CHAPTER I

Birth and Growth of the Greater City

THE POLITICAL AND GOVERNMENTAL CITY

THE CENSUS OF 1890 did more than mark the end of the frontier in the United States. It disclosed also that the nation's three largest cities were closely crowding each other for the coveted honor of first place: New York City with a million five hundred thousand people, Chicago with a million one hundred thousand, Philadelphia with a million fifty thousand. Chicago was coming up fast; no one could predict how the census of 1900 might rank the urban giants.

But two years before the census takers of 1900 began their canvass, a new urban phenomenon had been created. "Greater" New York had a population of 3,437,202 to match, two-to-one, Chicago's 1,698,575. For six decades that ratio of population leadership has been maintained. "Consolidation" in 1898 had placed New York City beyond challenge as the nation's first city. In that process the fourth largest city in the United States (Brooklyn, with an 1890 population of 838,547) had been "consolidated," along with the first city and additional communities (the latter containing about 150,000 people), into the new "Greater City." The resulting metropolis was to have many consequences for urbanization in the United States—and for the politics of New York City, of New York State, and of the nation. A new dimension, in scale and quality, had been added to the government and politics of urban America.

The Road to Consolidation

The enlarged city which began its governmental life on January 1, 1898, had been long in the making. Many forces—economic, social, and political—contributed to the incentives, the hesitations, and the bargaining which eventually led to an almost sudden and surprising culmination in 1897. As early as 1833, New York's Mayor and aldermen opposed the incorporation of Brooklyn as a separate city, on the grounds that it should be joined with Manhattan; but Brooklyn was not to be denied, becoming a city in 1834. More than twenty years later the idea assumed a different form: governmental necessities and political party strategies combined in 1857 to produce a metropolitan Police Board, a state agency with a geographical jurisdiction

approximating that of the Greater City established in 1898. In 1866 a Board of Health was similarly established, as was also a Board of Excise. These regional governmental institutions were regarded by many as pointing emphatically toward the logic and necessity of complete consolidation.

The most general and sustained drive for consolidation, however, was supplied by the leadership of Andrew Haswell Green, who for thirty years made the creation of the Greater City the prime object of his active career. While a member of the New York Park Board, he presented in 1868 a carefully developed proposal and design for an "imperial city," requiring the governmental and political integration of New York City, Brooklyn, and surrounding territories. Thereafter, Green worked ceaselessly for his ideal (his proposal evoking from his opponents the label of "Green's hobby"). He found many opportunities to advance his cause. The New York press gave him wide support in the seventies and eighties, a Municipal Union Society agitated in behalf of his plan, and the state legislature was pressed with petitions and bills. A small step was taken by the 1874 annexation of three western townships in The Bronx, while in 1883 the opening of the Brooklyn Bridge gave Green and his friends an additional impetus. In 1890 Green's "hobby" became an official goal. The Governor and the legislature joined in the creation of "a commission to inquire into the expediency of consolidating the various municipalities of the State of New York occupying the several islands in the harbor of New York." Green was appointed chairman, and no strong opponents were named as members. The commissioners drafted a bill for immediate consolidation.

The legislature spent four years in the search for a formula which could muster a majority among the legislators. In 1894 a popular referendum was decided upon. Thus in the November, 1894, general election—when the voters were choosing a Governor, congressmen and state legislators, Mayors in New York and in Brooklyn, and voting upon the recommendations of the 1894 State Constitutional Convention—the voters in the metropolitan region were also asked to approve or disapprove consolidation. The Consolidation League led the expansionist forces to a narrow victory: 176,170 for, 131,706 against; in Brooklyn, the margin was only 277 votes—64,744 for, 64,467 against. The legislature of 1895 was uncertain of its mandate; confronted by Brooklyn opposition, and by second thoughts in Manhattan, the legislature wavered, and at adjournment had merely authorized the annexation of the eastern towns and villages in The Bronx to New York City. Green and his associates had acquired territory on the "mainland" for the city, but not the "islands in the harbor."

Thus matters stood at stalemate in the closing months of 1895. For the next two years, confusion, uncertainty, cross-purposes, and shifting opinions were to characterize the battle over consolidation. Long-range aspirations for a

Greater City, the sentiment for an "independent" Brooklyn, the social and economic interdependence of the metropolitan district all became inextricably interwoven with the short-range incentives of the main actors in the contest. In the end, it was the party leaders and the public officials who brought the tangled issues to decision—and among these the central and crucial actor was Thomas C. Platt, long the leader of the Republican state party organization. In 1895 Platt faced more than his usual share of problems as the state party leader. The State Constitutional Convention of 1894 had been more "reformist" than "regular"; it had written a strong merit system requirement into the state's basic law, separated city elections from state elections, imposed strict limitations upon state and city finances, and in other ways made the life of party leaders more difficult. The 1894 city elections in New York and Brooklyn had brought the victories of "independent" Mayors (Strong and Wurster) who were not responsive to Platt's leadership. The national and state elections of 1896 were just over the horizon, and the aspirations of such "mavericks" as Theodore Roosevelt in that contest were unpredictable. In the midst of these dilemmas, Platt became a determined consolidationist, although his exact motivations for doing so still remain uncertain.

Events now moved rapidly. Governor Morton asked the 1896 legislature to expedite consolidation; the legislature appointed a joint committee, the committee held hearings and received petitions for and against consolidation, and then proposed the creation of a charter commission to establish a government for Greater New York, which under the joint committee's proposal was to be established on January 1, 1898. This proposal had a stormy course in the legislature; Platt needed, and received, some Tammany votes for its first passage. Then Mayors Strong and Wurster vetoed the bill (under a new "home-rule" provision of the 1894 constitution) and Platt was compelled to use all his resources to secure the required second enactment by the state legislature. In early May, 1896, Governor Morton was empowered to appoint the charter commission. He named as president Benjamin F. Tracy (who had been Harrison's Secretary of the Navy and was now a law partner of Platt's son); Green was a member, as were Seth Low (former mayor of Brooklyn and now president of Columbia University), Mayor Strong and Mayor Wurster, and ten others. The commission was able to present its first draft "as a gift to the city" on Christmas morning, 1896. The legislature adopted the charter in February, 1897. Brooklyn quickly acquiesced with the signature of Mayor Wurster. But now New York City had its doubts about the concrete terms and prospects of consolidation, and Mayor Strong (although as a member of the charter commission he had approved the charter) vetoed it. Platt again secured its passage in the legislature, and on May 4, 1897, Governor Black signed the charter into law. The thirty-year drive led by Andrew Green and

the party organization led by Thomas Platt had together brought the Greater City into being. The question now was: what forces would govern the new metropolis?

