CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

During the last two decades there has been considerable debate regarding the appropriate role of public participation in environmental planning.[1] However, such discussion has often been limited both by the lack of any well-defined theoretical framework, and by the limited amount of empirical data in certain areas. This thesis seeks to contribute to the planning participation debate on both a theoretical and empirical level. First it seeks to establish a comprehensive political framework within which ideas concerning planning participation can be placed. Secondly, because of the influential role that professional planners can play in public participation programmes, the thesis examines the internal and external factors which may determine how the planner actually carries out his or her participatory role. The first objective is fulfilled by means of an analysis of the relevant political and planning literature. To meet the second objective, the study includes the results of a series of surveys relating to planning and public participation in local government in New South Wales, Australia.

A major source of difficulty (and interest) is the inherently eclectic nature of the research, which involves the collection, interpretation and integration of ideas from the professional and academic fields of planning, politics, sociology, social psychology, personnel management, and public administration. Thus, the first half of the thesis comprises a necessarily lengthy development of the ideas upon which is based the subsequent analysis of the data collected from primary sources. Basic political and planning models are developed in Chapters 2 and 3. Specific historical details about local planning in N.S.W. are given in Chapter 4, thus providing the legal and administrative background necessary for a full understanding of the later chapters. Chapter 5 indicates how the selected survey topic, the

planner's participatory role, is but one aspect of a much more complex system of interlocking roles. The following four chapters provide a descriptive and interpretive account of the results, from three surveys designed to examine the personal and environmental influences on a local planner's participatory behaviour. In the final chapter there is a move away from the objective approach consciously adopted in the preceding chapters. Drawing on the findings of the theoretical and empirical work (and, no doubt, the unavoidable influence of the political bias of the writer - despite a sustained, conscious effort to be objective) the researcher advocates what is regarded as an achieveable and worthwhile course of action for local government planners to pursue with regard to public participation. The remainder of this chapter comprises more specific introductions to each of the following chapters.

The starting point of any discussion of planning and, particularly, public participation in planning should be a recognition that the topic is inherently political in nature: land use planning is a resource distribution process, and the individuals and groups influencing the determination of who gets what are thus political actors. Consequently, Chapter 2 examines how democratic theorists emphasise and interpret the public's role in government. Three overlapping schools of thought are identified: democratic elitism, pluralism, and participatory democracy. In the democratic elitist model the role of the public is largely confined to voting into office a small decision-making elite. The emphasis is on social stability, which is considered to be maintained most efficiently through minimising mass participation. In the pluralist model the emphasis is on the role of special interest groups in the political bargaining process. The number of decision makers is thus much larger than in the elitist system because each group has its own set of leaders, and the relatively specialised nature of each group means that there is little overlap of leaders. Both the democratic elitist and the pluralist systems are forms of indirect democracy for the majority of the public. In contrast, participatory democracy is direct democracy, there being a decentralisation of all decision making down to the level where the people likely to be affected will have a direct role

in the political process. Chapter 2 places the modern theorists from each school in an historical perspective, and then details those elements which define the public's role. Each section concludes with a detailed critique.

These political perspectives provide the philosophical framework for Chapter 3 which reduces the focus of study by considering specifically public participation in land use planning. The vast amount of planning participation literature is analysed by focussing on what the author of each paper suggests is the general social objective of participation. The chapter highlights the English and Australian literature's emphasis on democratic elitism showing how, even though the techniques may have changed, the basic social objectives of consensus and stability remain. The review of the largely American literature on pluralism outlines how the basic intention is to make the political bargaining process more equitable by providing assistance to disadvantaged groups, and shows how there is a continuum from exclusively technical to largely political assistance. The former overlaps with the more outgoing, modern version of democratic elitism; the latter overlaps with the more radical participatory democratic approach, which stresses direct action leading eventually to a restructuring of society as there develops what Altshuler (1970) calls 'community control'. As in the preceding chapter, the review of each of the three models is followed by a detailed critique. The resulting six main sections in the chapter provide a closely interwoven synthesis of the various perspectives on planning participation.

Chapter 4 provides the legal and administrative history of land use planning in New South Wales, emphasising the development of planning at the local government level and provision for public involvement in such planning. Four basic chronological periods are defined: an incipient period; a period of experiment during which major legislation was introduced; a period of rapid development and resulting conflict; and a period of conciliation and reform. Within each section there is an outline of the planning legislation, particularly as it applied to participation, and an account of how the main participating groups, the State government, local government,

local professional planners and the general public, interacted both within and outside the statutory framework. Overall, a democratic elitist approach to public participation is evident throughout the development of local planning in N.S.W.

Chapter 5 focusses attention on the participatory role of local government planners in N.S.W. who, given the continuation of a democratic elitist mode of planning in the State, will continue to have a central part in public participation programmes. Because the planner cannot be abstracted from the working environment, any study of local planners' participatory behaviour is, in effect, a study of organisational behaviour. One of the most comprehensive and well supported general perspectives on organisational behaviour is that provided by role theory. Following the lead given in the role theory literature, three major influences on role behaviour are distinguished: the formal organisation of which the individual is a part; the role set, or people with whom the individual interacts while at work; and the personal characteristics of the individual, especially his or her motivations and abilities. The general influence of each is discussed, before focussing specifically on the participatory role of local planners. A full study of all role influences was found to be beyond the scope of the study which was largely exploratory in nature, little previous empirical work having been done. In line with the general emphasis in the role literature, it was decided to place the major research effort into investigating planners' personal role definitions. Three general factors are identified as likely to influence personal role definition: professional values; social expertise, or the ability to establish and maintain a positive relationship with others; and technical expertise, which relates to the skills and knowledge acquired largely through job-related experience and professional training. The final part of the chapter gives details of the development of the methodology of surveying local government planners in N.S.W.

Chapter 6 examines how N.S.W. local government planners view their role in the process of public participation, an assessment of planners' attitudes being made largely from their verbal responses to open-ended interview questions. The analysis is done in terms of the

theoretical perspectives developed in Chapters 2 and 3. First, the planners' perceived objectives of public participation are outlined; and secondly, the perceived problems associated with participation are discussed. A close association is evident between the survey responses and the views put forward by the proponents of democratic elitism. Thus, in principle, public participation is generally regarded by local planners as an information exchange mechanism, the use of which can help maintain social stability. In practice, public participation is seen to be beset with problems, the local planners' responses closely matching the arguments used by opponents of participatory democracy.

Chapter 7 considers three groups of factors which the literature suggests are likely to be significant influences on the personal participatory role definition of local planners: professional values, social expertise, and technical expertise. The relationship between each factor and planners' attitudes to public participation is tested using a specially constructed Thurstone attitudinal scaling instrument. The degree of professional peer influence is measured by the depth and breadth of an individual's qualifications, views about the membership and role of professional bodies, and the status already gained within the professional hierarchy. Although results from the analysis are often not statistically significant, overall there is some indication that those respondents most closely integrated into the planning profession tend to be least in favour of public participation. Social expertise - an individual's ability to establish harmonious relations with others - is measured using a short questionnaire to gauge the extroversion dimension of personality. Other measures include respondents' formal membership of social organisations and their political activities. Statistical analysis shows that it is the most outgoing planners who are most in favour of public participation. Technical expertise - skills and knowledge acquired largely through job-related experience and training - is measured using, for example, an individual's knowledge of the client community, formal education about participation, and experience already gained of conducting participation programmes. Statistical analysis shows that those planners with the most experience of public

participation, both in an official and a private advocacy capacity, are also those planners most in favour of public participation.

In Chapter 8 there is a discussion of the second type of role determinant: the role set, or people with whom the planner interacts while at work. Three main groups make up each local planner's role set: the participating members of the public; the other professionals on the local authority's staff; and the planner's employers, the locally elected members. As resources did not permit detailed studies to be made of all three groups, it was decided to survey only councillors, the literature suggesting that, in N.S.W. especially, they have considerable influence on their staff. Thus, the aim of this aspect of the research is to obtain a general overview of councillors' attitudes to compare with the opinions collected during the planners' interviews. A matching of role expectations would indicate a strong basis for the common perceived approach to public participation. A discrepancy between role expectations would indicate a high potential for conflict, and thus much less commitment to the eventual role behaviour. An additional objective of the research is to use the councillors' survey data to test for the occurrence of a number of associations suggested in the literature between members' attitudes to public participation and a range of personal variables. Comparison of the Thurstone attitude scale results shows virtually no difference in the overall distribution of scores of councillors and planners. Two other numerical scales indicate a slight tendency for councillors to be more in favour of public participation than their professional planners. Of the 87 per cent of councillors favouring participation, the vast majority regarded such activity essentially as an information-exchange mechanism. These findings are very similar to those from the planners' survey, suggesting a democratic elitist approach to participation. Generally, councillors regard the process of information exchange as the responsibility of both the elected representatives and the professional planners. Overall, therefore, the responses suggest that councillors support the idea of a participatory role for local planners. Results also indicate that such support will come most from the younger, less experienced and less influential councillors,

especially those in the Australian Labor Party, and those with a relatively low socio-economic status.

In Chapter 9 there is a discussion of organisational role determinants, the third main type of influence on role behaviour. Each planner functions within a series of codes, traditions, policies and laws laid down by an administrative system that includes the department, the rest of the local authority bureaucracy, and the State government. An examination of the overall participatory environment is regarded as an important element in any research into the local planner's participatory role for two reasons. First, it reflects the explicit role behaviour of the formal local decision makers, that is, the councillors' interpretations of the legal and other pressures. Secondly, existing general participatory structures can have an attitude-forming influence on the general public - providing them with information about what they can expect to receive from the council, and what the council expects from any citizen participation in the local government decision-making process. Thus, Chapter 9 discusses the results of another questionnaire survey, which was mailed to N.S.W. council clerks and was designed to determine the extent to which council policies allow the general public to become involved in local government affairs. As before, a discrepancy between the role expectations imposed by these general organisational norms and the personal role definitions of local planners would indicate a high potential for conflict; a matching of organisational and personal expectations would suggest a more stable job environment for the local planner. The results of the council clerks' survey indicate that, overall, behavioural norms are very much in accordance with the modern democratic elitism model: virtually all avenues of participation are directed towards information exchange, or the integration of groups through their involvement in the emplementation of council policy. There is virtually no delegation of decision-making powers. Consequently, in line with the general trend, local planners will be expected to maintain or develop a consultative approach to the public. Any attempt by the planner to extend the public's role into the decision-making arena would be definitely out of step with overall trends which, if anything, indicate a greater centralisation of such

power. The results of this survey are thus in line with the results from the planners' interviews and the councillors' questionnaire returns.

The concluding comments attempt to relate the practitioners' perspectives and the theoretical perspectives, highlighting the limited but important role that local planners can be expected to play in the process of public participation in planning. Thus, the consciously objective stance adopted in the preceding chapters is discarded. Instead, the author advocates a form of positive discrimination in public participation programmes in favour of those groups and individuals usually most disadvantaged by the current operation of the planning system.

CHAPTER 2

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND MODERN DEMOCRATIC THEORY

2.1 Introduction

It is generally contended that planning issues comprise one part of a much larger political agenda. The debate concerning public participation in planning should thus be regarded as a small part of a much wider discussion concerning the role that the public should play in the total political process. Consequently, before considering planning participation, it is important to discuss the broad issues of political participation. This will enable the more specific planning literature to be placed within the context of the wider political debate.

The concept of public participation is most prominent within the democratic models of government. Although the definitional vagueness of the term 'democracy' is widely acknowledged (e.g. Mayo 1960,21; Pickles 1970,9; Lively 1975,8; Pennock 1979, Ch.1), the etymological origins of the term are clear, going back to the Greek historian, Herodotus, who combined demos meaning 'the people' with kratein meaning 'to rule'. Although the term has since been redefined many times,[2] a dominant theme has continued to be citizen participation in government decision making. For example, in a recent re-definition of the term, Holden (1974,8) emphasises the participation element. He sees democracy as a form of government in which 'the whole people, positively or negatively, make and are entitled to make, the basic determining decisions on important matters of public policy'. (See also Kaase and Marsh 1979,28.)

As part of his research into classifying individual participation programmes, Cole (1974) identifies two dimensions of citizen participation, which he labels 'intensity' and 'scope' or 'variety':

> Intensity of citizen influence refers to the degree of actual influence over program formation and execution exercised by citizens... Scope of activity refers to the number and variety of programs within the jurisdiction of a particular program. (Cole 1974,15)

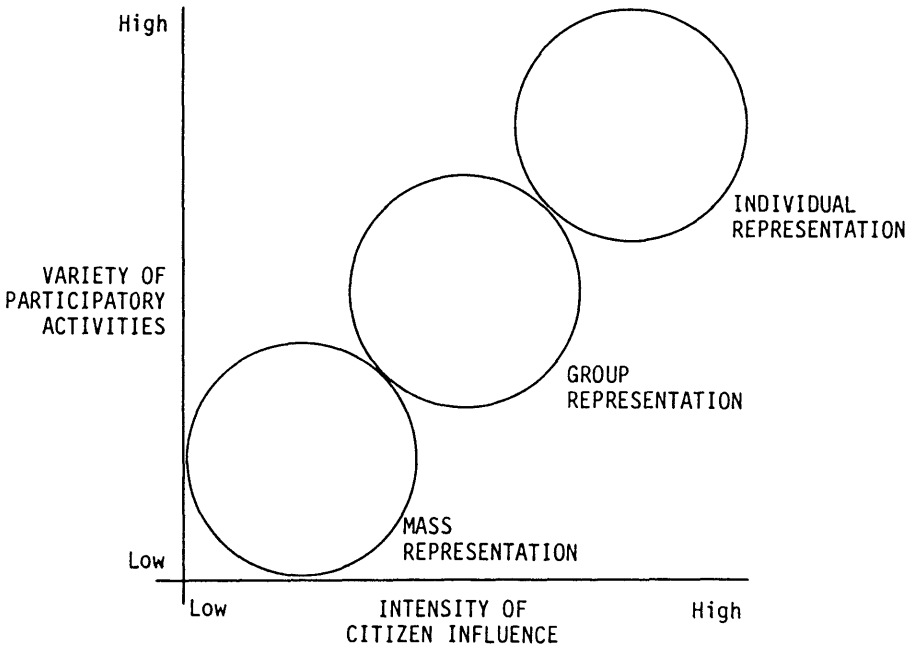
These dimensions can equally be applied to a broader analysis of the literature on democratic theory to identify general types of democracy.

Undoubtedly, the most literal translation of the term democracy involves all citizens directly participating in public decision making. Consequently, each individual would be placed in a high position on both the intensity and variety dimensions, individuals being involved in a large number of different political activities on a regular, frequent basis. Such a system of direct democracy can be characterised as one in which individuals represent themselves. At the other extreme of the two-dimensional model of democracy is a system in which large numbers of people (who might have very little in common other than the fact that they live in the same area) are represented by a small number of professional politicians. The democratic element is retained, the representatives being chosen by the people from a potentially very wide spectrum of candidates, and the people also having the right to choose differently at subsequent elections. However, the participation of the average citizen will be neither intense nor varied, being confined basically to voting every few years.

Thus, two extreme positions on the participation model have so far been identified: a system of democracy with a high level of participation where people represent themselves; and a system of democracy with a low level of participation where individuals represent large, heterogeneous groups. Logically, a third system of democracy can be identified, occupying a position somewhere between these two extremes. This third system will be another indirect form of democracy, with individuals representing relatively small, homogeneous groups. Because of the smaller average group size, the number of group representatives will presumably be larger than under the system of large group representation. (This assumes, of course, that there will be few instances of different groups having the same leaders, a

situation encouraged if each group is of a relatively specialised nature.) Consequently, the intensity and scope of participation by the average citizen will be somewhere between the very high levels of the system of direct democracy, and the very low levels of the other indirect system. The resulting simple model is shown on Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1 A basic model identifying three types of democracy



Another characteristic likely to vary between the three model democratic types is the value placed on the act of participation. Thus, at one extreme, the irregular and limited nature of the

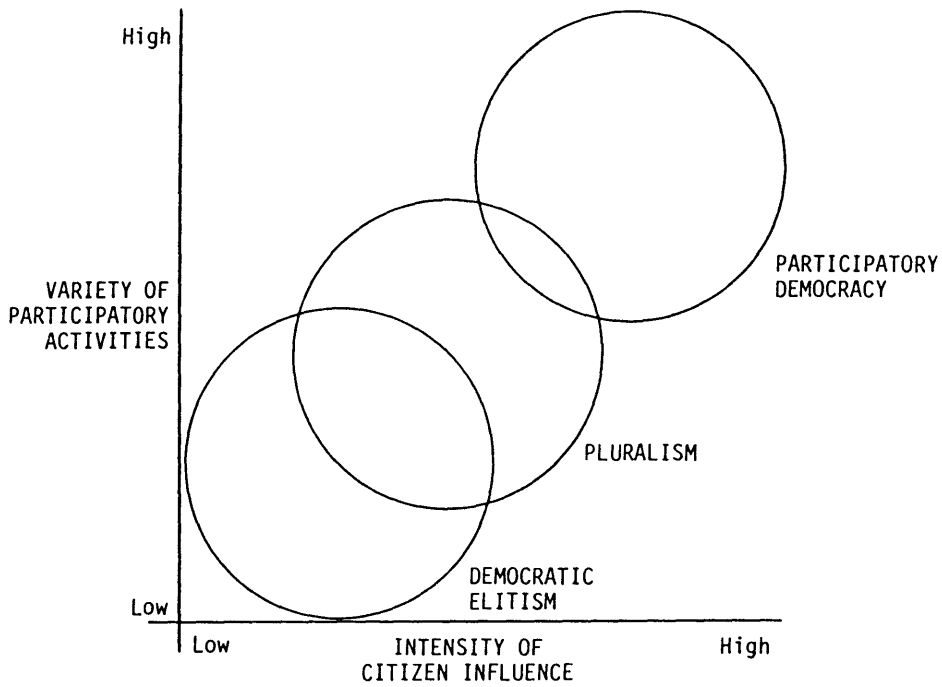
participatory activity - voting - would suggest that the main emphasis will be on the outcome of the participation process (the policies enacted by the elected government) rather than the participation process itself. At the other extreme, there is the possibility that, because the participation process is intense and varied, some changes will also occur (presumably beneficial ones) in the character of the participants.

It was with these ideas in mind that the literature on modern democratic theory was surveyed. It was found that there was support for the general ideas presented above. At the most basic level, democratic systems can be dichotomised into 'direct' and 'indirect', so called because in the former citizens directly participate in public decision making, whilst in the latter decisions are made by representatives of the people (Pateman 1970, Ch.1; Ranney 1971, Ch.10; Macpherson 1977, Chs 4 and 5). In addition, two major modes of indirect democracy are often identified by modern democratic theorists. 'Democratic elitism' in essence restricts the public's major role to selecting between competing elites at election time; and 'pluralism' emphasises the ability of individuals to form pressure groups to promote their particular interests in the political arena (Holden 1974, Ch.6; Kelso 1978, Ch.3). These three models provide a useful theoretical framework as they afford a wide spectrum of views on the role that the general public do or should play in government decision making in western democracies.

Although a distinction between elitist, pluralist and direct modes of democracy is valuable for the purpose of exposition, it assigns to three apparently distinct categories ideas which more correctly form a philosophical continuum in their portrayal of the role of public participation. For example, many critics make no attempt to differentiate between democratic elitism and pluralism (Duncan and Lukes 1963,167; Parry 1969,143; Pateman 1970,13; Macpherson 1977,77).[3] There is a similar, though less marked overlap between certain elements of pluralism and direct democracy. For example, twentieth century participationists are very concerned with group participation, devoting 'much effort to dispelling the spirit of the nineteenth century individualism from which, they think, emanate

the doctrines of isolated, egoistic man and laissez-faire politics and economics' (Thompson 1970,90). These overlaps are shown diagrammatically on Figure 2.2.

Figure 2.2 The relative positions of three types of democracy



Nevertheless, it is still valuable to identify the key dissociating elements of each model. Each of the following sections begins with a brief summary of each doctrine. Modern theorists are then placed in historical perspective, after which are detailed those elements defining the role of the public in the decision-making process. Each section concludes with a detailed critique. The intention is to provide a descriptive outline of the ideas contained in the seminal works related to the development and criticism of each model of democracy.[4] It should be stressed that the aim is simply to note the existence and characteristics of each model, and,

subsequently, to outline the views of writers who specifically argue against the tenets of the model. It is not intended to assemble the wealth of empirical material on political participation which has appeared in the last four decades to test independently the contentions of the democratic elitists, pluralists and participationists. Indeed, such a task would be a major research project in itself. Cited works in large part date from the period in which the basic concept first came to prominence, attracting both supporters and critics. The rapid development of pluralism in the U.S.A. is reflected in a similar geographical bias in the works cited in Sections 2.4 and 2.5.

2.2 Democratic Elitism

Democratic elitists see democracy as simply a method for the election of legitimate governments. The role of what are generally regarded as the apathetic masses is confined to choosing between two or more competing elites. The election process thus assures that the elites are responsive to the general wishes of the public. Once elected, the successful elite is expected to govern with little further hindrance. The general public apathy is regarded as a positive characteristic as it prevents the masses from hampering the smooth process of government, and possibly rendering the system unstable. In addition, the masses' political passivity means that their generally relatively intolerant attitudes do not upset the democratic consensus established among elites.

