

SOME PROBLEMS OF TOWN AND COUNTRY
PLANNING IN AFRICA

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I. Introduction

Research into town and country planning in Africa is complicated by the lack of recent publications on the subject, and the scarcity of those works which have been published. Generally, while the achievement of independence was a source of pride for the African, it was considerably less auspicious for the researcher. The severing of colonial bonds brought a halt to African town and country planning articles in English journals. The annual colonial reports which, if only cursorily, described each year's planning developments were also terminated. Necessarily, then, a treatment of present efforts in town and country planning must at least partially be based upon extrapolations from a decade ago. The scope of this paper, however, extends beyond a description of past or current events. Its emphasis is on the basic legal and economic constraints to such planning in sub-Saharan Africa, and it examines the implications of attempts to modernize national economies through urban planning methods when such economies are based on almost total non-urban conditions.

Geographically, this study is restricted to the East African countries of Kenya, Uganda, and Tanganyika (Tanzania), and the West African country of Ghana. The former were chosen partly because of their low level of urbanization--with towns of greater than 5,000 persons as the measure, the urbanization levels for these countries are 4-7%, 0-4%, and 0-4%, respectively.¹ Such towns of substantial size that have appeared are a result of Western colonial and economic intervention. Although not high when compared to other parts of the world, the 16-19% urbanization level of Ghana is considerably higher than what is found in East Africa. Ghana was chosen in part for its vigorous development projects at Tema and on the

¹Economic Commission for Africa, Report of the Workshop on Urbanization in Africa (1962).

Volta. Furthermore, the Ghanian towns, like those of East Africa, are largely a legacy of the past colonial presence.²

Town and country planning has been defined as the "direction of the development and use of land to serve the economic and social welfare of a community in respect of convenience, health and amenity."³ Where all or part of an old town has been torn down or destroyed, or when a new town is to be built, planning involves determining in advance the allocation of the available land among residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational uses. In addition, the location of public buildings and community centers, the layout of arterial roads, provision for rail, sea and air transport, water supply, and so on, must be determined. Moreover, in order to give expression to the local conception of an ideal city, an "art of civic design" is needed which breathes life into the plan and creates a viable social entity.

With the extremely low degree of urbanization in sub-Saharan Africa, however, the urban problems which have gained notoriety in more highly developed and industrialized parts of the world are a matter to which consideration need not be given in the near future. Because of this, it may be thought that the limited supplies of African capital and manpower should be allocated to other uses than town and country planning. Inherent in such thinking is a misunderstanding of the processes, rational and irrational, by which the cities of the world have developed. Most urban difficulties are attributable to a long history of nearsighted decisions made with immediate benefit in mind. More importantly, the belief that such planning in Africa is a luxury reflects a failure to appreciate the rate and location of urban growth in East and West Africa. Since the Second World War, and particularly since independence, the rate of rural-to-urban migration has been phenomenal. The rate of population growth in the leading African cities has matched that of the more rapidly expanding cities of this country. For example: Lagos, with only 75,000 persons in 1914, grew at a rate of 86% per decade

²Cf.: W. Bascom, "The Urban African and His World," in S. Fava, ed., Urbanism in World Perspective: A Reader.

³A. Brown and H. Sherrard, Town and Country Planning (1957), p.

to 230,000 in 1950, and at 100% per decade to 675,000 in 1962; Accra expanded at a rate of 190% per decade, from 20,000 in 1914 to 135,000 in 1950, and at 240% per decade to 325,000 in 1960.⁴

It should be understood that the above statistics fail to reflect the extent to which the population is redistributing itself within African countries in response to the attracting force of urban economic opportunity. The populations of the cities of Accra, Nairobi, and Dar es Salaam are growing at a rate of from three to five times that of the populations of the respective countries.⁵ The following figures are helpful in dramatizing the tremendous rural-to-urban shift which Africa is expected to undergo by the end of this century.⁶

| | URBAN CENTERS | | RURAL AREAS | TOTALS |
|------|---------------|--------------|-----------------|--------|
| | 100,000 + | 5,000-99,000 | less than 2,000 | |
| 1960 | 20 - 8.0% | 18 - 7.2% | 213 - 85.0% | 251 |
| 1975 | 48 - 15.8% | 27 - 8.9% | 228 - 75.0% | 303 |
| 2000 | 129 - 24.8% | 36 - 7.0% | 352 - 62.2% | 517 |

