

THE MYTHS OF TRADITIONAL TRANSPORT PLANNING

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When our group² started to work out an environment-oriented transport policy we stated as a principle that existing ideas and mental models the transport planners possess concerning the supposedly necessary solutions should be considered as basic parts of present situation, because these mental structures influence determinatively possible forward steps. In the same time we knew, that mental structures as same as spatial structures even if slowly but can change by the time. One of the important tasks of a long term conception to reveal the directions and tendencies of

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changes, to present preserving fields that hinder changes and to make the trap situations clear. It is from this aspect that we wanted to think over several principles of transport planning, which have been sometimes considered as taboos or unquestionable dogmas, but we called myths instead³.

THE SHORT TERM ADVANTAGES OF MOBILITY HAVE A HIGH PRICE

The myth of time-saving

This myth says that improvement in the transport speed results time saving. By now we should have saved 95% of the time we spend transporting due to the general contemporary technical level making possible a speed, which is 20-25 times faster than walking speed. It is not at all so.

Time that we spend transporting does not decline, rather climb up particularly considering the supplementary time in connection with cars (maintenance, procedures, repairing, etc.). If we accounted the time need to make money for transport expenses, the balance is even worse.

In the event of using different means of transport (including walking and cycling too) the time-distributions of journeys cover each other in large extent - as Knoflacher⁴ shows it. On statistic average people's time bases for change of place do not depend on the speed of the instrument they use. We gain distance as a result of higher speed - not time. We can get farther points and we can choose our destination within larger area than earlier.

Certainly, in a particular case if we decide on choosing the mode of movement, it counts that we go on foot or by car (e.g. we aim a place now in five kilometres' distances). Individual people are directly forced to use powered transport means in concrete cases. The statement that we do not gain time by motorization, because the technical options result restructuring in the destinations, refers to the non-declining time spending on transport as a society,

³ The "myth" term also came from Hermann Knoflacher. See Knoflacher, Hermann: Zur Harmonie von Stadt und Verkehr. Freiheit vom Zwang zum Autofahren. Kulturstudien bei Böhlau. Böhlau Verlag Wien - Köln - Weimar pp 216 1993.

⁴ Knoflacher, Hermann: quoted above

The myth of gaining space

Perhaps we gain *distance, connections* instead of time? Do we *gain* distance or *lose* it at all by the faster transport speed?

The *town* based on pedestrian transport offered a high density of possible destinations and the abundance of relations and produced the most important city function: *meeting point* within a small area⁵. The rising speed of the transport means seemingly improves the number and the range of available destinations in short term. In longer term the structure adapts to the faster speed and as a result *the development of transport does not improve the number of the possible meetings, it just extends in space their end-points of destinations*. In the same time the internal space loses.

A direct space losing from the urban area is the consequence of the place physically occupied by vehicles, and the growing safety lag and necessary widening of lanes on the road surface due to the increased speed.

An indirect space losing from the urban area is the consequence of the fact that room used by vehicles does not possess the earlier destination-abundance any more. The street loses its earlier role as a living-space.

The passenger or the driver in a vehicle misses the direct contact with the street. They begin to think in new scale and use the street as an industrial construction. They want to stop rarely, rather try to arrange their affairs concentrated.

In such a way the street really becomes an industrial construction, the carrier of the *transit* and pedestrians cease to move with comfort on it. People try to turn their back on the street and hide in their flat on one hand, while on the other hand they try to get hold of transport means to take part in the transport process as a participant of equal rank.

In the intercity traffic the gained space means that towns, which counted remote earlier, become part of the same attraction zone each, executing daily job and school commuting between each other. This phenomenon undoubtedly dispose advantages too, although *experience shows that distribution of advantages due to increasing connections between towns (regions) of different level of development are not symmetric* and definitely disadvantageous side effects can also appear.

