

URBAN INNOVATION IN THE UNITED STATES
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I thought what I would do today was share with you a few of my different travels to American cities over the last few years and also give you some of my tentative conclusions about what I found in these cities. What I did for my Guggenheim fellowship which I think endeared me to the Guggenheim foundation was I said I was not going to go to France or Paris or Stockholm or somewhere really pleasant, that I was going to go to places like Baltimore and San Antonio Texas, that I was going to go to places in the United States. My argument was that what I wanted to do was look at as many cities as I could find in the United States that seemed to have had what I called progressive governments and active progressive politics going on in them in 1970s and early 1980s. And I had to have a fairly broad and not terribly scientific definition of what I was doing. I did not pick cities that people might think of as left or radical. And one reason I didn't do it is because Pierre is already doing this and has come out with his book *The Progressive City* that looks in some detail firstly at Santa Monica and Burlington and then at some other cities. So I decided that I wanted to broaden the definition. And again it is not anything that you can find written down. There is no particular party called the Progressive party. The way I defined it was really to look for cities where people who had been politically active in the 1960s in one of the various social movements: the anti war movement, environmental movement, community organizing around gay rights, other movements of the sixties. These people had become active and involved in city politics and seemed to be having some effect on the way the city government was being run.

And the cities I picked in particular, one was Baltimore, which has had a very active neighborhood movement, is often cited although some of it is hype, as the ultimate Renaissance city — a down trodden industrial city that has come back and built a new downtown and waterfront area. And I wanted to pick that also because Esquire had said that their mayor Donald Schaffer was the best mayor in America and I knew a lot of people who had been very active there. So I picked Baltimore. I picked San Antonio because San Antonio has one of the strongest neighborhood based political movements in the country. A Latino organization called COPS — Community Organized to Provide Service? — I always forget what the acronym stands for. But to my mind it was the strongest and is still the strongest Latino, poor people, city-based organization in the country and was having a dramatic affect, it appeared, on the politics of San Antonio and then San Antonio elected its first Latino mayor, Henry Cisneros who as many of you know has now been touted as a vice-presidential candidate. He was interviewed by Mondale. He is continually held up as the leading Latino “progressive” politicians in the country.

I picked Portland, Oregon because Portland probably has over all the most liberal city council for a large city in the U.S. and also a very active neighborhood movement and probably the most

interesting transportation policies of any fairly large city in the U.S. I picked St. Paul because St. Paul has had a liberal democratic mayor for the last decade who came out of the labor movement — a man named George Latimer, very strong neighborhood movement and at least the times I've met with Latimer he was talking about lots of innovative and interesting ideas. This is again an aging city that I wanted to see what was the reality behind a lot of the hype talk about the St. Paul renaissance. I included shorter visits to a lot of other cities; Seattle, where there is again an active neighborhood movement, a liberal democratic mayor, a man named Charlie Rover who was a TV announcer. Davis, California which has had an environmentalist, a kind of Green majority for the last eight years or so and done a lot of innovative things even though it is a small university town. I included Burlington even though Pierre was going there, mainly to look at some of their neighborhood planning efforts and some of the new efforts that they have started in local economic development where they were using a group called the Industrial Cooperative Association to advise them on how they might do more worker owned and community owned businesses in the city. It is the only city I know where the mayor has invited such a group in to help plan his economic development strategy.

I also decided to include some large cities with lots of racial tension and sort of heavy duty city politics but ones that seemed to be moving in progressive directions. One is Chicago, where as you know, they elected their first black mayor — a progressive black mayor as opposed to Detroit, for example where Coleman Young is not terribly progressive from my point of view. Chicago had mayor Washington come in and also I knew a number of people in his administration and had some sense that they were trying to carry out a progressive agenda but with a lot of problems. The same situation in Boston although there we have a white ethnic Ray Flynn who was elected on a pro neighborhood platform in the final election. He ran against a friend of mine, named Mel King who also was black, and campaigned on a pro neighborhood platform. And so you had the final two candidates in Boston really for the first time that I can think of both running as progressive neighborhood candidates. And again in that administration in Boston Flynn hired a number of sixties activists. They were even dubbed by the media, his Sandinistas, who came into the government and brought with them their ideas of a progressive agenda.

So those are the cities. I have also been to an enormous number of other cities that I may refer to over the last few years because I with a number of other people in the 1970s formed an organization called the Conference on Alternative State and Local Public Policy which we started in 1974. and the idea was to bring together primarily sixties activists who had gone into state and local government and we had annual meetings every year until very recently. We published a number of studies and a regular newsletter called Ways and Means. And the whole idea was not to form a political organization with a particular line that would elect leaders and try and carry out national strategy. So unlike DSA or other national organizations we are not a political organization. It was

really a kind of information sharing experience, sharing who was doing what on the local and state level. So I have been involved in that for a number of years.

Now before I tell you what I found I just sort of want to give you a preface which is that, and particularly for the students in the class, I am well aware of the context in which American cities exist. And as you are of course reading in Sunbelt Snowbelt and Marxism and the Metropolis, we all know about the problems, and we all know about our basically pro-suburban policies of the fifties and sixties in particular, and we all know that we haven't had a very progressive national urban policy. I give my students Goldsmith's article on why America doesn't really want to have coherent urban policy. I'll just assume that we all know we are all talking about a situation in which most cities are ringed by suburbs. Most suburbs have white middle class and upper middle class people. And most cities have poor working class and minorities. And that is just a given. If you want to explore any of this in detail there is a new book out which is called *The Crabgrass Frontier* by an urban historian at Columbia named Kenneth Jackson. It is the best single discussion of the suburbanization of America in the post war period that I've seen. Even though I knew a lot of that material he found some new stuff. Maybe everyone already knows this but he even found out that the term redlining was not a term developed by private realtors but was actually a government technique that was developed for denoting on a map areas where you wouldn't want build or develop or invest. And the private real estate firms picked this up from the government survey that was done. So basically he explained how government policies promoted racial and spatial segregation. And again, I'll just take that as a given because if you don't take it as a given you can get depressed awfully fast because obviously we have so many really large problems that require national urban policy that we will in the end always have to come back to that. What happens in the national level obviously is tremendously important. But what I have been doing is given that there is not this national progressive administration which may have come, and my feeling is that there was this turning point in sixty-eight when Bobby Kennedy was killed and Martin Luther King was killed and if Kennedy had lived and become president. If King had lived, stayed outside through the pressure he built up with his grass roots movement it is possible that we would have gone in a more social democratic direction at the national level. Not likely, but certainly possible. And we would have had different national policies. Given that we didn't, when we were having any progressive impact was at the local and at some extent the state level and so that's what I am going to focus on right now for the rest of the talk.