First Consequences of Consolidation

Consolidation became a legal fact in May, 1897; thereafter the boundaries of the new city were not in question. The debate now shifted to criticism of the new charter (a hastily assembled document of some 600 pages and 1,620 sections) and its distribution of the powers of government. The new government of the new city was to be strongly centralized; power was to be concentrated in City Hall, although the five boroughs (Brooklyn, The Bronx, Manhattan, Queens, Richmond) were each to have a President and some governmental functions. At City Hall, the Mayor was to have great formal powers (he would serve four years, have an extensive appointing power, as well as unusually effective veto powers over the municipal assembly), but there were

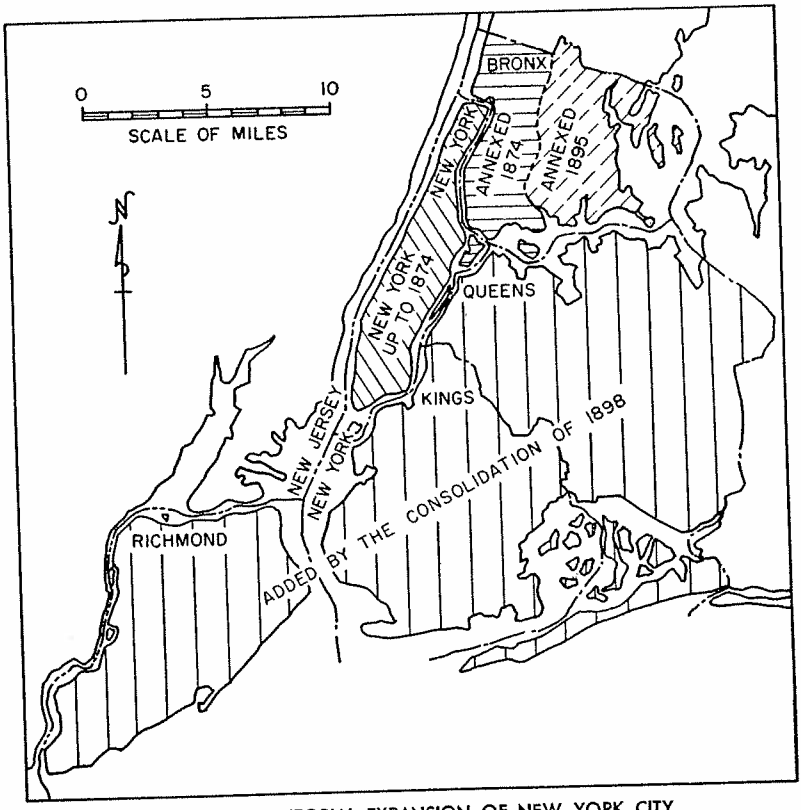

CHART 1. TERRITORIAL EXPANSION OF NEW YORK CITY

numerous boards and commissions whose autonomy threatened to reduce the Mayor's control over administration. The bicameral legislative body was to be large in numbers but uncertain in powers. Charter revision, however, obviously had to wait until after the first city elections.

To the state and city party leaders, and to the other leaders in the city's political life, it was clear that a new political force had been created. A government for a city of almost three and a half million people was something new in the nation and in the state. The key to this new power structure, everyone agreed, was the mayoralty. All those who sought power and influence in the city government turned to the capture of that prize at the first election in November, 1897.

Platt immediately encountered trouble. He had been one of the main architects of the consolidation and of the charter, but he could not transfer his power at Albany to the city, where the nominations for Mayor were to be decided. His need was for a Republican candidate who was "regular" enough for Platt's taste and who could also muster wide support from the independents and the reformers. Benjamin Tracy was his choice, but he was not acceptable to the forces which in 1894 had elected Mayor Strong in New York and Mayor Wurster in Brooklyn. These groups, led by the Citizens Union, wanted Seth Low. Neither Platt and his Republican party leaders nor the Citizens Union and its followers would concede to the other. Tracy became the Republican candidate; Seth Low, the candidate of the Citizens Union. Thus the anti-"Tammany" forces in the city's first election were divided against themselves, as they were often to be thereafter.

In the Democratic party Richard Croker, the New York County (Manhattan) leader, who had watched the course of consolidation from his semi-retirement in England, had fewer difficulties. He came home to persuade his Brooklyn and other party colleagues to nominate Robert Van Wyck, a relatively unknown regular Democrat and the bearer of an old and distinguished Knickerbocker name. Out of power at Albany, and at New York and Brooklyn City Halls since 1894, the Democratic leaders were more than ordinarily anxious and determined to win the new prizes of power in the Greater City.

Van Wyck won. The vote, in round numbers, was: Van Wyck, 234,000; Low, 151,000; Tracy, 100,000; Henry George (who died during the campaign), 22,000. Croker and his associates had won the first chance at leadership of the "imperial city." But the measure of their future troubles was to be seen in Van Wyck's 45 per cent plurality.

Further Consequences of Consolidation

These troubles came soon. The Republican leaders had power at Albany, and the independents and reformers had no difficulty in agreeing with them upon the use of that power to supervise the Van Wyck administration. Legis-

lative investigation was the first power of supervision to be used. In 1899 the Mazet committee explored the city's government, discovering and emphasizing the irregularities and corruption which Lincoln Steffens was soon to find endemic in all of America's large cities. The second weapon was charter revision by the state legislature in 1901, as the Van Wyck term neared its end. The third assault was a coalition in the city election of 1901: Seth Low, as the "Fusion" candidate of Republicans and independents, won the mayoralty. The Republican leaders, the independents, and the reformers had rediscovered the tripartite formula for their successful participation in the city's political contest—state legislative investigation, charter revision from Albany, and Fusion in the city election.

