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## **THE 'DISMEMBERMENT OF LONDON': CHAMBERLAIN, ABERCROMBIE AND THE LONDON PLANS OF 1943-44**

By the outbreak of the Second World War, anxieties over the great size of London and its assumed destructive impact on the rest of the nation had reached a crisis point. The metropolitan economic boom that followed swiftly on the end of the First World War led to an extraordinary growth of population and industry in the capital, especially in the 1930s. By the end of that decade one in five of the people of England and Wales was a Londoner, living somewhere within the boundaries of Greater London, as defined by the Metropolitan Police District. For many public policy-makers, this growth was not just draining the rest of the nation of its talent; it was directly causing disinvestment in the Distressed Areas of Northern England, Wales and Scotland. It was Neville Chamberlain, long a critic of London's overgrowth and a convinced advocate of satellite towns and garden cities, who laid the national policy basis for at last solving the London problem with the Barlow Commission on the Distribution of the Industrial Population, reporting in 1940. In alliance with the town and country planning movement, with the nation's most famous planner-architect Patrick Abercrombie, and with a consensus of opinion that was especially strong on the centre-left of national and London politics, a planning framework was established for the post-war capital in two ambitious plans for the County of London and for the Greater London area. The war, with its assertion of a new national unity embracing the notion of planning in all walks of life but especially in the reconstruction of the bombed cities, produced a receptive climate to planning interventions in the future of London. But there were unintended consequences. It is arguable that the London Plans of 1943-44, and the Government planning policy of 1946 that followed their lead, would help produce nearly forty years of metropolitan decline that only began to end in the second half of the 1980s.

**KEYWORDS:** London, Neville Chamberlain, Patrick Abercrombie, Lewis Silkin, town and country planning, distribution of population and industry, Second World War, home front, blitz

### **Introduction**

We might start with two contrasting bookends. The first, from 1936, comes from the final report of Sir Percy Malcolm Stewart ending his stint as Commissioner of the Special Areas.

The majority of those who have studied the problem of the location of industry may reasonably be assumed to agree that the colossal post-war growth of Greater London is the aspect of the problem which occasions most concern, and can be rightly regarded as calling for control in the national interest.

Stewart proposed compulsory restraints on new industrial development in London to secure 'a better distribution of industrial activity'. The Special Areas of Wales and the North 'would benefit to the extent that they obtained their share of diverted development.' 'Greater London', he concluded, 'has become a national menace'.<sup>1</sup>

The second dates from nearly forty years later, 1973, and is taken from the first chapter of *London: Urban Patterns, Problems, and Policies*, a collection edited by authors from the Centre for Environmental Studies:

... a reduction in activity, with its attendant reduction in investment and direct and indirect employment, can seriously weaken the economic and social fabric of a city. It is this aspect of the 'economic base' of our large cities which has so far received too little attention and has led to some rather crude prescriptions for our urban ills.

Of these, the crudest of all is simply to allow an unchecked and even accelerated outflow of population and jobs from London, without regard to any of the consequences which follow for those who are left behind in the general outward rush, in the naïve hope that because in this way more 'space' is created, notably that improvements in environmental standards will accrue to the remaining population.<sup>2</sup>

In between, not in the middle certainly, but playing an initiating part in the Inner-City anxieties of 1973, were the London Plans of 1943 and 1944. When Stewart wrote, the population of Greater London was approaching its twentieth-century highpoint of 8.7 million in 1939, for London had been an irresistible magnet attracting over 1.8 million people to it since 1919, with a net gain of some 1.2 million over the same period.<sup>3</sup> One in five of the population of England and Wales was a Londoner in 1939. When David Eversley wrote it was approaching its twentieth-century nadir of some 6.3 million around 1983. In between, the London Plans of the 1940s and the policies they produced into the 1960s, helped transform the economic prospects of London and the Londoner immeasurably for the worse. There were, of course, other notable factors, of which the wartime physical damage to London's industrial and commercial infrastructure, the national decline of manufacturing through global competition in the 1960s and 70s, and the closure of London's upper port over pretty much the same period, bulk large. We might also add to the mix the fierce cutbacks in housing and other public expenditure especially from 1979, fractious racial politics in the capital especially, and the eventual evisceration of London government, climaxing in 1986. Yet however we would wish to assign weight to the causal factors, the period from 1991 to 2016 can be envisaged broadly as the slow, twenty-five-year recovery period from London's great depression that was essentially triggered by the Plans of 1943-44.

The key policy of the Plans was to decentralise population and industry from London. The metropolis would not merely be restrained from further growth but would take steps actively to shed people and jobs. Where did this policy come from? How did the Plans refine it? How was it implemented? And what were the consequences?

### **Decentralisation: the crystallisation of an idea**

Just *when* people began worrying about the size of London, its great numbers of people, its bottomless accretion of wealth and its overweening power in the nation is lost in time. Certainly it began some time before 1580 because Patrick Abercrombie himself, in the Greater London Plan, reminds us of Elizabeth's proclamation banning new building in the city that year<sup>4</sup> and trots us through subsequent frustrated efforts to tame the giant metropolis. Cobbett's 'Great Wen' metaphor of 1822<sup>5</sup> was frequently invoked a century later as evidence of the intractable problem of London's growth.<sup>6</sup> Three generations on from Cobbett, at the end of the nineteenth century and the turn of the twentieth, and the garden city and town planning movements, the first giving birth to the second, had as their primary objective the control of London's growth.<sup>7</sup> Even at the heart of London government, the London County Council had pursued from the very end of the nineteenth century a dispersal policy to move Londoners from the central crowded areas into estates of terraced housing beyond the county boundary. That had been a policy that was designed to benefit the Londoner.<sup>8</sup> What emerged at the end of the interwar period was a dispersal policy on quite a different scale and for a very different purpose: not to benefit the Londoner, but to benefit the nation.

It was between the wars that London, which doubled in size on the ground in the twenty years between 1919 and 1939, raised an inextinguishable clamour against it. The disappearance of the remaining countryside in Middlesex and in much of Surrey adjacent to the capital provoked outrage among those who identified the very spirit of England and the English in the agricultural landscape and paternalistic class relations. Worse, the suburbs and their weary repetitions of stockbroker Tudor and semi-detached 'Dunroamins' by the tens of thousands, provoked a furious backlash of snobbery that castigated not just the suburbs but the suburbans who lived in them.<sup>9</sup> Here, in large numbers, was a class invasion unprecedented in London's history, fuelled by the popular growth of mortgage-funded owner-occupation and by the London County Council's (LCC's) policy of building out-county housing estates. The anti-suburban trope stretched back to the eighteenth century at least, but in the nineteen twenties and thirties the spiteful vituperation against 'suburban man' knew no bounds.

