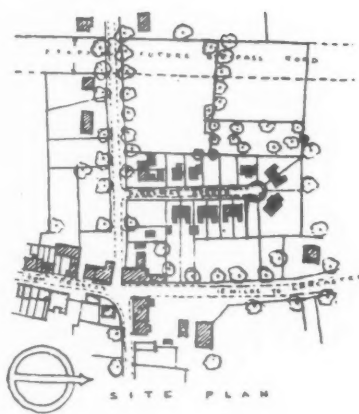
### 2. THE MOBILE IDEA.

Americans are turning their attention more and more to an opposite principle of construction usually called prefabrication. The word means two things. First, that building parts are standardized and made in factories—in itself not new; bricks have been made this way for generations. Secondly, that parts are assembled dry, like bits of a machine, which can be clipped, screwed or bolted together, but remain separate. Buildings assembled in this way can never merge into their surroundings to the same extent as the other type. This doesn't mean they need be ugly any more than immobility proves beauty. But it does mean that they are suitable for different purposes, and require to be designed differently.

### 3. THE MOBILE IDEA CARRIED TO ITS LOGICAL CONCLUSION.

The mobile idea is seldom carried to its logical conclusion, but the strip of photographs reproduced in Section 3 shows the principle in action. They show an American team creating another world record by "dismounting" a nice little family house and rebuilding it again forty miles away in less than seven hours. The American approach to the problem of war-time building is in sharp contrast to our own. It might be said that the English Building Industry has failed to meet demands made on it because it has evoked no method of building for an emergency. Nearly all the buildings put up during the last two years have been constructed to outlast several dynasties quite without regard to their possible period of usefulness. The problem of the temporary building will still be with us after the war. People cannot be expected to camp in the open while the last requirements of plans for the future are being worked out. On the other hand we have surely had enough permanent housing done in a hurry to make plain the disadvantages of forcing the pace. A third alternative would be the mass production of houses designed like the American example to be shifted from place to place as need arises, and ultimately to disappear without leaving a trace. Until society becomes stabilized in a way that seems improbable at present there will always be great scope for mobile type of house.

## 1. IMMOBILE HOUSE NEAR DESIGNED BY



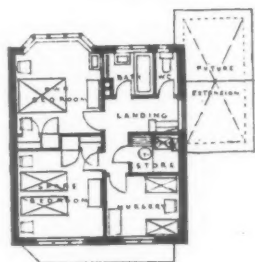
# THIS ISSUE



# I D E A

## P R E S T O N

KEVIN GRAHAM



SCALE OF FEET  
0 5 10 15 20 25 30



**GENERAL AND SITE**—Kingsway Avenue, Broughton Village, near Preston, Lancs. Designed by architect for his own occupation. **CONSTRUCTION AND FINISHES**—11 in. walls faced with 2 in. multi-coloured rustic bricks and pointed in black mortar. Roof covered with blue grey slates. Windows, timber, of standard stormproof type. Windows, front door surround and eaves soffit, gloss-painted an off-white. **COST**—£915. Including land, charges for road making, fittings and fitments, and garden layout.

*Recent newspaper and radio reports have suggested that the government is about to relieve the tremendous housing shortage in the industrial towns where war industries are concentrated. This would be solved partly by the erection of prefabricated houses; there has, however, been so much confusion on this subject that a true definition is necessary of the term*

## prefabricated HOUSE

[BY E. G. FALUDI]

For centuries houses have been built of wood, brick, stone, mortar and plaster. These materials have been brought to the building site in comparatively small sizes, and there cut and trimmed by hand to fit the requirements of the particular building. They were then put together piece by piece. These operations necessitated the employment of a large amount of skilled and highly specialized hand labour. An analysis of the one-family two-floor house built in the traditional way in brick shows the amazing number of units and of different trades, operations and sub-contractors employed. There are probably over 30,000 units, while operations such as planing, hammering and sawing are repeated thousands of times. Twenty independent trades are needed, many for a few hours only, with fifteen sub-contractors. Under such conditions house construction cannot be speeded up, nor can it be economically efficient.

The prefabricated house is a new kind of house, prepared in the factory, mass-produced, and erected in a few hours. In the usually accepted meaning of the words, the structure of the prefabricated house is made in the factory in large panels, which are assembled and fastened together on the site. The purposes of prefabrication are to transfer to the factory as much as possible of the work of constructing a house, to reduce the time needed for its erection, and by the greater efficiency of mass-production, to utilize power and machines. This reduces waste of material and consequently the cost of construction. The ideal of prefabrication is to increase the size of the various factory-made building units, reducing their number, and finally producing the entire side of a house or an entire room. With these principles in mind, many people believe that prefabrication can only succeed if there is a reduction

in types of houses, and if production is limited to special types of standardized dimensions.

This is a mistake. No one wishes all houses to be identical—any more than he expects everyone to live the same life in them—or for the house to be a standardized machine to serve that life. Happiness in life can be attained by the use of collective products, but the individual life must also be considered. In designing and producing the prefabricated house, therefore, we must consider the man who lives in the house as a human being and not as an object. For this reason mass-production can only solve the problem if the standardized units can be assembled in varying ways.

