

# GROWTH, TRAFFIC, POLLUTION

*Heads of European Capitals Discuss Common Problems in Budapest*

by

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**O**n the occasion of the centenary of the unification of Buda, Pest and Óbuda, the mayors of the European capitals met in conference in Budapest at the end of September 1972. It is an established custom for cities to arrange festivals in commemoration of past events; when they are important ones it is common enough for guests from abroad to be invited.

Budapest, however, did not invite the heads of the capital cities of Europe to an occasion dominated by exchanges governed by protocol; current questions of city planning and administration were discussed. It was this that made the occasion unique. It is usual these days for heads of state, scientists, writers, students, sportsmen, members of the peace movement—and the list could be extended—to meet and discuss questions of mutual interest, doing so within the framework of international organizations or independently of them. Human co-operation in special fields extends the scope of peaceful co-existence.

A conference of politicians and experts is nothing unusual today. That is why it may appear strange that no conference of the heads of the capitals of Europe had earlier occurred. Budapest, celebrating the centenary of its unification, was the initiator, but the general acceptance of the invitation showed that the time was ripe.

This could be experienced already at the preparatory meetings. The Budapest initiative was received with approval and interest in the capitals of Europe. The Conference which took place between September 26–28, 1972, was attended by the official delegations of twenty-nine capitals, most of them headed by mayors or the chairmen of city councils.

The fact that so many delegations attended the Conference shows that the positive processes going on in Europe and an international atmosphere

permitting a *rapprochement* between the nations living in different social systems favourably influenced the Budapest meeting.

### *The Will to Co-operate*

What made the Conference a major and exciting one was that the heads of the capital cities of Europe had been trying to cope with many identical or similar problems. In the course of preparatory meetings, the programme, the summary of lectures and the agenda were jointly worked out. The introductory address was delivered by Zoltán Szépvölgyi, President of the Budapest Municipal Council.\* The representatives of the capitals present expressed their support and spoke of those problems which they, individually, considered to be most important. Since the majority had previously submitted their studies—which the Budapest authorities had forwarded to all others—the possibility for an exchange of experiences and working methods was present.\*\*

The keynote of the Conference was struck by Zoltán Szépvölgyi, when he emphasized the importance of co-operation between the countries of Europe and of an exchange of their experiences. He said he looked on the Budapest Conference as an incentive in keeping with the interests of the populations represented as well as the desire for peace and security of the nations of Europe as a whole. He underscored that the will to co-operate and the possibility of co-operation would facilitate, in each city, the successful solution of specifically metropolitan problems.

These thoughts had wide repercussions at the Conference which, by unequivocally demonstrating the will to co-operate, expressed the strength of the links that connect all Europeans. A useful and diversified exchange of experiences took place in Budapest, one that reflected the individual features of the capitals as well, concerning modern ideas of city planning, the possibilities of developing historical cities, the protection of historical monuments and buildings, the avoidability of the breakdown in road traffic and, of course, questions of environmental protection. No matter what kind of municipal question was discussed, human care was always at the centre of interest. One can safely say that the heads of all the capitals were inspired by the endeavour to ensure their inhabitants better living standards than yesterday and higher ones tomorrow than today.

\* See "The Possibilities of the Co-operation of the European Capitals". No. 49 of *The N.H.Q.*

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*Ideas of City Planning and Development*

Throughout the world an increasing number of people move to cities. Not a single European capital had reached a population of one million in 1800. By 1900 the population of London, Paris, Berlin, Vienna, St. Petersburg and Moscow exceeded that figure, by 1970 thirty-four capital cities in Europe already had a population in excess of a million. Fifty million people inhabit the capitals of Europe today. In 1920 scarcely 20 per cent of the population of the world lived in towns; by 1980, 40 per cent will very likely do so.