Two other elements added considerable fuel to the fire of anti-London agitation in these years. One was the unprecedentedly prosperous industrial and commercial development of London between

the wars, in such sharp contrast to the fortunes of the declining 'Special Areas' at the nation's periphery. By the 1930s, though, this had become in the minds of many less a contrast than two sides of the same coin. London's prosperity seemed to be the *cause* of decline elsewhere, its wealth generated *at the cost* of the poverty of Wigan or Jarrow or Merthyr. The other was the international context. As the likelihood of a resumed European war, and with it the aerial bombardment of civilian populations, began to look increasingly likely from 1933 and a near-certainty from September 1938, London became the biggest (and therefore it seemed the most vulnerable) bombing target on earth. Ribbon development and urban sprawl, the dull uniformity of the suburb and the mass-produced minds of the suburbans, an insatiable metropolis that was 'the greediest of vampires, drawing all the life of England unto itself',<sup>10</sup> and a strategic weakness that could incapacitate the nation in time of war, these were the key elements that had made London a 'national menace' by the late-1930s.<sup>11</sup>

There was one man who thought he saw much of this more clearly than any other and who found himself in a position to do something about it. That was Neville Chamberlain. Chamberlain's role in the history of London in the twentieth century has largely been overlooked by historians.<sup>12</sup> He was a Birmingham man, of course, and patriotically loyal to the 'second city'. He was schooled in industry and was a Conservative, but one not afraid to extoll the virtues of state intervention and investment, especially to benefit working-class living standards. As alderman and subsequently Mayor of Birmingham he led the city's planning programme and initiated a survey of housing conditions and a slum clearance programme, though action was delayed by the outbreak of war in 1914.<sup>13</sup> Elected MP for Birmingham Ladywood in 1918 at the age of 41 and quickly recognised as a talented back-bencher, he chaired for Christopher Addison, the Minister of Health in Lloyd George's Coalition Government, an Unhealthy Areas Committee looking at ways to accelerate slum clearance and build new homes.

Chamberlain's committee turned first (and, as it happened, last) to the problems of London. Here came his first experience of the capital's housing conditions. Staggered at the size of the problem, the Committee's Interim Report in 1920 focused solely on the needs of the metropolis but ranged far wider than just slum clearance. Chamberlain's report proposed nothing less than an investigation into the 'number of persons and houses which would have to be removed from the London area in order for the remaining people to live in comfort'; it advocated a ring of garden cities around London, subsidised 'by the intervention of the State', to attract people and industry from London; a new authority or 'Parliament of London' to oversee government in the Metropolitan Police District and Home Counties; and a 'General Plan' to improve and control transport in the metropolitan region. The Committee's second and final report a year later confirmed and largely reiterated these proposals and contained the results of a statistical survey of overcrowding in the County of London.

This concluded that there was a 'surplus population' of 521,817 which would have to be removed and rehoused elsewhere: how and where would be left to further consideration by London's Parliament or whatever new authority was created.<sup>14</sup>

Chamberlain's attention to the problems of London would persist throughout his career. Three years later, in 1924, he was in Baldwin's first Cabinet as Minister of Health, presiding over housing and town planning among many other responsibilities. In 1926, acting very much on his own initiative,<sup>15</sup> he convened a conference on London planning that led to the establishment a year later of the Greater London Regional Planning Committee. 'Its remit was to examine the principles of decentralisation and alternative means of achieving it within the Metropolitan Police District...'<sup>16</sup> Despite the first priority accorded to its Decentralisation Committee its deliberations were defeated by the immensity of the task and little progress was made on that issue at least before the Regional Planning Committee was reconstituted with a wider statutory planning remit in 1933. It ceased to function when the LCC, supported by Middlesex County Council, withdrew funding at the end of 1936.<sup>17</sup> The timing was unfortunate: Sir Malcom Stewart's report on the Special Areas and the need to keep industry out of London had been published just a month before.

From around that time an almost overwhelming consensus would emerge among opinion formers and those in power (or seeking it) that London was too big and should be reduced. It had long been the case, of course, among garden city enthusiasts and town planners and those politicians and policy-makers who had been fellow travellers of the planning movement for more than twenty years. These included not only Chamberlain but a broad spectrum of centre and centre-left opinion. They included significant members of the Labour Party group on the LCC, from 1934 the ruling group, where Herbert Morrison had been vocal among those calling for satellite towns and garden cities to relieve pressure on London's growth. Indeed, Morrison had been the prime mover, with Lewis Silkin an active deputy, behind the Green Belt or Green Girdle strategy. This was intended to clamp London into the boundaries of its present built-up area and the LCC from 1935 funded acquisitions of undeveloped countryside to withhold it from the speculative builder.<sup>18</sup> But by the end of the 1930s, the urgent need not just to restrain but to diminish London became the fashionable opinion among novelists and poets and journalists and academics and armchair military strategists and politicians of every complexion. As war appeared to inch ever closer, opinion became increasingly strident. During 1937 and the opening months of 1938 it seemed as though almost every public figure lined up to say that something must be done to move people and jobs out of London: Sir William Beveridge,<sup>19</sup> Margaret Cole and Ellen Wilkinson,<sup>20</sup> Clement Attlee, David Lloyd George, Hugh Dalton, CEM Joad the Birkbeck philosopher, William Robson the LSE's specialist in London government, Clough Williams Ellis the architect of Portmeirion,<sup>21</sup> and just about every other

planning and architectural expert in the land. By the end of 1938, stopping the growth of London became official Labour Party policy as part of its ARP manifesto issued that December.<sup>22</sup>

Chamberlain was not slow to capitalise on this growing tide of opinion, an opinion he had shared and done much to try to further since 1920. In recent years he had been preoccupied elsewhere, as Chancellor of the Exchequer under Ramsay MacDonald and then Baldwin since November 1931. But Sir Malcolm Stewart's report of November 1936 gave him the opportunity he had sought for many years past to take action. It was Chamberlain who chaired an Interdepartmental Committee to decide what action should be taken in respect of Stewart's recommendations. He reported its findings to Cabinet in February 1937, paying close attention to Stewart's impeachment of the Metropolis. It was from Chamberlain's Committee that the idea of a Royal Commission took root, focused at first just on London but subsequently widened, again on Chamberlain's recommendation, to examine the distribution of industry in the country and make recommendations.<sup>23</sup> The 'excessive growth of London' was spelled out as a reason for action when the Government first announced in March 1937 the proposed Royal Commission.<sup>24</sup> Ten weeks later and Chamberlain became Prime Minister. It was he who that July announced the terms of reference of the Royal Commission on the Distribution of the Industrial Population under the chairmanship of Sir Montague Barlow, a 69 year-old barrister with experience on the pre-1914 LCC, a former Conservative MP for South Salford and Minister of Labour in the early 1920s.<sup>25</sup> Among the commissioners were Patrick Abercrombie. For Chamberlain, ever dogged in his convictions, whose fingerprints were all over the decision to create a Royal Commission with the decentralisation of London clearly in its sights, this was a further step in a long campaign stretching back nearly twenty years.

