

# CURRENT AFFAIRS BULLETIN

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## YOUR CAPITAL

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## CURRENT AFFAIRS BULLETIN

*Editor: J. L. J. WILSON*

## YOUR CAPITAL

SOME wit once called Canberra "Six suburbs in search of a city"; and it is this lack of anything like what is called "the city" in Sydney or Melbourne – or even Ballarat or Goulburn – which baffles, most of all, the New Australians who are coming to Canberra in large numbers these days. They had been told they were coming to the Capital City of Australia. They have arrived, but where is the city?

There is, it is true, "Canberra City", a colonnaded shopping centre about the size of the shopping centre in a middling suburb of Sydney or Melbourne, but it is not the focus of Canberra's life. That is in the "Government Area", where Parliament House and some government offices stand among formal lawns and gardens. In between the two and in every direction are great stretches of open space, some formal and ornamental, but most of it the same grassland that was there before Canberra was built. Through the middle of the city runs the Molonglo, a narrow meandering little river fringed with willows. Sheep and cattle graze on the river flats. Lucerne crops grow a few hundred yards from Parliament House.

The residential areas are on the outskirts, with red-tiled, ordinary, mostly small, suburban houses along tree-lined streets, broken up by plantations and shrubbery. The amount of empty land is probably the first thing that strikes the stranger in Canberra. The next is the mixture of solidity and makeshift. Everywhere there are temporary buildings: hostels converted from Army hutments, a group of big, white, fibro buildings, something like woolstores, housing some government departments. At the same time there is a great deal of solid construction going on. Canberra is very obviously still being built.

The tourists who visit Canberra by the thousands every year may ask, as taxpayers, whether they are getting value for their money. In 1949-50 the administration and maintenance of Canberra cost in round figures £1,500,000.\* The inhabitants paid £652,000 in rates, rents and various charges. The taxpayers of all Australia made up the difference – a little short of a million pounds. These figures don't include the cost of the Parliament, the public service, the Governor-General's establishment – items which would have to be paid for whether Canberra existed or not. They include the ordinary services of a city – roads and bridges, water, electricity and transport – and some not so ordinary, as for instance the

\* Total capital expenditure from Canberra's inception to June 30, 1951, is £22,414,845.



cutting of every householder's front hedge to uniform height by government employees, or the government hostels which are run at a loss.

We all help pay for Canberra. So Canberra is every Australian's business.

## 50 Years From Federation

WE have a National Capital because this was part of the bargain between six colonies when they agreed to become a Federation. In particular it was part of the bargain between the two most advanced colonies—New South Wales and Victoria. Section 125 of the Constitution says:—

*The seat of government of the Commonwealth shall be determined by the Parliament and shall be within territory which shall have been granted to or acquired by the Commonwealth . . . and shall be in the State of New South Wales, and be distant not less than one hundred miles from Sydney. . . . The Parliament shall sit at Melbourne until it meets at the seat of government.*

It is not hard to read between the lines of this section. Victorians feared that a Federal Parliament and a Federal public service in Sydney would be open to the influences of Sydney's ideas and attitudes. New South Wales politicians were just as fearful of Melbourne's influence. When the bargain was signed no one thought that the Federal Parliament would sit in Melbourne for 26 years, or that the central offices of many Commonwealth departments would be in Melbourne 50 years later. There were unforeseen factors to delay the building of the capital.

It took the newly-created Federal Parliament from 1901 to 1908 to decide on a site. Another four years were taken in defining the boundaries of the Federal territory and negotiating the transfer from New South Wales. Then an international competition was held to find a worthy plan for the new Capital. The winner was Walter Burley Griffin, a Chicago landscape architect. Canberra was formally founded and named in 1913, but the outbreak of World War I prevented any large-scale work from going ahead. Griffin spent the war years in Australia elaborating his plan, and quarrelling with public servants and ministers, some of whom preferred an alternative plan. When he returned to America in 1920 not one building had been begun. After so much delay Canberra was built in a hurry. A Federal Capital Advisory Committee, with the town planner, Sir John Sulman, as chairman, was appointed to take over where Griffin left off.