Factory mass-production of houses is often compared with the production of cars. This is a great mistake. The car is much more efficiently produced than the house. But the car has only one use—transport; the house has many uses—shelter, nutrition, recreation, education, work. The proper housing of a family, the relation of the family to each other, their habits, their standard of living, the surrounding country, the climate, the orientation, all greatly influence the building of a house. It is a much more complicated problem, with much less scope for standardization, than the standardization of the car. But even in the automobile industry every manufacturer produces different types of cars. A car leaves the factory as a finished product ready to function; a house has to be erected, partially or wholly, connected to utilities and services, and adapted to the nature of the land.

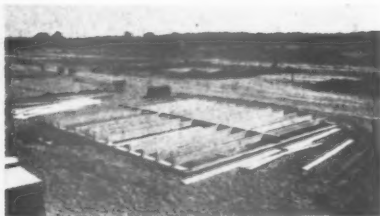
Prefabrication has had to overcome many obstacles. Early designs, 20—25 years ago, were unattractive aesthetically, technically and economically, and had temporary characteristics as regards durability. These were the so-called portable houses, built entirely of wood or steel. Most experimenters considered the prefabricated house as a new outlet for old materials; the steel producer tried to produce steel houses, the plywood or fibre board manufacturer houses using plywood or fibre board in every part (even if it was not the most suitable material), while plumbing and electrical concerns designed houses with the sole view of utilizing their products. Only in the last ten years, since non-profit scientific organizations have taken the lead in research, has the prefabricated house been considered seriously as a solution for the future housing of the people.

To-day in many countries in Europe and in America the factory-made one-family house can compete technically and aesthetically with the traditionally built house, and obviously, when the market becomes big enough to absorb mass-production, economically also. In America some manufacturers deliver whole houses in sections, complete with plumbing, sanitary and heating

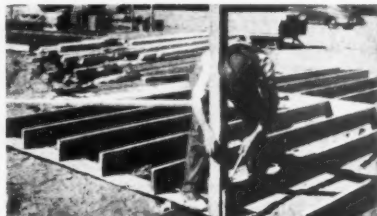
## 2 . M O B I L E



1. Each house rests upon concrete piers and precast concrete rails.



2. Termite shields are laid over the concrete foundation.



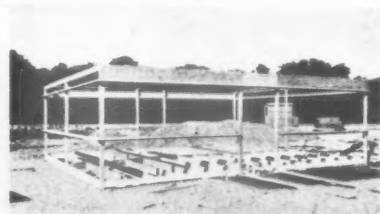
3. First wood column set in place against a floor joist. Columns are manufactured at millwork plant and shipped to site.



4. The window course sills fit into recesses in the wood columns. The sills are also a millwork product.



5. Tops of the columns are bound together with wood girders.



6. Here floor and wall framing has been completed.



7. An oil-burning furnace is put into each house before the flooring is laid.



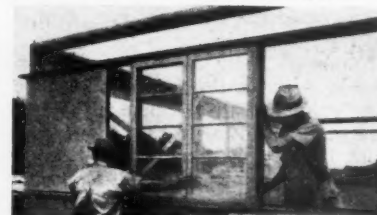
8. The floors are laid with 1 1/2 in. thick T and G flooring.



9. A sheet of 1 1/2 in. Celotex Cementos board is being applied to the lower section of a wall. Panel is 12 ft. long x 4 ft. wide.



10. A short Cementos board panel is put into place at the corner of window course. Board is nailed to wood columns.



11. A wood casement window, complete with frame, is slipped into place.



12. An end roof truss, equipped with ventilating louvres, is fitted into position.

equipment, electrical wiring and furniture, all assembled in a few hours. This kind of house is not the jerry-built portable type, but is built on the same principle as the car, radio or aeroplane, and is of a much higher quality than the speculative builder's house. Many of these houses are made of timber or timber products and insulation board, some of steel frame and asbestos sheets, some of concrete panels. A very interesting recent development is the use of weatherproof resin-bound plywood for exterior and interior walls.\* This kind of plywood is well known in the aeroplane industry, and because of its high strength, light weight and insulating properties, it will be one of the future materials for building prefabricated houses.

One American firm delivers factory-made plywood sections to build a house of any plan the buyer desires, provided it fits into multiples of 20 by 20 inches. The sections are interlocked by steel nails and fastened by metal wedges at the top. Two men can erect a four-room house in two hours, the same two hours in which two plumbers make pipe connections for bathroom and kitchen, and two others put on the copper roof. Kitchen and bathroom adjoin, and the necessary pipes are concealed in the partition wall and bolted to connections on the site. Another firm offers to young couples with small incomes a house with one large room, kitchen, bathroom and garage. Two men can add a room to this house in a few hours, and it can grow from one room to six or seven. All these houses are built of 4 by 8 feet precise machine-made sections made of wooden frames with wallboard or plywood welded to them by phenol waterproof glue or plastics. The sections are stained or painted in the factory, too.

The Tennessee Valley authority has considered almost complete prefabrication and assembly of the house before delivery to the site. This includes doors and windows, outside and inside finish, and all equipment ready for occupation. The house is divided into five units, which are joined together on vertical section lines running from front to back of the house. These units are not

\*The Ministry of Works and Buildings experimental all ply hut will be illustrated in a future issue.

