

# REGIONAL PLAN ASSOCIATION, INC.

*... a research and planning agency supported by voluntary membership to promote the coordinated development of the New York-New Jersey-Connecticut Metropolitan Region.*

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## NEWS RELEASE

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### Even 'Megalopolis'

URBAN GROWTH NEITHER UNNATURAL NOR UNHEALTHY,  
NEW YORK REGIONAL PLAN ASSOCIATION STUDY SAYS

Continued growth of large metropolitan areas like New York and even the gradual growing together of adjacent urban regions, happening now between Washington and Boston, are neither unnatural nor unhealthy in themselves, as many critics of urban development have argued, Regional Plan Association declared in a publication released today.

The nation's additional population growth would be better served in existing metropolitan areas than in isolated new towns, if planning of these areas is improved, according to the report.

Regional Plan Association is a nonprofit research organization which has recommended development policies for the New York Metropolitan Area since the 1920's. The publication is The Region's Growth, a volume of economic and population analyses mainly of the New York Region. It is one of a series of background studies which will lead to a Second Regional Plan for the New York Area, sequel to the world's first major metropolitan plan produced in 1929.

The Association projects the population growth in the 13,000 square miles around the Port of New York to increase by nearly twice as many people in the next 35 years as it did in the last 35, from 19 million in 1965 to 30 million in 2000 compared to a 6.4 million growth between 1930 and 1965.

Population in the 67,000-square-mile urban belt along the Eastern Seaboard is expected to rise from 42 million to about 72 million. "Even so, only about 14,500 square miles would be urbanized, assuming typical suburban densities and high standards of local open space," according to C. McKim Norton, Regional Plan's President, who summarized the report. "More than four-fifths of the Boston-to-Washington corridor would remain forests and farms and large public parks."

"While urban regions are beginning to grow together at the edges-- particularly New York and Philadelphia around Trenton and Washington and Baltimore, they remain distinct social and economic units," the Association has found. "Measured by the number of commuters to central cities, there is very little overlapping of metropolitan areas. In few counties along the Eastern Seaboard do significant numbers of commuters go to more than one metropolitan center." (See Table 1.)

"Another measure of overlapping of metropolitan areas is the number of trips made daily within and outside an urban region. In the New York metropolitan area studied by Regional Plan, there were 35 million trips per day made by mechanized vehicle (eliminating walking and bicycling). Of these, only 260,000, three-quarters of 1 percent, were to or from points outside the metropolitan region." (See Table 2.)

### Why Metropolitan Areas Grow

"Metropolitan areas are growing because they are machines of communication in a world of increasing communication," Norton explained. "Just as the telephone did not make letters obsolete--both mail and calls keep increasing dramatically--so the importance of face-to-face communication has increased despite all the new communication technology. Even closed-circuit television does not seem to take the place of being in the same room with someone.

"Organizations locate in metropolitan areas to communicate with other organizations. Individuals usually come to enlarge their job choice," Norton said. "Of course, some individuals come simply because they prefer large cities--the freedom of anonymity, excitement, wide choice of friends and variety of leisure activities. But most people apparently come or stay in metropolitan areas because it is easier to find a suitable job there."

### Experience in Five Countries

"England's efforts to build small self-contained towns in which all residents would work within the town have clearly failed on this point. Residents of the new towns apparently want the whole metropolitan area as their job market, especially those who moved into the new towns as children and are now in the labor market. There is considerable commuting to and from these new towns, and emphasis on self-contained small towns in the London area has been ended."

The Regional Plan study summarizes policies in five countries toward growth of their largest metropolitan areas:

London. A greenbelt 6 to 10 miles wide around the city, intensive efforts to divert jobs to other parts of Great Britain, and "decanting" residents to new towns beyond the greenbelt all have failed to limit London's growth, according to the study. Between 1951 and 1961, the urban region influenced by London increased its population nearly twice as fast as the rest of England, by 7.5 percent compared to 4.2 percent. Designed to accommodate half of London's population increase, the new towns have absorbed only 27 percent and have not remained self-contained in regard to jobs. The most recent British policy is to accept growth in Southeast England of at least 3.5 million people (20 percent) over the next 20 years, organized around larger communities than had been anticipated with the new towns--including a one-third increase in the Southampton-Portsmouth sub-region which already has 750,000 people and substantial increases in the planned populations of the new towns, which had been set at about 80,000.