The political views of several eigtheenth and nineteenth century writers are cited as containing elements of the modern democratic elitist theory. Thus, Holden (1974) indicates strong links with the traditional 'liberal democratic theory' - which 'involves the people in little more than rather passively choosing between options presented to them' (p.69) - the main advocates of which he identifies as J.S. Mill[5] and Madison (pp. 74 and 75). In contrast, Macpherson (1977,77) suggests that democratic elitism is 'a reversion to and elaboration of' what he terms 'protective democracy', the main

advocates of which he identifies as Bentham and James Mill (Ch.II). Parry (1969,156) extends the time-scale, suggesting that 'the view of man held by democratic elitists is one with a long tradition in liberal thought, and is to be found in Hobbes, Hume and Madison'.

The renewed vigour of the elitist interpretation of democracy in the twentieth century can be assigned to four major causes. Most important was the apparent association of political instability and high rates of popular participation leading to totalitarian governments in Germany, Italy, Spain and Argentina (Tingsten 1937,225; Lipset 1960,32; Dahl 1966,301). Secondly, the 'Cold War' produced a strong anti-communist reaction, especially in the U.S.A., and a consequent 'idealization of the American status quo' (Goldschmidt 1966,5). Thirdly, the economic depression of the 1930s resulted in a dramatic rise in the status of the expert for 'only the experts, whose reasoning was assumed to be beyond the comprehension of the voters, could save the system' (Macpherson 1977,92). Lastly, Goldschmidt (1966,5-6) sees the post-World War II economic prosperity as bringing about a 'steady decline of alienation among academic intellectuals' as their job security and prestige increased.

The seminal work of the modern elitist democratic school is Joseph Schumpeter's Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy, first published in 1942, in which he transferred the elitist ideas of earlier writers such as Mosca (1939) and Pareto (1935) into a more democratic context. Thus, Margolis (1979,108) points out that Schumpeter 'went on to identify his conception of elite competition with democracy itself, not merely as a best approximation'. Schumpeter maintains that

> the role of the people is to produce a government . . . (and) the democratic method is that institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people's vote. (Schumpeter 1950,269)

Schumpeter thus discounts as unrealistic the classical emphasis on the public's participating and decision-making role. Instead, he extends the capitalist framework from the economic into the political sphere with the consumer-voter choosing between competing elites. It is the

elites who are regarded as the initiators and decision makers. Leaders of high calibre come from a social stratum which 'is neither too exclusive nor too easily accessible from the outside' (p.291), being capable of absorbing new members from the most gifted individuals in the rest of society. The participatory role of the public is reduced to a minimum. He sees 'the electoral mass' as being 'incapable of action other than a stampede' (p.283), and thus even rules out 'bombarding' representatives with letters and telegrams (p.295). This extreme position is softened by later writers, though the general argument remains. For example, Almond and Verba comment:

> In ordinary times, citizens are relatively uninterested in what government decision-makers do, and the latter have the freedom to act as they see fit. However, if an issue becomes prominent, citizen demands on officials will increase. If officials respond to these demands, the importance of politics will fall again and politics will return to normal. (Almond and Verba 1965,484)

Schumpeter's emphasis on ability also led him to assign a powerful role to the bureaucracy which he sees as 'the main answer to the argument about government by amateurs'. He goes on:

> It is not enough that the bureaucracy should be efficient in current administration and competent to give advice. It must also be strong enough to guide and, if need be, to instruct the politicians who head the ministries. In order to be able to do this it must be in a position to evolve principles of its own and sufficiently independent to assert them. It must be a power in its own right. (Schumpeter 1950,293)

Schumpeter's work was completed without benefit of much empirical data, but he gives an important lead for future research:

> The question whether conditions are fulfilled to the extent required in order to make democracy work should not be be answered by reckless assertion or equally reckless denial. It can be answered only by a laborious appraisal of the maze of conflicting evidence. (Schumpeter 1950,297)

It was this 'laborious appraisal' that the post-war behaviouralists were concerned to make (Somit and Tanenhaus 1964,21-4). The first major attempt was by Berelson, Lazarfield and McPhee (1954) in their study of Elmira, New York. In a concluding chapter entitled

'Democratic practice and democratic theory' they comment that

> Political theory written with reference to practice has the advantage that its categories are the categories within which political life really occurs. And, in turn, relating research to normative theory would make such research more realistic and more pertinent to the problems of policy. (Berelson et al. 1954,306)

Berelson et al. (1954) paint a very gloomy picture of the average democratic citizen from their study of Elmira: he or she does 'not give evidence of sustained interest' (p.307), engages in limited 'true discussion' (p.308), and in general the motivation to participate in political life is 'weak if not almost absent' (p.309); he or she is 'not highly informed on details of the campaign' (p.308) and votes 'more by faith than by conviction and by wishful expectation rather than careful prediction of consequences' (p.311). Overall, Margolis (1979,113) characterises this research and commentary by Berelson and his associates as the 'most influential post-war statement of the elitist thesis'.6

Moreover, the political attitudes of the apathetic are shown by other researchers to be unsympathetic to many democratic ideals. Lipset (1960,218), in a review of survey findings, concludes that 'non voters differ from voters in having authoritarian attitudes, cynical ideas about democracy and political parties, intolerant sentiments on deviant opinions and ethnic minorities, and in preferring strong leaders in government'. (See also: Prothro and Grigg 1960,288; Stouffer 1963,57; McClosky 1964,375.)

However, despite the apparent shortcomings of the individual voter, elitist scholars maintain that the political system appears to function well. The conclusion is that high participation is not required for successful democracy (Milbrath 1965,153). Indeed, widespread citizen apathy has definite advantages. As well as being a 'more or less vivid reminder of the proper limitations of politics' (Morris Jones 1954,37), the apathetic public also helps to limit the intensity of conflict within society and thus contributes towards a more stable democratic system. Berelson et al. in a marked reference to then recent European history comment that:

> Extreme interest goes with extreme partisanship and might culminate in rigid fanaticism that could destroy democratic processes if generalized throughout the community. (Berelson et al. 1954,314)

The most apathetic are also considered to be the most undecided voters (Berelson et al. 1954,316).7 According to Parsons (1959,114) this forms 'the main basis of the stability of the system' as it provides 'the element of flexibility necessary to allow sufficient shift in votes to permit the two-party system to function effectively without introducing unduly disruptive elements into the system'. In fact, the institutional arrangements within democracies allow the democratic burden of responsibility on the individual to be minimised. The existence of political parties absolves the voter from having to study the views of individual candidates. Instead, 'the citizen can manage simply by knowing the record and reputation of the political parties under whose labels the candidates run' (Milbrath 1965,144).

Moreover, in the inter-election periods the elites are able to take initiatives and make decisions without hindrance. However, the responsiveness of the political elites is assured by the potential influence which the mass of citizens retain:

> The citizen's opposite role, as an active and influential enforcer of the responsiveness of elites, is maintained by his strong commitment to the norm of active citizenship (Almond and Verba 1965,481). (See also: Sartori 1962,81 and 124-6; Milbrath 1965,152; Cnudde and Neubauer 1969,530.)

Because this perception is rarely matched by appropriate action, Almond and Verba (1965,486) refer to it as the 'democratic myth'. As long as government officials are thought by the public to be performing well, most citizens will be content not to become involved in politics.

2.3 A Critique of Democratic Elitism

The democratic elitists' perception of democracy and, in particular, their views on the character of the general public, has

been subjected to considerable criticism. Such criticism is partly concerned with participationists' arguments in favour of greater public involvement in political affairs. However, this section refers only to those critiques which seek to directly confront the major tenets of elitist philosophy, leaving the related pro-participationist arguments for Section 2.6.

The preceding section shows that democratic elitists view the public as essentially uninterested, uninformed, irrational and intolerant, their role virtually confined to selecting between competing elites at election time. However, as Thompson points out:

> The elitist element is so strong that it calls into question the raison d'etre of permitting popular participation at all. If citizens are so incorrigibly incompetent that their role must be limited, what reason (as distinct from cause) can be given for any member of an elite to pay any attention at all to the results of the elections? (Thompson 1970,25)

More specifically, researchers question the existence of an extensive apathetic public, the empirical foundation of the elitist concept of democracy. For example, RePass (1971) argues that an interested public is identified when open-ended questions are asked as this method allows respondents to select the issues which they feel are most significant. Plamenatz takes the view that not being able to give reasons for a particular voting choice does not imply that it was an unreasonable action: 'A choice is reasonable not because the chooser, when challenged, can give a satisfactory explanation of why he made it, but because, if he could give an explanation, it would be satisfactory' (Plamenatz 1958,9). (See also Thompson 1970,124.) Downs (1957,Ch.8) highlights how, in a two-party system, it is electorally rational for each party to occupy as much as possible of the political middle ground. As a result, not only is there considerable overlapping of the two parties' policies, but each group also attempts to be as ambiguous as possible over each issue, thus vastly widening 'the band on the political scale into which various interpretations of a party's net position may fall' (Downs 1957,136). However, this situation makes it much more difficult for voters to make a strictly rational choice. They are therefore compelled to base their voting decisions on less

rational criteria such as traditional family allegiances or each candidate's personality. When clear-cut policy alternatives are offered, the degree of ideologically-based voting dramatically increases (Field and Anderson 1969,380). (See also Nie, Verba and Petrocik 1976,319.)

The value placed on public apathy in elitist theory has also been criticised extensively, in particular the equating of apathy with political satisfaction. For example, Rosenberg (1954) gives a list of ten determinants of public apathy in which contentment with the social and political system is of only minor importance. Apart from the 'threatening consequences of political activity' (p.350) - the survey being conducted during the McCarthy era - the major contributing factor is the perceived futility of political activity. This feeling of political ineffectiveness is analysed by several other critics. For example, Pranger (1968,28) sees the basic cause of apathy as being people's awareness that they do not have the necessary resources to play any significant role in the decision-making process of large and complex modern democratic societies. Macpherson (1977,88) highlights the fact that equal citizen input does not necessarily result in equal political output. Those 'whose education and occupation make it more difficult for them than for others to acquire and marshal and weigh the information needed for effective participation are clearly at a disadvantage'. Such disadvantages, as Kavanagh (1972,119) points out, are concentrated among such groups as 'the aged, unemployed, and racial minorities'. Therefore, the stability which is seen by proponents as one of the major outcomes of the elitist democratic system is viewed by critics as necessarily being very short-lived, tension among disadvantaged groups gradually leading to political instability.

Critics also attack the elitist notion that because the general public have intolerant views, it is preferable that they do not become very concerned with political affairs. Although very much part of the 'developmental' theory of participation discussed in Section 2.6, the argument, in brief, asserts that 'becoming involved in the political system tends to increase one's commitment to the nature of those workings' (Cnudde and Neubauer 1969,521). So, for example, Kelso

(1978,46-8) comments that in McClosky's comparison of civil rights attitudes between elites and the general electorate, no differentiation of the general sample is made according to whether the respondents are politically active or passive. Kelso maintains that if such a division had been made the results would have shown that the politically active minority of the general public would have exhibited attitudes no different from those of the politically active elite group.

Marxists provide probably the most fundamental criticisms of the basic democratic elitist concept of the mass of the public periodically electing the governing elite. There are two main Marxist arguments:

> In the first emphasis is on the idea that it is economic power that is basic: political institutions are subordinate to economic power. Hence, even though (or even if) the people genuinely make basic political decisions at elections this does not mean that they have power: the capitalists will frustrate the implementation of any decisions which threaten their own interests. (Holden 1983,290)

So, for example, in asking the question 'Who Rules Australia?', Playford (1980,346) concludes that 'the most important political fact about our society is the existence of concentrated private economic power, whose owners and controllers enjoy a massive preponderance in the determination of the policies and actions of the state and in the political system as a whole'. (See also Connell 1977, and Wheelwright 1974.) Holden goes on to point out that

> The secondary category of arguments focusses not so much on the (paucity of) effects of elections as on the elections themselves. The basic contention is that the so-called free elections of liberal democracies do not actually express the views of the people. (Holden 1983,290)

Holden subdivides this second argument into two parts. The first relates to the view presented above, that the range of options available at election times is too restricted to allow a genuine choice to be made. The second argument is that elections do not express the views of the mass of the people because they 'have been indoctrinated with the ideas - the ideology - of the ruling class'.

That is, the mass 'are victims of "false consciousness"' (p.291).[8]

Overall, the contention of the democratic elitists that they have created an empirically-based, value-free theory is discounted by critics who maintain that the elitists simply have replaced the traditional norm of 'broad participation' (Walker 1966,289) with new norms of stability and efficiency based upon oligarchic political parties. Moreover, the emphasis on the functioning of contemporary democracy means that the theory is dependent on an already established community 'to the development of which it makes little, if any, contribution' (Davis 1964,45).

2.4 Pluralism

Pluralists regard members of the public as being interested only in narrow policy issues. They display this interest by joining interest groups which reflect their views and which, along with other opposing groups, can gain entry into the political bargaining process. Avenues for participation are thus available within the structure of the interest groups, resulting in the creation of numerous sets of group leaders. The diversity of views presented by competing groups ensures that there is a wide information base for decision making. It also helps to ameliorate major group disagreements as the more extreme views are modified and reformulated during the group bargaining process. As new issues arise there is an opportunity for new issue groups to form without detriment to the membership of existing associations. Indeed, the overlapping membership of various groups ensures that no one group will destroy all others.

Lively (1978,188) points out that the basic tenet of pluralism, the need for power in society to be divided, 'has a long genealogy stretching back at least to Locke and Montesquieu and Tocqueville'. Connolly (1969,4) extends the time-scale, commenting that 'the intellectual roots of pluralism reach back to Aristotle'. The foundations of contemporary pluralism can be traced back to the first three decades of this century through the writings of analytical pluralists such as Bentley, Lippman and Dewey (Ricci 1971,43-4).[9]

Basically, they suggested that the nineteenth century emphasis on the individual had become increasingly anachronistic with the development of large industrialised nation states. Instead, there should be an emphasis on the role of groups in the political process. As Coker (1933,171) points out, such a development was 'in part a rationalization of recent movements in actual society, tending in various ways towards a more decentralized application of social control'. Indeed, like their elitist colleagues, pluralists have always 'aspired towards a theory that took its bearing by the observed facts of political life' (Kariel 1968,166).

Nevertheless, the view generally held through most of the first half of the twentieth century was that the multiplication of interest groups would produce 'at best instability and, at worst, chaos in national politics' (Truman 1971,xxxix). However, in 1951, David B. Truman's book, The Governmental Process, provided an influential restatement of Arthur F. Bentley's (1908) earlier views, 'and during the 1950s group analysis of politics became the orthodoxy in political science' (Holden 1974,160). The development of contemporary pluralism is most closely associated with Robert A. Dahl, whose studies of New Haven politics (Dahl 1961) and pluralism in the U.S.A. (Dahl 1967) are seen as the 'strongest link in the pluralist chain' (Newton 1969,213).

Wolff (1969,126-30) maintains that a combination of three characteristics helped pluralism to develop rapidly in the U.S.A. They were, first, the federal political structure; secondly, the people's inclination for voluntary associations; and thirdly, the country's religious, ethnic and racial heterogeneity. However, Truman (1971,502) sees pluralism not simply as a reflection of American trends, but instead as the result of the general increasing complexity of industrialised society. Nevertheless, as Parkin (1980,50) points out, the literature on pluralism 'is almost exclusively American in origin'.

Pluralists view organised groups as 'structures of power' (Latham 1965,14) within which 'participation in the making of decisions is concentrated in the hands of a few' (Polsby 1963,123). However, of crucial importance for public participation, and indeed for the stability of the system, is the need for there to be little or no

overlapping of group leaders (Dahrendorf 1959,317). Dahl (1961,169 and 181) provides empirical evidence to suggest that this is the case in the U.S.A. In his study of New Haven he found almost no overlap among his three groups of influentials: 'individuals who are influential in one sector of public activity tend not to be influential in another sector' (p.169). The result is that because of the multitude of interest groups, a much larger number of political participants are identified than under the more restrictive elitist model. However, the elitists' mass/elite dichotomy is largely retained by pluralists. For example, Truman (1971,510) refers to 'the rarely aroused protests of chronic non-participants'; and Dahl (1961,223-8) divides the New Haven population into 'homo politicus', the politically active, and 'homo civicus', the 'apolitical clay'.

Pluralists also give consideration to the relative power of existing groups. Early writers are optimistic about power differentials among competing groups. For example, Riesman comments that:

> The future seems to be in the hands of the small business and professional men who control Congress: the local realtors, lawyers, car salesmen, undertakers and so on; of the military men who control defense and, in part, foreign policy; of the big business managers and their lawyers, the finance-committee men, and other counselors who decide on plant investment and influence the rate of technological change; of the labor leaders who control worker productivity and worker votes; of the black belt whites ... of the Poles, Italians, Jews and Irishmen ... of the editorializers and storytellers ... of the farmers ... of the Russians and, to a lesser degree, other foreign powers who control much of our agenda of attention; and so on. The reader can complete the list. (Riesman 1950,254-5)

More critical consideration of 'power differentials' is undertaken by Dahl (1961,85). He maintains that although the resources available to different groups may vary immensely, nevertheless it is of minor political importance because such inequalities tend to be 'non-cumulative'. In other words, a person's possession of one resource, for example wealth, does not mean that he or she is also better off in respect of other resources, such as 'social standing, legitimacy, control over religious and educational institutions, knowledge (and)

office'. Dahl also distinguishes between the actual and potential political power that a group may wield: 'Individuals with the same amounts of resources may exert different degrees of influence because they use their resources in different ways' (Dahl 1961,271). Thus, of crucial importance are the group's skills in resource management, and the group's perception of just what proportion of its potential resources it is willing to invest (Dahl 1961,192-9).

The importance of unorganised groups is commented on by Bentley (1908,219), but it is Truman (1971,35) who highlights the role of what he terms 'potential interest groups':

> Any mutual interest ... any shared attitude is a potential group ... the possibility that severe disturbances will be created if these submerged, potential interests should organize necessitates some recognition of the existence of these interests and gives them at least a minimum of influence. (Truman 1971,511-12)

A similar idea is included in Dahl's (1961,305) concept of 'political slack', unused resources which, if necessary, can be called upon. They therefore provide a 'built in throttle that makes it difficult for any leader, no matter how skillful, to run away with the system' (Dahl 1961,310).

Kornhauser (1959) is also concerned with the relationship between popular participation and the stability of the political system. He sees interest groups, or 'intermediate relations', as being essential 'for in the absence of intermediate relations, participation in the larger society must be direct rather than filtered through intervening relationships' (Kornhauser 1959,76). The result is that such popular participation is conducted 'in a manner unrestrained by the values and interests of a variety of social groups' (p.77). However, an extensive system of intermediate groups 'helps to regulate popular participation' (p.81). Individual members of the public become selective in their participation, concentrating on particular issues and refraining from mass action 'not because elites prevent them from doing do, but because they can influence decisions more effectively through their own groups' (p.82).

Lindblom (1959 and 1965) analyses the group bargaining process,

referring to it as 'partisan mutual adjustment' (1965,4). The basic advantage of such a system is that 'it will often accomplish an adaptation of policies to a wider range of interests than could be done by one group centrally' (1959,84-5). This is partly because such a system will generate 'a great deal more information and analysis than will a central coordinator' (1965,174) as groups attempt to discredit their opponents' claims and advance their own. The group bargaining process thus necessitates that each participant group goes some way towards reconciling its views with those of others. Thus, partisan mutual adjustment 'moves partisans towards agreements on values and decisions' (1965,332). Lindblom sees the need for allies as being an especially powerful motivation towards agreement as this draws participants 'to reconsider their own interests or demands to see whether there is some possibility of altering them in ways that lose less than will be gained by the ally attracted' (1965,211). An individual group is thus required to consider the views of other competing groups as it must ensure that its case is presented so as to antagonise as few other parties as possible. This will help to improve its chances of success, and also cut down the time and effort required of the group in the bargaining process.

The relationship between interest groups and government is not consistently or clearly defined in pluralist writing. However, as far as participation is concerned, there is an emphasis among pluralists on the role of public consensus as an important mediating influence in group-government interaction. Truman (1971,xxxviii) maintains that the 'politically active and articulate portion of the population' are responsible for maintaining a public consensus or, in Truman's phrase 'the rules of the game'.

2.5 A Critique of Pluralism

Criticism of the pluralist doctrine is extensive, especially in the U.S.A. where, as previously explained, pluralist theory and practice have come to dominate politics. Although pluralism (and pluralist critique) is based essentially on empirical research,

nevertheless several proponents maintain that there is also a substantial normative component. For example, Kelso (1978,108-9) argues that, with regard to agenda setting, most pluralists 'believe that the effectiveness of public policy can be greatly enhanced by multiplying rather than limiting the number of decision makers'. Therefore, 'To identify weakness in the functioning reality is not to offer a theoretical argument; it is merely to appeal for reform of some features of that reality' (Truman 1971,xl). Ironically, it was an increasing dissatisfaction with what they regarded as 'the prevailing fictions' (Kariel 1968,166) of political philosophy that encouraged the early pluralists to develop their alternative doctrine.

It is thus virtually impossible to reconcile descriptive attack and prescriptive defence. However, it is important that the distinctions be acknowledged, as much of the pluralist critique is based on the observed role of individuals in groups, and of groups in the decision-making process. Although the division is by no means clear-cut, it is possible first to separate out those criticisms which are concerned with the basic logic of a pluralist system of government, and secondly those more extensive commentaries which deal with the mechanics of group formation and operation. The following analysis begins with an examination of the more fundamental criticisms. These are closely related to participationists' arguments regarding the intrinsic worth of public participation. However, these will be considered separately in Section 2.6.

