

SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE TRAFFIC OF BUDAPEST¹

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1. INTRODUCTION

Previously, mainly in impact assessments connected with the World Exhibition, I engaged in debates concerning various issues about the ideas of traffic envisaged for the capital. In engaging those debates, I partly referred to the lack of a comprehensive concept and partly dealt with concrete issues. Following from the fundamental characteristics of the impact assessment, my remarks were mainly of a critical nature, though I also presented a few alternative ideas. As I see now, further steps must be made in this direction, giving impetus to the elaboration of a traffic development programme for the capital for which reasons can be adduced from the conceptual side as well.

I want to emphasize that it is not "the only possible" programme I am going to formulate, I just want to encourage the elaboration of 'one' possible programme that should naturally be liable to debates. What I consider an important task is just to point out issues in the course of the formulation of the concept which can be debated from a merit aspect. In fact, I regard as one of the greatest problems that like previously the metropolitan authorities dare not discuss and compare actual alternatives even today. There is a strong bias for the metropolitan authorities first to take deci-

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sion on really contestable issues and then to face debates, thereby obliging themselves to defend their own choice.

Hence, I consider as a fundamental and necessary element not only the concrete contents but the very existence of the alternative ideas and plans insisted on farther below.

2. TWO APPROACHES: FINDING A SOLUTION TO TRAFFIC - OR DEVELOPMENT OF A HABITABLE TOWN

Two different ways of looking at things will be dealt with in what follows. At the same time, the concept of traffic will be approached from two different directions according to the way of setting forth, too: one can either set out from the individual problems or assume the set of viewpoints opted for by us as explicit beforehand. In what follows, first I will try to present, and confront, two different ways of looking at things, using here the concrete problems to be dealt with in more detail subsequently just by way of illustration.

2.1 Treatment of bottlenecks and other phenomena

One concept considers traffic as a technical possibility where the planner has the task to measure, analyse and satisfy demands. Though it is this that can be regarded as the traditional design engineer's attitude, a coherent setting forth of this system of values is usually met with rarely. What is more characteristic is to set out from individual problems and refer in the meantime to partial value viewpoints as evidences. The typical mode of approach consists of surveying and describing the various obstacles and bottlenecks emerging in traffic and of formulating plans and proposals for their solution as individual cases. In this case, the establishment of problem ranking, the formulation of priorities implies giving consideration to where problems are most pressing, where there is the longest coherent set of problems, as it is there where intervention is most urgent.

What sorts of reason may be enlisted in support of this attitude? According to this, what people expect is not for others to criticise their ideas, as they don't like to be urged to change their habits, to be made face prohibitions and detours, but they would like to make use of a service, to travel there, then and by the means of conveyance where, when and whereby they just want. If trams or buses are jam-packed, they expect larger vehicles to be put in service and be operated at reduced intervals, or to be replaced by express or underground railway. If car traffic is slowed down by traffic jams, then more lanes, overpasses and larger road surfaces should be made available. If it is hard to find parking lots, then more such facilities should be created, or if this is impossible then multistorey car parks should be built. Accordingly,

the traffic planner has the task to take note of traffic jams, waiting and congestions and to do away with these by way of complying with demands.

According to this chain of logic, every piece of concern is matched by a well-definable response reaction. It is in the spirit of this attitude that until the very present day the "trade" has been referring to what should be constructed, what should central funds be allocated to in order to avoid further traffic jams and the complete unviability of traffic.

Unfortunately, if the financing of the construction of infrastructure is segmentalized and depends on individual decisions, that is, if for every project it needs to be proved on a case by case basis to the allocator of central funds that it is absolutely necessary to provide money for the given project, then really this method becomes the best short-term money-raising tactic, i.e., projects will have the best chance to be approved where the problem to solve, unviability and congestion can be demonstrated most spectacularly.

What is more regrettable than this is that during the systemic change it has turned out that planners themselves tend to believe this tactical element, this system of referring to demands, and even consider it a prestige viewpoint of the trade that they must stubbornly stick to the truth of their argumentation. Thereby the whole of the trade of traffic planning has considerably contributed to helping the whole system of decision remaining unchanged.

The planner's attitude referring to demands always draws the conclusion from congestion that there is little space, and therefore it is necessary to make more lanes and more parking lots available in the very middle of the town. The result is already well known: it is the six traffic lanes next to the Inner Town Church that can and must be used for getting from the town of Miskolc to Lake Balaton or from Vienna to the Great Hungarian Plain; it is at the same point where the Váci street pedestrian precinct is terminated, which, incidentally, cannot be expanded laterally due to the reason that it is in the two neighbouring streets that two multistorey car parks (we could say, the country's all car parks) are to be found.

2.2 Exploration of the roots of problems

Those in support of the other approach claim that it is not the phenomena but the underlying causes that need treatment. The form of emergence of problems does not necessarily coincide with the real problem needing solution. If a network is overcentralized, and today all connections can be established only through the centre, it is naturally in this centre that traffic jams and congestions occur and it is here that no place for parking can be found, and furthermore it appears that it is here that more lanes and stopping places must be created and more bridges must be built. However,

this does not automatically mean at all that the construction of all the above would be the best solution. If, in fact, overcentralization and the main structural problem of the capital are increased by further constructions, then - instead of bringing a solution to - we would just strengthen the consequences which cause congestion. In actual fact, it is not the available place that is too limited in the Inner Town but, due to constrained solutions, it is traffic that is too much, it is the number of cars that is too high there. These problems of structural nature cannot be remedied through either the establishment of further target points in the inner part of the town or enlargement of the Inner Town. Solutions are needed which make it possible for people not to go to the Inner Town with demands for functions that can be satisfied elsewhere.

The key to the solution of lots of problems of the Inner Town is not to be sought in the Inner Town itself, as it may lie in spatially farther off developments. The local centres of the individual districts and parts of town must become more attractive for being able to take some burden off the Centre. An increase in the mutual relations of these outer centres can only make it possible for local inhabitants to have alternative destinations and a choice of alternative travel routes as against the constrained routes leading to the Inner Town. It can generally be claimed that the possibility of choice, a spatial unfolding is more important for the town-dweller himself than an improvement as enforced according to the previous concept, that is, a permanent capacity enlargement to satisfy constrained relations.

2.3 And who does "the trade" consist of?

If the two approaches are confronted, differences may be identified between them not only in respect of attitude and the depth of the analysis of problems, but the extent of the viewpoints taken into account is also different.

Conventional traffic planning wants to find solution to problems always in isolation, and not only spatially isolated, but the same is characteristic of the disciplinary approach to the solution of problems. According to this concept, there are traffic problems which must be solved by traffic-related methods and traffic specialists should be in charge of this. Often the objection is raised to proposals made from outside (irrespective of their contents) that the maker of the proposal is "not one of the trade" and that "the trade" is uniform in rejecting the proposal. (We are of course aware that in various periods the definition may even be reversed and it is the mode of taking stand on a given issue that becomes the criterion of "speaking out on behalf of the trade".)

According to the other concept, the finding of structural solutions is not at all an exclusive issue of the traffic trade. On the contrary, what is expected of the traffic planner is to be able to integrate by his work and mentality with the logic of thinking of the professionals co-operating in the solution of urban structure, town manage-

ment and environmental concerns. The shaping of a future network need not be guided by the direct satisfaction of the daily travel requirements identified but it must be adjusted to the future structure of a 'habitable town' to be established through the joining of resources. What this requires, among other things, of the traffic planner is that he can be able definitely to distinguish his network planning task from, say, that of the traffic organizer of the urban transport company. The latter, in fact, has the responsibility to serve (daily) requirements as well as possible.

2.4 The concept lying behind the chief burgomaster's program

In 1991, the chief burgomaster of the capital, when drafting the traffic programme of the town, completely took a stand in favour of the conventional approach, implying the treatment of individual problems, the resolving of bottlenecks through transport technical methods, and the acceptance of the professional judgements of traffic planners in the narrow sense. (I mention this as a fact and do not claim that it was the result of a deliberate choice.)