The Barlow Commission took evidence about the London problem from a wide range of witnesses, including many organisations. There was near-universal agreement among them that London was too big. That was only to be expected from the planning lobby (there was evidence from The Hundred New Towns Association, who wanted London to shed two million people),<sup>26</sup> but a range of experts including Robson concurred. Even the LCC admitted that London was too big.<sup>27</sup> The only dissenter – though the Board of Trade was cautious about ordering industrialists to locate in places they didn't wish to, and the railway companies were defensively wedded to giving passengers the lines and stations they appeared to want<sup>28</sup> – was Frank Pick of the London Passenger Transport Board. Firmly upbeat about London's prospects – he assigned the causes of its growth to 'the fortunes and advantages of London more than in the misfortunes and disadvantages of other districts' – he thought the Green Belt and economic constraints on journey times would naturally limit London to a radius of some fifteen miles from the centre. He dismissed the significance of civil defence as a consideration on which to plan the future of London: 'It would be a strange decision

which contemplated conditioning the growth and development of London by the accident of war.’ And he was resoundingly optimistic about the future. Pick envisaged the future development of London as an organic process that would naturally bring about improvement without the need to stifle population or industrial growth:

Fortunately this is an age of transition. There is a demand for slum clearance and rehousing. There is a programme for new schools to replace antiquated and inefficient schools. Social amelioration is finding opportunities in new institutions. All these factors favour redistribution, for with the movement of the population, housing, education, baths, hospitals and other public services can follow them without appreciable loss. London through its manifold local authorities is busily engaged on providing afresh for its population. There could not be a more favourable moment for expansion.<sup>29</sup>

Pick, though, was ignored. The Barlow Commission finished its deliberations before 3 September 1939 but the outbreak of war delayed publication of its report until January 1940 by. It revived Stewart’s censure of Greater London and in hardly more measured terms. London was overcrowded, had much unfit housing, was plagued by congested traffic, its inchoate local government lacked any authority that could take a planning view of the whole vast agglomeration. On the other hand, its mortality rates were surprisingly low, its medical services correspondingly good, its parks, entertainment and educational facilities second to none. Yet much of what was good about London flourished at the country’s expense. Its museums and institutions were funded by the national taxpayer rather than just the London ratepayer, and the concentration there ‘of the best industrial, financial, commercial and general ability represent[s] a serious drain on the rest of the country.’<sup>30</sup> These criticisms were backed up by a very lengthy statistical review of London’s demographic and industrial growth since the end of the First World War, expanding on the similar appendix in Stewart’s third report.<sup>31</sup> Finally, and adding the strategic vulnerabilities of London into the argument for metropolitan restraint, Barlow concluded that ‘The continued drift of the industrial population to London and the Home Counties constitutes a social, economic and strategical problem which demands immediate attention.’<sup>32</sup>

In January 1940, Chamberlain – still Prime Minister of course – must have realised that the times were hardly propitious for implementing Barlow. Indeed, on the strategic considerations of civil defence the bolt had been shot, for the war was now three months old. But he was also deprived of the chance to see what might have been made of the commission’s recommendations when a public desire for reconstruction emerged from 1941 on. For Chamberlain, the most able and persistent advocate of cutting London down to size, died of bowel cancer on 9 November 1940.



## Decentralisation and the Plans

Patrick Abercrombie had not signed the majority report of the Barlow Royal Commission and so did not put his name to the conclusions in respect of London or anything else. That indicated no disquiet on his part with the report's analysis but marked his frustration at its tone. In his view this lacked vigour and urgency, especially the milk-and-water implementation machinery proposed by Barlow of a nominated Board or Central Authority with merely supervisory powers over local development plans. Abercrombie, with two other commissioners whose names now mean little to us, criticised the report for lack of urgency and wanted a new Minister and a new department to *direct* the production and implementation of local planning nationwide. Their minority report<sup>33</sup> proposed to endow the new Minister with powers to promote and assist the construction of satellite towns, to protect the countryside and value country living, to deter the building of flats instead of houses and, in the case of London, to prevent industrialists moving factories from one part of the capital to another, requiring them to move away altogether from what would be a 'prohibited area' for industrial development.<sup>34</sup> Abercrombie's desire for a new Ministry of Town and Country Planning would be realised by the War Cabinet on the penultimate day of 1942.

When he was nominated as one of Barlow's commissioners Abercrombie had occupied the post of Professor of Town Planning at University College London since May 1935, when he was 56 years old. A Cheshire man he had lived all his life in the north-west, apart from his years at public school in the Midlands, and until 1936 he lived still in the Wirral. A year or so after moving jobs to London he moved house too – to Oxford.<sup>35</sup> All his professional projects had been outside London, mostly in the north of England. Over the years he had criticised London's lack of planning from afar but the closest his work had strayed to the metropolis was a report on the Thames Valley from Cricklade to Staines in 1929. His writing on the countryside had helped inspire the establishment of the Council for the Preservation of Rural England, and he had worked with Clough Williams-Ellis to initiate a similar body in Wales. It is difficult to know just how much Abercrombie knew of London or how much affection he felt for it. Certainly there was little in his professional life or in his passionate feeling for English nature that was likely to endear him to the metropolis and all it had come to symbolise in the nation of the 1930s, though he paid some compliments to the town and its people when he came to write the County Plan – whether from lip-service, or expedience or some post-blitz respect, or even change of heart, it's impossible to fathom.<sup>36</sup> In the Greater London Plan, the LCC no longer his paymaster, he was a little less kind, calling migration to London 'irrational' – rendering 1.8 million people who had chosen to move there little more than lemmings – and denoting Londoners as 'a race of straphangers'.<sup>37</sup>

Nonetheless, it was Patrick Abercrombie, the nation's most celebrated planner, with whom the LCC contracted as their planning consultant to help prepare a plan for the post-war reconstruction of the County of London, in April 1941.<sup>38</sup> The LCC had recognised the need for a reconstruction document within a month or so of the main London blitz beginning, but the key event was a meeting at the Ministry of Health with officials from several ministries and chief officers of the LCC and the City Corporation, where it was agreed that plans for both the County and the City would now be.<sup>39</sup> It is likely that Abercrombie's name was suggested or discussed at that January meeting. Given his already widely-known views on the need to restrain London industry and deter new factories from moving there, it must have been clear to all parties that decentralisation would play a large part in any proposals to which he gave his name. The County of London Plan, under the joint authorship of J.H. Forshaw, architect to the LCC, and Patrick Abercrombie was published in July 1943.