Pluralism is founded on the assumption that individuals will feel constrained to join or create groups, especially if they consider that their interests are being threatened. In The Logic of Collective Action, Olson (1965) asserts that the mere fact that individuals have a common interest is no guarantee that they will organise themselves into a group to pursue that interest. It will depend on whether each individual sees the cost of participation as being less than the resulting benefits. However, when large numbers of individuals are involved, any benefits accruing from group formation become collective or public goods available both to members and non-members. After reviewing the empirical evidence, Rothman (1974,301) supports this view, concluding that 'the amount of participation in voluntary

associations varies directly with both the number of benefits (rewards, satisfactions) offered by an organization, and the degree to which the benefits are contingent upon participation'.10 Thus, Olson's 'free-rider' problem casts doubt on one of the basic tenets of pluralist philosophy: that interest groups are natural social products.

Wolff regards interest groups as simply being too restricted to cope with some of the social ills of a complex, modern society. Moreover, because pluralist society is organised around private interest groups 'there is no mechanism for the discovery and expression of the common good' (Wolff 1969,159). The existence of narrow interest groups may indeed actively prevent the development of more general social policies. For example, Lowi (1967,18) considers that 'parcelling out policy-making power to the most interested parties destroys political responsibility' in that the groups become virtually autonomous, self-protective, and unconcerned about the wider social and economic issues.

There is also a danger that power may become so fragmented that effective leadership cannot emerge. This danger is reflected in a speech to the nation by former American President, Jimmy Carter, in which he refers to American politics as 'a system of government that seems incapable of action', including 'a Congress twisted and pulled in every direction by hundreds of special interests' leading to 'paralysis, stagnation and drift' (Guardian Weekly, 22 July 1979, p.1).

The suggested relationship between the government and interest groups in a pluralist system has been widely attacked. Critics have identified two mutually conflicting pluralist approaches to the role of government. The 'referee' theorists see government as having an umpiring role, laying down the ground rules and ensuring that the competitors follow them, possibly 'moving to redress the imbalance when one group goes too far' (Connolly 1969,8). In contrast, the 'arena' theorists see politicians 'as merely co-equal participants in the group battle' (Lively 1978,191). However, both schools of thought ultimately rely on what critics see as a fundamentally unsound foundation - public consensus.

Critics point out that the referee theorists need to reconcile their view of government policy as merely the end-product of group competition with the fact that politicians should also, at times, play a regulating role in accordance with 'some general standard of justice or the general interest' (Lively 1978,192). Such a concept is precisely what earlier pluralist scholars had emphatically rejected (Kariel 1968,167). Similarly, the arena theorists are criticised for having to rely upon the concept of consensual agreement. In addition to claiming that there exists an essentially equal distribution of resources (see below), arena pluralists imply that there is a consensus on the legitimacy of that distribution. Lively sees this as the weakest link in the arena theory's chain of argument, for the pattern of 'power distribution is not usually uncontentious and may be precisely what is at issue in political dispute' (Lively 1978,200).

Finally, Benello (1971,51-2) points to the inability of pluralism to encompass ideological movements such as Soka Gakkai and Black Muslims which demand a total commitment from their members 'under a single over-arching ideology'. This type of demand, he suggests, appears to contradict the pluralist concept of group membership as being overlapping and caused principally by the desire of individuals to fulfil narrow selfish interests.

The more instrumental criticisms of pluralism can be divided into three basic areas of concern: the membership of groups; the distribution of resources between groups; and the distribution of power within groups.

The prevalence of non-joiners is of obvious importance in a system which seeks to realise goals through membership of interest associations. Pluralists and their critics interpret the available empirical data from opposing perspectives (cf. 'half full' and 'half empty'). For example, Kelso (1978,91-5) views the steady increase in group membership with optimism, but Newton (1969,219) is much less sanguine, pointing out that many of the overall figures are inflated by purely nominal memberships. Moreover, the majority of non-joiners are from the lower socio-economic groups. Schattsneider's (1960,34-5) comment that 'the flaw in the pluralist heaven is that the heavenly chorus sings with a strong upper class accent' is well supported by

empirical evidence. (See, for example: Verba and Nie 1972,131; Rothman 1974,285.) This phenomenon may, in part, be caused by the fact that some of the poorer sections of society are not able to articulate the causes of their grievances with sufficient clarity to allow an interest group to be formed. This is especially true of poorer areas of cities, where there is often a 'sense of inadequate self-worth' (Clark 1965,67).

Wolff (1969,153) criticises what he sees as the essential conservatism of the pluralist system, commenting that 'by presenting a picture of the American economy in which those disadvantaged elements do not appear it tends to perpetuate the inequality by ignoring rather than justifying it'. (See also Benello 1971,47.) Thus Bachrach and Baratz (1970,18) emphasise the essentially conservative character of most decision making, effectively shutting out marginal groups by 'limiting the scope of actual decision making to "safe" issues by manipulating the dominant community values, myths and political institutions and procedures'. Wolff (1969,155) sees this process in terms of providing a strict division between the 'fringe' and 'legitimate' groups. Transition from the former to the latter is possible but slow, thus having a braking effect on social change (Connolly 1969,16). Burtenshaw (1968,586) points to the widespread rioting by American Negroes as being a direct result of the failure of the pluralist system to encompass large elements of American society. (See also: Baskin 1970,78; DeAngelis and Parkin 1980,302.) Writing after the social unrest of the 1960s, both Truman and Dahl concede the difficulty of accommodating such groups into the pluralist model. Thus, Truman (1971,522) notes that 'the atrophy or deficiency of such groups in the less privileged classes may be a source of political instability'. Similarly, Dahl (1971,94) concedes that 'historically it has been possible to develop and even to sustain over a very long period a dual system that is competitive with respect to the dominant group and hegemonic with respect to a deprived minority'.

There has also been considerable criticism of the pluralist assertions regarding the 'non-cumulative' nature of political resources and the resulting group power parity. Thus, Pandey (1973,273) comments that 'there is a body of literature in sociology

which shows that people with more money generally have more time, more political skills and official positions than those with less or no money'. Indeed, Dahl (1961,245) himself concedes that 'money and influence have a certain interdependence'. In one of the most influential criticisms of pluralism, C. Wright Mills (1956) refers to 'the power elite' comprising 'the political directorate, the corporate rich, and the ascendant military' (p.296) who make all the 'big decisions' (p.244). At the bottom level 'society is politically fragmented, and even as a passive fact, increasingly powerless' (p.324). Pluralism, he suggests, is confined to the 'middle levels of power' (p.296). The concept of a ruling elite obviously has much in common with the Marxist idea of a ruling class (Section 2.3), the difference being in the degree of emphasis on the social origins of the members of the elite (Parkin 1980,276).

Pluralist theory has also been criticised on the grounds that, rather than protecting the interests of all their members, groups are dominated by self-interested, self-seeking elites or oligarchies. The critique is based on Michel's 'iron law' that oligarchy is 'a preordained form of the common life of great social aggregates' (Michels 1915,407). McConnell (1966,122), interpreting Michels, emphasises the essential difference in outlook between the leaders and other group members. Not only do leaders 'develop within a different milieu', 'engage in different activities' and 'enjoy a different status', but they also 'acquire different interests', thus 'laying the foundation for conflicts of interests between leaders and led'. Kariel (1961,181-2) sees the leaders of large-scale multiple interest associations as 'muffling dissent and repressing factionalism', and keeping members 'in line by a variety of sanctions ranging from subtle social boycott to the systematic denial of access to tangible rewards'. This he believes, is especially true of essentially working-class organisations, like labour unions, where there are the greatest status differences between leaders and members, and where the latter are more likely to be lacking in the skills needed to mount any effective opposition. Such in-group pressures are also evident in situations where a dissatisfied group member does not have the opportunity to 'exit' (Hirschman 1970) and join a more worthwhile

organisation. For example, Lowi (1967,19) points to the trend of groups being 'co-opted by the state in pluralist government' by being delegated complete administrative control over, for example, occupational licensing. (See also: McConnell 1966,150; Wolff 1969,158.)

The two major modes of indirect democracy, elitism and pluralism, have thus been outlined and critically examined. The two models are closely related, both being developed largely from interpretations of empirical findings, attempting to describe and explain the functioning of contemporary democratic government. The final sections of the chapter are concerned with modern interpretations of classical or direct democracy. Unlike elitism and pluralism, participatory democracy is based essentially on normative theory. Consequently, its critics rely primarily on the results of the limited applications of participatory democracy within the overall framework of an indirect democratic system.

2.6 Participatory Democracy

Participationists see the need for a decentralisation of all decision making down to the level where the people likely to be affected will have a direct role in the political process. Participation is seen primarily as contributing to the self-development of individual participants, this in turn resulting in the social development of the total community. A secondary consequence of participation is that it helps in the making of better decisions as it ensures that the people most directly affected will play an important political role. The collective wisdom of the group is considered superior to that of the more blinkered specialist.

The origins of participatory democracy are usually traced back to the ancient Greek city-states, especially Athens (Barker 1960, Jones 1964). Although 'a second tide of democratization' (Dahl 1970,5) swept through the north Italian city-states in the tenth and eleventh centuries, later applications of direct democracy are seldom found, especially after the rapid development of industrialisation and

urbanisation in the nineteenth century. Since that time direct democracy in western nations has been confined to isolated and small-scale experiments such as 'the town governments of New England and the Midwest, the Swiss Cantons that still retain direct democracy, the Israeli kibbutzim, and some of the community-action programs in the War on Poverty' (Cook and Morgan n.d.,5). Woodstock (1972,21-2) also notes the communes that developed in 'many villages in the anarchist regions' during the Spanish Civil War, and a 'community movement that arose at the outset of the Second World War among English pacifists'.

However, modern participatory democrats view recent developments as indicating that a much more widespread use of direct democracy is imminent. They see the beginnings of a reaction to the continuing 'depersonalization' within modern industrial society (Benello and Roussopoulos 1971,3), resulting from an accelerated trend towards centralisation and specialisation (Arblaster 1972,42). Thus Ladd (1975,102) ascribes the current interest in participation to the fact that it 'provides an obvious way of coping with bigness'; it is 'a constructive method of disalienation'. For example, participatory democrats view the hierarchical, autocratic system of management operating in most modern industry as psychologically unsuited for a mature, educated workforce (Flacks 1971a,402). Thus Pateman (1970,133) claims that there is 'a widespread desire' among workers for more participation (see also Wall and Clegg 1979,41-2); and Abrahamsson (1977,185) points to the 'widening employee influence' in European industry since World War II. More generally, Macpherson (1977,103) sees the increasing public concern with environmental problems as a sign that people are beginning to 'exert pressure to preserve or enhance those human values against the operation of what may be called the urban commercial-political complex'. (See also Agger 1979,Ch.1.)

Most modern writing about participatory democracy relies heavily on the eighteenth and nineteenth century philosophers, especially Rousseau and John Stuart Mill (Pateman 1970, Ch.2). Also important are the early writings of Marx, in which he outlined the ideal, harmonious state (Stokes 1983,446). Several writers point to the marked lack of theorising by modern participatory democrats (e.g. Ono 1967,119;

Oppenheimer 1971,276; Christenson et al. 1972,294; Keim 1975,30; Duncan 1978,67; Pateman 1978,53). This is partly accounted for by the considerable influence of the traditional anarchist position which maintains that 'the proper forms and patterns of human interaction cannot be ascertained but will emerge after the old order has been destroyed' (Cook and Morgan n.d.,21). (See also Benello and Roussopoulos 1971,8.)11

Whilst pluralists evaluate the participation process simply in terms of the resulting material benefits, direct democrats have a 'two dimensional view' (Bachrach 1967,95), the pluralists' 'instrumental' perspective being overshadowed by a personal 'developmental' approach (Parry 1972a,18 and 1972b,151). Thus, participationists emphasise the value of participation in terms of the psychological development of individuals, and the consequent social development of the total community.

Keim (1975,29) contends that social interaction is 'part of what it means to be a complete human being'. Thus, the development of the 'political nature' of the individual is dependent on participation, just as the development of the body depends on an adequate diet. Bachrach (1975,40) summarises the 'self-realization' hypothesis by saying that 'participation is an essential means for the individual to discover his real needs through the discovery of himself as a social human being'. So, for example, he contends that the socially disadvantaged groups will only begin to identify their political interests after they engage in the participation process (Bachrach 1975,43). Chickering (1971,220) shows how a lack of meaningful participation can seriously affect 'the development of competence, the development of identity, the freeing of interpersonal relations and the development of a personal value system'. So, for example, he suggests that non-participation results in less development of 'intellectual competence' as individuals encounter fewer intellectual challenges. 'Interpersonal competence' is also limited for with 'increased selectivity of participants there is less need to find ways of working with persons of diverse abilities and attitudes' (Chickering 1971,220). Moreover, as specialisation increases, a sense of competence is not only less fully developed but also 'rests on a

more limited sphere' (p.221). This means that self-evaluation is increasingly based on comparisons with the more visible and thus more competent people. The result is that the less able 'struggle along, frequently using as much energy to cope with feelings of inadequacy as to cope with the tasks at hand' (p.221).

There is considerable empirical evidence to show that participation and individual psychological development are strongly correlated (Rosenbaum 1978,52). The classic small group experiments were conducted by Kurt Lewin in the 1930s into the behavioural effects of different styles of leadership. In a discussion of these experiments, Blumberg (1968,109) concludes that 'participation creates appropriate values, attitudes and expectations'. Summarising subsequent research into workers' participation, Blumberg maintains that:

> There is hardly a study in the entire literature which fails to demonstrate that satisfaction in work is enhanced, or that other generally acknowledged beneficial consequences accrue from a genuine increase in workers' decision-making power. (Blumberg 1968,123)

He suggests that 'satisfaction in work is just as dependent upon fulfilment of the employees' ego needs as upon satisfaction of their physical needs'. Thus, participation gratifies 'basic human needs for respect, appreciation, responsibility and autonomy' (Blumberg 1968,130). Industrial participation has added political importance as individuals tend to learn how to react in the wider political sphere from their experiences in everyday social situations. For example, Taylor comments that a worker's

> personality cannot be successfully divided into watertight compartments ... If he is rendered irresponsible at work by lack of opportunity for responsibility, he will be irresponsible when away from work too (Taylor, in Ward 1973,95). (See also: Almond and Verba 1965,369; Gillespie 1971,75; Pateman 1976,24.)

Workers' self-government is given special prominence in the Marxist-orientated writings of the New Left (Holden 1974,227). Thus, Megill (1970,113) comments that 'Since the political structure and the economic structure are intertwined, any new democratic theory must

emphasize that the economic system - the conditions under which work is done - must be democratized'.

The concepts of personality and community development are very closely linked as the individual learning process is inevitably based on a deeper understanding of the attitudes and concerns for others in the community (Friedrich 1964,198). As a result, an individual is 'freed from the carefully drawn lines and the historically constructed but unnatural divisions and barriers which cut him off from his fellows' (Duncan 1978,66). There is thus created 'the foundations for a genuine human community' (Walker 1966,288). Ladd (1975,103) stresses that participation leads to responsibility and thus to a greater sense of co-operation and community. The result is that participation has a marked integrative function, leading to an inherently stable society.

The inherent stability of a participatory democracy is also seen to be a result of the quality of the decisions made. Of major importance is the belief that every individual knows his or her own interest better than anyone else, an idea first put forward by Aristotle (Kasperson and Breitbart 1974,14). The idea is usually presented in the form of a 'shoe pinching' analogy. For example, Lindsay (1943,270) comments that 'only the ordinary man can tell whether the shoes pinch and where; and without that knowledge the wisest stateman cannot make good laws'. Moreover, as pointed out above, participatory democrats also maintain that interests are only truly recognised after engaging in the participation process. Thus, they believe that even if benevolent elites conscientiously sought the people's views, their resulting policy decisions would still be inferior to those reached in a direct democracy (Parry 1972a,37).

Participatory democrats also stress that, because fundamental political decisions are based essentially on value judgements, no degree of expertise qualifies one person's opinions to be judged superior to others (Lucas 1976,75). Cook and Morgan (n.d.,13) consider that this argument is particularly valuable today when 'our primary problems are increasingly of a non-quantifiable nature'. They see the current emphasis on mechanical and engineering solutions to problems as resulting in the neglect of 'personal and social nuances' which means that 'the solutions adopted may often make matters worse,

especially when decisions are further stultified by routine implementation structures'.

Direct democrats maintain that participation not only produces better decisions, but also a greater efficiency in the carrying out of the selected course of action. This is because it generates a 'quite novel commitment to the community or to work' (Parry 1972a,34). (See also Pateman 1970,40.) This view is supported by empirical research in, for example: County Durham, England (Trist, Higgin, Murray and Pollock 1963,143); South Australia (S.A. 1973,4.10); Norway (Emery and Thorsrud 1976, 22 and 25); and Yugoslavia (Blumberg 1968,223).

2.7 A Critique of Participatory Democracy

The claims of participatory democrats have been widely criticised. Basically opponents suggest that the limited participation experiments that have been conducted indicate not only a lack of desire among most members of the general public to become involved, but also serious individual and social difficulties arising from such involvement.

Many critics doubt that there is a high level of public demand for greater participation. For example, Barker (1972,158-9) contends that the claim is 'based more on fashion than on fact' as 'neither in academic enquiries ... nor in the regular personal experiences of politicians or political writers is there any general indication of a national active demand for extra personal participation'. There is agreement among writers from very different political backgrounds about the present lack of interest by most workers for much greater workers' control (Dahl 1970,134; Ward 1973,99; Elliott 1978,289; Pennock 1979,467). Wall and Lischeron (1977,30-1) point to the 'restricted' support among Yugoslav workers for self-management, and to the doubtful success of several schemes to introduce more participation in the Histadruth, the General Federation of Labour in Israel, a trades union organisation which is also responsible for over one-fifth of Israeli employment and production. Union leaders in particular are seen to be against greater general worker

participation, fearing 'that worker participation in manufacturing in forms other than via union participation will erode their powers' (S.A. 1973,5.35). Jones (1982,vi) is more sweeping in his comments regarding interest in worker participation in Australia: 'One of the significant features in the development of worker participation in Australia is the lack of interest in the concept shown by employers, employees and politicians as groups'. (See also Giles 1977,51.) Citing Rousseau's famous phrase that men might be 'forced to be free' (Rousseau 1953,19), critics conclude that, in order to achieve a more participatory society against the wishes of the majority, there will have to be 'a more regimented democracy' (Martin 1961,93).

The possibility of psychological difficulties arising from participation is raised by Kelso (1978,202-8) in his literature review of the impact of communal life on members of Israeli kibbutzim. Kelso concludes that 'communal forms of life often stifle rather than enhance an individual's sense of freedom and self-fulfillment', many people becoming 'depressed by their inability to have a life apart from the kibbutz' (Kelso 1978,203). Moreover, the claustrophobic atmosphere 'frequently tends to kill off any spark of originality or uniqueness' (p.204) in kibbutz children and often results in their having a 'limited capacity to deal with the vagaries of new and complex developments' (p.205). Doubts are raised even about the participationists' claim that kibbutz life stimulates close and lasting interpersonal relationships: those who were born and raised on a kibbutz 'not only avoid deep and emotional relationships with a few, but they maintain an attitude of psychological distance with the many' (Spiro, in Kelso 1978,205).

The claim that participation has an integrative effect on the community has also been explicitly challenged. (It is, of course, implicit in the evidence regarding psychological difficulties.) Angell (1951,113) found that there was no relationship between group activity and 'moral integration', which he defines as 'a set of common ends and values towards which all are oriented and in terms of which the life of the group is organized' (Angell 1951,2). After developing Angell's work by comparing the moral integration index to measures of political interest, Lane (1959,271) concludes that 'there is no necessary

correspondence' between participation and community integration. Other writers go further believing that participation might just as easily create social antagonisms as facilitate social integration. Thus, Coser (1956,68-9) maintains that groups 'engaging the total personality of their members' will try to suppress conflict, but if it occurs 'it will be intense and passionate'. (See also Banfield and Wilson 1966,26.)

Critics also question both the decision-making structure in a direct democracy and the quality of the resulting policies. They see political decision making as an art requiring competence and expertise, qualities which only a few possess. The argument is therefore focused on the level of competence of those participants who, under the present system, make up the large body of relatively apathetic citizens. Critics suggest that their political ignorance, combined with the increasing complexity of modern western society, would result in inefficient and incompetent government. The virtual inevitability of such an unsatisfactory situation occurring (at least in the short term) is recognised by some participatory democrats. For example, Kaufman (1969b,206), paraphrasing Rousseau, states that 'before participatory decisions can become sound they will be unsound - necessarily'. Moreover, the more intolerant attitudes of many people not now involved in politics (see Section 2.2) would assume much more politicial importance in a participatory democracy. For example, Barker (1972,161) points to the possibility of a local community deciding to follow racialist policies on education and housing.

In addition to questioning the abilities of many of the participants in a direct democracy, critics also highlight the difficulties in the organisation of decision making. For example, they suggest that even in the present system, political activity is 'an extraordinarily time-consuming activity' (Smith 1975,129), partly because much public debate is 'threadbare and repetitious', clogging the system and submerging the important messages with 'irrelevant noise' (Lucas 1976,153-4). The need for decision makers to hear all sides of an argument can be much more efficiently fulfilled, critics argue, with fewer political actors. Critics also believe that inefficiency is inherent in the rotation of positions of

responsibility, a practice first used by the ancient Athenians. Critics suggest that the temporary incumbents would not be there long enough to become proficient, thus resulting in even more effective control being gained by the permanent bureaucracy (Lucas 1976,79).

