

transport

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transport

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1. introduction

No government has yet had a comprehensive transport policy. In the long years of economic struggle after the war when resources were heavily committed to rebuilding a run-down nation the main task of the Labour government was to prevent the railways and road haulage from disintegrating altogether. Then during the 13 years of Conservative rule, the motorised society came into being. Faced with this new problem, the Conservative government was content to confine its role to that of a policeman on point duty. Its response was to make a start on a long overdue network of motorways, and to confess its own bewilderment by drowning public anxiety in a plethora of reports. The purpose of this pamphlet is to outline a coherent transport policy.

the motorised society

The motor vehicle threatens the whole quality of civilised society. The Buchanan Report has spelled out with frightening clarity the effect of the motor vehicle on the urban environment. The Government must act quickly if one half of the population is not to spend its day motionless in a motor car, while the other half waits in vain for the buses and trains which never come.

At the end of 1964 there were 12½ million vehicles on the roads, an increase of 8 per cent over the year before. In 15 years' time, as a result of the increasing affluence of our society, there will probably be at least 27 million. The Buchanan Report estimates that in less than 50 years' time the saturation point will have been reached, with 40 million vehicles on the roads, or more than one to every two people. Even now we can see the effects of this sort of growth. Streets and main roads are heavily congested. Towns are made horrible by heavy streams of traffic, noise and fumes. There is a tragic loss of life—nearly 7,000 people were killed in 1963. At the same time public transport is either overloaded or losing passengers to cars. It therefore becomes increasingly difficult for public transport to provide adequate services and remain solvent. British Railways lost £134 millions in 1963.

The difficulties brought about by the increase of cars, vans and lorries are being accentuated by the growth of population. The most recent estimate is that within 30 years there will be 25 per cent more people. This inevitably means that more people will be travelling to work, to schools, to shops. At the same time there is an increasing concentration of people in the main centres of population, in the great city regions such as Manchester, London, and Birmingham, and a net drift out of the North and West into the South-East.

Conservative failure

The transport picture is one of steady deterioration. Investment during 13 years of Conservative government was not enough to cope with the problem. Apart from paying British Railways' overdraft and cancelling its old debts, the Conservative government spent £60 millions on motorways in 1962-63 and planned to increase this to over £100 millions by 1969. Little attempt was made to direct investment to the projects which will bring most return to the community. Which should come first, motorways in towns or motorways between towns? Is it worth spending so much money (well over £1,000 millions) to modernise the railways? What sort of public services do we need, and how much should we be prepared to subsidise them?

The Conservatives failed to answer these questions. Their failure was partly an administrative one. Investment decisions were taken by many different bodies: the Ministry of Transport, local councils, the various nationalised Boards, often not only in isolation from each other but from other decisions which affect the pattern of transport, the development of towns, and the siting of new industries. It was also partly because they lacked criteria to make these decisions.

the task for Labour

So far the Labour Government has not shown its hand over transport policy, except to repeat election pledges about

coordination of road and rail transport. In effect this means a slowing down of the Beeching programme for closing railway lines and stations to passenger traffic. The most notable decision of the Minister of Transport so far has been to compel new proposals for closures to come to him first, before the expensive and lengthy process of hearing objections in the Transport Users' Consultative Committees is set in motion.

The Minister has also been busy finding candidates to man a committee of coordination. Dr Beeching, Chairman of the Railways Board, came within an ace of being put at the head of this committee, before what looked suspiciously like political pressure from within the Labour Party and trade unions made this move impossible. Lord Hinton has now been given the task of coordinating transport. But the appointment, with undefined and undefinable duties, does not create any substitute for a policy.

Beyond this, it does not look as if, in practical terms, Labour policy will advance much beyond that of the previous Conservative government, at least during its first term of office. Nor is there any sign as yet of radical rethinking. The pressing claims of general economic policy, the need for reform and increased government investment in so many areas, education, health, housing, do not make it seem likely that transport investment will obtain a much larger share of the national cake.

Yet transport is one of the policy areas which can least afford inaction. At present plans to spend £866 millions in the five year period 1964-69 on new road investment in Great Britain have been inherited from the previous government. This may be considered inadequate, but it is still a substantial proportion of government investment. At the same time, the British Railways Board is likely to require a further £200 millions of government money a year. A number of city transport companies, notably London Transport, are now reaching a critical situation, where they will either need subsidies or have to raise fares by significant amounts.

Meanwhile the growth of road traffic will be at its highest over the next ten years. The Minister is therefore faced with a steadily deteriorating situation, with increasing congestion, loss of life, loss of amenity, and a rising bill of wasted resources to be paid by an economy which is engaged in a life-or-death struggle to improve its efficiency. The fact that resources are limited makes even more important the need for a coherent policy of reform to be set in motion now which will both alleviate the defects of the present system, and provide a framework for a more efficient and dynamic solution in the future.

The Government must therefore decide what choices are available to it. This is more important and intricate than it sounds. Behind the complaints of a "lack of coordination" that the Labour Opposition hurled at the Conservative government in the last Parliament lay a feeling that decisions were being taken on the wrong set of criteria, in particular that the terms of reference of the Beeching Report invalidated its conclusions because they did not take into account questions of regional planning and social obligations.

What are the needs for transport? What makes 500 lorries use a particular stretch of road within an hour, or a man go by car to work rather than use the local bus service? Are some needs being frustrated? It is functional questions such as these which must be asked. At present too few of the answers are known, and certainly far more empirical information is needed on the lines of the studies, such as the London Traffic Survey, now being conducted in some of the great conurbations.

But to wait for the end of all surveys would be like putting all the people in China in a line and waiting for them to file past. There are more immediate ways of improving the situation. What of government itself? Is taxation helping or hindering the fullest use of transport resources? Is the administrative structure capable of producing the right programme quickly enough?

This pamphlet cannot put forward a total

policy. It attempts, however, to outline the basic principles and lines of immediate action.

transport is a fundamental need

The motor vehicle is here to stay. There will be an increasing quantity of private transport. But there will always remain a section of the population—the old, the young, the infirm, the poor—which will need public transport. Transport should be considered, in the same way that food and shelter have always been, as a fundamental human need. It follows that those who do not have access to transport facilities which the rest of the population takes for granted can be considered underprivileged.

Therefore the Labour Government should be prepared to subsidise public transport where this is necessary to ensure an adequate service. There is obviously no simple yardstick for what constitutes an adequate service, nor for the situations in which one is necessary. It is a question of taking practical decisions in individual cases.

But there is no reason why the task of providing a service should be exclusively the responsibility of overburdened local councils, or of the transport bodies which provide the service. This is merely a way of making one user of transport subsidise another. Ultimately it is the duty of the whole community to ensure that its members are provided access to means of transport.

investment and society

Investment in transport should be considered as an integral part of the overall economic plan, not merely in budgetary terms, but in its economic consequences. At the same time the motor vehicle must be contained as the servant, not the master, of man.

This means that more resources and time must be spent on planning our cities, our jobs, and our journeys. This is a value judgment. Others have a good case for

saying that education, research, and the pockets of poverty within our society should have priority. Yet if we cannot tame the motor vehicle the whole structure of our motorised, urbanised society will be undermined.

We must therefore look much more carefully at the costs which transport users impose on each other and on the rest of the community. When motorists drive on congested roads they are hindering other users and therefore imposing extra costs on other people in terms of delay, more petrol used, and so on. To these costs can be added other social costs arising from adverse environmental effects.

Investment decisions in transport should take these wider costs into consideration, and the wider benefits which new investment can bring. A new motorway, for instance, may save lives, wear and tear of machines and men, working and leisure time. This may not constitute a monetary return to the investment making body, but it is a real return nonetheless to the community and transport users. Fortunately the economic techniques for calculating the return on investment in this way (and the cost of not investing) can be assessed with increasing sophistication by cost benefit analysis (as used on the M1 and the Victoria Line).

In order to make the best use of these techniques and of the resources available, investment alternatives must be compared to see which would bring the widest real return. This not only means calculating whether a road should be widened or rebuilt, but whether investment in a railway line would bring a greater return in terms of congestion costs than a motorway, or whether investment should be concentrated in any particular area.

2. urban transport

The main culprit in the increasing chaos of transport in our towns and cities is the motor vehicle. Every year traffic in urban areas is increasing at the rate of $6\frac{1}{2}$ per cent on a road system which was not always adequate in the horse age. The result is a mockery for an advanced civilisation. It takes longer and longer to get from one place to another. Sometimes the congealed mass of cars and lorries which filters through our towns is frozen into immobility for several minutes. Time is money and congestion steadily increases the costs of moving people and goods.

But as more and more motor vehicles flood onto the roads, they not only increasingly nullify their advantage of quick and convenient travel, they also cause a general deterioration in city life. The Wilson Committee on the *Problem of Noise* (July 1963) said, "We conclude that in London (and no doubt this applies to other large towns as well) road traffic is, at the present time, the predominant source of annoyance and no other noise is of comparable importance." In California, motor vehicle exhaust is now the major source of atmospheric pollution, and in British towns (the Clean Air Act does not apply to vehicle fumes) the same situation is developing. More people are killed on the roads than die from TB and nearly three quarters of all casualties occur in urban areas.

There are many other ways in which the motor vehicle is adversely affecting our physical surroundings, all minutely chronicled in the Buchanan Report. It produces unrelieved ugliness on a great scale and heavy traffic flows carve up the life of a town, severing houses from shopping centres. Unfortunately, as the report states, "the deterioration of our urban surroundings under the growing weight of traffic has passed almost unnoticed . . . we tend to take it [the motor vehicle] and its less desirable side effects very much for granted."