On the subject of decentralisation of people and industry the County of London Plan and the Greater London Plan (published to the press in December 1944) must be read as one, and were intended by Abercrombie to be so.<sup>40</sup> Unsurprisingly, some of the recent history of the decentralisation idea, with London as a national menace, finds its way into the County Plan, which respectfully references Chamberlain's 1920 Interim Report on Unhealthy Areas, and both plans cite Barlow as their key authority for the removal of people and jobs.<sup>41</sup> After describing the nature of London on the ground, both plans turn from the outset to decentralisation as the key policy initiative. The County Plan, coinciding very closely with the surplus population enumeration in Chamberlain's 1920-21 proposals, found it necessary to remove 500,000 to 600,000 people from the 'congested parts of London' to 'obtain attractive living conditions' for those who remain. A consonant decentralisation of industry, though a more difficult task the Plan thought because less was known about decision-making in respect of industrial location, would be needed to rationalise the journey to work and removing industry from residential zones, so providing 'a really satisfactory environment'.<sup>42</sup> The County Plan could not say where these people and jobs were to go but assumed 'a re-arrangement within the Greater London area' and, more surprisingly and surely over-optimistically, with a genuflection to the thinking of the former Commissioner for the Special Areas, 'a removal clear outside the metropolitan influence, *e.g.*, to the north of England.' In between, maybe fifty miles or so from Charing Cross, the development of towns 'is probable', with some of the development 'attributed to London' which would supply both people and jobs.<sup>43</sup>

Here of course Abercrombie passed the baton from one hand to another for by then the Minister of Town and Country Planning had appointed him the consultant to prepare a Greater London Plan. It was published eighteen months or so later. The Greater London Plan would again make decentralisation a top priority. In response to criticism from the Town and Country Planning

Association that he had not been brave enough in the LCC plan (they argued that the County needed to shed 1,500,000 people), with similar concerns from the new Ministry of Town and Country Planning,<sup>44</sup> Abercrombie enlarged the numbers to be removed from the County to 618,000 and rolled up the emigration target to a planned decentralisation of 1,033,000 from Greater London. Only 125,000 of these displaced persons would relocate in Greater London, with the rest in the Plan's 'outer country ring', in satellite towns outside the Green Belt, or outside the Plan area entirely. A further component of voluntary emigration would bring the total to be moved out of London's built-up area to some one and a quarter million.<sup>45</sup> The press was in no doubt that the 'main aim' of the Plan was to stop London growing and remove a large slice of its population and industry.<sup>46</sup> It all added up to what the *Daily Herald* called the 'biggest mass-migration in our history', the brainchild of 'Professor Patrick Abercrombie, the monocled leader of planning'.<sup>47</sup> Again, industry would be decentralised too, to ensure that London's population did not rise again as people continued to come there to work.<sup>48</sup> London needed, in a word, to be permanently de-magnetised.

### **The War and the Londoner**

Both Plans stressed that their decentralisation proposals were made in the context of a good deal of voluntary movement, especially away from the County of London, since the end of the First World War. People were choosing a longer journey to work in order to obtain improved living conditions, especially the possibility of a house with a garden, in outer London. Now, supplementing these longterm trends in London's demography, the war had added to population movements and had made moving back impossible for some, at least for a time. As Abercrombie put it,

This decentralisation has been happening in an unplanned way; the boroughs see their population dwindling, as their best elements, especially the young married folk, leave.... What we now propose is to anticipate this loss, to enhance it by means of a bold reduction and to produce a really satisfactory environment by wholesale rebuilding made possible by war damage.<sup>49</sup>

Besides the clearances brought about by the Luftwaffe, the war had also made things more psychologically amenable to the decentralisation idea. The 'war has made migration a familiar habit',<sup>50</sup> Abercrombie wrote, and it was certainly true that the people of London were extraordinarily mobile during the war years, perhaps more so than ever before. Published figures in the 1951 Census volumes give mid-year population figures for a Greater London approximating to the Metropolitan Police District that show 8.746 million in 1939, 6.282 million in 1941, 6.643 million in 1943 and 6.785 million in 1945, so two million fewer Londoners at the end of the war than the beginning, with over two and a half million fewer just after the main London blitz.<sup>51</sup> Unpublished

figures in the National Archives give the astonishing figure of 5.825 million in September 1944 after the peak of the V1 attack and yet another great rush out of London from late-June of that year.<sup>52</sup> Abercrombie wistfully pointed to the potential of movements such as these: 'it is interesting to note that, if none of those still evacuated from London in January, 1942, were to return, an automatic reduction to the density of 136, which we recommend, would have occurred without the necessity of any "decanting" ....'<sup>53</sup>

It's worth making a few other points briefly here about the impact of war on the Londoner and its relevance for the London Plans. First, the period from May 1940 had brought the national interest to the fore as never before. There was a readiness to put the nation first over sectional interest groups (the rich, or railway companies, or the mine owners and workers for instance), so that sacrifice for the nation as a whole had become a truism: London having to lose people and jobs for the good of the nation, with a million and more people on the move, became just one more sacrifice that would have to be made when peace came. Second, and related to it, there was a general acceptance that planning for national reconstruction was rational, essential and achievable. The status of the planner in the war years was probably higher than at any time before and certainly at any time since and that was especially true for those planning the ideal environment. Abercrombie and the other planning experts were confronted by a receptive, almost credulous, audience.<sup>54</sup>

Third, there was the impact of aerial warfare on London. It's probably true that Abercrombie's decentralisation proposals, put forward as necessary to endow London with a new start delivering good housing, open spaces, planned industry, good road connections and modern amenities, would have been made and accepted had no bomb or missile or rocket ever dropped on London. But the blitz encouraged all those who wanted to see London cut down to size to see bombing as an opportunity for a new beginning. There was much comment on the potential for bombing to wipe out the slums, even as those whose homes they had been were struggling, bedraggled and bereft, to rebuild their lives after losing everything.<sup>55</sup> And there were those, like Abercrombie, who saw this as an aid to achieving target housing densities by keeping sites empty until a comprehensive plan could be determined on the ground. There were even some who questioned whether the bombed parts of London should be rebuilt, or even if London should remain as the capital of the nation.<sup>56</sup> Bombing, which destroyed or damaged beyond repair some 116,000 houses in Greater London,<sup>57</sup> seemed to indicate that in any event London could no longer accommodate the population it once had housed because of the enormous damage done to housing and industry at the core.