What was, in fact, proposed for the improvement of the prevailing situation by János Schulek, author of the programme brochure "Közlekedés, közművek" (Transport, public utilities) [1]

- "It is absolutely necessary to establish overground and underground car parks at well-identified points on the territory of the Inner Town" - then in another passage:
- "The traffic of Southern Buda can be solved only by the construction of an underground railway line, one passing through the Inner Town" - or:
- (Through the renewal of the Csepel fast line ..) "a major improvement may be achieved in the Csepel-Inner Town traffic context" - while:
- The Lágymányos bridge by-passing Csepel (in close proximity) "can be redesigned because of the establishment of a tram line on it ... in a relatively short time" - on the other hand, along the line of the Galvani bridge connecting Csepel with Buda and Pest alike - "it can be foreseen as early as now that ... serious technical and environmental problems will emerge".

All in all, the programme lists a number of general principles (and there are lots of up-to-date ones among them, too) and then, innumerable, all possible connections, including five Danube bridges, after that, however, it defines a priority: it rejects, or postpones to later dates, or makes uncertain, everything what differs from the ideas conceived in the past years by a few planners of the capital. And these plans, unfortunately, want to remedy all central problems through local constructions and all peripheral shortages through making their solution dependent on those central constructions.

Unfortunately, thus, the the programme brochure "Transport, public utilities" is drawn up according to an isolated, sector-related way of thinking, which is unsuitable for resolving traffic concerns on the metropolitan scale. It is from this basic stand that the proposals of the programme follow, thus, in addition to the network elements referred to above and further strengthening spatial centralization, special mention should be made of the cardinal proposal calling for the setting up of a Traffic Development Fund emphasizing sectoral separation and special treatment of the related resource allocations. Thereby, for the implementation of mistaken spatial developments, the sector actually wants to get in an autonomous position of dictation.

2.5 Relationships between problems and the actions aimed at solution

At this juncture I just refer to the fact that in another source [2] I analyzed in detail the mechanism whereby, in view of the structural problems of the capital described above, a game is emerging under which the recurrent experiments at solution (in our case, ever newer attempts to come to solutions through developments in the very middle of the capital) are becoming, in the course of time, the main generator and sustainer of the basic problem. By calling this mechanism "let's have even more of the same", the literature concerned with problem resolving refers to the fact that the conventional "well-proved" methods are in this case misleading and what should be strived after is to manage to get out of the game by a real solution.

3. TWO VALUE-RELATED PRINCIPLES: BRINGING A SOLUTION TO TRAFFIC - OR RENDERING THE TOWN HABITABLE

Herein above, I primarily compared the conventional traffic planner's concept with other possible ones mainly from a methodological viewpoint, from the aspect of the technique of approach, the depth of the exploration of the problem, the extent to which the problem is trade-exposed. Although there was already a combination in the examples, I did not want to go into an analysis of the disparities and dualness of the values of the traffic objective, of the solution chosen.

3.1 The plurality of value-related principles

In reality, the mode of conceiving, of formulating the problem does not emerge as a purely technical issue (implying the depth of problem analysis) but is connected with value viewpoints, too. Accordingly, the conceiving of the problem decides at the very beginning - in the case of the issue of the Budapest network structure as well as of other sets of issues - what result may be expected of solutions. In *Table 1* I list the modes of approach, according to the two different principles of value, of the

most general terms and key elements of town traffic, which implies how the key problem of the individual subsectors is defined according to the given value principle.

FORMULATION OF THE PROBLEM		
KEY ELEMENTS	Traditional traffic planner approach	Environmentally oriented approach
Urban road network metro	missing capacity	over-centralised structure
Passenger car traffic	lack of traffic lanes lack of parking places	air pollution waste of energy
Public transport operation	missing maintenance missing subsidy (of the company)	high expenses, tariffs non-attractiveness (for the people)
Bicycles & Pedestrians	risk of accidents lack of discipline vulnerability	missing lanes health risks

Table 1. Transport problems in Budapest

Here, as can be seen, I have matched the conventional transport sector concept by a possible "alternative" set of values, namely terms and definitions of an environmentally oriented urban traffic concept.

The conventional concept is characterized by the attitude that it practically considers the road surface to be established for individual transport as a goal. From the international comparisons of road capacities, parking lots and levels of motorization it exclusively draws conclusions telling of underdevelopment and shortage of capacity. Simultaneously, pedestrian and cyclist traffic as well as public transport stopping-places are, according to this planning concept, by no means priority objectives but factors disturbing vehicle flows.

The environmentally oriented set of values is, in many respects, just the opposite, where priority is unambiguously accorded to the pedestrian, the cyclist, the public transport passenger. According to this concept, it is the car that becomes the factor disturbing the pedestrian way of life (risk of accident, health hazard), which definitely needs to be eliminated from many urban areas while at other places the damages caused by it must be reduced.

I consider it important for the judgement concerning the set of values to be distinguished pronouncedly from the methodological, technical issues dealt with above. The acceptance of the set of values is unambiguously a social issue and not a professional one in the planning technical sense of the word. On the basis of his conviction, a planner may declare himself to be in support of one of the sets of values and may promote its assertion, however, this should be done by him as a social activist and not as a professional.

At the same time the planner as a specialist is obliged to do planning, within the scope defined by the given set of values, by the use of up-to-date methods and with all circumspection. Although there are no financial circles and lobbies in support of the interests of pedestrians and cyclists which would make these an actual hazard, on the level of planning also a partisan of the environmentally oriented set of values may commit various mistakes referred to above, such as intervention without an analysis of the problem, lacking due knowledge of real relationships and on the basis of mere symptoms; concentration on an unlimited enlargement of the pedestrian precinct already established instead of the establishment of ones initiated in other districts, on the technocratic viewpoints of traffic planning in the narrow sense with reference to "demands" and simultaneously leaving all other aspects out of consideration; ignorance of harmonization with other trades and plans, planning without alternatives or the presentation of alternatives unsuitable for real choice, sticking to a single solution, inadmissible corrupt interweaving of interests, immersion in plot and real estate related speculations.

When in what follows I am, then, going to set forth in detail my ideas connected with an environmentally oriented set of values, I by no means want to propagate anything as a single possible solution or a imposed taste to be realized on the basis of a set of values differing from the currently prevailing one. However, I consider it necessary to prove that it 'is' possible to conceive a metropolitan traffic concept on the basis of a set of values showing greater sensitiveness to the environment and in reliance on professional traffic planning methods. I remark it only in parenthesis - in order to avoid overemphasizing my own value-related principle - that I also hope to see it proved that this concept, actually, makes life in the capital more pleasant, more attractive, and - what is by no means incidental - essentially cheaper than the concept represented today officially.

3.2 New priorities in the life of the capital, in traffic. A vision.

We must imagine a capital where environmental values, the traditions of the past coexist with the present-day inhabitants and represent meaningful contents and values for them. From the traffic aspect, this means a town where it is the pedestrian, the cyclist, the public transport passenger that enjoys priority.

The priority of the pedestrian shall mean that residential streets must be revived in the town. The street should not, primarily, be a storage place for vehicles and garbage-disposers but part and parcel of the living space of those having their homes in the street. This requires that respect for the pavement should be restored. The pavement must be protected from motor vehicles, from dustbins, from kennel dirt. It should be made possible for those affected to get everywhere with their prams - or invalid chairs -, and where this cannot be ensured on the pavement, unambiguous signs should be used to warn road users that absolute priority shall be due to the pedestrian over all other modes of transport. It must be ensured that the street can be cleaned, for which parking must be regulated so that cleaning can be done on at least predetermined days.

Today inhabitants tend to turn their backs on the street, as what can be expected from there is the noise of traffic, dust, and polluted air, from which - with good reason - they would like to be isolated and for which reason they prefer staying in their flats. This turning of backs is well illustrated, symbolically and in reality, by the fact that while previously the storage place for dustbins was the back staircase or the back-yard, today in most houses it is the doorway or entrance-way. Unfortunately, the more people turn their backs on the street, the more this becomes something alien, the empire of strangers, as for the people locking themselves up even the neighbours become alien.

