
THE URBAN CONSPIRACY OF DETROIT – A FICTION

Exactly fifty years ago, in the heart of downtown, gathered about two dozen of the most powerful men in Detroit. The meeting, held at the top of Penobscot building, then the city's tallest structure, was exclusive, if not clandestine. Below them, for miles and miles over the glacier hewn plain, spread the pride of American industrialism, Henry Ford's Motor City. The destiny of Detroit, up until the last second of the second millennium, was delivered here—as an *aperitif* before the bounty of capitalism.

Present were executives from three of the five biggest corporations in the world, Detroit's auto companies. Across from the „Big Three“ sat a new breed of developers and real estate magnates, who would impel a new concept of retail spaces, eventually constructed outside Detroit. The initiative was merely one segment of a residential and commercial assault upon farmlands, which later resulted in shopping malls and urban sprawl.

Invited at the last minute were city government officials who solemnly accepted the insignificance of their elected power. Facing them were the presidents and board members of Detroit's leading banking institutions, looking to privatize the „Arsenal of Democracy,“ as the city was called during the Second World War, when it was the nation's leading producer of arms.

On the table laid a document titled „The Last One to Leave the City, Please Turn Off the Light.“ Jointly prepared by the auto industry and real estate developers, this surprisingly brief report opens with an introduction on the problems of centralized cities, particularly the economic inefficiency of static urban formation, and the vulnerability of concentrated population to the newly emerging intercontinental ballistic missiles armed with nuclear warheads. Sympathetic to the nation's strategic defense to decentralize its industries and population, this report recommends the regional extension of centrifugal movement already at work, as the cities of America were expanding into metropolises.

The infrastructure that would accommodate the destined fragmentation of culture was the new interstate highway system, the largest single construction project in the history of civilization. Developed parallel to the newly created electronic communication system (initially called Arpanet, later the Internet), this high-speed vehicular network was to create irreversible movements of the population and goods. Replacing traditional population centers with a matrix-based urban structure, these networks would institute the perpetual dislocation of a society and its cities and factories.

The following is a general summary of this document, a manuscript of an urban conspiracy.

Pack your bags and leave this city now

The American dream no longer lives in Detroit. The city is crowded with foreigners who do not speak our language, and who are not willing to embrace the American way of life. They do not appreciate our toil and accomplishments. They are free loaders! Besides, the city is now too polluted to raise our children, and it is too expensive to build our new, more competitive factories there.

We need to build a new city that is more open. We need bigger roads, more cars, and large yards around our houses so that our children can play safely.

We must demolish all tall buildings and live on the ground once again. We need to regain our frontier. For this, our people must move back into open spaces, away from the European styled high-density cities. We have space, they don't.

Turn farms into houses

Our victorious soldiers are coming home from Asia and Europe. We need to build new houses so they can start families. The old city is packed with old houses, which will cost too much to fix. We should just let them go. Don't forget: this is the new world, and we must keep on building. Besides, the materials to build new houses are cheaper than the land prices in Detroit. And we have plenty of materials. Our new highways will quickly bring them anywhere we want.

But there are better reasons why new is better than old. First, there will be tremendous economic gain in transforming farms into houses. More profits can be made from building houses than from growing corn. Second, new houses create empty spaces that must be filled. People will buy new things for their new houses. This means new refrigerators, ovens, heaters, air conditioners, furniture, bathrooms, washers, dryers, lawn mowers, swimming pools and more. The list goes on and on. As long as we make them, people will buy them.

Thanks to television, we can convince people that they can't live without our modern products. We will design and build generic houses so that everyone will fill them with the exact same things. This will make our job easy. All we have to do is design a few things and produce millions of them. We will update our products constantly, making older items obsolete. We will then build bigger, more expensive houses, farther and farther away from the city. People will buy our newer houses and fill them again, with our newer products. But more importantly, we will keep our people uneducated, so they will not criticize us. We will make consumerism a mass addiction.