*Growth—One of the Problems Large  
Cities Have to Cope with*

The extent to which a city should grow has long been a subject for discussion. Nor can this question be answered in a way that is valid everywhere. The increase could mean the growth of the population within a certain area, or an increase in area, that is the incorporation of settlements near the city, or else the extension of the agglomeration. The character and duration of this growth is influenced by regional and geographical properties, by the role of a given city within the country, economic and cultural standards and, of course, by the far-sightedness of city planners. One can safely say that today's level of urban life makes spontaneous city growth impossible. The science of urbanism and city planning has reached a high level and demands planned activity. The Conference clearly reflected the fact that, in the capitals of Europe, city planning is implemented according to carefully worked out general plans of development. Those in charge of these capitals endeavour to acquaint those who live there with city planning programmes, asking them to express an opinion on these plans, and help their realization. The city planning and development programmes of various capitals differ. It is worth discussing three types of these programmes in brief, Moscow, Paris and Belgrade, as an example.

*Moscow*

A plan on the largest scale was reported on by V. F. Promislov, the President of the Moscow City Council. The area of the city is large (about 87,500 ha.) and is surrounded by a circular road. There is no need to go beyond these

limits in order to make essential changes in city structure. The general plan of development covers 25–30 years.

The traditional monocentric city structure is being abandoned and Moscow will be developed polycentrically. Eight complex planning zones will be developed to be connected by a system of town centres. A maximum of one million people will live in each of these zones, that is a 10 per cent increase in the present population of 7.3 million is reckoned with. It should be mentioned that the population will be doubled along the fringe. The basic principle of planning is that there should be a balance between the number of able-bodied inhabitants and employment opportunities, and that civilized living conditions be created in each zone. Since one million inhabitants are themselves the population of a big city, the planning zones are divided into planning districts—with 250,000 to 400,000 inhabitants in each—which again are subdivided into residential sections with an average population of 30,000 to 37,000. These sections are the supply units of the metropolis. They will be provided with cultural and social institutions, catering enterprises, sports grounds and parks. Since employment opportunities and housing will be assured for the inhabitants of each zone together with opportunities for cultural life entertainment, all this will no doubt decrease the burdens inflicted on traffic. The plan also envisages the development and modernization of the industrial potential of the Soviet capital. The factories so far scattered all over the city areas will now be linked up and transferred to the planned production zones. The factories and plants damaging to health will be moved, or else their methods will be changed.

A huge ring of parks and forests will be part of the suburban zones. This will ensure the pure air of the city. This park ring with architectural and aesthetical functions will connect the urban scene with the surrounding landscape.

Moscow's historically formed city centre is situated within the Sadovoye Boulevard. The city centre now extends beyond the old town core and connects all elements of the city's planning structure. The significance of the new structure is that the projects important for the whole city will be implemented outside the Sadovoye Boulevard. In this manner a large number of new work-places can be opened on areas that are closer to the newly planned housing zones, so that the population density of various sections of the city will now be more proportionate.

As part of the city planning project 550,000 apartments will be built between 1971–75 employing mechanized methods of construction. In view of the fact that the high blocks of flats built from prefabricated elements

lent a certain monotony to the cityscape, building methods will be radically changed. The factories will switch over to turning out elements prefabricated on the basis of a unified catalogue, ensuring variety in housing estates in various sections. On arterial roads and in other areas so important for city planning, individual building projects are carried out and harmonized with the townscape. The results of technical and economic research show that in Moscow, it is most expedient to build from nine to sixteen-storeyed buildings, though in certain sections twenty-five-storeyed or higher buildings may also be erected. An important point in planning is the increased exploitation of underground areas for servicing areas helping out the commercial, communal and production centres in the first place, and also projects of civil engineering and underground stations.

### *Paris*

M. Roussille, who represented Paris, told of quite different notions of city planning. The principles of city planning are influenced here by the fact that the site of Paris is too small, no more than 100 square kilometres, and building and population density very high (2.6 million). The expansion of the city within its administrative boundaries is scarcely possible. The municipal authorities of Paris, therefore, keep three factors in view:

- (a) the population density of inhabited areas,
- (b) the height of buildings,
- (c) the geographical distribution of housing and employment areas.