Obviously, the ratio of rural to urban population will change significantly, and urban planning must be engaged well in advance to prepare for this population shift. Also, the bulk of urban growth will take place in the larger cities, which are more attractive to those seeking work. This would mean that a policy of community development and the creation of new towns are needed to reduce pressures on the large cities. Most of the advantages identified with the agglomeration of similar and complementary firms, a large labor supply, capital resources, educational institutions, and service industries are generally achievable in cities with populations of 100,000. At this size, the city government can handle most of the essential municipal public services. Growth beyond that magnitude subjects a city to a parade of horror. Typical of the difficulties which accompany such population

⁴P. C. Lloyd, Africa in Social Change (1967), p. 111.

⁵Economic Commission for Africa, supra, note 1, p. 18.

⁶G. Breese, Urbanization in Newly Developing Countries (1966), p. 139.

increases are increasing capital and service costs, pollution of water and air, congestion, and a waste of time, capital, and labor.⁷ The African countries can ill afford at this stage in their development to finance urban services (whose costs increase exponentially) in an effort to eliminate poverty, unemployment, and slum conditions. The appearance of these ultimately unavoidable concentrations of population must be postponed until the time when increasing the average income per capita has become less of a primary national goal.

The monumental task of coping with these problems in developing nations of Africa has fallen on the shoulders of the various Town and Country Planning agencies (hereafter referred to as TCP). Theoretically, this is as it should be. Practically, however, these agencies are invariably poorly equipped for their task. The African countries are in dire need of lawyers, yet in comparison with the number of qualified city planners that they have, they abound in legal talent. Employment and educational opportunities for aspiring planners in sub-Saharan Africa are far more limited than for those intending to enter legal practice. The consequence is that young Africans more readily take up the study of law than that of urban planning.

If the constraint imposed upon the TCP Boards by the shortage of trained and experienced planners were the only obstacle, their mission of rationalizing the patterns of city growth would not be insurmountably difficult. Unfortunately, their task is made doubly difficult by the lack of coordination of government departments having control over the various aspects of national and economic development. The combination of these problems, plus differences of opinion over what each countries' economic difficulties really are, results in non-cooperation and, not infrequently, planning at cross purposes, as when the department concerned with labor problems concentrates on the expansion of labor opportunities in the larger cities while the TCP Board experiments with the creation of new towns to draw the excess population from the major cities.⁸

⁷See J. Spengler, "Africa and the Theory of Optimum City Size," in Mimer, ed., The City in Modern Africa (1967), p. 53.

⁸Cf.: A. Sutherland, "Planning Law and Practice in

II. Origins

The beginnings of city planning, at least in a rudimentary form, can be traced back half a century in East Africa and before the turn of the century in Ghana (then the Gold Coast). The earliest town control legislation in these countries was in the nature of public health measures. One of the first of these was Ghana's Towns Ordinance, enacted in 1892. The limited purpose of the law was quite adequate at that time, since towns had not experienced the population implosions characteristic of recent decades. In those pre-industrial days, town life was only a little less primitive than life in the outlying villages.⁹

The second wave of legislation consisted of Town Planning Ordinances, authorizing a modicum of control over city land use. Typically, these ordinances established an agency whose function was to divide town land into various zones of land use. These agencies were virtually powerless to stimulate development according to master plans. Their power was restricted to prohibiting land use and development incompatible with existing surrounding use and/or the master plan. Ghana's first Town and Country Planning Ordinance went into effect in 1925, but it was never seriously enforced.