The problems of urban transport do not end here. The population is growing in all the major city regions, although it may be declining in the central areas, so buses and railways are becoming increasingly crowded at the peak hours when people

travel to and from work. But the growth of car ownership attracts people away from public transport at off-peak hours (besides making it impossible for buses to keep on schedule and provide an efficient service at peak hours). This starts a vicious circle in which public transport cuts down its services as it loses passengers, and puts up fares to recoup its falling income, thus further discouraging potential fares. Some bus companies lost a third of their passengers between 1951 and 1961. So public transport is on the whole providing less and less adequate service, and becoming steadily more insolvent each year.

tinkering

Unfortunately, although the problems of urban transport have been with us since at least the beginning of the 1950s in their present seriousness, very little has been done about them. The most the average town has so far achieved has been to provide an additional car park and put more policeman on traffic duty.

In cities and the major conurbations, the line of attack has been a plethora of regulations, forbidding parking and so on, combined with a tinkering with the road network, mainly at the worst bottlenecks. Odd corners have been widened, roundabouts enlarged, relief roads chartered through the back streets, and occasionally connecting links between two towns in a conurbation have been given dual carriageway.

There have been one or two exceptions, of course, to this failure to appreciate the advent of the motor car. The New Towns built since the war simplified traffic flow and contained traffic-free shopping areas, although the spread of car ownership was heavily underestimated. Some of the big cities have town centre schemes, varying from the relatively piecemeal approach of Birmingham to the ambitious plan of Liverpool, which covers the whole city. But none of them are near completion. Coventry, given the chance of rebuilding after the war, has gone a long way towards satisfying the requirements of pedestrians in its centre, and eventually

there will be a circular motorway system to carry the cross-town traffic.

London

The largest conurbation, around London, has in some ways the worst record. Even today the urban motorway system which has been adopted in Brussels, is rapidly coming in Paris, and is used to a greater or lesser degree in every major American city, is at least ten years from making an appearance in London. The failure to plan is a terrible indictment on the last 15 years of Labour rule in the LCC. Nor can any major proposals appear in the next two years, since the GLC's Director of Highways and Transportation is sensibly awaiting the findings of Parts II and III of the London Traffic Survey.

At the same time, however, increasing use is being made of the existing road space. With direct overlordship for London's roads, the Minister of Transport is able to push through traffic management schemes to speed up the flow of traffic. These succeeded in reversing the trend of declining speeds in central London. In 1961, for instance, the average annual fall of 2 per cent was changed into a rise of 9 per cent, even though the level of traffic grew by 4 per cent.

London, in fact, typifies the piecemeal attitude of past governments towards transport problems. Isolated improvements, such as the Hyde Park underpass, do not get rid of bottlenecks. They merely remove them to somewhere else. Traffic management diverts heavy lorries to quiet residential streets, or runs counter to plans for physical reconstruction. The local authority plans to turn Camden High Street in north London into a pedestrian precinct, while the Ministry of Transport has used it as the focal point in an enormous one way scheme.

The main evidence that the Tories seriously underestimated the gravity of the urban transport situation can be found in December 1963's White Paper on government expenditure for the 1964-69 period. Although expenditure on roads was to be increased by 6.9 per cent a year

(compared with a 4.1 per cent rise in overall expenditure) four fifths of the increase was to go on inter-urban roads. London now has a ten year plan costing £100 millions, but this amounts to less than £3 10s per year for each vehicle in the London conurbation, and by merely tinkering with the problems of the London region, is likely to be worse than useless.

ideas to be used

The main principle, or non-principle, which has generally informed Government policy for urban transport is that of relieving pressure. It is like someone hoping that a tyre will last for ever by being patched up only where it looks in danger of imminent collapse. Only recently, in fact, have attempts at overall policy been seriously considered. The Tory government's greatest achievement was to commission the Buchanan Report, though like most reports it has been thrown in the Ministerial wastepaper basket. This set out to "study the long term development of roads and traffic in urban areas and their influence on the urban environment," and succeeded in turning the radical reconstruction of our cities to take advantage of, and to contain, the motor car from an utopian ideal into a feasible object of study. Other useful reassessments of transport policy have been published in the last year or two, such as Alan Day's study of roads, Christopher Foster's *The Transport Problem*, and the special supplement of *Socialist Commentary*, *Transport is everyone's problem*. There is no lack, in fact, of informed public interest and criticism, and going by the 1964 Report on Roads in England and Wales, there is obviously increasing awareness of the problems of the motorised age within the Ministry of Transport itself. There can be no excuse for a Labour government which refuses to define and act on a comprehensive policy.

limitation of ownership—no

There are, however, two root and branch answers to the problem of urban transport which must be abandoned. Some

people think that the car is a short lived stage in the technological development of communications; that it is therefore a misuse of resources to change our cities to accommodate it; and that the level of ownership must be severely limited. There is a strand of Socialist thinking which dislikes the way increasing resources in our modern society are spent in creating a problem and then solving it. Some think that provided the railways were given a coat of paint and made financially a lot more attractive to travel on, the transport problem would be solved. We would be able as a result to spend more money on education and old age pensions.

Yet even if we prefer education to motor cars, the electorate would have to be convinced that they are mutually exclusive. The short answer to this argument is that it would be virtually impossible at this stage to have any sensible or fair form of physical rationing. Any attempt to limit the spread of car ownership in a democratic society, once it has got so far, must fail. We assume, as most writers on the subject have done, that the level of car ownership will rise until virtually everyone who wants a car will have one, and indeed some families will possess two or three. We assume, in fact, that cars are not the objects of a mass neurosis, but the most convenient and comfortable form of transport.

limitless expansion—no

Secondly, the use of cars in urban areas could be allowed to expand without limit, every effort being made to accommodate them, by building gigantic motorways, car parks, and so on. This has been tried in some parts of the United States, notably California, and experience has provided the following law; traffic expands to fill the space provided. Even after destroying a city for the sake of the motor car, there would still be traffic jams. In fact even in Los Angeles, which some people consider has already been sacrificed to the motor car, 50 per cent of the working population have to travel by public transport and investment is being increased. By contrast, the Buchanan Report has estimated that even if London

was completely redeveloped only 20 per cent of the working population would be able to commute by car (the present proportion is 10 per cent).

environmental standards

One of the main aims of the Labour Party policy must in fact be to set standards whereby urban life can be measured objectively. As a society we are capable of attacking poverty because we have standards against which we can define it. The same is true of the National Health Service. We can determine its success or failure by the rate of infant mortality or by the level of immunisation against infectious diseases.

But at the moment we have no way of telling whether the quality of urban environment deteriorates or not, after any particular change. "In quite a number of matters in town planning it seems that real progress has only been made when standards have been worked out and accepted, for then people have been able to see at once where things are wrong," the Buchanan Report says. Having defined minimum environmental standards in terms of noise, safety, air pollution and so on, "it would be possible to take any existing street and, after examination of its dimensions, the uses and character of the adjoining buildings, and the amounts of pedestrian traffic along and across it, to define the volume and character of the traffic permissible in the street consistent with the maintenance of good environmental conditions." A detailed survey of the changes in these conditions which any traffic reorganisation might cause would obviously become a precondition of it.

grinding to a halt

The inevitable result of defining environmental standards will be that some limitation will have to be put on the use of motor vehicles. This will hold good however much urban areas are reconstructed, as the example of Los Angeles showed and, therefore, *a fortiori* of areas which have not been or are in the process of being reconstructed. At the moment

this limitation is being largely achieved by congestion. In some American cities, as for example New York, traffic speeds are down to five miles per hour, in the central area, which must be a strong deterrent to potential users. In London speeds are around ten miles per hour, and in Glasgow around eight miles per hour.

But congestion is a costly method of limiting vehicle use. Congestion costs are notoriously difficult to calculate and methods are highly arbitrary (it has to be decided, for instance, that at a certain speed of traffic flow there would not be any). But the Road Research Laboratory has put the cost of congestion in urban areas during 1963 at £270 millions. It also causes what we want to avoid, a decline in environmental standards.

rebuilding towns

A Labour Government should therefore work out some method of limiting vehicle use which is fair, comprehensive and easy to operate.

Limitation of vehicle use is not by itself a solution. The motor car, the lorry, the van, are there to be used. By 1980 it is forecast there will be 27 million vehicles on the road, more than twice the present number. Limitation by itself would require a very severe curtailment of the liberty of people to use their vehicles indeed. Hand in hand with this policy, therefore, must go a major effort to re-plan and reconstruct our towns, cities and conurbations in a way far more extensive than is at present dreamt of.

In the long run we can only improve both traffic circulation and our urban environment by rebuilding our cities, whatever is done in the way of improving public transport or limiting vehicle use. The blueprint for action has been provided by Buchanan. The key concept is that of the environmental area, to which there is good access, but where the pedestrian is separated from the motor vehicle, shops and homes from through traffic. This is the purpose of the "Radburn Layout" developed in the United States in the

1920s and used in the designs for Cumbernauld New Town and the abortive New Town for Hook. Such planning will require both the horizontal and vertical separation of traffic, motorways skirting environmental areas, service roads descending underneath buildings.