From car business to house business

All industries depend on the making of American dream houses. We must first get people to buy these houses, then they will buy our cars. They will have spaces to fill, and they will need a vehicle to get the stuff. We will make sure that these houses are built far away from workplaces, so that people will buy more cars and pump more gas. The less of our cars they buy, the more we will raise our gas prices. The more time we force them to spend on the highway, the better our business will be. The more time we force them spend on the highway, the better our business will be. We must create traffic jams and make their commute longer and longer. And we will not build or support any public transportation systems. The more we make them use their cars, the sooner they will need newer ones.

We will then automate all domestic work with our modern appliances. The Detroit factories that made war machines will now make domestic machines. Before long, housewives will need to go to work too, to buy our new, more expensive products. Women will need their own cars to drive to work, and then the kids will need them too. Not only will every American family need a car, but now every American person will need one. The highways will make this happen, as they will stretch the population farther and farther out. The only way Americans will be able to see other Americans will be to drive cars.

That's why we, the automobile companies, must support the production of new houses. With more new houses, there will be more new cars. It's that simple. We will help build these houses, as long as they are designed with three- or four-car garages. We are certain we will also have the support of other companies not at this meeting.

Consumerism is the real peace dividend. We must spread the American way of life throughout the world, through our concept of globalism. But we will still pretend to be just a bunch of car companies. We don't want people to know our real ambitions.

On ethnic cleansing

With two world wars in just 25 years, we have to believe that the rest of the world is totally unsafe. Therefore, we need more Americans to defend this great land. And we mean real Americans!

To keep America real, we must remain the majority, over the tide of incoming foreigners. Remember how we made this land a great place to live. We first exterminated the natives, and then beat the French, British and Spanish. From a handful of former minorities, we made ourselves the majority.

Let the Negroes and foreigners have Detroit, and we will create better places for us outside. They can have the pollution and congestion; we will breathe fresh air and have more space. We will make sure that, in the city, they will fight and compete against each other and never unite against us. We will create mistrust between them, and accept only a few of them to watch the rest. That's how things were done with the slaves, and we should continue that practice today. Whenever we need cheap labor, we will have surplus labor in Detroit. We will make them do the work that we no longer want to do. They will work hard and long hours, thinking that the American dream will get them to the suburbs. But we will keep them locked up in the city, just like we do with the natives on reservations.

We whites must move out and remain in constant motion. This is the idea behind our great capitalism, which relies on change and movement to generate profit. Stability is counterproductive to the cyclical nature of production, consumption, obsolescence and disposal. We will design our highways so that the exit ramps from Detroit can be closed easily, to contain inner city riots and prevent them from reaching us. They will burn their own neighborhoods and kill their own people.

Turn the city into countryside

This is the best part of our plan. First, we will immediately begin the disinvestment and abandonment of the inner city, by red-lining every property and business in Detroit. It will be impossible to build new houses and buildings there because nobody will loan money. All new houses and buildings will then be built exclusively in the suburbs. The Federal government will help us by insuring all of our loans and investments. If any of our loans or developments FAIL, the government will pay for it with tax money. Our plan is fail safe.

Once we start to move our big factories out of Detroit, all other businesses, stores, and even gas stations will follow us. But we will not let the liquor stores leave, and they will pollute the mind and soul of Detroit. We will make sure that it's easier to get guns, drugs and sex in Detroit than voter registration, so the people there will keep killing each other. Some of us can go into the city for a little entertainment, but we will return home to our families clean and proper.

We will undermine Detroit's education system by pulling out funds and corrupting school officials. We will crowd the classes, pay less to teachers, and supply no new books to the libraries. We will only support sports programs, because we want city residents to be strong to work on assembly lines or in fast food restaurants. This will also breed negative attitudes toward learning, causing early drop outs. Our goal is to make the entire population of Detroit illiterate and unqualified for any professional work. We will educate only a few of them, through scholarships and religious organizations,

so they can work in the fire, police and other city departments. They will control the rest of the population, under our direction and pay.