Characteristic of this second stage of legislation was the Tanganyikan Township Authority. For the purpose of regulating town land use, it devised a four-zone plan: I. Homes of European type; II. Commercial and trading premises with dwelling accomodation attached; III. Houses of native type; IV. Industrial areas. This rather neat segregation of use and class has been described by a somewhat paternalistic English town planner as pleasantly reminiscent of Aristotle's ideal town: one-third gods, one-third administration, and one-third workers.¹⁰ Where building plans violated an existing land planning scheme, or when they destroyed the proposed aims of a plan in the process of preparation, the Authority could deny permission to proceed with construction.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰See F. Silvester White, "Planning in the Commonwealth," TPLJ, v. 44 (1958), p. 172.

The powers of these planning agencies remained limited through the end of the Second World War. The enactment of the Town Development Ordinance (1936) in Tanganyika accomplished no significant improvement in the state of city planning. The Authority remained without any real creative powers. Under this Ordinance, only crude, unsophisticated zoning schemes could be drawn up. While the Authority could designate broad land use categories for different sections of a town, he could not control the intensity with which land in any particular section was used. His only power to control residential density was his ability to reject subdivision plans submitted for approval to his office. As before, development projects were a matter of private initiative.

Not all the fault for the inadequate extent and quality of town planning at that time can be attributed to the nature of the ordinances. The shortage of qualified staff was even more severe than it is today. Perhaps because the demand upon their limited manpower was so great, the planners neglected even to reserve land corridors for future road construction. The initial phases of rural-to-urban population shifts apparently escaped their notice, for in most cases, the planners made no provision for the rapid growth of the urban population. As a consequence, large numbers of migrants settled on the fringes of the towns, beyond the zoned areas and in the path of future development and expansion. Even today, under substantially more sophisticated planning legislation and with increased manpower, urban planners have often experienced difficulty in keeping pace with fringe settlements of this sort.¹¹

With the end of the Second World War, there was a rapid increase in the rate of rural-to-urban migration in sub-Saharan Africa. In the cities, residential density increased as family and tribal members moved in and doubled-up with the friends and relatives who had preceded them. At city limits, substandard, unsanitary dwellings were thrown up in a haphazard pattern.¹² In Tanganyika, as in other countries, the rural males abandoned their villages, if only temporarily, in response to the amenities

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Peter Gutkind, "Congestion and Overcrowding: An African Urban Problem," Human Organization, v. 19 (1960), p. 129.

of urban life and its employment opportunities.¹³ Contributing significantly to this uprooting was the gradual dissolution of tribal loyalties. The more ambitious of the young males yearned for at least a partial release from the patriarchal discipline of the tribal community.

The colonial town planners recognized many of the major implications of this relocation of the rural African population. Over a century of dismal, overcrowded urban centers had finally motivated the English to enact advanced planning legislation which would subject all areas, developed and undeveloped, to land use studies and eventual zoning legislation, to be coordinated and approved by a national board. The opportunity for the English to divert the massive migration to the cities, and thus avoid overly large concentrations in urban areas, had long passed. Consequently, the English planners turned to redeveloping deteriorated areas of existing cities, while planning future development projects for the cities at the same time. Among the more suburban-minded planners, the idea of relocating in new towns some of the displaced persons from the war, as well as the excess population from the more crowded towns, gradually took hold. These new towns were to be erected in hitherto undeveloped sections of the country. In this way, employment deficiencies in the rural areas could be alleviated simultaneously with the reduction of urban congestion.

The colonial administrators sought to enable the various communities to institute preventive measures against the imminent urban chaos. Ghana was the first country to respond to the population explosion in its cities when a Town and Country Planning Ordinance was enacted in 1945, modeled after the English Act of 1932. The authority of the TCP Board established under this act was limited to places declared to be planning areas. In light of the limited financial capacities of the Gold Coast, this restriction was perhaps beneficial. Responsibility for the entire colony might have crippled the Board, diluting its impact in any one area, especially in the towns. Thus the Board could concentrate its first efforts on Accra, and as the amount of available funds increased, it could increase the number and size of the planning areas commensurably.¹⁴

¹³Lloyd, op. cit., p. 116.

¹⁴Sutherland, op. cit., p. 137.