Typical house chosen by Jan Porel, after studying the possibilities of 30 different types, for housing the workers of Glen Martins bomber factory. Prefabricated parts are fitted together, at rate of six houses a day by crew of 150. Completed houses cost about £500 each. Real claim of the house is that exterior walls, which even in most prefabricated houses are traditionally built up of from seven to twelve layers of wood plaster, etc., are composed of a single building material. Features of the plan: well-equipped kitchen, built-in cupboards, open plan, large living space; large fixed plate glass casements in living room, flanked by movable screen casements. Rest of the work done by sub-contracting prefabricators who need never see a house. Trimming floor boards is only job for which a saw is used.

### 3. U L T R A - M O B I L E

flat elements of wall, floor and roof, but whole pieces of a house, each comprising one-fifth of its cubic volume. Each unit corresponds to a room, and is complete, including plumbing and electrical work.

Research is also being done into the possibilities of using low cost plastic materials reclaimed from farm products or waste for the production of factory-made houses. It is obviously too early yet to draw any definite conclusions, but the use of plastic materials in aeroplane construction has shown that they are to be reckoned with in the future.

The Canadian Government, through its new organization the War Time Housing Ltd., has decided to build semi-prefabricated houses for the war industry centres. These houses, partly designed by the director of housing, are a great advance on the well-known Canadian "precut" system. All the timber parts are cut in definite dimensions, and the walls, floor and roof are prepared in the factory in frame sections. The wall sections are covered, after erection, with weather boarding or cedar shingles. This type of semi-prefabricated house, now in use for war factory workers, has a carefully studied design and a pleasant appearance. It has been chosen by the Canadian Government because it would be a mistake to erect permanent dwellings where the existence of post-war industries is improbable. After the war the houses could be "demobilized" and redistributed where they were most needed; they are temporary as regards location, but not as regards durability.

It is generally believed that the prefabricated house is the solution to future housing problems. The social question—that the workers should have decent houses which they can afford—can only be solved by low cost mass-production. The development of the aeroplane and the helicopter will probably have a strong influence on the house of the future. As to-day everybody has a car, to-morrow each may have a helicopter, thus completely transforming the system of life. Our houses will either be in the country, far from the cities, because of easy transport, or in the cities with narrow landing places at the side for the helicopter. The house will be movable because of transport facilities.

After the war there will be many other influences on the development of the prefabricated house industry. The devastated countries will need many new houses, and Canada—with its quantities of raw materials and advanced timber industry—can take an important part in producing them. For a period of great change in the housing industry is imminent, and if the necessary preparations, research and study are provided on a large scale at the right time, Canada can be in the forefront.

*Demountable houses are being built at the U.S. Navy Powder Factory at Indianhead, Maryland, for enlisted and civilian personnel employed at the plant. One of these houses was recently demounted for demonstration purposes for the American Defence Programme's "Housing Projects" in 2 hours 35 minutes, carried in sections on trucks over 40 miles of country roads in 1 hour 15 minutes, and reassembled on another site in three hours—altogether less than seven hours. Demounting began at 7.30 a.m., and by 10.5 all sections had been dismantled. The trucks—there were four in all—began their journey at 10.15 a.m. and arrived at the new site at 11.30 a.m. Work on the re-erection was started immediately and the house was completed at 2.30 p.m. The U.S. Federal Work Agency is responsible for the whole scheme; it uses Indianhead as the testing ground for these demountable houses which are single-family dwellings containing two bedrooms. They are built of Homasote board which is manufactured of old newspapers and re-processed chemically into a sturdy pressed board. Here is a pictorial record of the demounting and reassembling operation.*



7.30 a.m. A bell rings and the demounting crew start towards the house



2 7.45 a.m. Fifteen minutes after the start the crew are well into their stride.





**3** 7.50 a.m. Twenty minutes after the start—two of the workmen using claw irons on the roof.



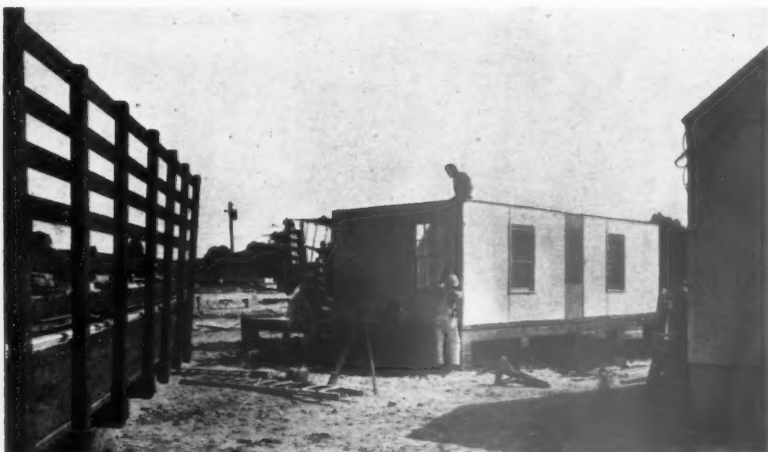
**4** 8.10 a.m. One of the gable ends is being removed; gable ends were dismantled in approximately twenty minutes.



**5** 8.25 a.m. Removing a ceiling panel. All ceiling sections were removed by 9 a.m.



**6** 8.35 a.m. Roof pieces being lifted off the house directly into a truck which had been brought to the side of the house.