What I found and the way I define progressive is that in order to have a progressive city it is not just a matter of having elected officials who are left liberals or left or liberal, you also have to have grass roots political movement. There is no case that I can find where the leaders at the top spontaneously themselves create progressive policies. And I think that that is basically true of the whole twentieth century in the United States. Most of our progressive policies come from grass

roots movements. Pushing ordinary politicians in a more progressive or liberal direction sometimes you will get some unique leadership that plays that movement in a very progressive dramatic way but usually what happens is that you have politicians who don't want to move and are forced to move by grassroots movements. So it is real important and I think it is a given that one of the things happened in the nineteen seventies which really never got depicted in lime or Newsweek is that there was this tremendous growth of grassroots community based political action and alot of it has its origins in the movements of the sixties. But what was interesting about the seventies is that it became geographically based. A lot of people got a little older. They realized that they wanted to settle in a community or they had kids and the kids had to go to school, they had to get a job or they were working in university or in a union or a business and they found themselves in a particular place. So they became place specific and they tried to carry out the political values that they learned the sixties at the local level. And again that is a given. I haven't proven this with any dramatic social science research but I have seen it enough to know it is real.

And I also know enough of these people to get this sense of their kind of shared values. And again, it is not a clear cut ideology and this always amuses Europeans. I was at a conference in Spain in December and I kept getting questions about well "is it Marxist or is it socialist or are you social democrats" it is really hard to explain that in the U.S. most people don't think that way or think of themselves in that particular way. They think of themselves as activists or progressives or they are in favor of participatory democracy or they have environmental values or they are active in the women's movement. I think it is true that social movements in the U.S. are much stronger than narrower ideological or political movements and I think that that is always going to be the case in the U.S. And though many of us wish we had a labor party or a social democratic party but we don't. And again what I found in my local case is that it not coming from a particular party or organization. It is always a coalition of groups and organizations that are very locally based that get put together. Sometimes it is within the Democratic Party. In the left wing of the Democratic Party, particularly in California where I come from we all offer it within the left and liberal wing of the party because we have a very liberal party, but in some cities like Burlington, the democrats were the old machine democrats and Bernard Sanders was fighting them. In Chicago they were fighting the democrats. So again there is no one rule.

But let me tell you some of the things I concluded about what made a progressive urban policy. Actually there are three basic elements. I am trying to be professorial here and number my points and not just give a political speech. One is the concept of balanced growth, which sounds really namby pamby like who could be against balanced growth. Or as I say in talks, everybody who is for cancer raise their hand. Growth. You know that is what the realtors and developers want they want a cancerous form of growth. And any rational person is for balanced growth. But of course and

I think Bill said in the beginning, you read about Sao Paolo will show you what unbalanced growth looks like in extreme form. But when you say you are for balanced growth and then you try to carry that out at the local level what that means is what you want to try and take into account as accurately and in some cases scientifically as you can the cost and benefits of growth, and you want to mitigate the costs, which includes growth which is induced by city policy such as urban renewal, which means you want to talk with people who may happen to be displaced or moved or are being displaced by condo conversions or by a free way or what ever. And you want to make sure as much as possible to benefit, the growth gets shared. And that the city has a responsibility to do that accurately. One of the things we found when we came to Santa Monica is that the city was never making an accurate assessment of what it gave businesses and what it cost the city to just maintain services for growth and how that affects the community. So once you get that concept and try and carry it out in practice it turns out to be not only complicated but also a politically hot issue because there are an awful lot of people who want the growth coalition to just roll over you and proceed with economic growth. But this means economic growth defined by private businesses investment without anybody raising these questions of social or economic cost or tradeoffs or without wanting to negotiate some benefits. Again I will get back to specifics. I think that is a real important concept and one you can apply at the national level clearly as well as at the local level.

The second is citizen participation. And by this I don't mean citizen cooptation. I don't mean the kind of citizens committees that were set up in the sixties under Model Cities, where the idea was you have got to have a few token people of different color and sex to sit on a committee and give you input and then go ahead and carry out your plan. I mean that the city government consciously supports citizen participation in decision making and you can't obviously do that in every single position, but there are lots of ways in which I will come to in which you do that consciously and make it city policy.

The third concept is that of human scale in the built environment and that means that you think of the built environment as something that involves social interaction, not like most architects think of the built environment, which is monuments to themselves and their artistic creations or the huge phallic symbols that pass for most downtown development — of course made by male architects and the mayor standing in front of the high rise saying “progress”, you know, “this city is back.” “We are coming back.” “We have these huge buildings”, and then some how the buildings and the cars become the city instead of the way the people interact in them.

Obviously Jane Jacobs' work has some effect, Lewis Mumford's work. Values that people have picked up in their classes in college and then get translated into this concept of well this city ought to be about people and how people interact and that we ought to have city policy, city design policy, city zoning policy, city traffic policies that allow us to do business, do social business, do

cultural business, do sports business on a human scale. To get out of their cars to have buildings that encourage almost make possible that kind of interaction.

Once you say that you run up against builders and developers who say it doesn't pencil out. We can't afford it. We run up against architects who say we can't do it. My favorite one is one of the requirements in Santa Monica, which has a very nice Mediterranean climate, is that we require buildings to have openable windows and all of the architects bitch and moan. This is the worst requirement they have ever heard of. It is going to screw up the controlled environment that they have designed with all of these air conditioning – isn't needed. I say just open a window and they say well you know dirt'll blow in the window and they come up with all these reasons. But once you come up with a rule then they figure out that they have to do it. Again what sounds sort of namby pamby turns out in practice to run up against lots of political hassles.