Moscow. Since 1931, powerful weapons of the Soviet state have been mobilized to keep Moscow from growing, but the population increase since 1939 has been at about the same rate as the New York Region where no controls have existed. The City proper increased in population from 4.5 million to 6.3 million. Statistics indicate some success for the restrictive policies, however--Moscow grew only half as fast as Soviet cities of less than 1 million inhabitants, though some of these smaller cities--(such as those in the Donets and Kuznets basins)--are in fact part of large metropolitan regions themselves. In any case, "with the increasing complexity of Soviet society, there are signs that revision of the growth-restricting policies is under consideration," the Regional Plan study says. (See Table 3.)

Tokyo. A brief attempt was made in 1956 to follow British policies, setting aside a greenbelt around Tokyo and building new towns beyond it, with national economic regulations to divert jobs to other cities. But in 1965, the plan was changed to call for continuous urbanization interlaced with parks rather than a restricting greenbelt, and the new towns were changed to sub-centers connected to Tokyo by extensive freeways and rapid transit routes.

Paris. Paris always has had a greatly disproportionate share of French population and activity. National policies since 1949 have favored provincial cities for industrial location. They may finally have had some effect; the growth rate of provincial cities recently began to exceed that of Paris. Nevertheless, Paris received a third of France's population growth between 1954 and 1962, and French planners anticipate additional growth of 5 to 8 million people over the next 35 years, at least a 65 percent increase and possibly more than 100 percent. "Here, too, growth-restricting planning ideas are being abandoned, and the strategy is to channel development in a strong corridor pattern mostly along the Seine towards the sea, and to relieve pressures on downtown by the creation of a few major centers in the suburbs," according to The Region's Growth.

In the United States, radical programs for redistributing population never have been accepted, though there have been programs to aid economically depressed areas, such as Appalachia, and the placing of defense contracts have had significant effect on the growth of certain metropolitan areas including New York. "On the whole, Americans have believed in growth and hesitate to try to limit it artificially in any

particular area," Norton observed. "For example, in a 1963 public response program via television, Regional Plan Association asked 4,750 people, mainly active participants in civic affairs, whether they would favor policies to try to limit the New York Metropolitan Region's growth. The replies were: 19 percent yes; 77 percent no; 4 percent undecided. Again last year, the Association asked its distinguished 135-member Committee on the Second Regional Plan. The answer was almost unanimous: no.

"The medium-sized cities of America are growing far faster than the larger ones," Norton reported. "As a metropolitan area becomes larger than 1 million, its growth rate begins to slow. Nevertheless, between 1940 and 1960, half of the total growth of metropolitan areas of this country took place in those metropolitan areas with populations of more than 1 million people." (Table 3.)

#### Problems of Large Size and Solutions

The Association study acknowledges "that large urban size does complicate access to the countryside and that unique natural resources close to the largest urban areas are likely to be too crowded for maximum enjoyment." This can be mitigated, it continues, by maintaining natural open space between channels of urbanization and by the spontaneous staggering of vacations and shorter outdoor recreation times, which becomes possible as leisure time increases.

Other alleged deficiencies of large urban size, the study argues, can be overcome with well-planned organization of land use and transportation. Beyond a population of about 1 million, the size of an

urban area does not seem to affect average travel time to work very much, for example. Limited data show that the average time for the trip to work varies from 26 minutes in Minneapolis-St. Paul (1.4 million) to 26.5 in Detroit (3 million), 27 in Chicago (5.2 million) and 35 minutes in both Paris (7.7 million) and the New York Region (19 million).

The study adds that large urban areas usually have more than one center. In the New York Region, the outlying centers not only are growing faster than New York City but also are becoming increasingly independent. This keeps commuting time down even while the whole Region grows.