⁵ Engwicht, David: Towards an Eco-city: Calming the traffic. Brisbane 1992

The latest Hungarian researches⁶ suggested that construction of the transport network can improve the *ability of development* (not the level of development), that is the transport in itself does not produce economic development. Good traffic position undoubtedly increase the chances at places *where other conditions of development are given*. But at regions with economic decrease and (out)migration, sometimes the better traffic conditions can but accelerate these trends! In this case particular goods are withdrawn from certain sites and concentrated to other places, but space as a whole available for the community does not increase, but decrease.⁷

The myth of mobility

This myth says that improved mobility characterises the modernity and the modern people. Increasing of mobility provides possibilities for more and more relations that one of the motivations of our development. Therefore the mobility would be one of the reasons, indicators and results of our development. In contradiction to this, Knoflacher⁸ shows that this sort of thinking basically reduces the category of mobility to changing places *by motor-vehicles*, although this category should refer to the *number of changing places generally*.

One side of the problem is that the growth of motorised mobility refers only to middle age people and even can not be valid under or over certain age.

There is another aspect, which is more important than the above one, that the statement is really not valid concerning moving out, which is the real sense of mobility. *Motorization has not increased the number of changing places, it has only removed certain part of them into a motorised system.*⁹

More and more study reflect the fact that we could only change the means of mobility not the mobility itself! It is fact that the speed has changed, and for those

⁶ Andics, Jenő: A közúti infrastruktúra hatása a település fejlesztésére. [The Effect of The Highway Infrastructure on the development of settlements] A Study for the Institute of Transport Sciences. Presented in Conference for Highways in Kecskemét, 29-30 September 1994.

⁷ It's worth quoting Dr. Béla Czére's statements about the myth of the multiplier effect of the transport. Presented on the widened session of the Association of Transport Sciences concerning the transport policy in 25 October 1994. If the transport capacity generated economic development, the extra capacity of railways would have positive effect and would start development. Instead of this where economy decreases the railway also has deficit.

⁸ Knoflacher, Hermann: quoted above.

⁹ Knoflacher, Hermann: quoted above.

people moving faster resulted a wider range of the available destination. But the real sense of the result of increased speed also became the base of myths (see above: "the myth of time-saving" and "the myth of gaining space").

As a conclusion the motorization does not improve the number of journeys in the society. The society does not gain time either by motorization. Even if we can get further away, we only get as number of connections and meeting points as earlier in statistic average. Perhaps, do the concentrated meeting points would become the winner of the process?

PREFERING THE TRANSIT

The myth of turntable

One of the - mainly foreign-related - myth says that a region needs to become a transport junction, and that means the development and connection to Europe for the country, (See also as centre of a region, international finance centre, bridge between East and West, HUB etc..) In this respect the present international exercise alters too: Holland, which is considerable in environmental questions, acts this role deliberately, while Austria or Switzerland referring also on environmental arguments protests against playing such role.

A reference on the past seems to be confirm the myth of turntable, because in the age of the industrial development transport junctions as places having good connections to get all factors of production really could start from an advantageous position in an industrialisation competition and later in getting the industrial service functions too. Still, after a period of time advantages of this position can be revised as same as today centres of heavy industry or energy are not considered to be attractive development poles either.

A long term technical/economic conception, taking a paradigmatic change into account, generally try to avoid everything based on further extent use of materials and energy while prefers activities founded on the use of information and considers the later as promising and determining from the point of view of future development. This slogan seems to be very close to sights mobilizing people to decrease the use of energy and materials, referring to environmental limits therefore it is frequently quoted as an environmental orientation. In fact the whole question is much more practical and calculated: the object of the race is that which activity is able to become dominant in the close future and *to keep itself in economic power*.

Another viewpoint accepts as an empirical fact that large international junctions of developed regions are in especially advantageous position just because they are able to make contact not only with their own region but with distant places in the world too. The question is that whether this is a positive-sum-game, that is whether all the large junctions of the macro-network are in gaining position or rather there exists a

redistribution among these central points too, and single junctions can succeed partly to the detriment of others. The myth of turntable fail to notice that there are also losers of the international network, namely a junction in an underdeveloped region is very likely becomes to be a loser too and what is more it assists to that goods could flow out from the region *efficiently*. The junction can compensate itself for these losses from the rest of its region for a while, so it is a fact, that *in a region sliding downhill* it can keep a position of a *relative* gainer.