II

Now these are what I call the basic concepts that I have found. How do they get carried out in practice? Let me give you some specific example and sort of sub themes.

One is strengthening neighborhoods. What I have found in all of the cities I visited is a growth of neighborhood based organizations and these neighborhood organizations demanding from city government that neighborhoods not be abandoned. The people take seriously that a city is made up of neighborhoods and ideally the good city is made up of healthy strong neighborhoods. And it even would be recognized there are gonna be class differences and race differences behind the neighborhoods, but that is still no reason why some people should live in awful neighborhoods or not get an equal balance of city services. And in some cities this can be very, very dramatic. For example in San Antonio before Latinos were elected to the city council, before COPS started organizing, the West side of the city basically didn't have plumbing. They didn't have drainage, so whenever it rained in San Antonio the whole West side of the city, which was all Latino, got flooded. They didn't have much in the way of schools. They had no parks. I mean they didn't have the basic urban infrastructure that any decent city would provide on an equitable basis and there it was real gross and clear to people. One of the things that the neighborhood movement there demanded from people was that they get basic urban infrastructure into their neighborhood. So now when you go on a tour with COPS in San Antonio they proudly point out the storm drain, the new school, new parks. Again the things that we may take for granted in other cities but there it only came about because of this neighborhood based movement — and theirs is based around parishes and the Catholic church — had demanded of a city that had been run by a white power structure for many, many years and was not about to ever deliver those things until they got organized. The other thing they did was to change the form of government from at-large elections to district elections which has had a big effect in a lot

of cities, changing the politics of the city so that Latinos get elected from Latino districts and now the city council is about half minority and they have a Latino mayor and they did that by threatening federal suit. And a lot of other cities are doing that.

Some of the programs that I have found going on in neighborhoods: One that has been incredibly popular is neighborhood based crime prevention. I will -just mention it because no one is quite sure how much this has had with lowering the crime rate but lots of police say it does which I find interesting. It is clear that the crime rate has gone down in a lot of cities because the number of young people has decreased relative to the rest of the population so the number of people who commit crimes has been reduced but very conservative police chiefs have said that they think one of the reasons is that a tremendous number of neighborhood based crime prevention programs that have been out in action. It is not clear to me that they actually reduce crime. They certainly make people feel better about their neighborhood and they make people feel safer. And one of the things that is important about neighborhood based crime prevention is it's a progressive answer to the law and order themes that you get and we face this very dramatically in our own city where the Right's issue against us in one election was that they wanted more police and that we were all these crazy liberals that loved criminals and we would free all the criminals. We didn't care if people got mugged and we don't care about crime. Our response was not to argue that unemployment causes crime and once we have full employment we won't have crime, which may be true but it is not a good electoral position. So we went out really strong with community based crime prevention. And we now have all these programs like the city will come in these low income and elderly people's apartments and houses and put in free locks. So that the police will go out and give anybody's house a security check, police and our neighborhood organizer will set up block clubs and block meetings. We do all these things, very actively saying we are concerned, we know a city can be a dangerous place and we want to deal with it. And we will deal with it in a neighborhood based way. We will also deal with it in terms of the built environment. We need new streetlights. Hedges are a problem because people can hide behind them. We will deal with all that. Again that is a theme I found in every city that I visited. There is always some neighborhood based crime prevention program that is going on.

The other thing that I found is that lots of cities are now going into partnerships with neighborhood organizations. Either through the community development block grant program, or through their own general funds, are working out innovative ways to get neighborhood based organizations to engage in a whole variety of physical fix-up or service delivery projects. St. Paul has one of the most interesting ones. They have a matching grant program. It's like they have their own foundation. It's called the St. Paul Partnership, and what they do is, if the neighborhood group can come up with either money or in-kind contributions from local merchants, the city will then match that with a grant for a particular neighborhood improvement program. And, again, what's good about

that is that it forces the people in the neighborhood to say what it is they want to go on, not just the planning department, the community development department deciding what improvement the neighborhood needs, and in fact the St. Paul program has been studied and adopted by a lot of other cities. In Portland, Oregon the city had an office of city negotiations which is real important because it is now a permanent office in the city government. And everybody in the city, even conservative politicians agree that it is the city's responsibility to provide money to neighborhood organizations so they can have newsletters or hire their own organizers or planners. The office of neighborhood organizations actually gives out small grants to democratically based organizations, so that you have to come to them to show them that you have some democratic means of selecting leadership so it is not five friends who decide they are a group. And once you meet the standards the office provides technical assistance and money to help you get organized around the issues that are concerning people in the neighborhood. Obviously some neighborhoods have lots of organizations, others have a few. But everybody knows that it is the role of city government to encourage this kind of participation and to put some funds behind it.

Sort of going along with this practical helping of neighborhood organizations is the theme that people should be proud of their neighborhoods and look at their neighborhood heritage. Particularly in older cities where you have particular ethnic neighborhoods I think it is real important where you have city government who says our neighborhoods are important to us and we are going to emphasize those neighborhoods, not only through money, but verbally and through a lot of symbolism. And the mayor of Baltimore, even though he has a lot of anti-democratic tendencies in the way he behaves, has done a really good job of celebrating Baltimore's neighborhoods. After there were riots in Baltimore they organized a city wide fair in downtown. A lot of people were afraid, because Baltimore is dramatically split between blacks and whites, that nobody would come or if they did come they would have a tremendous riot or fight. One of the things the mayor said was "we are going to be a city of neighborhoods and we are going to support and celebrate all the different neighborhoods". So now Baltimore has more ethnic fairs and festivals than any city I have ever seen. And what is important about it is that the mayor, even though he gets a little corny about celebrating Baltimore and Baltimore at its best, has paid people on his staff whose job it is to do this kind of symbolic politics. One of the things they do which I like is that they have a contest every year for the best neighborhood projects. And then the neighborhoods that win these awards, the neighborhood leaders from the neighborhood organization are flown at city expense to another city to meet with their neighborhood leaders and compare notes about neighborhood organizing and neighborhood associations. When I was in Baltimore they had just sent twenty of their leaders to meet with neighborhood leaders in Kansas City and to talk about neighborhood organizing and neighborhood projects. Again, not a big deal, but an important one when somebody like the mayor says it is important and puts his own

resources behind it. I am not going to talk about Santa Monica. I am doing that in another class if you want to ask questions about that later I will. So you have these neighborhoods, putting resources into the neighborhood, supporting neighborhoods, supporting neighborhood organization.

