

quite seriously, a case of just not having time to think things out. There was, especially, no time to think ahead for more than just a couple of years.

Time and the ability to plan for all the future needs of the cities are the challenge of the seventies. There are serious social, economic, environmental, cultural and political questions to be answered about Canada's urban future. But there are also brighter, more easily realisable opportunities in Canada than in almost any other highly developed industrial nation.

Canada's urban problems are not as serious as those of other countries. There are fewer people and Canadian cities are by comparison smaller. This doesn't mean that urban problems do not exist, that they may not become worse, or that new ones may not emerge.

Less effective space

Although the population of Canada is smaller than that of the United States, the majority of Canadians live within 200 miles of the U.S. border. Because of Canada's climate and geography, much of the country is difficult to live in due to sub-zero temperatures, snow and ice. This means Canadians have in effect less space to live in than the United States and overcrowding could become a serious problem.

At present, Canada has one of the highest urbanization rates in the world. Whereas the United States has a 69.9 per cent urban population, Canada has 76.1 per cent. The United States has 10 times Canada's population spread all over the country. Canadians crowd on 10 per cent of their land space. Predictions indicate that, by 2000, Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver will have reached the size of New York and Los Angeles. That's only 23 years away!

To provide for this continued population growth, Canadian governments are looking critically at the cities. Federal, provincial and municipal governments are attempting to develop policies to prevent cities from becoming dangerous and unhealthy places to live. An example of this is Vancouver's "livable region programme," one of Canada's 14 projects featured at Habitat and described in the previous article.

The federal Ministry of State for Urban Affairs was established on June 30, 1971 in response to the increasing Canadian and world concern about urbanization. The Ministry was created to develop policies, conduct research and co-ordinate planning in urban affairs with other federal departments, other levels of government (provincial and municipal) and the public.

Ministry policy planning develops a course of action to be followed in specific areas of urban development. In the area for housing, for example, amendments to the National Housing Act have been proposed recently to help the poor and middle income families buy houses. The amendments will also help to improve

existing neighbourhoods, and provide funds to assemble land for the building of new communities outside large cities.

In the next five years, the federal Government plans to spend up to C\$500 million to bank land so that new towns can be built for people who want to live close to a city without the problems of big city living, such as high cost housing, pollution and transport crowding. This will take some of the strain off existing cities and provide more pleasant surroundings for those living in the communities.

Research on growth

Research is being conducted into the effects of city growth on people and the environment. Areas of research include: the way cities grow and the changes that occur within them; the concentration of the Canadian people in a few large cities; and urban problems of poverty, housing, transport, and social unrest.

Co-ordination is a very important part of the Ministry's function. The Ministry works together with federal, provincial and municipal governments to co-ordinate urban planning. National tri-level consultations have been held with representatives from the three levels of government to jointly plan future efforts in urban development. Similar consultations are being held on a regional level with provinces or groups of provinces, and on a local basis in major Canadian cities.

Within the federal Government itself, the Ministry of State for Urban Affairs is co-operating with the Ministry of Transport to study various means of urban transport.

Transport experiments

New ideas for urban transport proposed by provinces and private groups include mono-rail trains running on tracks above the ground. Other suggested rapid transit systems run on the ground beside highways, and in the strips of land reserved for servicing hydro transmission towers and power lines. Experiments are being conducted in Canada and other countries with malls where cars are banned from downtown shopping areas. Also cars in some cities are being banned from certain streets by local authorities during specified times to give shoppers a chance to walk freely.

Through research and co-ordination, the Ministry of State for Urban Affairs is developing national urban goals so that all levels of government can work together toward making tomorrow's cities clean, bright, free places for everyone.

The problems of the city are problems of the future. Plans are now being made to provide for continued urban growth, but it is the adults of the twenty-first century who will be ultimately responsible for the outcome. ♦

Sail boat to tackle North West Passage

A trio of Montreal adventurers is planning a tough sail trip which, if it comes off as projected, will be a record-breaker. The three are planning to take a 35-foot sailing boat from Montreal to Vancouver the long way round, via the Northwest Passage. They will start in mid-June and are scheduled to complete the journey by October.

If they succeed, they will be the first to make the trip, 7,500 nautical miles, under sail since the Norwegian Roald Amundsen made it in a craft twice as large early this century — and it took him three years.

Skipper of the expedition is Real Bouvier, 30, an experienced yachtsman and writer of a yachting column for the daily newspaper *La Presse*. His crew are Jean-Guy Lavallee, also 30, a technical researcher with a Montreal brewery, and Marie-Eve Thibault, 26, a radio script assistant. M. Lavallee has been assigned to collect scientific samples of water and plankton along the way, while Miss Thibault takes photographs. The Arctic Institute of North America, financed by Canadian and United States money, is sponsoring the voyage.

The trio are well aware of the hazards, including the formidable pack ice which has put an end to numerous adventures in Arctic waters. Their boat is specially reinforced against these dangers. Mr. Bouvier has said: "We shall rely on our navigational skills and knowledge of winds and currents to keep out of trouble and, of course, we shall be in constant radio contact with airborne patrols for information on climatic conditions ahead. We shall certainly not be ploughing along blindly."

If the vessel is marooned by ice despite their precautions, Mr. Bouvier says he intends to remain on board through the winter and try for release the following summer. He hopes to rely on sail for most of the trip, using an auxiliary engine only when strictly necessary to avoid ongoing ice or when becalmed.

Among the more drastic preparations for the trip, each of the crew members are planning appendectomies to avoid the hazards of an attack of appendicitis while the vessel is far from medical help. ♦