The problems are enormous. For the remainder of this century there will be very radical changes. The population is now increasing rapidly. At the same time there is a net inflow into the South of England. Peter Hall estimates that by AD 2000 there will be six-nine million more people in the South-East. Towns even of 100,000 inhabitants will double in size. Space for 1½ million to two million people will have to be found within the London region. There will be other areas of expansion too: the West Midlands, Manchester, Liverpool. There will be new factory complexes, new suburban shopping centres (on the American pattern) and all of these will have to be linked to the road network.

urban motorways

Only small towns of less, say, than 30,000 inhabitants can be treated as a single environmental area, since the larger a town the less it can be by-passed by through traffic separated horizontally from it. In a town of 100,000 inhabitants, such as Oxford, only about 10-30 per cent of the traffic does not start or finish within the town itself. What is required in the modern town is a system of urban motorways separating environmental areas, and connected to them only by feed lanes, which would in turn connect with a smaller network of distributor roads. Apart from the advantages an urban motorway brings to the areas from which it has drained traffic, it can carry several times the traffic that the multipurpose arterial road of the same width can. A 48 foot wide motorway can carry the same amount of traffic travelling at 40 miles per hour as a 72 foot wide ordinary road at speeds well below ten miles per hour.

In London only a few radial stretches of urban motorway are planned, although expensive road widening schemes are

being undertaken. As Alan Day says, this is economically an unjustifiable choice, especially where widening requires the purchase of valuable frontages, while motorways can be driven through decaying areas. Fortunately, however, most British cities have a ring of these decaying areas, the result of late 19th century speculation, which are ripe for redevelopment. Several of the more enterprising cities, Glasgow, Liverpool, Bristol, plan to drive motorways through them.

vertical separation

In the urban centres themselves, in order to achieve good environmental standards and allow space for the maximum amount of traffic, there will have to be vertical, as well as horizontal, separation of vehicles from pedestrians. This is being done at Cumbernauld, and is even more necessary where redevelopment takes place along existing road patterns. Vertical separation may be extended in some cases to the traffic lanes themselves.

This sort of physical reconstruction will of course cost a good deal of money. A two deck system in Oxford Street would come to £50 millions. The Buchanan Committee reckoned that to provide Leeds with anything like an adequate road system, involving urban motorways, ramps and flyovers, would cost £90 millions. To treat the rest of the United Kingdom in the same way, according to one calculation, would require some £18,000 millions which, even if spread over 40 years, would entail a radical upward adjustment in present spending plans. But even if taxation in its various guises on transport was kept at the same level, the growth in the number of vehicles could go a long way to providing the extra money.

traffic engineering

What should Labour do now? First there must be a fuller use of existing resources. Although acceptance by the Labour Government of the Buchanan Report will require a programme of investment over a long period, much can be done now to

improve our use of the existing road space. Traffic engineering techniques, used by the London Traffic Management Unit, have been in use for a considerable time in the United States, but have been slow to spread in more than an ad hoc way in this country beyond London, mainly due to scepticism in council planning offices and a dearth of traffic engineers (the two are related). Investment in a traffic engineer yields a high rate of return. They should be paid accordingly (output from such institutions as the School of Highway and Traffic Engineering in Birmingham could easily be expanded).

The great merit of traffic engineering techniques is that they are both cheap and easy to apply, since they involve few physical alterations. Their aim is to reduce conflict between different traffic streams, between vehicles and pedestrians, and between moving and parked vehicles. One of the most effective weapons is the one-way scheme. The Baker Street—Gloucester Place scheme, for example, increased average speeds in its first year of operation by 34 per cent.

The prohibiting of right-hand turns, filter lights, freeways, are others. So is the control of parking and unloading, whether by meters, wardens, or yellow lines, since stationary vehicles can reduce the traffic flow by more than half or even stop it.

Much more ought to be done in England; even in London the engineers could go a good deal further to canalise traffic using American and Continental experience. The linking of traffic lights over a wide area, adapting the principles of air and rail traffic control, through a computer, has for instance increased the capacity of certain busy streets in Cologne by 35 per cent (it is now to be tried experimentally in London). The safety and capacity of most roads could also be increased dramatically if they were divided into lanes. Both these methods require the British motorist to become far more disciplined before better use can be made of the roads.

But there are limitations to what can be done by traffic management. Speeding up traffic may well involve a serious loss of

amenity. People may have to walk further to catch their buses, and quiet residential streets can be made almost uninhabitable by the roar of heavy lorries. Furthermore, although traffic management can make significant differences to traffic flow, they are soon swallowed up by the rise in traffic, quite apart from that which they generate themselves. Speeds in central London, having risen, are now believed to have fallen again.

traffic limitation

However great the improvement of road conditions, they will never be able to take all the traffic which might be generated by rising car ownership. Moreover, the new cars and lorries will not wait for new roads. It is inevitable that over the next ten years the increase in vehicles will be at its highest rate. Vehicle use must therefore be controlled.

One partial answer to the problem is already operating: greater control over and rationing of parking. This is already being used as a traffic management technique. It could also be used deliberately to keep traffic out of congested areas. The number of parking spaces should be closely controlled to keep cars entering the congested area down to a level at which it was known the road system could cope. This means making large areas of road space unavailable for parking, and killing the idea that motorists can park free virtually anywhere they like.

parking meters

There are only two ways of equating demand and supply; either by a priority system, or by the price mechanism. A priority system would mean, for instance, giving discs allowing the right to park only to doctors, invalids, certain government officials, and so on. Selection, however, would be difficult to administer and almost certainly be widely resented.

Far simpler, and much fairer, would be use of the price mechanism, provided there were no loopholes. This means in effect that all on-street parking must be

controlled by meters (much the most flexible way of charging, especially where, as in regional centres, there is a good deal of irregular traffic). The prices paid and the time limits allowed would be varied according to the pressure of demand. The greater the congestion the more expensive the parking. The Conservative government tardily recognised this last year when Mr Marples announced that West End parking meters would be made much more expensive than those in less busy districts such as Marylebone. In Newcastle, too, a sixpence buys more time the further away from the centre one goes.

But parking meter charges must be related to off-street parking too. In London, for instance, it is more than twice as expensive to park off the streets in commercial car parks as on them. This coupled with the fact that not all parking areas are yet covered by meters means that the big underground car parks at Hyde Park, for instance, or Finsbury Square, are only half full. Private developers are also forced to provide garages in new blocks of offices or flats, a policy now seen to be disastrous. It is not only unprofitable for property developers, it also encourages yet more office workers to commute by car. It also means that more people can escape the pricing mechanism, or pay very low charges. This is obviously inequitable. All public parking places in metered zones should therefore be under one authority: the local council which controls the meters. Where garages have been built by private enterprise the council should obviously pay rent as long as they can fix charges in line with the overall scheme.

The obvious difficulty is that although this control would be equitable to commuters and shoppers, it would penalise people who live in towns and own cars. This conflict is already occurring in London. They either pay high rent for garage space (several pounds a week in London) or else, where the time limit in meters is short, have to park their car during the day outside the meter zone. One answer is to have all-day meters where demand is low enough to allow this. Another is to have special spaces for residents for which they can pay an annual rent (even

if this requires a change in the law). But there is no reason why one particular class of the population should benefit from subsidised parking space.

charging for road space

A more fundamental objection to this technique of using control over parking to control congestion is that it would not affect goods traffic or motorists going through a meter zone. A much more efficient technique would be to charge vehicles as and when they caused congestion costs by using busy roads. After all, the stop from the control of the use of kerbside space to the control of the whole roadway is logically a short and easy one. Again the criterion for charging should be the relation between demand and supply of road space. The motorist must be able to relate the benefit he obtains from using a road to his private cost of travel, plus the costs he imposes on his fellow motorists (plus the costs he imposes on the people living near the road in terms of amenity, although these are much more difficult to put into monetary form).

A report published last June by the Smeed Committee, *Road Pricing: the Economic and Technical Possibilities*, showed that there are technically feasible devices for charging vehicles in congested areas. It came down in favour of vehicle metering systems, whereby meters would record a vehicle's journeys in congested zones. The committee considered that neither capital nor administrative costs would be excessive—meters would cost £5 or less and the cost of enforcing the system would be outweighed by savings to the police through reduced congestion.

Charging high prices for vehicles travelling in congested city centres (the Smeed Committee suggests a 10s an hour zone in central London and Cambridge) would cause a considerable change in travelling habits. "Some people would travel at cheaper times, some would travel by cheaper routes. Some commercial operators, such as owners of delivery vans, might make fewer journeys but with

larger payloads. Shoppers might make fewer but bigger shopping expeditions. Commuters would be induced to share their cars more than at present. Some people would transfer to buses and railways."

It is often argued that although charging for the use of roads is technically feasible, it is politically impossible, since the public is not ready for such a drastic innovation. But why should this be so? Everybody is used to paying for parking. They already pay £15 a year licence fee, and ½d to 2d in fuel tax for every mile travelled. If the meter system was instigated the Government could lower these other taxes so, although it would be more expensive to travel in congested areas, it would be much cheaper elsewhere (in the same way as the social costs which a vehicle causes are very low in a country lane). The principle of charging for the use of road space is that, although the total of taxation would remain the same.

Until these electronic systems are perfected, however, we believe that control over parking is the best method of inhibiting traffic in busy area. But it must be backed up by control over goods vehicles. As soon as urban motorways are built they will obviously attract the heavy through traffic. But the small delivery vans, which account for more than half the numbers of goods vehicles, will continue to be a considerable cause of congestion until there is much stricter control over loading and unloading. There is no reason why this should not be carried out in the early morning or evening, even if this does cause some inconvenience to traders.

It should also be made more expensive to acquire a C licence (which entitles the holder to carry his own goods). At present it costs virtually nothing. In order to encourage traders to use common carriers, or to use their own carriers more efficiently, the price of a C licence should be nearer £50 or £100. Another possibility, that of having a differential taxation system so that licences would cost more in towns than in the country, could be evaded.

