

Mr. President

Ladies and Gentlemen

Whoever lives in the city of São Paulo knows from personal, every day experience that this is a city full of problems.

Many of these problems are easily felt by the citizens: the deficiencies of the street network, which show up through the difficulties in the circulation of vehicles and the traffic jams; the deficiencies of public transportation, which, for many, result in the daily loss of two to four hours in the ride from home to work and the return home. These problems affect everybody- the rich and the poor, the workers and the managers.

Some of the problems are not always noticed by the citizens. A good example is the increasing degradation of the environmental quality of the urban areas through air and water pollution. However, the pollution of the environment is also a problem that affects everyone, poor or rich, every day, with detrimental reflexions on the health of each citizen. It is an even more serious urban problem than the traffic and transportation problems.

I mentioned but two examples of worrisky problems. There are other urban problems in the city of São Paulo - hundreds of others, with varying degree of seriousness. All the big cities of the world, in developed Countries and in Countries undergoing development, are today being hit by the same problems and searching for solutions.

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If the city of São Paulo, among the large cities of the world, does not hold the monopoly of urban problems, it is certainly ahead of most of them in what concerns the intensity and drama with which these problems appear. São Paulo today may no longer be the fastest growing city in the world, but it is possible that it succeeded in becoming the city with the fastest growing urban problems.

There is a methodology in current use by the city planners in the job of identifying problems and orienting decisions: it is the so-called "urban accounting".

In a nutshell, it consists in filling out columns labeled "assets" and "liabilities" and determining the credit or debit balance.

Let us look over an example of urban accounting, as applied to the street problems of São Paulo. It is known that the Traffic Department issues licences to new vehicles in the São Paulo Municipality that result in a net gain of about 350 vehicles per day. By computing the street space occupied by a moving vehicle and multiplying this space by the increase in vehicles licensed in one year, we find that, in order to accommodate these additional vehicles, the city must build 250 miles of paved thoroughfares per year. If more than 250 miles are built, the circulation system's performance will be improved; if less than 250 miles are built, the performance will be getting worse. Now, in the last four years the Municipality was able to pave only about 112 miles of thoroughfares per year. It is easy to compute the accrued shortage in the city's circulation system in the last four years alone.

Another illustrative example: the ratio of daily urban travels per person in São Paulo is approximately one. That is, our seven million inhabitants generate seven million urban journeys per day. The North-South line of our subway will be able to carry about one million passengers per day, that is, it will serve one million trips per day. If this line would have been built in only four years - which was not the case, as the construction time was much longer - its full capacity would not even be attending to the increase in the demand of trips per day generated during this period, which exceeded one million two hundred thousand trips. So, the building of the North-South subway line absorbed a big portion of the investment resources of Municipality in the last four years, but did not solve the public transportation problems of the city. To the contrary, after the subway will be in full operation, the situation will be worse than four years before.

These examples clearly emphasize the degree of urgency of our urban problems.

Let us examine another example: UN-affiliated international organizations studied and defined minimum standards for urban communities concerning open air leisure space, or the so-called "green areas". They concluded that the acceptable minimum is one hundred and twenty square feet of green area per inhabitant. São Paulo has today fifty square feet per inhabitant, the shortage being, therefore, of seventy square feet per inhabitant - that is, in 1975 our shortage of green areas amounts to just over twelve thousand acres. Supposing that the Municipal Government would decide to invest part of its budgetary resources in the purchase of green areas, at the going average prices of the real state

market, it would have to disburse about fifteen billion cruzeiros - fifteen thousand million cruzeiros - just in buying the land; this corresponds to all the resources destined to investments in the next five years. And we should keep in mind that the additional requirements generated by the yearly population growth of three hundred thousand people would be over one thousand acres, costing an additional one billion three million cruzeiros per year.

It is obvious that except through an extraordinarily creative imagination - or through a miracle - the city will be in no position to solve its problems. Not even in a position to maintain its current standards - which are quite low.

These are only a few among many examples of the problems which the population expect to be solved by the Mayor - since the Mayor is the physical personification of the Municipality and of the Municipal Administration.

So far we have talked only about problems. Let us talk a little about solutions. São Paulo is not only a city that grows at a terrifying pace. Besides that - or perhaps precisely because of that - it is a city that has an enormous capacity to face and overcome problems. The creativity potential of its population - civil servants, industrialists, businessmen, employees and employers - is remarkable. If it were not for this, as a result of the Government's chronic lack of financial resources, the city would have reached the state of urban chaos many years ago. This did not happen - and there is no indication that it will happen. The city remains viable, remains a highly attractive area for local and foreign investors. Its industrial and commercial expansion proceeds at a constantly increasing pace. The large-scale absorption of migratory currents continues.

In a few words, it is necessary to recognize that the contribution by the Municipal, State or Federal Governments for the solution of urban problems has been by far exceeded by the action of private initiative - which is indeed responsible for a most important share in our process of urban development.

Therefore, there is no reason for expecting that in the future the Mayor - or the Municipality, or the Government - will take charge of solving all the urban problems. To the Public Administration falls the task of channelling the creativity potential latent in the community and steer this potential towards the improvement of the quality of urban life; of establishing the norms that will guide the rational and balanced urban development; of restraining the distortions and abuses; of complementing the action of private enterprise in those areas where the Administration can act more freely. In conclusion, of defining the guidelines and the policies for urban development, of creating models and setting examples to induce private enterprise to action.

Even while being not the sole entity responsible for the urban development of the city and for the solution of its problems, a gigantic task falls to the Municipality, which is entirely out of proportion to its limited resources. Administrating a city of seven million people, with a budget of only five and one half billion cruzeiros - well less than one billion dollars - takes somewhat more than common sense and good intentions.

We start from a simple definition: to administrate is to apply ressources in order to attain objectives. Therefore, two questions must be preliminarily replied:

- What is the amount of the available (or possible) ressources?
- Which are the objectives to be attained?

For the first question, an answer can be promptly obtained, and with reasonable precision. The mechanism for collecting taxes is well organized and the capacity of the Municipality for going into debt is known. But even here there is a potential for gathering ressources that has not been fully explored as yet.

The answer to the second question - which are the objectives - is the specific task of urban planning.

In general terms, the great objective of urban planning is to improve the quality of urban life. Environmental factors, economic factors, social factors influence the quality of urban life; they do not act, however, as isolated, easily identifiable elements. They are always interconnecting, superimposing, colliding. The urban process, of increasing complexity, demands increasingly sophisticated planning mechanisms, with human ressources, of the highest professional qualifications.

Until now we talked about problems and are attempting to talk about solutions.

Well, it is not the case of presenting solutions.

The case is to identify the ways that can lead to solutions, the mechanisms that will assure their accomplishment. Of the same

possible ways, I have chosen three as examples because they clearly synthesize a philosophy of public administration:

- The maximum utilization of the Municipality's potential capacity for gathering resources;
- The maximum utilization of private enterprise's capacity for acting in São Paulo's urban development process;
- The intensive utilization of planning as the Municipal Administration working tool.

In urban planning one will only get useful answers by asking the right questions; accordingly, in public administration one will only attain objectives by choosing the right paths, the final destination of which are the objectives to be reached.