Owing to the extremely high population density the temptation is great to reduce, in practice, the number of inhabitants. This, however, would require "surgical" interventions of a kind that would not be countenanced by the population. On the other hand, a more proportionate distribution of population density through the modernization of fringe areas, new centres in the East, the reduction of overcrowding in historical districts, seem feasible. A reconstruction of the 15th District on the bank of the Seine, and on the Avenue des Italiens in the 13th District, is being planned, in which the large railway stations will be given a central role.

Maintaining population density is only possible if the height of buildings is increased, together with the simultaneous coping with overcrowding in certain areas. Since it is possible to achieve this only through the reconstruction of suburban districts, the municipal authorities are careful not to let a growing wall be built around Paris. They want to ensure the terraced

character of its geographical setting ensured by differing levels and the traditional, historical buildings and monuments. The following zones governing building heights have therefore been established:

- 25 metres in the centre of the city,
- 31 metres at fringe of the Centre,
- 37 metres in the suburbs,
- 45 metres on small, fringe areas where the skyline and view are of no importance.

New residential quarters and housing areas may be planned on condition that building heights are strictly observed and the various architectural and constructional elements are in harmony with the general view.

The municipal authorities of Paris see no possibility for the creation of new housing areas without places of work, or of working zones without blocks of flats. They have therefore chosen a system of mixed zones where a diversity of functions is permitted, in fact facilitated, provided that the predominant character (housing or working area) of the various districts is maintained. In the interest of general regrouping the opening of new offices is not allowed in certain housing areas (7th and 13th Districts) and in business areas where apartment-houses have practically disappeared (2nd and 8th Districts), the authorities give preference to the building of flats. The building of new offices is considered desirable in the immediate vicinity of the major railway stations because the time of travel from homes to places of employment can thus be reduced.

The municipal authorities also endeavour to maintain the conditions typical of the Parisian way of life, conserving, or restoring, the historical, aesthetic, cultural and emotional environment. It is planned that, by the end of the 20th century, employment opportunities in industry will be cut by 200,000 and openings in the servicing industry be increased by the same figure. The size of the population will be stabilized at around 2.6 million.

### *Belgrade*

B. Pesic, the President of the Belgrade Municipal Council, said in his address that, at the beginning of the twentieth century, the city of Belgrade developed unsystematically, without any plan. In this way extensive suburbs sprang up, without communal buildings, which were unnaturally cut off from the old city centre. It became necessary to draw up a general city plan, which was adopted in 1950. Belgrade then had 300,000 inhabitants.

Zemun continued to exist as a separate town. The two towns were separated by extensive, uninhabited, boggy marshland and were connected by just one bridge over the River Sava. Belgrade was situated between two big rivers, the Danube and the Sava, and for historical and other reasons the city had no structural connection with the banks of these rivers.

It was this situation that the general city planning programme wanted to change radically. Since then, New Belgrade has been erected on this earlier boggy area and merged with Zemun and Old Belgrade. It is a specific feature of the plan that it assigns the role of city centre to New Belgrade. Here, in addition to the housing area planned for 250,000 inhabitants, a considerable part of the most important public buildings of the capital will be built, establishing a close connection between the river banks and the capital. The plan has to be implemented by 1980. The size of the population was laid down as one million in the plan. Dynamic growth however speeded up the influx of the population into the capital, so that it already exceeds 1.2 million.

It was necessary to draw up another project, to be carried out by 2000. Its characteristic feature is a further increase in the area. Two million people will live on the vast site of Belgrade by the end of the century. This will include the area of fifteen villages. The increased area will enable the planners to allow for a very airy town structure. The built-in area will be four times as large and the population twice as large as earlier.

The basic purpose of the new city planning programme is "to create a healthy and favourable environment for everyday life". Housing and industrial areas will be strictly separated. New housing areas will be established on the hillsides, along the river banks, mainly in the areas that do not require major investment in the preparation of building operations. In the densely built-up Old Town, the number of inhabitants will be considerably reduced. As a result of these large-scale building operations, by the year 2000 70 per cent of the population will live in an area with a population density of 90-220 inhabitants per ha.,

15 per cent in an area with a density of 90 inhabitants per ha., or less,

15 per cent in an area with a density of 220 inhabitants per ha., or more.