The charter revision of 1901, however, was more than a stratagem in the political and governmental contest. It also sharply redistributed power in the city's political and governmental system, with lasting effect upon the opportunities and liabilities of all the main participants in that system. The Mayor was reduced in power, the borough governments were enhanced at the expense of power at City Hall, and the party organizations were confirmed as five county-borough systems, precluding the growth of integrated citywide party organizations. The key institutional instrument in producing these changes was the creation of a newly designed Board of Estimate and Apportionment, with the Mayor, the President of the Board of Aldermen, the Comptroller, and the five Borough Presidents as members, the Board being endowed with generous powers which were to be steadily increased during the following decades. The Mayor was thus put "in commission," while the borough officials and their party-leader associates were moved into full partnership in the city government's most powerful single institution. Many clues to the subsequent political life of the city are imbedded in this transformation set in motion by the charter of 1901.

The charters of 1897 and 1901 were framed in the midst of, and as products of, a complex political contest involving not merely the creation of the Greater City but the stakes of the political system of New York State and of the nation as well. The long-range goals and short-term necessities of the leading actors, their perceptions (myopic or clear-sighted) and their motivations (self-centered or selfless), were the mixed ingredients of the public debate accompanying the decision to consolidate and the subsequent decisions making the formal distribution of power under the two charters. If the charter makers were distracted by the contradictions and inconsistencies of the debaters, and if they did not correctly anticipate all the major consequences of their actions, they did succeed in building a viable system of politics and government for the city which succeeding generations have changed only in detail.

The reformers of 1897–1901 were most sharply disappointed over the refusal of the charter drafters to introduce "nonpartisan" government into the

charter of the Greater City. Instead, the charter commissions accepted the political party as a valued, if not indispensable, institution in the governance of the city. They gave more attention to, but ultimately rejected, proposals from the reformers to provide assured representation for minority parties (a plan which was to be tried from 1937 to 1947). The charters of 1897 and 1901 emerged free from almost all doctrines of nonpartisan or bipartisan city government, thus removing New York City from the tendencies which were to become so pronounced in Boston, Detroit, and Los Angeles. At the same time, and perhaps somewhat inadvertently, the 1901 charter, by creating a powerful Board of Estimate, confirmed the tendencies toward five separate party systems in the city (one for each of the five boroughs or counties). As the boroughs of The Bronx, Queens, and Richmond grew in population (and so also in voters), the party system of the city became increasingly, within both the Democratic and the Republican parties, a system of struggle, bargaining, and accommodation among borough power centers. The boroughs quickly became the equivalent of large cities (by 1930, four of them exceeded a million people each, and Richmond had almost 160,000). The resulting "borough politics" of New York City offers many contrasts to the "ward politics" of Chicago and Philadelphia. A Borough President is not an alderman; a county party leader is not a ward leader. The borough-county constituencies are large and diverse; Borough Presidents and County Leaders must respond to a wider array of forces than do aldermen and ward leaders. They are more visible, more vulnerable, and in that sense more responsible.

New York City's political and governmental system, then, is unusual even though it may not be described as unique. The charters of 1897 and 1901, confirmed by the charter of 1938, kept the parties and the party leaders on the list of principal actors in the city's political contest. The ambiguities and low visibility of nonpartisan city government have, as a consequence, been largely avoided. By constructing a system of borough politics, the charter commissions enabled the city to escape much of the parochialism and low visibility of a system of ward politics. And while many other forces in the life of the city have contributed to the nature of its political and governmental system, the commitment of a prominent role to parties and to party leaders, and to a system built around a few large boroughs rather than numerous small wards, has played a significant part in developing the main characteristics of New York City government and politics to be described in the following pages: a system of "open" politics, the absence of a single dominant ruling elite, a pattern of competition and bargaining from which no group is for long alienated or excluded, a system inherently conservative but not incapable of innovation.

THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CITY

The political and governmental city and the social and economic city are reciprocal in their influences upon each other. The size, diversity, and wealth of the city affect the size and worth of its political stakes; the political and governmental system in turn affects the growth and character of the city. Much of the special quality of New York City as a social, economic, and political center flows from its status as the "First City" in the United States—first in population, in economic wealth, in cultural resources, and in first place among the nation's burgeoning metropolitan regions at mid-century. These cherished "firsts" are the direct and indirect gifts of the political and governmental system which established the Greater City in 1898 and which has maintained and nurtured its growth for six decades. The social, economic, and political concerns of the city are in a very real sense indistinguishable from each other, meshed together inextricably.

Population Growth

To a large extent, New York's population growth is the result of fortunate geography. New York Bay is a magnificent natural harbor—large, well sheltered, deep enough to accommodate the largest ships, shallow enough to afford convenient anchorage. Moreover, the natural waterways of the region provide several hundred miles of excellent waterfront and expedient means of

TABLE 1. POPULATION OF NEW YORK CITY AND ITS BOROUGHS, 1890–1957

	1890[a]	1900	1910	1920
The Bronx	88,908	200,507	430,980	732,016
Brooklyn	838,547	1,166,582	1,634,351	2,018,356
Manhattan	1,441,216	1,850,093	2,331,542	2,284,103
Queens	87,050	152,999	284,041	469,042
Richmond	51,693	67,021	85,969	116,531
Entire city	2,507,414	3,437,202	4,766,883	5,620,048
	1930	1940	1950	1957
The Bronx	1,265,258	1,394,711	1,451,277	1,424,367
Brooklyn	2,560,401	2,698,285	2,738,175	2,602,433
Manhattan	1,867,312	1,889,924	1,960,101	1,794,069
Queens	1,079,129	1,297,634	1,550,849	1,762,582
Richmond	158,346	174,441	191,555	212,020
Entire city	6,930,446	7,454,995	7,891,957	7,795,471

[a] The Greater City had not yet been formed at this time. New York City consisted of Manhattan and about half of The Bronx. Brooklyn was a separate city, and Queens, Richmond, and half of The Bronx were separate counties containing small villages.

