

*Charles Correa*

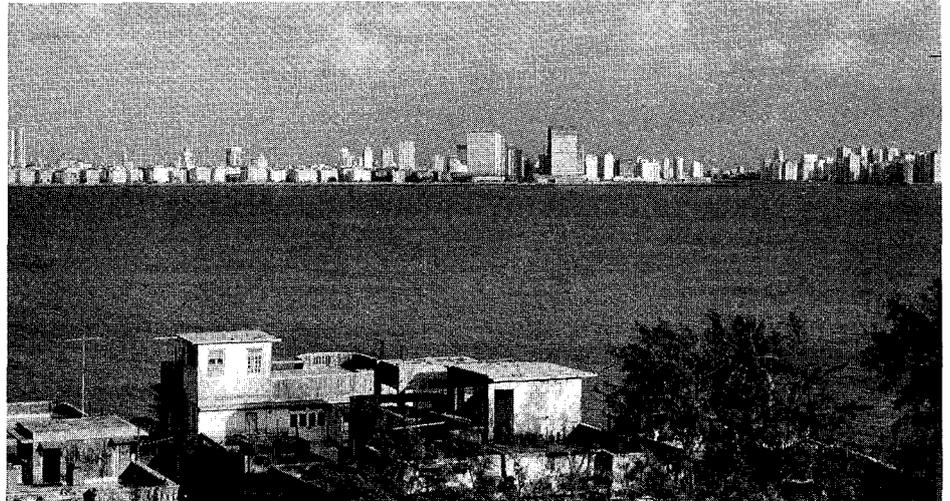
There are half a dozen cities in the world of over 10 million inhabitants each, most of them in the developed countries. By the year 2000 there will be almost 50 cities of over 15 million, of which 40 will be in the Third World and one of them will be Bombay.

Like many other sea ports, the city of Bombay is like one long breakwater, protecting the harbour from the open sea. The East India Company started the settlement more than three centuries ago, building the docks and the fort to establish a protected manufacturing and trading area at the southern tip of this breakwater. Its linear structure provided a natural functional framework, one which was sufficient until World War II. Subsequent population increases, however, have stretched the structure to its limits, and it is now on the verge of collapsing.

At the southernmost tip of the island lies the fastest growing employment centre in the city: an enormous complex of government and commercial offices which form India's financial centre. These office jobs, together with the vast textile mills nearby, every day trigger off massive flows of traffic, southward in the morning, northward in the evening. To avoid this gruelling commuting (up to four hours each way), people try to live as close as possible to the southern end in squatter settlements, or in overcrowded slums, ten to fifteen in a room.

There is indeed a brutal mismatch between the city's structure and the load it must carry today. To survive the next two decades, the capacity of Bombay will have to be considerably increased. This was the basis of the proposals which two colleagues and myself presented to the government as private citizens some years ago. In essence, we suggested the opening of new growth centres so that Bombay's north-south linear structure would metamorphose into a circular, multi-centred one, refocusing it once again around the harbour.

Actually, several critical but unrelated decisions had already been made with regard to land use strategy, involving transport, industry and other key factors of urban



*Bombay view of the southern tip*

*Photo: Charles Correa*

development. Through the concerted efforts of government and commerce, effectively interacting and co-operating with one another, a new urban centre on a scale commensurate with the dimensions of Bombay's growth could be generated. Furthermore, through public ownership of land, cash flow could be generated, using the enhanced value of developed acreage to help finance service infrastructure, public transport and housing for the poor.

The natural, unavoidable growth of Bombay should be looked upon as an opportunity to restructure its urban fabric; something that no other modern metropolis such as London or New York, for example, could even conceive of. It is the real advantage of the Third World cities of today that they can emerge from the tunnel, so to speak, better off than the condition in which they entered it.