The priority of the cyclist shall mean that it must be ensured for everybody wanting to use their bicycles to do so and be able to get by that means everywhere in town. It must be ensured in this connection - and special consideration must here be given to teenagers - that safety and security should be provided for everybody and they should not suffocate from the exhaust-gases of cars. Facilities should be made available for the safe storage of cycles (and prams) so that these need not be taken up to, say, the fifth floor. Naturally, all this implies not only planning and regulation tasks but also ones of building and surface reconstruction, which may sometimes be quite costly.

Giving preference to public transport shall mean that the use of public transport vehicles must be made attractive (as against car use). At variance with the general belief, this is not just an issue of financing. It is also one of regulation and competitive conditions concerning public transport companies but, at this juncture, I would prefer emphasizing the relevant desirable goals, including an improvement and more

careful planning of the conditions of changing trams or buses, the restoration of longer services instead of the short-cut lines reduced to a feeder service status. In general, priority must be given in the organization of public transport - and even of the whole traffic system of the capital - to the viewpoints of the passengers to be transported as against operational viewpoints.

This shall not imply a transport made either free or cheap. In fact, what means improvement from the aspect of the life of the whole of the capital is not - at variance with the general belief - that transport in the town shall be made outstandingly cheap through an input of major sums withdrawn from other beneficiaries for reallocation. A transport artificially made cheap makes the economy and the population insensitive to distances. The greatest problem in this connection is not what transport senses itself, namely that the consumption of this service becomes wasteful and unsatisfied demands emerge. (Naturally, this is also a problem, and this very fact makes public transport of an unacceptable standard and, despite the price differential, is not attractive for a great number of car users.) Actually, it represents more serious consequences for the shaping of the urban structure if the cheapness alone of the urban transport urges people to travel to "the" centre for everything, and people in fact do so, as this would restrain an assertion of the "local market - local entrepreneur - local resident" self-generating process, that is, no local developments would take place, no local trade and entertainment facilities would be established, and not even jobs would be created locally, or in brief, no local subcentres and local markets would emerge.

Taxis should feature various assets not in comparison to the above public transport modes but to individual transport, including the possibility of access (with considerably reduced speed) to various major areas closed to vehicle traffic in general.

An increasing proportion of the restrictions - indispensable from the viewpoint of the whole of the town - of the individual use of cars shall be made subject to flexible and self-regulating measures instead of to strict authority controls. Such flexible regulation may imply road pricing in the busiest central areas - not free from traffic - in relation to not only parking but the time of stay, at all, within the whole of the zone, or making it an exclusive right of residents - in the zones partially closed to traffic - to hold one (or less) parking licence per flat, which could possibly even be offered for sale.

In conclusion, following the key elements according to Table 1 in a backward order, we come to the issues of network development. Since this is again a topic which was dealt with in detail [2] in the previously cited article, here I just mention that - although a professional methodological theme is at issue - the question of the promotion of network development 'outwards from inside' or 'inwards from outside' has got in the currently ongoing debates as a principle-of-value based case of confrontation. Naturally, I consider only an 'inwards from outside' type enlargement of

network capacities as acceptable. In actual fact, this principle is no longer called in doubt even by the professional community, yet it is just the opposite which occurs in practice, sometimes on the grounds that the available scarce resources are sufficient only for this (which is diametrically opposed to the accepted principle of priority) or more frequently without any justification of principle, merely as part of the ad-hoc type problem solution attempts dealt with previously (enlargement of the capacities of services taking traffic to the Inner Town).

4. CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS

Having presented, by way of introduction, both the methodological and the value-related principles, farther below (Chapter 5) I want, in reliance on them, to deal with various sets of problems concretely emerging in the capital. We could see at any rate that fundamentally it is manifest as early as at the presentation of the state of affairs what we consider as the problem to solve. Therefore, here and now, I am going to insert a special subchapter concerning this issue, despite the fact that I don't regard as my task to immerge at this juncture in an extensive and comprehensive analysis of the situation. At the same time, I consider the plans, principles and proposals already formulated as part and parcel of the "situation".

4.1 Interpretation of the facts

For the statement of the state of affairs I make use, with due criticism, of the publication on the principles of the development of traffic in the capital brought out in June, 1992, by the Transport Department of the Chief Burgomaster's Office. [3] I am going to make use, concretely, of the seven figures included in the publication concerning respectively public transport and motor vehicle traffic, which can be accepted as facts with no comment. At the same time the text describing the situation is concerned on six pages - except for two lines - with the presentation of quantitative capacity shortages and making the reader aware that all this is to be attributed to a scarcity of funds. This is in full compliance with the problem approach of the conventional traffic planner's concept as is contained in *Table 1*.

I don't want to call in doubt that the fixed assets and the rolling stock of BKV (Budapest Transport Company) have grown old, as have the road, rail and suburban tracks and the operational facilities. The situation of road traffic - the publication claims - is even more serious; due to the underdevelopment of, and the lacking sections in, the road network the number and graveness of accidents is increasing. At a large number of junctions signalling equipment would be needed, and a great proportion of those where there are such consist of obsolete devices, and account must in addition be taken of rail/road level crossings. "This state of things is an outcome of the fact that road management has faced a shortage of the necessary resources for

several decades, as a consequence of which Budapest has not been able, until the present day, to eliminate the deficiencies mentioned and thereby to pull even in tackling the tasks it is in charge of."

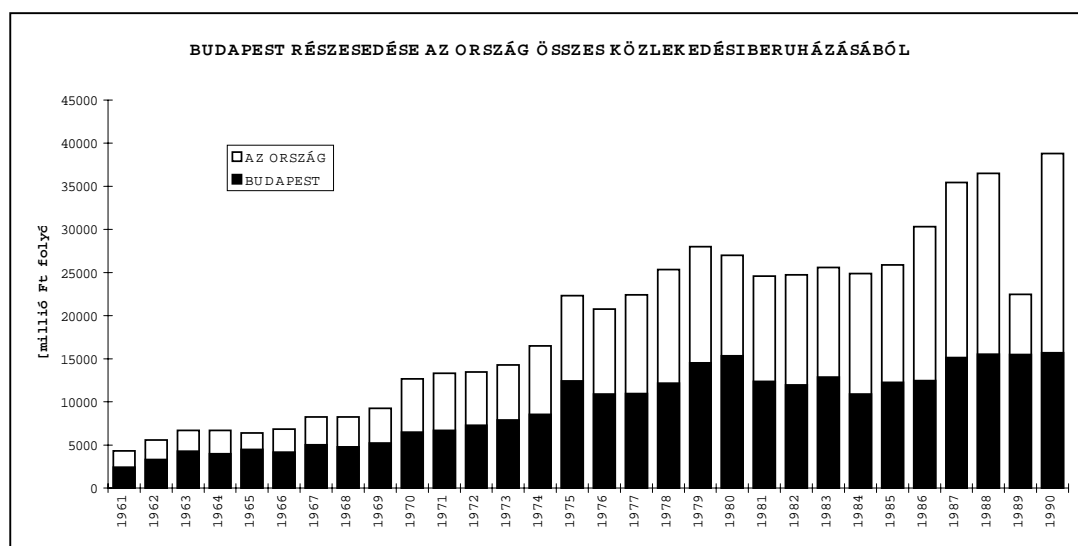


Figure 1. Budapest's share in the total transport investments of the country

In connection with the above, I consider it necessary to present *Figure 1*, that shows what proportion of the national-scale transport and telecommunication investments has been allocated to the capital since 1961. The proportion is lastingly close to, or exceeds, fifty per cent, though the trend is undoubtedly of a declining one. 1989 was an exception.

The major disparity is explained by the fact, that while the relevant funds available on the national scale declined considerably in 1989, projects in the capital continued to be implemented, raising the proportion to 68 per cent.

Naturally, I am aware that much more money could be spent on the whole of the national infrastructure, yet, since the proportion of projects in the capital exceeded, with a lasting trend, the share of the Budapest population to a more than twofold extent, it is realistic to suppose that not much more external funds could have been allocated to the traffic of the capital even if the amount of total expenditures had been increased considerably but that within the framework of a more even national-scale distribution.

It would be high time to give up the tactics having been considered determinative in the redistribution-characterized system which explains every problem by the shortage of financial funds and it would be necessary to analyze why all money has been absorbed while tensions and lags have continued to increase in the meantime. In the previous chapters I tried to make it clear that, according to a stupid investment

mechanism, funds were used for just symptomatic treatments resulting in not a resolving of problems but just their pushing off and their simultaneous growth like a snowball.