Occasionally, we will give the city some money, but it will never be enough. The departments will fight among themselves for it. This will breed corruption and graft in Detroit, and eventually no public money will ever get to the people it is supposed to serve. It will make us look compassionate, while our goal of the complete destruction of the inner city will be uninterrupted and unsuspected.

When education fails and jobs move out, the inner city will become bankrupt. It will be left with the poor, old and uneducated—few people to tax. Roads, bridges, sewers, school buildings, parks and playgrounds will not be fixed. Buildings and houses will be abandoned by the hundreds of thousands. We will let them rot or we will burn them. We will create an extremely inhospitable and dangerous environment, which will inject an inescapable hopelessness into the whole population. More importantly, this will drive the price of land down further and further. So low, that land will be practically free when we want it.

We are moving out now, but we will be back. According to our research, it will take about 50 years to completely destroy Detroit and its population. The research also recommends that the time to take the city back is when the average price of homes drops below the average annual income of an American. By then most of the buildings and houses will have been burnt or demolished, and it won't take much more to „clear cut“ the rest of them. With so many vacant lots and open spaces, the cities will begin to look more like a countryside. A *tabula rasa* will have been created in the old cities, ready for us to take back for almost nothing.

Then we can create a new city of our own, inside Detroit. The city government, so desperate for jobs and investments, will give us big tax breaks, and will build roads and parks for us. They will have no choice but to give us what we want. If not, we will go somewhere else. The graft and corruption that we have already bred in city hall will help us. The government will let us take control of the major municipal departments, by installing us on their boards so we can deregulate or privatize them. The new city at the center will be built according to our design and concept, and we will drive the existing population out. We will raise taxes, increase living costs, use the right of eminent domain and other legal and illegal means to force the residents to sell out. They should be more than happy to move to the suburbs, because they think they will be finally getting what we enjoy.

We will then abandon the suburbs, just the way we are now abandoning the city. A whole new cycle of redevelopment and abandonment will begin, instituting a perpetual sequence of built-in obsolescence. Everyone will either be moving into Detroit or out to the suburbs, buying new homes or paying higher rent for old ones. The beauty of this plan is that nobody will be aware. They will think that they are getting the „American dream.“ What a brilliant idea, investing by dis-investing.

Take the land by force

The best way to take the land is by force. It's the fastest and cheapest. We have practiced this for more than half a millennium, while colonizing the world through our superior intelligence and weapons.

But it is not necessary to use armed forces now. The new method is to exploit urban fears and racial hatred. Therefore we must fill every television and newspaper with the faces of Negroes in urban crime scenes. Whether they are the criminals or just bystanders doesn't matter. Through media control and

manipulation, we can create an unquestioned impression that all domestic violence and other urban ills are caused by the Negroes.

We will make Detroit seem so violent that people will flee from it as if it were a war zone. Believing that their lives are in danger, city residents will sell their properties fast and low. At the same time, we can sell suburban houses high because so many people will want them. We will continue to promote ethnic and cultural differences because racial segregation is good for our business.

State sponsored rearrangement of land is not new in America. In fact, it's how we created Detroit in the first place. We took our land away from the natives, and now we will take it from the disenfranchised and uneducated Negroes.

At work now is neo-colonialism, operating under more deceptive and complex methods. Hidden by countless layers of economic agreements and legal procedures, it's deeply embedded and automated in the global matrix of advanced capitalism. The only notable difference is that we, the corporations, are the colonizers, not the government. You could say that we help bring peace to this land, because our methods eliminate the need for wars to seize property.

The purpose of this plan is to ensure the sustainability of corporations for the next one hundred years or more. We are the new government of this great nation, and perhaps of the world.

The back of this report read,
CORPORATIONS FOREVER!

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