SOURCE: *Statistical Abstract of the United States;* 1957 figures based on special census as reported in *The World Almanac,* New York World-Telegram Corporation, New York, 1959, p. 240.

moving goods inside the area. These natural advantages made New York a center of economic activity and opportunity. People flocked to it in such numbers that it was already the largest city in the United States by 1790 (with a population of about 33,000), and its population had almost doubled when the census of 1800 was taken. The growth of the city was further encouraged by the opening of the Erie Barge Canal in 1825, since this permitted shipping goods in bulk relatively quickly and cheaply between the interior and the East. The Appalachian Mountain range was for decades a towering barrier blocking land communications with other ports, which meant that when railroads came, rail service in and out of New York on the water-level route paralleling the Hudson-Mohawk and Erie Canal system also long enjoyed a competitive advantage. New York experienced a virtual revolution in commerce as it became the primary transportation center for

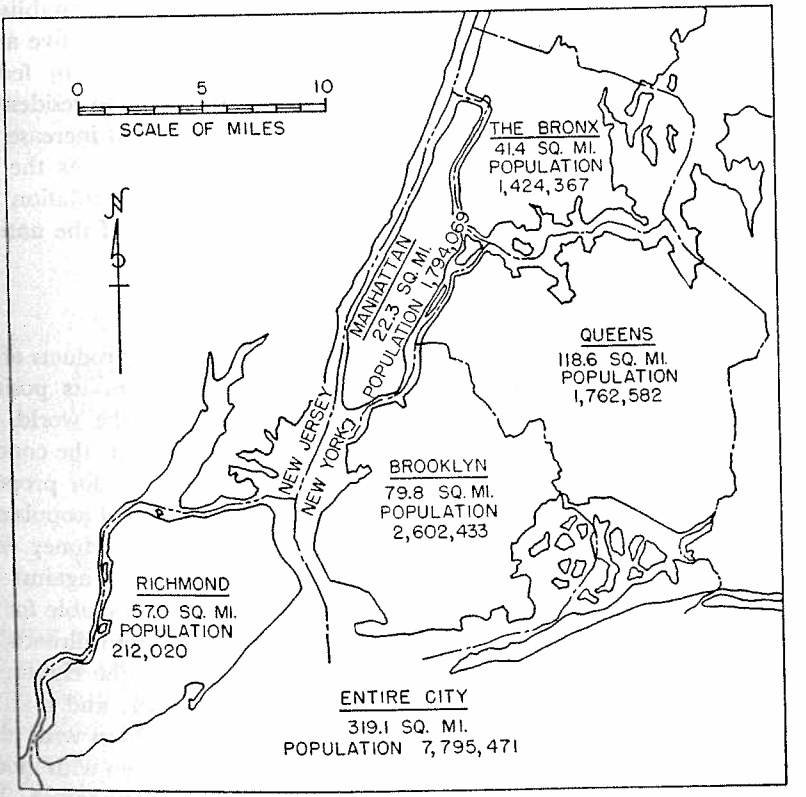

CHART 2. NEW YORK CITY: POPULATION AND AREA BY BOROUGHS, 1957

SOURCES: *The World Almanac*, New York World-Telegram Corporation, New York, 1959; area data from *Official City Directory*, New York, 1959.

the exchange of raw materials from the West for the finished products of Europe and the Eastern Seaboard. Its miles of waterfront permitted it to handle this explosive growth with ease. By 1855 the city had almost 630,000 inhabitants, roughly ten times its population at the start of the century.

It was the industrialization of the United States, though, that produced the greatest jump in the population of New York City. Floods of people from foreign lands poured into the country to take advantage of the burgeoning opportunities. Most of these immigrants passed through New York because the principal lines of transportation radiated from it, and enough of the recent arrivals remained to swell the ranks of New Yorkers rapidly. Rural and small town America sent its thousands also. These migrations created a great pool of comparatively cheap labor, much of it skilled, which accelerated further industrial and commercial expansion, and in turn attracted new enterprises and additional immigration. By 1880 the population of the city had passed the million mark. By 1898, when the Greater City was established, its population exceeded three million. By 1920 it had more than five and a half million people. Even the termination of free immigration by federal statute in 1924 did not stop its growth; there were seven million residents in the city in 1930, and almost eight million in 1950, as natural increase and influxes from other parts of the country continued to feed it. As the city looked forward to the census of 1960, a stabilization of population was expected—but the city stood now as the vital "central city" of the nation's largest metropolitan region.

Economic Growth

The financial and commercial preeminence of the city are products of the same forces that built its population—its strategic location, its position athwart the transportation and communication channels of the world, the stream of goods that flows in and out of it every day. Moreover, the concentration of population itself adds to the city's economic power, for property values are directly related to the intensity of use, and the local populace is both a huge market and an abundant supply of manpower. Money early accumulated here (money made by trade, money borrowed against the security of valuable land and improvements) and became available for investment in new ventures—for the development of the West, for railroads, for industry. It is not at all surprising that before the end of the eighteenth century Alexander Hamilton founded the Bank of New York, and that the beginnings of the stock exchange were already discernible. Men with ideas came to the place where financial backing was to be found; men with money came to the city where opportunities for venture capital abounded. The process was self-reinforcing, and the cycle that was to make Wall Street a worldwide symbol of finance capitalism was set in motion. Today, over $500

billion a year clears through the banks of New York, an amount roughly equal to the total clearings of the next highest 37 cities in the country, and about ten times the bank clearings in Philadelphia, which is next in line. The shares traded on an average day in the New York and American Stock Exchanges constitute over 87 per cent of the nation's total by volume and 96 per cent of the national total by dollar value. New York is one of the great money markets of the world, and the leading one in the United States for foreign currency transactions. It is the busiest seaport in the world. The real

TABLE 2. THE CAPITAL PLANT OF NEW YORK CITY, 1958–1959: ASSESSED VALUATIONS OF REAL ESTATE, 1958–1959

In millions of dollars

Area	Land	Total
Taxed property		
Manhattan	$3,896	$9,585
The Bronx	747	2,661
Brooklyn	1,392	4,995
Queens	1,180	4,758
Richmond	134	451
Total, Taxed	$7,349	$22,450[a]
Tax-exempt property, 1958–1959		
City of New York		$4,621
New York City Housing Authority		1,030
New York City Transit Authority		1,206[b]
Triborough Bridge and Tunnel Authority		392
Port of New York Authority		418
State and federal		501
Religious		507
All other		1,205
Total, Tax exempt		$ 9,880
Grand total		$32,330

[a] Property is assessed at less than "full value." "Full value" is $25,031 million.

[b] Property administered by Transit Authority although owned by city.

SOURCE: Adapted from Citizens Budget Commission, *Pocket Summary of New York City Finances*, October, 1958.

property within the city's borders is assessed at $32 billion. In all these respects the city towers, and its influence, felt everywhere, lends to its politics a widespread interest that lesser cities cannot match.