The second piece of the city to make it work is the downtown and of course one of the criticisms of the neighborhood groups is that too much resources and attention goes to downtown. And that is often true because that is the symbolic heart of the city and it's easier for a mayor to stand up in front of a new building and say there is progress. But what I have found in these progressive cities was that the neighborhood groups were pushing on the administration itself to make downtown what I call people friendly. To make it a neighborhood itself where people from all the different neighborhoods feel comfortable. I mean ideally what you want in a downtown is the equivalent of your own living room where all the members of the family can come together and where people of different races and classes feel comfortable and have some reason to come together and also hopefully where people from the suburbs are willing to come other than just as commuters for work. So I mean ideally you want as much as possible almost a twenty four hour downtown and you want to lure both residents and suburbanites back to the city. One of the ways you do this is you have got to have public places that are pedestrian and people oriented. This takes physical design. You cannot trust it to happen by itself. It has to be conscious city policy to do this. In Seattle for example, I don't know if some of you have been there, there is an area called Pioneer Square which is the older historic part of the city. And the city made a conscious decision to declare these historic buildings and not to allow them to be torn down and instead allow them to be renovated and to have new shops and new restaurants in them. And what is interesting about the place. It shows you a lot of Jane Jacobs tenants in action, there are a lot of homeless people, there are a lot of down and out people in Seattle and they coexist with a lot of middle class people in Pioneer Square and everybody manages to handle it without it seeming too scary or getting out of hand. Even in situation where we have some fairly desperate people we can still use this square and park, and people still feel comfortable having lunch there and working nearby and now people are even moving into the downtown to live. Seattle also has a market which is called Pike Place market which was slated for urban renewal but neighborhood activists saved the market with a city initiative. Again, something that is fairly common. These old market places get saved by activists and then get revived, and then the next thing you know the mayor is talking about tourism being revived because people want to come to the Pike Place market in Seattle which is a really wonderful collection of small businesses selling fruits and vegetables and huge crowds and handicrafts and all kinds of things.

In St. Paul they did the same thing. They saved their farmers market. They fixed up the building and it became a real attraction to it. So market places, but small scale, small business people market places have had a real revival in progressive cities and these are not just festival

market places. Not just the Rouse company Faneuil Hall or Harvard Place, which aren't bad for what they do, but also real genuine market places where the owners are local people. And again it takes city policy to say we are going to have public markets. Baltimore for example has a huge public market downtown which got revived as well as the fancier Harvard Place. They have even put a subway stop near the new revived old farmers market to bring the people right downtown.

Portland, which I mentioned earlier, probably has the most innovative downtown traffic management program. They converted one of their downtown streets into a bus mall. Just bringing the buses down this one street, concentrating their office development in that one street, requiring people to park in particular lots away from the downtown, and keeping the downtown for walking. So probably of all of the cities I have been in, Portland has the most active people oriented downtown. It is one of the few cities where you can walk all about the downtown and feel comfortable about it. And it is partly because the city, under Neil Goldschmidt who was this liberal Jewish Democratic mayor, made it his policy to do it. They are now bringing light rail into Portland as well. They have also had a policy of not increasing the number of parking spaces in downtown. So they don't allow new parking spaces to be built. They require new buildings to develop traffic management programs, to provide tokens for their employees to use mass transit or to park in the parking lots in the outskirts.

Part of this downtown development policy also involved what is called linked development. Linked development means sharing some of the benefits of the downtown development with the neighborhoods or with people who need services that the city cannot, particularly in our tight fiscal situation, pay for. For example probably many of you have probably heard that San Francisco has now adopted a downtown plan that requires the developers of large office buildings to put money aside for day care centers or include day care facilities on site. That is something we've done in Santa Monica. The other thing that we did in Santa Monica is we did studies to show that new office development affects the housing market and that it is a legitimate part of city business to require that some money be paid into a housing fund or that off site housing be developed by large commercial developments. So a number of cities: Chicago, Boston, San Francisco have picked up this idea, to set up housing trust funds the developers have to put money in. The city uses that money to subsidize the development of affordable housing in other parts of the city. It is a concept that obviously works best in a city where there is some demand for growth. It is harder to do probably in Cleveland than it is to do in San Francisco, or in L.A. or in Boston.

So it is not something that you can, again Cleveland is one of those cities that requires national policies. I don't want to say you can do it everywhere, but it is something that is being done. There should be an article about it in the next APA Journal by Dennis Keating of Cleveland State. He is a friend of ours who just did a fairly in depth study of Boston, Santa Monica, and San Francisco's linked development policies.

The other two parts of the downtown policy are markets and fairs. I mentioned markets just briefly. One of the things which I call the animated city that a lot of these cities have done is try to revive cultural and market place activities. Get people out to the streets basically, make the city fun, not just the fun city as a diversion from people's problems but genuinely make it a place where there are activities happening where people interact at a human scale level. Portland has something which is called Art Quake which is this huge city wide art festival. Obviously in California we are not going to adopt that name. But it works in Portland. Every year they have this tremendous city wide festival where they have theatre and arts and crafts all over the city and it has become a real big deal. Portland also has something which is called the Saturday Market which is a crafts market which is run as a cooperative by the people who sell their trades there. And it is something that started as the kind of hippie subculture thing. Now it has developed into a real attraction for people on Saturdays to come. They use the outdoors. They use the streets. The rule is that you can't sell anything that you don't make yourself. You can't trade in manufactured goods. You have got to produce it yourself, and it is a real nice little market, sort of a throw back to medieval days where people interact and buy and sell. And they also have musicians and street jugglers and people that entertain nearby and the city actively supports it and has now made it a part of why people want to come to downtown Portland.