Finally, in all the pre-war anxiety about London's immense size making it a sitting duck for the bomber, one further 'strategical' argument for decentralisation from the mid-1930s on, it was in fact

the city's enormous built-up area that proved the Londoners' salvation when the bombs began to fall. London was so huge that it could not be destroyed by the weapons then available and the undamaged parts of the city could always leap to the succour of the wounded districts. It could reconstitute and replenish itself. It was the smaller cities like Coventry and Plymouth that were vulnerable to the knock-out blow but never the metropolis and its much-despised 'urban sprawl'. As Winston Churchill, addressing a County Hall lunch at the end of the main blitz, put it: 'London is so vast and so strong that she is like a prehistoric monster into whose armoured hide showers of arrows can be shot in vain.'<sup>58</sup>

In all this, few voices were raised against the dispersal policy of the plans, at least in principle. The City Corporation's first reconstruction plan was one of them, arguing for retention of at least some of the old neighbourhood and street patterns and arguing, utterly against the spirit of the post-Barlow times, that office, warehousing and factory space should be reconstructed to provide for a possible 800,000 jobs in the Square Mile, substantially more than the half a million jobs accommodated in the pre-war City;<sup>59</sup> the plan was swiftly abandoned in some embarrassment for a more Abercrombian approach.<sup>60</sup> There was a little more dissent, though, in the metropolitan boroughs and the urban districts and county boroughs around. Many boroughs wished to reduce the impact of Abercrombie's density rules on population and argued that they should retain more people and jobs than the plans prescribed, at the expense of open space if necessary, heralding to some extent the arguments of David Eversley thirty years in the future. The plan for Stepney, for instance envisaged a post-war population of 94,000, but Stepney Borough Council wished to build for 130,000;<sup>61</sup> both Fulham and Chelsea argued for a density of 136 persons per acre rather than the 100 proposed; others worried about jobs declining faster than people, and so on.<sup>62</sup> There was even caution in the LCC: Lord Latham, the council's Labour chairman, objected to the Town and Country Planning Association's draconian proposal to remove 1,500,000 from the County as advocating 'the dismemberment of London'.<sup>63</sup>

For those, like Abercrombie, who saw London's size as an unmitigated evil, the substantial population drift away seemed like an opportunity to accomplish decentralisation as if by the wave of a wand. Similarly, civil servants also wondered how to prevent the 'rush back', as they called it, of families and industry at the end of the war. But what mechanism was there to stop it?<sup>64</sup> And in reality there seemed no desire among those evacuated to stay away. A survey of workforces moved out of London at the beginning of the war and published in 1944 concluded there was 'little doubt that a substantial majority of most evacuated staffs, if consulted, would vote ... for a return to London....'<sup>65</sup> London, the survey discovered, 'has an interest, prestige, and glamour without equal.'<sup>66</sup>

Sure enough, when Londoners eventually saw their chance to return, and when new potential migrants saw their chance to be 'irrational' and move to the capital, they took it in increasing numbers. If this was a question of Londoners and potential Londoners voting with their feet then it was an optimistic sign of London's impending recovery from six years of savagery and neglect. Despite the laying waste of large tracts of inner London, and despite the slow progress of housing schemes in the congested districts of the County and outer London, population numbers slowly climbed back almost to their pre-war levels: over a million people gained between mid-1945 and mid-1946 (to 7.806 million), over 8 million again in 1947, and 8.320 million in 1948. The population of Greater London was marginally above this at the 1951 census, so almost back (400,000 short) to what the figure had been in 1939.<sup>67</sup> There was much written during the war and immediately after about the established Londoner's desire for a new home outside the crowded and knocked-about inner city, especially in the East End, and consequently a readiness to move away. This is probably true, though surveys of this kind of opinion will always depend on what and how the question was asked.<sup>68</sup> Certainly it is true that the population of the County fell by 700,000 between 1939 and 1951, though outer London gained 300,000. But these figures of population recovery show that the war had not, by itself, permanently tarnished London as a place to live or work or bring up children; and there was no evidence that the Plans' desire for a population reduction of 1,250,000 would happen by itself, or any time soon.

### **Removing the Londoner from 1945**

Despite the war, then, removing the Londoner would indeed require some direction if the 'bold reduction' envisaged by the Plans was to be achieved. Everything depended on the thrust of peacetime government policy after 1945. Clarity was not long in coming.

Hugh Dalton had been a confirmed advocate of Sir Malcolm Stewart's proposals for restricting industry in London as a means of favouring investment in the depressed areas. A Cambridge-educated clergyman's son born in Glamorgan, Dalton had been an academic economist before he was elected Labour MP for Camberwell in 1924. He found Camberwell politics uncongenial and switched for the 1929 election to a seat in the North-East, in one of the distressed areas that was meant somehow to benefit from Stewart's plans for London industry.<sup>69</sup> As President of the Board of Trade in the wartime Coalition he steered through parliament in June 1945 a Distribution of Industry Act firmly along Stewart, Barlow and Abercrombie lines.<sup>70</sup> He had wanted the power to declare Greater London a prohibited area for further industrial development but dropped the clause in the face of opposition from London Members, and from the Prime Minister.<sup>71</sup> With Labour in power after the General Election that July, Dalton's policy objective was quickly secured by other means.

On 5 March 1946, Lewis Silkin, Minister of Town and Country Planning and a longterm sympathiser with the town and country planning movement, finally adopted the Barlow Report as the basis for the Labour Government's policy on 'the planning of London'. Silkin had a very different upbringing from that of Dalton but his convictions on decentralisation were equally passionate. He had been born in Poplar in 1889, seventh child of a recent Jewish immigrant family from Lithuania. A boy of some brilliance, his parents couldn't afford to send him on the scholarship he had won to Oxford and he went to work as a clerk at the East India Docks. From there he became a solicitor's clerk, ending up with his own law firm and living in Dulwich. He was elected a Labour councillor onto the LCC in 1925 for South-East Southwark, and was briefly leader of the Labour Group before handing over to Herbert Morrison; he had been a keen rambler in his youth, loved the countryside, and was an active proponent of the Green Belt. He was elected to Parliament for Peckham in a by-election in 1936.<sup>72</sup>

Silkin's policy announcement faithfully followed the Barlow-Abercrombie proposals for decentralising London's people and industry. First, the growth of London's population and industry would be restrained to achieve for the nation 'a better balance of the distribution of industry', especially in what now were called 'the Development Areas'. Second, 'a planned programme of decentralisation to the outer areas of Great London should replace the uncontrolled sprawl of the inter-war period.' This would involve the removal of about a million people and 'a related quota of industrial firms to be accommodated further out – mainly in a few new towns and in selected existing towns within 20 to 50 miles of London's centre.' Third, the pattern of decentralisation would 'broadly conform' to Abercrombie's proposal in the Greater London Plan. The displaced people were to come from the County of London and from the inner urban ring; the suburban ring of outer London would be 'static'; the Green Belt would be 'carefully safeguarded' to 'act as a barrier to further suburban growth'; and the Outer Country Ring should serve as the main 'reception area' – adopting the term familiar from the planned evacuations of September 1939 – for people and industry moving to 'compact settlements surrounded by open country.' Thus far Abercrombie's Plans became government policy but no further: his highway proposals and the location and number of new towns would be considered further.<sup>73</sup>