The myth of transit

We have to remind that among the different parts of great international networks junctions are still not so disadvantageous for the acceptor regions than *sections having not even junctions*. The channel of transit is an industrial construction, that produce solely harmful effects on its total length on region, only the junctions *can* cause positive influences too.

Soleness of harmful effects refers to *territorial* and *environmental* considerations. The transit charges naturally bring an income for the consignee and other concerned also can be interested by their partial aspect to keep the transit. This is a sort of argument similar to that of the waste-importer who refers to his currency income because he was paid for his activity. There is no difference between income from transit or from other waste-import if we accept that an activity can not be *profitable* on the level of the society if it causes damages, which could not be compensated by money. Naturally there is a difference too: *we can not prohibit transit* we can only minimise harmful effects of it. - and we should demand to get charges for all the possible external expenses that can be payed.

As a consequence of the above mentioned, it is useful to consider as a principle that to reduce damages we should provide the unavoidable transit across the country *by minimised total-length channels*. At the level of greater areas the principle should be *pointing out channels of transit that disturb little local circumstances* and let the traffic through these channels relatively without disturbances. Another defence opportunity is an orientation of transport *toward modes with less disturbance*.

In an urban area extended by higher speed it is not only the distances and length of trips that grow, but on a given section necessarily increases the ratio of transit traffic relative to the local-target traffic. The pressure of this quantity proportions and an approach that pick off a phasis of a process has led to a regulation that - just contradicting to the original city functions - prefers the continuous flow of transit and subordinate the local traffic.

We can notice this approach in public transport planning, when stops, which cause only problems from operating viewpoint, would like to be terminated.

This is the approach of a city transport planning, that mainly wants to improve the throughput capacity.

This approach is shown clearly in the hierarchic relations at the crossing sections of road networks through settlements. Regulation consider the integrity of national highways as a priority and subordinate to them the unity of the settlement. (The local self government has no responsibility for these crossing sections.)

In connection with questions of transit we refer two more points in the following: "the myth of one-way streets" and "the myth of joining Europe".

The myth of one-way streets

This method of traffic control is so widely used that we hold necessary to discuss it separately taking out of the other transit problems.

The principle of preferring the transit formed the network of one-way streets in cities, where regulation wants to promote conditions of transit against residents' comfort. The whole city traffic regulation, based on this principle, needs supervising and revising.

Certainly we do not suggest a radical and unawared central changing of the present situation. We see bigger possibilities in such a rearrangement in which the local communities have gradually greater possibilities on forming the regulation. They can implement their own priorities accepting that transit is not to be eliminated entirely in the cities and that leaving their street they also become transit in front of other people's home.

The myth of (the infrastructure of) joining Europe

The myth of joining Europe tries to make believe that closing up depends not on arranging and enriching of local circumstances, local networks and internal relations, but on the construction of *magistral lines*, over our possibilities and the real demand, but to make possible rushing through Europe.

At the end of the World War I the length of Hungarian highway network was almost 28.000 kilometres (in the present area of the country). That network, consisted of 60% minor roads, touched already all the settlements. The ratio of minor roads decreased under 10% by 1950 and 80% of the network were macadamised road fitting for the purposes of cart traffic. The length of the highway network is about the same now: 30.000 km. Development was brought mainly by constructing a new pavement: during the 60's and 70's the ratio of modern asphalt and concrete surfaces, which can satisfy requirements of the motor vehicle traffic, went up to 90% from 10%. Today a basic daily task should be for the road branch to maintain this highway network in good quality: without that the Hungarian road network is *not European*.

Disquieting that nowadays one can hear almost exclusively about motorway constructions, and that politicians deal also only with that.

It is not independent of the pressure of Western Europe, directly concerned in construction of large networks. When the main Western European networks reach Budapest, through that they reach the whole of the Hungarian market centralised here for decades. This order of developing can conserve the existing development gap between the capital and the country for further decades.