Baltimore has this annual city fair which is probably the most organized and active city fair. City fairs are real good ideas, they are a real cheap and simple way to make people feel about a city well that is your city. But also they are something difficult to do if you are afraid of getting lots of people out on the streets. I remember in Santa Monica when we decided we were going to do a farmer's market in the downtown before we had a majority on the council. The previous council said that they were opposed to farmer markets and I said how can you be opposed to the free market, and they said well when lots of people get out in the street they riot. I mean you know it is a lot of peoples' view that if you encourage people to get outside and interact, something bad will happen, you know, or people will slip on a banana peel or something real awful. But these cities where I was visiting felt that you wanted to make the city a fun and safe place for people to interact. Seattle has gone one step further than just sponsoring cultural activities or city fairs. They started a project which is called "Kids Place" which is to make the city a safe place for kids and to very consciously try and look at the design of the city and how children use it. I mean that is even more difficult than just making the city safe for adults. But they have created an office. They have staffed it. They are starting to look at things like how kids use the bus system and maybe there ought to be separate informational guides to tell young kids and teenagers how you can get to the zoo or different places on the bus. Obviously daycare is part of it because they have got to have places for kids in the city in terms of day care. How do the kids look at the city? So they started using city schools which is interesting because most city schools never study the city they are in. You know they make papier mache models

of volcanoes. I mean I can't believe how few cities use their urban school system to look at the city they are in. Seattle has now made the city school system part of their Kid's Place program by having kids draw their own maps of the city from their view. You know those kind of conceptual maps that you are probably all familiar with. They what the city means to them how they would fix up the city, what they like about it, what they don't like about it. Then the mayor makes a big deal out of this and publicizes their responses. Again not a big thing but all a part of humanizing the city and making it a pleasant and safe place to live.

I mentioned that one of the themes is citizen participation which is real important. Now how does it take concrete form in these cities? One way is that the city planning process itself gets decentralized and that there are some structures in addition to neighborhood organizations that allow people to participate. St. Paul for example has district councils so that the city is divided up into geographic areas and there is actually a council of citizens where they have a legal right to participate in city planning decisions. Baltimore has divided up the city planning department so that there are district planners for each of the city council districts, whose responsibility it is to only worry about their district and to deal with the city council person and neighborhood groups about district issues. Some of you are probably familiar with New York's community boards, Washington's advisory commissions. There are other cities. About ten cities around the country have tried this form of decentralizing some of the planning process. And everywhere I have been it has been fairly successful. It doesn't solve all of your problems but usually where it has been stopped is where too many people have gotten too active. For example in Atlanta they had a fairly good decentralized system and a so called liberal mayor and Andrew Young came in and one of the first things he did was get rid of the district planners because too many people were getting active in the planning process and they wanted to stop a freeway that he was building through some neighborhoods to Jimmy Carter's presidential library and he had promised Jimmy he would do this and all these neighborhood activists were getting in the way and district planners were helping them. So he had to get rid of that.

But it is one of the reforms that I always think of. It is a structural reform like district elections that makes a lot of difference and a lot of sense in a city is to let people know that there are actual people; structures below city hall that they can use to get involved in planning issues. They are not meant as neighborhood city halls that John Lindsay used to quell riots. I am not talking about a pacification strategy, but actual structures that people individually or through the neighborhood associations have access to that have resources and so they can raise planning issues on a neighborhood level, not just on a city level.

The City of Portland probably has the most active public participation process of any city that I have found. They are redoing their whole city downtown plan now. They have set it up so that they have a commission on the future whole down town which includes neighborhood activists. But

they also have a touring road show that goes to all the different neighborhoods and talks about how the future plans of the downtown are going to affect the neighborhoods. And everything is done in public. All the studies are public. Everything is done very graphically. There are big exhibits showing choices and options and a real public education process goes on. It takes a couple of years to get done. But where they really want to involve people other than just saying we have an elite group that are going to plan the next big urban renewal project, or the development commission or the urban renewal commission is going to do it all. And so they made a conscious decision and it was pushed. It is interesting to see who pushed this. It is a woman who is now on the city council. She started out as a neighborhood activist, mother of five kids who then became a staff person for one of these district councils who then thought well I am as smart as a lot of those guys in city hall and I'll run and get elected. Well now she keeps those values even though she has become a kind of seasoned politician and I have found that citizen or neighborhood activists, at least a couple of them sit in every city council in every major city now in the country. And they are usually people who came out of these neighborhood movements, or sixties movements, which I think is a good sign or step forward.

The last theme or policy orientation that I have found was a new economic policy for cities. What I call it is what they call it in St. Paul. They call it the home grown economy. If you call it the home grown economy in California everybody thinks you mean something else. Again so it is not necessarily a transferable phrase. But the idea is that instead of the old style of economic growth of begging a large corporation to move to your city and giving them lots of tax breaks and other special advantages, you look at your city's assets in a hard nosed business way. You say what are the assets? What are the schools? What is the river front? What is the historical background? What are the skills of the people? And how can we as a city strategically plan, just like corporations do strategically planning? How can we as a city strategically plan to plan our strengths and our assets and develop our local economy? Still we obviously recognize there is a national and international economy. So you can't go against economic trends in any really gross way. But it is amazing how many cities don't consider their assets and then try and develop them with their own folks. What this means is helping local businesses, usually small and middle sized businesses. And of course there are lots of studies to show that expanding small and middle sized businesses at least in the seventies and early eighties have been creating most of the new jobs — not large corporations. Again not to say that large corporations in the city aren't important. But even then what you can do in some cities like they have done in St. Paul where you have fairly progressive large local corporations, they have gotten the large local corporations to donate money for some of these economic projects to develop smaller and middle sized businesses. And there are lots of ways to go about this. You can set up a commission; or more typically you can set up your own corporation which hires professionals to work out a strategy for your city.