Finally, there is considerable criticism of the participatory democrats' claim of efficiency in policy implementation. For example, critics highlight what Dahl (1970,182-8) terms 'the dilemma of primary democracy'. Basically, the problem centres around determining the size of the polity in a participatory democracy. Ideally this would be defined by applying 'the principle of affected interest' which Dahl (1970,64) defines as meaning that 'Everyone who is affected by the decisions of a government should have the right to participate in that government'. But people are affected to different degrees. Indeed, the notion of affectiveness is essentially subjective:

> Is it to my interest to protect the rights of black Southerners to vote in elections ...? Certainly so, for my "interests" are determined by my beliefs and values about the well-being of others ... (Dahl 1970,66)

However, even if the affected public could be determined, critics suggest that there still remains a major problem concerning its size. The larger its size the fewer opportunities there will be for each individual to take an effective part in discussion and decision making. Thus Dahl (1970,71) illustrates the considerable time constraints on people voicing their opinions in a public meeting. He considers it significant that 600 seems to be a general limit for the existing legislative bodies (p.70). Unfortunately, social problems such as pollution, poverty and public order have large affected publics. Dahl maintains that the creation of many smaller units to allow extensive participation would result in fragmented and inefficient local solutions to what are essentially supra-local problems. Moreover, he points out that those local communities with the smallest resources would generally be the least effective at solving their difficulties, thus further increasing relative spatial inequalities. Dahl (1970,88) concludes that 'To insist upon primary democracy as the exclusive form of democracy is to condemn "the people" to impotence'.

2.8 Summary

This chapter outlines a variety of possible roles for the general public in a western democracy. The basic rationale is that, as planning is one aspect of a much larger political agenda, it is important to discuss the broad issues of political participation. This will allow the more specific debate on public participation in planning to be placed within the more general theoretical framework. From the continuum of democratic philosophy, three modes of democracy are identified: elitism, pluralism and participatory democracy. Each assigns a different role to the general public in the political decision-making process.

Elitists see democracy as simply a method for the election of legitimate governments. The role of what are generally regarded as the apathetic masses is confined to choosing between two or more competing elites. The election process thus ensures that the elites are responsive to the general wishes of the public. Once elected the successful elite generally governs with little further hindrance. The general public apathy is regarded as a positive characteristic as it prevents the masses from hampering the smooth process of government, and possibly rendering the system unstable. In addition, the masses' political passivity means that their generally more intolerant attitudes do not upset the democratic consensus established among elites.

Criticisms of elitism are closely related to the arguments supporting direct democracy. However, critics of elitism also question the existence of an extensive apathetic public, and suggest that the apparent lack of interest is caused by a feeling of political ineffectiveness rather than satisfaction with the political situation. They suggest that commitment to the democratic system will come about only through people's participation in its operation, and that the exclusion of large sections of the public make the elitist system inherently unstable.

Pluralists regard members of the public as being interested only

in narrow policy issues. They display this interest by joining interest groups which can gain entry into the political bargaining process. Avenues for participation are thus available within the structure of the interest groups, resulting in the creation of numerous sets of group leaders. The diversity of views presented by competing groups ensures that there is a wide information base for decision making. It also helps to ameliorate major group disagreements as the more extreme views are modified during the group bargaining process. As new issues arise there is an opportunity for new issue groups to form without detriment to the membership of existing associations. Indeed, the overlapping membership of various groups ensures that no one group will destroy all others. As far as possible, group bargaining is conducted without the intervention of the state, though it may have a maintenance or reconciliation role.

Critics of pluralism question the need for many people actually to participate in groups if they are able to enjoy the benefits without having to join in the group activity. Moreover, interest groups are seen as too restricted to cope with the social ills of a complex, modern society. Their activities may actually prevent the development of more general social policies by causing delay and conflict in the decision-making process. The exact relationship between issues groups and government is not only unclear but also based on the fundamentally unsound foundation of public consensus. Another criticism of the current operation of pluralism is that many people, particularly those from lower status socio-economic groups, do not join interest associations. This results in a continuation of social inequalities which, critics suggest, will eventually lead to social unrest. The assertion concerning the non-cumulative nature of political resources is rejected by critics. They also suggest that the established powerful groups effectively exclude others from the political arena. Finally, group leaders are regarded as forming self-serving elites, or oligarchies, more concerned about maintaining their own positions than protecting the interests of their members.

Participationists see the need for a decentralisation of all decision making down to the level where the people likely to be affected will have a direct role in the political process. They

envisage a completely participatory society with, for example, worker participation in industry, and parent and child participation in schools, as well as general participation in the more formal aspects of government. The act of participation is seen to have inherent as well as instrumental value. People become less self-interested and more public-spirited as their lack of political specialisation allows them to more clearly understand the social consequences of any decision. This socialisation process is also aided by the feeling that important decisions can be made by the groups, thus reducing apathy and political cynicism.

Participation is also seen to help make better decisions. Decentralising decision making protects people from the misuse of power by a strong, controlling elite, and also ensures that the people most directly affected - and who thus know 'where the shoe pinches' - will play an important political role. Most modern decision making is essentially based on the value system of the decision makers; rarely is there one technically correct solution. The collective wisdom of the group is thus considered superior to that of the more specialised, blinkered expert. Consequently, the role of the expert is peripheral, being simply to advise on the social implications of the ideas generated by group discussion. The eventual decisions are more readily accepted by everyone because of each person's close association with the preceding political process.

Critics of direct democracy highlight the apparent lack of public demand for greater participation. They point to the possibility of intense participation stifling psychological development, and to the potential for participation to generate social conflict. Participatory democracy is thus regarded as inherently unstable. Critics also question the effectiveness of the decision-making structure, suggesting both that the public are not competent to make political decisions, and also that the more authoritarian attitudes of many people not now involved in politics would become much more important. The decision-making process is also regarded as inefficient in that most arguments put forward in the political debate will simply repeat views already expressed. Moreover, the permanent bureaucracy is likely to become more powerful under a system of regularly rotating political

positions. Finally, critics reject the claim of efficiency in policy implementation, suggesting that the necessarily parochial decision-making groups would not be able to cope with pressing supra-local problems.

Having identified and analysed the general political models relating to public participation in democratic decision making, it is now possible to use this framework to give some structure to the more specific planning participation debate.

CHAPTER 3

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN PLANNING

3.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the planning participation debate using as a framework the foregoing political perspectives. This requires an analysis of the planning literature based on what the authors regard as the general social objectives of participation. Unfortunately, many papers do not contain an explicit articulation of social purpose. Indeed, Glass (1979,180) maintains that 'students and practitioners continue to overlook one of the important elements of any participatory program - the objectives that one hopes to accomplish'. (See also Barić 1977,245; Hampton 1978,540; Gutch 1979,3.) Therefore, any structuring of the literature often must rely on interpreting the implicit intent of the papers. Difficulties arise from the fact that particular participatory techniques are not necessarily confined to one theoretical perspective (Mogulof 1970,20).

Despite these difficulties, it is possible to identify within the planning literature the major issues raised by democratic elitists, pluralists and participatory democrats. Such an approach to analysing planning in general has already been outlined by Catanese (1974,18) and by a working group of project directors attached to the British Community Development Project (C.D.P. 1974,23). The C.D.P. schema is used by Hampton (1979) and, indeed, even appears in an introductory textbook on social geography (Jones and Eyles 1977,260). A similar framework is also used by Thornley (1977) in his discussion of public participation in planning.[12] This chapter develops and updates this material, and provides the first extensive attempt to integrate the Australian planning literature into a synthesis of ideas about planning participation from a number of English-speaking countries, particularly the U.K. and U.S.A.[13]

3.2 Democratic Elitism in Planning

The following subsections outline how the democratic elitist approach has evolved and changed its mode of operation to meet changing circumstances. Two basic orientations are identified: the traditional elitist approach which closely parallels the Schumpeterian view of democracy; and the modern approach which resembles the Almond and Verba concept of democracy.

3.2.1 The traditional approach to democratic elitism in planning

The origins and development of the town planning movement illustrate how this tradition became dominant. The burgeoning of urban areas during the laissez-faire stages of industrialisation resulted in such squalid conditions for the urban poor that it became increasingly obvious to the governing elites that the stability of the total society was threatened (Palmer 1972,16; Glass 1973,50; Cherry 1974a,10). Thus, the 1840 report of the British Select Committee on Health of Towns refers to the need to improve the physical condition of urban areas. The Committee considered such improvements to be 'necessary not less for the welfare of the poor than the safety of property and the security of the rich' (Ashworth 1954,54). A call for similar action was made in Australia when in 1896 Archdeacon Boyce 'predicted catastrophe in health or crime or both if something were not done about Sydney's slums' (Sandercock 1977,17). In the United States, during the First National Conference of City Planning organised by the American Society of Planning Officials in 1909, Henry Morgenthau made reference to the evil of urban decay, 'an evil that breeds physical disease, moral depravity, discontent and socialism' (in Goodman 1972,69).

There followed a range of improvements in the physical infrastructure of many towns and cities. Essentially it was a policy 'devised by a minority, a dedicated interest group, on behalf of the

majority' (Cherry 1974b,73). This is not surprising considering the great disparity of status between council officials and the urban working class, described by Broady (1968a,111) as 'a lumpenproletariat, uneducated, not yet enfranchised and subject to long hours of routine manual employment'.

These developments met with the basic approval of all elements of society: the masses because of the improved environmental conditions; and the elites because of the improved social stability (Palmer 1972,18; Sandercock 1977,15). Consequently there developed a strong belief that planning was essentially an activity designed to serve a society-wide consensus on how land should be developed (Klosterman 1978,37-8; Rabinovitz 1968,13). So, for example, Cherry reports that in post-World War II Britain planning was seen as

> an exercise in State direction to secure ends which everyone agreed were right and proper in the interests of the public as a whole. This was the day of the consensus. (Cherry 1974b,77) (See also Foley 1973,72.)

A similar concern with a unitary public interest is also evident in Australian and American planning. Thus, most planners giving evidence at Australian planning tribunals 'seem to feel it professionally incumbent on them to identify their opinions with "the public interest"' (Power 1970,34). Indeed, clause 2b of the Royal Australian Planning Institute's constitution states that one of the objects of the Institute is 'to encourage the development of urban and rural areas in the best interests of the community' (R.A.P.I. 1981,10). In the United States planners have traditionally regarded their plans as

> reflecting the desires and directions of an overriding public interest. The plan had to reflect a single and consistent set of values and hence suppose a fundamental agreement among those with an interest in the outcome of the plan. (Burchell and Hughes 1978,xxi)

One of the consequences of this public interest orientation was the development of the notion of planning as an apolitical process. The vision of many early planners was of a profession unfettered by political masters. For example, George Taylor, the first Secretary of the Town Planning Association of New South Wales, concluded that

'Canberra must be developed by experts with a staff, and free from any political interference' (Taylor 1914,117). However, administrative separation of planning and politics was given greatest explicit formal recognition in the U.S.A. with the early establishment of independent city planning commissions. In 1939 Rexford Tugwell, then Chairman of New York City's Planning Commission, extended this idea, calling for the establishment of a 'directive' branch of federal government 'staffed by planning experts that would be on a par with the executive, legislative and judicial branches' (Goodman 1972,198). This disinclination to become involved in politics is also evident in planning textbooks. For example Chapin's Urban Land Use Planning (1957) begins with three chapters outlining major determinants of land use. Significantly, 'Economic determinants' (Chapter 1) and 'Socially rooted determinants' (Chapter 2) are followed not by political determinants but 'Public interest as a determinant of land use' (Chapter 3).

Not surprisingly, the failure of planning to achieve rational and orderly development is ascribed by many planners to the interference of politicians (Beckman 1973,251; Buck 1976,13; Hill 1978,n.p.). One of the most extreme characterisations is given by Sharman (1967,277) who comments that 'the politician is seen as an unwanted intruder, half clown, half villain, ignorant, prejudiced, opinionated, corrupt in thought and corrupting in influence, while the planner personifies objectivity, wisdom, far-sightedness and technical mastery'. The actual working relationship between planners and politicians remains unclear. The simplest position casts the planner in the role of professional advisor, supplying the elected representatives with a great deal of technical data to allow them to make policy decisions (Sternlieb 1978,299). The officer's role is then to help implement the chosen policy regardless of his or her own personal assessment (Keeble 1966,220). In contrast there is the belief that planners should attempt to impose their professional judgement on planning policy decisions. Some planners envisage a bureaucracy guiding and instructing the amateur decision makers (Howard 1955,64). Others advocate a more forceful role for the planner, highlighting the declining ability of politicians to make competent unbiased judgements

from the factual evidence provided by the professional planner (Lee 1958,154; Eversley 1973,203; Fagence 1975a,60; Hill 1978,n.p.). Certainly the ability of planners to steer policy decisions along a particular line does not seem to be questioned. Thus, Davies (1974,89) describes as 'legal fiction' the view that officials offer only advice. Similarly Dennis (1974,169) outlines several 'tricks of the trade' by which 'councillors can be coped with and controlled with ease and with their acquiescence'. According to one Birmingham councillor the bureaucrats' technique is 'a subtle blend of bullshit and flannel and making sure that things go their way' (Newton 1976,156). (See also: Rabinovitz 1969,12; Cockburn 1977,36-37.)

Adherents of the traditional elitist view of planning also see the system as being comprehensive and rational, guided by professionals who are primarily technical experts. Thus Daland and Parker are able to identify a normative model of rational planning in which

> The decision maker considers all the alternative courses of action which lead to the ends he seeks to attain within the limits of the possible, he evaluates the consequences of each course of action, and selects the course of action which will maximize the ends valued most. In short, he applies a scientific method to the solution of problems. (Daland and Parker 1962,190-1)

Notions of rationality continue to be widely held by members of the planning profession. Indeed, in Great Britain Kitchen (1974,894) maintains that 'technical rationality' is the dominant model. Similarly, in the U.S.A. Hudson (1979,388) comments that technical rationality (or 'synoptic planning') has achieved 'pre-eminence' and thus 'serves as the centerpiece' of his classification of current planning theories.

The emphasis on rational technique was given an added fillip during the 1960s with the development of computer-based models of land use development. It was reflected in the 'remarkable. . .prominence given to mathematical techniques in almost all planning schools' in Britain during 1965 to 1975 (Thomas 1980,75). Modern urban society came to be seen as a complex system of innumerable interactions between individuals which for the first time could be adequately

represented in mathematical form (McLoughlin 1965,261). The picture painted is one of the planner 'as a helmsman steering the city' (McLoughlin 1970,86). In other words, in the elitist framework of government, computer-based planning was welcomed as a more efficient way of managing the social system (Simmie 1974,33; Thornley 1977,34).

Alonso (1963,824) portrays the American city planning profession as a self-conscious adolescent, a view echoed in Britain by Ogden (1968,315). Systems planning was perceived as helping to further the legitimacy of the planning profession by extending the 'authority of expertise' (Rein 1969,233). (See also Chadwick 1966,186.) In doing so, however, the technical gap between planners and their clients - both elites and masses - was widened, leading Friedmann (1973b,109) to refer to the 'incommunicability of expert knowledge'. Even communication between professionals was not always easy (Bigham 1973,8; Cowan 1977,252). In his humorous 'Portrait of a planner', Clapham outlines the public view of the professional:

> His vocabulary and his language are unique and completely unintelligible. It is not difficult for the planner himself of course since it is never meant to be understood . . . The greater number of likely sounding words and phrases that are coined, the higher his status becomes. (Clapham 1970,403)

3.2.2 The modern approach to democratic elitism in planning

The consensus and resulting social stability which had characterised the development of planning since its inception began to be eroded during the 1960s, when it 'became clear that many citizens in America, in Britain and in France were no longer satisfied with their role' (Allison 1975,98). An essential characteristic of democratic elitism is the maintenance of the democratic myth: as long as government officials are thought to be performing well most citizens are content not to become involved in politics. Styles relates general public disquiet and the democratic myth in the following terms:

> The success of an elitist democracy rests upon striking a balance between the responsiveness and accountability of the

> few to the many, and the ability of the few to get on and make necessary decisions. The current concern about participation arises from a feeling that the balance has swung too far in the direction of the decision-making and away from responsiveness. (Styles 1971,164)

One indication of the development of an unresponsive 'technocratic system' (Payne 1973,25) is the sheer growth in the scope and scale of government, accompanied by a steady decline in public accessibility (Richardson 1970,52; Bendixson, in T.P.I. 1971,174; Ferris 1972,14; Kasperson and Breitbart 1974,2). Town planning became the focus of much of this discontent partly because of the inherent nature of the planning process. For example, 'planning has a direct effect upon property, and individuals in our society are notoriously jealous of their right to control their own property in the way they think best suits their interests' (Davies 1974,95). This is especially true in Australia where there is an 'atmosphere of individualism' (Hampton 1973,31). (See also Day 1980,37.) More particularly, discontent developed because of the very noticeable consequences that poor planning policies had for both the physical and social environment. The problems facing the planning system can be divided into two main groups: those concerned with the planning system itself; and secondly, those stemming from the public's perception of planning.

In the early 1960s British town planners became greatly concerned with the slow speed at which planning operated. The highly centralised system which had been established through the 1947 Town and Country Planning Act was showing signs of considerable strain under the rather different social and economic conditions of the 1960s (G.B. 1965,7). Delay resulted in the inability of local planners to amend the schemes quickly enough to allow them to keep in touch with emerging planning problems. Planning thus came to be seen as 'being more negative than positive, more biased towards controlling the physical environment than the deliberate stimulus of good development' (Allan 1976,122). Consequently, reports Cullingworth (1976,81), 'public acceptability, which is the basic foundation of any planning system was beginning to crumble'. At the same time, the results of the planning process were increasingly acknowledged to be lacking in quality. Thus, a former president of the Town Planning Institute, refers to the

creation of 'acres of soulless, antiseptic development' (Ashworth 1969,76). Moreover, as the quality of the developments decreased, their quantity increased:

> In absolute terms the size of the new objects which have intruded into our towns and landscapes have become larger - cooling towers, giant pylons, 400-foot office blocks (some of them empty years after construction) urban motorways and other road improvement schemes involving destruction, intrusion and noise. Since they are so easily seen it has been easier to raise resentment against them and to make them serve, not as special examples, but as general indicators of the rottenness of society, and in particular, of the anti-social insensitivity of 'the planner'. (Eversley 1973,169)

Not surprisingly, the public's perception of planning during this time also changed. This was partly due to the increasing significance of planning policies in already developed urban areas, especially the more affluent areas outside the inner city (Eversley 1973,170). As a consequence 'large numbers of articulate social groups were being affected and they protested vigorously' (Damer and Hague 1971,222). (See also comments by Power (1969,61) on Australian cities.) In addition, the discontent felt by individual groups was communicated to society as a whole as the news media began to portray planners as secretive, authoritarian bunglers (Low 1974,15; Hawkins 1981,5). The news media also served as an educative mechanism, highlighting the fact that many planning problems, such as those concerned with amenity and quality of life issues, involved 'aesthetic evaluations and ideological positions' (Allison 1975,72).

Using the elitist model, the introduction of institutionalised public participation is an attempt to reduce the developing social conflict, and thus to restore the former social stability. Hague and McCourt (1974,153) identify two major aims of a consensus-orientated participation programme: 'on the one hand, to help local residents understand and possibly endorse the proposals of the planners, and on the other hand, to help the planners better understand the needs of the residents'. These two elements, both relating to information exchange, are the major characteristics of the elitist strategy for social stability.

The dissemination of information by the planning authority is

aimed at 'educating the public towards an acceptance of the "general public good" implicit in planning' (Bruton 1979,422). It is a practice which has long been recognised as valuable by planners. For example, at a 1910 town planning conference in Britain, John Burns exhorted the delegates to take the trouble to teach the average citizen: 'Give them lantern lectures so as to popularize fine houses, good gardens and beautiful streets' (in Davies 1974,98). Fifty years later in Australia, Shaw (1960,25) concluded an article entitled 'Selling town planning' claiming: 'Your Plan has a story to tell and the more time and vigour spent in telling this story then the more friends and less appellants'.

This educative process may involve the planner in attempting to modify the attitudes of a large section of the community:

> As the planner seeks to educate the community on the consequences and potentialities of planning, he seeks to modify the area of tolerance for new ideas, specifically by enlarging it. Ultimately he will be able to propose what initially was clearly unacceptable. (Daland and Parker 1962,196)

More recently, there appeared in the Journal of the Royal Town Planning Institute a report entitled 'The planner in environmental education: a special in-depth survey into an important and developing field'. Oakley introduces the report commenting:

> Planners are increasingly recognising the need for public endorsement to ensure successful implementation of policies and proposals. This depends upon adequate understanding of what planning is all about - objectives, pitfalls, the need to reconcile different viewpoints. To be effective in participation the general public must have a measure of education on how the environment can or ought to be shaped. (Oakley 1979,99) (See also: Duckenfield 1979; Crouch 1982.)

Similarly, it has been suggested that Australian planners' 'outstanding sin of omission ... has been their failure to positively promote enlightened attitudes through advice and guidance to lay aldermen and the lay populace' (Day, in R.A.P.I. 1972,52).

The second element in a consensus-oriented participation programme is concerned with information collection:

> the purpose of public participation is to ensure that those making the recommendations and those taking the decisions are aware of all the relevant facts. Public participation provides a means of establishing that all the relevant facts are available to them. (Robinson 1979,435)

Planning thus becomes a more rational activity through the use of greater amounts of relevant data (Simmie 1974,138; Whitehead 1976,377). The population's intimate local knowledge is most valuable to the planners (Goodey 1974,515; Schwartzkoff 1976,12; Williams 1976,349), particularly as many professionals are relative newcomers to the district, their geographical mobility being very high (Marcus 1971,57). In addition, planners may well perceive an environment differently from their client community (Bromley 1983). To illustrate the relationship between planners and their client communities, Goodman (1972,205) uses a doctor-patient analogy: the planner-doctor prescribes the most suitable remedy after the client-patients have explained their symptoms.