PILLARS OF QUANTITY-BASED DEVELOPMENT

The myth of increasing demand

One of the transport planner's most frequent argument refers to the increasing transport demands. The emergence of these claims is fact, but there are more essential other claims in the background, for there satisfaction changing place is only one possible means. Actually, in the form of transport claims the society drafts its needs for different services and supplies. The recognition of these needs and their satisfaction by not-transport means could be the solution too, not just the increase of the number of journeys. It is because of the lack of this kind of solution that resident of a city extended and disaggregated to separate functions, the men enforced to transport, arrive at a vicious circle. He must take longer and longer journeys just to keep the satisfaction of his needs on an earlier level.

This is a typical social trap: The distances to be taken are bigger and bigger, while passenger do not gain time, relations, space. but if he do not want to lose these, he must go further and further, he must possess car, by which further spoil his own situation and that of others too.

We have a hope to avoid this trap only in co-operation with the city planning and by revise the role and place of the fundamental services, It is needed to consider all the problems for every single decision and to demythicising the myths. One of the principles is the reability of *lifestyle of little towns*. One target of the planning can be to establish little towns as a compact whole in a big city, supplying the most possible city functions within the given units.

The myth of little money

A returning slogan in reports presenting contemporary situation of infrastructure says little money has been given for the infrastructure development in the last decades and this practice needs basical change. In some cases, e.g. in the development of the telephone network this detriment can be shown in details and proven by a comparison with similarly developed countries. The situation is not so clear in the most industries: certainly, there was little money for the transport but similarly little as for the education or for the sanitation, for the police, for the fire-service, for the technical development, for the manufacture industry, for the post, for

the agriculture, for the local councils, for the culture, for the commerce, etc. and as little was in countries of similar development.

It would be good to leave the myth and to analyse how the money that *was* invested into transport has been used, and that the situation has been formed by now whether to which extent is the responsibility of professionals on this field .

One of the most common symptom is (characterising not only the transport sector) that in the shadow of a fight for external sources and new investments *the maintenance of existing constructions was neglected*. It is also the fault of the wrong economic rules in connection with the amortisation, of the lack of property considerations, a result of the deformed interests and the consequence of failed economic and technical approaches. The change would need comprehensive macro- and microeconomic and technical analyses and researches beside the well-intention.

It is a common problem but bring especially disadvantageous consequences at transport investments that explicitly supports the acceptance of investments, if there are slightly and obvious bankruptcy as the problems in that case enforce decisions of politicians. The problem is doubled: on one hand it makes investors interested to produce situations close to the bankruptcy instead of an interest of finding real solution. On the other hand this model always reflect the problems of the existing structure and firework-like quick development improve and strengthen always the existing structure. (See also "the myth of underground solution" and "the myth of development missed" in connection with motorways)

The myth of development missed

Similarly to the phrases of "there was no money for infrastructure" the "accumulated missing" is also returning slogan of the evaluation of the past. Analysing the surveys on infrastructure development of past decades we could state¹⁰ that not so much extent a general lack of development was typical than rather the fact, that there *were* always money for networks fitting to political wills and intentions while for those considered by the power as unessential *were not*. So the Budapest centered networks reflecting similar political centralisation were developed during this time.

While in recent decade each survey on transport situation mentioned Budapest-centrity as a first characteristic and fundamental problem of the Hungarian transport structure, motorways still constructed and are constructing in the same structure that is as a supplement capacity for main roads. That means that Budapest *is* the connection among different directions of transit. Similarly, (and not independently from above mentioned

¹⁰ E.g. Fleischer, Tamás: Infrastruktúra fejlesztési csapdák [Traps of infrastructure development], Közgazdasági Szemle, 1986 February and Infra-struktúra váltás [Infra-structural shift], Közgazdasági Szemle, 1988 June

facts) the crossing capacities over the River Danube were established also in Budapest and this process continues nowadays (underground, widening the Árpád Bridge, M0, Lágymányosi Bridge, a planned new M0 Bridge and a new underground). In the case of the railways it is also true that the renovation of all main lines leading to the Capital beats the construction of the long-time planned Danube crossing South of Budapest. Finally, the extension of Ferihegy Airport by developing a regional international airport in Kiskunlacháza would also increase the predominance of the Capital.