Unfortunately, the Board did not long confine its attentions to Accra alone. Instead, it declared not only Accra but also Sekondi-Takoradi, Kamasasi, and Cape Coast as planning areas. Political pressures, however, rather than errant planning policy decisions, were responsible for this overextension. Recognizing the paramount political realities involved, the Board expeditiously prepared plans and granted development permission in these areas. The hasty preparation of these plans is reflected in their neglect of basic planning principles. Most of the plans were defective, too, in that they were based upon inaccurate contour maps, ignored existing patterns of settlement, and were unrelated to the actual housing needs of the towns.¹⁵

TCP legislation of the East African countries during this period differed little from that of Ghana. All of the laws suffered from a failure to provide a planning mechanism which could adjust to mid-development changes in conditions. But the final wave of legislation, appearing in the early and mid-1950's, was substantially more sensitive to problems of the actual implementation of planning schemes.

III. Recent Legislation: Tanganyika's TCP Ordinance

Typical in almost all major respects of the more recent African planning legislation is the Tanganyikan Town and Country Planning Act of 1956, which retains the basic planning structure of the prior round of legislation in the 1940's.¹⁶ Under this law, the central entity in the planning mechanism is the TCP Board, a corporate body with perpetual succession. The Board consists of an Executive Council responsible for TCP, and seven individuals selected by the Governor-in-Council. No more than four of these seven can be appointed from the ranks of those holding a Crown office in the Territory. At least three of these four must be representatives of local government interests. Although a precise definition of "local government interests" does not appear in the law, it would seem that such persons need not have any professional training in TCP, a conclusion suggested by the fact that there is special

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶See: Town and Country Planning Ordinance (1956), Rev. Laws of Tanganyika, Chapter 378.

provision made for a professional advisor, the Director of Town Planning, who is not a member of the Board. Thus, TCP decisions are primarily made not with professional planning principles in mind, but with practical political and economic considerations regarding national development goals.

The basic procedure by which development is initiated is the declaration of planning areas under section 13 of the Tanganyikan law. This occurs at the instance of the Board, in consultation with the local authority in the area involved. There are similar provisions for local authority initiative in this matter under the 1951 Ugandan Town and Country Planning Ordinance, as well.¹⁷ In any case, whether through local representations or its own initiative, the Board then proceeds to prepare a general planning scheme for the area. The scheme will furnish support for the application to the Governor-in-Council (after independence, the Governor was replaced by a department-level Minister of TCP) for the declaration of a planning area.

The successful implementation of planning schemes is dependent in part upon national income growth. A reverse in the progress of national economic development may postpone even the preparation of a planning scheme. Similarly, a lack of cooperation between property owners within the area may result in the inability of the Board to complete the planning scheme. Thus, to prevent an area from lying indefinitely under Board control without any provision for development and land use authorization, a three-year limitation is placed upon each planning area declaration order when no accompanying scheme has been submitted to the Governor (section 14). Moreover, although the law allows sufficient time for planning and economic activities to be completed, private changes in land use or development are subject to restrictions within this three-year period, in order that the planning task does not become even more difficult.

Exercise of this interim development control is in the hands of local Area Planning Committees (section 15), which are appointed for each area by the Board. If the planning area is within an existing municipality, the local council will serve as the Area Planning Committee, but whenever a planning area extends beyond a town's limits, a separate body may be appointed. This Committee, serving as the

¹⁷Sutherland. *op. cit.* p. 134.

Preparatory Authority under the Board, has the responsibility of preparing general planning schemes for the area.

The rationale behind section 15 of the law, placing initial planning determination in the hands of local authorities, is the belief that local cooperation, a necessity for successful planning implementation, is best assured by co-opting the local leadership. Many past efforts at land control and development in Africa have aroused substantial opposition among property owners, especially in Ghana.¹⁸ Allowing local authorities first decisions concerning land use has the advantage of providing for a kind of self-determination, and, since the project becomes as much their own as it is the national government's, the local leaders have an interest in promoting the project among the townspeople. As the local opinion leaders, these authorities are more likely than is the Board to persuade their constituents of the necessity and desirability of comprehensive town planning.