It has been suggested that charging schemes for traffic are fundamentally unsocial-

ist in principle since they penalise the poor. But there are two main points about using private cars. One is that to own a car at all requires a certain amount of money, so that if somebody can afford to buy a car he can presumably afford to run it. The other is that cars (or private vans) are not the only available means of transport. There is public transport too, and since there is a choice there is no reason why the motorist should continue to be subsidised for the journeys he makes in towns. Transport is simply not a suitable means for redistributing income.

subsidising public transport

It is no good, in fact, pricing vehicles off the roads unless there are adequate alternatives. Unfortunately, public transport, as the 1963 report of the London Transport Board emphasises, is finding it increasingly difficult to provide adequate services. As car ownership has spread, public transport has been involved in a vicious circle of rising costs and falling receipts. Buses lost 15 per cent of their passengers between 1951 and 1961.

At the same time a growing population in the large conurbations has meant that public transport is faced with heavy capital expenditure to cope with the increasing flood of commuters, and this will certainly be swelled by charging for road use. The study for the South-East, published in March 1964, estimated that 200,000 more commuters would be travelling into central London by 1970. And the Standing Joint Conference has estimated an increase of up to 350,000. Both Southern Railways and London Transport have investment plans involving more electrification, new lines, and so on, which amount to several £100 millions.

In strict accounting terms buses and trains in urban areas are finding it increasingly difficult to keep out of the red. This is inevitable. Since private transport is basically do-it-yourself, while over 60 per cent of the costs of bus and rail services are accounted for by wages, assuming that wages will continue to rise, there will be a widening gap between the comparative prices of public and private transport

which will have to be filled sooner or later by subsidies, if public transport is to play its part in minimising congestion.

In terms of overall social benefit, in fact, public transport yields a far higher return than it does in strict accounting terms. It was for this reason that the London Transport Board decided to build the £56 millions Victoria Line, even though it was calculated that it would make an operating loss of £3 millions a year. Over the 20 years there will be a strong need for more means of high density transport such as monorail or tube lines in city centres.

There is plenty of justification, therefore, for running some urban public transport at a loss, and for making new investment which will bring in little return, as New York has discovered. But even where the economic arguments for continuing a service are doubtful, there may still be a good social reason for doing so, since there will always be a proportion of the population which does not own its own means of transport.

3. inter-urban transport

In many ways inter-urban transport suffers from the same defects as transport in urban areas. Certainly as far as roads are concerned the complaints are the same. This is partly of course because any journey between towns will be for much of the way in towns or through city regions.

Even on the "open road," however, the picture is much the same; long lines of slowly moving vehicles; motorists sitting angrily behind heavy lorries unable to pass. Traffic is increasing rapidly on roads which are already overloaded (the latest Ministry of Transport reports describes 18 per cent of total trunk road mileage as "severely overloaded," which means with traffic more than twice as heavy as the design capacity). It is predicted that between now and 1970 car traffic on inter-urban roads will increase by up to 8.8 per cent a year; lorry traffic by up to 4.8 per cent, vans by up to 3.3 per cent.

At the same time the share of public transport in conveying passengers and freight has declined. Between 1950 and 1961 the railway's share of passenger miles fell from 23.6 per cent to 16.6 per cent. The percentage of ton miles (freight traffic) carried by rail dropped from 55.7 per cent in 1951 to 36.1 per cent in 1962. Buses have had more mixed fortune. Bus mileage is steadily falling by 1.4 per cent a year. But this is due to less passengers on stage services. Express, long distance services, increased by 50 per cent between 1951 and 1961. Part of the inter-urban problem, therefore, is the increasing financial difficulties of public services in this area too.

There are two striking differences between urban and inter-urban transport. One is that there are more alternatives: not only rail and road but air, sea and pipeline as well. There is therefore greater room for choice in allocating resources and changing the present pattern of transport.

Secondly, it is much easier to make physical changes in inter-urban facilities; far fewer people are involved and land values are lower. It is far simpler, for instance, to drive a motorway through the countryside than through a town—and far cheaper. Inter-urban motorways now cost about £750,000 to build, compared to anything

between £2 millions and £12 millions for those in towns.

throwing money away

Until 1958 very little was spent on inter-urban roads (£12.6 millions in 1957-58 on major improvements to trunk roads and motorways, which was a considerable rise on the year before). Then the M1 and work on the A1 pushed up expenditure rapidly until it reached £60.1 millions in 1962-63. The current plan is to build 1,000 miles of motorway, of which some 370 miles will have been completed by the end of this year. By March 1969 it is expected that about 600 miles of motorway will be complete, with a further 400 miles of all-purpose trunk road modernised. The present motorway programme, with further improvements to some trunk roads, will be completed in the early 1970s.

Meanwhile after a long period of disinvestment, the late Conservative government accepted a modernisation programme put forward by the British Transport Commission in 1954 for the railways. £912 millions were spent in seven years between 1955 and 1961. The total plan, when it was revised in 1957, was estimated to cost £1,660 millions. Meanwhile, until last year British Railways made a steadily increasing loss on operating account (quite apart from capital charges) which rose to nearly £100 millions a year.

The extraordinary thing about these investment programmes has been that they were started so late and with so little regard to their return. The British Transport Commission have admitted that "there was no attempt made in the earlier estimates to make a precise calculation of the return," and when a reappraisal of the investment programme took place in 1959 it was "impossible to disentangle from the evidence a rate of return on the investment" (C. D. Foster). As far as roads are concerned, the latest Ministry of Transport report states that, "improvement . . . on a substantial mileage of overloaded trunk road must wait until the 1970s. During the present decade, therefore, conditions on many trunk roads must be expected to get worse." In this situation

almost any investment can show a sizeable return. After it had been decided to build the M1 it was shown that it would yield a return of up to 15 per cent. But there are a good many possibilities for road investment which could give a higher rate, as the RRL study showed.

Such inter-urban motorways are comparatively more simple to organise. It requires little planning effort to look at a chart showing traffic flows on trunk routes and decide where to build new roads. As mentioned before, it is easier to make physical changes to the countryside. It is also administratively easier, since the Ministry of Transport is in complete charge of the trunk routes, while in towns of county borough status it is the local councils which are responsible for putting up proposals. Driving motorways through cities, in fact, involves a degree of planning which governments have been unwilling to accept.

What programme should the Labour Government undertake?

motorways

As far as the immediate investment plan of the Labour Government is concerned, the problems of drawing up a list of priorities have been simplified in one way. The great programme of urban reorganisation advocated in the last chapter will not be able to get under way immediately, since it will require such detailed surveys and planning. During the next five years, therefore, the bias given by the Conservatives to the road building programme will have to be continued.

However, it is by no means certain that the priorities are right in inter-urban road building either. It has been sensibly decided to give priority to roads which are more important for freight, and keeps proposals like the London-Brighton motorway well down in the queue. More doubtful is the present concentration on improving existing roads. Schemes costing over £100,000 cover over four pages in the last report on roads in England and Wales. Many of these consist of by-passes, flyovers at important junctions, or new or

improved bridges. This may be a relatively inefficient way of spending money compared with the construction of inter-urban motorways. This is because the steady rise in traffic will mean in many cases that in ten or 15 years' time trunk roads, even if they are improved by by-passing major bottlenecks, will be hopelessly congested.

Motorways will then have to be built which will render the improvements unnecessary. The London-Ipswich road, for instance, even more important now that Ipswich is scheduled to be expanded, is scheduled to have eight major stretches improved, and doubtless others will be added by 1975. Why not start building a motorway now, which could curve fairly near Stansted, where it is proposed to expand the airport?

The answer depends very much on how the future is discounted. In the short run, of five years, say, it usually makes much more sense to tinker with existing roads; but taking the period for discounting the cost as 20 years, there is a strong case for constructing a motorway. And just as the M1 has relieved trunk roads over 40 miles away, so any new motorway scheme will be able to replace several batches of trunk road improvement. An example of this is the heavily trafficked road between Gloucester and Bristol which requires major improvement but which will lose most of its long distance traffic to the M5. The Ministry of Transport is therefore merely improving it to three lane standards.

One of the most serious complaints levelled against the present motorway plan is that it does not always take into account regional growth and development. This cannot be laid at the door of the Ministry of Transport since it is not its job to anticipate the confused or non-existent policy of other departments. The fact is that there are no detailed plans of regional development. There are already several examples of this confusion. A new city is planned north of Southampton and Portsmouth, the largest conurbation in the South-East outside London. The roads to this area are already very heavily overloaded. But no motorway is planned to this area except for a short stub as far as Basingstoke (which is also going to be

expanded several times over) and this has no definite date for completion yet and will certainly not be built during this decade.

But although there has been a lack of co-ordination in regional planning, the idea that regional development will make very considerable changes in the needs for a motorway programme is quite erroneous. In two areas, the North-East and South Wales, there are considerable schemes already for the renewal of the road network. In the North-East, schemes have been authorised which will cost nearly £110 millions over the period 1963-68. In general, compared with the natural increase of traffic, the effect of a new development in traffic volumes, as the 1964 *Roads in England and Wales* points out, is often found to be surprisingly small. It has been estimated for instance that the building of the Channel Tunnel would not increase the traffic flow on roads the other side of Maidstone by more than the equivalent of one year's growth.

So although the planning of the next stage in the motorway programme must obviously take regional developments closely into account, these will not cause a major change of emphasis.

railways

While traffic on the roads goes up the proportion of passengers and freight carried by rail falls. Some critics, impressed by British Railways "Go By Rail" posters as they wait in the traffic jams, have suggested that a partial solution to our traffic problems is for the balance to be deliberately tipped in favour of the railways again. At present, they point out, we are allowed fewer and fewer opportunities of going by train, as stations are closed and services curtailed.

However, where there are railway lines which carry too little traffic to be justified, there tends to be very little traffic on the roads either. So the main question is whether the railways can attract more passengers and goods on those routes which duplicate the overloaded trunk roads.