**7** 9.14 a.m. The roof is off and the crew get to work on the walls. All but two of the window frames were left in the wall sections. The two windows removed were to facilitate better handling of the centre wall panel.



**8** 9.45 a.m. Last wall section was down and on the truck by 9.40 a.m. Here the floor panels are being removed.



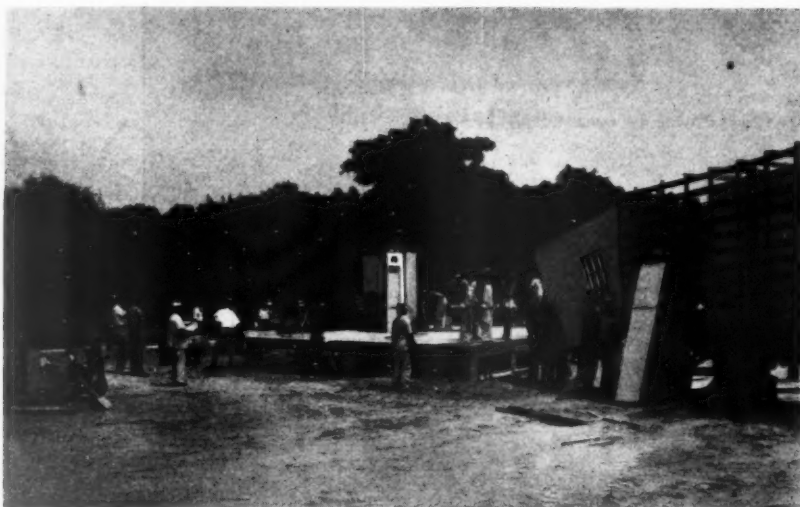
**9** 10.05 a.m. The last floor section was put on the truck at this time and the demounting was thus completed.



**10** 10.15 a.m. The house in sections begins truck—there were four trucks—journey of 40 miles.



**11** 11.30 a.m. Certain special tools were used. This is a racket wrench.



**12** 12 noon. Floor sections were installed and bolted to the foundations by 11.45 a.m. Here the walls are about to be put in position.



**13** 12.15 p.m. One of the exterior wall panels being lifted into position. In this illustration it will be seen that the window frame was left in position when house was dismantled.



**14** 12.35 p.m. The mason about to start work on the chimney. Here he is seen hauling up chimney block.





**15** 12.40 p.m. The plumber at work on the installation of the bathroom fittings. This delayed the placing of last walls.



**16** 2.30 p.m. Roof sections were in place at 2.05 p.m. Here is the last act in the re-building—electric wiring being fixed.

U L T R A - M O B I L E

## House of Lords DEBATE

*The debate in the House of Lords on Lord Reith's speech announcing the new Ministry of Planning was opened by VISCOUNT SAMUEL. He said:*

My Lords, the noble Lord the Minister of Works and Buildings has been kind enough to send me in advance a copy of the statement that he has just made. I have had an opportunity of studying it, and I have no hesitation in saying at the outset that to my mind it is a most excellent statement, which will be warmly welcomed throughout the country, and which will be cordially approved by those of your Lordships' House who have taken an active part for many, many months past in pressing for a policy of this nature. In fact, this statement very closely coincides with the aims which we have advocated in this House and which we have urged upon the Government. Two points in particular are embodied in it: one, that there is to be a single Ministry of Planning, that is to say, physical planning of town and country; and, two, it is recognized that such a Ministry cannot cover the whole ground of the economic and social reconstruction of Britain and special machinery has to be devised for the purpose.

That there must be a single Ministry is agreed by all who have made a study of these problems. The slow development of town and country planning in this country is very largely due to the confusion of central and local authorities that has prevailed hitherto. Furthermore, the Town Planning Acts have been somewhat negative in character. They have controlled and vetoed, but they have provided no positive stimulus, guidance or direction. A Ministry is needed in order that under the general direction of Parliament it should exercise a propulsive influence in the country and see, or help to see, that difficulties are overcome and that action is in fact taken. The local authorities, of course, must continue to control the actual creation of the schemes in particular localities and their execution.

No one suggests for a moment that a new Ministry should be created and by bureaucratic action from Whitehall determine the schemes in every town or county of the land. That is contemplated by no one. But it is also recognized that many, in fact most, of our present local governing areas are too small for the proper execution of a planning policy. They have arisen from ancient historic causes, and frequently their boundaries bear little relation to the practical needs of the present day. Therefore, pending a general readjustment of the boundaries of the local governing areas, which will be a long process and give rise to much controversy, it is necessary now to group local regions of sufficient size for the task in hand. It should be the duty of the Ministry of Planning to take the initiative and to help in the formation of such regions by general consent in the various areas.

Furthermore, I think there is general agreement that the matter would advance more quickly if there were not the present degree of centralization in Whitehall, causing much delay. Indeed it is often a question of years before a local authority's scheme is finally put into effective operation. If there were devolution by this Ministry to regional bodies within the Civil Defence Regions, or areas equivalent to them, that would be a step in advance. So that the plan contemplated by this statement and by what has been said before is for a single central Planning Ministry in London, devolving parts of its authority on the several Defence Areas or the equivalent below the local regional authority, consisting

of groups of the present local authorities, which will carry out the actual work itself.