Just how this decentralisation would be brought about was not yet clear, but civil servants quickly began to use what tools they had in furtherance of a planning objective they – like almost every other expression of public opinion – had long favoured. Yet two months after the government adopted an official policy of restraint for London's industrial development, it was clear that market forces were working against the government's intentions. In a mirror image of the 'rush back' of people to London, industry was doing the very same thing. Silkin had tried to put a brave face on matters when answering a question on planning London in February 1946: 'There was a list of

industrialists willing to go to places within 50 miles of London, and there were blitzed factories whose owners were willing to rebuild in such places';<sup>74</sup> and the Town and Country Planning officials were doing all they could to facilitate their wishes. But the officials themselves were more worried. Around the time of the policy announcement they reported that

The majority of the blitzed firms wish to rebuild in London and will, no doubt, eventually be permitted to do so [because of their rights under War Damage legislation]. At the same time, all available information suggests that the plan for building new factories and extensions by firms already established in Greater London or by new firms would, if unchecked, greatly exceed the volume of industrial premises likely to go out of use through the decline or demise of firms with establishments in Greater London.

Officials concluded that 'the entry of firms new to the area must be rigorously opposed', expansions must be 'strictly controlled', and as many firms as possible 'persuaded' to move out – especially (but surely unrealistically) to the Development Areas.<sup>75</sup> In officials' discussions with industrialists, stress would be laid on the great difficulty of getting building permitted in Greater London except for blitz replacement and then only the most important; on the shortage of labour in Greater London; and on the strategic dangers of industry in London from enemy attack. This was 1946 but even so the Chiefs of Staff had advised at the end of the war that 'vital installations' should not be put in London.<sup>76</sup> So the old strategic arguments about locating industry in London had a life beyond victory. Despite that, just as for the residential population of inner London, it is very clear that there was no significant opposition among industrialists to returning to London or making a new start there. Indeed, the opposite was true.<sup>77</sup>

Panel A, the Ministry of Town Planning's official mechanism for approving industrial developments in Great Britain, offered the means of restricting industrial development in Greater London through constraints on the issue of building licences. No licence, no factory. In the two years between January 1945 and January 1947 Panel A permitted just 262 industrial projects in Greater London out of 2,736 in Great Britain as a whole; permissions in the Development Areas were three times as many. The picture revealed in the Barlow Report had now in just a few years been turned on its head.<sup>78</sup>

At the same time it became in government's interest to make inner London – the County and its neighbouring urban suburbs – as unattractive as possible for people to live in and industry to stay there or move to. The mechanisms were again building licences and capital investment restrictions on industry, both lasting much longer in Britain than elsewhere in the post-war world.<sup>79</sup> This aspect of the post-war history of the capital remains to be written but there is a wealth of evidence to show



the dire state of London housing in the early 1960s, collected by the Milner Holland Committee.<sup>80</sup> Though most of the bomb sites allocated to housing had been used up by 1956, dereliction and decaying housing were general across much of inner London. When Gillian Tindall went to Stepney as a voluntary social worker for the elderly in 1963, she found still 'a scene of wartime devastation'. 'But the war has been over for eighteen years,' she writes, 'so why is the place still a wilderness reminiscent of Ypres just after the First World War?'<sup>81</sup> Well, it was for a purpose. And the purpose was Chamberlain's, Abercrombie's, Dalton's, Silkin's, and all the multitude of others who wanted London to be 'cabin'd, cribb'd, confined'; and who at last had the power to do so.

The mechanics of decentralisation worked themselves through in a raft of new policies. First, and in contradiction to Abercrombie, the LCC built 30,000 houses or more in the Green Belt between 1945 and 1950, as 'quasi-satellites' or mini-towns on thirteen sites; a programme closed down by Harold Macmillan in 1955 as not moving people far enough away from London and so not in accord with planning policy for London.<sup>82</sup> On the other hand, the New Towns programme, which Macmillan vigorously supported when the Conservatives gained power in 1951, and which had achieved thirteen designations between 1946 and 1949, dedicated eight New Towns for London, with plans to take 460,000 newcomers. Development was slow in the early years and had to be supplemented, with LCC support, by the Conservative government's expanded towns programme under the Town Development Act of 1952 – there were eleven in all with Letchworth, Harpenden, Hertford, St Albans in the north, Slough, Camberley and Woking in the west and south, and Chelmsford, Brentwood, Billericay and Thurrock in the east. Here London's 'overspill', as it was called, was facilitated by existing town centres whose infrastructure could more easily accommodate house- and factory-building than the New Towns, some of which were planted around a village nucleus and pretty much in open country.<sup>83</sup>

The government policy enunciated by Lewis Silkin in 1946 remained (in precisely the same terms) as LCC policy into the 1960s, and when opportunities came to relocate factories they were taken.<sup>84</sup> Employment in the East End fell as a consequence by 29,000 between 1951 and 1961.<sup>85</sup> When employment opportunities in central London rose Phoenix-like through the huge expansion of office jobs in financial services, commercial and public sector employment in particular, the LCC agitated for means of restricting the new incursion: in 1963 government established the Location of Offices Bureau to move offices out of the centre and, if possible, out of Greater London altogether.<sup>86</sup> The mirror image of all this, the continuing and deliberate neglect of inner London, made of the Abercrombie Plans a self-fulfilling prophecy. Many voices were raised, by intellectuals and others, against the depopulation of inner London and there is evidence that many working-class Londoners would have preferred to stay put rather than move.<sup>87</sup> But the die had been cast. The County's

population lost 20,000 a year between 1951 and 1961, falling from 3.7 to 3.5 million. Thereafter, as talk about the ‘twilight areas’ between London’s commercial centre and the suburbs grew ever noisier,<sup>88</sup> the population went into free fall for twenty years – 3 million in 1971, 2.5 million in 1981, 2.3 million in 1991, a low-point from which it has quite swiftly recovered, despite astronomical land values: in 2016 it was estimated to be 3.5 million, a return to the figure of half a century ago. Similar, though less extreme, trends were apparent in Greater London as a whole, where the population had fallen to 6.7 million, a reduction of 800,000 on the decade before.<sup>89</sup>

## Conclusion

There can be little doubt that the Abercrombie Plans had a major impact on London’s fortunes for half a century after their publication. They did not act alone, because the Plans were a vector through which earlier prejudices about the ill effects on the nation of London’s phenomenal growth on the ground, and in population and employment between the wars, were channelled. The plans, though, gave those prejudices legitimacy through ‘the super-planner of our time’,<sup>90</sup> and offered, through satellite towns of one kind or another, the means of implementing them. The contradictions and unintended consequences for inner London in particular, and more generally the impact on London’s place in the national economy, only became articulated after thirty years of planned decentralisation. We might summarise it in a sentence. London’s twentieth-century misfortunes began with the blitz; but they were made much worse by the London Plans of 1943-44.