Griffin's plan remains the official plan, but it was this committee which laid down the lines on which Canberra has developed to the present day. If Parliament was to meet in Canberra as soon as possible, the committee pointed out in its first report, there was no time to make the great artificial lakes and the "monumental" buildings of Griffin's plan. Instead they advised the building of "provisional" buildings for the Parliament and government offices, cottages and hotels for the people, development of the area as a "garden town". It had been estimated that Canberra would begin its life with a population of 15,000. The committee proposed that this be reduced to 6000 by transferring only those departments which it was most important to have close at hand for the Parliament. For the others there could be small secretariats to assist the ministers. And, broadly speaking, that was how Canberra was built.



## *Canberra's Early Days*

THE Federal Parliament was opened in Canberra on May the 9th, 1927, just a year behind the target date. The transfer of Canberra's share of the public service was carried out like a military movement. The Government took responsibility for disposing of the public servants' homes in Melbourne. It moved them and their families and furniture to new homes in Canberra. The unmarried were placed in hostels and "bachelor quarters".

The committee had laid the foundations of its garden town by planting over one million trees. For these Canberra citizens of to-day should remember them with gratitude, but by all accounts Canberra in 1927 was a raw place, with fresh-turned earth round the houses, excavations and piles of building materials at every turn. The public servants were unhappy.

Canberra in these early years had the reputation of a crazy city, a city where bureaucracy had run mad. From 1924 the Territory had been under the control of the Federal Capital Commission, a body responsible both for the construction of the capital and its civic management. In a city such as Canberra this meant that it controlled almost every aspect of the citizen's life. Unmarried public servants were segregated into hostels reserved strictly either for men or women. All manner of regulations governed their conduct.

Canberra was a dry area in these days. The Commission had inherited the prohibition of liquor from King O'Malley, the Minister for Home Affairs in 1913, who had a passionate hatred of what he called "stagger-juice". The Saturday procession along the seven-mile road to Queanbeyan across the border, became a national joke. This one Australian experiment in prohibition in so small an area was bound to be ineffective. It did nothing to convince Australia of any virtues prohibition may have, and it did nothing to raise Canberra's reputation. When Canberra's people were allowed to vote on whether the experiment should continue, they turned it down solidly.

Towards the end of the Commission's life the Government provided that one of the Commissioners should be elected by the people, but a new Government abolished the Commission altogether. It made Canberra's civic administration a branch of the Department of the Interior. An Advisory Council was set up consisting of three elected members and four Government nominees.

This is the system which remains to-day. It doesn't satisfy Canberra people, but neither has it created the bitter dissatisfactions of the Commission days. Canberra has grown up since the 1920's. It has become bigger and more civilised as it has become more comfortable to live in. But it has not grown quite as its founders expected. Construction since 1927 went by fits and starts. The depression of the thirties stopped the construction programme for years. It picked up again, only to be stopped by World War II. Since the war Canberra has had another burst of building activity. There is a big leeway to make up. At the beginning of the war the population of the Capital Territory was about 13,000; at the end 15,000. To-day it is 25,300, of whom 23,530 live in Canberra and the rest in other parts of the A.C.T.



## ***Why a National Capital?***

AT this date it is an idle question to ask whether we want a separate national capital or not. We are committed to Canberra by the Constitution, and anyway no one would now face the problem of shifting 20,000 people. But still we can ask, "Was it worthwhile?"

Canberra comes in for a fair amount of criticism as an instance of over-centralised control, but would West Australians, for example, feel their government was less remote, if the Federal Government were in Melbourne? It can be argued that Government in Canberra takes all too detached a view away from the hurley-burley of great masses of population, but it is not the Member of Parliament who gets away from the hurley-burley. He flies to Canberra on Tuesday and flies home on Friday, or, if his electorate is too far away, he flies home as soon as the session ends. It is a widely held belief, borne out by political history, that the politician who spends too long away from his electorate will soon have no electorate to stay away from. It is true that Ministers sometimes spend long periods in Canberra, and this may affect their decisions in matters of policy and administration; but they usually have their "listening posts" in the big cities.

Maybe it is the top public servant who is too secluded. The Departments of Health, Customs and Immigration have their central administrations in Canberra; the Departments of Repatriation, Social Services and the Postmaster-General have theirs in Melbourne. These are departments with which the ordinary citizen is likely to come in contact; the test is whether he finds any difference between those in Canberra and those in Melbourne.