The myth of the radial-concentric system

As it was mentioned previously, there is a consensus in the statement, that one of the basic structural problems of the Hungarian transport network is its extreme Budapest-centricity. (Furthermore, this kind of centralisation exists within Budapest too.) Referring to earlier conceptions it is often said that the country needs a *radial-concentric* system instead of the radial one, .

It is important to draw the attention, that a radial-concentric system has also one centre. As long as we had to consider the national network closed, because the borders were closed too, there were no real alternatives to solve this problem. In the present situation it is better to emphasise the openness of the network and to promote its development for an *open net system*.

A special feature of a network structure is that it has several equivalent knots. Even if Budapest will never shade invisibly into a network either, it is important to try at least setting up equivalent lines by avoiding the Capital. There are three possible lines in East-West direction, and, constructing new bridges on the River Danube, a greater traffic weight could be provided for the Székesfehérvár - Szolnok axis, producing a future basis-line for a transit axis out of Budapest. The relating ideas¹¹ about a possible autoroute network were already tested¹² loading forecasted traffic on that axes.

Certainly, we do not want to mysthysize advantages of the net-type network, because roads are the same in 95%. It is we who appoint (first on maps) concentric or net-like directions. But this appointment does have a real influence on viewpoints of transport development. The projection of the transport network appears in people's mind as an abstract structure, and this projection does have a feedback for the chosen ways and even for the chosen priorities of developments!

¹¹ Fleischer, Tamás: A magyar gyorsforgalmi úthálózat kialakításának néhány kérdéséről [Some questions about establishing of the Hungarian automobile-way network.], Közlekedéstudományi Szemle 1994/1.

¹² Uvater: Gyorsforgalmi úthálózati koncepció [Conception of Automobileway Network], Presentation by Flórián, Gyula at the Capital Transport Meeting, 1994 September

The myth of underground solutions

By this myth constructing underground railways is the only solution for transport problems of big cities. As for Budapest, it would especially urgent need for the Délbuda - Downtown - Rákospalota line and first of all the middle section of that.

At first let us see why the underground is necessary by those arguments. In big cities because of the long distances and traffic demands there is a need for high capacity, quick and comfortable transport. The transport means, which meet these requirements can not be constructed on the surface, because of the traffic especially in the Downtown. But we need the underground most urgently just in the Downtown, therefore we should build the first section here.

Two terms are interlocked tightly: Fast Railway and Downtown. Fast Railway connections can also be established between different external points of the town avoiding Downtown using the existing railway lines (and areas). In 1992 the MÁV suggested a two-termed solution¹³ to execute till 1996 and 2000. There are also sections with closed tram lines, apart from the railway areas, that can be counted for inter-district rapid transit development.

Today Budapest has two underground lines and one subsurface tram line. All they go to Downtown and meet at one point at the Deák Square. Common in the case of three sections, which go into the Downtown (under the Váci út and Bajcsy-Zsilinszky út, under the Rákóczi út and under the Üllői út) that a tram line was eliminated on the surface giving place for 2x3 lanes' road traffic, and increasing significantly the pollution¹⁴ of the town. One can summarise this history that the tram lines became the victim of capacity increasing for the car traffic going into the centre of city. It resulted that passengers were sent under the ground. The new underground now can become the mean of establishing again a new lane to the Downtown from South Buda.

On one hand the great investment of underground has an appearance of being invested for the sake of improving public transport. On the other hand operational expenses of the underground can be always shown as a running deficit of public transport and a donation for passengers. In reality, contrary to this statement the public transport could perform on the surface (even in the Downtown) and could operate on higher level of quality with fewer costs if regulations have really preferred public transport. Certainly, there is no reason to stop the operation of

¹³ A magyar vasutak távlati fejlesztési programja. [Development Strategy of the Hungarian Railways] Brief work, Ministry of Transport, Communications and Water, August, 1992.