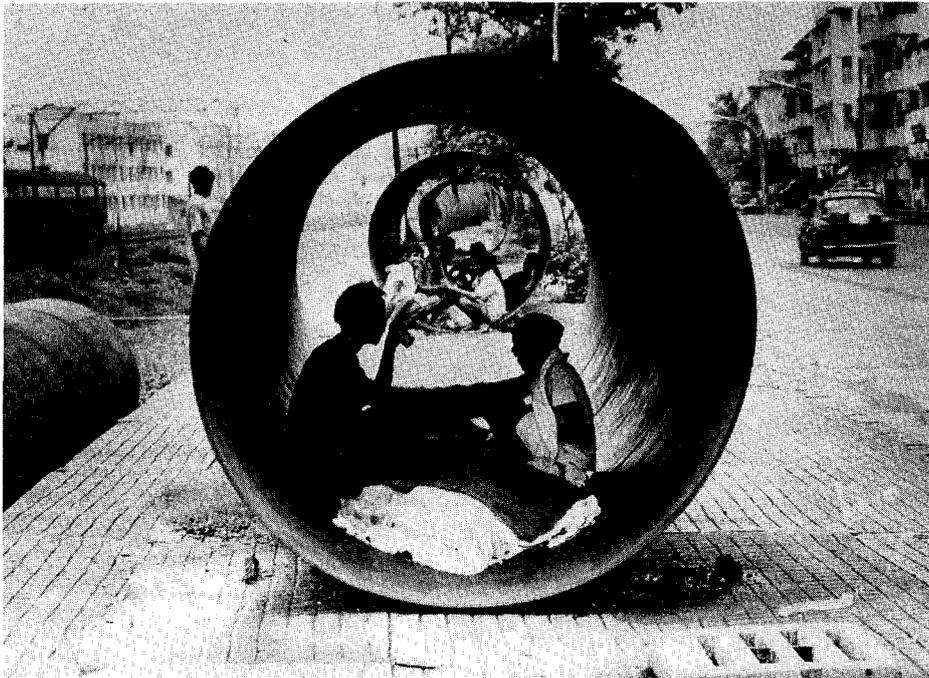
### **New Bombay**

In 1970, the Government of Maharashtra accepted the basic planning concepts and earmarked 55,000 acres of land for acquisi-

tion. It set up CIDCO (City and Industrial Development Corporation) to design and develop a new city, to be called New Bombay. Since the metropolitan region was expected to grow by about 4 million between 1970 and 1985, it was estimated that about half, i.e., 2 million persons, would relocate into the new city.

The planning concepts developed for New Bombay consist chiefly in generating a number of growth points within the context of a structural plan, which has to be flexible enough in order to be able to deal with unforeseen obstacles such as could be encountered, for example, with local land owners. Despite statutory powers of acquisition, there was enormous resistance from the local owners to sell their land, not because they disliked the idea of a new city, but because they wanted to keep all the profits for themselves. Even today, the land keeps coming to CIDCO in bits and pieces, requiring constant re-adjustment of the development programme.

The problem of creating a large viable urban centre within a developing economy is indeed a formidable one, especially since inputs for generating job opportunities are scarce.



*Bombay migrants along the railway*

*Photo: Charles Correa*

Perhaps, in time, techniques will be found for using some of the same inputs over again. After all, certain inputs are more mobile than others, and are, in that sense, re-usable. For instance, dock facilities once set up, cannot be moved. On the other hand, certain key functions such as those of the government are highly mobile. Moreover, government jobs have a high multiplier effect (estimated at five in the context of New Bombay). Obviously, if we are to generate new urban growth centres, within the limitations of our economy and our resources, then we will have to find techniques for re-using some of the key inputs several times over. As soon as a healthy and sustained growth is ensured, some of these ingredients can be remanufactured and used again, rather like a technique for grafting trees. Perhaps a better analogy would be a travelling circus. The government of a developing country pitches a tent somewhere and generates the pro-

cess of urban growth; then it moves on to a new location ten years later.

The important thing to remember is that this kind of urban development has occurred before: the British created Bombay and Calcutta out of nothing; and the Spanish, Lima. These colonial powers knew that if their empires were to continue, they had to act decisively, quickly and aggressively. So too, in the case of urbanisation it is crucial that a planning method be created within this decade. The countries of the Third World must begin to plan their urbanisation patterns as boldly as they plan their industrialisation patterns.

With the continuous flow of migrants into existing centres, slums and squatter settlements contain an ever larger portion of the urban population: 33 per cent in Karachi and Calcutta, 41 per cent in Brasilia, and as high as 80 per cent in Buenaventura (Col-

umbia). Yet, through careful planning, the challenge to develop these areas with a minimal amount of seed capital can be met by functionally restructuring our urban configurations, and by land-use policies involving large-scale acquisition. The concept of self-sufficient housing already exists; there must now come into being the concept of (and the programme for) the self-sufficient city.