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<sup>1</sup> *Third Report of the Commissioner for the Special Areas (England and Wales)* (London: HMSO, 1936, Cmd. 5303), 7 and 9.

<sup>2</sup> David Eversley, ‘Problems of Social Planning in Inner London’, in David Donnison and David Eversley (eds.), *London: Urban Patterns, Problems, and Policies* (London: Heinemann, 1973), 24-5.

<sup>3</sup> Patrick Abercrombie, *Greater London Plan 1944 [GLP]* (London: HMSO, 1945), 27.

<sup>4</sup> *GLP*, 29-30.

<sup>5</sup> William Cobbett, *Rural Rides....* [London: William Cobbett, 1830; New Edition with Notes by Pitt Cobbett, London: Reeves and Turner, 2 Vols. 1908], I, 81.

<sup>6</sup> By David Lloyd George, for instance, in *Town and Country Planning*, VI, 22, (1937), 26.

- <sup>7</sup> See for instance Ebenezer Howard, *Garden Cities of To-Morrow (Being the Third Edition of 'To-Morrow: A Peaceful Path to Real Reform')* (London: Sonnenschien, 1902), passim; Raymond Unwin, 'Some Thoughts on the Development of London', in Sir Aston Webb (ed.), *London of the Future, by The London Society* (London: London Society, 1921), 177-92.
- <sup>8</sup> Andrew Saint, "'Spread the People": The LCC's Dispersal Policy, 1889-1965', in Andrew Saint (ed.), *Politics and the People of London. The London County Council 1889-1965* (London: Hambledon, 1989), ch.12.
- <sup>9</sup> See Jerry White, *London in the Twentieth Century. A City and its People* (London: Viking, 2001), 24-37. See also Frank Mort, 'Fantasies of Metropolitan Life: Planning London in the 1940s', *Journal of British Studies*, 43, 1 (2004), 120-51, especially 133-5.
- <sup>10</sup> Elmer Davis, 'England's Weak Spot', *Harper's Monthly Magazine* (December 1936), 385-92
- <sup>11</sup> See Michele Haapamaki, *The Coming of the Aerial War. Culture and the Fear of Airborne Attack in Inter-War Britain* (London: I.B. Tauris), 24ff, for a recent overview of the fears of London's vulnerability.
- <sup>12</sup> See for instance, Stephen Inwood, *A History of London* (London and Basingstoke: Macmillan), ch. 23; Michael Hebbert, *London. More by Fortune than Design* (Chichester: Wiley, 1998), 65-72; White, *Twentieth Century*, 24-37.
- <sup>13</sup> *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edition [ODNB], Andrew J. Crozier, 'Chamberlain, (Arthur) Neville (1869-1940)', <https://doi-org.ezproxy.lib.bbk.ac.uk/10.1093/ref:odnb/32347>, accessed 19 September 2018.
- <sup>14</sup> *Interim Report of the Committee appointed by the Minister of Health to Consider and Advise on the principles to be followed in Dealing with Unhealthy Areas* (London: HMSO, 1920), passim; *Second and Final Report...* (London: HMSO, 1921), 3-5, 17, 21-4.
- <sup>15</sup> Keith Feiling, *The Life of Neville Chamberlain* (London: Macmillan, revised edition 1970), 137.
- <sup>16</sup> Michael P Collins, 'The London County Council's Approach to Town Planning: 1909-1945', *The London Journal*, 42, 2, (2017), 172-91, especially 174-5.
- <sup>17</sup> *The Times*, 28 December, 1936.
- <sup>18</sup> Saint, "'Spread the People'", 224-8.
- <sup>19</sup> *The Times*, 22 February, 1937.
- <sup>20</sup> *Town and Country Planning*, V, 20, (1937), 132-3.
- <sup>21</sup> All in *Town and Country Planning*, VI, 22, (1938), 24-31.
- <sup>22</sup> *The Times*, 20 December, 1938.
- <sup>23</sup> [The National Archives, TNA] CAB 24/268/7 and 24/268/21.
- <sup>24</sup> Hansard, Commons, 9 March 1937, cols. 1026-7, statement by Minister of Labour.
- <sup>25</sup> Hansard, Commons, 7 July 1937, cols. 341-5. For Barlow (1868-1951) see the brief reference in his father's notice in the ODNB, E.H. Pearce revised by H.C.G Matthew, 'Barlow, William Hagger (1833-1908)', <https://doi-org.ezproxy.lib.bbk.ac.uk/10.1093/ref:odnb/30597>, accessed 23 September 2018.
- <sup>26</sup> TNA, HLG 27/59, 5-6.
- <sup>27</sup> *Report of the Royal Commission on the Distribution of the Industrial Population [Barlow Commission]* (London: HMSO, 1940, Cmd. 6513), 84.
- <sup>28</sup> TNA, HLG 27/19, 67-71 (Board of Trade); *The Times*, 19 May, 1938.
- <sup>29</sup> TNA, HLG 27/34, 1-11; *The Times*, 16 February, 1938.
- <sup>30</sup> *Barlow Commission*, 83-4.
- <sup>31</sup> *Barlow Commission*, 158-78.
- <sup>32</sup> *Barlow Commission*, 200-1, 202.
- <sup>33</sup> *Barlow Commission*, 218-32.
- <sup>34</sup> *Barlow Commission*, 228.
- <sup>35</sup> When he contracted with the London County Council [LCC] to carry out the County of London Plan he was living at 91 Courtland Road (London Metropolitan Archives [LMA] LCC/CL/TP/1/33, file note 1 April 1941).
- <sup>36</sup> ODNB, Mervyn Miller, 'Abercrombie, Sir (Leslie) Patrick (1879-1957)', <https://doi-org.ezproxy.lib.bbk.ac.uk/10.1093/ref:odnb/30322>, accessed 14 September 2018. See also Gerald Dix, 'Patrick Abercrombie 1879-1957' in Gordon E. Cherry (ed.), *Pioneers in British Planning* (London: Architectural Press, 1981), 103-30, especially 113-7.
- <sup>37</sup> *GLP*, 28, 30.
- <sup>38</sup> LMA, LCC/CL/TP/1/33, file notes January-April 1941.
- <sup>39</sup> LCC/CL/TP/1/33, file note 14 January 1941.
- <sup>40</sup> *GLP*, 5 (Assumption 2).
- <sup>41</sup> JH Forshaw and Patrick Abercrombie, *County of London Plan [CLP]* (London: Macmillan, 1943), 30; *GLP*, 5.