It would be necessary to deal with this even if it were just a mistake of the past, as the lessons that could be drawn would even then be worth considering. But unfortunately, this a mistake of the present: nothing has changed as regards the identification of problems, the queuing up for external funds, the unilateral presentation of the situation, and the ignorance of an analysis of the mistakes caused by ourselves. In the presentation of the situation, no reference is found concerning public transport and just one is found, in the source mentioned, regarding the structural problem of the network. This reference ("Outside of the zone encircled by the Grand Boulevard, the network of main roads lacks, or is deficient in, circular and transversal elements complete with bridges over the Danube in the southern part of the town.") is a typical example of the "it is as if I had revealed something" style analysis of the situation, since what it wants is to refer back from a planned action to the underlying problem rather than it is the result of a real analysis. Actually, this sentence could as well be used in support of the action aimed at destroying [4] the structure of Józsefváros district or as justification of the need to build, say, the Lágymányos bridge or the Galvani bridge.

The unilateral presentation of the situation makes also those passages appear lacking creditability where reference to the shortage of funds is justified. It is in fact true that the maintenance of the existing facilities was definitely neglected by the same mechanism which competed for investment funds, since for obtaining funds it was just a reference to the crisis situation that provided a dependable bargaining position, in which connection it was always a trump in hands that the stock in a poor state could be referred to. Today, thus, the poor state of the infrastructure and the public transport fleet of vehicles is a matter of fact, and it will be like this as long as developments depend on ad-hoc mechanisms of bargaining for external resources.

The presentation, on one and a half pages of the publication, of the environmental nuisances and accidents caused by traffic is likewise unilateral. For the most part, accidents are dealt with, and no mention is made here either of the fact that congestion may be caused not only directly by capacity shortage but also by problems of the structural network. Environmental nuisances or the deterioration of the quality of the environment is likewise attributed to overcrowded roads, congestions having become a regular phenomenon, and the large volume of traffic - in addition to the obsolescence, composition and poor technical state of the fleet of vehicles -, but no attempt is made to move further and explain traffic jams and congestions by structural causes. Due to this, those reading the presentation of the situation come themselves to the conclusion - suggested by the publication - that it is a shortage of

capacities that causes congestions, that is, there was not enough money available for developments, and environmental problems may be attributed to this same cause.

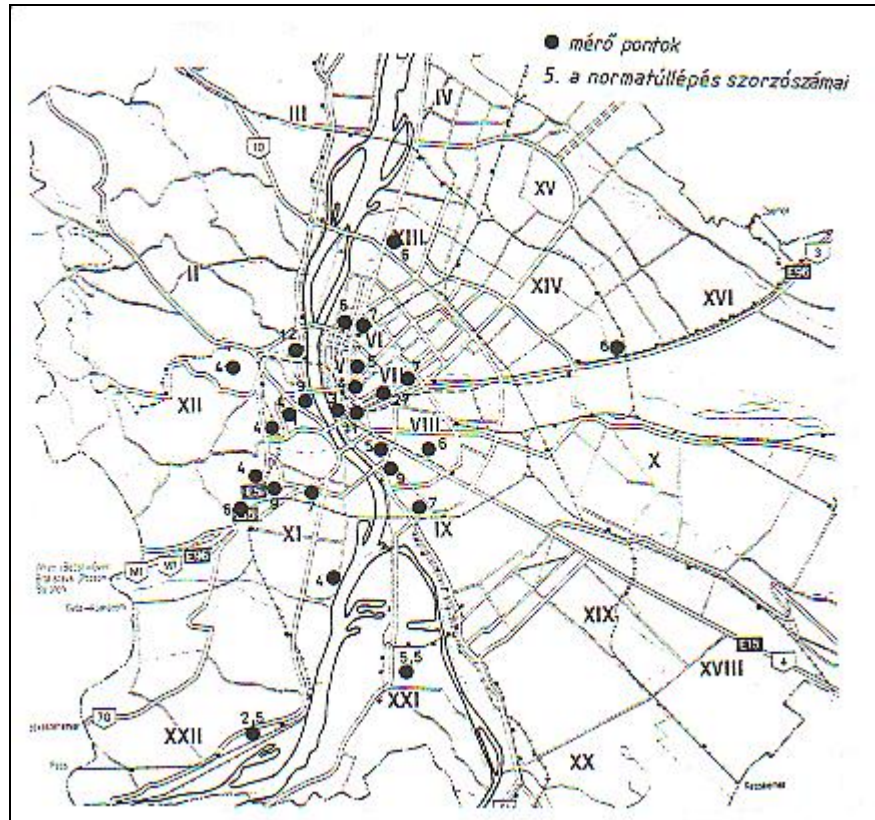


Figure 2. How many times is lead pollution higher than the permissible loading? Situation at some selected points with heavy traffic of the town (annual average loading)

On my part I consider it indispensable to add a survey to the environmental situation. In *Figure 2*, I am going to present the most polluted areas on the basis of last year's lead pollution measurements [5]. Perhaps it is not superfluous to mention that the highest values above the limits (respectively 19 and 27 times higher ones) were recorded in Kossuth Lajos street and Rákóczi street, that is, in two areas where there was money available for development and thus the dream of traffic planners was realized, including the construction of an underground, the elimination of tram service, and three-lane vehicle traffic in either direction. This problem cannot be remedied through capacity enlargement, but it can be achieved through developments of the same type that similar states of environment evolve in Southern Buda and in Bartók Béla street.

On the basis of the figure the conclusion can be drawn that four times higher-than-permissible lead emission values can be measured on the annual average also

along the "less important" or "peripheral" thoroughfares. On the grand boulevards (Nagykörút, Hungária körút) the values tend to be 6 or 7 times higher (which holds good of Bocskai street and Budaörsi street, too), whereas along a number of roads there are even 9 times higher values: such are - in addition to Kossuth Lajos street already mentioned - various sections of Nagyszőlős street and Soroksári street, as well as Adam Clark square. Except for the last one, the others have definitely been developed for handling vehicle traffic, representing access roads to the capital.

4.2 The declared principles of development

I continue referring as "publication" to the work cited, entitled "Principles of development of traffic in Budapest". In it, half of the text is made up of the principles of development, divided in sections respectively entitled 'comprehensive viewpoints, public transport, and road traffic'.

Before going into details, it is necessary to make mention of two very general types of "making proposals". One is the case when the planner has a preconceived action of development, and the problem is named only afterwards, so to say in support of, and justification for, that action. The other characteristic case is when really existant problems are set out from, however, a "solution" is wanted to be brought to it too quickly, without analysis and understanding, by giving answer directly to the symptoms perceived. (Characteristic examples of this type of "solutions" are the guidelines and programmes which identify difficulties one after the other, then they describe these as solutions in the positive sense, adding the requirement that "it is necessary to ..." or "it must be achieved that ..." etc. In fact, such declarations are nothing else than a demonstration of the will to change, at the same time they hide from outsiders the fact that those making the proposals have not the slightest idea of what should actually be done.)

The development principles of the publication offer a fair number of examples for either type. Under the title 'comprehensive viewpoints of development' the publication considers as very desirable the extension of the spatial centre of the town, since in want of this "a further concentration of functions cannot be hindered". In my previous article cited I set forth in detail - here I am just referring to it - that an enlarged centre will not provide an actual solution but it will expressly strengthen the 'mono-centre' structure of the capital. I must definitely call attention to the fact that this issue is not at all settled, it may be called in doubt, and it isn't particularly as axiomatic as is suggested by the publication. Further on, the publication deduces the series of relationships which I have previously presented as a conventional traffic planner's attitude, which claims that due to lags we are in a constrained situation and in want of money and time only an easing of the most serious concerns may be priority number one. Only a satisfaction of the already existing demands, a making up for lags may be first and foremost among the tasks, which "must come before any

projects of district development giving rise to new demands". According to this logic, demolitions in the centre of the town in compliance with the "requirements" of capital is equal to meeting "existing demands", and the extension of the centre, the displacement of local residents, the doing away with long-existing streets, and the penetration of banks are not projects of downtown development stimulating new demands, on the contrary, these are viewpoints of all-metropolitan interest!