People travel by cars because they are very convenient, allowing door to door journeys, and comfortable, but also because it pays them to do so. It has been calculated that between 1953 and 1961 rail fares rose by 40 per cent but the costs of private motoring by 10 per cent and, as we have seen, this trend of costs moving in favour of private transport is likely to continue. Therefore any attempt to subsidise railway passenger services generally, beyond just supporting the present losses which it makes, would become increasingly expensive.

It was stated in the Beeching Report that if fares were halved, passenger traffic would have to be increased sixfold to cover the cost. Since it is very unlikely that passenger traffic would go up by more than 100 per cent (and probably very much less) the cost would therefore be enormous, and it is very unlikely that it would cover this by the fall in congestion costs since over half the passengers (assuming that cheaper fares had the same effect everywhere) gained would either have come off roads where there was little congestion, or would not have travelled before.

There is a stronger case for subsidising inter-urban lines which parallel heavily congested road routes, just as some suburban lines may have to be subsidised. But these routes, London-Liverpool, London-Edinburgh, are just those where train services tend to be filled near to capacity. In spite of the M1, for instance, the London-Birmingham line has no difficulty at making a profit. On these services it would require very high investment to be able to cope with sufficient extra traffic to make a difference to road conditions.

So although it would be worth exploring the costs and benefits of subsidising inter-urban rail transport, it is doubtful whether the benefits would outweigh the costs. It is also true that if tickets are made cheap enough to attract motorists off the road, they will also attract people who would not otherwise have travelled and, to quote Christopher Foster, "there is no self-evident reason why people should be encouraged to use more transport than they can ordinarily afford."

Prima facie it may seem more logical to persuade more freight to go by rail, and the general public would certainly be more sympathetic to the attempt. What motorist travelling at ten miles per hour up a hill behind a convoy of heavily laden lorries has not wished that he could force all long distance freight onto the railways by decree? But since British Railways has been free to charge what the market will bear, and has therefore been able to compete fully with the road haulier, there have been good reasons why an increasing proportion of goods have gone by road.

Although the railways have until recently been thought of as the common carrier, they have specialised in the sort of goods they carry for some time. They are ideally suited to serve large plants with a large enough input or output of bulk material to justify the provision of railway sidings, so that the costs of transfer from road to rail are avoided and full trains can be run without the need for marshalling. One of the main reasons why the percentage of ton-miles carried by rail dropped from 55.7 per cent in 1951 to 36.1 per cent in 1962 is that the industries or parts of industries which they serve so well, coal, steel and some types of chemicals, have either declined or grown less fast than the national average. Trends in the location of plant, too, reduce transport demands.

road's advantages

Road transport, too, specialises in certain types of traffic, above all small loads carried for short distances. To a greater or lesser degree it offers certainty of timing and the use of specialised vehicles. It can take large indivisible loads such as transformers or boilers which the rail system with its narrow loading gauge is unable to. The driver can also be used for other duties, such as soliciting orders or collecting cash. Road transport is likely to grow much faster than rail because the industries which use it most are growing relatively fast. This is especially true of the industries which make most use of their own vehicles, the distributive trades, the food, drink and tobacco manufacturing industries, or the building and construction industries. It is also true that now

industrial development is taking place at sites which are more conveniently served by roads.

Nevertheless, there is a common area where both types of transport compete. This general goods traffic brought the railways £102 millions in 1960, and although this traffic fell during the 1950s by 2½ per cent a year, the new railways management may be able to reverse this trend. Dr. Beeching claimed that he could win some of this back through such devices as liner trains which aim to provide the customer with certainty of timing and rapid transit.

But the possibilities are limited. 85 per cent of the tonnage carried by road is taken for distances less than 50 miles. But Dr. Beeching has calculated that the economics of train movement can only compensate for the costs involved in transferring containers from road vehicles to railway wagons on a journey of 70 miles or more (in France the break-even point is thought to be 200 miles). This leaves only about 30-40 million tons at present being carried by road suitable for the railways and if they attracted all of this traffic total lorry traffic would only be reduced by 8 per cent. On inter-urban roads lorries represent a quarter of total traffic—and this proportion is declining. If Dr. Beeching was completely successful—which is exceedingly unlikely—the effect would be to reduce inter-urban road traffic by only 2 per cent, or less than four months growth.

changing tax ratios

Nevertheless it is true that so far the argument has been in terms of the existing structure of taxes. It is often said that under Conservative rule the dice were loaded unfairly against the railways, that hauliers do not have to pay the overheads of the roads system, while the railways have to fork out for all the expense of maintaining track. Alternatively it is argued, the sensible coordination between road and rail which was begun under the 1947 Transport Act, the dovetailing of operations to give the greatest advantage to each, has been undone and that if there was stricter licensing, or road haulage was renationalised, in the words of the NUR

“much traffic that goes now by road would be diverted to rail, where it properly belongs.”

vehicle taxation

Let us look at vehicle taxation first. A five ton lorry pays £84 for an annual licence and 2s 9d a gallon for fuel tax. On an average mileage it will pay in all about £500 a year. In 1962 commercial vehicles paid £210 millions in motor taxation, of which those over 2½ tons paid £120 millions (cars and buses paid a further £535 millions). In the same year public expenditure on maintaining the road system was about £120 millions and public investment in roads was about £130 millions. In 1962, as everyone knows, gross railway receipts fell short of working expenses by £100 millions. In fact motor taxation in every year since it began has amply covered both current and capital expenditure on roads, as well as indirect costs such as those of policing the roads, while the railways have never been charged interest on the replacement cost of their system. Under the 1962 Transport Act, too, all liabilities in respect of railway assets before the recent modernisation have been written off or placed in suspense.

It is of course possible that heavy lorries do not pay their fair share for road maintenance, since they cause many times the wear and tear that cars do. It could also be said that if we are to step up spending on new roads all vehicles will have to pay more anyway. Finally, although inter-urban freight traffic may cause few congestion costs between towns, it also has to go through towns to get to its destination, and at either end of the journey.

Now we have seen in the discussion of urban transport that it would be desirable to make vehicles pay their congestion costs and that electronic methods may soon make this possible. But again it is doubtful whether they would make a substantial difference to manufacturers' decisions to send their goods by road. At either end of the journey the reduction of vehicles run by road hauliers would simply be compensated for by an increase

in the railways' own delivery vehicles. As for the congestion caused by lorries going through towns, as we have seen, only a small proportion of urban congestion is caused by through traffic and only a small part of that consists of lorries. So the extra costs which a manufacturer would have to pay to send his goods by road rather than rail are not going to be large enough to deter more than a marginal quantity of goods traffic.

the licensing system

It is also suggested that the present road haulage system could be rearranged so that the same amount of goods could be carried in fewer lorries and vans. The licensing system divides vehicles into four classes: those which carry goods exclusively for other firms (A), those which carry exclusively for one other firm (Contract A), those which carry only for their owners (C), and those which carry partly for their owners and partly for other firms (B). The system was set up in 1933 to end the price war which ruined many hauliers in the depression. Since it requires little capital to become a haulier (the hire purchase deposit for a second-hand lorry) it is easy to get in and out of the industry. So to control entry Traffic Commissioners, quasi-judicial figures independent of the Ministry of Transport, grant operating licences (A and B) only to those who can make a case that there is an unsatisfied need for their services. Applications are open to objection from established road hauliers and from the Railways Board on the grounds that adequate capacity already exists to meet the transport requirements in question.

Anyone can obtain a C licence, however, simply by filling in a form, whether or not there is spare capacity for his goods on A licence vehicles, and the number of C licences which already consist of over four fifths of total goods vehicles, is steadily rising, while the number of A and B licences is nearly static. There have been murmurings in the Labour Party that not only could there be better co-ordination, and therefore better vehicle use of A licence vehicles if they were returned to public ownership, but there

should be restrictions on C licences because vehicles owning them are empty or only partly full for a much higher proportion of their mileage than A licence vehicles are. The suggestion is that either the owners of C licence vehicles do not know what is good for them—they have not bothered to find out whether it would be cheaper for them to have their goods carried by someone else—or that they are thinking in terms of other advantages like speedier delivery, or the opportunity for advertisement which owning one's own vehicle brings.

It has already been suggested that it would lessen urban congestion (although not by much) if C licences cost much more, and that goods vehicles should in this way pay towards the congestion costs they impose until more accurate ways of doing this are brought into use. But whether or not much goods traffic can be diverted to A licence vehicles is much more problematic and cannot be settled *a priori*. The proportion of empty mileage run by C licence vehicles according to the Ministry of Transport's 1962 survey was less than 3 per cent greater than that of A licence vehicles, and this was less than the standard sampling error. The only really significant difference is in vehicles over three tons going on end to end journeys (where goods are not picked up *en route*), when A licence vehicles run 27 per cent empty miles compared to 40 per cent for C licences. But unfortunately too little is known about goods traffic to know why this is so. Certainly a large proportion of C licence vehicles in this category are specialised lorries delivering oxygen or petrol. Until more research is done it is difficult to see how congestion could be minimised by making more C licence traffic go by A licence vehicles. One of the most fruitful fields of research would be an origin-destination survey of goods traffic, in terms of the goods themselves rather than the haulage vehicles.