Perhaps the simplest case for Canberra is social rather than political. Our population is too centralised; our big cities are too big; Canberra as a national capital is a small city which helps to relieve the population pressure in the big State capitals, and is free from many of the stresses and strains of life in a big city.

## ***A Planned City***

IN the early enthusiasm for Canberra there was another way of looking at the question: Australia was to have a new city, worthily planned from the beginning to be a source of pride and an example to other cities. George A. Taylor, a vigorous champion of the Griffin plan, wrote in 1914 before Canberra was ever built:

*"We can build it as a model city and its sweetness will spread; because a garden city is a hundred times more useful, because of the inspiration it creates. It gives an example for others to follow. . . . We can watch the city of Canberra, rise, a city well and truly built. A city beautiful to look upon and a city beautiful to live within. A world's centre of civic beauty and health. A city typical of the virile white race which is building a nation great in the Southern seas."*

If Canberra is to be like that, it is cheap at much more than a million a year. But is Canberra a planned city we can give as an example for others to copy? There is, of course, the Griffin plan, but Canberra so far owes very little to the Griffin plan other than the involved lay-out of its streets.



Griffin planned a system of artificial lakes. At present golf links and a racecourse and grazing sheep occupy the future lake beds. Griffin put his Parliament House on a spur off Capital Hill. Parliament meets in a provisional Parliament House, below Griffin's site. The Government offices are in "provisional" buildings of brick or "temporary" buildings of fibro, while building of the first permanent Administrative Building is just getting under way. Griffin planned a civic and commercial centre with shops and offices, banks and law courts radiating like spokes of a wheel round a city hall. The first two spokes are there in the City shopping blocks, but the City administration is carried out from the Department of the Interior in a weatherboard building well over a mile away. The Supreme Court sits in a section of the Patents Office two miles away.

But in any case the Griffin plan is not town-planning quite as the planners of to-day use the term. Griffin called himself a "landscape architect". His plan puts the emphasis on ornamental design rather than the needs of the ordinary inhabitant.

Griffin liked his main avenues to converge on points of architectural interest. So to-day the main traffic route into the city from Sydney and Melbourne runs down the middle of the City shopping centre, to the horror of modern town planners. It is not Griffin's fault that in 1912 town planning was in its infancy, or that he did not foresee the growth of motor transport. But one has to make these reservations when one looks at Canberra as a planned city.