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- <sup>42</sup> CLP, 6-7.
- <sup>43</sup> CLP, 34.
- <sup>44</sup> *Estates Gazette*, 11 September, 1943, 249, for the Town and Country Planning Association; [LMA] LCC/CL/TP/1/38, County of London Plan, Observations of Government Departments. Ministry of Town and Country Planning, 2.
- <sup>45</sup> GLP, 37-8.
- <sup>46</sup> *The Times*, 14 December, 1944.
- <sup>47</sup> R. Gordon Cummings, 'Plan for a Million People to Move Their Homes', *Daily Herald*, 14 December, 1944.
- <sup>48</sup> GLP, 5.
- <sup>49</sup> CLP, 6-7.
- <sup>50</sup> GLP, v.
- <sup>51</sup> *Census 1951 England and Wales: Report on Greater London and Five Other Conurbations* (London: HMSO, 1956), xxvi.
- <sup>52</sup> TNA, HLG 7/608.
- <sup>53</sup> CLP, 33.
- <sup>54</sup> See John Stevenson, 'Planners' Moon? The Second World War and the Planning Movement' in Harold L. Smith, *War and Social Change. British Society in the Second World War* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1986), 58-77.
- <sup>55</sup> See for instance the editorial comment in the *Municipal Journal, Local Government Administrator and Public Works Engineer [MJ]*, 25 October, 1940, 1361 (the bombing is 'an ill wind blowing us some good').
- <sup>56</sup> *MJ*, 19 December, 1941, 1538 (F.J. Osborn, Hon. Sec. of the Town and Country Planning Association: 'We should not abolish London, but to the extent that it had been demolished we should not rebuild it'); *Estates Gazette*, 30 November, 1940, 605, citing an architect pressing for the 'evacuation of official and business London' to a new capital in the centre of England.
- <sup>57</sup> *Report of the Committee on Housing in Greater London* (London: HMSO, 1965, Cmnd. 2605), 11.
- <sup>58</sup> *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Mercury*, 15 July, 1941.
- <sup>59</sup> *Report...on the Preliminary Draft Proposals for Post-War Reconstruction in the City of London* (London: Corporation of London, 1944), 13.
- <sup>60</sup> Hibbert, *London*, 70-2.
- <sup>61</sup> *Boroughs of Poplar and Stepney and East London Advertiser*, 11 February, 1944.
- <sup>62</sup> See the responses in [LMA] LCC/CL/TP/1/39.
- <sup>63</sup> *Estates Gazette*, 30 October, 1943, 416.
- <sup>64</sup> See for instance TNA, HLG 71/694, Draft Note by GHD, 4 March 1944, 'The Planning of London', 1.
- <sup>65</sup> National Council of Social Service [NCSS], *Dispersal. An Inquiry into the Advantages and Feasibility of the Permanent Settlement out of London and Other Great Cities of Offices and Clerical and Administrative Staffs* (London: NCSS, 1944), ch. III.
- <sup>66</sup> NCSS, *Dispersal*, 21.
- <sup>67</sup> *Census 1951*, xxvi.
- <sup>68</sup> See DL Munby, *Industry and Planning in Stepney* (London: Oxford University press, 1951), 99ff.
- <sup>69</sup> Hansard, Commons, 2 March 1936, cols. 1023-33.
- <sup>70</sup> 1945 (8&9 Geo. 6) c.36.
- <sup>71</sup> Hugh Dalton, *The Fateful Years. Memoirs 1931-1945* (London: Frederick Muller, 1957), ch. XXIX. See also ODNB, Ben Pimlott, 'Dalton, (Edward) Hugh Neal, Baron Dalton (1887-1962)', <https://doi-org.ezproxy.lib.bbk.ac.uk/10.1093/ref:odnb/32697>, accessed 30 July 2019.
- <sup>72</sup> ODNB, Richard Weight, 'Silkin, Lewis, first Baron Silkin (1889-1972)', <https://doi-org.ezproxy.lib.bbk.ac.uk/10.1093/ref:odnb/31684>, accessed 29 July, 2019.
- <sup>73</sup> Hansard, Commons, 5 March 1946, cols. 189-92.
- <sup>74</sup> *The Times*, 16 February, 1946.
- <sup>75</sup> TNA, HLG 71/706, 'Official Committee on the Distribution of Industry. Panel A. Further Industrial Development in Greater London. Principles to be followed.' [n.d. cMay 1946]
- <sup>76</sup> HLG 71/706.
- <sup>77</sup> See Peter Self, 'Distribution of Population', *Official Architecture and Planning*, 19, 1, (1956), 1-24, especially 21-2.
- <sup>78</sup> HLG 71/706, 'A Survey of Approvals of Industrial Building Projects in the Greater London Area', 24 January 1947.

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<sup>79</sup> William Holford, 'The Changing Face of London', in Ruth Glass et al, *London. Aspects of Change* (London: Macgibbon & Kee, 1964), ch. V.

<sup>80</sup> *Report on Housing in Greater London*, passim.

<sup>81</sup> Gillian Tindall, *The Tunnel Through Time. A New Route for an Old London Journey* (London: Chatto & Windus, 2016), 210-11. See also Patricia L Garside, 'The significance of post-war London reconstruction plans for East End industry', *Planning Perspectives*, 12 (1997), 19-36.

<sup>82</sup> For the building programme see LCC, *A Survey of the Post-War Housing of the London County Council' 1945-1949*, (London: LCC, 1949) ; for Macmillan see Ken Young and Patricia Garside, *Metropolitan London. Politics and Urban Change 1837-1981* (London: Edward Arnold, 1982), 263-4.

<sup>83</sup> Young and Garside, *Metropolitan London*, ch. 9.

<sup>84</sup> LCC, *Administrative County of London Development Plan. Statement* (London: LCC, 1962), 3.

<sup>85</sup> Greater London Council, *Greater London Development Plan Report of Studies* (London: GLC, 1969), 4, Table 3.3.

<sup>86</sup> *The Times*, 26 February, 1963.

<sup>87</sup> See, for the general picture, the interesting essay by Mark Clapson, 'Destruction and Dispersal: The Blitz and the "Break-Up" of Working-Class London', in Mark Clapson and Peter J. Larkham (eds.), *The Blitz and Its Legacy. Wartime destruction to Post-War Reconstruction* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013), 99-112; on attitudes to moving in Bethnal Green, which may not have been typical, see Michael Young and Peter Willmott, *Family and Kinship in East London* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1957), 155ff.

<sup>88</sup> The first use of the term in *The Times* appears to have been on 25 July, 1960.

<sup>89</sup> Online data from [www.trustforlondon.org.uk](http://www.trustforlondon.org.uk), accessed 23 September 2018.

<sup>90</sup> C.B. Purdom, *How Should We Rebuild London?* (London: J.M. Dent, 1945), 153.