I call these professionals public entrepreneurs. Everybody is all hot over entrepreneurs in the

seventies and I think what is important is that there are showing up in some cities people who do these entrepreneurial work but do it for the city. They just don't do it to get personal profits, or to sell their stock options to move in to something else. They use business skills for the overall benefit of the city. And I think it is really important to give this a different style than the public bureaucrat who usually tells you why you can't do something. It is sort of an extreme categorization. What you want with a public entrepreneur is how can we do it? How can we get the resources? How can we do this thing? And how can we do it in a way that fits with our values? Fits within the earlier things that I talked about?

In St. Paul a local foundation which was founded by some of these larger corporations set up a redevelopment corporation in one area called Lower Town. Their whole model of this whole area is to do an urban village which includes mixed uses: housing, artists lofts, farmers market, a new YMCA, a refurbished park, a real nice model of what part of the city ought to be. They hired a very progressive urban design architect named Weiming Lu to be the head of it. He is their kind of public entrepreneur. What he does is tries and makes deals with companies, finds money from foundations, gets UDAG grants, all the things that a sort- of active city bureaucrat ought to be doing and puts these packages together in creative ways to get this urban village built in St. Paul. So they came up with the idea that artists wanted to live downtown and they formed a coop to help artists refurbish some old warehouses that were no longer economically feasible for manufacturing into artists lofts. Then they talked some restaurants into opening in the bottom of some of the old warehouses. They talked to the YMCA to expand into the downtown rather than expanding in the suburbs. And they are putting the package together and they are using the corporate vehicle, a non profit corporation, but again the goal is not to maximize the private profit of the corporation, but to kind of maximize the overall development returns to the city.

In San Antonio Henry Cisneros personally wrote a strategic plan for the city which emphasized biotech and medical. And the reason he did that is San Antonio is very dependent on military spending. It has a number of military bases around it and he recognized that that was not the way to go for San Antonio, that in addition to using their tourist base, he wanted to develop some of the existing health and biotech firms they had there. In order to do that he also had to strengthen he educational system. So part of their strategic plan was to talk the state into creating the engineering school at the branch of the University of Texas in San Antonio, and the other reason he did that is that there are virtually no Latino engineers in the state of Texas. And that is because they don't get into the University of Texas engineering school. So his solution to that was well then we ought to have an engineering school here in San Antonio and then they'll get in and they are going to become engineers. He convinced the state. COPS went down. They lobbied the

state legislature. They got an engineering school for San Antonio. This book that Cisneros carries around, he uses as a guide for the kind of firms that they would like to see come to San

Antonio, as well as the kind that they would like to see expand. And he is also clear when they come that they have to engage in training programs to train local people to work in those firms. So he ties it to the jobs issue. And again he is thinking about it, not that it is easy to do, but he is thinking about it strategically.

In Baltimore, the city has had its own bank, although they don't call it a bank. They call it the trustees fund, which actually has made loans on lots of economic development projects, just the way a bank would, but it takes a long term view, and its interest is in the overall development of the city in loaning them money. It really should be called a bank but it isn't. The city also has an economic development corporation that does a lot of these same entrepreneurial planning projects. Most other cities do. The one that is the most out of the ordinary is Burlington, which is called Commission on Local Ownership, that not only does traditional local economic development but also is promoting worker-owned community owned businesses. That is only because the mayor thinks of himself as a socialist, so he is a little out of the ordinary.

III

But I think that what is important about all of these themes — I haven't touched on all the details — is that if you take them together, they really do have the makings of a progressive urban policy that can be transferred to a lot of other cities. For that to happen you really need a national urban policy and support from the national government. To deal with the really difficult problems of race and class, particular housing, transit and schools in older cities you obviously need national urban policy. I am not trying to pretend that what goes on in these local cities is a substitute for that national policy. But what is important to me is that there is a building block potentially of a national urban policy. One can imagine if you could figure out the political circumstances that would make it happen a national administration that came to power and said "Well what we want to do is take all of these good things that are going on in these different cities, let everybody know about them and give them lots more resources to happen in lots of other cities around the country." That could be one of the major jobs of HUD to do that. Then I think it would be incredibly important to focus national attention on this progressive agenda. I think it has its importance besides its own local importance in the lives of local people. I think it has national significance.

IV

Let me stop there . . . agreements — arguments. If I sound too pollyannish let me know.

Bill: I'd like to give a small response. Then maybe we will all stand up and turn around for a second. Then we'll have time for lots of questions. I'd like to . . . to Ithaca because some of it is a little hard to bring home. It has an aura of sounding California-ish for all of us but I

really don't think it is. I'd like to say why with some local examples I think everybody here may understand. By going through your last and penultimate section which was the themes the programs, the concepts in practice and try to find out how many of them happened actually here in Ithaca. Along the . . . neighborhoods with an appeal for equal balance of city services one section of town on the south side which is the section where there are a disproportionate number of black people in Ithaca live, though it is not by any means exclusively black, in which city services are definitely poorer housing . . . schools have been distributed badly, many school services and the school closings the last ten years have been disproportionately hurtful for weaker neighborhoods. Neighborhood based police protection is something the city has begun to mess around with but not nearly adequate. The downtown there has been an active policy to make the downtown what in this little area you could call . . .

Derek: Did they close off any streets down town.

Bill: The main street is closed and it has made a huge difference for downtown. The downtown business men opposed it for a long time but they did over their dead bodies and it is the only thing that saved them I think in the long run. They opposed it long enough so that a major suburban mall was set up and it hurt them very severely, more than it would have had they acted first. But its been very good. There is a lot of walking space, a plaza, that kind of stuff and there has been activity fostered by pressure from directly interested parties, small scale small businesses, such as the weekly farmer's market which has the same rule you talked about, if you didn't make it here you cant sell it here. Transportation system has improved dramatically in the last ten years again because of this pressure. It is not good but it is a lot better than it used to be. There is no linked development what so ever, something which I think probably the city ought to consider. We don't have an Art Quake but there is a mud day or what ever it is.. The Slush Festival and a summer festival, both of which are I mean the slush festival made the New Yorker last year. It does add to all kinds of local activity. The school district has been prompted, largely by . . . out of this department to undertake for children and for school teachers in the built environment called BEAT — it is a series of workshops and programs that we offer. Citizen participation in local planning has its ups and its downs. There are two big issues right now. One is whether to build an enormous highway and bridge over an inlet downtown versus a dispersed set of bridges. The other is whether the social service program should be moved out of the city into a suburbanized hospital. Citizen groups have been principally interested in the small scale revolution of the transportation system and in keeping the social services down town. Some business interest . . .