Yet this technique of planning popularization has its shortcomings. These local authorities are likely to be totally untutored in the concepts of TCP, and may be only slightly less provincial than the people they represent. Consequently, the constructive value of the planning scheme which they produce may be negligible. Also, unlike the Board, the Area Planning Committee will be far less able to appreciate the relationship of their scheme to the problems of national development. This difficulty can be minimized if planning is restricted to the larger cities, where a realization of the mutual problems of rural and urban areas is enforced upon the town leaders.

Planning experience in underdeveloped countries has shown that planners are frequently faced with an overwhelming influx of impoverished migrants. The powers of the Area Planning Committee to prohibit land use and development may be ineffective against these masses. To the extent that these powers are not effective, and to the degree that local authorities must meet the public service needs of these squatters, the Preparatory Authority may be forced to alter its plan to accommodate these changed conditions. This can be done under subsection 2 of section 23 by preparing

¹⁸A. Alcock, "Planning in the Gold Coast," Town and

at any time after the effective date of the general plan an amending scheme in respect to the affected areas. To ensure that the Preparatory Authority changes its general planning scheme to reflect altered circumstances, the Authority must re-examine its general plan at least every five years. If, in the opinion of the Authority, a revision is necessary, an amending scheme may be prepared. Where planning efforts are met with opposition from local property owners, one might question how seriously the Authority is likely to regard its duties. If the Authority does not fear the operation of the sanction under section 19, then, out of a desire for local political stability, it may not pursue its duties with diligence.

A more refined type of planning scheme may be prepared under section 24 to deal with specific problems in the planning area. Such a scheme is called a detailed planning scheme, and is defined in section 2 of the law as a plan pursuant to section 24, "making provision for detailed planning of any part of a planning area included in a general planning scheme or in respect of which a general planning scheme is in the course of preparation." In order to accommodate the desires of the property owners to the maximum degree consistent with the planning goals of the Authority, six months notice must be given before preparation of the scheme may begin. During that period of grace, the property owners have the opportunity of submitting alternative plans for the land in question. If the Authority so chooses, it may, at some time between the material date and the effective date of a general planning scheme, adopt the property owner's scheme (section 24[2] and [3]).

In the preparation of a development scheme, the Authority might often encounter situations in which the complexity of property configurations makes equal treatment under the restrictions of planning methods quite impossible (sections 27 and 28). In such cases, the Authority may pool the properties and redistribute the land so as to give each affected owner a relatively compact tract. This redistribution is subject to the limitation that, if the appropriation of land for road or other uses results in a substantial loss of value, the Authority is required to compensate the owner by an amount assessed at market values as of the material date (section 59).

When all necessary adjustments have been made to the planning scheme, and the Authority deposits it with the TCP

Board, publication of the scheme is made so that all interested parties, including other governmental agencies, have an opportunity to lobby for alterations in the plan (sections 29 and 30). Three months later the scheme is submitted to the Governor-in-Council, together with any written statements of objection as well as an estimate of compensation costs prepared by the Board. In order that such schemes are not frustrated by new development projects inconsistent with general goals, the Area Planning Committee is empowered to prohibit the development of "any land within a planning area without planning consent or otherwise than in accordance with planning consent and any conditions specified therein" (sections 35 and 36). Section 22 of the law defines development as the "carrying out of any building operation, engineering operation or mining operation in, on, under or over any land, the subdivision or laying out of land, or the making of any change in the use of the land." Furthermore, in order that land use is not unreasonably restricted, changes of purpose within any particular class of use (zoning) are permitted. Certain allowable changes of use are specifically enumerated in the second schedule of the law, and those changes not expressly forbidden under the regulations are also considered allowable.

The standards by which the Area Planning Committee assesses development requests are contained in section 37. There it is stated that, in ruling on such requests, the Committee shall consider the potential effect of the proposed development upon any scheme in effect or in the course of preparation. Where land owners do not seek planning consent, or when they attempt to ignore an effective planning scheme, it is the Committee's responsibility to take action to enforce the general plan, even to the extent of ordering the demolition of unapproved development (section 72). Moreover, to ensure that those property owners who do receive planning consent do not construe such permission too broadly, the Committee can impose conditions upon such consent. Setting aside land for various minor public purposes (e.g., sidewalks) or forbidding development in the path of a proposed roadway are commonly imposed conditions. If an owner willfully violates stipulated conditions, he may be penalized, as provided for in section 71.