In the publication, it is the proposals concerning the development of public transport that are best elaborated. The main proposal calls for a uniform and spatially extended network (covering the town and its environs coherently served by trams, trains, buses and boats). The relevant conditions are fully, or at least partly, covered in respect of the requirements for planning, organization, capacity utilization, change-stops, tariffs and passenger information. Among the proposals affecting network issues, those are to be highlighted which urge the completion of the construction of the tram line along Hungária körút - designed among others to re-establish the unity of the much broken-up tram network -, the completion of HÉV suburban train connections, the development of M_V railway connections according to similar principles, as well the peculiar justification of the DBR (Southern Buda-Rákospalota) underground line, in which connection Inner Town - Southern Buda, and Inner Town - Zugló - Rákospalota sections are mentioned, which "route carrying heavy traffic flows could be made free by the underground from the disturbing effects of road traffic and weather conditions". As regards the last remark, I already mentioned before how 'successfully' the underground could free Rákóczi street from road traffic. Farther below (in Chapter 5), I will try to leave the 'one problem - one proposal' methodology out of consideration and deal with the above network problems in their coherence.

Regarding road traffic, there are relatively many meaningless "solution must be found" type proposals. Unlike this is the proposal for network development, which definitely lays down the top priority: "It is necessary, first of all, to build a bridge most suitable to take a good deal of burden off the Inner Town as well as Szabadság Bridge and Petőfi Bridge, which latter could occasionally also be replaced by the new one. Although those familiar with the trade jargon are aware that this development outwards from inside is intended to mean the priority of the Lágymányos bridge, it is all the same good that a basic principle is laid down which, at least, can be debated. In fact, the basic principle reflects well the strategy having been consistently represented for a decade which uses as a weapon the fact that in view of the state of bridges it is necessary to close a bridge every ten years for three or four months, in the worst of cases, and it is then on this basis that structural developments having implications for several decades ahead are wanted to be decided. As to the total elimination of tram service from Szabadság Bridge, I am going to deal with this in connection with the public transport network in Chapter 5.

As regards parking, the development principles take account of conventional modes for parking regulation and no mention is made of the setting up of multi-storey car parks in the Inner Town. I can only welcome this idea, however, the relevant stand should be made explicit, as thus one may just think that one chapter happened to be left unincorporated.

The principles concerning pedestrian and cyclist traffic are in accordance with the value-related principles here made known (Subchapter 3.2), nevertheless, these principles are hard to bring in harmony with the development principles of the publication we are criticizing.

5. SOME CONCRETE MATTERS

5.1 Various issues of public transport

As I have already said the endeavour to establish an integrated public transport system may be considered a good starting principle. I also agree that full consideration must be given to the consequences of this practically along the whole vertical line of public transport presented above. In what follows, I am going to deal in some detail with a few selected relationships.

5.11 The role of the railway. A Budapest RER.

The integration of the railway into the transport of the capital is one of the issues with which every transport specialist agrees in principle, then it is explained by a competent official of either BKV (Budapest Transport Company) or MÁV (Hungarian State Railways) why the thing will not go, and this has been the case for ten years now. Most recently, as if there had been less resistance on the issue, from which the conclusion may be drawn that the respective transport companies' counter-interests have perhaps lost in intensity in the meantime.

No doubt, the issue was very often raised from outside as a "free" express line solution, in response to which MÁV mostly said that there was no free capacity on its lines. Actually, both sides were right, but no further explanation was given, which would have made the context interpretable. The regional railway RER doing service in the environs of Paris and referred to most often can in fact be claimed only by a superficial outsider to use the tracks of the railway. It would be more correct to say that RER just uses the territory of the railway, the transport channels of the railway passing through the town, or rather, the environs of the town. In actual fact, railway stations put out of service were, at several points, transformed into RER stations, or the regional train runs along routes where previously SNCF tracks were laid down. At any rate, an essentially separated operation is at issue.

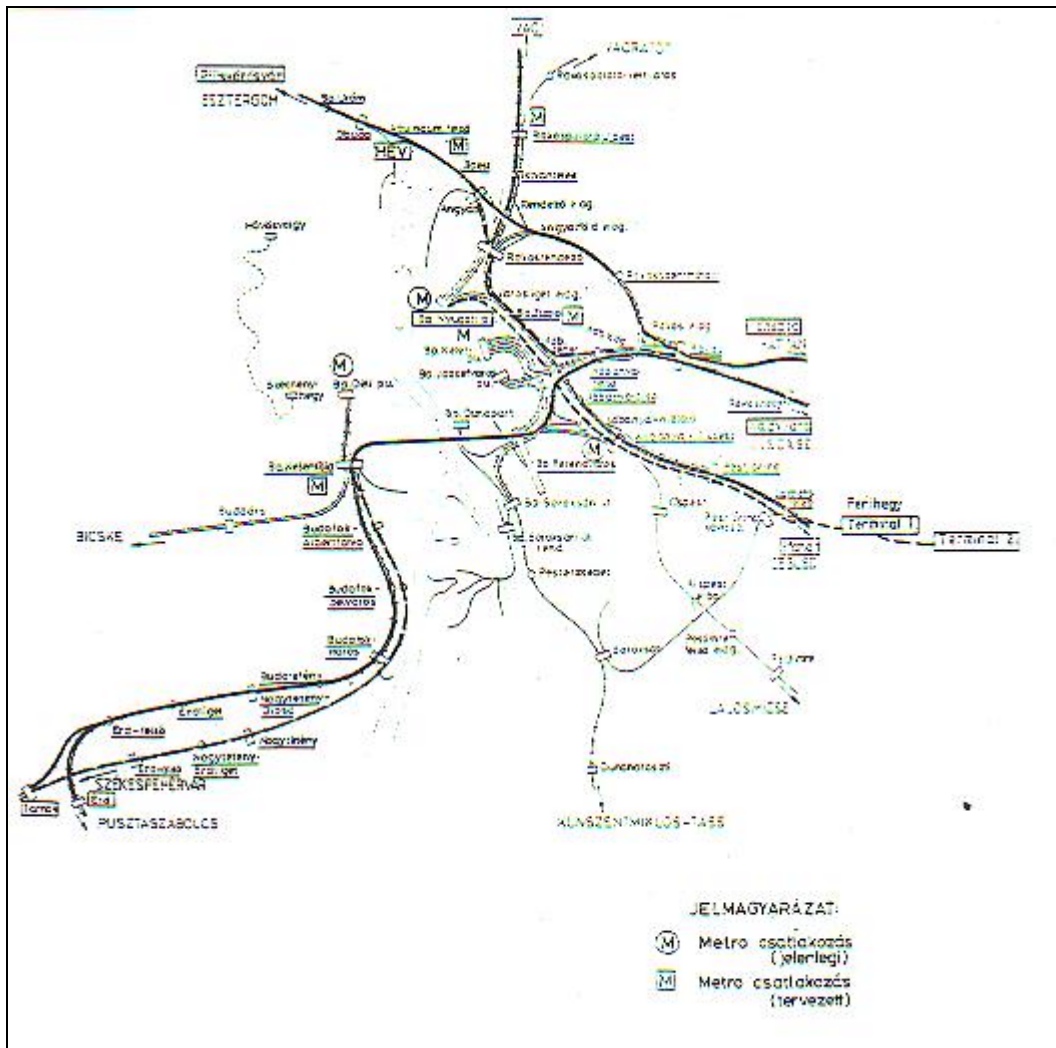


Figure 3. Expansion of MÁV's involvement in Budapest's suburban express line service

An intention of making progress is reflected by MÁV's latest long-term development programme [6] which, referring to examples in Frankfurt, Munich and Vienna emphasizes that "following a corresponding upgrading, the lines of the railway passing through given in-town regions, could be used well in helping the handling of the suburban transit traffic of the metropolis". *Figure 3* is taken from this document, showing well how three pairs of railway tracks, touching tangentially the major core area of the town, actually encircle the capital. The first line establishing connection between Vác and Monor includes the section Budapest Western Railway Station to Ferihegy Airport. Similarly, the core of the town is fairly approached by the Érd to Nagykáta line, whereas the Pilisvörösvár to Nagykáta line could establish connection with an outer circle.