Industry will be decentralized to evenly divided, well-proportioned zones. Soil, air and water pollution will be carefully avoided. Industrial zones will be separated from the housing areas by protective wooded belts. All major roads will run in a "green corridor" which, depending on the character of the surrounding areas, are planned to be 400, 200, or 100 metres wide. The national and international network of motor-roads will by-pass the capital, merely touching it. International motorways and the major Belgrade

roads will be connected by city motor-roads which will touch the central sections, or form ringroads around them.

### *The Threat of Traffic Coming to a Standstill*

This is a problem with which each and every metropolis has to cope. The fact that traffic problems in town centres remain unsolved poses another problem. The heads of a number of capital cities dealt with this subject. It appears that the "traffic explosion" demands radical measures. There is a general tendency towards transferring most of the traffic underground and the construction of underground railways as well as low fares that make public transport attractive to the public serve this purpose. Many big cities try to restrict motor traffic in the town centres. Those concerned are not agreed on whether to adjust the city to traffic demands, or traffic to the established rhythm of the city. There are examples for the skyline of a city being changed in the course of traffic modernization, but the desire to reduce traffic is gaining in popularity.

A number of cities in Europe have a well-developed system of underground railways and others such as Amsterdam, Vienna, Budapest, Belgrade, Prague, Sofia and Warsaw are in process of developing one. Unfortunately, relieving congestion on the surface does not necessarily solve the problem.

W. Polak, the Deputy Mayor of Amsterdam, argued that not only an underground network, but a modern surface one is needed as well, where public transport has precedence over private traffic. As an experiment, trams were equipped with a light signal which automatically switches to green when the car approaches an intersection. What is more, motor traffic is prohibited in certain streets. In these streets public transport circulates freely, and therefore its use by the public has increased beyond expectation. Overcrowding is lessened by the reduction in whole-day parking places. An increase in parking areas is not envisaged. The Amsterdam municipal authorities endeavour to discourage people who wish to use private cars in the city centre, and to make the use of buses and trams more attractive.

In Stockholm—as Ewald Johannesson, President of the Municipal Council, said—traffic is being reorganized in certain residential areas. Several streets were closed to traffic, others were made one-way streets. The bulk of traffic was directed to major roads. Goods traffic avoids the residential quarters, and is banned from the Inner City at night. In order to avoid accidents, the Municipal Council of Stockholm plans to separate pedestrian traffic from vehicular

traffic. This solution is used in more and more capitals of Europe on thoroughfares where traffic is lively.

In Bucharest, which is developing apace, major attention is paid to the modernization of traffic. It could be gathered from the address given by Council Chairman Gheorghe Cioara that, within the system of avenues and boulevards, the number of major roads will be redoubled in a North-South, East-West direction. Rectangular traffic systems are planned in the area bordered by the Main Boulevard. The problem will be dealt with by a widening of existing streets and by reducing overcrowding in the old town core. The city is surrounded by an outer motorway which serves industrial transport, and tangential and transit traffic. This links up the motor-roads which converge on the capital. To speed up traffic and make it safer underground passages making it easier to get to surface and underground tram-stops and bus-stops will be constructed. Public transport will be improved primarily by increasing the bus network. The tramway network outside the central ring will be completely transformed and provided with modern noiseless cars.

#### *The Historical Town Centre*

I have already referred to the function of city centres. Since the capitals of Europe, almost without exception, look back on a long and rich historical past, a town core of historical importance evolved in them. This historical town core is, in many capitals, the city centre even today. The conservation of the century-old historical buildings and architectural monuments in these centres as well as problems connected with the development of town cores and their role in the life of the capital concerned, arise day after day.