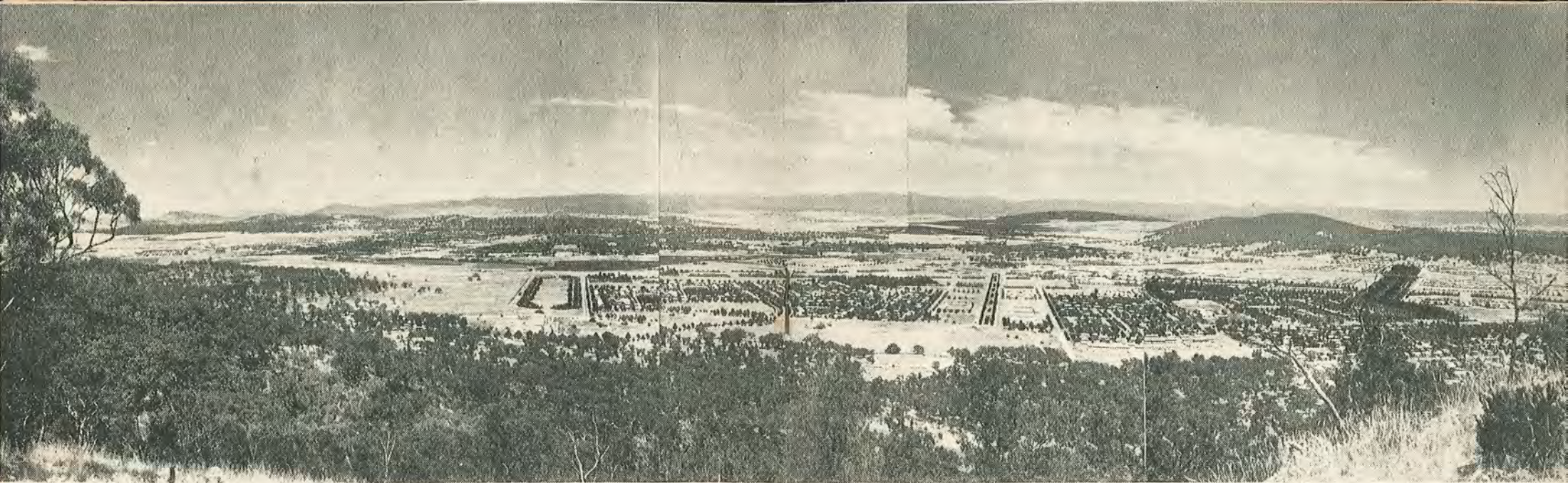
### ***Five Miles by Four***

CANBERRA is not a convenient city, nor an economical one. The city population of about 20,000 is contained in an area five miles long by four miles wide. Great spaces in the centre of the City remain empty, reserved for one monumental building or another in the Griffin plan, while the residential areas continue to press outwards. And in the residential areas housing blocks are big, even by Australian standards where the detached cottage is the rule; streets are unusually wide; distances between intersections are short.

A few statistics will illustrate Canberra's great spread. Residential areas cover 2650 acres. Parks, gardens, street plantations and reserved areas cover 5650 acres. The city has 132 miles of streets, 70 miles surfaced with concrete or bitumen. The average density of population in residential areas is between seven and eight to the acre (the average in most Australian suburban areas is about 15 to the acre).

The Australian taxpayer meets much of the cost of running so many miles of roadway, so many miles of waterpipes and powerlines for so few; but the people of Canberra pay too in convenience. The city has only three shopping centres. Housewives take daily bus rides to do their shopping. The city has only two public primary schools (but there are several private schools). A fleet of buses shuttles the children to and from school morning and afternoon. The lack of community services has been accentuated by the growth of Canberra's population and the post-war strain on the building industry. Leases have now been let for three more shopping centres. Two more schools are planned.





**CANBERRA VIEWED FROM MOUNT AINSLIE**  
 This view was photographed in December, 1950. Mount Ainslie may be located in the top left hand portion of the plan on page 75. The central axis of the panorama corresponds roughly with a diagonal across the plan from the top left to the bottom right corner. Features in the panorama may be identified from the plan.

Photo by the News and Information Bureau.

But a shopkeeper will only go into business where there is a population to give him profit. Public schools are not governed so strictly by economic considerations, but governments must still consider the child population they are to serve. The lighter the density of population, the farther one must travel to shop, the farther one's children must travel to school.

No one realises Canberra's deficiencies as a "planned city" better than the town planners who work in the Department of the Interior to-day. They can't sweep the ground clean and start again, but as the city grows they are adapting the plan to suit the convenience of its inhabitants. Neighbourhoods are being defined, community centres located. New areas are being sub-divided into smaller homesites. Blocks of flats, few in Canberra at present, will be put where land is available in established areas.

### **Canberra Architecture**

WHEN the Federal Capital Advisory Committee was laying its plans to have Canberra ready for occupation in six years, it described this first stage of Canberra as a "garden town . . . with simple but unpretentious buildings . . . planned nevertheless to afford adequate comfort and reasonable convenience." Professor W. K. Hancock, writing 10 years later, found this characteristically Australian. He thought Australians distrusted lofty aspirations. They preferred a middling standard. Whether this is true in general, it is true that Canberra's architecture has little original or inventive about it.

Most people would agree, however, that the public buildings are decent and pleasing. The courtyard treatment of the "provisional" Parliament House and the Institute of Anatomy provide an answer to Canberra's biggest climatic problem, the bitter wind. The unpretentious white-painted brick of the provisional buildings — startlingly white in bright sunshine — seems to fit their garden setting. Some of them, Parliament House in particular, have suffered in the last few years from piecemeal additions.

One can't discuss Canberra's architecture without considering the City shopping block, the so-called "Civic Centre". It was designed, apparently, on the principle that shops must be dignified. So the designer enclosed them in a colonnade, through which the winds whistle for a great part of the year. A stranger to Canberra might well think he had arrived on a public holiday, for shopkeepers commonly shut their front doors against the wind, and rely on cards saying "please open" to bring their customers in.