Sample surveys allow the planners to collect a wide cross section of information with as little conflict as possible (Levin 1971,1091; Moughtin and Gibson 1980b,516; Anon. 1979,68; see also Hatry and Blair 1976). Occasionally the participation of groups may be valuable if it is kept under tight control (see Chekki 1979,38) and if it helps to develop a sense of commitment and consensus among the participants. This view is forcefully expressed by Grove and Procter with reference to participation in environmental improvement projects:

> Even those apparent misfits of present-day society who misuse their leisure time in displays of violent energy or anti-social laziness might be moved to take part in such activity. Such destructive instincts, flavoured with the spice of danger, might be diverted to the removal of areas of dereliction wherever and whatever they might be. (Grove and Procter 1966,415)

Overall, public participation in the elitist model is concerned with minimising possible conflict by allaying public fears and heightening public understanding. In addition, the planning process becomes a more efficient and rational activity. The general approach has been well summarised by a Minister for Town Planning in Western Australia who comments:

> Don't expect too much of PP. We are not handing over town planning to a hotchpotch of Citizens' Action Committees. But we will try to establish a better communication with the people, to listen to what they say, and see if planning can become more flexible. (Davies, in W.A. 1973,4)

From a professional viewpoint public participation is seen as a means of strengthening the role of the planner. Planners are very aware of their very poor public image. Indeed, in a paper to the eight Australian Planning Congress, Newman (1965,99) describes the division between the public and the planning profession as 'a great gulf, a chasm that grows wider year by year'. This view is supported - in rather more muted phrases - by the British Town Planning Institute in its memorandum of evidence to the Skeffington Committee on Public Participation in Planning (T.P.I. 1968,343). In a later paper, the Institute comments:

> The planning profession's desire to strengthen public involvement in the planning process became increasingly evident in the mid 1960s. It has since been attributed to a diminishing confidence by planners in making policy judgements on behalf of an electorate to whom they were not directly accountable. (R.T.P.I. 1974,1)

Although not directly endorsing this attribution, the paper's acknowledgement of the suggestion implies that it has widespread support. (See, for example: Ross 1966,249; Broady 1968b,220; Reynolds 1969,131; Marcus 1971,59; Low 1974,15; Drake and Thornley 1975,114; Thornley 1977,37; Cockburn 1977,135; Gracie 1980,112.)

Public participation can also be used by planners to enhance their own bargaining position within the administrative organisation. In effect, public participation is used to legitimise the presentation and support of proposals which the planner knows would otherwise be rejected out of hand by the elected representatives. If a planner can show widespread public support for a particular course of action, it will have a much better chance of approval (Needleman and Needleman 1974,32; Buck 1976,33; Lang 1976,211; Sager 1981,419). This tactic has long been appreciated by some professionals. For example, in a 1953 paper the Chief Planner of Cumberland County Council (covering the Sydney metropolitan area) comments: 'To my way of thinking the first

thing for a planner to do is to start winning friends' (Fraser 1953). A few years later the notion was made more explicit by another Sydney planner:

> To secure political action, therefore, means winning public support first. This is perhaps the main task of our time - more important even than advances in techniques which are already ahead of our political ability to benefit fully from them. (Winston 1960,24)

The cooperation of professional colleagues in other government departments is increasingly significant to the success of any major planning strategy, as its effective implementation may well depend on their goodwill (Frost 1974,580). A chief planning officer may be better able to force the hand of his fellow chief officers in local government by emphasising his department's 'public role' (Gutch 1979,17). Support for this viewpoint is provided by Power (1976,304) who suggests that, with regard to planners, public participation 'has tended to inflate the relative importance of the role they play in the overall process of policy formulation and implementation'. He goes on to suggest that the much less politically aware engineering profession will be 'doomed to witness a steady erosion of its authority and power' (Power 1976,306) if it maintains its traditional stance which Sewell (1971,39) summarises as a belief that 'the public is not well informed and therefore cannot make rational judgments'.

3.3 A Critique of the Democratic Elitist Approach

The consensus-orientated approach to planning has not gone unchallenged. As was pointed out in a more general context in Chapter 2, such criticism is partly concerned with participationists' arguments in favour of greater involvement in civic affairs. However, this section will detail only those criticisms which directly oppose major tenets of the elitist philosophy. The related pluralist and participationist arguments will be considered later. Two main sets of elitist counter-arguments are identified, the first concerning the traditional approach to land use planning, the second relating to the

more recent participatory style.

3.3.1 A critique of the traditional elitist approach

The traditional elitist approach is attacked both for its view of planning as serving the general public interest, and for its insistence that planning has a rational scientific methodology. Many writers (Moughtin 1972,6; Jakubowicz 1973,62; Payne 1973,29; Klosterman 1978,39) contend that the planning profession is dominated by the middle class, a contention which is upheld by social survey results (Marcus 1971,54; Cohen 1975,ii; Knox and Cullen 1981a,887). Critics maintain that this middle-class domination of the profession has, in turn, resulted in a middle-class bias in the formulation of planning proposals. This argument is most forcefully stated by Gans (1972,368) who comments that the city planner has been planning for 'certain people', particularly 'the planner himself, his political supporters and the upper class citizen in general'. Thus, Hague and McCourt (1974,141) argue that new urban road schemes provide maximum benefits for the affluent car-owning suburbanites, whilst imposing considerable costs on the poorer inner city residents. For example, the Sydney expressway programme caused considerable disruption to the inner city suburbs, all areas with low levels of car ownership, whilst benefiting the more prosperous residents of the northern suburbs (Planning Research Centre 1973,n.p.). A more comprehensive criticism is made by Colman who examines planning policies for housing, shopping, recreation and welfare. With regard to housing he comments:

> Thus for the "residential zones" on the planning scheme we can read "private occupied housing zones". But where within our local planning scheme will we find any reference, implied or explicit, to rental housing, low cost housing, housing for disadvantaged minorities, the physically and mentally handicapped, delinquents, social rejects, and other people who for various reasons do not conform to the archetype of the happy home-owning Australian? (Colman 1980,4)

Similarly, with regard to shopping he comments:

> many small neighbourhood shopping centres and corner stores

> are no longer recognised on planning schemes and are being zoned out in favour of the larger district type of centre, geared primarily to the needs of affluent mobile consumers. As the small centres disappear so are our elderly people, children, non-car owners, and others being disadvantaged. (Colman 1980,4)

Thus, critics highlight what they see as the existing bias in the planning system towards maintaining the dominant position of the existing power holders. For example, Jakubowicz (1973,62) refers to planners as 'scientific articulators of the status quo'. Particularly trenchant criticism comes from those who argue from a Marxist perspective. Kilmartin and Thorns (1978,88) summarise this viewpoint commenting that 'the state acts in the interests of private capital to preserve a happy, healthy and docile labour force'. The 'ultimate function' is 'keeping the system going'. (For a range of viewpoints, see also: Kravitz 1970,243; Goodman 1972,180; Lorimer 1972,80; Palmer 1972,30; Eversley 1973,267; Bett 1974,15; Davies 1974,229; Hamilton 1974,81; Jarrett 1974/5,49; Cockburn 1977,Ch.2; Harloe 1977; Harvey 1978,226; Agger 1979,Ch.3; Knox and Cullen 1981b,183; Fainstein and Fainstein 1982,148.)

Such criticism leads to a drastic redefinition of the public interest, from a society-based unitary concept to a more individualistic conception. Meyerson and Banfield (1955) identify three subtypes of individualistic public interest: first 'utilitarian', the Benthamite model in which 'one discovers whether or not a decision is in the public interest by identifying all the gains and the losses in utility that are likely to be caused by it and, treating everyone's utility as of equal worth ... by estimating whether or not there has been a gain in "total utility"' (pp.324-5); secondly, 'quasi-utilitarian' in which 'the utility of the individual is the relevant quantity but a greater value is attached to some men's utility than to others' (p.325); and thirdly, 'qualified individualistic' in which the utility of the individual is still paramount, but a greater value is attached to certain classes of ends than to others (p.326).

Consensus critics thus suggest that planners have adopted, consciously or unconsciously, an individualistic approach. Reference has already been made to middle-class winners and working-class losers - Meyerson and Banfield's quasi-utilitarian public interest. A qualified individualistic approach is apparent as soon as planners move away from an expression of the most general of goals - problem solving, identifying options, and aiding decision making. Thus, 'when we enter the realms of "preserving order", "reducing inequity", "maximising diversity", "improving the environment", and so forth, we are talking politics, disingenuously' (R.A.P.I. 1972,56).

By advocating an open adoption of an individualistic approach, elitist critics are also encouraging the planning profession to take a more visible political stance as the conscious implementation of all three subtypes involves value judgements. For example, the utilitarian approach will involve adjudicating between the relative importance of 'accessibility' as against 'amenity' (Gutch 1970,391). Wexler refers to this type of question as 'complex':

> Can an expert "answer" our difficult complex question? It would seem not. These questions are not difficult for lack of information: they are difficult because we must compare two or more different values and we can only do so in the grossest cases. (Wexler 1975,188)

The two other individualistic subtypes contain more obvious value judgements involving the exclusion or downgrading of issues or groups. Elitist critics often advocate the cause of social justice by positive discrimination of the poor: 'government policies with which the planner is concerned ought to be compensatory; they ought to allocate as much as possible to the poor and deprived to reduce inequities' (Gans 1972,382). (See also: Wilson 1969,298; Eversley 1973,267; Friedmann 1973a,6; Drake and Thornley 1975,114; Piven 1975,309; Krumholz 1982,165.) Such ideas are more fully developed in the pluralist literature (Section 3.4).

Critics also point to the technical flaws in the traditional elitist paradigm, particularly the planners' inability either to accurately predict the future, or to effect desired changes in social patterns. An inability to give an accurate forecast of the future is

of concern to all types of planners, but particularly to those who base their claim to professional expertise largely on the notion of technical rationality. Banfield (1959,365) points to planners' inability to predict the future much beyond five years, a contention which is illustrated by Piven (1975,309) who asks: 'where then is the master plan of the 1950s that foretold and planned the future of the declining central cities...?'. These failures are explained by Friedmann and Hudson who comment:

> Since most decision analysis relates to nonrepetitive situations, the prediction of consequences and, for that matter, of external circumstances involves probability judgments that are essentially subjective... A parallel set of difficulties lies in the information systems required to provide decision makers with accurate and relevant data. The problems here range from the outright falsification of data, to the loss of vital information through aggregation, the transformation of knowledge into mathematical models, and critical delays in bureaucratic responses... Finally, a serious aspect of the problem of knowledge is the inherently partial and limited validity of social models used for estimating the impact of decisions. (Friedmann and Hudson 1974,8)

Smith (1973,277) extends the argument, positing that accurate predictions of future states can never be achieved as 'the simple change from the system being unknown to its being known may influence changes in the system'. In other words 'human knowledge of human behavior is likely to change human behavior - making it again unknown'.

The second general problem involves 'a lack of knowledge of effective means to achieve ends' (Bolan 1969,234). As noted above, the vision of many early planners was of a profession unfettered by political masters. In practice however, planning continues to be directly affected by its irrational socio-political environment (Broady 1968a,108), in which organisations have a decided preference for present rather than future effects (Banfield 1959,366). This is why quantitative models posited on rationality are seen by Friedmann (1973b,57) as being unhelpful: 'quantitative models tend to divert the planner's attention from the need to formulate his plans in terms of the real world'. One of the most sustained arguments concerning the ineffectiveness of planning is by Pickvance who concludes:

> The aim of this article has been to demonstrate that the conventional wisdom which accords an omnipotent role to physical planners in urban development in Britain is based on a complete misconception of the scope of physical planning powers. These powers are limited in nature and weak in their application due to the prevalence of trend planning. It follows that market forces are correspondingly powerful and that these are the main determinants of urban development. (Pickvance 1982,80; see also Neutze 1977,237 for a similar comment about Australian planning.)

Pahl is perhaps most closely associated with the notion of 'urban managerialism'. In his development of the concept, Pahl envisages groups such as planners being able to 'control and manipulate scarce resources and facilities' (Pahl 1975,206). Yet, on reconsideration even he notes that planners 'at best. . .only have slight, negative, influence over the deployment of private capital, and their powers of bargaining with central government for more resources from public funds are limited' (Pahl 1975,269). What little influence the planner wields is directed mainly at 'disadvantaged local populations' (p.267).

Moreover, elitist critics argue that, even if the complete cooperation of the formal decision makers were obtained, a further difficulty remains: the marked ineffectiveness of imposed planning policies in achieving desired social changes. In particular, detractors have attacked the notion of architectural or physical determinism - that people are moulded by their physical environment (Broady 1968a,13; Gans 1972,370-3; Mercer 1975,70-97; Bailey 1975,15; Mullins 1976,260).

Overall, critics see the concept of the rational planner as becoming increasingly untenable as the flaws become apparent not only to an increasing number of professionals, but also to the general public.

> The myth of 'rationality' - the belief that a professional expert is uniquely qualified to judge objectively what is best for society within his spheres of competence - is slowly being discarded as the community comes to realise that the traditional model of the professional's role in reaching a decision through 'objective' study and analysis is no longer viable. (Colman 1978,37)

3.3.2 A critique of the new elitist approach

In essence, critics view the new elitist approach to planning as a patronising strategy, designed by planners and politicians to manipulate public feeling by attempting to dissolve opposition and thus legitimise the planning process.[14] The result is that eventually the public becomes aware of its own powerlessness and, consequently, becomes alienated from the decision makers. Thus the lack of public response to the planners' calls for participation is seen by critics not to be the result of apathy but rather a manifestation of the public's rejection of their allocated role.

It is suggested that a patronising attitude is implicit in the very notion of public participation in planning, as this implies a bureaucratic view of government, being 'divided and subdivided into a myriad separate and exclusive fragments, each the responsibility of a different department' (Howard 1976,164). However, the public has a different perception of government, seeing it as a single body without well-defined functional divisions (Damer and Hague 1971,226; Drake and Thornley 1975,122; Howard 1976,164). Any 'planning' participation in which the public does become involved will encompass a variety of problems. For example, Day (1981,284) points out that in Britain 'structure plans became shooting galleries for public discontent with housing, employment, health and social service issues that could not be debated through other formal mechanisms'.

Critics believe that this bureaucratic bias is also reflected in the attitude of the planning profession, each member regarding himself or herself as 'the sole expert on ... environmental issues' (Damer and Hague 1971,231). Public participation is thus seen as a threat to the autonomy of the profession (Broady 1968b,220; Hampton 1971,168; Heil 1974,147; Hodge and Hodge 1979,36). As a result most planners, and elected members, pay only lip service to the idea (Goodey 1974,515; Hamilton 1974,81), making little attempt to 'demystify' the planning process (Fyson 1976,123).

This comment leads on to the second major attack on the new

elitist style of planning: the use of dishonest tactics to dissolve opposition and legitimise the planning process. Several strategies of dissolutionary participation can be identified. The most straightforward tactic is to try to discourage either the formation of community groups or, if they are already in existence, discourage their further development or even attempt to destroy them. For example, with regard to the last tactic, the N.S.W. Department of Main Roads, having become conscious of the power of united resident action, orientated its pattern of resumptions 'to destroy any community that might exist' (Planning Research Centre 1973,n.p.). A less drastic technique is simply to extend the individual approach used in collecting information to include information dissemination and negotiation. The move is justified by claiming that any dealings with specific groups could be interpreted as unfairly favouring a special section of the community. Thus, Cox and Howard (1973,56) note that the Sydney Cove Redevelopment Authority attempted 'to bypass the Rocks Residents Group and make individual contacts with those of the tenants who can be easily influenced'. (See also Sandercock 1975,90 on the Victorian Housing Commission.) In Britain, Dennis (1972,261) outlines how Sunderland Corporation's planning department attempted to provide information about the demolition of houses for a new polytechnic by suggesting that interested individuals 'should get in touch with the planning department'. Dennis concludes that this is

> the classic pattern of political domination in a mass society. Totalitarianism succeeds when the population is amorphous and unorganised. (Dennis 1972,262)

Moreover, such an approach considerably slows down the planning process, thus making it difficult for any effective opposition group to continue. Thus, Dennis envisages a member of the bureaucracy adding his own private qualification to each statement about participation:

> Forward! - at a snail's pace. You will get tired before I do. (Dennis 1972,262)

Another delaying tactic, labelled by Howard (1976,164) as 'passing the buckmanship', utilises the departmentalised structure of local government by constantly referring participants' queries and

recommendations to other administrative sections.

A similar result is achieved through a procedure of constant meetings and committees in the hope that any opposition will fade as participants lose both their interest and energy (A.C.O.S.S. 1974,26). Thus, the British Attorney-General in 1947 is reported as regarding the inquiry process 'as merely an opportunity for the public to "blow off steam"' (Moore 1979,429). (See also: Piven 1968,115; Riedel 1972,216; Wolpert, Mumphrey and Seley 1972,36.) This sentiment is echoed by Garner who, in a postscript to an international collection of articles on public participation, comments:

> The final decision in planning matters must be made by the authority where the decision-making power has been placed by law. In practice this will often mean that the views of the professional planners will prevail: they know - orshould (?) know - 'best'. . .All the contributors to this collection of articles seem to be somewhat sceptical about the value of public participation. But the man in the street needs to blow off steam occasionally; and an organised participation process may meet just that need. (Garner 1981b,297)

A second dissolutionary tactic is to stimulate discord within and between groups of participants. Intra-group strife is encouraged by co-opting leaders of opposition groups into the decision-making process 'in a way that divorces them from their supporters and into unproductive activity' (Sandercock 1978,122). (See also: Anon. 1966,628; Floyd 1972,70; Palmer 1972,50; Robbins and Goode 1972,22; A.C.O.S.S. 1974,26.) One of the clearest statements of this policy is given by Arnstein in her seminal paper 'A ladder of citizen participation': 'Some mayors, in private, actually boast of their strategy in hiring militant black leaders to muzzle them while destroying their credibility in the black community' (Arnstein 1969,218). Inter-group strife is created by what Howard (1976,164) terms the 'divide and rule' tactic: 'Its most recent manifestation is the DoE's "Choose-a-route" trick, designed to split up motorway objectors into three or four little camps, all at one another's throats'. A more sophisticated strategy is to appoint members to the committee who will never be able to agree on appropriate procedures or recommendations. An alternative technique is to appoint a narrow-

spectrum group whose findings will be so extreme as to be unacceptable to most other public groups.

A further dissolutionary tactic is concerned with directing participation towards the more minor elements of a planning proposal. For example, Heil (1974,148) refers to 'pseudo activity' such as involving the public in selecting the colour of house frontages or choosing street names. Similarly, Hampton and Walker (1975b,3.9) cite the following extract from a consulting firm's submission to a local authority for a contract to organise the structure plan participation programme: 'the aim of the campaign should be to canalise objections away from the primary proposals (which could threaten the Plan as a whole) and towards the secondary elements'. Hampton and Walker comment that the objective defined by the consultants 'was to gain public acceptance of the Plan, and they did not shrink from opinion manipulation'.

Alternatively, an illusion of power is maintained in two main ways. The first method is what Aleshire (1970,372) terms 'the promise delivery gap': allocating major tasks but minor resources. For example, in the American Model Cities Program 'people were encouraged to plan for vast problems they had no means to solve' (Marris and Rein 1972,328). (See also Graycar 1977,242.) The second method used to maintain an illusion of power is to establish relatively extensive legal rights to participate, but to modify or circumvent them when the use of such provisions is perceived to disrupt established decision-making powers. For example, in the U.S.A. the 1964 Equal Opportunity Act provided for 'maximum feasible participation'. This led to federal grants being made directly to local community groups. Langton (1981,370) reports that 'opposition to this from local officials who feared lack of control of programs was swift and strong', leading to a 1967 legislative amendment giving local government authority over community action programmes. Langton goes on to note that all subsequent federal public participation programmes have been based on the principle that they should be 'complementary and subservient to the power invested in elected and appointed officials'(p.371). (See also Callies (1981,291); Kalodner (1975,164); and Kasperson and Breitbart (1974,21). Agger (1979, especially Ch.5), referring to

both the U.S.A. and Italy, also notes that when participation programmes had 'really modified traditional decisional processes, they were brusquely cut off' (p.6).) Referring to public participation legal rights in Britain, Bailey (1983,20) suggests that 'an unholy alliance of some local authorities and High Court judges has shown that these public rights can be overridden and in effect rendered virtually nugatory by a local authority'. Bailey lists seven ways in which this can be achieved including, for example, simply withholding relevant information, exempting some developments from public participation provisions, and pre-empting public participation by demolition. (See also McKean 1981 and Dorfman 1983b.) In N.S.W., Ball (1983) shows how the public participation provisions of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act have been circumvented by the State Government by enacting new, specific, overriding legislation, and bypassing local councils' development control procedures to make sure that favoured projects are not delayed. (See also Sections 4.4.5 and 4.5.5 concerning the establishment and dismantling of participation measures in Leichhardt in Sydney.)

Many authors have noted the use of public participation primarily as a legitimising strategy having little to do with the actual decision-making process (Hague 1982,237). For example, Sandercock reports on the public participation programme related to the City of Sydney Strategy Plan:

> the consultants approached by letter several hundred organisations...and 'participation' was derived from general comments by the organisations that the planners had invited to participate. The consultants' summary of "the needs and demands of the community" was so general that they were impossible to reject - for example to "improve access to and movement within the city". In effect the participation programme was a means by which the planners tried to ensure that many interest groups could feel they had been involved in the determination of objectives for the city. From the planners' point of view they could then point to the participation programme in an effort to legitimize their plan. (Sandercock 1977,198-9.) (See also: Broady 1968a,43; Jakubowicz 1973,63; Hay 1975,5; Pickles 1976,140; Boaden, Goldsmith, Hampton and Stringer 1982,62.)

