

as inherently either good or bad. If we are willing to invest in the effort to make high-rise housing in the central cities attractive, it can be done. We can, for example, experiment with play areas within the buildings, as has been done in Sweden; roofs can be connected by bridges and used for protected gardens; shopping facilities can be included within building complexes; construction can be vaulted above automobile streets to create traffic-free upper promenades for children to play on without fear of traffic.³¹ The use of three-dimensional space, both above and below ground, can be an asset rather than a liability if we have the courage to use it creatively.³²

Costs and Benefits of the Program

What, then, would be the costs and benefits of such a program? In considering the cost, we must not fall into the ancient error of assuming that there is a constant supply of money in existence and that if we use funds for housing we must cut somewhere else.³³ On the contrary, our money supply and financial institutions are most elastic—it is *resources* which can be scarce and inelastic. If we expand the supply of currency without expanding our resources, the effect can be inflationary. In the case of the building industry, we have a reserve of unused resources

in the form of unused technological advances and partial use of manpower (members of one trade are not allowed to fill in on the work of others during their own slack times on a job or during seasonal unemployment in their own trades, etc.).

If the need for these restrictions is eliminated by a program assuring job security and full use of resources, a great unleashing of capabilities is possible. It is also pertinent that the resources involved in a program of building of housing, schools and other such facilities are not in general the same as those involved in whatever military efforts the country may find it necessary to sustain.

The costs of such an effort aimed at making our central cities places of gravitational attraction rather than repulsion because of intolerable conditions allowed to exist there would thus not be material costs at all—they would be the intangible costs of giving up some of the long-accepted and time-encrusted practices of each of the groups involved in the problem. Each group would undoubtedly gain by making the change, but each would have to modify what have been regarded in the past as unalterable principles—such as the practice of appropriating funds for periods limited to one year, or of absolutely forbidding use of certain prefabricated materials.³⁴ The political courage necessary to make this

³¹ See, for example, Savelson, "Housing Over Central Rails Studied by Civic Leaders," *N. Y. World Journal Tribune*, March 20, 1967, first page of second section.

³² Compare "Town Houses in Sky Planned for Harlem," *New York Times*, May 30, 1965, Sec. 8, p. R1, col. 2; Mailer, "Cities Higher Than Mountains," *New York Times Magazine*, January 31, 1965, p. 16; Hechinger, "Rescue Operation for the Urban School," *New York Times*, July 16, 1967, p. E7; Jacobs, "What It's Like to Live in an Experiment," *New York Times Magazine*, June 4, 1967, p. 51. On use of space

below ground, compare L. K. Edwards, "High Speed Tube Transportation," 213 *Scientific American*, 30, Aug. 1965; Clausen, "Sweden Goes Underground," *New York Times Magazine*, May 22, 1966, p. 23.

³³ Compare Givens, "The Coming Industrial Citizenship," 17 *LABOR LAW JOURNAL* 99, Feb. 1966.

³⁴ E.g., The rule involved in *National Woodwork Mfrs. Assn.* cited at footnote 1: "... No member . . . will handle material coming from a mill where cutting out and fitting has been done. . . ."