A Ministry is essentially needed as the author of the legislation that will be required to present it to Parliament and to get it enacted. There is a great body of legislation which is needed, reforming and expanding in many directions existing Town and Country Planning Acts. Only an authoritative Ministry can undertake that task. Such legislation would have to deal especially with the question of the acquisition of land and the difficult problems of compensation and betterment, which have hitherto been one of the main causes of the holding up of the advance of building. An essential point is that the present powers in the Town and Country Planning Acts, which are in the hands of the Ministry of Health, should be part of the powers transferred to the new Ministry. It would be fatal to leave the Planning Ministry without those powers. It would mean duplication of effort, over-lapping, conflict and delay, and I am indeed glad to hear to-day that the very first point mentioned in the statement made by the noble Lord is that those existing powers shall be transferred from the Ministry of Health to the new Ministry of Works and Planning.

Whether the powers of the Ministry of Health dealing with housing—the housing of the working classes and others—should be transferred is perhaps a moot point. There are arguments on both sides. On the whole, the course which is being taken by the Government to leave the actual Housing Acts in the hands of the present local authorities and, centrally, in the hands of the Ministry of Health, is one with which we will not quarrel. The question of housing is very closely connected with the question of over-crowding, with streets, and with local finance. All these matters are within the purview of the Ministry of Health, and although it may be said that it is somewhat illogical to deal with town planning by one hand and with housing by another, nevertheless, viewing the matter as a whole, I do not criticize the decision which has now been arrived at by the Government with regard to housing powers.

One point I missed from the statement that has been made to-day. Nothing has been said about certain planning powers which are of national and not of local interest, particularly national parks, the preservation of the coast line and other amenities, which are of general concern to the whole country. We have advocated that those matters should be centralized to a great extent under the control of the new Ministry of Planning and that there should be a National Planning Fund, to be at the disposal of, or to be allocated by, the Ministry of Planning for achieving these objects. I trust that when the legislation is presented it will be found that powers in that direction are also to be conferred on the new Ministry.

A question has arisen whether this Ministry should not be separated from the Ministry of Works and Buildings. I think, for my own part, that the Government have arrived at the right decision, that there should be only one Ministry and that the actual works and buildings—questions at present dealt with by the noble Lord—should continue under his control in a separate section or department of the whole Ministry. Otherwise again, if these matters were under dual control, there would probably be delay and possibly friction.

I myself have advocated in this House on more than one occasion that the new Ministry of Planning should absorb the whole of the present Ministry of Works and Buildings as well as take over planning powers from the Ministry of Health, and I have also advocated that certain powers of the Ministry of Transport should be transferred. It is an anomaly, when you are controlling, or endeavouring to control, ribbon development, along the main roads, which is essentially a matter of planning, that the Ministry concerned is neither the Ministry of Health nor the Ministry of Works and Buildings but the Ministry of Transport, so that local authorities have now

to look to three separate Ministries for various parts of the same undertaking. I trust that the legislation will provide that these very anomalous powers, which were almost accidentally conferred upon the Ministry of Transport when some hurried legislation was passed through Parliament, shall revert to the new Ministry of Works and Planning. With regard to Scotland, we should all agree with the proposal now made that that country should be dealt with separately, otherwise, if Scottish planning were transferred to Whitehall, whether to one Ministry or another, Scottish national feeling would be gravely offended and strong protests would speedily be made.

The noble Lord has said that steps will be taken to provide the necessary skilled assistance for carrying out these various proposals. I might remind him, although he is, I am sure, very conscious of it, that considerable difficulty has been created on account of calling to the Colours many of the key men in this administration—professional town planners and other advisers of the local authorities who are frequently being called up to one Service or another, leaving the work in their own localities frequently in a state of some confusion. I hope that, so far as military exigencies allow, the very small number of individuals concerned will be allowed to continue this work, for without it the ambitions of the noble Lord cannot be adequately fulfilled.

I have suggested that two points have to be borne in mind—first, the essential duty of creating a single Ministry of Planning; and, secondly, that such a Ministry cannot cover the whole field of reconstruction. I am very glad that the Government do not propose to adopt the suggestion made in some quarters that there should be a Minister of Reconstruction. That is a matter far too wide and varied to be dealt with by one Department. The location of industry, for example, which is a fundamental matter in this connection, is a question which raises every aspect of economic development in this country, and could not be dealt with by a Minister whose prime duty was the physical planning of town and country. It belongs specifically to the Board of Trade. Furthermore, strategic considerations enter into the location of industry, and the three Service Departments are therefore concerned. Again, arterial roads and railways must belong to the Ministry of Transport. Agricultural interests are very vitally concerned when you are considering the disposition of urban and rural land, and that cannot be divorced from the Ministry of Agriculture. Similarly, the creation of green belts—broad areas of rural land to be preserved round our cities, which is an essential of planning policy—vitally concern agricultural interests.