Clelio Darida, the Mayor of Rome, dealt with this subject. More than a hundred years ago, when Rome became the capital of the new, unified Italy, it looked essentially as it had between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries. After that, for seventy years, the objective was to adjust the historical town core to modern requirements. In the Mayor's view, irreparable damage was done to Rome. The disappearance of smaller buildings of architectural interest injured the extraordinary harmony of the Old Town. New Rome was in fact built on the site of Old Rome. This process had to be stopped. The problem is not only to conserve the historical town core but to ensure it a specific function. If it were permitted for the city centre to become a business area, or a centre of political and economic administration, this would be tantamount to a series of forced architectural interventions which would finally destroy the Old City. New administrative centres

will, therefore, be built in three different areas, diverting administrative organs from the Old Town. The old town centre would thus resume its old and homogeneous character. The authorities consider it important to keep the population here, lest the old city centre lose its original nature.

A noteworthy plan was discussed by Hervé Broubon, Deputy Mayor of Brussels, in connection with the replanning of the old section surrounding the Grand Place. The city plan prescribes the conservation and restoration of the old façades in the style marks of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The only building permitted is what contributes to the unity of the cityscape. The owners, or tenants, may use only traditional building materials, that is stone, wood, brick, slate or tile. Street lamps are of traditional design. Trade-signs are strictly regulated. Inscriptions may not be placed higher than the first-floor level. In the case of spotlights, the light source must be hidden. Preference is given here to wrought-iron trade-signs of an artistic or decorative character, fixed on supporting pillars. The city supports house-owners in repair and restoration work by

(1) advising them, through its Building Operations Service, on the professional aspect, and by

(2) financial grants to cover up to 25 per cent façade and roof repair costs.

The President of the Budapest Municipal Council also spoke of historical town cores. As a result of the independent historical development of Buda and Pest, Budapest's historical town centre consists of two parts, one on each Danube bank. The Castle area in Buda was once the seat of the kings of Hungary. Its central, administrative character survived until the end of the Second World War. The Castle area suffered considerable damage during the war. Prior to restoration it had to be decided whether the old function of the Castle area should remain, or be modified. The pertinent decision radically changed the function of this section of Buda. The one-time Royal Palace will house museums, the National Gallery and one of Hungary's most important libraries. The Castle area will house scientific institutions, hotels, theatres and restaurants, at the same time maintaining its residential character. The restoration of the Castle area has been practically completed, with the exception of the Palace itself. Historical buildings have been rebuilt, restored and adapted to modern use in keeping with the Ancient Monuments Act.

The town centre of Pest is an area delimited by major roads; the northern part is dominated by governmental, the central one by commercial and catering, and the southern one by university buildings. There are, of course, residential buildings as well. This is one of the most crowded parts of

Budapest. Because of development in unbroken rows, there is scarcely a possibility of finding sites for new buildings. The function of this town centre will not change.

The town centre of Amsterdam, as the Deputy Mayor, W. Polak told the meeting, is the world's largest historical town core. Forty per cent of the buildings have been scheduled as protected. More than 100,000 people are living there even now, though in the second half of the fifties the population dropped by 28 per cent. The aim of the city planners is to maintain the original residential character of the town centre. The large houses built along the canals in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries are now occupied by commercial enterprises. The town centre is the shopping centre, and will remain that. The bigger of the two universities of Amsterdam will be able to keep its buildings in the eastern part of the town center. The present character of the town centre can, therefore, be conserved.

#### *Environment Protection*

Current tasks of environment protection were extensively discussed at the Conference together with the plans and measures destined to ensure a healthy environment and the right conditions for the population. It is a peculiar contradiction that man with his various activities destroys his environment. Engineering and science in the service of man often destroy that environment which, with its natural endowments, induced him to settle down. It is common knowledge that the pollution of the air has already produced tragic situations.

Sir Desmond Plummer, Leader of the Greater London Council, said that the worst smog in 1954 caused the death of 4,000 people in London. This circumstance led to government measures. As a result of the enforcement of the Acts of 1956 and 1968 the quantity of smoke, flue-dust and ashes ejected by chimneys has been considerably reduced. Fuller combustion or transformation of all kinds of fuel under constant control is being envisaged. Heating systems are improved and fuels producing the minimum amount of smoke are used. A compulsory chimney height is given for new buildings, so that residual gases (e.g. sulphur dioxide) may be dispersed over a large area and at higher altitudes. Furnaces are equipped with cinder and flue-dust removing installations to prevent their spread through the air. As a result of these measures, London smog is a thing of the past. The smoke content of the air, as compared with earlier years, fell to one-fifth, sulphur dioxide pollution to half the former quantity. It is planned that London

be smoke-free by 1980. It is worthy of note that the number of the sunny winter days in London is on the increase, flowers and plants are thriving in gardens and parks which earlier could not survive in the smoky air.