New York City is an industrial town, too. It has forty thousand manufacturing establishments, with the largest factory work force in any American city (nearly a million industrial workers) and the largest manufacturing payroll (close to $3 billion a year). The garment industry is the dominant one, but printing and publishing are also huge (one fifth of all the printing and

TABLE 3. GROWTH OF LARGEST UNITED STATES CITIES, 1880–1950

City	1880	1890	1900	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950
1. New York, N. Y.	1,911,698	2,507,414	3,437,202	4,766,883	5,620,048	6,930,446	7,454,995	7,891,957
2. Chicago, Ill.	503,185	1,099,850	1,698,575	2,185,283	2,701,705	3,376,438	3,396,808	3,620,962
3. Philadelphia, Pa.	847,170	1,046,964	1,293,697	1,549,008	1,823,779	1,950,961	1,931,334	2,071,605
4. Los Angeles, Calif.	11,183	50,395	102,479	319,198	576,673	1,238,048	1,504,277	1,970,358
5. Detroit, Mich.	116,340	205,876	285,704	465,766	993,678	1,568,662	1,623,452	1,849,568
6. Baltimore, Md.	332,313	434,439	508,957	558,485	733,826	804,874	859,100	949,708
7. Cleveland, Ohio	160,146	261,353	381,768	560,663	796,841	900,429	878,336	914,808
8. St. Louis, Mo.	350,518	451,770	575,238	687,029	772,897	821,960	816,048	856,796
9. Washington, D. C.	147,293	188,932	278,718	331,069	437,571	486,869	663,091	802,178
10. Boston, Mass.	362,839	448,477	560,892	670,585	748,060	781,188	770,816	801,444
11. San Francisco, Calif.	233,959	298,997	342,782	416,912	506,676	634,394	634,536	775,357
12. Pittsburgh, Pa.	235,071[a]	343,904[a]	451,512[a]	533,905	588,343	669,817	671,659	676,806
13. Milwaukee, Wis.	115,587	204,468	285,315	373,857	457,147	578,249	587,472	637,392
14. Houston, Texas	16,513	27,557	44,633	78,800	138,276	292,352	384,514	596,163
15. Buffalo, N.Y.	155,134	255,664	352,387	423,715	506,775	573,076	575,901	580,132
16. New Orleans, La.	216,090	242,039	287,104	339,075	387,219	458,762	494,537	570,445
17. Minneapolis, Minn.	46,887	164,738	202,718	301,408	380,582	464,356	492,370	521,718
18. Cincinnati, Ohio	255,139	296,908	325,902	363,591	401,247	451,160	455,610	503,998
19. Seattle, Wash.	3,533	42,837	80,671	237,194	315,312	365,583	368,302	467,591
20. Kansas City, Mo.	55,785	132,716	163,752	248,381	324,410	399,746	399,178	456,622

[a] Includes Allegheny City.

SOURCE: *The World Almanac*, New York World-Telegram Corporation, New York, 1959, p. 304.

publishing in the United States is done here), and machinery and metal products, scientific instruments, chemical products, leather goods, paper products, furniture and wood products, and textile products are turned out in substantial quantities by the city's plants.

The national headquarters of many nationwide and worldwide companies are located in New York, and the concentration of managerial personnel has been increasing since World War II. With them come ancillary services—the major law firms, accounting houses, consulting engineers, management consultants. Some 70 per cent of the national advertising agencies of the country locate their central offices here. Wholesalers in New York do more than $42 billion worth of business a year—18 per cent of the national total, three times as much as Chicago, the second largest wholesale center. Each activity, each service, attracts others; all make the city's government a matter of general rather than purely local concern.

Cultural Resources

The economic greatness of the city brought it still other sources of greatness. The United Nations came to New York because this was a convenient place for it to be—and because the city had become the home of the Rockefeller family, who had the resources and the generosity to give the UN a home. The city is a great intellectual center. Over forty institutions of higher learning with students from all over the globe, and one fifth of all students doing postgraduate work in the United States, are here. And in an area "on Broadway north of Times Square or in the adjoining side streets, . . . bounded by Eighth Avenue to the west and the Avenue of the Americas (Sixth Avenue) to the east," writes Brooks Atkinson, drama critic of *The New York Times*, "in this compact, shabby neighborhood, where cheap souvenir booths and penny arcades abound, where the traffic is angry and nervous and the sidewalks are jammed, where the honky-tonk atmosphere prevails—in this decaying neighborhood, about seventy or seventy-five productions are put on the stage every season and most of the theatrical history of America is inadvertently written."[1] A visitor seeking to attend all the musical events in New York in the course of a single week was amazed and exhausted to discover this included "performances by four world-famous orchestras, by the Metropolitan Opera, by violinists and pianists, by ballet companies and an operetta troupe. . . . For quantity and quality," Howard Taubman, the *Times* music critic observes, "New York as a musical center has no peer anywhere in the world. . . . For better or worse," he adds, "we set standards. New York has become a showcase for the nation, and its imprimatur of approval is influential not only throughout the country but in

[1] Atkinson, Brooks, "Theatre: Fascinating and Fabulous," *The New York Times Magazine*, April 29, 1956, Part 2, p. 35.

TABLE 4. UNITED STATES CITIES WITH METROPOLITAN AREAS[a]

Rank	Standard metropolitan area			Total population	In central cities	
					Number	Per cent
1	New York-N.E. New Jersey	April, 1957	(14,186,000[b])	12,911,994	8,629,750	66.8
2	Chicago, Ill.			5,495,364	3,620,962	65.9
3	Los Angeles, Calif.			4,367,911	1,970,358	45.1
4	Philadelphia, Pa.			3,671,048	2,071,605	56.4
5	Detroit, Mich.			3,016,197	1,849,568	61.3
6	Boston, Mass.			2,369,986	801,444	33.8
7	San Francisco-Oakland, Calif.			2,240,767	1,159,932	51.8
8	Pittsburgh, Pa.			2,213,236	676,806	30.6
9	St. Louis, Mo.	Jan., 1956	(1,892,000[b])	1,681,281	856,796	51.0
10	Cleveland, Ohio			1,465,511	914,808	62.4
11	Washington, D.C.	Jan., 1956	(1,884,000[b])	1,464,089	802,178	54.8
12	Baltimore, Md.			1,337,373	949,708	71.0
13	Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minn.			1,116,509	833,067	74.6
14	Buffalo, N.Y.			1,089,230	580,132	53.3
15	Cincinnati, Ohio			904,402	503,998	55.7
16	Milwaukee, Wis.	Jan., 1956	(975,000[b])	871,047	637,392	73.2
17	Kansas City, Mo.			814,357	456,622	56.1
18	Houston, Texas	Jan., 1956	(1,077,000[b])	806,701	596,163	73.9
19	Providence, R.I.	July, 1956	(771,000[b])	737,203	248,674	33.7
20	Seattle, Wash.			732,992	467,591	63.8

[a] A standard metropolitan area must contain at least one city having a population of 50,000 or over. The largest city is the principal central city for which the area is named, although there may be several cities in the area with a population of 50,000 or over. Metropolitan areas have been specifically defined to identify large concentrations of population in and around cities of 50,000 population or more. One exception exists to this rule. In the case of the standard metropolitan area centering on New York City, the central cities are New York City, Newark, N.J., and Jersey City, N.J.