Domestic architecture runs to the tile roof and brick walls, plain or stucco, varied sometimes with weatherboard or fibro. The houses look much like middle-class houses in any city in South-Eastern Australia. The same designs recur, over and over, but two houses of the same design are not allowed to stand side by side, except in rare instances. Generally they have the suggestion of being built with an eye to economy in materials. This is natural enough, since building in Canberra has generally lagged behind a growing population. Rooms are on the small side. Passageways are largely dispensed with. As a concession to the climate, the typical house has a small sunroom, but sometimes it doesn't face the sun.



Canberra has few really impressive homes. On the other hand it has no slums. Some jaundiced inhabitants like to say that Canberra has slums tucked decently out of sight. They mean the Causeway and Westlake areas (both names, by the way, look forward to the future Lakes scheme), groups of little weatherboard houses, built originally as homes for construction workers, but kept in use to ease the strain on permanent housing. They are drab, but no one who knows Surry Hills, Sydney, would rank them as slums. A family with a house to itself and land enough to grow a couple of fruit trees, hardly feels it is living in a slum.

## *The Beauty of the City*

BUT few people would deny that Canberra is a beautiful city.

It has not turned out, so far at least, on the grand theatrical lines that Burley Griffin imagined. Perhaps it is better for that. Monumental public buildings that delight one generation sometimes fail to move the generation that comes after. Canberra is beautiful for its setting, and for its trees and gardens. It is at its best in the autumn, when it enjoys day after day of bright sun. The deciduous trees—poplars, pin oaks, birch—turn a rich yellow or red. The mountains in the background stand out a deep blue. The sunlight puts a soft haze over the colours, very suggestive of a Gruner painting. In spring the flowering trees, planted along the avenues and in private gardens, burst into blossom. First comes the wattle, actually in late winter—then plum, peach, apple and pear blossom.

Autumn and spring are the tourist periods, but the city has its less showy charms at other times. The Canberra winter's reputation for bleakness has spread far, but even the winter has its moments, when the cloud lifts from the mountains and shows them shining with snow. It must be admitted that the Canberra people, hurrying through the icy wind, are not greatly uplifted.

## *"The Department"*

THE ordinary citizen of Canberra finds an entity, familiarly known as "The Department", impinging on his life at every turn. "The Department" means the Department of the Interior, which runs Canberra's civic administration and also most of those services which in any other part of Australia would be the responsibility of the State Government, and some which would normally be left to private enterprise. But, if he wants to telephone the Department of Works and Housing about an electrical failure, or the Department of Health about a dental examination for his children's teeth, he still says simply that he's "going to ring the Department".

If the citizen of Canberra is single and not a member of an established family with its own home, he probably lives in a hostel run by the Department of the Interior. If he is a construction worker, he probably lives in a different type of hostel run by the Department of Works and Housing. If he is married but newly come to Canberra, he most likely lives in a hostel. He may manage as best he can with his family, or he may keep another home in the city he has left, until he can get the tenancy of a





The dark areas represent the built-up parts of Canberra to-day; the lighter areas are those of the modified Griffin Plan which it is intended to carry out.

Plan prepared by the Town Planning Section, Dept. of Interior.



government house. Roughly, seven out of eight houses are government owned.

A paternal government runs the hostels at a loss, but discontented boarders are apt to claim that the losses are due more to inefficiency than generosity. House committees protest about the service and the tariffs. Harassed officials do their best to remove grievances, but sooner or later a new discontent crops up. The married boarder, however, can treat hostel life philosophically, if he works for the Government (as four out of five wage and salary-earners do). He knows that he will have a government house in time. When he comes to Canberra he has his name put on the bottom of the housing list. As houses are built and filled, it works its way to the top. A few badly needed people — architects for example — have some priority, but, generally speaking, if he works for the Government, whether as a plumber or the head of a department, he has equal standing on the list.

But if he works for a private employer, it is different. By a fairly recent concession, one government house in eight, is allotted to a private employee. This is the source of a long-standing argument. It could only be so in Canberra. Briefly, the arguments run like this. Those who would like to see private employees on an even footing say the butchers and bakers who supply Canberra's public servants are as essential to carrying on government as the public servants themselves. The official reply is that the government is responsible only for its own employees. Private enterprise can build in Canberra, too. And so in fact it can. It was originally believed that private building would supply about half Canberra's homes, but in the early days private people didn't build to any extent. Now, with materials short, they find it difficult, but the Government letting mass contracts, can always see some building in progress.