When a general planning scheme is finally adopted, it does not always provide for explicit land use of all property within the planning area. The ultimate disposition of

certain land areas may remain contingent upon the degree of realization of the projected development of other areas. To keep such land open for alternative use, the Planning Authority, the Board, or the Governor may prohibit development in the area, although permission to develop such land may be had with the consent of both the Area Planning Committee and the Board. In passing upon such applications, the Committee and the Board must consider the "general pattern of development in and around that area" (section 43). Such applications are made under sections 35 and 43 of the law and are addressed in the first instance to the Planning Committee. If the application is rejected, the property owner may appeal to the Board; if again unsuccessful, he can make a final appeal to the High Court (section 58).

Although the Planning Committee has considerable interest in defending its schemes of land use from attacks by individual land owners, it must bear in mind that the denial of an owner's requests may result in the necessity of compulsory acquisition of his land, and the payment of adequate compensation. Whenever possible, therefore, the Committee will attempt to reach an agreement with individual owners consistent with both the planning scheme and the owner's desires. Where agreement is not reached, and the owner does not take reasonable steps to develop his property in accordance with planning measures, the Committee must take the land (section 45). In such instances, if the land is suitable for development, but the general plan prohibits any change in the use of the land, the property owner is entitled to compensation (section 47). If, however, the ban on development was based on the Committee's judgement that the land was unfit for development of any sort, no compensation need be given.

In cases of compulsory acquisition, the measure of compensation is the market value of the land on the material date, plus the value of any development carried out thereafter (section 50[1]). Compensation is also available to those who suffer injury or loss due to the revocation of planning consent (section 52[d]). Furthermore, the Committee can avoid its duty to compensate for post-material date improvements by taking advantage of its power under section 39 to set conditions to the granting of planning consent for such improvements (section 50[2]). Whether this latter device applies only to post-material date developments on properties subsequently acquired, or to developments for which planning consent has been revoked, is not made clear.

IV. New Towns

Depending on one's professional viewpoint, a person with detailed knowledge of the TCP Ordinances of the African countries either knows a great deal about planning or very little. A lawyer might be convinced that he is reasonably knowledgeable about the subject as a result of his reading the above discussion of the Tanganyikan Town and Country Planning Ordinance. Were a lawyer to make such an assertion, however, he would be guilty of the same narrow professional perspective which Lloyd Rodwin laments in his *Urban Planning and Developing Countries*. The lawyer, the city planner, and the economist all suffer from the same tendency to emphasize certain variables to the exclusion of others in an analysis of a given situation or problem. In terms of intergovernmental agency relations, such specialized approaches can be fatal in the attempted solution of national problems.

Yet, to a considerable extent, the lack of intergovernmental coordination and the limited perspectives of many professionals must be accepted as "givens" in much of Africa. One may envision utopian educational and governmental systems which would prevent the occurrence of these imperfections, but it is unlikely that such systems will ever be achieved. Nevertheless, once it is realized that complete reliance on the basic principles of one discipline may do violence to the principles of another discipline vitally concerned with the same social problem, an interdisciplinary approach becomes desirable if not absolutely necessary. An analysis of some of the conflicts between economic, social, and city planning activities and the consequent obstructions to implementation of the African Town and Country Planning Ordinances would, then, be helpful.

The Ghanaian experience with TCP furnishes two important examples of the manner in which abstract planning law and policy must be modified during the process of implementation. The first concerns the minimum building standards which were imposed in residential areas under the Town and Country Planning Ordinance.¹⁹ The expense of the materials which could meet the minimum standards was more than the average African worker could afford. The average Ghanaian

¹⁹See Sutherland, op. cit., p. 137.

worker, at the time that Sutherland wrote about TCP in Ghana, earned less than £ 120 per year.²⁰ The result of this income gap was a serious housing shortage. This condition, in turn, led to overcrowding, slum conditions, and squatter shacks, which violated the planning schemes.