[b] According to results of censuses and estimates of the Bureau of the Census taken after April 1, 1950.

SOURCE: *The World Almanac*, New York World-Telegram Corporation, New York, 1959, p. 305.

other lands."[1] "Any one of New York's twenty-odd museums would be a matter of single-minded civic pride elsewhere," says one art critic;[2] and many of the museums have special exhibitions in addition to their permanent collections, while there are over 1,600 shows a year in more than a hundred commercial galleries. All these things enhance the city's distinction, and this distinction, whether its people and politicians wish it or not, give New York's government a special significance everywhere.

Diversity and Variety

But probably nothing makes the government of the city so interesting as the diversity of its population. No major city in America—nor in the world, for that matter—boasts so varied a populace, such an assemblage of different interests. Alec Waugh, the British novelist, comments:

> In Copenhagen, Paris, Tangier, Baghdad, and Rome, I have searched in order to understand the city's central core, but not in New York. . . . There is no such thing as . . . a common basic of New York life. Everyone's New York is different. When I lived in London as a young man, I lived the same life as many thousand others. I prided myself on being "a real Londoner." Today I pride myself on being by adoption "a real New Yorker," yet I am very well aware that there are not a dozen people in Manhattan whose routine is the same as mine.

Yet, he adds, for all the differences among the people of the city, they are *all* New Yorkers:

> You have to have been born in London to be a Londoner, you have to be a Dane to be a Copenhagener. Could anyone born in Missouri become a real Bostonian? But New York is different. It is a city where the unrooted can take root. You do not need to have been born in New York, you do not, I believe, even need to be an American, to feel yourself a New Yorker. The basic difference surely lies in this, that whereas London, Paris and Vienna have grown as England, France and Austria have grown, expanding outward from a center, New York has been a magnet drawing to itself from East, North, South, West, from every state of the Union and from every European country, the restless, the dissatisfied and the ambitious, who have demanded more from life than the circumstances of their birth offered them.[3]

The city is fascinating in that it does afford each individual a realistic hope of fulfilling himself in his own way. It is important as a social experiment in that it manages to provide these opportunities despite the enormous number

[1] Taubman, H., "Music: A Great, Endless Festival," *op. cit.*, p. 49.
[2] Saarinen, A. B., "Art: Something for Everybody," *op. cit.*, p. 53.
[3] Waugh, Alec, "Rivals: 'New York Is Unique,' " *op. cit.*, pp. 24, 70.

of different values and patterns of living that must somehow be accommodated with each other. If New York were administered like a military camp—with standardized clothing, diet, architecture, living routines, types of work, recreation, and so on, and with tight control over the movement and disposition and interrelations of personnel—the technological operation of feeding, sheltering, clothing, amusing, and keeping order among eight million people crammed into a little over 300 square miles of land area would constitute a remarkable achievement. New York City accomplishes all this without sacrificing the variety, the multifarious customs, the divergent interests, or the competing objectives of its people.

Something of the diversity of the city is suggested by the many national cultures represented in it. One and three-quarter million of its inhabitants were born abroad, and three million more are the children of immigrants. Consequently, the New York Bible Society distributes to New Yorkers Bibles printed in more than 80 languages; libraries house collections not only in the most widely used tongues of the world, but in Arabic, Albanian, Bohemian, Bulgarian, Finnish, Hebrew, Hungarian, Lettish, Lithuanian, Norwegian, Portuguese, Rumanian, Ukranian, and many others as well; 240 publications, including 28 dailies, in scores of languages appear regularly; radio stations broadcast programs in well over a dozen languages; dozens of motion picture theaters (not counting the "art" houses that show foreign films primarily to English-speaking audiences) specialize in foreign pictures for particular language groups. Without leaving New York, one can enjoy meals in restaurants featuring the cuisine of all nations, including Indonesian, Indian-Pakistanian, Japanese, Persian-Assyrian, and patronized heavily, in some cases almost exclusively, by customers of the corresponding national stock. Hundreds of nationality-group organizations flourish in the city. The numerically predominant ones are of Austrian, English, German, Hungarian, Irish, Italian, Polish, and Russian origin or descent, but many other nationalities are represented in substantial numbers.

There are also more than a hundred religious denominations in the city. Three faiths comprise the vast majority of New Yorkers: Roman Catholic, with about three and a half million adherents (45 per cent of the total population); Protestant, with some two million (25 per cent); and Jewish, with roughly two million (25 per cent). But even small percentages, for all other religious persuasions, are far from negligible in absolute numbers when the base is a community the size of this metropolis. (For all religions, however, most adherence is nominal; it has been estimated that only a tenth of the adherents are active in their churches or synagogues.)

Over three quarters of a million residents of the city are nonwhite. Most of these are native American Negroes, but included in the total are persons of Oriental or other birth or descent.