The viability of solutions in terms of time is wanted to be proved by the same concept through presenting the possibility of a major MÁV involvement in handling the traffic of the 1996 World Exhibition, too (*Figure 4*).

Now apart from the programme cited, I would add that under a somewhat major project a connection could be established between the Érd-Kelenföld-Ferencváros railway line and the Vác-Rákospalota-Ujpest-Zugló-Kôbánya railway line crossing it (*Figure 4*), and then we would have a substitute solution for the Southern Buda-Rákospalota underground, while bypassing the Inner Town at that! Let's see what would be necessary for the realization of this.

Naturally, it would imply more development than in the cases mentioned by the programme. In fact, the burden-easing effect of the latter would not be little on its own: according to the optimistic estimate of the programme some 5-8 per cent of the urban traffic and about 15-20 per cent of the traffic in the agglomeration could be channelled to the railway. But if the substitute connection between Southern Buda and Rákospalota would be chosen instead of an underground line, which would make a 200 billion forint project dispensable, in the longer term further additional projects could be implemented.

One would be the following. By the completion after the turn of the century of the building of the Szár-Baracska-Dabas-Cegléd network section, actually forming part of the Székesfehérvár-Szolnok route bypassing Budapest and included in the programme, a third track on Budapest's Lágymányos railway bridge and a fourth track to be constructed as a special one instead of a road bridge could fully serve the town's railway connection, substituting the underground as regards not only its route but also its capacity.

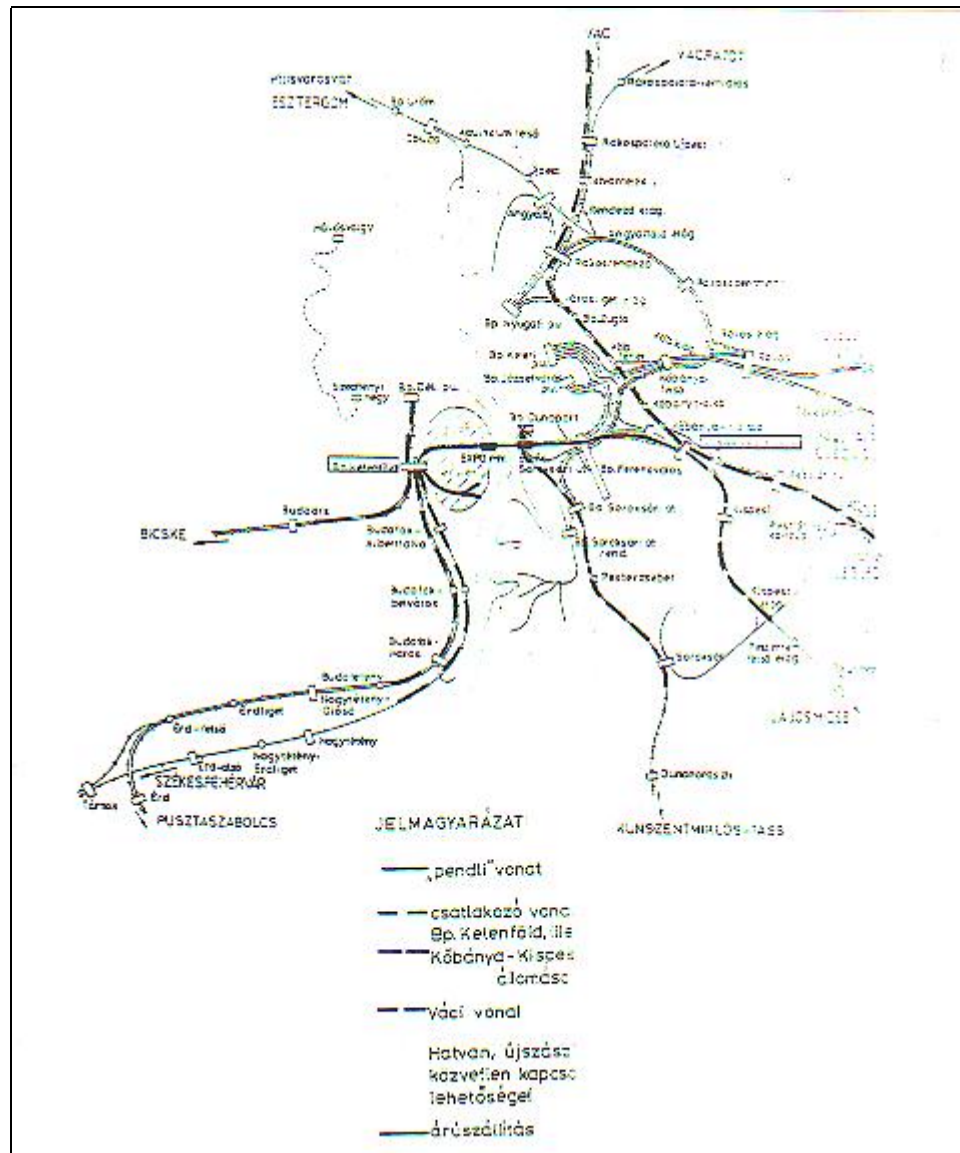


Figure 4. The possibility of MÁV's involvement in handling the traffic of the EXPO'96

5.12 And the other reasons in support of the underground?

The MATRA firm is undoubtedly one of the most aggressive forces wanting to construct the underground line. It would obviously be poor consolation for it that while its product remains unsold at least it would earn the 'gloire', in view of the fact that the model of the Paris RER would be followed.

As regards the domestic reasoning - apart from MATRA's individual interest in the project - usually the following arguments are adduced in support of the construction of the DBR underground line:

- The growth of the built-up urban areas towards north-east and south-west has extended beyond the distance which still can be served by surface means of transport with acceptable travel times. [7] (This argument is fully met by the railway connection.)
- The capacity of Bartók Béla street has been exhausted,
- Tram traffic must be eliminated from Szabadság Bridge,
- The bridge must be closed down for a time.
- Petôfi Bridge must also be closed down for a while, because of an exchange of buttresses,
- No more No. 7 buses can be run on the line. Half of those living or staying in Southern Buda use this bus to get to Ferenciek square in the Inner Town,
- Surplus capacity is needed between Astoria Hotel and Eastern Railway Station, as the capacity of Underground 2 will get exhausted.

This reasoning focuses on a single set of ideas, namely, capacities must be expanded where currently there is a busy traffic. In fact, in paragraphs 2 and 3 above I have already pointed out in general that this mode of approach is good only for making problems last longer or, at most, shifting them from one place to another. I have also pointed out that a similar "aid" to the Inner Town - the construction of an underground line under Rákóczi street - has not at all been of any help, on the contrary, the underground plays a decisive part in the evolvement of the present situation, where three lanes in either direction carry a motor vehicle traffic, similar in size to that of a motorway, along the axis of the Inner Town.

Actually, all these problems could be solved much more simply, by transferring the tram lines designed to be eliminated from Szabadság Bridge to Erzsébet Bridge. From this latter, tram lines had to be eliminated not long after the opening of the bridge to traffic in 1964, due to an unsuccessful invention of about that period of time, a technical solution proving unviable, implying the building together of the tram track with the main girder. Naturally, it is technically quite possible to lay again tracks on the bridge, with the interposition of a conventional load distribution structure. Complete with the re-establishment of tram traffic along Rákóczi street, this would of course be by no means cheap, yet it is much cheaper than the construction of an underground line.

Besides, the solution would feature enormous environmental advantages. It would increase the passenger throughput of Erzsébet Bridge, and simultaneously it would begin to recapture the road surface for passengers and pedestrians and would reduce the car throughput of a motorway volume passing through the Inner Town as well as air pollution. In addition, trams would be of a feeder service for the east-west underground line, which is likewise advantageous, since this was just one of the purposes of establishing the new underground line so near, and partly parallel to, the existing one. It is perhaps worth noting that the elimination of tram lines from Szabadság Bridge would make the network of tracks in Gellért square much less sophisticated, thanks to which trams could run much faster there. Regarding traffic on the inner bridges, the rhythm would improve from the aspect of trams: while Margit, Erzsébet and Petöfi Bridges would carry tram traffic, there would be none on the bridges in-between, i.e. Szabadság Bridge and Chain Bridge.