A related criticism is made by Sawyer regarding Adelaide City

Council's Planning Study. An exhibition centre was established which attracted 20,000 visitors who, in turn, submitted 1,000 written responses. However, there was little attempt to analyse the submissions. They

> were simply lying in a heap in the office. They had been read by the planners but the suggestions made had not been handled in any systematic way nor had any report been made on action taken upon them. (Sawyer 1975,228)

Such a practice views an analysis of the responses as 'an ad hoc nuisance tacked on at the end of a public participation programme' (Hampton and Walker 1975a,7.10). The legitimising role of the exercise is virtually completed once the submissions have been received. (See also Boaden et al. 1980,42.)

A variety of other techniques have been used to give public participation a legitimising function. For example, Beresford and Beresford (1980,413) report the possible manipulation of results of a participation exercise through selective distribution of leaflets and the use of a strongly biased questionnaire. Cowan highlights what he sees as the misuse of public inquiries which are held

> to fool the public into thinking that they have a real opportunity to influence the decision. By pretending that the purpose of public inquiries is to let the public participate in making policy, government ministers are trying to defuse politics by concealing where the real decisions are being made. (Cowan 1980a,110)

The educative nature of much legitimising participation is well illustrated by a British Civil Service document on lorry weights:

> We welcome the idea of an inquiry as a means of getting round the political obstacles to change the lorry weights. Given that the more straightforward approach is politically unacceptable, I have no doubt that...the inquiry would be a worthwhile investment...
> ...The establishment in the public mind of a clear and overwhelming case on balance for heavier weights is seen as the main end of the inquiry. (In Sandbach 1980,126.)

Similar tactics are evident in Arnstein's comments on the planners' use of public meetings as a medium for a one-way flow of information - from officials to citizens - through such devices as simply

discouraging questions or, when answering queries is unavoidable, providing superficial information or giving irrelevant answers. Regarding citizen advisory committees, she maintains that 'it was the officials who educated, persuaded and advised the citizens, not the reverse' (Arnstein 1969,218).

Critics maintain that the outcome of these dishonest tactics is a feeling of powerlessness among many elements of the public: 'there is a pervasive lack of confidence on the part of the average Australian in his or her ability to do anything to protect or control the environment' (Spectrum Report, in Angel 1978,n.p.). (See also: Alinsky 1969,217; Barnard 1970,450; Dennis 1970,350; Levin 1971,1091; Batley 1972,113; Nisbet 1973,3; Jowell 1975,9; Colebatch 1978,18; Moughtin, Ceccarelli and Stratton 1980,13; Turner 1980,163.) For example, Tibbits (1973,34) notes that the most difficult problem that the Carlton Association in Melbourne had to overcome was the attitude of residents that 'you can't beat the government'. Similarly, in Sydney,

> Father Edmund Campion reported that one of the most difficult things he had to do when working with residents of Woolloomooloo was to convince them that it was worth doing anything at all. The people did not believe that it is possible to change things when those in authority have decided to do something. (Sawyer 1975,73)

Supporting survey evidence is provided by Beresford and Beresford (1978,545) from their work in the London Borough of Wandsworth, and by Taylor and Stringer (1973,173) in the London Borough of Croydon. (See also Section 9.1.)

Critics maintain that one of the consequences of public impotence is public apathy: 'the general public sat up and looked at planning for a while to see what all the fuss was above, saw nothing but talk going on, and slid back into an apathetic sleep' (Lock 1978,9). However, other responses include anger (Mogulof 1970,32), frustration (Kalodner 1975,80), and exasperation and hostility (Arnstein 1969,218). The eventual result is that the elitist goal of social stability is threatened.

3.4 Pluralism in Planning[15]

The pluralist model rejects the concept of a unitary public interest, Peattie (1970,405) referring to it as a 'mirage'. Instead, groups are seen to hold different values and support different goals. Plans are thus identified as value statements (Davidoff and Reiner 1973,22). Consequently, rather than there being one 'correct' plan, pluralists see the possibility of many group plans or 'plural plans' (Davidoff 1965,332). Plan making is therefore considered to be basically a political process, involving group negotiation. Pluralist planners see their role as one of advisor and advocate for their client groups - indeed, the term 'advocacy planning' is often used to denote this professional role in the pluralist bargaining process. This bargaining process is crucial as it determines in what way resources will be allocated between groups. Thus, Long, writing before the advocacy model was fully developed, declares:

> Plans are policies and policies, in a democracy at any rate, spell politics. The question is not whether planning will reflect politics but whose politics will it reflect.
> ... plans are in reality political programs. In the broadest sense they represent political philosophies, ways of implementing differing conceptions of the good life. (Long 1959,169)

However, pluralist planners tend to view the framework for bargaining much more critically than some of their political scientist counterparts. For example, Kaplan (1969a,97) maintains that one of the 'seemingly readily provable assumptions' on which advocacy planning is based is that 'the present distribution of public and private resources in American cities favors the haves, not the have-nots'. This is in part because 'resource distribution results not from a rational, but from an adaptive and incremental decision-making process in which ghetto residents and groups play only a minimal role' (Kaplan 1969a,97). Similarly, in Britain the Town and Country Planning Association comments that

> there is undoubtedly a very unequal distribution of resources among participants at many planning inquiries. This leads to an unequal presentation of their arguments and so may distort

> the inspector's judgement or that of the Secretary of State'. (T.C.P.A. 1979,66)

The basic aim of advocacy planning is therefore to make the pluralist system fairer by providing additional resources to otherwise disadvantaged groups. So, for example, in running its Planning Aid Service 'the T.C.P.A. has always aimed to offer planning aid to the "less equal" - people whose voice in the decision-making process would not be heard otherwise' (Brown 1980,32). (See also: Frieden 1965,328; Davidoff 1965,334; Blair 1973,143; Rauscher 1973,24; Needleman and Needleman 1974,31; Ross 1976,433; Lyon, in C.D.P. 1977,42; Hale 1978,5.) As a result of the opening up of the bargaining framework, pluralists argue, there will be a greater chance that the poor will benefit from the planning process. This redistributive function of planning is the essential focus of advocacy planners:

> If the work is not specific in its redistribution aims then it is at best inefficient. If the work is not aimed at redistribution, then a presumption stands that it is amoral. These are strong words. They must be. So long as poverty and racism exist in our society, there is an ethical imperative for a single direction in planning. (Davidoff 1978,69-70.) (See also Krumholz 1978 and 1982.)

However, mainstream advocacy planners see their role as improving, not completely restructuring the present pluralist system. It implies evolutionary rather than revolutionary changes (Kaplan 1969a,100; Kravitz 1970,263; Blecher 1971,167; Blair 1973,146). This is well illustrated by Barnard's comments on the Shelter Neighbourhood Action Project (S.N.A.P.), a Liverpool rehabilitation programme sponsored by a private housing group:

> though the S.N.A.P. residents will never directly control the city's capital expenditure and allocation of resources, they will be able to have their say about priorities, to bargain and negotiate with city hall, and not be tyrannised or abashed by doubletalk (Barnard 1970,452).

The basic advocacy role is one of providing a technical service to a client. Peattie (1969,238) points to the gradual transfer of public policy from politics to expertise as the size and technical complexity of cities continues to increase. This, she argues, further

disadvantages those elements of the public who are 'particularly ill-prepared to deal with the presentation of issues in a technical framework'. There are several types of task for advocates giving technical aid. First, they may examine a public agency proposal for internal consistency and feasibility as well as questioning the underlying value judgements. For example, the Suburban Action agency was concerned with challenging zoning controls in suburban areas which prevented the development of moderate and low cost housing (Davidoff, Davidoff and Gold, 1970,19). A second task occurs when the community group's objectives are already well-defined but require a more technical articulation. For example, Hartman (1978,79) describes two urban renewal confrontations in San Francisco where advocates were involved in producing renovation plans, collecting evidence to assist in the designation of buildings as historical landmarks, and drafting supportive ordinances to prevent demolition without the provision of alternative housing. (See also: Kirkham 1980; Brown 1980.)

In addition to providing technical expertise, the advocate planner also attempts 'to develop the political viability of interest groups by building organizational capabilities', as well as helping to 'penetrate the decision-making system' (Blecher 1971,158). Indeed, these non-technical roles are sometimes regarded as the most important aspect of an advocate planner's role (Hartman 1970,38; Wolpert et al. 1972,39). However, they are not usually highlighted in the earliest advocacy literature where it is maintained that 'the advocate planner would be above all a planner' (Davidoff 1965,333). According to Arnstein the 'more recent and multidisciplinary models' are aimed at

> political mobilization ... aiding the poor to reach increased levels of sophistication about what makes the city system (and subsystems) tick, to learn who and where the powerholders are and which levers to press to effect action, and to incorporate such sophistication into concrete programmatic approaches'. (Arnstein 1970,33)

So, for example, the advocate planners associated with the British Cumberland Community Development Project established a resource centre to advise the local community about 'the channels of power, authority and influence and how these might be most effectively utilised' (Long

1976,120).16

Other non-technical skills include monitoring the activities of government departments, cultivating further contacts with the existing power elite, establishing working relationships with the local authority, and sustaining the interest of a significant representative section of the local community (Wolpert et al. 1972,34). Thus, the advocate planners with the N.S.W. Coalition of Resident Action Groups were able to play 'the middle class game of bureaucracy manipulation' not only because of their technical expertise but also because of their 'ability to use media and personal contacts within bureaucracies' (Jakubowicz 1973,64). Formal political groups may also be encouraged by advocate planners. Thus, Williams (1978,555) reports on a West German team who helped found a local community association which subsequently sponsored candidates at the city elections.

There is a realisation among advocate planners that the role of the community leaders is crucial if participation is to be effective. This is well illustrated by Peattie's dramatic performance analogy:

> The community organizers were staging and directing; sometimes they edited a basically improvisational script. There were main actors, the officers and active members of the organization. And there was a supporting cast, those membersof the community who could be gotten out to meetings and to public hearings and whose crowd noises at such occasions might intimidate the redevelopment authority. (Peattie 1970,406)

Like Lindblom (1959 and 1965), pluralist planners stress the benefits flowing from the group bargaining process. As Hartman (1970,38) points out, because planners are able to choose which groups they will support, there is an 'inherent similarity between the goals of advocate planners and advocate plannees'. Consequently, there develops a 'total partnership with clients', resulting in a 'trust that has been so lacking in other approaches to increasing citizen participation' (Blecher 1971,160). This view is strongly supported by Colin James (1974,12), advocate planner for the residents of the Sydney suburb of Woolloomooloo. This high level of commitment results in a more carefully prepared, explicit presentation of each group's ideas, and a close scrutiny of other groups' ideas:

> Advocacy planning, by making more apparent the values underlying plans, and by making definitions of social costs and benefits more explicit, should greatly assist the process of plan evaluation ...
> The adversary nature of plural planning might also have a good effect on the uses of information and research in planning. One of the tasks of the advocate planner in discussing the plans prepared in opposition to his would be to point out the nature of the bias underlying information presented in other plans. (Davidoff 1965,333)

Thus, pluralist planners see the group bargaining process as leading participants towards a better understanding of all the available alternatives (Corey 1972,54). Rothblatt (1978,197) claims that the advocacy approach produces 'a relatively open and trustful environment', resulting in the creation of an 'area of manoeuvreability' during the bargaining process (p.196).

Considering their commitment to the present political structure, it is not surprising that in the pluralist framework the final decision making remains with the official planning authority. Thus Davidoff comments:

> In presenting the plea for plural planning I do not mean to minimize the importance of the obligation of the public planning agency. It must decide upon appropriate future courses of action for the community. (Davidoff 1965,332)

The exact relationship between public authority planners and politicians is not clear - indeed it is seldom mentioned in the pluralist literature. Davidoff (1965,333) appears to see local authority planners as just one of the numerous interest groups competing 'with other groups to win political support'. On the other hand, Fagence (1979a,63) comments that 'it is beyond the capacity of most elected representatives to appropriately mediate within themselves the conflict of interests of different societal groups'. As a result 'the development of a mediated or synthesised public interest might be most appropriately achieved through the activities of a non-partisan and objective public service'. A possible middle course is through the use of the charrette technique. This involves speeding up the normal pluralist bargaining process by bringing together via a series of working groups all interested community groups and

politicians into a highly structured situation of intense information exchange and negotiation. The groups' conclusions are subject to scrutiny and comment from both the general public and the legal decision makers, and are reworked before eventually being formally approved by the responsible politicians. (See, for example: Williams 1976; Fagence 1977,301-4; Soen 1981,111-117.)

3.5 A Critique of the Pluralist Approach to Planning

It is proposed to review the extensive criticism of pluralist planning under three headings: first, the relations between advocates and client groups; secondly, the relations between advocates and the politicians who employ them; and thirdly, the relations between groups in the bargaining process.

3.5.1 Relations between advocates and client groups

Of initial concern is the need for the advocate to decide whose interests are to be represented in the policy-making process. As Klosterman (1978,39) points out, this is a two-stage problem because 'not all groups can be represented and it is doubtful that any group will be homogeneous in all relevant respects'. The latter problem in particular has been raised by several commentators (Hatch 1968,72; Kaplan 1969a,100; Rein 1969,235; Breitbart 1972,64; Corey 1972,54; Kasperson and Breitbart 1974,48). Because of the lack of group homogeneity, advocates are faced with the same difficulty as that facing their more traditional bureaucracy-based colleagues - that of reconciling the different interests of the subgroups which, together, form their clients. Peattie (1969,244) sums up the problem saying 'advocacy planning for the local community miniaturizes, but does not eliminate, the problems of conflicting interest which inhere in the planning activities of citywide agencies'. Indeed, the idea of a community interest is as much a 'mirage' as that of the wider public interest (Peattie 1970,410).

Advocates have found that it is the poor who are most reluctant to become involved in planning matters (Peattie 1969,242). As a result, their interests may well remain effectively unrepresented as community spokesmen fail to articulate their views. For example, Gilbert and Eaton (1970,411) report that, although Pittsburgh community activists were 'highly critical of existing neighborhood conditions', the results of a survey of over 6,000 residents indicated that 'these views were not shared by the vast majority of the people living in the neighborhoods'. They conclude that

> The saliency of this point cannot be ignored by professional planners seeking to legitimate their activities in low-income neighborhoods through resident involvement. Currently lacking in most of these endeavors are formal mechanisms of accountability to insure that the activists' opinions and objectives are valid expressions of local sentiment. In the absence of such accountability, professional planners must attempt to assess activists' views on the basis of evidence, when it can be obtained, of who legitimately speaks for the poor. (Gilbert and Eaton 1970,416)

Peattie broadens the scope of this problem, indicating that with the widespread use of advocate planners, there might be 'a general closing-up of the city against the poor, especially the sorts of "problematic poor" represented by Gypsies and families on AFDC' (Peattie 1969,243). This argument is only one aspect of the general criticism that advocacy planning encourages communities to be both parochial and short-sighted. Breitbart (1972,66) considers that 'perhaps the most obvious failure of advocacy planning' is its essentially reactive role - waiting for initiatives to be made by other agencies. Even with the assistance of their advocate planner, a local community does not have the resources to do 'counter-planning' (Peattie 1978,86). This situation is well summarised by the term 'the fire-fighting approach' (Kasperson and Breitbart 1974,49). (See also Smith 1983,104.)

An even more basic criticism of pluralist planning concerns the community's inability to provide its advocate with any detailed information about planning objectives. Referring to the New York City school decentralisation debate, Skjei (1972,15) claims that 'information from participants provided only the most general basis

for assessing costs and benefits' as 'neither proponents nor opponents presented any evidence at all to support their claims about the relative merits of decentralization' (pp.17-18). He concludes that 'the information provided by the advocacy system was not much of an improvement over the "incomplete and shallow analysis" that Davidoff suggested frequently results in the absence of plural planning' (p.18).

Critics maintain that the lack of effective communication is exacerbated by the absence of trust that a community so often has for its professional advocate. This is well illustrated in a self-critical paper by Lisa Peattie (1969), when she explains how a community group excluded all 'outsiders', including the advocate planners, when discussing its strategy towards the redevelopment authority. (See also: Clavel 1968; Jacubowicz 1973,64.) It is claimed that client distrust of advocates is generated by the personal and professional attributes of the advocate. There is an obvious class difference between the middle-class planner and his or her poor client community. This gap is even wider in those situations where white advocates attempt to represent an ethnic minority community. Thus, Blair (1973,148) maintains that 'blacks see America through a different pair of eyes from those of whites'. He echoes Stokely Carmichael's view that whites 'are prisoners of their "whiteness in a racist society"'. As a result, white planners attempting to provide an advocacy service for black communities hold 'untenable positions' (p.149).

Several critics have questioned the motives of many advocate planners. Self-interest is seen to be a major influence. Advocacy work may provide a lucrative source of funds, particularly at a time when large-scale government projects are in operation. The most scathing attack is by Alinsky in his paper 'The War on Poverty - political pornography':

> Around and through all this crawls that new specie of professional parasites known as consultants and coordinators. Their voracious appetite insures that only the discarded droppings will drip down to the poor (Alinsky 1965,45). (See also: Funnyé 1970,36; Goodman 1972,81; Hartnett 1975,49.)

Similar, though less trenchant criticism has been directed at British professional aid projects. For example:

> Some architects suspect those of their colleagues who are involved in community architecture of talking about new types of relationships with clients only as a smokescreen to an underlying interest in finding a new class of client at a time when conventional architectural work is hard to come by (Anon. 1978a,10). (See also: Cowan 1979,292; Gardiner 1975,309.)

The advocacy model is based on the assumption that the input of an expert is necessary in order to give the plan legitimacy (Kasperson and Breitbart 1974,48). Critics see this assumption as helping to maintain the traditional dependency of the layman on the expert (Breitbart 1972,66; Hartnett 1975,48). Moreover, it leaves the community open to manipulation by its advocates as they seek to promote their own interests which are not necessarily the same as those of their clients. Thus Breitbart (1972,65) comments that 'the planner often finds himself molding the desires of his group to fit his own conception of what their demands should be, instead of articulating the group's real desires'. (See Starr (1968,34-5) for a specific illustration of this type of manipulation.)

A related criticism concerns advocate planners' use of their position primarily to enhance their own professional prestige. Thus, Heil makes the following attack on advocate planners (or 'proxy participants'):

> Self-interest and the desire to achieve prominence on the part of the proxy participants may become key motives in an open planning process. A co-operative planning agency would be a serious obstacle to securing a maximum of personal success. This can easily become a reason to seek conflict, to drive the opponent (the planning agency) into a corner as the enemy of the citizen, or to block chances of co-operation. (Heil 1974,152)

A similar serious indictment of the motives of advocates is put forward by Funnyé (1970,37). He maintains that the change from a technically-orientated to a more politically-orientated mode of advocacy in the U.S.A. was initiated by advocates when they saw that 'their own self-interest (survival as pertinent urban experts) would

be better served by a volatile and vocal black-poor constituency'. Advocates are also criticised for using their position primarily to enhance the public image of their profession. Quoting an American Institute of Architects' brochure, Goodman (1972,156) disparagingly refers to how architects 'participate actively in the life of their community in order "to protect the image of professional competence which is basic to public confidence in architects"'. British architects and planners have also seen the public relations value of a technical aid service (Cowan 1979; Anon. 1978b,1).17

3.5.2 Relations between advocates and politicians

A second group of criticisms relate to the interaction between advocate planners and the politicians who employ them. One major inherent difficulty concerns the possibility of an advocate's loyalties being divided between his or her client group and employer. This problem is particularly acute when the employer is also the responsible planning authority for the area in which the advocate's community reside. As such it can affect all types of plural planners, but particularly what Needleman and Needleman (1974) term community planners - individuals on the staff of an official planning agency who are assigned to take responsibility for the development of a plan for one specific district. (See also Wilson 1983,78.)

Critics point out that the reasons for the community planner's appointment are often not related to improving the bargaining framework. For example, the Melbourne City Council established a network of 'Community Planning Groups' each having 'appointed to it a Community Planning Officer from the staff of the Council's City Planning Department to carry out work under the Group's direction' (J.L.G. Williams, City Planner, pers. comm., 11 May 1977). However, Blake (1976,1) maintains that the programme was initiated simply to provide 'an excuse for inaction' and to direct attention away from 'the consideration of the hard questions of planning in the area'. (See also Sandercock 1975,78.) One study of community planners in the United States led the authors to conclude that many planning

departments in large cities launched community planning programmes for reasons that were largely concerned with strengthening the role of the planning department within the administrative hierarchy:

> Community planning is intended to serve the planning department symbolically, through its existence rather than its operation. It is usually envisioned as a way to get its parent bureaucracy, the planning department, off the hook by demonstrating the department's relevance to both city politiciansand city residents. (Needleman and Needleman 1974,323)

The activities and recommendations of the community planner are thus largely ignored by his or her department, the management falling back on 'an indirect form of control, control by inertia' (p.332).