But suppose our Canberra citizen has his home. The Department is his landlord. It supplies his electricity and water. It rents him an electric stove and bath-heater. It provides a rotary hoe to plough up his land if he is establishing a garden. It gives him free flowering trees and shrubs from surplus department stocks to beautify it. It clips his front hedge to regulation height (whether he wants it so or not). In fact it plays Father Christmas to him: At Christmas time the Department brings truckloads of loppings into town from its pine plantation, and any citizen can go and pick himself a Christmas tree. If he is a public servant, he can have his rent deducted from his salary, with something extra to go towards his electric light account.

If he wants to own his home, the Department will sell it to him on terms, at a price calculated on the replacement cost, less depreciation. But he can own only one house from the government, and, if he wants to sell, he must give the Department first option. Buying government houses as a speculation is not encouraged.

It can be said the typical Canberra citizen is born in the Department of Health's Hospital, educated at the Department of the Interior's schools (staffed, however, by teachers from the New South Wales Education Department), works in a Government Department, retires on superannuation, and is buried in the Department of the Interior's cemetery. He probably



finds the Department both paternal and exasperating. It does a great deal for him and charges much of it to the taxpayers of Australia. On the other hand it is hard to move from its settled ways. It is too impersonal to be moved by a hard luck story. Explosions of annoyance get nowhere.

### *Ways of Living*

AS a rough and ready generalisation, one can say that children enjoy Canberra, adolescents and young people don't, settled married couples do.

For children the great stretches of open space, never far from their homes, make great playgrounds. The suburban play centres for kindergarten-age children, run by the Department with local committees, are regarded by educationists as out of the ordinary.

For the teen-agers and young unmarried people Canberra is often boring. Canberra has been described as "entertainment-starved". There is no night-life as it is understood in a big city. There are picture-shows and dances, but professional stage shows only at intervals of years, and never anything so earthy as vaudeville. There are more sporting grounds than usual for a city of Canberra's size, but there is only one ridiculously inadequate swimming pool. But, perhaps more important than anything else, there are no places where young people can get together and talk, no coffee shops and milk bars which will remain open after the last tea-time customer has been pushed out round about seven.

Canberra encourages culture and learning, considering its size. The Commonwealth Government gives small but useful subsidies to cultural bodies, musical societies, the Repertory Society and so forth. There is an extraordinary number of learned societies with branches in Canberra — for example the Royal Society, the Institute of International Affairs. Anyone can borrow books from the National Library, which is well stocked with substantial works, but not with lighter reading. But the fact is that there is a mass of young people in Canberra, as anywhere, uninterested in culture or learning. The Public Service Board bears witness that it is difficult to recruit young people for positions in Canberra or keep them there.

But, as Canberra's people grow older, marry and settle down, by and large they surrender to the city's rural charms, even if the wives grumble about the distances to the shopping centres and the inadequacy of the stocks they find there. And here we might lay a hoary old fiction — that Canberra is a city of rigid class divisions. There are class divisions marked by different residential areas, but the distinction between Red Hill and Ainslie is less marked than between Point Piper and Surry Hills. And even this distinction is breaking down for a typically Canberra reason. The Department of the Interior fixes its rents strictly on the capital cost of the houses. As building costs rise, it has become cheaper to rent some old houses in what used to be the more expensive suburbs, rather than a new house in what used to be the less expensive.

### *The Problem of Government*

ALTHOUGH the citizen of Canberra has appreciable benefits from the Department's paternal government, he loses the advantage of governing his own affairs.



Since 1930, as we have mentioned already, he has had the right every second year of electing three representatives to an Advisory Council.\* These three meet monthly with four nominated members to discuss local affairs and give their advice to the Minister concerned. But, in the first place, the elected representatives are a minority on the Council. In the second, there is no assurance that the Minister will take the Council's advice.

One reason is that the Minister receives so much advice on Canberra matters from so many different quarters. Besides the Advisory Council there is the National Capital Planning and Development Committee, consisting of distinguished architects, engineers and planners, together with the chairman of the Parliamentary Public Works Committee and the department officer in charge of Canberra's civic administration.