"Nevertheless, some of the advantages of being part of a giant urban region are available in these outlying sub-centers," Norton noted, "if they are tied to the major center with fast transportation.

"Such sub-centers of offices, major retailing, higher and continuing education, health services, the arts and apartments probably will be recommended in the Second Regional Plan. This idea is being tested by the Association not only on a wide range of public opinion but also with mathematical models which will indicate the travel demand and housing pattern likely to result from them.

"The Association also would favor planned residential communities within the metropolitan region, such as Columbia, Maryland; Reston, Virginia; or such older examples as Radburn in New Jersey and Forest Hills in Queens.

"But these new communities are not self-contained in regard to jobs," Norton emphasized. "Though many people will both live and work in them, they are designed to be part of the larger metropolitan job market and depend on the whole urban region for many special activities. The reverse also will be true. Columbia's downtown is designed to serve many more people than the residents of that city. It is intended to be part of the metropolitan fabric."

#### Trends in Metropolitan Growth

"Faster intercity transportation seems likely to encourage rather than discourage the growth of the largest cities," Norton continued. "Larger and faster aircraft make fewer rather than more stops feasible, and the prospects of increased surface or underground transportation at high speeds will do the same. Only the automobile has tended to disperse population, and that only within short distances. The result has been both increasingly spread metropolitan areas and increasingly populated ones."

Tracing the growth of the largest urban areas parallel to the growth of world population, the study found that city size generally grew step-by-step with world population. As the world's economy became more efficient, it supported an increased population and freed more people from hunting and agriculture to live in cities. The more complex the economy, the more communication was necessary and so the more people had to live together in cities. Since 1800, the world's largest urban area--whichever city it happened to be--tended to contain an increasing share of the world's population.

Altogether, the report stated, "the conclusion here is that large urban size brings great benefits and is a natural concomitant of world population growth and increasing wealth. The fact that metropolitan areas continue to grow all over the world, in many countries defying strong governmental measures aimed at limiting their growth, testifies to the universal magnetism of large urban areas....In any case, most of the problems of the largest urban areas of the world--congestion, dehumanization, poverty, crowding, long work trips--are not inherent in size and can be mitigated without limiting growth."

Of course, the study continues, "large and small metropolitan areas offer different living conditions" and "there should be a wide range of sizes to suit individual requirements."

But "the acceptance of large metropolitan size is not simply bowing before the inevitable; it is a recognition that the great city is one condition of man's fulfillment in the modern world."

"I want to make clear," Norton emphasized, "that we are not advocating increased population for its own sake. Regional Plan is simply saying that the population increase the nation gets can be well accommodated in metropolitan areas--at least for the next generation. For the years beyond 2000, we will have to take another look."

#### Atlantic Urban Region

"While we do not oppose population growth along the Eastern Seaboard, between the urban region of Washington and that of Boston, Regional Plan Association does advocate three policies to strengthen the advantages of urbanization and mitigate the handicaps," Norton stated.

"1. Acquisition of about 10,000 square miles of large public parks--an Appalachian park system from the Shenandoahs in Virginia to the Green Mountains of Vermont, altogether more than twice the size of Yellowstone Park. This would put the equivalent of one-fifth of the National park system where one-fifth of the nation's population lives. In addition, about 160 more miles of oceanfront should become public parks, and the major inland waterways--the great rivers and bays--should become the framework of continuous green spaces.

"2. High-speed surface transportation should be provided along the Atlantic Urban Seaboard, beginning as soon as possible with faster rail service (scheduled to begin in fall) which would eventually run in two hours between New York and Washington and New York and Boston. Further, the public should invest in research on even higher-speed modes of ground transportation to link the major centers of the Atlantic Urban Region.

"3. The major older centers of the Atlantic Urban Region should be strengthened and several new large downtowns developed as magnets within the corridor of urbanization. Regional Plan already has suggested that New Brunswick, New Jersey, and New Haven, Connecticut, should become major centers serving a large surrounding population, in addition to the enlargement of such centers closer to Manhattan as Newark, Jamaica in Queens, downtown Brooklyn and White Plains. The Association's finding that office jobs are rapidly overtaking factory jobs as the largest segment of the New York Region's economy strengthens the probability that such centers can and should become important transportation points and activity nodes."