In an attempt to ensure that the community's goals are at least partly realised, the community planner begins to adopt a less professional, more political stance. Such a transition is fraught with problems for, as Jones (1977,165) points out, 'organisations are unlikely to employ, at least in the long term, professionals who adopt belligerent political tactics'. For example, Hatch, Fox and Legg (1977,102) report on the reluctance of the Southwark Borough Council in London to continue their funding of the Community Development Project once they realised that the Project Officers wished to focus on 'the sensitive issues of planning and redevelopment, promoting local participation of a kind they probably associated with irresponsible pressure groups'. (Similar examples are provided by Tierney and McMahon (1979,23) in their discussion of the roles of community development officers employed under the Australian Assistance Plan.) On a more general scale, the Community Development Project field workers claim that once they began to criticise local and central government policy the project's major sponsor, the Home Office, 'started actively seeking ways to close down or curtail project activities' (C.D.P. 1977,5).

Community planners thus become acutely aware of the difficulties involved in a more political role. As a result, many adopt the covert role of 'subversive planner' (Lorimer 1972), 'bureaucratic guerrilla' (Anon. 1972) or 'administrative guerrilla' (Needleman and Needleman 1974,326). They develop a network of 'carefully cultivated informers',

information from whom is leaked to the community group so that residents can 'anticipate the city's moves and further their community interests through methods such as the "gratitude trap", the "democratic blitz" and the "symbolic holocaust"' (Needleman and Needleman 1974,327).18 As their survey found that over three-quarters of community planners adopted this role, they conclude that 'it is an intrinsic part of the new programs - the predictable outcome of the community planning pressure system' (p.329). However, such a role is in an organisational sense 'self limiting' (p.335) as an inevitable bureaucratic backlash builds up within the administration, which sees the community planners as 'disloyal agitators'. Even if the individual planners are not discovered, nor the programme closed, the psychological stress on the community planners is so great that they quickly reach 'a breaking point of exhaustion, frustration and disillusionment' (p.336). They drop out of the programme, taking with them their carefully developed community rapport and guerrilla skills. (See also: Hartnett 1975,47; Barnard 1970,452.)

Moreover, critics maintain that even when advocates have more freedom of action, which obviates the necessity for covert tactics, their effectiveness in terms of influencing policy making is extremely limited. Benington, Bond and Skelton report on their work with the Coventry Community Development Project. During one stage the project workers followed a policy which was based on the following assumptions:

> that changes in policy and practice could be brought about by the documentation of evidence about needs and problems (relying heavily on the evidence provided by local people); well-reasoned debate about alternative solutions; and small scale demonstration projects as pilots for wider developments in government. (Benington et al. 1975,25)

Their overall conclusion about this strategy is 'that the leverage which we were able to bring to bear, in practice, and the constituencies of support which we were able to find or to create inside the administration were insufficient to bring about even relatively minor organisational changes' (p.38). They go on to say that, although their arguments about needs and problems were often

accepted in principle by both administrators and politicians,

> we were rarely able in practice either to deliver, or to channel, the scale of extra resources which our analysis implied, or to mobilize sufficient support (from our position within the administration) for redistribution within existing budgets. (Benington et al. 1975,39)

More generally, there are criticisms relating to the government funding of advocacy initiatives. There are two types of criticism: the first relates to the changing levels in funding; and the second to the effects of such funding. Changing government attitudes have had a considerable impact on the development of advocacy in the U.S.A., U.K. and Australia. So, for example, in Australia a change to a more conservative government in 1975 resulted in the abandonment of the previous government's very modest advocacy programme 'without any proper revue of its usefulness' (Australian Conservation Foundation, in Australia 1980, para.17). On the other hand, some commentators see the ready availability of government funding as creating greater problems. For example, Johns maintains that

> once you institutionalise such a function, its operation becomes constrained by the same pressures which bear on the main system. At present, planning aid is relatively unfettered by such pressure, and can therefore take a freer view of individual issues; if it had a formalised, codified set of duties, these would soon be dominated by establishment-based policies. (Johns 1978,8)

3.5.3 Relations between groups in the bargaining process

Critics believe that the basic problem of differences in resource levels between groups is often exacerbated rather than ameliorated by the plural planning process. For example, the advocacy grants made available by the 1972-75 Australian Labor Government 'almost inevitably' went to 'groups which already have sufficient resources to put forward a good case for a share of the relatively small cake' (Hamilton-Smith 1975,13). The T.C.P.A. Planning Aid Scheme has also encountered similar problems (Anon. 1973a,423; Curtis 1980,291; Brown 1980,32).

Moreover, critics point out that the use of advocates by poor neighbourhood groups does not mean that there is an equality of resources between opposing groups. For example, referring specifically to the New York school decentralisation debate, Skjei makes the point that

> many participants in the debate were at a relative disadvantage in obtaining access to the legislature and were forced to rely on public hearings to present their viewpoints, while a few politically powerful participants such as the union and the mayor were readily able to obtain private sessions with legislators. (Skjei 1972,22)

This criticism is developed further by Marxist commentators who see the pluralist bargaining framework as not including the dominant class, who maintain their traditional tight control over the really important issues. Thus, referring to 'tenants, mothers, ratepayers, teenage youth, house owners, swimming enthusiasts and squatters', Cockburn (1977,118) points out that 'All are asked to compete and defend their special interests against each other, while the class with the real power remains untouched and out of earshot'. (See also Sandbach 1980,128; and Goodman 1972,214.)

Skjei also maintains that the highlighting of value differences by the advocacy system can lead to a hardening of attitudes among participants, and a corresponding decline in trust and toleration. Thus he concludes his New York study saying that 'invective, not the generation and assessment of alternatives, frequently dominated discussion in the advocacy system' (Skjei 1972,21).

Other criticisms of pluralism relate to the final decision-making process. In many situations elected representatives will be called upon to make a decision as to whose ideas will be implemented, and whose rejected. However, as Rein points out,

> A judge is not simply a mediator among conflicting interests; what makes his decisions just is that they conform to some normative standard, some moral judgment. But the society has created neither mechanisms of adjudication nor a body of law and tradition to provide us with norms and standards to judge conflicting social policies. (Rein 1969,243)

This results in a search for 'technical' solutions, and therefore a

handing over of the problem by the politicians to their planning staff. The continuing importance of government planners is highlighted by Keyes and Teitcher (1970,225) who, writing at the time when advocacy was most widespread in the U.S.A., expressed concern that the most enthusiastic and able graduates were moving into advocacy, thus 'encouraging bureaucracies at all levels to continue filling their ranks with unimaginative civil servants, political appointees or old style uncommitted and insensitive planning technicians'.

Finally, many commentators criticise pluralist planners for attempting simply to improve rather than radically change the political environment in which they work. McConaghy (1972,97) summarises the basic argument, commenting that advocacy 'attempts to treat local sores without administering any systemic medicine'. So, for example, the Community Development Project was seen 'primarily as focusing down on the community level' (Long 1976,113). In other words, the guiding notion was that the problems were the result of individual shortcomings rather than outside social and economic forces (Harford 1977,100). Several Community Development Project workers have been highly critical of this approach, scathingly referring to it as 'gilding the ghetto' (C.D.P. 1977). In particular, the director of the Coventry project, John Benington, has attacked the 'blackspot' strategy for focusing attention on 'marginal problems' (in Long 1976,113) rather than those crucial outside forces such as 'changing land values, interest rates in the money markets, the operation of private landlords and speculators, the pattern of central government expenditure and the employment and investment policies of industry' (Benington et al. 1975,40).

More outspoken political critiques have been made by commentators about the American War On Poverty programmes. They see advocate planners as serving only to 'tranquilize' (Funnyé 1970,35), 'divert' (Piven 1970,35), 'manipulate' (Goodman 1972,237) and 'placate' (Mazziotti 1974,40) their poor community clients. Thus, Kravitz (1970,265) maintains that 'advocacy ties up limited political energy that might have been more effectively utilized in political activity', and serves 'to reduce pressures for more basic reforms by

pacification'. According to Mazziotti (1974,44) this is 'counterproductive' as 'structural change and reform within an inherently defective and corrupt system is not possible'. The root cause of all major social problems, these critics maintain, is an unjust distribution of wealth (Kalodner 1975,182). As a result, such a concentration on planning issues is futile 'as planning cannot eradicate poverty or redistribute wealth' (Anon. 1978c,3). (See also Marris 1982,99.)

3.6 Participatory Democracy in Planning[19]

Of the three perspectives, participatory democracy is the least developed in the planning literature. This is not surprising considering the very limited implementation of the participatory democracy ideal, and the fact that, according to this perspective, 'professionals should largely disappear as executive functions are taken over by mandated delegates' (Thornley 1977,53). Nevertheless, several themes can be identified within the literature. The first continues an idea first raised in the previous section, that of the current inequality in the distribution of political power. Overcoming these inequalities is often seen to be achieved most effectively through direct action, this resulting in a much greater degree of local self-control. The participation process is considered important both to self-development and general social development.

Because the implementation of this form of planning implies that changes have to be made to the existing modes of government, it is sometimes labelled 'radical' planning. However, there is no unanimity on the degree of change required. Hudson (1979,390) identifies one form of radicalism that is 'content to operate in the interstices of the Establishment rather than challenging the system head-on', and a second stream which 'takes a more critical and holistic look at large-scale social processes'. Arnstein's well-known 'ladder of citizen participation' provides a more clear-cut attempt to subdivide the radical approach. The top two rungs of the ladder, designated 'delegated power' and 'citizen control', distinguish between those

situations where local activity is considerable, but is ultimately dependent on the goodwill of the delegating authority, and those situations where a neighbourhood has 'no intermediaries between it and the source of funds' (Arnstein 1969,223). (See also Ferris 1972,16.)

Generally, there is the same lack of theorising by planners as there is by their political science colleagues. For example, Kotler's failure to explore intergovernmental relationships in his book Neighborhood Government (1969) is ascribed to his conviction that 'if you once free people to make judgments and take responsibility, they will invent the new institutions and political forms that orderly conduct of affairs requires' (Kolodny 1970,131). Similarly, Friedmann comments:

> You will ask me, then, how do we get from where we are today to what we may become?
> This also I do not know. But I think it is important to know the general direction we shall take. We shall be able to draw an accurate map only later as we look backwards over the paths we have travelled. Meanwhile we are impelled towards the future by sheer hope (Friedmann 1973a,7). (See also: Duhl and Volkman 1970,14; Kravitz 1970,266-7; Goodman 1972,218-9; Agger 1979,124; Marris 1982,107.)[20]

Consequently, the only theme common to the participatory democracy approach is the very general one of a need for some restructuring of society. Thus, Marcuse (1976,471) refers to 'the structural view...underlying most radical perspectives'. According to this perspective 'effective, responsive and meaningful' planning 'is unattainable without wider socio-economic change' (Boyle 1974). This argument was first raised at the end of the last section - indeed there is a very fine dividing line between participatory democracy and 'the more recent multidisciplinary models of advocacy' (Arnstein 1970,33). Thus, Blair (1973,152) presents the view that 'advocacy planning is a necessary transitional step towards real democratic planning and urban development within a restructured society'.

The restructuring of society has the basic aim of power equality (Beauregard 1978,250; Agger 1979,50). As planning participation is regarded as one aspect of this restructuring process its effectiveness is judged by the degree to which it results in a sharing of power.

Thus Angel (1978,n.p.) defines 'real citizen participation' as a 'transfer of power'. Occasionally such a redistribution is brought about by legislative changes. For example, Arnstein (1969,221-5) lists several anti-poverty and Model Cities programmes to illustrate the top two rungs of the participation ladder: delegated power and citizen control. Hallman (1972,423) claims that 'in most places residents of the model neighborhoods have the de facto right to approve or disapprove the program before it goes to the city council'. Similarly, Graycar (1977,245) notes that the Australian Assistance Plan of the Whitlam Labor Government 'saw participation in citizen power terms, and not in tokenism or market research terms'.

However, the general attitude of many radical writers is that a restructuring of society will come about largely through a process of 'confronting existing power centers with the power of numbers - an organized and committed mass of citizenry' (Burke 1968,292). Indeed, even in legally constituted participation schemes, effective citizen control may only come about after such confrontation. Kasperson (1977,183), for example, refers to citizens managing 'to wrest de facto veto power' in western Model Cities. A major task is 'to sharpen local consciousness of the underlying problems' (C.D.P. 1974,26) by 'raising people's awareness of the position they are in and why they are in it' (Gutch 1979,30). Thus, Hamilton (1974,80) envisages a radical revision of the role of the planner, with an emphasis on 'communication, consciousness-raising and coordination in the first instances and ultimately on political agitation, lobbying etc'.

The provision of information is a first step (Thornley 1977,46), but more direct, active methods are needed as 'fundamental political change occurs only after a prolonged period of ferment and conflict within the principal cultural, social and economic institutions of the society' (Flacks 1971b,10). The radical planner thus 'relishes conflict' (Jones 1977,165) because it highlights the need for social justice and, in turn, results in a 'growth of radical consciousness and organizational competence' amongst disadvantaged groups (Peattie 1978,88). This is particularly true in those cases where protest results in a strong reaction from the responsible authority to repress the protest for 'repression brings about a positive reaction' (Olives

1976,182) in terms of a further increase in organised community resistance. Burke (1968,292) refers to Saul Alinsky as 'the chief ideologist of the conflict-orientated strategists'. Alinsky's overall approach to social change is illustrated in the following quotation, originally published in 1946:

> A People's Organization is a conflict group. This must be openly and fully recognized. Its sole reason for coming into being is to wage war against all evils which cause suffering and unhappiness. A People's Organization is the banding together of large numbers of men and women to fight for those rights which insure a decent way of life. Most of this constant conflict will take place in orderly and conventionally approved legal procedures - but in all fights there come times when 'the law spoke too softly to be heard in such a noise of war'.
>
> It is a deep hard-driving force, striking and cutting at the very roots of all the evils which beset the people. It recognizes the existence of the vicious circle in which most human beings are caught, and strives viciously to break the circle. It thinks and acts in terms of social surgery and not cosmetic cover-ups. It is one of the reasons why a People's Organization will find that it has to fight its way along every foot of the road towards its destination - a people's world. (Alinsky 1969,132 and 133)

The efficacy of such an approach is highlighted by many writers. For example, the introduction of the U.S. War on Poverty programmes is attributed by Gans (1972,368) to the activities of the poor people themselves as 'it was not until they began to oppose urban renewal and then to rebel and riot that anyone began to listen to them'. Likewise, the community living in the Shankill Road area of Belfast

> have been able to impose their wishes on the authorities because they have been in a position to stop developments they did not want. High rise flats disappeared from the plans when the then Shankill Redevelopment Association threatened to blow up the foundations on any that were started. The rest of the flats disappeared when the Save the Shankill campaign blacked all demolition work on the Shankill and announced that they would blow up any bulldozer which came onto the site. (Wiener 1976,103)

Damer and Hague (1971,229) note the 'unashamedly Marxist orientation' of many activist groups in working-class areas, and their relatively high level of success 'in achieving their ends of a more

equitable deal for their "clients"'. For example, Jack Mundey the leader of the N.S.W. branch of the Builders' Labourers' Federation at the height of the green ban movement (see Section 4.4.5), was also president of the non-aligned Communist Party of Australia (Mundey 1976,346). His view was that 'if capitalism is to be overthrown it is essential that a great section of the middle class have to be involved' (Mundey 1973,15). The green ban movement was thus seen as 'an educational forum for radicalizing the middle class' (Sandercock 1976,294). Condon illustrates the radical character of many of the green bans. As well as the pluralist, negotiative type of green ban, he identifies two others. The second type

> works outside the existent decision making process and regards its operations as irrelevant. These green bans effectively prevent authoritarian decisions from being implemented. The presence of a green ban limits the options of decision makers to the point where only such decisions as are compatible with the interests of the residents are really possible. (Condon 1975,253-4)

The third type of green ban

> has as its aim a radical change in the way public policy is made. It does not seek to operate within the context of formal decision making but rather to over-ride it. The focus is more ideological, more symbolic. It is "revolutionary" and valued for being that rather than for its contribution to the specific environmental goals. It is part of a wider social/political movement. (Condon 1975,254)

The mechanism of the green ban also illustrates a successful liaison between local communities and the wider labour movement, a feature which is seen by many writers as an essential element of the process of structural change. (See, for example: C.D.P. 1974,26; Benington et al. 1975,61; Thornley 1977,47; Gutch 1979,31; Hague 1982,242; Kraushaar and Gardels 1982,301.)

The human developmental consequences of participation have received relatively little attention in the planning literature, despite the claim by Friedmann and Hudson (1974,7) that a 'new paradigm' was constructed in the early 1970s which emphasises 'man's psycho-social development as a central focus of planning'. An early reference to the psychological aspects of participation is made by

Alinsky in Reveille for Radicals, first published in 1947, in which he stresses the importance of self-help:

> It is impossible to overemphasize the enormous importance of people's doing things themselves. It is the most common human reaction that successful attainment of objectives is much more meaningful to people who have achieved the objectives through their own efforts. The objective is never an end in itself...
> It is living in dignity to achieve things through your own intelligence and efforts. It is living as a human being... While to be given life's essentials may be physically pleasant it is psychologically horrible. (Alinsky 1969,175)

In a later work, Alinsky (1972,121) describes the motivation to participate as 'a desperate search for personal identity - to let other people know at least you are alive'. More dispassionately, Smith (1973,288-9) outlines how the basic source of behaviour is a wish to change the physical and social environment. Being successful in achieving the desired result leads to a 'sense of competence' which stimulates further adaptive behaviour and thus even greater success. This sense of competence spreads through the community as individuals 'inspire each other, communicating an elan of hope and self confidence' (Burke 1968,289). Brier and Dowse (1966,976) refer to 'amateur activists' 'acquiring new techniques, wider friendships and greater knowledge of public affairs', a situation which Bryant (1972,212) more sweepingly describes as 'the unleashing of new human potentials'.

The social equivalent of this viewpoint is articulated by Palmer (1972,49) who comments that to deprive communities of the ability to exercise environmental choice is also to deprive them of 'an essential element of their humanity'. Indeed, Goodman (1972,216) considers that the fundamental benefit provided by a system of community socialism is that 'it lets the society be humane' by allowing the development of 'people's most fundamental needs for cooperation and a sense of love, joy and human experience'. Advocates of participatory democracy thus envisage a cultural and economic resurgence of local communities through greater neighbourhood control. For example Altshuler (1970,37) portrays city-wide bureaucracies as having 'traditionally suppressed expressions of the majority culture in black communities',

a situation which would cease once 'community control' is assumed. Similarly, Kotler, in his book Neighborhood Government (1969),[21] sees the role of the neighbourhood corporation as helping to establish 'a neighborhood economy' by attracting capital from outside sources for investment in the neighbourhood, and then ensuring that the profits remain in the neighbourhood: 'it is only when the territory generates wealth principally for its residents that its people can be sure of local liberty' (Kotler 1969,54).

The instrumental benefits of participation include what Cahn and Cahn (1968,220) refer to as the 'special insights' of consumers. Indeed, the participant style of planning 'makes an enormous volume of information available for the guidance of societal development', the large quantity of initial information being added to as 'the network of working groups generates its own new insights into problems' (Friedmann 1973b,207). There is an emphasis on readjusting the relationship between the professional and the community to move away from the present 'subservient' public role (Goodman 1972,246). Thus, Benington et al. (1975,61) refer to demystifying and sharing professional knowledge. As Grabow and Heskin explain:

> The radical planner is a nonprofessional professional: no longer one with a property right entitled "planning", but rather an educator and at the same time a student of the ecological ethic as revealed in the consciousness of the people. Such an individual strives for self-actualization of oneself and of the others with whom one lives. Finally, he or she is not apart from the people: the "planner" is one of us, or all of us. (Grabow and Heskin 1973,112)

Friedmann (1973b) looks in detail at how this may be achieved in his book Retracking America: A Theory of Transactive Planning. His term 'transactive planning' refers to the 'forging of a personal relationship between expert and client actor' (p.111). Bridging the 'communications gap' (p.171) that has developed between planners and the public requires 'a continuing series of personal and primarily verbal transactions ... through which processed knowledge is fused with personal knowledge and both are fused with action' (p.177). In this learning environment 'a common image of the situation evolves through dialogue; a new understanding of the possibilities for change

is discovered' (p.185). Goodman (1972,248) extends this theme of decision making for environmental satisfaction, making the point that under a system of community socialism, the public and their planners would not be constrained by the overriding need to maximise bank and real estate profits.

Altshuler (1970,40) points out that decisions, once made, are most effectively implemented when there is general community support for the social goals underlying the decisions. Moreover, such decisions will not be parochial in outlook as any pre-existing social isolation experienced by a community will be broken down through participation, exposing the group to a wide range of alternative views, and thus helping to stimulate a wider social perspective (Styles 1971,166) - though the public has already shown a willingness and ability to discuss regional issues (Illeris 1983,430-31). One of the few authors who details a formal mechanism to create this wider perspective is Friedmann (1973b). His vision is of a society with a cellular structure based on a myriad of 'task oriented working groups' (p.196) of about half a dozen people, which he describes as 'temporary', 'small scale', interpersonal', 'self guiding' and 'having a self-appointed and/or representative, inclusive and cross-tied membership' (pp.196-7). In addition there would be 'some integrative structure' to define priorities and assign tasks. He envisages 'working group assemblies' of around fifty people, comprising all members of about eight average sized groups. Each assembly would delegate a limited number of members to still higher assemblies 'and so on until the entire corporate structure is exhausted' (p.199).

3.7 A Critique of the Participatory Democratic Approach to Planning

The participatory democratic model has been extensively criticised as the following section indicates. However, it should be noted that commentaries are, of necessity, often based on participation conducted in a social context which may be very different from that envisaged in the normative participatory model. Criticism comes essentially from an elitist perspective. Thus,

although it applies most particularly to the extensive schemes of participatory democrats, much of it can also be used to oppose the less radical, pluralist views of planning participation.