In 1961 injuries produced by noise were scientifically examined. It was established that 56 per cent of the population suffered from injuries caused by excessive noise. Traffic was the worst offender. Increasing traffic meant that noise is also increasing, it now reaches even formerly quiet streets. The quiet period at night has become shorter and the noise level over the week-end has increased. The pertinent investigation showed that heavy vehicles are a more important factor than other kind of traffic. That is why the City Council considers it important to reduce the noise level of the goods vehicles, banning them from residential areas, with the exception of local deliveries.

The noise made by air traffic poses another grave problem. London's biggest airport is not only close to the western suburbs, but because of the prevailing south-western winds, 70 per cent of all incoming planes fly low over that densely populated area. People who live there have to sound-proof their houses, 60 per cent of the costs being reimbursed.

Cleaning the Thames and its tributaries involved large-scale sewage-filtering projects. Absorbed oxygen was found to be completely missing in water tests taken in the summer of 1950, each containing nothing but sulphide. Oxygen dissolved in water is an important index of the quality of water. The treatment of sewage meant that only 3 per cent of the water tested in the summer of 1969 did not contain absorbed gaseous oxygen. At present the sewage in half of the London canals can be treated, and a new plan will ensure that all the sewage of Greater London will be filtered. This will ensure that the Thames, which is a tidal river, can in the future be used for recreation.

Ewald Johannesson, the President of the Stockholm Municipal Council, spoke of concrete measures and results. At the end of the sixties it was decided that houses must be liquid-fuel heated in future. The number of heating centres was cut. District heating centres were set up for heating the new residential areas and the general plan is that the heating of Stockholm's inner districts be also dealt with in this manner. In order to reduce the quantity of exhaust gases escaping from the exhaust-pipes of automobiles, the Municipal Council wants to restrict motor traffic in densely populated areas, to increase areas closed to traffic, and prohibit the idling of engines. Research work is being done on the best methods for filtering the exhaust fumes, or to have engines constructed which are less harmful to health than the present internal combustion engines. High lead petrol will be prohibited.

The President of the Sofia City Council, Ivan Panev, dealt, in quite a novel way, with the green belt problem. They want to exploit the natural setting of Sofia by creating an imposing system of parks. The vast green areas in the West and the South will connect the forests of the Vitosha and Lyulin Mountains with the green belt of the capital. Other public parks will be established as well. The connection between the system of public parks and sports as well as the network of health, social and day-nursery organizations and recreation is being investigated as well.

The structure of the system of public parks is as follows:

1. Existing and planned public parks. Both are situated on large green areas, thus forming the basis of the park system of the future.
2. Zones of the capital's infrastructure and pedestrian traffic favourably influence the layout of the settlements, e.g. road parks partly separate them from, partly connect them with, pedestrians' zones.
3. Parked areas of a limited use which penetrate deep into residential areas.
4. The green belt around the capital is formed of the woods in and around the city, ensuring the transition to nature.

Sofia is already called a city of parks; 9.24 per cent of its area are parkland, that is 17.2 square metres per inhabitant. By 2000 this will rise to 25.5 per cent, that is to 50 square metres per inhabitant.

Felix Slavik, the Mayor of Vienna, chose the international problems of environment protection as the subject of his address. He said that the municipal authorities of every city must cope with these problems which thus can justly be called international.

He started out from the fact that the means at the disposal of the various capitals differ. But even if a uniform practice of sorts could be established, the municipal administration alone would be incapable of coping with increasing pollution. Measures taken on a regional or country-wide scale can be effective only in part. A number of problems in this connection can be solved only on an international basis.