Projections for the New York Metropolitan Area

In earlier press releases summarizing other findings of The Region's Growth, Regional Plan pointed out that:

--The 31-county area surrounding the Port of New York, some 13,000 square miles, would increase by 60 percent in population between 1965 and 2000 and by 70 percent in jobs.

--Office jobs would rise substantially. There will be more than 4 million more white-collar jobs by 2000, of which 1.4 million would be in office buildings, compared to a rise of only a third of a million blue-collar jobs (craftsmen, laborers, operatives, foremen), with just 100,000 more jobs in factory buildings. This difference in growth between the two types of jobs could result in more concentrated employment than has been taking place, which would facilitate economical public transportation.

--Though new factories generally are located out of the Region's dense core, primarily for ease in acquiring large sites, public policies should encourage some factory jobs to remain near the center as long as factory workers are barred from suburban housing by its high cost or by racial discrimination.

--The metropolitan area will be faced with disproportionately high demands for jobs over the next decade-and-a-half as the number of 18-24 year olds continues to rise sharply for the next fifteen years, following two decades (1940-60) of decline in this age bracket.

--The demand for places in higher education also will leap. Altogether, the Study Area will need to quadruple its higher education places by 2000.

--Demand for one-family houses will increase faster than population as incomes go up, but particularly in the 1970's there will be a great new one-family house boom. Then, the number of families whose head is in the typical home-buying age (30-34) will jump from half-a-million to nearly 800,000.

--As the suburbs mature, suburbanites will demand more and more apartments for themselves and their children, who are gradually reaching the age when they form their own households. The older suburbs will be exporting population; some already are.

--Incomes at all levels, including the lower brackets, would rise substantially if recent trends can be continued. In fact, almost no families with children would be left with incomes of less than \$5,000 a year by 2000 (in 1965 dollars). But as the economy turns increasingly to white-collar work, the distribution of this prosperity to all families will depend on the adequacy of education and training or provision of new productive unskilled jobs. At the top of the scale, recent trends projected would mean an eightfold rise in families with incomes over \$15,000 a year by 2000.

Boris Pushkarev, Chief Planner of Regional Plan Association, wrote the section of The Region's Growth on world urban growth. Emanuel Tobier, Chief Economist, and Regina Belz, Senior Economist, prepared the analyses and projections on the New York Metropolitan Region. Stanley B. Tankel is Planning Director.

The first Regional Plan of New York and Its Environs (1929) laid out policies which influenced the timing and location of the Region's limited-access highway network and several major parks. It also proposed development ideas that resulted in the current concepts of zoning,

FHA subdivision standards, the commercial superblock carried out in Rockefeller Center and the neighborhood unit, carried out in Fresh Meadows in Queens.

Later landmark Regional Plan Association reports have been: The Race for Open Space (1960), Commuter Transportation (a report to the Senate Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee in 1961), Spread City (1962), Planning and Community Appearance (1958), Airports of Tomorrow (1947) and Traffic and Parking Study (1942).

Most of the Association's work is applying the basic concepts developed in these long-range research projects to immediate Region-shaping decisions facing public and corporate policy-makers. For example, the reports cited helped to achieve half-a-dozen major park acquisitions, five state bond issues for parks and the first federal aid for open-space acquisition; modernization programs for commuter rail service in all three states of the New York Region and the first federal aid for public transportation; visual surveys in Denver and San Francisco and the Washington "skyline study;" consolidated operation of the three major airports of the Region by the Port of New York Authority; one-way streets and a consolidated bus terminal in Manhattan and establishment of a Department of Traffic for New York City.

The New York Metropolitan Region Study by a Harvard University research team and Man in Metropolis by Louis B. Schlivek, both commissioned by the Association, expanded public understanding of the dynamics of metropolitan growth, according to Norton.

Regional Plan Association is a nonprofit civic organization supported by foundations and corporate, local government, civic organization and individual members and subscribers.