¹⁴ I used the similar ideas by Benyó Bertalan and Miklóssy Endre in large extent in this block.

existing underground, but using experiences it is totally causeless now to start constructing of a new line.

The underground is a hidden transfer to individual car users from the taxes presented as an expense of public transport given by transport leaders of Budapest and by the Government. It was an addition to that, that filling up the capacity of the underground constructed it was necessary to cut the earlier diagonal surface bus and tram relations for establishing new lines, subordinate to the underground, while forcing passengers to make extra interchanges.

If the surface conflict between individual and public transport could only be solved by constructions in the future, this investments has to be formed that way, that the individual passengers could pay investment charges.

MONOPOLY OR SERVICE?

The myth of freight ton/kilometre

Both the transit costs projected on freight ton/km or passengers/km and the environment coefficients show great advantages of water and railway transports. Why do not these obvious advantages succeed in the practice?

It can not be denied that there are strong lobbies behind the road transport in each country (building industry, steel industry, car manufacturing, oil industry, tourism, etc.) and it is also not a Hungarian speciality that there are hidden transfers for car traffic by building roads from public money or other ways. Still we wonder the reason whether the above stated and more considerable economic advantages why *can not have an effect on individual entrepreneurs' decisions*. Do entrepreneurs decide badly or statistics are not correct?

It is true that internal relations of transport changed basically during last decades, not only on the supply-side (see wagon versus car comparison at the myth of "not giving up railways") but on the demand--side consigner requirements also changed in considerable extent.

Changes project a trend that is valid for the whole industrial and economic sphere: *fewer products and more services* - partly through the fact that we pay more and more services in the prices of products. It causes altering claims on transit from the traditional service: the freight ton/km to the extra services: insurance, accompanies, managing goods, delivery to the house, quickness, special care, etc..

Extra services become specially important transporting more valuable goods Here the cost of strictly count transport is not so important. .

A market viewpoint measuring in cost and do not distinguish the transport from its additional services or loading. It does not matter that carrier can perform cheaper transport on rail or water at an important section if he can not offer a set to make the whole process cheaper the consigner would not even get the message of rationality.

The theory of *fewer products and more services* is not only a question of quantity but it leads us to an important quality statement too. This has an effect on the supply side again.

It is in the energy sector that first regulation was tried to establish to eliminate suppliers' interest *against* energy saving. (The consumer wants to buy *light* and *warm*, while supplier is concerned to sell more possible *energy, kilowatt-hours*.) Supplier should offer warm, he should be paid for the result of services (warm or light) and he will interest in saving energy even he will urge to arrange insulation for windows!

How could we reach a similar change in the field of transport? At first we should *look through* the whole process instead of a phasis of shipping and *understand* what services customers really want. Secondly, transit has to be prepared to supply more additional services different of the technical nature of traditional spipping but joining to the whole process. Thirdly carrier needs to establish confidential relations where customer belives and look over that s/he is served by common interests. At last it is more than just confidence, it also needs to establish such a system of regulation and tariffs, which make really carriers interested in satisfying their customers.

There is no general rule: who should be the main transport entrepreneur that performs basic shipping service. He may possess shipping means or can hire them on the market. It could be useful to keep own storage, or to have a part property in a logistic center, but it is also possible that just the lack of preferred own storage capacity makes carrier more flexible. The market will answer these questions if the conditions could be determined suitable.

The myths of "not giving up railway lines" and "uneconomic railway lines"

The construction of the Hungarian railway network practically ended in 1913. Since, the main changes have been the construction of second rails, the electrification of lines, or - as a negative development - reducing some side lines. That is, the rail *network* was constructed before large-scale using of cars and it was based on the collecting role of cart transport. It became the more flexible and spatially more extended alternative of the earlier dominant water transport. The importance of railway stations could not be compared but the importance of ports, because stations also become the commercial (goods), the energy (coal) and information (post office, news, people) centre of single little regions.