He mentioned as a major obstacle that a country which ensures that industry takes measures against pollution, will be handicapped on the international market by those whose industry is not encumbered by such obligations. Some argue that those must deal with pollution who are responsible for it. According to Mr. Slavik, this also requires international co-operation. Distorting effects could only be avoided if various countries pursued about the same practice in environment protection. He considers such international agreements necessary as would guarantee that products

be exported to other countries only if their use or their destruction after use did not harm the natural environment. There are many small countries in Europe, yet not one can afford to permit the importation of only such motor vehicles the exhausts of which are reduced to an acceptable minimum. The situation is even worse in the case of airplanes. The gases of nearly all aircraft pollute the air, yet no aircraft manufacturer will possibly meet the demand of individual countries in this respect. A reassuring solution of these questions requires international agreements. He mentioned, as an example for the efficacy of international agreements, the agreement on atomic exchange under which the artificial radioactive radiation affecting the natural environment has considerably decreased.

### *Representing Fifty Million Europeans*

The Mayor of Vienna spoke in terms of great appreciation of the importance of the Budapest Conference, and suggested that at this first conference of the European capitals a statement be made on the necessity of co-operation, and that this communiqué be made public.

The participants in the Conference carried the motion, and discussed the draft communiqué. After views had been reconciled, the text of the declaration was unanimously adopted. The mayors and council chairmen of the European capitals, representing fifty million Europeans, assessed the result of their meeting in the following brief communiqué:

"Budapest's centenary—the hundredth anniversary of the unification of the ancient Hungarian towns of Buda, Pest and Óbuda (Old Buda) afforded an opportunity to the heads of the European capitals to confer jointly for the first time in the history of our Continent. We had much pleasure in coming together in Budapest and discussing problems that are of high concern to us.

"Representing Amsterdam, Andorra la Vella, Ankara, Athens, Belgrade, Berlin—capital of the GDR—Bern, Bonn—capital of the Federal Republic of Germany—Brussels, Bucharest, Budapest, Copenhagen, The Hague, Helsinki, London, Madrid, Monaco, Moscow, Oslo, Paris, Prague, Reykjavik, Rome, San Marino, Sofia, Stockholm, Vaduz, Vienna and Warsaw, we had the opportunity to discuss at length both the specific and the common tasks set to us by the rapid development of our age. These tasks make it imperative that we co-ordinate our creative efforts.

"Inestimable treasures of art and cultural assets have accumulated in our capitals. The preservation and further enrichment of this irreplaceable

heritage depend on the maintenance of peace. The creators of such values ought not to feel concerned about the results of their labours falling into ruins or burning to ashes. It is our common objective that, starting out from realities, we may further the development of our capitals and the welfare of their population in an atmosphere of security and co-operation.

"This realization prompts us to establish closer relations among our capitals. We deem it our task to promote scientific, technical and social progress by every means at our disposal and to do everything in our power for the peace and security of the peoples and to work for the continuous improvement of the living conditions of both today's and tomorrow's generations.

"We are taking effective measures to cope with the increasing environmental pollution that threatens the health of the population of the European capitals. We will concentrate, counting on the support of our respective governments, on ensuring a healthy environment for the population.

"One of the greatest events of this Conference is that it provides us with an opportunity for intensifying co-operation among the capitals of our Continent. We believe that our Conference is useful also because it can serve as an overture to future negotiations which will, no doubt, contribute to intensifying mutual relations, to the development of our cities and to the enrichment of the lives of our populations.

"We are firmly resolved to pool our forces, with mutual trust, understanding and co-operation, for the realization of our common aims. We are convinced that this resolution and the subsequent co-operation will be fruitful and will serve the interests of our Continent."

I think we may safely say that the Budapest Conference has opened up a new phase in the relations between the individual capital cities of Europe. It can be unequivocally stated that the competent heads of these capitals consider their close co-operation not only possible, but necessary. It is only to be hoped that the Mayors and Council Chairmen of the capital cities of Europe will exploit the advantages of this co-operation and will thus serve the common cause—the peace and security of Europe.

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