Derek: Are people elected at large or by district?

Bill: They are elected by district . . . And votes on certainly the social service issues . . . would have

been very different if we . . . downtown by one by one vote where a democrat would have been obliged to vote the city versus suburban interests. So it has very much become a part of Ithaca politics. . . .The new economic policy — there is a group called TEDI, Taskforce for economic development, which has worked very closely with the mayor and in some instances with the city council to introduce new options for local ownership and this plant closing law . . . and being discussed but a long ways from doing a lot of things. And there is the establishment of the new ice cream shop from Vermont Ben and Jerry's kids run it. . . .

Derek: Is it open? Last time I was here workers were on strike at what was that Bakery. Clever Hans. I never got to go because the workers didn't want me to . . .

Bill: It split. It has reopened and you can go there. . . . So my superficial reaction is this is all California Pollyanna. My deeper reaction is that these kinds of innovations are going on even in Ithaca.

Derek: Even. I would expect no less with Cornell here. . . .

Bill: Why don't we just stand up take half a second. Don't go down the hall. Sit back down and lets get into some aggressive conversation with Derek for the next half hour.

Derek: I think the way Pierre sits encourages sleeping. . . .

Q: . . .I've been involved in Ithaca politics and in planning for Ithaca also for a number of years and you can talk to me on a good day and i can tell you all the corrective things that have happened in Ithaca and look at it and pick out those items that you know, we are a sanctuary city and we have a farmer's market, and we have revitalized our downtown and then you can talk to me on another day and lean remember all the things the battles we have lost and the ways in which even those same items are not corrective. Our farmer's market is now being kicked around. And our downtown is now talking about closing off access to downtown for certain groups. They want to ban bicycles on the commons...things like that so I was wondering how much time Derek spent in each of these cities and whether it was true of all of them that on one day . . . and relative to that also one of the ways in which I think Ithaca and certain cities are different from these other cities is that we are counteracting — we need to counteract more thoroughly the trends of business and activities out of the cities, both out in the suburbs and also out of the whole region. And it makes it more difficult for us to do things like . . . run into any ideas on how to balance development and at the same time counteract suburbanization. In a city like Ithaca where we are inviting businesses downtown so how do we at the same time . . . on them.

Derek: Well you ask two questions. The last one is particularly big. I mean the first one is Basically most of these things are happening in all the cities I visited and my definition of what cities to visit is ones where there was a combination of if not a progressive mayor, progressive people

on the council and active neighborhood citizens groups you know active around these kinds of issues. Unfortunately there are a lot of cities where at least I have been unable to find anything particularly good going on. there are some cities where there are some progressives. Like I have friends in Detroit where there is so much that is going on that its depressing. I mean it is just too depressing to go to Detroit even for my friends who live there. So I didn't pick bad examples or depressing examples consciously because i was trying to cheer myself up while Reagan is president. It was also to try to look for things we could look for, signs of hope for models. Also I wanted to see for myself how progressive were they. How good are they. And even as I said at the beginning even with ail the good things going on in St. Paul lot s of people stay in the suburbs, have already moved to the suburbs. I mean you start out with most of the cities with people living in the suburbs. The question is can you get any of them back or do you just abandon the city. In a lot of cases the option was abandon them or do something. I am looking at the places where they are trying to do something in a progressive way. obviously you are right that in cities that have been particularly hard hit by economic change it is very difficult to focus on these other issues that may seem trivial. On the other hand they are not trivial for people's daily lives. And while you are also dealing with these bigger economic development issues I think it is also important not to abandon people. I mean Baltimore had a lot of plant closing. It has real racial inequality. It has a lot of problems. But it still managed to do a lot of these pro-neighborhood programs go after federal money aggressively, and try and figure out an economic development strategy although that is the hardest thing to do. They haven't solved the unemployment problem in Baltimore. They won't all by themselves. I didn't get into Chicago and Boston but those are both clear examples of where you could have the most left or progressive mayor on city council you could imagine and they are still going to run up against suburbanization, against splits on race and class, against plant closings and economic. I mean there you clearly need national urban assistance and health in policy and they know it too. Still they are stuck where they are so like Ray Flynn who is the mayor does things like plays basketball with black kids in black neighborhoods just to keep people from killing one another, just to show that he cares. And that is not unimportant. It is not all he does but given that people are the state of Boston it is important. He is the first mayor who ever did that. He personally escorted black families to integrate an all white public housing project. And he is trying to do linked development, and he is trying to do things, but Boston is surrounded by white suburbs, and he can't change that over night. It is very, very, difficult and the same is in Chicago. The bussing crisis. I didn't get into bussing but that exacerbated a lot of problems in a lot of cities. The only cities that have managed to avoid some of these ones are the cities that can still annex. It is interesting that the annexation laws differ from state

to state. In north Carolina for example it is very difficult to have suburbs because the cities have the power to annex communities without the communities voting on it. So Charlotte for example, it has a black mayor even though it doesn't have a black majority. It has a very progressive black mayor and the city is in pretty good shape. They have even managed to do busing in Charlotte with out it being too awful. That is because they have annexed all the suburbs and so they have kept themselves relatively speaking. San Antonio has annexed a lot of the suburbs. It has a mixed effect.

It dilutes the Latino vote . . . resources for the city, but a lot of states don't have that option.

Derek: Basically the city decided they were going to fund this whole center city process and it was important to the city. Portland is a city which . . . you know every city basically is making a transition to the service economy of some sort or another. Portland has managed to do it fairly successfully but also it is still a port and they have a fairly good port authority, port facilities so they are a trading center. They have also tried to shift into high tech somewhat. So they have at least a strategy then they have kept the downtown alive so they have created some jobs and culture, arts and downtown services. So they are in a pretty good position compared to the rest of Oregon which is in a depression because of declining housing and . . . sales and a lot of problems in the rest of the state But they fund it directly. They just said we are going to fund it . . . city planning process.