In Nagykálló - the former administrative centre of Szabolcs county - the local farmers (now we could say like an environmentalist group) prevented to build rails nearby,

therefore the next village became the junction. Nagykálló gradually lost its earlier role and the regional administration moved to Nyíregyháza.

The developing power carried by the railways was also realised by people and it meant personal security, direct and indirect working facilities and connection too to the town becoming 'closer'. It provided rank, importance and prosperity to the village.

Today, the railways operate with entirely different conditions. The car traffic, which have the same capacity and speed as the railways, can not be expected to act the role of carts beside the railways.

The above words do not want to show as good the present trends at the railways and do not want to find excuses for the hidden support¹⁵ of the road freight. But it can help to protect everybody from the illusion that after eliminating present faults and unfairness the railways could gain back their earlier *predominant* role.

A reformed modal split leads us towards the solution in a system, that is *intermodal*, and considered as a single transport market. The railways - and the other transport modes - have to find their up-to-date role within this market. Railways should be dominant at the main national axes, in the field of urban and suburban transport, and in the field of international transport and transit.

We suppose that railways can prove these statements in case of fair competition conditions and using a tariff system, that considers external costs too. It is not allowed to affect badly the future division of labour by a rash decision in the conditions of unequal competition. It is particularly unjustified to create a ready situation by hasty eliminating of railway lines, in such questions that need solutions at the level of transport policy before a new transport policy accepted.

The myth of low cost water transport

The clear transport costs projected on freight ton/km are the lowest for the water transport. This statement is true, but some requirements should be performed to validate it for shipping on inland waters.

¹⁵ Pavics, Lázár: A magyar vasúti és közúti áruszállítás nemzetgazdasági szintű (valódi ill. hosszú távú) versenyképessége, valamint az ebből levonható következtetések. [Ability of Competition of the Hungarian Railway And Freight Shipping (in short and long terms) And Its Consequences] Working Paper, 1994.

- It needs goods for which the speed and conditions of water transport is suitable . This traditionally means cheap mass goods in large quantities preferably with destination close to the water.
- It needs ships.
- It needs crew.
- It needs ports.
- It needs navigable river.

If most of the five criteria should be established in a country at the same time it is not sure that improvement of first criteria can finance the four others. In that case, the sense of cheapness could become doubtful.

If we consider the external expenses, particularly environmental expenses in the costs, the result could be different from a strict economic rentability. In the special case of the Hungarian inland navigation it would be difficult to say whether it would really be advantageous for it in a comparison if the environmental costs were involved in the terms of water transport similarly to other modes of transport.

The myth of low cost public transport

The myth of low cost public transport says that public transport should be cheaper for passengers by growing up state support for the target that it will be capable of competing with cars, meeting also environmental arguments.

Our opinion is that every solution that makes a service artificially cheap instead of taking real costs into the prices leads to wasting. It means wasted money on the supply-side and wasted transport service on the demand-side.

Besides, the solution will not reach its target, because the overused public transport, generating unsatisfiable demands, is unable to be attractive despite its high expenses. A high quality comfortable and civilised public transport can only withdraw a motorist from his car. This kind of transport is necessarily expensive: not only in absolute term but for the user too. A high entering threshold also protects the level of the quality.

Such kind of public transport is not a social solution. Another question that it is necessary to establish supplementary systems (different ones at country, region and city level) to handle social problems by giving occasional support for those in needs, including problem of going to school.

It is worth noticing that the real level of transport expenses' changes the parameters of rentability calculations in connection with school - concentration (and generally spatial concentration) and by that reduces exaggerated claims. Furthermore the real level of

transport costs stimulates the creation of local business and services and it promotes the increase of the quantity of the local destinations, the settlements can reach a higher density, and a growing number of destinations are accessible for pedestrians.

Finally, we remind to everything we described under "the myth of the underground solution" that *real level of prices* does not solely mean increasing in prices but also decreasing in significant cases. If expenses of projects, which are not justified from the point of view of public transport have been shown in the budget of car-holder society (and indirect, environmental and other costs are also included), the real price would reflect the difference between the social costs of individual and of public transport.

Budapest, November 15, 1994

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