TABLE 5. NEW YORK CITY POPULATION, BY AGE, RACE, SEX, BOROUGH: ANALYSIS OF SPECIAL CENSUS OF APRIL 1, 1957[a]

Age and borough	Total	White		Nonwhite			
				Negro		Other races	
		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
All ages	7,795,471	3,302,599	3,511,621	434,038	514,158	21,505	11,550
Under 5	650,053	274,010	263,127	55,022	54,811	1,593	1,490
5 to 9	620,458	262,850	253,392	50,149	50,362	1,877	1,828
10 to 14	555,754	246,909	238,498	33,936	35,108	693	610
15 to 19	450,108	194,441	200,397	24,450	29,541	682	597
20 to 24	481,313	192,058	222,393	25,551	39,293	1,117	901
25 to 29	568,475	237,196	246,194	34,273	47,894	1,516	1,402
30 to 34	584,333	234,104	252,736	40,642	53,546	1,968	1,337
35 to 39	596,308	234,121	268,057	40,510	50,647	1,945	1,028
40 to 44	596,054	240,034	277,921	34,599	40,725	2,001	774
45 to 49	572,115	243,279	266,955	27,521	31,959	1,860	541
50 to 54	551,544	245,308	254,977	23,228	25,754	1,884	393
55 to 59	454,905	206,646	211,759	16,530	18,154	1,544	272
60 to 64	405,067	184,749	194,142	11,519	13,271	1,211	175
65 to 69	319,271	141,526	158,507	7,899	10,433	811	95
70 to 74	200,391	88,872	100,210	4,447	6,319	479	64
75 to 79	105,888	45,155	54,866	2,238	3,392	211	26
80 to 84	56,076	21,692	31,437	1,009	1,847	78	13
85 and over	27,358	9,649	16,053	515	1,102	35	4
Under 21	2,368,024	1,015,076	998,236	167,886	177,177	5,004	4,645
21 and over	5,427,447	2,287,523	2,513,385	266,152	336,981	16,501	6,905
Median age	34.9	35.2	36.5	29.1	30.0	38.4	26.2
Boroughs							
Bronx	1,424,367	621,796	665,273	62,412	72,355	1,458	1,073
Brooklyn	2,602,433	1,118,396	1,172,257	141,133	166,663	2,359	1,625
Manhattan	1,794,069	669,553	721,659	172,787	208,281	15,125	6,664
Queens	1,762,582	791,052	850,861	53,577	62,616	2,392	2,084
Richmond	212,020	101,802	101,571	4,129	4,243	171	104

[a] The U.S. Bureau of the Census conducted a special census of New York, N. Y., as of April 1, 1957. The final count, released October 8, 1957, indicated a population of 7,795,471, a drop of 96,486, or 1.2%, from 1950. The 1957 special census was conducted under residence rules identical with those used in the 1950 Census. Several special factors contributed to the decline between 1950 and 1957.

In 1950 about 50,000 transients enumerated in other parts of the country who reported their usual residence of New York City were added to its population. In 1957 such additions were not possible because the census was not taken on a country-wide basis. Another factor contributing to the decline in population between 1950 and 1957 was the increase in the size of the Armed Forces in this period. In both 1950 and 1957, members of the Armed Forces stationed in New York City were included in the count but former residents of New York City serving elsewhere in the Armed Forces were not. The latter number exceeds the former, and owing to the over-all increase in the size of the Armed Forces between 1950 and 1957, this net loss is estimated to have increased by about 40,000 in this period.

SOURCE: *The World Almanac*, New York World-Telegram Corporation, New York, 1959, p. 260.

Nationality differences, religious differences, and ethnic differences often mean differences in folkways, differences in social position, differences in political strength. So, too—and perhaps more emphatically—do economic differences. New York is, as many writers and screen scenarists have repeatedly pointed out, a city of extreme contrasts; it has some of the richest people in the world in its midst, and some of the poorest in the United States, and these are often found side by side with each other, the slum tenements of the latter leaning against the exclusive apartment skyscrapers of the former. (The extremes capture most attention; the large middle class seems less dramatic.) New York is the headquarters of many of the country's largest and wealthiest corporations, whose executives abound; and it has a huge white-collar work force; but it also has a million industrial workers, a huge number of small and independent factory owners, and a large population of small shopkeepers. There is a large reservoir of unskilled laborers and domestics, but there is probably nowhere in the world such a collection of practitioners of the skilled trades as may be found here, nor such a concentration of professional manpower—legal, medical, engineering, scientific, teaching, and the like. Indeed, with relatively few exceptions—farming, ranching, mining, for instance—one is likely to find in New York somebody routinely producing precisely the goods or performing exactly the services one needs, no matter how specialized or unusual. In this single metropolis, in these 300 square miles, physically close to each other and often geographically intermingled, the rich and the poor, the big and the little, the distinguished and the disreputable, the managers and the workers, the powerful and the helpless, live with each other, depend on each other. Social cleavages run deep, but no social class in the city can live unaware of the others, and no group can avoid its interdependence with the others.

The diversity of New York is geographical as well as social; the city contains hundreds of neighborhoods, each with unique characteristics as distinctive as those of separate cities. Neighborhoods develop individually because people of the same national, ethnic, social, and economic background tend to congregate and thus give each area, each subcommunity, its special flavor. Greenwich Village, Flatbush, Harlem, Yorkville, Riverdale, Forest Hills, St. George, the Lower East Side, and Washington Heights, for example, are little worlds of their own, while Wall Street, the garment center, Times Square, Fifth Avenue, Radio City, and scores of other areas are special concentrations of particular kinds of business and industry. But the gregariousness of people with common culture patterns or mutual interests is not the whole explanation; the history and geography of the city are significant factors in the growth of neighborhoods.

Most of New York, after all, is in a technical sense not even on the continental mainland. It is divided into five boroughs (each coterminous with a

county): Manhattan (New York County) is an island, with bedrock just below its surface capable of supporting skyscrapers; Richmond (Richmond County) occupies another island, Staten Island; Brooklyn (Kings County) and Queens (Queens County) together occupy the western end of Long Island; only The Bronx (Bronx County) is on the mainland. Long Island Sound separates The Bronx from Queens; the Harlem River, which connects East River and the Hudson River, flows between The Bronx and Manhattan; the East River, not a river at all, but a salt-water strait, separates Manhattan and The Bronx, on one side, from Brooklyn and Queens on the other; Upper New York Bay stands between Manhattan and Richmond; the Narrows, the thin passage of water connecting the Upper Bay with the Lower Bay and the sea, is between Richmond and Brooklyn. The Hudson flows to the west of the city, touching Manhattan and The Bronx, and separating them from New Jersey. "The City on Many Waters," one author[1] appropriately called New York. No other city in the world is so crisscrossed by broad, navigable streams. The waters, including a number of creeks and canals, were the making of New York in giving access by ship and barge to almost every part of the city, thus reducing transportation costs. The railroads still use carfloats and lighters and barges to transfer freight instead of building huge marshaling yards comparable in number and size to those of Chicago. The waters have been the binders as well as the dividers of the city; for a long period, however, they encouraged the subdivisions of the city to develop independently, and the character of these separate communities that grew up in earlier times has not yet totally disappeared.