The fact remains that the present licensing system is clearly unsatisfactory. It neither encourages rail traffic by penalising road carriers, nor does it encourage the road haulage industry to be as efficient as possible. A licences not only discourage new entrants (there are fewer A

licence holders than there were in 1951), they prevent efficient operators from extending their covering.

possible solutions

There are two alternatives. Either licensing as a deliberate restrictive practice can be abolished, or it can be made really restrictive. A model for the latter course can be found in West Germany, where very few railway lines have been closed since the war and some blatantly uneconomic ones were rebuilt after they had been knocked out by war damage. The rates which can be charged are rigorously controlled in line with railway rates, only a certain number of new A licences are granted each year. C licences are expensive and C licence vehicles are not allowed to make journeys of more than a certain length. In spite of this very careful attempt to divert goods traffic to the railways, in 1960 Western German railways only carried proportionately 5 per cent more goods traffic than British Railways. It is true that there is proportionately less than half the quantity of freight on German roads than there is on British roads (also less than half the mileage of roads). This is mainly because a major section of German industry is either grouped near ports or on the Rhine (or canals off the Rhine). So more restriction is likely to achieve very little.

4. rural transport

Rural transport services are not only those which exist in agricultural areas, but include cross-country journeys by public transport and commuting journeys in a large conurbation, like journeys to work between villages and country towns which may have as large a population as 100,000.

There has always been a rural transport problem in the sense that with a smaller pool of passengers and freight from which to draw than other categories of transport, rural services have by and large always failed to pay their way. But until comparatively recently the losses made on these services have been subsidised by profits made elsewhere. As far as the railways were concerned the long distance passenger and freight services paid for the losses made by the stopping trains, this practice being helped by the inability of the railways to tell where the profits or losses came from. Ever since Herbert Morrison's 1930 Road Traffic Act, bus operators have had to accept the obligation to provide a fair quota of unremunerative services in return for protection against newcomers on their more profitable urban routes.

passengers vanish

However, the growth of private car ownership and road haulage in the 50s has made a difficult problem acute. The potential pool of passengers and freight has shrunk rapidly. In a recent Government survey of rural transport it was found that more than 40 per cent of households had the use of a private car (the average for the country as a whole is one third). At weekends passenger journeys by private vehicles of all kinds accounts for three quarters of all travel. Worst hit have been the railways.

The Beeching Report said, "It is questionable whether British Railways meet as much as 10 per cent of the total and declining demand for public rural transport. To do so, they provide services accounting for about 40 per cent of the total passenger train mileage of the railways as a whole, and most of the trains carry an average of less than a bus load

and lose nearly twice as much as they collect in fares." Passengers on county bus services fell by 25 per cent between 1951 and 1959, and the Jack Committee reported that "the decline in the number of passengers carried on stage services by small operators seems to have begun as early as 1952 and to have continued at the rate of 3.4 per cent per annum." For British Railways there has been a similar fall off in freight.

Unfortunately as the losses incurred by public transport on rural passenger services have grown, profits on other services have tended to fall, as earlier chapters showed. So cross-subsidisation has ceased to be an easy *ad hoc* way of carrying out rural services. But there is not the same pressure in rural areas to subsidise public services in order to relieve congestion on the roads. The pattern of traffic density on roads is comparable to that on railways. In most rural areas roads are underused. The occasional exceptions are mostly short peaks during the holiday season.

Conservative confusion

Conservative policy towards rural transport was confused. The contradictions between the desire to avoid accounting losses and at the same time to avoid causing "undue hardship" sent the Conservative Government shambling from report to report. Dr Beeching, on a strict accounting basis, called for the wholesale closure of rural train services, including those in areas such as Northern Scotland and parts of Central Wales, which are by his own admission ill served by other means of transport. At the same time the White Paper on Transport Services in the Highlands and Islands warns that, "unless the Highlands are provided with adequate modern transport services they will fall further behind the rest of the country."

In August 1962 Mr Marples organised detailed studies of passenger transport facilities in six rural areas in the United Kingdom (mentioned below). This revealed that when the Jack Committee concluded that the present and future levels of rural bus services were not ade-

quate to avoid real hardship to those who lived in the country, it was only too correct. Between half and three quarters of persons in households without private transport (nearly 60 per cent) said they were hindered in some way by the inadequacies of local transport facilities. However the large majority of railway closures continued to be authorised. By contrast Sir Alec Douglas-Home once publicly stated that closure of the Highland services would be indefinitely postponed!

The Conservative Government's ambiguous attitude towards rural transport was helped enormously by the discreet co-operation of the bus companies, many of which are of course indirectly controlled by the Transport Holding Company. In 1953 the Thesiger Committee stated that "the Licensing Authority [the Traffic Commissioners] has no direct power to force an operator to put on or keep on a service, but in practice operators have recognised an obligation to provide as full as possible a network of services for the area they cover." After Beeching, Mr Marples said that where necessary he would see that adequate alternative means of transport were available before a railway passenger closure takes place. In most cases, it has been affirmed again and again, there are existing bus services to fulfil this role, and any extra expense incurred by the bus companies taking on the railway traffic has been, in theory at least, subsidised by British Railways.

why public transport?

One reason why the Conservatives were so unwilling to accept subsidies as an inevitable fact of life in the provision of rural transport seemed to be the unspoken belief that provided they patched up the present system a few more years, the need for any major change would disappear. For soon every countryman would possess a car. But in fact, of course, as the introduction showed, there will always be an irreducible core of the rural population (as in the United Kingdom as a whole) who do not have and cannot have access to private transport and need public transport—the poor, the very young, the very old. Until the United Kingdom

becomes a two car per family nation the housewife can be included in this category. Any Socialist transport policy must see that the weaker and poorer members of society are not actually worse off as the result of the technological advances that benefit the stronger and richer.

It was said earlier that rural roads are normally underused, and therefore that in rural areas it is unnecessary to subsidise public transport in order to relieve congestion on the roads. The exception to this is peak hour traffic into and out of the larger country towns. When car ownership becomes wider spread there will be the same problems of congestion as those described in the chapter on urban transport. Instead of carrying out large scale improvements to the approach roads to those towns, it may be cheaper (and indeed essential if the amenities of the town are to be preserved) to ensure that a large proportion of journeys to work can still be made by public transport.

The argument has so far been mainly concerned with passenger transport. This is because changes to the public transport system, such as the closing of railway lines, are likely to have less political repercussions when it is a freight service that is at stake. There is one exception to this, however, which typified the Conservative government's failure. Where a region was struggling to maintain employment opportunities, the closing down of a railway line might have had a disastrous effect on attempts to persuade new industry to enter the area concerned. This is not to say that every single route should be kept open in case one day new industry may wish to settle at its end.

subsidies

However, the provision of adequate transport facilities is an integral part of any development programme. As the report on Transport Services in the Highlands and Islands put it, "the rate of economic progress that will be attained in the Highlands during the remaining decades of this century depends largely on the extent to which transport services and facilities are progressively developed."

It is probably true that economies could be made in the actual running costs of railway and bus services, through more one man services, less station staff, better coordination between time tables, smaller or larger buses. But whatever is done to improve efficiency some form of subsidy will be needed to maintain adequate services. It was said in the introduction that subsidies should be paid in principle directly so that it was known precisely what was being paid for and so that operating companies did not continue to erode the services which it was the purpose of the subsidy to maintain. The problem is where and how these subsidies should be paid.

At the moment too little is known about the needs which rural services fulfil. The first step, therefore, should be to set up surveys of transport patterns in every rural area (these could be done quite quickly by local councils). The survey so far carried out for the Ministry of Transport, while interesting enough as a pointer to general trends in rural transport, is quite inadequate for a detailed rural transport plan, since it was only carried out in six rural areas between which, "there were quite significant variations."

At the moment British Railways' knowledge of how closures will affect the general public is gained through the Transport Users' Consultative Committees, which make recommendations generally about the standard of train and other services provided by nationalised transport undertakings, and investigate objections to plans to withdraw train services. These are meant to represent specific interests, but they are obviously unable to show a true picture of transport needs, however active they are; and often they are moribund bodies of county gentlemen. Moreover, they are in no position to ensure that bus companies provide an adequate service, even if they had any concept of what an adequate service was.

now inadequate?

Once the needs for rural services are known, it is possible to determine the level of inadequacy of present services.

It is also possible to decide the best method of allocating the subsidy. For instance, in the Ministry of Transport survey, between a quarter and over a half of people in households without private transport said they had difficulty in travelling to obtain medical or dental treatment. It is possible that the best way of meeting this need is to subsidise taxis.

There is no reason at all why one form of transport, for instance railways, should receive subsidies rather than others, or why they should be allotted subsidies equally. Each case must be considered on its merits. On the whole, bus services are likely to be cheaper to run than rail services, since overheads are so much lower, whatever economies are made in terms of running rail buses, closing some stations and so on. The Beeching Report claims that stopping services require a minimum of 6,000 passengers a week just to pay for movement costs, while a two hourly bus services requires only a third of the passengers to pay for total costs (it is sometimes argued that buses do not pay for the overheads of the roads. In uncongested rural areas the answer is the same as for lorries. They do, several times over. 10 per cent of the bus companies' costs consist of the fuel tax they have to pay).

Local authorities could also run subsidised taxi, or mini-bus services. One interesting possibility might be to re-equip rural post office vans as minibuses with a locked mail compartment so that they could supplement the present bus services, thus covering two essential services by one subsidy.

There is, however, one feature of railways which distinguishes them from bus services, but which they share with shipping and air services; it is very expensive to restart them after they have been stopped. This is important when areas are earmarked for new population and new industry. It is therefore essential that where future development might justify the use of a railway line once again, the track should be kept open.

It is difficult to see what body would carry out the programmes suggested in

the previous section, make surveys, re-organise services to meet transport needs, and allocate subsidies. The Jack Committee recommended that subsidies to the rural bus services should be administered by the county councils. But this has several disadvantages. Council boundaries, as it was emphasised in previous chapters, are highly artificial as far as transport is concerned (both bus and rail services are generally organised on a regional basis). It is essential, moreover, that the transport facilities of an area should be considered as a whole, and councils do not have the facilities nor the staff to do this.

who can do the work?