Table 1

## COMMUTERSHEDS OF THE ATLANTIC URBAN REGION.

Commutershed <sup>1</sup>	Persons Working in Central City, 1960	Population in Commutershed <sup>2</sup>	
		1960 number (thousands)	1950-1960 growth rate (percent)
1. New York-Hudson-Newark	4,126,000	15,816.4	15.8%
2. Philadelphia-Camden	950,000	4,442.3	17.4
3. Boston-Cambridge	521,000	3,433.6	9.6
4. Washington, D. C.	502,000	2,193.8	37.8
5. Baltimore	396,000	1,775.8	23.3
6. Providence	115,000	834.6	7.1
7. Hartford	114,000	1,018.7	28.2
8. Worcester	88,000	576.5	6.8
9. New Haven	85,000	439.7	23.5
10. Springfield	75,200	532.5	16.8
11. Albany	74,700	758.7	10.9
12. Bridgeport	73,000	273.4	23.6
13. Harrisburg	61,000	387.5	16.6
14. Wilmington	60,000	414.5	37.3
15. Allentown	58,000	481.8	9.2
16. Trenton	53,000	400.7	31.2
17. Reading	52,000	275.4	7.7
18. Lancaster	40,000	278.3	18.5
19. Lehigh-Valley	37,000	346.9	-11.5
20. York	34,000	290.2	17.7

<sup>1</sup>Commutershed includes counties or census portions of counties with over 2 percent of resident labor force working in designated central city of an SCA or SMSA of 250,000 or more population.

<sup>2</sup>Adjusted for overlapping areas.

Source: U.S. Census of Population, Journey to Work.

Table 3

## GROWTH OF METROPOLITAN AREAS BY SIZE GROUP, UNITED STATES AND SOVIET UNION.

## UNITED STATES

Population size in 1960	Number	1960 population	Absolute increase, 1940-1960 (thousands)	Annual rate of growth 1940-1960 (thousands)
Over 1 million	22	62,767	20,694	2.0%
500,000 to 1 million	27	18,030	8,160	3.1
250,000-500,000	48	15,829	5,470	2.1
100,000-250,000	89	14,498	5,128	2.2
50,000-100,000	22	1,761	599	2.1
<b>Total, U.S.</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>112,885<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>40,051</b>	<b>2.22</b>

<sup>1</sup>In 1960, 62.5% of nation's total population.

Note: 208 areas include 2 Standard Consolidated Areas and 206 Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas outside the SCA's.

## SOVIET UNION

Population size in 1962	Number	1962 population	Absolute increase, 1939-1962 (thousands)	Annual rate of growth 1939-1962 (thousands)
Over 1 million	6	14,096	3,353	1.2%
500,000 to 1 million	21	14,854	6,484	2.5
250,000-500,000	37	12,505	5,401	2.5
100,000-250,000	110	16,259	7,253	2.6
50,000-100,000	153	10,532	5,016	2.8
<b>Total, USSR</b>	<b>327</b>	<b>68,246<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>27,507</b>	<b>2.27</b>

<sup>1</sup>In 1962, 31.0% of nation's total population.