As a solution to this problem, Sutherland suggested that the building standards be relaxed in certain designated residential areas so that these workers might use the traditional, low-cost materials used in villages outside the urban areas. He also proposed that small, satellite villages be erected for commuters within short distance of Accra. The first solution had already been adopted in Uganda to meet the same problem. The Area Planning Committee there had the power to authorize the construction of substandard dwellings within high density residential zones. The Ugandans found that this policy tended to eliminate the disordered settlements of low-income workers on the perimeters of their major cities. Moreover, multiple occupation of dwellings by the same families or tribes was also reduced.²¹

A second difficulty which accompanied implementation of the Ghanaian Ordinance was the geographically over-extended nature of planning projects. Because of this, Ghanaians lost the opportunity to limit the rate of development within the major cities to a level commensurate with the local government's ability to provide adequate services. The result, of course, is that Ghana's towns (which A. C. Sutherland describes as typical of most sub-Saharan towns) are burdened by a surplus population and a shortage of housing units and employment opportunities.

Ghana has found one solution to these problems: new towns. Great Britain, which has suffered from many of the same problems, has provided an example in its "New Towns Plan," an attempt to redistribute economic opportunity on a geographic basis.²² But the concept of new towns is not new in Ghana, or in other African countries--Whittick and

²⁰P. C. Lloyd, op. cit., p. 122.

²¹Sutherland, op. cit., p. 134.

²²Meyer, "Regional Economics: A Survey," American Economic Review, v. 53 (1953), p. 29.

Osborn, for example, list nine new towns in Ghana, Kenya, and Uganda.²³ However, the actual implementation of a new towns policy is considerably difficult. The first and most important decision is whether to move the jobs to the people, or the people to the jobs. If the former course is selected, the TCP Boards must cooperate with other government departments to set aside attractive industrial areas which have adequate transportation services. If the latter course is taken, and rural regions are developed, then some means must be found to stimulate the movement of surplus population from the cities to the new towns.

The selection of a location for new towns can be simplified when there exists a clear need for a new port, a hydroelectric plant, or an extractive industry. Any one of these can serve as the nucleus for a viable city, especially when the older urban areas are nearby and accessible. The presence of a special industry and an adequate labor pool may induce other industries or business services to relocate in the new town. Lloyd Rodwin enthusiastically endorses this approach, if it is undertaken in connection with development of the existing urban areas.²⁴ If there are natural resources ready to be exploited, he believes that the new town policy is reasonably likely to succeed. He points out, however, that control over the location of industries is not a simple task. New industry will naturally prefer to locate in the larger, older cities which have an experienced labor pool, more supporting service industries, and so on. Since the government must induce and not coerce, the bias for existing cities must be met by duplicating in the new towns the labor pools, supportive industries, transportation facilities, and so on, which existing cities offer. Since TCP activity usually suffers from a lack of funds, planning efforts should be concentrated on only a few projects, perhaps only one. The success of such new towns is highly dependent upon publicity. Special function cities such as Ghana's Tema or Uganda's Jinja clearly

²³Whittick and Osborn, New Towns: An Answer to Megalopolis (1963), pp. 141-8. New Towns listed are: Ghana: Akosombo (1960), Tema (1954); Kenya: Kismu (1903), Nairobi (1900), Nakuru (1904); Uganda: Kampala (1913), Entebbe, Jinja, Tororo.

²⁴See: L. Rodwin, "Cuidad Guayana: A New City," in Scientific American comp., Cities (1968), p. 88.

possess all the necessary ingredients for a successful project. Once such a project becomes a well publicized success, as have these cities, other new town projects can be started with greater assurance.