A second possibility would be to hand the whole responsibility into the hands of the traffic commissioners who, after all, by presiding over the granting of licences to lorries and buses know more than most about local services. Deprived of the responsibility for A licences, and given an enlarged secretariat, they could be the new focal point of rural transport. But if they kept their judicial powers this would make them prosecuting council, judge, and jury, all in one. The simplest solution may therefore be to upgrade the TUCCs, which have representatives of the transport services as well as local interests and give them a decision making, as opposed to an advisory capacity. At present they are neither representative enough, nor expert enough, nor close enough to those who make planning decisions at a regional level to be capable of fulfilling this role. But there is no reason why they should not be given staff to handle the job and brought into close contact with the Regional Boards which are now being planned.

5. recommendations

There are a variety of ways in which the Government can, and must, act in the short term.

It can make the best use of existing road resources. Although there is increasing use of traffic engineering techniques, which seek to lessen conflicts between flows of traffic, far more can still be done. This not only means wider use of existing methods, such as one way streets, laned traffic, the creation of clearways, but more research into new methods, using advanced electronic techniques, such as the control of traffic flow over a wide area by a central point, using computers for rapid information on traffic build up.

Traffic management imposes costs as well as benefits, on the occupants of houses, for instance, in a residential street which is turned into a main traffic route. New arrangements which speed the flow of traffic tend to become permanent, so those who bear the costs should be able to appeal in the same way that those who are affected by a new road scheme can. With maximum publicity given to a new scheme through the press, television, and so on, it should be possible to do this rapidly, to prevent administrative delay.

control of parking

It has been found that any method of speeding up the flow of traffic tends to generate further traffic. The London Traffic Survey has shown that the greatest offender is the car commuter. In central London 47.5 per cent of all car journeys were journeys to work. This is an increasingly intolerable situation, and there are ample statistics to prove that the number of people who drive to work would rise rapidly if journey times were lowered or parking easier.

The disproportionate share of road space taken by commuters is emphasised by the fact that London buses and trains still serve 90 per cent of peak hour travel. If half the people who go to work by car switched to public transport, the benefits in terms of higher speeds on the roads would be considerable, while the added

pressure on public transport would not be intolerable.

It is important, therefore, to cut down on the number of long stay parking places near places of work, and, to make the system fair, make them all cost the same. All off-street car parks should be brought under central control. City authorities are already building off-street car parks with the money from their meter schemes. All they need to do would be to lease parking space owned by private developers.

tax changes

The effect of severely limiting long stay parking space available in urban areas is to penalise journeys to work more heavily than other types of journey. It is a crude but effective way of bringing greater overall benefits to those who have to journey to work each day. The ultimate aim, however, is to maximise the benefits to all users of our existing road resources. The best way of doing this is to relate as directly as possible the benefits which a road user obtains from a particular stretch of road at a particular time to the costs he incurs and imposes, both on other road users and the public generally. The Smeed Committee showed that the best way of doing this was by some type of meter system, since this would allow great flexibility in charging, both in time and space. Underused road space would be comparatively cheaper to drive upon than it is now, whilst congested roads far more expensive. Charges for parking could be included in the overall system.

More work needs to be done in resolving the snags of having such a system. The Government has two duties. One, to treat the introduction of such a system as a matter of utmost priority. Two, to prepare the public as fully as possible for this revolutionary change. The public stands to benefit, and it must be made to realise the fact. It only will if it is made clear that the new system is not just a method of raising additional revenue.

A distinction, in fact, must be made between taxation as a means of raising

revenue for general Government funds, and taxation as a means of relating more closely social costs and benefits to transport users.

subsidies for public transport

One way of redistributing the income gained from a congestion tax would be to subsidise public transport. It has been shown that the cost of travelling on public transport would have to be reduced very considerably before congestion would be lessened, and therefore that subsidies by themselves would achieve little if public transport is not allowed to provide an adequate and comprehensive service. A congestion tax on the roads would be highly inequitable, however, penalising the poor against the rich.

A congestion tax would, however, benefit bus services, since it would make journey times shorter, and so allow the buses themselves to be used more intensively. There is, however, a long term tendency for the cost of travelling by private car to fall in relation to that of travelling by public transport. Unless congestion taxes are gradually adjusted to keep them in line (assuming that the tax is included in costs) public transport will have, sooner or later, to receive subsidies.

Most urban bus services have already reached the point where they either cease to provide an adequate service or raise their prices very considerably. Either way they will cause a heavy increase in congestion. Railway and Underground commuter services on the whole have a more captive public, because at the moment they have a great advantage in speed over cars entering built-up areas, but even they find it difficult to cover their costs owing to the disproportionately high level of capital equipment needed for peak periods.

Public transport services in towns should not therefore be required to make a profit (the London Transport Board, for instance, is required to maintain a working balance of £4 millions). They should be allowed to obtain subsidies from the

City corporations, provided they can show that the level of the subsidies is outweighed by the benefits which their services offer in reducing congestion.

There are other, less easily computed, ways in which public transport services may bring benefits to other parts of society that could override the accounting loss made on them. They may be a precondition of the further economic and social development of a region, where the present level of traffic does not justify them. This argument tends to be overplayed. There is no reason why particular services should be maintained merely because there may be a need for them in ten years' time. It is perfectly possible to keep the option for a service open, by maintaining the capital investment.

In practice, of course, these considerations generally refer to the railways. As far as roads or ports are concerned, the question is generally whether new investment is needed to increase their future capacity. However if the Government decides that its regional plan requires that a railway should be kept open, there is no reason why British Railways should bear the loss. In fact, the principle that subsidies should be made for particular services holds good here as well. It is the Government or local bodies that should pay.

goods traffic

There is little need to carry out a structural reform of goods haulage. Over the last 15 years there has been a rapid increase in the tonnage carried by road, but over 80 per cent of road tonnage is carried for less than 50 miles, very largely by C licence vehicles, and is largely the type of traffic which the Beeching Report recognised as not being suitable for carrying by rail.

The present licensing system must go. It hinders competition without bringing compensating advantages in terms of high standards of maintenance. What is needed is far stricter supervision of lorry operations. There should be a yearly test to check the level of maintenance, and to

ensure adequate safety standards. These could be reinforced by spot checks.

There should also be a test for overloading, although at present there is no definition of it. The Ministry of Transport is working on a "plating" scheme, to define what constitutes overloading in relation to engine size. The sooner lorries carry a plate, stating their maximum permissible load, the better it would be, both for safety, and for other road users, who have to queue behind lorries going up hills at less than 10 mph.

nationalisation

The main arguments for nationalisation (apart from the more general theoretical ones which apply as much to other industries as to road haulage) are that there would be an end to wasteful duplication, better coordination between services, and that the railways would not have to suffer from unfair competition. The amount of duplication, however, is surprisingly limited, and except by refusing to allow long distance lorries on the roads, little difference can be made to the proportions of goods which are taken by rail compared with road.

There is indeed a need for better coordination, ensuring more rapid transit between road and rail. But in fact the type of traffic which would benefit most by coordination between road and rail services is that which the British Railways Board hopes will travel by its liner trains, and because these will travel between comparatively few terminals in order to be economic, their loads will have to be distributed over a wide area by road.

Quick transit between road and rail will obviously require a good deal of cooperation, although British Railways itself owns a substantial fleet of vehicles. In the words of the Beeching Report, "It is intended to cooperate with British Road Services, with C licence operators, and with road hauliers, so as to avoid an expensive duplication of road transport." It is difficult to see how nationalisation could substantially improve the chances of the liner trains.

Nor does the cry of unfair competition have much relevance now that British Railways are allowed to relate their charges to what the market will bear. Certainly road freight does not pay for the congestion and social costs it imposes. We have advocated that it should, and when it does British Railways will obviously benefit.

On these considerations alone nationalisation of the Contract A fleet seems a complicated way of achieving very little. Any major change such as this is bound to be costly in the short term, while administrative muddles are sorted out; and customer-carrier relations are bound to be disrupted.

It still remains worth considering, however, on two counts. First, the present system of licensing restrictions at least ensures that carriers operate to a high level of their capacity, Abolition of this system is likely to lead to a lower use of capacity, and would therefore require more resources to do the same job as the present system. Licensing must still go, however, because it protects the inefficient, and by preventing large companies from expanding rapidly enough does not allow the greatest economies of scale to be realised. Nationalisation achieves both economies of scale and enables a high level of capacity to be used. It combines, in fact, the best of both worlds.

However, it is doubtful whether the abolition of the present licensing system would in fact significantly increase the capacity and thus cause lower use of resources of industry. Because the volume of traffic required to be carried is fluctuating, it is useful, too, to have small haulage firms which can take up the slack when demand is high.

Secondly, it could be argued that the easiest way both of allocating investment resources, and of taking social and congestion costs into account, would be to extend nationalisation even further than it was taken in the Transport Act of 1947: by taking over all contract business and by restricting C licence traffic, a large part of which consists of delivery vehicles anyway, on a geographical basis, as in

Germany. Road haulage would then be forced, where necessary, to yield competitively to the railways, and by using railways at a higher level of capacity, there would be less need to duplicate expensive investment in track by building six lane motorways. Dr Beeching has said that the railway trunk system is capable of carrying about three times as much traffic as it carries at present.

It has been said that the use of road capacity would not be seriously affected by favouring railways to this extent. At the same time, so important are other factors than mere cost to manufacturers these days, speed of transit, flexibility and so on, that the overall economic effect of switching freight to the railways would be very costly unless the freight carrying capacity of the railways was considerably modified. It is precisely this which the liner train plan sets out to do.