It has become clear that the restoration of the tram service would be able to address all problems but, by the nature of the thing, it would not increase but reduce the Inner Town's motor vehicle throughput.

It may still be added to the above that the attraction of Ferenciek square, Kálvin square and Astoria for Southern Buda partly follows from the fact that the inhabitants of the latter part of the town became artificially channelled and "fed" to the former points in view of there being access to the underground network. What we can now claim is that the capacity of the feeder line has become exhausted and that is what the current plans wants to make up for by an additional underground capacity. Naturally, there is nothing to warrant for the transfer point of the feeder connection to be in the Inner Town, increasing target traffic and the overcrowdedness of capacities here.

It was set forth above that Southern Buda can be connected with Northern Pest and the existing underground lines by means of the railway, or at least by the use of railway territories. Thereby, the logic of the whole system may be reversed: outer free surface areas may be made use of, at lower prices, for high-volume traffic needs, and at the same time surface areas may, and must, be made free for and available to pedestrian traffic and public transport in the inner part of the town.

The train of thoughts must, at this juncture, face two aspects: the resulting implications for the Inner Town (subchapter 5.2) and a human-oriented upgrading of the railway change-stops (subchapter 5.13).

5.13 Establishment of human-oriented conditions of changing

An improvement of connections between railway stations and urban public transport is no new issue; various standard solutions are existent. Nevertheless, it is

general experience that there are further possibilities of upgrading relations if the different modes of transport are considered as components of a common system.

However, a common system is not enough on its own. Obviously, the negligence of the circumstances of changing in Budapest has not at all been restricted to relations with the railway. Actually, in the last 25 years operational viewpoints within the self-contained system of the metropolitan public transport have definitely overshadowed passengers' interests.

In the case of several junctions - e.g., Baross square, Örs vezér square and Moscow square - it is striking how much two very different functions are mixed up.

One is the Transport Company's requirement to have terminal points there, to have facilities for returning service lines and for stationing substitute vehicles to be used in emergency cases. Undoubtedly, this is an important operational, technological function, but actually, passengers have nothing to do with it, such facilities could be spatially separated from the junction itself. The other function, the task of a junction strictly speaking, is at the same time important for passengers. This is the requirement that changing could be made easily, with relatively little walking and with due information provided for that.

At the squares mentioned, these two functions are not just mixed up but, unfortunately, the operational function is predominant. At the time of building, definite emphasis was laid on bringing an efficient solution to the latter. While before the reconstruction of, e.g., Baross square the trams, trolleybuses and buses coming from different directions had crossed the square and each other's respective lines, after the reconstruction the respective services are turned back before reaching the very square, obliging passengers to 4 or 5 minutes' walks during their changes. The other two squares mentioned are also characterized by a predominance of the operational functions.

In the case of lesser traffic requirements, it is of course possible to apply a harmonizing solution to the two functions combined, as has occurred during the organization of surface traffic connection in Podmaniczky square and Batthyány square.

However, in the case of major traffic junctions emphasis should primarily be laid on the service activity connected with traffic as a function, whereas the operational functions of transport could be moved out of the junction, occasionally even at the cost of slightly longer travels, that is, turning back the service should not be made before it reaches the junction, but a stopping-place should be established here with well-organized changing facilities, and the terminal (operational) activity should be moved farther outwards.

It would be good if, in compliance with the scale of values of a human- and environment-oriented transport system, an increasing role would be accorded to the fundamental viewpoint of the objective of the activity, the best possible service of passengers, and the technology of operation would be made compliant with that instead of letting it be predominant. I consider this endeavour an important issue of attitude during the planning of integrated transport systems, too, although this has been possible to be asserted to a regrettably limited extent so far, in view of the prevailing power relations.

By way of concluding the bloc concerned with public transport, I am going to deal with some selected issues of power relations and regulation.

5.14 Transport tariffs, regulators and power relations in Budapest

For the Budapest Transport Company the organization of traffic is primarily an operational issue today. From the viewpoint of the company, an operational regime was expedient to be established which was most efficient from the aspect of being eligible for subsidization, since this is what accounts for the main source of income of the company. Thus, if subsidization was proportional to the number of passengers carried, it was not worth increasing the accommodation capacity or improving comfort.

In the last decade, the tickets sold also served as a basis for subsidization. This made it important to retain short and fragmented lines and the through ticket system, which makes it clear that what the passenger pays for is not for the network to get him to his destination but to carry him on specific sections, and actually, this is what BKV contracts for.

When the right of decision on supports is taken over by new politicians less versed than their predecessors, the leaders of the public transport company knowing the ins and outs of the trade tend to stand for a regulation based on ad-hoc bargaining. They then refer, in the relevant debates, to the threatening hazard of the company becoming unviable, and even to a crisis the traffic of the town is faced with. This tactic usually works, and distracts attention from the fact that it would be just the task of the BKV management to bring solution to the two issues of the company's viability and the public transport of the town.

Currently all situation reports compiled by the company set forth, analyse, and use for argumentation one single issue, and that is the claim that no sufficient money is available. It is the consequences of this which are then related ahead into the future.

At the same time, no appropriate analysis is available to the capital on how subsidization tied to various indicators (passenger mileage, accommodation mileage,

income proportional system and mixed system) has worked until now and to what it has stimulated the company in the course of years.

The complete survey of the past lacks an analysis of how BKV's network development strategy may be evaluated from, say, 1966. That is to say, while we know for what there was no money available, we don't know how it was realized for what funds were accessible. Such an analysis should deal with, among other things, the systematic cutting of long lines into pieces, the establishment of feeder lines related to the underground, the constrained capacity enlargement of the connections thus established, and giving meanwhile no consideration to the circumstances of constrained changes increased in number and definitely causing a deterioration of the situation (lines turned back before junctions, development of junctions with emphasis laid on operational viewpoints etc.). Similarly, due attention must be paid to, and revision must be made regarding, various overall viewpoints of the development of the macro network, including the full centralization of urban traffic, the concentration of all underground connections to Deák square, which appears by no means to have been concluded. It should, of course, be made part of the analysis to what extent such steps were encouraged by the system of subsidization established inappropriately and lacking precaution, which occasionally made BKV interested in satisfying specific "plan figures". (Such might have been related to a forced express line service to the suburbs in order to increase accommodation mileage, the putting of buses in service from far-off garages, and the like.)

An analysis of such issues is necessary by no means for criticizing past actions or for identifying those responsible. Naturally, BKV operated in the same way as other firms living on subsidization, trying to enforce their own regulation conditions if they could. This was the general way redistribution worked. However, since the traffic of the capital and the activity of a number of other local government controlled companies continue to benefit from subsidization of a fair size, it would be expedient to avoid in the future at least those subsidization traps which we here in the capital already experienced once.

The ideas proposed by the company foreshadow a few new hazards. The plan presents two kinds of a "more equitable" tariff system: on the one hand, rates increasing proportionally with the distance travelled (which is rejected immediately) and, on the other hand, the creation of regional zones. These are sometimes called belts in the text, though it would be expedient to make distinction between the zone system consisting of sectors and the system of concentric belts. Although the zones having the form of sectors, to which an inner town zone covering the area lying within the Grand Boulevard could be added, can be imagined to comply with the theoretical concept of transport performance proportional costs, from the viewpoint of the town this logic of operation can by no means be proposed to concentrate on. Such a system, particularly if made complete with a two-zone season ticket arrangement,

would be definitely favourable for a scheme where everything what cannot be attended to locally should be attended to in the centre, implying travels to the centre from all points of the town, that is to say, the tariff system and subsidization would strengthen just a mono-centre organization. (With such sort of stimulation prevailing, it can be adduced as an argument that requirements are really increasing for travels to the centre of the town, hence, it is necessary to increase the capacity of the lines leading there, underground, suburban railway and other radial lines equally included.)

At variance, an appropriately laid-out concentric belt system would be suitable just to promote horizontal connections: true, it would then turn out that there is much more demand, than today, for annular structural elements.