Lastly, in connection with the building industry, the Ministry of Labour is the authority involved, so that if you attempt to establish a single Ministry of Reconstruction, that Ministry would have to overlap all these various Departments which are already dealing, and must continue to deal, with important areas of the whole matter. Furthermore, such a Ministry of Reconstruction would be likely to become a bottle-neck through which an immense volume of varied business would endeavour to pass, causing a very great deal of postponement and delay. The Minister for the Physical Planning of Town and Country will have, in carrying out his own specific task, enough to tax the energies of the most active administrator, and to endeavour to convert him into a Minister charged with the whole of this vast complex of varied questions would be an error of policy.

I am very glad, therefore, that the statement we have had to-day does not adopt that suggestion, but provides, very wisely, in my opinion, for the creation of a Council, over which the Minister is to preside, and of which official representatives of all the various Departments concerned will form part in

order to secure a proper liaison between them. Furthermore, at the Cabinet level, there is to be a Committee, similar to the Committee of Reconstruction, I presume, which now sits under the Chairmanship of Mr. Arthur Greenwood, which would deal with any matters in which there is a difference of opinion or with questions of adjustment that cannot be decided by the officials. The Chairman of such a Committee should, in normal times, I suggest, be either the Prime Minister or his deputy, for these matters will be the main task of government in the years that follow the war, and I envisage an organization something like the Committee of Imperial Defence for dealing with these matters of national reconstruction.

All these matters, and particularly the principal ones—the creation of a single Ministry and the co-ordination of the work of reconstruction—have long been obvious, and these proposals have been generally supported throughout the whole country. I have myself had the advantage of attending, within the last few months, three Conferences which have consisted of representatives of all the associations and the institutes concerned, representatives of some of the chief local authorities, the chairmen of committees, and the leading professional town planners. They have all been unanimous on these two points—no dissentient voice was heard at any time—first, that there should be a single Ministry which must take over the powers of the Ministry of Health with regard to planning, and, secondly, that there should be some co-ordinating body of officials at the Cabinet level. Indeed, in all the voluminous literature which is now pouring from the Press on these questions of planning, these objects have been repeatedly reaffirmed, and so far as I know no one has gainsaid them. Therefore it is all the more surprising that it should have taken all this time to reach the statement that has been happily made to-day. If I remind your Lordships of the steps that have been taken in this House and elsewhere, it is not in order to recriminate about the past or even to make any protest against the delay, but because I am anxious lest the same procrastination should prevail in the future. The noble Lord has spoken of legislation being introduced of a preliminary character as a first step, and I am anxious to know when the more comprehensive and definitive legislation is to see the light. I feel bound to remind your Lordships of the melancholy calendar through which this question has passed. In October, 1940, the new Ministry of Works and Buildings was established, and the noble Lord, happily for all of us, was nominated as the Minister. He brought to his task great energy and enthusiasm. He realized his opportunity and he realized the obligation to build up a Department. He appointed at once an expert Committee to deal with his crucial problems of compensation and betterment, and he came to his work full of zeal and enthusiasm. After three months, in February, 1941, exactly a year ago, he was able to announce on behalf of the Government that the principle of planning had been accepted as a national policy, and that the Government recognized that some central planning authority would be required. That was a great step in advance. It was cordially welcomed throughout the country; but we soon learnt that announcement is one thing and achievement is another.

The noble Lord found himself surrounded by all kinds of departmental obstacles and obstructions. The start of the new Ministry was glorious, but that splendour did not last long.

“Heaven lies about us in our infancy!”

Shades of the prison-house begin to close upon the growing boy.”

Five months passed when, in July of last year, a solution was announced of the problems before the Ministry. A conference of Ministers had been held, and we were given the quite futile proposal of a Council of three Ministers, a proposal that was immediately denounced here, which bore all the marks of a

Ministerial compromise, of an endeavour to escape from the problem without settling it. I heard recently an observation made by a man of great experience well known to your Lordships if I were to name him. He has probably seen more of the inner working of the British Government system than any other now living. He said that when you get half a dozen Ministers in a conference and expect to obtain a clear and definite decision more likely than not all you will get is the greatest common platitude. After this declaration of this triplet—the noble Lord called it an embryo; it was a triplet—that was born, in October, just one year after the noble Lord had taken office, there was a debate in this House in which members from every quarter expressed great disappointment at the prolonged delay, asked why it was, why nothing definite had happened, when a central planning authority was to be established and when legislation would be introduced. We were told last October that it was hoped the necessary legislation would be introduced before Christmas.

Christmas came and went, and I put down before Christmas a Motion which is now before the House, giving a full month's notice, postponed it for another fortnight in order to meet the convenience of the Government, and at last to-day we have the sixth discussion that has taken place in the House of Lords on the same subject during the last fifteen months. In all those discussions all of us have said exactly the same thing. It may be said that the delay does not matter very much, that there is plenty of time, that the war will last a good time yet. But these are immense problems requiring most careful study in detail and great elaboration in execution. What I fear has obsessed the minds of many of us is that if this war should come to a sudden end, as did the last war in 1918, the Government would be faced with what the Minister has said would not happen. They would be caught by the peace, and the whole of this matter would be thrown into a state of confusion. On the one hand, you would have the enormous problem of unemployment through demobilization of the Forces, and the cessation of the manufacture of munitions; on the other hand, you would have a demand for constructive work; but plans would not be ready, and local authorities would not be able to act because the necessary legislation had not been introduced. That is why I have ventured to go back over this unhappy history of the past. It is because I greatly fear, that although now this Ministry is to be established, and although the preliminary legislation, the sort of safeguarding legislation recommended by the first Report of the Uthwatt Committee, will perhaps be soon introduced, the more important legislation covering the whole field and telling local authorities what they will be able to do, and what they will not be able to do, will be delayed month after month, and even, possibly, never be put through.