Q: It seems to me strategies like neighborhood coalitions aren't enough — you need more economic coalitions involving business and the labor movement. Do you see that at all?

Derek: Yeah and it depends again on the politics of the local city. Obviously you want to get labor involved if they are willing or interested and you try and find. This is always the trickiest thing to do, people with the business community who want to be good citizens, who are not just out for themselves or their own company. And that really varies from community to community. Different- corporate cultures in different cities. I mean in St. Paul maybe because it is in not near the other cities, maybe cause they are Scandinavian, or whatever. The business leaders there tend to be very liberal and progressive and that is why they have set up the foundations. They are willing to work hard on task forces. They are willing to support a very liberal mayor. In California a lot of business community are to the right of Reagan and you have real difficulties working with some and you often really have to search. I mean it is the politicians job in a way to try and find those people, convince them to work with you and also it means that you can't go at the thing saying you are anti business. You can't go out there and say all business men are bad. You have got to differentiate and deal with people as individuals and really try and appeal to their better nature, some will say they won't and others will. We found in Santa Monica that a lot of small business people found that the chamber of commerce

only represents certain big businesses in the real estate industry and they were shut out so we try to bring them in and appointed them to some of our local development corporations. In San Antonio the business community seemed so relieved that Cisneros is a moderate Latino instead of a . . . sort of Latino that they are willing to work with him most of them. Not all of them. But some. And they like his ideas that he wants to develop San Antonio and so they are willing to work with him.

Q: Having labor involvement is not the same as having a labor association on a city scale. Did you see that any where?

Derek: You mean did I see strong labor movements in any city? Well I'll tell you the labor movement is in pretty sad shape in this country. I say that as someone who is basically pro labor and I was you know on the United Auto Workers economic advisory board but boy there is a lack of imagination. There is a lack of planning. There is certainly a lack of strategy and it is very very difficult to expect leadership or imaginative thinking out of local labor councils you know. AFL CIO councils in most cities have been part of these old downtown growth machines. You know growth . . . which is we'll build anything if it creates jobs for members of the construction trade. We are all for urban renewal. We don't particularly care if we displace minorities. I'm exaggerating but it is true of a lot of cities and it is rare to found a union or labor leaders or even people on staff who have thought creatively about urban policy. They think about jobs for their members and labor issues. And there are exceptions but not any real dramatic ones that I can think of. Host of the creative labor stuff is at the national level where some unions are thinking about being on board of directors like eastern got machinists on the board of directors cause the machinists hired some progressives to advise them as a way to deal with their crisis there. And the UAW at the national level is pretty progressive, but at the local level like in Detroit they never miss. They do anything Coleman Young says. So it is disappointing I must say. But I guess this shouldn't surprise you because one of the things we ought to remember about the labor movement is that a lot of the progressives were all driven out during the McCarthy period. Not just people who were communists but a lot of people who thought that the labor movement was a place for people with a social conscience. And I think in the fifties they were driven out and learned that wasn't the case. And what was left in the labor movement where a lot of people who may be good at service and servicing contracts or they might be good organizers but they were not people with creative public policy ideas. And they also didn't think policy should come from labor, their view was labor protects its members. Labor doesn't think of new policies. And because we don't have a labor party they don't debate policies very often at the local level within a party structure. It is also such a weak local party structure. So unfortunately I may have missed some but I haven't found any.

A few local unions are good on particular issues, like in our case in Santa Monica, the retail clerks union had a good local president who supported our coalition, and we put one of his members on the city council but it was really personal local thing.

Q: Over the last twenty years many many American communities have developed a dependency on federal funds just because they have been available and perhaps . . . inclination HUD money transportation money so on. As they are drying up and many of them have dried up is there some indication in some communities that this will stimulate a grass roots falling back on . . . local resources . . . neighborhood apparatus . . . particularly communities where they have been encouraged or not frustrated and discouraged. However because of this . . . except the fact that this dependency is a kind of paternalistic attitude I see some communities like this one, Ithaca and other communities and this is really what I would like you to comment upon, not so much the Portland and Seattle as the smaller sized communities where there is a strong company town influence. How does that sort of tension and perhaps conquest. Is there a very understandable human reaction to continue a dependency and follow paternalistic attitudes, how does this compete with and coexist with a rising neighborhood influence a grassroots response. Do you get a stalemate or is it a kind of a positive . . . cooperative framework . . . that you see in your national travels?

Derek: Certainly I think it is true that some cities would draw the cut backs would force people to be more creative and rely on their own resources. I think that is a good thing. On the other hand I don't really think of it so much as dependency or paternalistic. My view is that federal national policies created all the problems and the whole situation and basically created the suburbs and created the federal highways and then people stuck in the cities have to live with all that and to the extent that they have gotten any moneys back to help them deal with that I think that is fair and just. I also think that in fact it is true in Europe, that a lot of European countries finance their cities nationally because that is the only equitable way to do it. They take national tax funds and they realize that different cities have different taxing capacities and can't expects cities to deal with all their own social problems with their own resources. so I don't think it is bad to have these federal funds, I just think that right now it is clear that there isn't going to be any large source of federal funding. Whether you think it ought to be there or not it is not going to be there. That really has generated a lot of creative thinking at the local level but you also are going to run up against limits and there are some problems that you can solve and there are others that are real difficult. Like education. I mean urban education is a real real difficult thing to figure out. How to finance it? I mean most big cities with large populations of poor people can't finance it by themselves so they have relied o the state. And in some states now like California where the states have cut back it is a real

difficult problem that no one has figured out whether to say well maybe we should have a tax increase for education and then the people have to ask themselves What is it worth? you know to have the educated citizenry and what do you want to pay for it. I don't see tension between neighborhood groups and federal government programs or funds.

Q: Tension between neighborhood groups and communities that could be described as company towns where the inclination is to use the paternal figure. In this instance it is Cornell University. It is the major industry in town.

Derek: Oh I see what you mean.

Q: You try and substitute Cornell and its benevolence for what the Federal government like it or not it did have a lot of effect over twenty years sharing UDAG

END