Local governments cannot escape formulating for themselves - in reliance on a much more target-oriented work than hitherto - strategic urban policy frameworks of principle within which they then can make timely decisions. In the contrary case, that is, if they lack own viewpoints, they will always feel unequipped in debates with "professionals" and will be reduced, when obliged to make decisions, to constrained situations, becoming aware of developments afterwards.

Another potential trap is represented by a haphazard introduction of unified tariffs. The equalization of tariffs between tram and bus is just a partial measure, perhaps just a half-measure in many respects. The application of a common tariff system is a problem having expected solution for a long time, implying co-operation between MÁV and BKV and possibly VOLÁN with regard to passenger transport on the territory of the town and in the major agglomeration. The actual task, however, is much more difficult than that and it should not depend on whether the affected monopoly companies are ultimately ready to come to terms on it. In principle, the town should first formulate its own expectations and then establish and announce the relevant conditions it can offer. Practically, the traffic of a town of the size of Budapest should not necessarily imply a uniform company management but it could mean a uniform regulation under which various part tasks are handled by different companies, although international experiences bear evidence to the fact that large towns are usually served by a characteristic transport company. Despite this it must be underlined that though BKV having a staff of 20 thousand people is a major company of the capital, the municipality must endeavour to find solution to the problem of traffic in the capital and not to that of transport companies, that is to say, from its own viewpoint it would do best to make this set of problems at least as clear as those of the companies.

5.2 Rákóczi street, Inner Town

In the foregoing, I first mentioned Rákóczi street as the record holder of lead pollution, and then I dealt with it in connection with the impacts of "its" underground railway and the possible implications of the rail and tram network designed to replace that line.

The axis of the Inner Town, Rákóczi street and Kossuth Lajos street, is a typical example of the failure of the conventional traffic planner's attitude, implying a continuous increase in traffic throughput. In the latter street, the situation has reached a point where there is no more place for more traffic lanes, there is not enough place for pedestrians on the pavement made narrower, and the board-fence set up to separate pavement and roadway is actually designed to protect the traffic of motor vehicles from pedestrians getting drifted from the pavement rather than vice versa. We are aware that it was Elizabeth Bridge reconstructed with two traffic lanes in either direction and then enlarged to three lanes after the elimination of the tram line that made a constrained situation emerge along the whole route from BAH junction to the Eastern Railway Station. These developments were made one after the other in the sixties and seventies, underpasses and overpasses were created, roads were broadened, and buttresses and bridge abutments were constructed, thanks to which it could have been reached by today that a lead pollution exceeding the limit twenty to thirty times can be brought about in the very centre of the Inner Town amidst relatively favourable traffic conditions. (This has been partly made possible by, and partly explains, the fact that some 50 to 60 per cent of the country's total traffic investments were made here; see *Figure 1*) There is no doubt that no further steps can be made ahead from here, that is through any continued improvement of traffic conditions, yet the reason why it is necessary to call attention to the lessons is that the same mistakes should not be committed at other places, e.g., in Bartók Béla street, and also to make it clear that just the opposite direction should be followed for achieving progress.

5.21 Narrowing of capacity

In the foregoing, I advanced a proposal calling for a narrowing of the vehicle throughput capacity from inside, namely through a re-establishment of the tram line. I am not going to repeat the advantages, I just refer to the point that the goal was not only to achieve a reduction of the capacity but also to fulfil the other expectations set for the underground, which the tram service was able to meet.

A capacity rearrangement from the pavement side is also imaginable, that is, making the pavements broader by the width of one lane on either side. Today, places on the pavement are competed for by parking cars, vans awaiting unloading, vendor's booths and pedestrians. I am convinced that sooner or later both steps will be necessary: the re-establishment of tram lines (implying a common use of the inner lane by trams and buses, the re-establishment of street islands, the reconstruction of underpass exits and their enlargement to serve as second exits for the underground) and

making the pavements broader. Today it still perhaps sounds heretic to say this, but it should not of course be implemented overnight. Gradualness and the tasting of advantages could be well served by various partial measures to be introduced temporarily.

5.22 Time-sharing regulation

This direction was embarked upon by, e.g., Béla Varga-Ötvös [8], who proposed to make the road between the Eastern Railway Station and Elizabeth Bridge a Sunday promenade. Let the whole length of the road be given back, at least over the week-end, to pedestrians, vendors and a forum-like life. Let us create a tradition here, and let everybody see that the use of these six lanes can be dispensed with at least one day a week. Perhaps it could be a promising example of the efficiency of this type of traffic organization that, as proposed by Béla Varga-Ötvös, municipal authorities could lease the rights of advertisement and vending and could fare, as a classical joke puts it, on keeping (a route) closed over the week-end.

I remark that the proposal is not contradicted by the re-establishment of the tram service. On the contrary, there are several examples of trams and malls faring well together (e.g., in Geneva or Bratislava). On the one hand, the tram is no source of locally polluting emission and, on the other hand, it is noisy enough for calling attention to itself, in which the visible track is definitely helpful.

Among the time-sharing solutions I am going to mention another one, the possibility of a broader-based solution, under which motor vehicle traffic would be fully banned from the Inner Town on a weekday (Pedestrians' Tuesday). This would not affect Kossuth Lajos street but would realize full ban on motor vehicle traffic for one day in the areas where traffic is restricted even today. (It is perhaps superfluous to say that the ban would not apply to the ambulance and the fire brigade, but taxis could already be given special consideration to; for example, it could be prescribed that a maximum speed of twenty km per hour would be permissible in the zone under ban.)

In this case, the disadvantages and counter-arguments often voiced in connection with no-traffic zones could themselves be dealt with equitably. Really, it is necessary to deliver goods, but it can be organized that this should not take place on Tuesday. Really, removals cannot be handled without vans, but the moving-day should not fall between Monday night and Wednesday dawn. Really, a resident prefers to park his car near his flat, but once a week he could dispense with this. The Pedestrians' Tuesday would simultaneously make it possible for the Inner Town to be thoroughly cleaned and washed the night before and the night after. I am confident, in this connection, that apart from the disadvantages the resulting advantages could become manifest, too, that residents would become aware that their flats would thereby gain,

and not lose, in value, and particularly that Pedestrians' Tuesday would become established as solid feasts in urban life.

6. SUMMING UP

In this study concerned with the traffic of Budapest I first of all wanted to make clear the hazard that part of the transport trade is in support, aggressively and without recognizing alternatives, of obsolete ideas conceived according to the conventional way of thinking. Unfortunately just the possibility of easily calling these ideas in doubt has reduced such traffic planners to a situation of defence, excluding all meaningful debates. In this study I wanted, on the one hand, to make clear distinction between the two kinds of approach, methodology and set of values. The choice between the goals, the set of values, is no specific transport issue, it is above all this that must be made the topic of a debate.

On the other hand, my purpose with this study was to offer definite alternatives regarding various concrete problems of traffic in Budapest. I want to point out that it is not true that there are no alternatives and that it would be particularly hazardous if, persuaded by the urge of the Expo, the municipal authorities adopted, without due consideration, one order of magnitude larger bridge and underground construction projects than match the costs of the Expo.

Regarding the underground, the intention is particularly easy to see through. It is not cleared which direction the underground would follow from Móricz Zsigmond square in Buda. (In my view, no line is necessary even as far as that point, on the contrary, it is definitely deleterious.) It is neither cleared which track the line would follow from the Inner Town in Pest. (I think it is there that it would do most damage; it is just that point that it should avoid as far as possible.) In such uncertain conditions, no sober reasoning would permit any sort of decision (irrespective of what remarks I have put in parentheses). The entanglement of things is only increased by the fact that even the short section recommended for adoption is constantly 'on the move', alternative tracks are proposed and vehicle depots are mentioned, in order to try to use operational viewpoints for giving reasons for day-to-day decisions having implications to the tune of billions or tens of billions of forints.

In such conditions, only those having personal interests in launching the project and wanting to make the municipal authorities face a 'fait accompli' situation may be in support of starting the construction. Well known is also the mechanism whereby, in the case of projects launched, the disbursement of funds creates the opportunity to have recourse to further extortions. On the part of the municipal authorities of the capital it would be a serious professional blunder and a mistake of management having implications for the long term if they started any poorly prepared transport projects.

13 November, 1992

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