Many new towns have had to deal with rapid increases in population, which can seriously endanger the success of such a project. In such instances, there is an influx of large numbers of low-income workers. Irregular patterns of sub-standard shacks appear, and the new residents immediately raise demands for an extension of public services, such as educational facilities, utilities, and roads.²⁵ Obviously, such circumstances place a great deal of strain on planning agencies, and force them to adopt stopgap measures not provided for in the original plans. Yet the disordering of the long range development schedule by such population influxes is not the only burden placed upon the planners and the new towns. The inability of these low-income workers to pay taxes commensurate with the value of the services which the local government offers results in what is called a negative fiscal residuum.²⁶ For example, in certain Tanganyikan towns, three-fourths of the population account for only 10% of the urban revenues.²⁷ Without government financial aid, the presence of this negative fiscal residuum calls into question the economic viability of these towns. Offsetting tax revenue from businesses cannot be relied upon to eliminate the deficit. Further, since the establishment of new towns proceeds on the premise that industry must be attracted, prohibitive business taxes clearly cannot become a part of the new town's economic environment.

African planners have also been affected by another planning concept taken from the British: residential density. In England, this idea was applied in the reconstruction of London after the Second World War. In rebuilding entire sections of the city that had been destroyed in the war, the English planners had the unique opportunity of determining the population density of a new settlement. As might

²⁵Ibid., p. 91.

²⁶Heilbrun, "Poverty and Public Finances in the Older Central Cities," in Urban America: Goals and Problems, Joint Economic Committee, 90th Congress of the U.S., 1967, p. 142.

²⁷White, op. cit., p. 172.

be expected from the low urbanization levels of sub-Saharan countries, there has been no African problem of population saturation. Yet the concept of residential density has found fairly widespread application in African countries. The institution of density regulations is not entirely unwarranted, and certain sections of certain African cities do need regulation--in Kampala, Uganda, for example, residential density has been found to reach as many as forty flats per acre.²⁸

There have been various attempts to limit population density in African cities. The Ugandan TCP Board has set up minimum residential, commercial, and business lot sizes, and maximum ratios of building ground space to lot size. The Kenya TCP Board has placed similar controls in commercial land use in downtown Nairobi. But in the opinion of one writer, these density figures have not been adequately related to the number of cars which the businesses of downtown Nairobi would attract.²⁹ In 1958, some 100,000 entered this small downtown area, and this figure will supposedly triple by 1978.

Open space, however, is obviously not yet a problem in these countries, although Area Planning Committees should provide in their general planning schemes for a regular distribution pattern of parks within the cities. When the cities expand, as they eventually will, amending schemes could be adopted to reserve other properties for park use. In order to make orderly expansion of the cities possible, the Planning Committees should coordinate their granting of development permission with the activities of the departments of housing and education in their cities. As far as possible, the rates of development and population growth should not be allowed to expand beyond the city's capacity to serve its residents. The housing authorities should be encouraged to provide as much low-income housing as possible, and the education agencies should direct their efforts to raising the income earning capabilities of the workers.

But, in the course of implementing the above policies, the planners would do well to heed the warning of Peter Gutkind,

²⁸Sutherland, op. cit., p. 134.

²⁹H. Dyer, "Planning in the Commonwealth: Kenya," TPIJ, v. 45 (1958), p. 12.

who observed that "the temptation is great to shape the physical and social environment of the people of Africa, Asia, or elsewhere in the so-called undeveloped parts of the world, in the image of the West."³⁰ Part of this problem arises when planners adopt concepts employed in other countries, e.g., in England, which are of little or no use in an African context. Also, the African planner must be careful not to place any unnecessary constraints on economic activities in the cause of local cultural values when he is attempting to promote an industrialized city. As Hans Blumenfeld has observed, industrialized cities tend to obey the same economic laws of behavior regardless of the section of the world in which they are located.³¹ It is the task of the town and country planners both to facilitate industrial development of metropolitan areas, and to incorporate an expression of local cultural values in both the land pattern and the overall civic design.

³⁰Gutkind, "Urban Conditions in Africa," Town Planning Review, v. 32 (April, 1961), p. 20.

³¹Blumenfeld, "On the Growth of Metropolitan Areas," in Hatt and Reiss, eds., Reader in Urban Sociology (1951).