But once it is admitted that to use up some of the railways' excess capacity, over £100 millions need to be spent, the argument changes tack. It is no longer a question of it being cheaper overall to use up surplus capacity rather than pay for new investment. Rather, the problem is which type of investment will give the greatest return; the liner trains, or another £110 millions spent on modernising trunk roads.

Seen in this light the whole liner train project, and *a fortiori* any project to attract more traffic to the railways, looks much less tenable. Nor is there any point in nationalising the road haulage industry, for the purpose of reallocating traffic.

The main changes which the Labour Government should make in goods haulage operations, therefore, are to make them more competitive (this includes the right to unlimited expansion by BRS and other organisations, such as Pickfords, under the aegis of the Transport Holding Company). Road haulage should be more strictly policed, and the heavy vehicles should pay more for their licences. As for British Railways, the liner trains look suspiciously like another of a long chapter of schemes which require a massive dose of capital and yield a very uncertain

rate of return. It should be looked at again. It may, for instance, be possible to tie in a smaller version of the scheme with an expansion in the BRS operations along the motorways which have already been built.

administrative changes

The main aims of a transport policy in the present situation are in some ways opposed. Because the demands for transport facilities are both changing and increasing so rapidly, one of the main purposes of a transport policy is that it should provide for these changes as rapidly as possible. The gap between intention and execution must be narrowed. At the same time wider considerations must affect transport plans more than they have done in the past, such as changes in the industrial structure, shifts in population, social amenities and so on.

This means that the process of decision making must become more complicated; more information is required than is known at present. As a result the process of change will inevitably tend to become slower than it is now. Fortunately institutional and administrative changes can be made which will help to minimise conflict between these two goals.

It takes at least five years between the time the course of a new road is decided upon and work actually starts. The intervening time is given up to ensuring that within the limits already set out the road follows the best path and the liberties of the individual who may be affected by the scheme are as far as possible maintained (neither of these objects may be or are achieved).

Most people involved in the detailed planning of new road schemes feel that, with new legislation, the procedure for deciding on the details of a scheme, and for airing and meeting objections, could be made to work not only better but faster. More publicity and more discussion among interested parties before the stage of formal hearings is reached are the essential ingredients of any revision of the current 31 steps. The County En-

gineer and Surveyor for the West Riding of Yorkshire, S. Maynard Lovell, suggested in 1962 a new procedure which would only involve eleven steps and take two years less time to complete. The Government must therefore enact new legislation for administrative procedure as soon as possible. This will do more to improve the road system than any bold new plan for more motorways.

conurbation authorities

The areas in which the most intractable transport problems lie are the great conurbations. Yet it is precisely here where the greatest administrative chaos is to be found. After all, the responsibility and the power for setting up a national inter-urban motorway network rests with one body, the Ministry of Transport. In the conurbations, up to a hundred authorities may be involved in an overall road scheme. It is not enough to set up conurbation road committees on which these authorities are represented. What is needed is one overriding body which has overall power for deciding where and how the main changes in the living and working population should take place and how the whole conurbation should be connected by means of a transport system.

A prototype already exists, the Greater London Council, although it has already been persuasively argued, by Peter Hall in *London 2000*, that this is not large enough. At present a Royal Commission is reviewing the boundaries of local authorities, but leaving the major problem, that of the conurbations, untouched. There is no reason, apart from local jealousies, where there should not be a Greater Birmingham Authority, or a Greater Glasgow Council, which would take in the surrounding satellite towns and the commuter catchment area (the local authorities would still have, as they do in London, considerable powers).

Such a far reaching proposal cannot, of course, be implemented in the short term. Studies will have to be made of the main city regions, and legislation enacted in Parliament. But if the necessary recon-

struction and adjustments to the growth in population are to be made during the next two decades, the administrative framework needs to be set during the next five years.

regional planning

Although the city regions cover large areas of England, they are, of course, totally different from the eleven slices into which the Minister for Economic Affairs, Mr George Brown, has divided the UK, or those covered by the TUCS. Decisions about the distribution of transport resources, whether to build more roads in the North-East, or in the South-West, can only be made within the framework of a national economic policy. The Ministry of Transport alone cannot decide where the new roads should be built, although of course a good deal can be done regardless of the particular twists of regional policy.

By acting as a clearing house between the regions and Westminster, it looks encouragingly as if the new Regional Boards, supported by their Councils, will not only enable a national plan to be made which is not merely based on *a priori* notions and a compromise between political pressures but also will help to ensure that decisions about transport are taken in the proper context. With the Ministry official sitting alongside his colleagues from the Board of Trade and the Ministry of Economic Development, he will better be able to judge, perhaps, the effect of a new road taking one direction rather than another.

the Ministry of Transport

With increasing attention being paid to regional problems, and the desire to decentralise decision-making as far as possible, there is a need to define the role of the Minister of Transport in deciding what sort of transport system we should have.

Coordination may mean the dovetailing of different types of transport operation, so that they can provide a more efficient

operation on a day to day basis. This is not a problem that can be solved merely by bringing all types of operation under one supreme authority. Even if the road haulage industry was nationalised, there would still be considerable problems in ensuring that the services of BRS, the Railways Board, and the GPO were co-ordinated smoothly. Far greater day to day coordination is possible. But this is largely a question for the management of the concerns to solve.

Coordination of investment plans, on the other hand, does need decisions made at the highest level, since it concerns the allocation of the country's resources. But, as we have seen, this is not a six months' job. The main problem for transport policy is that far too little is known about transport needs. And it will take some years for land use-transport surveys to be completed, and regional and national policies for the location of population and industry to take shape. It is surely for the Ministry of Transport itself to obtain and assess the information needed for a long term transport policy and for the Minister and his Cabinet colleagues to make the decisions. To hive off the responsibility for formulating policy on to an independent committee will not only complicate unnecessarily the structure of government, it will be an evasion of responsibility on the part of the Minister.

investment policy

All the measures so far suggested need to be, and can be, put into operation in the near future. The administrative re-organisation suggested will, of course, meet with considerable opposition, and even with the smoothest passage, will take some years to put through. But to a large extent they are a precondition of the successful treatment of transport problems in the long term.

It is only in the long term that Britain can come to terms with the motor age. A start has already been made on the inter-urban routes, and in some of the larger city centres. But these in many ways are the most soluble of the problems which transport now presents. In

the first case it is the task of the Ministry of Transport to ensure that new motorways are constructed on routes which will bring the greatest return and take into account plans for creating new towns or the expansion of existing ones.

In the second case the main aim must be to ensure that where redevelopment takes, it does not freeze for another 70 years a 19th century (and in some cases medieval) street plan. It is not, however, the task of city centre planners to plan for the unlimited growth in traffic. People are becoming increasingly aware that limitation of traffic in city centres is essential if they are to retain their identity. Given the control of private vehicles it should be possible to provide adequate public transport facilities.

The same is not true of the city regions as a whole. And these are the areas where the transport problem is most intractable. In the large agglomerations of suburban dormitories, local shopping centres, industrial estates, it is not possible to provide public transport of the same quality that is available, potentially at least in the central areas. As car ownership increases, it will be in local travel and journeys across the conurbations that cars to a large extent will be used. As wealth and the means of private travel increases, it is difficult to see how the most sophisticated use of electronic charging methods can stop a paralysing chaos (it takes long enough already to drive, for instance, across South London by day).

The only solution is for a complete system of motorways to be constructed within the city regions. This is a long term task which is likely to make little progress in the next ten years. The main task of the present Government is in a sense to do nothing. Tinkering with the problem by constructing an underpass here and widening a street there gives only an expensive illusion of action. The only major programmes under way, such as the M1 extension and the M4 in West London, look like ill judged attempts by the Ministry of Transport to present a façade of dynamic response to the conurbation problem. They put the cart before the horse. Radial motorways merely at-

tract extra traffic into the conurbation which cannot be dispersed at the other end.

This is not the place to discuss the strategy of road planning in Britain's great city regions. It is part and parcel of an overall strategy for land use and urban development. It has already been stressed that what is needed is unified direction, not just of the conurbation, but of the whole city region. In addition, the Ministry's plans for the trunk routes through a city region must be considered in terms of their effect on the region and not just as extensions to the national network. What is needed now is detailed and multi-dimensional planning.

For this the present land use transport surveys are an essential precondition. But these by themselves are not enough. They evaluate a quantitative relationship between such factors as land uses, population distribution and employment and the transport demand they generate, a relationship which can be used to project forward a detailed pattern of future demand. As important is the need to assess how new roads will disturb this pattern and generate new traffic movements.

An increasingly important function of the Ministry of Transport, in fact, is to carry out long term research on the development of transport in city regions. And this includes not only sharpening the research into new transport techniques, weapons of cost benefit analysis, but also such as monorails, moving pavements, and the like.

The Young Fabian Group exists to give socialists not over 30 years of age an opportunity to carry out research, discussion and propaganda. It aims to help its members publish the results of their research, and so make a more effective contribution to the work of the Labour movement. It therefore welcomes all those who have a thoughtful and radical approach to political matters.

The group is autonomous, electing its own committee. It cooperates closely with the Fabian Society, which gives financial and clerical help. But the group is responsible for its own policy and activity, subject to the constitutional rule that it can have no declared political policy beyond that implied by its commitment to democratic socialism.

The group publishes pamphlets written by its members, arranges fortnightly meetings in London, and holds day and weekend schools.

Enquiries about membership should be sent to the secretary, Young Fabian Group, 11 Dartmouth Street, London, SW1; telephone Whitehall 3077.

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