Any question bearing on the Canberra plan is referred to this committee as a matter of course, but the committee can offer its own advice unasked. Then there is what is usually known as the "inter-departmental committee", which is designed to bring together the views of the different departments affected by Canberra's development. While the opinions put forward on the Advisory Council are fully reported in the local press, very little is heard of the opinions of these committees. This often gives the impression that the Council's advice is ignored without reason.

Very few, if any, people regard Canberra's present form of government as satisfactory, but it is obvious that the ratepayers could not bear the costs involved in the city's great sprawl, let alone the cost of acres of ornamental gardens. On the other hand, if the taxpayer is to foot the bill, he would not be prepared to see a body representing no one but the people of Canberra playing ducks and drakes with his money.

One solution has been offered in recent years. This is to be found in the report of Mr. H. J. Cole, Town Clerk of Hobart, who held an inquiry into Canberra's civic government in 1949. Briefly, Mr. Cole's report proposed a division of "national" and "civic" functions. The national functions, which would remain with the Commonwealth Government, would include all major construction works, variations of the Canberra plan, maintenance of parks and gardens, water supply. The civic functions, to be administered by a fully-elected city council, would include the electricity supply, all the normal health responsibilities of a municipal council, the fire brigade, letting of sports grounds and public halls, shopping hours. The Commonwealth would continue to build roads and streets, but would hand them over to the Council when they were established. The Council would receive an annual grant from the Commonwealth, but the Council would have to cover the rest of its costs from the rates, manage its own budget and employ its own staff.

The Cole report was generally well received by Canberra people, but not everyone was keen to be pushed into the deep waters of financial responsibility. So far no action has been taken on it.

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\* Since 1949 Canberra electors have also had the right to elect one Member to the House of Representatives, entitled to speak on any subject, but only to vote on ordinances of the Capital Territory.



## *The Future of Canberra*

WHAT will Canberra be like 10, 20, 50 years from now? Its past history is a warning against prophesying what its size will be, but we do know what is planned for it. In 1949 the Inter-Departmental Committee drew up a 10-year plan for the transfer of the Central Administrations of all Commonwealth Departments to Canberra. This would mean 45,000 people by 1960, including the additional people in private business who would provide services for the extra public servants. The time-table may not be strictly adhered to, but we can say that transferring all central administrative staffs to Canberra would mean a minimum population of 45,000. Thereafter it would rise with the increase in population of the country as a whole, until we can visualise Canberra as a city roughly the same size as Hobart (83,000). It will never be a human anthep like Sydney and Melbourne.

These figures assume that Canberra will remain a public servants' city, without sizeable industry. What are the prospects of diversifying its economic life? At present it has only the service industries, which any community of its size requires — retail trade, milk, bread, ice, bricks, motor repairing, etc. Young people have little choice of employment: they must either go to the big cities or into the public service, a fact which may have future repercussions upon that service if, as some people have suggested, it begins to suffer from "in-breeding". New industries will come only if special inducements are offered to them; and although there is the prospect of cheap power once the Snowy scheme gets going, Canberra is not likely to attract many factories. It is likely to remain a middle-class city of white-collar workers in government and in other activities promoted by government, especially education — through such institutions as the National University, the Forestry School, and the Commonwealth Solar Laboratory.

Probably the Griffin Plan will be modified more and more to meet the needs of this community, but Canberra will remain a planned city, and, with greater flexibility, will prove a better advertisement for planning than it is to-day. We can imagine it as a pleasant little city with trees and gardens, and its chain of lakes (a part of the Griffin Plan that few people would give up), set against its magnificent backdrop of hills.

So far as its architecture goes Canberra is not likely to set a very unusual example to the rest of Australia. This is not because public servants are unimaginative, but because governments tend to "play safe". Canberra is everybody's business; and if the buildings are "extreme", the critics will express themselves strongly. We can thus expect the future architecture of Canberra to run a little behind what the public has come to expect. This has been the case in the past, and there is no indication that it will be different in future; readers may care to ask themselves whether Professor Hancock was right in saying Australians prefer a "middling standard" in such things.

Middling or not, Canberra will still exercise its charm over many who disliked it at first but came to love it as they knew it better.

NEXT ISSUE: *Our Food Production*



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