When is this legislation, I would ask the noble Lord, likely to be introduced? I know it must await the final Report of the Uthwatt Committee, but in a few weeks it will be a year since they presented their first Report. I know their task is an exceedingly complicated, technical and difficult one, and requires the greatest care and deliberation; still I do hope the Minister will see that these terrible delays that have taken place now for some fifteen months will not be repeated. The Minister himself, I know, is full of zeal. He appreciates the urgency, but I am not so sure that the Government as a whole are animated with the same spirit. Will this other legislation be produced? Do they hope to produce it before next Christmas? If the Minister would only fix that date I should feel greatly relieved, but I should be still more relieved if the promise is fulfilled and the legislation is passed before the end of this year. I can assure the noble Lord that I feel I can speak in the name of your Lordships when I say that this House, which has on six occasions pressed forward

the urgency of this matter, and which now rejoices that a definite step is to be taken, will continue to keep the closest watch upon it, and if efforts are relaxed will insist on the measures being taken which we are sure the nation as a whole desires.

*Viscount Samuel was followed by LORD LATHAM, who said:*

My Lords, may I trespass upon your time to indicate the views of the Labour party with regard to the statement which has been made by the noble Lord the Minister of Works and Buildings? While I feel sure that those concerned with planning in this country will be gratified that at length the Minister has found it possible to make this statement of Government intentions, I regret I cannot share the belief of the noble Viscount, Lord Samuel, that they will be satisfied by this statement and by the steps which are proposed. I see no great contribution to the preparatory step necessary to deal with this complicated problem in what amounts to no more than a transfer of certain powers from the Ministry of Health to the Ministry of Works and Buildings—powers which we are told are to be increased and amplified by further provisional legislation, but which at present amount to no more than the powers given under the Town and Country Planning Act of 1932.

I am not one of those who hold the view that difficult problems can necessarily best be solved by the creation of new Ministries, nor am I one of those who feel that difficult problems can best be helped towards solution by the creation of multifarious Committees. I do not believe that Committees are an alternative to democratic representative Government or Ministerial responsibility. I see no close affinity between the Ministry of Works and Buildings and planning. I can see a much closer affinity between planning and the Ministry of Health. I am one of those who regret that the term "local government" was dropped from the new title of the Ministry of Health just after the last war. The Ministry of Health, we are informed, is to retain present powers with regard to housing. As one who is not without experience in dealing with the problem of housing, with the decongestion of congested areas in this great Metropolitan City, I see housing as one of the important elements, I will not say the most important, but certainly one of the most important elements in planning. Notwithstanding the proposed Committee on a Cabinet level which is to be set up, I can see possible confusion through the Ministry of Health still being responsible for the solution of what will remain a grave problem in many of the cities of this country—the solution of the slum problem, while planning is being dealt with by the Ministry of Works and Buildings.

I was encouraged, however, by the statement of the noble Lord, the Minister of Works and Buildings, that both the Government and he recognize that planning is in essence a problem of local government. It is correct that the main outline of the national plan must be settled nationally, but planning cannot be settled nationally on the drawing board. The national settlement must be the decision of policy relating to roads, to agriculture, to open spaces, to the location and distribution of industry; but may I suggest to your Lordships that it will still remain a problem of local government to execute planning in this country? The preservation of a close partnership between the central guiding and, as the noble Viscount, Lord Samuel, put it, propulsive Ministry and local government authorities, is of extreme importance. There are in my view far too many planning authorities in this country at the present time. The latest information I have is that there are 751 planning authorities in England and Wales. There are in the Metropolitan Police district, an area of 690 square miles, no fewer

than 77 town planning authorities, whereas in the County of London, an area of 117 square miles, there are happily only two town planning authorities—the London County Council for 116 square miles and the City of London Corporation for the balance.

I was encouraged by reading an informative article in *The Times* yesterday in which among other things the writer said:

"The central authority will not be alone in the field of planning. Hitherto planning has been the duty of local authorities under a loose supervision from Whitehall. There must still be local planning and a local administration, but the areas must be large enough to make them both effective."

The noble Lord, the Minister of Works and Buildings, proposes to get over the difficulty of the numerous small town planning units now in existence by the appointment of committees which, as I gather, will have no statutory foundation, which will have no power to raise finance and which will not enjoy the other statutory powers necessary for effective planning. With all respect, I do not believe that town planning can be done by joint committees. I believe that town planning must be done by popular, democratically-elected local authorities, and if their boundaries are inappropriate, as they clearly are for existing conditions in this country—and will be even more inappropriate for the conditions which we hope may be brought into being—then the Government should have the courage to tackle the problem (complex, I agree) of the reorganization of local government units in this country.