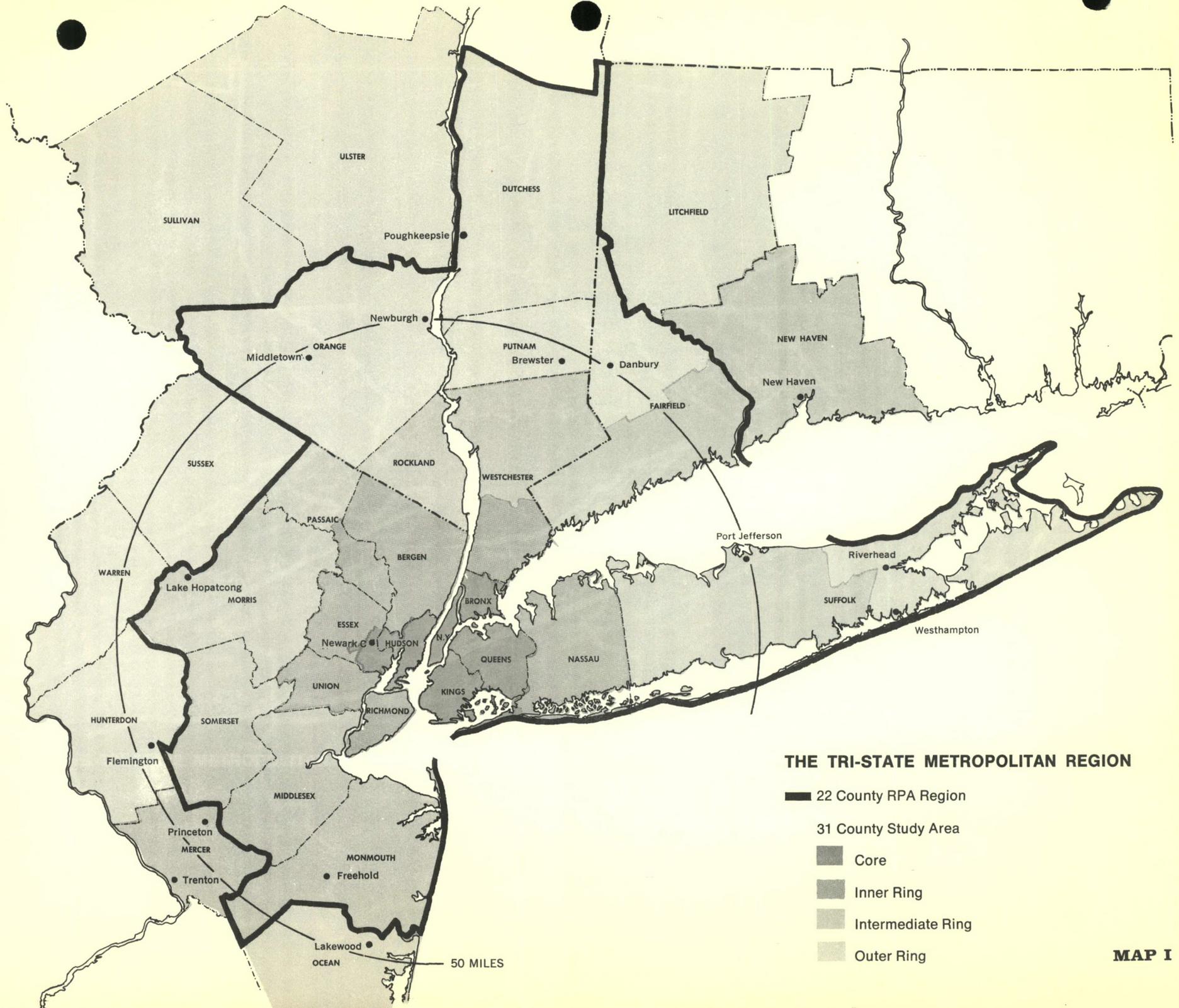
Sources: United States: U.S. Census of Population. Soviet Union: Narodnoe Khoziaistvo SSSR. (Annual of the Central Statistical Administration.)

Table 2

## INTERNAL VERSUS OUTSIDE DAILY TRIPS FOR THE NEW YORK STUDY AREA.

Internal trips for all purposes by mechanized means . . .	35,000,000
Internal work trips by mechanized means . . . . .	13,500,000
Trips to and from points outside the Study Area . . . . .	260,000
of which, to and from:	
Philadelphia . . . . .	20,000
Boston . . . . .	12,000
Washington . . . . .	11,000
Chicago . . . . .	4,500
Los Angeles . . . . .	2,000
overseas . . . . .	17,000
of which, to and from:	
London . . . . .	1,000
Paris . . . . .	700
Tokyo . . . . .	250
Rio de Janeiro . . . . .	50
Moscow . . . . .	6

Source: Regional Plan Association (estimates for 1965).



**THE TRI-STATE METROPOLITAN REGION**

- 22 County RPA Region
- 31 County Study Area
- Core
- Inner Ring
- Intermediate Ring
- Outer Ring

50 MILES