Many writers comment on the level of public apathy towards planning participation, and the impossibility of attaining the level of interest required for a participatory society to function. For example, Allison outlines what he terms the theoretical weakness of the case for increasing public involvement:

> it is clear that participation can only be increased from a very low level to a slightly higher level. Mass participation is not in line with the sociological facts of life. (Allison 1975,105)

Sandercock (1978,123) also dismisses the idea of grass roots radicalism commenting that 'the trouble with this theory is its naive assumption that there is a reservoir of popular enthusiasm waiting to be tapped'. The literature includes a large amount of supporting empirical evidence. For example, an extensive government-sponsored British research programme, the 'Linked Research Project into Public Participation in Structure Planning', found that attendance at public meetings ranged between 0.04 and 3.44 per cent of the total population (Stringer and Ewens 1975,18). (See also, for example: Reynolds 1969,147; Goldsmith and Saunders 1975,18; Wheeler 1976,106.)[22]

More serious is the relative failure of the conflict orientated approach to overcome apathy. Even Alinsky (1969,181) reports that 'in the most powerful and deeply rooted People's Organization known in this country the degree of popular participation reached a point varying between 5 and 7 per cent!'. In one of his most well-known groups, The Woodlawn Organization in Chicago, the degree of public participation reached only two per cent according to the principal organiser (Sherrard and Murray 1968,201). Indeed, it is suggested that 'reliance on agitation may ultimately reinforce the apathy the organizer sets out to dispel' as 'the marginal concessions extracted from city officials cannot sustain the exaggerated aspirations and expectations which the organizer must stir up to overcome the initial mood of helplessness in the community' (Anon. 1966,627).

Apathy is particularly apparent among the working class. This

again is brought out by the Linked Research Project. For example, Goldsmith and Saunders (1976,2.1) comment that 'most, if not all, studies of participation would lead us to expect that the audience for meetings about structure planning is likely to be drawn from amongst the middle-class'. (See also Hampton and Walker 1978,10.) Evidence from the U.S.A. is also used by critics to confirm this view of working-class apathy. For example, Edelston and Kolodner (1968,231) in a study of an urban renewal programme in Baltimore comment that there is 'no evidence that the poor are consumed with desire to participate in planning'. The authors conclude that the attempt to persuade or cajole the apathetic poor to participate could be interpreted as 'the imposition of the patronizing paternalistic approach which the concept of "maximum feasible participation" is intended to eradicate' (p.231).

The presence of what Levin and Donnison (1969,477) refer to as 'the ignorant, the apathetic and the helpless', and what Powell (1975,10) calls 'the inarticulate masses' raises the related problem of the representativeness of the opinions which are articulated. This difficulty is examined by critics on both an inter-group and intra-group level. On an inter-group basis, an advantage is gained by 'stirrers and self motivated groups' (Harvey 1974,5), or those 'who merely shout the loudest and are the best organised' (Sandercock 1978,125). So, for example, Ferris comments

> Perhaps the most likely political outcome and the most serious in terms of social justice is that certain high class areas where there is a vociferous amenity lobby will be protected from the consequences of increased road traffic while lower status areas will not only have to absorb this traffic but also the extra traffic diverted from the higher class areas. There are indications that this may be already happening in Inner London. All the districts that have been so far designated as environmental areas are high class residential areas with active amenity societies (Ferris 1972,77). (See also: Sandercock 1976,296; Cupps 1977,481.)

Thus, Keeble (1966,219) rejects the idea of 'everyone being consulted about everything before decisions are made', believing that this 'is more likely to lead to rule by pressure group than to democracy'. He goes further, maintaining that 'we should have a stronger concept of democracy if local authorities in fact, took decisions <u>without</u> the

advice of interested and therefore biased parties'. In another paper, Keeble (1971,48) advocates a much more active role for elected representatives suggesting that they 'ought to be out in front gently leading the electorate along a path of wisdom instead of way behind having to be goaded on like donkeys'. He concludes that 'the only way to improve things is to stand for office yourself'.

The intra-group criticism is closely related to comments concerning the manipulative nature of advocate planners. It is clearly illustrated in the following Shire and Municipal Record editorial:

> A short while ago a southern suburban council was considering the desirability of transforming a few acres of grassland into playing fields for children. Usable reserves suitable for children's sports were not only in short supply but, in that section of the municipality, were actually non-existent...
>
> In a heady moment when aldermen were slightly overwhelmed by the spirit of democracy it was decided to arrange a meeting of nearby residents on the site to tell them how the neglected area would be transformed. It so happened that among the residents were two loud-mouthed assertive types to whom the meeting was a welcome confrontation and they obviously gloried in the self-assumed role as leaders in opposition to the council's proposal. The sole objection was the noise the children might make in their play.
>
> Infected by the raucous tones of the two people other residents joined in and a slanging match developed which left the aldermen somewhat spiritually confused and bruised...
>
> The error aldermen made was in allowing mob rule to be substituted for democratic local government. (Anon. 1978d,153)

Critics also cast doubt on claims that participation can lead to psychological development. At the individual level participation is seen to stimulate an egocentric attitude. Thus, Mullane states that

> A discordant note of the hip pocket nerve is the only catalyst that I have known to activate the public into putting forward a point of view.
>
> In my own experience I have found that the environmentalist and the conservationist who wish to participate become only a money hungry developer when the question of beneficial rezoning is imminent. (Mullane 1978,n.p.)

This view is confirmed by Edelston and Kolodner in their research into a Baltimore citizen group established under the Equal Opportunity Act to help establish a housing programme. The authors refer to the 'self-serving tendencies of members of the group in decision-making' with a 'major motivating factor' being 'their own personal need for job upgrading and their use of participation in the planning process to achieve that end' (Edelston and Kolodner 1968,236). (See also Gest and Peterson 1982.)

The concept of social development through participation is also attacked by critics. At the most general level, participation may be seen as one aspect of the overall planning aim of encouraging social interaction, thus allowing the development of '"meaningful" relationships centred on local communities' (Mullins 1976,261). Mullins (1976,261-3) goes on to question this planning tenet, pointing out the conflicting evidence regarding levels of social pathology and solidarity in different types of community. More specifically Cullingworth (1973,175) notes the possibility of conflict between owner-occupiers and tenants over the designation of general improvement areas; and Zimmerman (1972,206) refers to blacks and Puerto Ricans who ended up 'fighting for control of neighborhood corporations and Model Cities citizen committees' in New York City.

Community participation is also considered by critics to hinder the larger scale integration of urban society as it helps foster a myopic, parochial attitude as citizens 'grind their axes on behalf of their own geographical locality at the expense of the total community and of other localities' (Goldblatt 1968,38). For example, a former Lord Mayor of Sydney makes the point that 'Many resident action groups have an intensely parochial point of view with no concept of the wider issues or responsibilities' (Bingham 1982,82). (See also: Powys, in Kitson 1972,83; McDonald 1980,9.) In the American context, Zimmerman (1972,207) raises the possibility that neighbourhood control 'might sharpen ethnic cleavages and intensify the segregation of the races'. Long-term evidence in support of this claim is provided by Alinsky. He reveals that in the Back of the Yards district of Chicago, an area in which he developed a strong People's Organization, the residents had

> mounted victory upon victory and moved steadily up the ladder from the Have-Not's to the Have-a-Little-and-Want-More's... Today they are part of the city's establishment and are desperately trying to keep their community unchanged... They are segregationists (Alinsky 1969,xi). (See also: Stenberg 1972,196; Kalodner 1975,184; O'Riordan 1981,982.)

Doubts are also raised concerning the public's intellectual ability to participate meaningfully in plan-making, the fundamental point being that 'social systems are of particular complexity which defies intuitive understanding' (Forrester, in Smith 1973,280). McClelland (1975,30) sees this as being 'perhaps the major argument against participation in urban planning'. (See also: Grove and Procter 1966,416; Broady 1968b,220; Rein 1969,242; Riedel 1972,214; Dalton 1973,22; Senior 1973,122; Drake and Thornley 1975,113; Chekki 1979,37.) The uneducated poor are seen to be greatly hindered in effectively participating by their inability to conceptualise and their tendency to 'individualize all problems' (Edelston and Kolodner 1968,238). This, critics argue, leads to a significant limitation of both the spatial and temporal perspectives of these participants. Consequently, they would regard regional strategies as being irrelevant to day-to-day living (Stenberg 1972,195; Boaden et al. 1980,99; Gutch and Thornley 1980,50), and would look for 'immediate solutions to immediate problems often with a disregard for future consequences' (Smith 1973,280). Grove and Procter (1966,416) thus see the 'more far sighted' planner as having an important role, being responsible for 'the wider context of the town as a whole' and ensuring the interest of 'the future generations who will be inhabiting the environment he creates'. Aleshire (1970,373) sums up these arguments referring to the 'me-ism' and 'now-ism' of some participants. (See also: Thornton 1970,194; Eversley 1972,18; Altshuler 1973,197; R.T.P.I. 1974,2; Boaden and Collins 1975,10.2; Whitehead 1976,378; Smith 1978,24; Ash 1979,137.) More generally, it is argued that as many of the basic features of local plans are often predetermined by an overriding regional plan, the public's lack of interest in non-local concerns means that their subsequent participation 'is unlikely to transcend purely cosmetic activity' (Damer and Hague 1972,226).

Critics also question the view that citizens have an unequalled ability to devise the most effective plans for their own specific neighbourhoods. For example, Zimmerman (1972,207) maintains that it is unlikely that ghetto residents 'will be able, on the basis of their limited education and experience, to develop innovations that will be more beneficial than innovations developed by professionals'. Edelston and Kolodner (1968,238), in their Baltimore study, note that only one of the many programme ideas that were discussed was raised by a citizen member of the committee, the rest being suggested by the professional planner. More generally, Klein (1974,417) highlights the conservative public attitude to change, suggesting that radical policies 'are the creation of elites'. Moreover, critics maintain that such problems are likely to persist in the longer term as there is little evidence of the educative benefits of participation (Heil 1974,151).

Many writers raise the related problems of the financial and time costs of participation in planning. Thus, the British Town Planning Institute (1970,51) in its observations on the report of the Skeffington Committee, comments that it 'is greatly concerned at the resources in staff, facilities and time that would require to be committed by local planning authorities for a full implementation of public participation practices on the scale recommended by the Committee'. The T.P.I. emphasises the point adding that 'full implementation of the Committee's recommendations would require staff resources which might be quite out of scale with those that planning authorities should more profitably be devoting to productive planning work' (p.51). (See also Cockburn 1977,135.)

Critics also see public participation as prolonging the planning process, which in turn may have costly implications. Most obvious is the delay in handling a development application. Thus Keeble (1966,221) comments that 'money is being lost while the papers shuttle back and forth'. He believes that delay may be reduced by 'cutting out a lot of useless consultation'. This view is supported by Heap (1979,427) who advocates the reduction or elimination of public participation at the development control level as 'it would make for quicker, more efficient and purer decisions'. Similarly, with regard

to forward planning, Edelston and Kolodner (1968,233) conclude from their Baltimore study of a citizens' committee that 'almost a year was required to produce a plan which planning technicians, unhampered by an unsophisticated group, might have produced in several weeks'.

Another difficulty relates to the fact that apparently local issues often also have an impact beyond the local area. This is indicated in the discussion by Sorensen and Day (1981) of 'libertarian planning'. It is suggested that it is only when 'changes can be shown to have a cumulative and detrimental effect' that they should 'become the concern of the planning apparatus' (p.400). Yet they specifically mention only 'small extensions, the colour and shape of buildings and limited changes of use' (p.399) as the issues for which the local community should have planning responsibilities. Generally, the problem of the co-ordination of local plans has received little attention from critics in the planning participation literature, probably because so little attention has been given by participation advocates to the question of co-ordination. However, it is likely that most direct democrats would agree with Goodman (1972,219) who points out that 'interdependencies between regions and communities will naturally require some degree of centralization'. In other words, some type of tiered structure of government will probably be needed. An indication of the problems likely to be engendered by such a tiered structure is provided by the experience of administering the two-tier (county/district) British planning system:

> the districts may have very different ideas from the counties on the way in which the general policies in a structure plan are to be elaborated in their areas. The scope for conflict is very great, particularly since district authorities are independent political entities who are not subservient to the county. (Cullingworth 1976,88)

Oakley (1976,69) raises the problem of 'the proliferation of co-ordinating committees between the two tiers' resulting in 'more staff and more paper work'. Smart (1977,5) concludes that the entire system will deteriorate over time as the two levels of planning 'get more and more out of phase'. (See also Section 4.3.2 which outlines similar difficulties experienced in the planning of Sydney.)

3.8 Summary

This chapter presents a review of the voluminous literature on public participation in planning. The basic rationale is that, as participation in planning is a political act in that it is intended to influence the distribution of resources, it can be studied within the general framework of political participation established in the previous chapter. Thus, the literature is divided into a support and critique of each of the following perspectives: democratic elitism; pluralism; and participatory democracy.

The traditional approach to town planning is closely associated with the democratic elitist style of government. Decisions were made by politicians closely guided by planning professionals who were certain of their ability to accurately reflect the general public interest whilst maintaining minimal contact with the general public. The stability of the social system was preserved as the small scale and slow rate of change resulted in relatively few people being disadvantaged at any one time. More recently, however, as the pace and scale of planning increased, there has been a marked decrease in the level of apathy of the general public. This in turn began to disrupt the stability of the social system, the prime goal of the elitist philosophy. There was thus a need to adapt the planning framework to restore societal equilibrium. Public participation was seen as an element of the new policy, it providing a more effective means of supplying the professional planners with the necessary information to determine more accurately the public interest. It was hoped that this would make the planning process more efficacious, allowing a more rapid rate of physical change without severe social disruption. The resulting re-establishment of stability would be accompanied by a return to a strong democratic myth ideal, and thus a heightening of the public esteem of both representatives and planners.

The traditional elitist approach is attacked both for its view of planning as serving the general public interest, and for its insistence that planning has a rational scientific methodology.

Critics suggest that there is a bias in planning towards maintenance of the status quo, and thus against the already disadvantaged sections of society. They suggest that planning should strive to reduce social inequities. Moreover, critics point to the technical flaws in the elitist paradigm, particularly the planners' inability either to accurately predict the future, or to effect desired social changes in social patterns. Critics view the new elitist approach as a patronising strategy designed by planners and politicians to manipulate public feeling by attempting to dissolve opposition and thus legitimise the planning process. The result is that eventually the public becomes aware of its own powerlessness and consequently becomes alienated from the decision makers. Thus, the lack of public response to the planners' calls for participation is seen by critics not to be a result of apathy, but rather as a manifestation of the public's rejection of their allocated role.

Pluralists view planning as an allocative process based not on a mythical general welfare but on the goals of sectional interests. They emphasise the existing unequal distribution of planning resources between groups, and consequently the role of the advocate planner in creating a more equitable bargaining framework by providing assistance to disadvantaged groups. Such assistance includes the use of both the professionals' technical and non-technical skills, the latter being used to develop a group's organisational and political abilities. Pluralists argue that because of the commitment and enthusiasm of the advocate planners, each group's preparatory work will be of the highest quality, leading to a better overall understanding of all the alternatives available, and thus to more soundly-based decisions. As with the democratic elitist approach, the emphasis in pluralism is largely on working within the present social system, not on the need for drastic restructuring of society.

The criticisms of plural planning can be divided into three groupings. The first concerns the relationship between advocates and their clients. Critics point out that there still remains the difficulty of resolving conflicting views within groups, and the problem of the representativeness of group activists. Moreover, there are doubts about the ability of many elements of the public to provide

their advocates with any detailed information about planning objectives. This communication problem is exacerbated by the lack of trust that a community often has for the professional, seeing him or her as a manipulator from a different class or ethnic background whose very presence symbolises their continuing dependence on the expert. Critics also question the motives of many advocates, regarding self-interest, in terms either of financial reward or professional prestige, as being a major influence.

The second group of criticisms concerns the relationship between advocates and their employers. Critics point out that there is the possibility of advocates having divided loyalties as their activities in promoting their client communities may well lead to difficulties for their employers. Some planners thus adopt the limited covert role of administrative guerrilla. However, even when advocates have more freedom of action, their effectiveness in terms of influencing policy making is extremely limited, and their work is always vulnerable to changes in policies relating to public funding of advocacy.

The third group of criticisms concerns the relationship between groups in the bargaining process. Critics maintain that, even with advocacy, there may still be vast differences in the level of resources available to opposing groups; that the bargaining process may simply lead to a hardening of attitudes; and that, because of the lack of any normative standards on which to judge conflicting issues, politicians will instead try to transfer responsibility by handing over the problem to their own planning staff in order to search for technical solutions. Finally, there is criticism of pluralist planners for attempting only to improve, rather than radically change, the political framework in which they operate, critics suggesting that the problems attended by advocates are symptoms of much more serious social ills.

Participatory planning is the least developed of the three theoretical perspectives. Proponents consider that some degree of social change is needed to achieve the basic aim of power equality, and that this will come about only through the mass of the people taking power from the existing power holders. The planners' role is one of raising people's awareness of their disadvantaged social

position and helping to co-ordinate the resulting political agitation. Links between local communities and the wider labour movement is often seen as an essential element of the process of structural change. However, there is little theorising about the exact nature of the resulting restructured society: new institutions will be developed when necessary by the people as a whole.

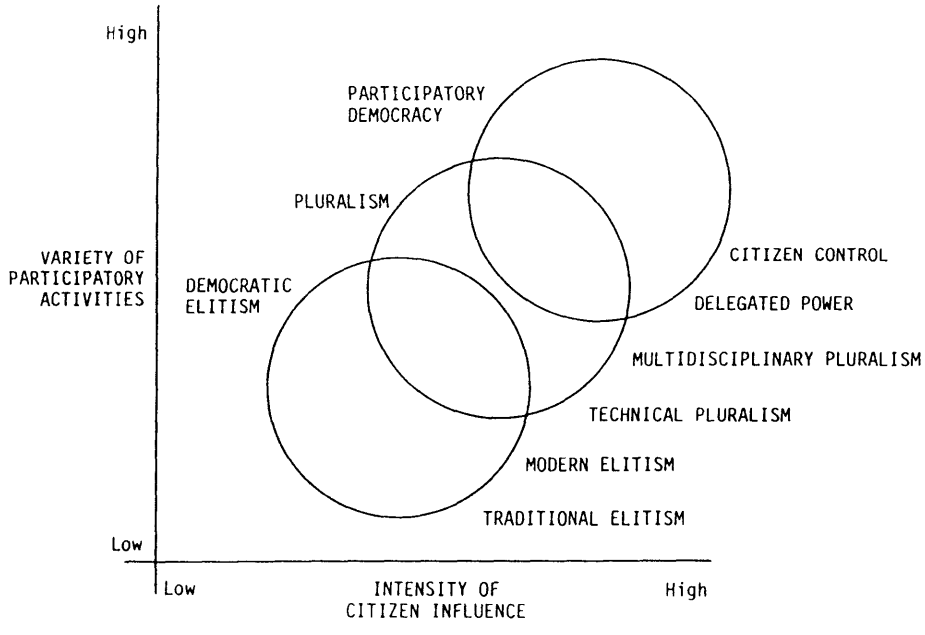
Psychologically, participation is regarded as essential in the development of human personality, generating self-confidence and self-reliance among participants. Similarly, a participatory society develops into a more humane society, and also experiences a cultural and economic resurgence. Moreover, developments would be in line with residents' wishes as the large amount of local information generated by participation is carefully assessed by everyone, the planners sharing their professional knowledge with the local community. Decisions would also tend to be less parochial in outlook as any pre-existing social isolation experienced by a community would be broken down through participation, exposing the group to a wide range of alternative views, and thus helping to stimulate a wider social perspective.

The participatory democratic model has been extensively criticised, it being suggested that results of the more limited participation already undertaken do not support the participationists' claims. Thus, there is public apathy about general planning issues, this being particularly marked among working-class groups. Consequently, it is the better organised middle class which benefit most from participation opportunities. It is also doubtful that the vociferous members of a group are really representative of the silent majority. With regard to personal development, critics suggest that participation can stimulate an egocentric attitude. And socially, participation can lead to a similar self-interested attitude, resulting in a sharpening of differences between groups within one neighbourhood, and parochial views when issues are raised which affect several neighbourhoods. Critics argue that many members of the general public do not have the ability to appreciate complex planning problems, many of which affect a wide geographical area and extend over a long period of time. Indeed, the ability of citizens even to

devise plans for their own neighbourhoods is questioned. There are also considerable financial costs related to public participation, including the length of time it would take before planning decisions were made. Finally, critics highlight the problem of attempting to co-ordinate local plans.

The overlapping between the 3 ideal types in the model of political participation (Figure 2.2) is also evident in the planning participation literature. This is shown in Figure 3.1. Thus, it is apparent that the development of a more participation-oriented version of the democratic elitist model of planning (Section 3.2.2) has blurred the dividing line between elitism and pluralism in planning, the new elitist approach having much in common with the technical pluralism advocated in Davidoff's early papers. Similarly, the development of what Arnstein terms 'multidisciplinary models' (Section 3.3) has resulted in an overlap with the less radical version of participatory planning: the delegated power rung of Arnstein's ladder in which the current power-holding institutions share their power with more local organisations.

Figure 3.1 The relative positions of three types of planning participation in a democracy



Having synthesised the literature on planning participation using the political framework developed earlier, it is now possible to consider in detail the actual planning process and the roles of some of the actors. Chapter 4 details the development of planning and participation in New South Wales. It thus provides the legal and administrative background necessary for a full understanding of the later chapters, which relate to the participatory role of N.S.W. local planners.