With your Lordships' permission I should like to extend to the noble Lord, the Minister of Works and Buildings, my commiseration that he should be asked to operate the Town and Country Planning Act of 1932. He will find that no adequate weapon. Not only is it not a Tommy gun, it is not even a pike; it is only a disappointment. One can understand how it comes about that it is a disappointment. After all, 1932 was not a very good year for social legislation. The nation and its elected representatives were still suffering from the fright of the economic collapse of 1931, and it is not surprising that the high hopes held out at the time were falsified as regard that Act. The noble Lord has indicated that provisional legislation is contemplated. I agree entirely with the noble Viscount, Lord Samuel, that provisional legislation is not encouraging. Interim legislation has a great habit in this country of becoming final legislation. What is really needed in my submission for dealing with the problem of planning is not necessarily the creation of a new Ministry, nor is it the transference of powers from one Ministry to another. Local authorities should be given adequate powers to plan.

We want a new Town and Country Planning Act. It must be an Act which will embody new and ample and comprehensive power. It must be an Act which will embody, not in the preamble but in its sections, recognition that if this country is to be replanned, if the land of this country is to be used most efficiently and most economically for the social, economic and cultural benefit of the people, then private interests must be subject to public requirements and public needs. The new Town Planning Act must embrace proposals which will make town planning less burdensome financially upon the public purse and must make the powers capable of much speedier operation. About compensation I would say that in my view the basis of compensation and of its ascertainment still has too much of the atmosphere which prevailed in 1845, when the Land Clauses Act recognised not only the existence of land as the predominant form of property in this country but the existence of both landowners and the projectors of railways, and it is unfortunately true that local authorities, notwithstanding the substantial improvements embodied in the Act of 1909, have had to acquire, for statutory purposes, land at prices which in many cases have been oppressively inequitable, and in some cases





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have been—may I use the word?—something in the nature of ransom.

The basis of the ascertainment of compensation cries aloud for amendment. Whilst we are all gratified at the Government announcement that, as regards the price of land required for local authorities in the future, the standard would not exceed that of 1939, I assure the noble Lord, the Minister, that that does not satisfy or meet the legitimate requirements of local authorities. It is the basis upon which that standard has to be ascertained when a local authority enter the market, not as willing buyers, that is important. Local authorities are seldom willing buyers. They must buy land to discharge their statutory functions, and frequently they must buy a particular plot of land. If, for instance, they are under the obligation to provide a school, they must provide a school within a certain distance of where the children live, and they must, therefore, get a site within that distance. Accordingly, it is seldom that the local authority are willing buyers. The basis of compensation when amended, must also take account of the anomalies which arise from the right to claim injurious affection. It is a curious anomaly that, although there may be no indirect injurious affection, the person owning land a portion of which is taken by a local authority can claim injurious affection, whereas any owner, although, in fact, he may have a more substantial claim for injurious affection, cannot claim it if the local authority have not acquired a portion of his land.

And then there are problems of speeding up. The London County Council are not inexperienced in acquiring land, but even with our great experience—and I may say with our very efficient machine—it is a rare

occasion if, after we have decided to clear an area of its slums, we can get into possession of the slum dwellings within two years. When it is a matter of less urgent problems, where the London County Council, like other local authorities, possess less imperative powers, the time can be very much longer than two years. I respectfully commend to the attention of the Minister amendments of the Town Planning Act which will shorten that period and will also enable local authorities to deal with another curious anomaly—namely, that of the nonconforming use. That, briefly stated, is the right possessed by the owner of a building which, whether as a building or as to the uses which the building is put, does not conform with the town planning scheme, to go on not conforming in perpetuity unless the local authority are able and willing to pay him compensation. I suggest that it would be in every sense equitable that terms should be put to the exercise of that right, which can, and frequently does, militate very seriously against schemes of road improvement and schemes of town planning.

May I indicate a further direction in which the Town Planning Act should be amended? It is that there should be some substantial limitation of the obligation to hold local inquiries which result in much delay, much expense, and, often, much confusion, and at the same time of the obligation to give individual notice to owners whose land or property it is contemplated will be included in a scheme. I suggest that that notice should be by public advertisement or that some other simple means should be adequate.

I must ask your Lordships' forgiveness if I have trespassed too long on your time, or if I have presumed, on the first occasion in

which I have addressed you, to be somewhat definite upon this matter. I have had the privilege of being associated with the problems of planning and local government for a number of years, and I am, like your Lordships and many people outside, very much concerned that this great opportunity to replan this country, to make it worthy of the sacrifices which have been, and are being, made in its defence, should not be missed. I beg the Minister to delay no more than he is compelled before introducing—and I hope before being successful in putting it on the Statute Book—new powers which will enable local authorities, in conjunction with the central Ministry, to replan and reconstruct the country. I want to see the term "East End" cease to be a term of social reproach, and become a geographical term.

But if we are late, if peace should come before these powers are on the Statute Book, before local authorities have had the opportunity of making their arrangements to operate them, before the owners of land and the private developers have the opportunity of finding out for themselves what their rights and powers are, then there is a great danger that the intense pressure of seeking to get back to normal conditions, the pressure to provide houses for people returning to damaged cities, the pressure to rebuild schools, will be such that planning will be postponed, or will be so prejudiced by those activities as to make it more costly and its operation much more difficult. In conclusion, therefore, I beg the Minister to do what he can to expedite the final Report, or the next Report, of the Uthwatt Committee, and not to delay for a moment in getting new and comprehensive legislation upon the Statute Book.



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