Each area added to Manhattan had a long history of its own. Brooklyn itself had absorbed a number of separate communities, such as Williamsburg, Flatbush, New Utrecht, and Gravesend. Queens contained a large number of suburban, residential villages as well as some larger communities—Flushing, Astoria—and some industrial centers—Long Island City, Jamaica. St.George, Stapleton, Port Richmond, and Tottenville on Staten Island are old communities. In The Bronx, old settlements like West Farms, Wakefield, Williamsbridge, Morrisania, High Bridge, and Riverdale have left their names, a measure of neighborhood consciousness, and their imprints. Even in Manhattan, the neighborhoods recall the sites of the original settlements—Greenwich Village, Murray Hill, Lenox Hill, Harlem, Yorkville, Fort George. As people poured into New York and spilled out into the environs of Manhattan, the surrounding sections began to change. But they often preserved an awareness of themselves as communities, and newcomers tended to adapt to the locally prevailing standards as well as to modify those standards, so that the city has not yet turned into a homogeneous collection of uniform subdivisions. There are many areas reminiscent of small towns; about 684,000 families live

[1] Berger, Meyer, and Fritz Busse, *New York: City on Many Waters*. Arts, New York, 1955.

in private homes, and Brooklyn is still sometimes called the City of Homes. The early isolation of the communities eventually brought into the city thus had a lasting effect, and many of them resist vigorously changes or encroachments that they believe would alter their character even though they have in fact been changing all the time.

Changes in the City

Writing of *The United States in 1800*, Henry Adams declared: "Innovation was the most useful purpose which New York could serve in human interests, and never was a city better fitted for its work."[1] Change has continued to be a hallmark of the city. The rapidity and extent of change helps to keep the diversity of the city from declining. On the basis of logic alone, one might expect the city to move in the direction of greater standardization, for technology has standardized many other aspects of modern life—as, indeed, many observers, viewing the drab sameness of vast housing projects, have feared it is already doing. While it is not impossible that even New York may one day succumb to pressures toward conformity, the past record of the city indicates it has powerful built-in forces making for continued variety. Sections alter with rapidity, and by the time a new section resembling an established neighborhood is completed, chances are the original one will already have been transformed into something else.

Three generations ago Harlem was a fashionable residential area of the upper middle class. In a few decades it became one of the city's worst slums as its initial residents moved away and landlords took advantage of discrimination against Negroes in other parts of New York to extract exorbitant rentals from these housing-short people for flats that were quickly overcrowded and inadequately maintained. Today Harlem is again changing with massive slum-clearance programs that may restore some of its former attractiveness.

Greenwich Village is an old section that deteriorated when it became a temporary stopping place for newly arrived immigrants, who moved to newer and more comfortable quarters as soon as they were able. The cessation of immigration further depressed the dilapidated neighborhood, and the declining rents and food prices in the area attracted struggling artists without much in the way of capital or income, but with a great desire to be in New York. The growth of its reputation as an artistic, intellectual, and bohemian center drew more well-to-do people to it, and rents and prices began to rise until it became what it is today—not a refuge for artists, but an expensive district in which a comparatively substantial and steady income is usually a necessity. Meanwhile, across Manhattan, in another depressed area, the process may be starting again as the "East Village" takes shape.

[1] Adams, Henry, *The United States in 1800*. Cornell University Press, Ithaca, N. Y., 1955, p. 80.

On Park Avenue and Fifth Avenue above Fifty-ninth Street, what were once private mansions are now occupied largely by nonprofit (and therefore tax-exempt) institutions, or by the diplomatic establishments of foreign governments. Many of the lavish old structures have given way to luxury apartment buildings. In Riverdale, the section of The Bronx facing the Hudson River, rambling houses have yielded to twenty-story apartment buildings. But on upper Riverside Drive, the luxury apartment buildings of an earlier day have been cut up into small flats, and the deterioration of the structures has reached an advanced stage. Third Avenue was a grim and

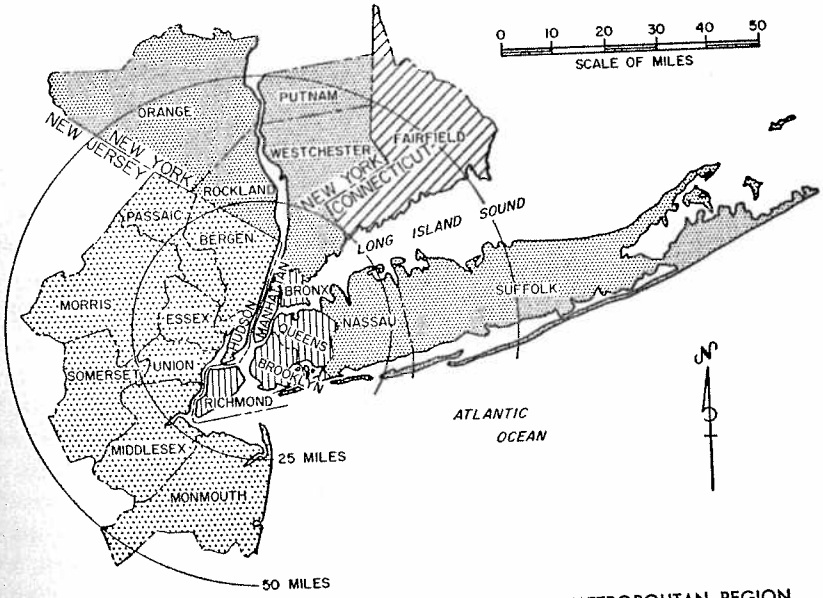

CHART 3. THE NEW YORK-NEW JERSEY-CONNECTICUT METROPOLITAN REGION

SOURCE: *Third Annual Report* of Mayor Robert F. Wagner, 1956.

stark slum as long as the shadow of the city's oldest elevated rapid transit line fell across it, but the demolition of the "El" in 1955 has turned it into one of the city's fastest-growing boulevards.

Neighborhoods bloom, decline, come back (or are brought back), probably to decline and return again. The cycles, however, are not uniform in speed or character; hence, at any given moment, it is almost inevitable that the city will encompass very different kinds of districts. Change here does not necessarily make for uniformity. It is true that there has been a rather consistent trend toward more intensive land use; rarely is the reverse true, and larger structures are not often razed to make way for smaller ones. Yet since 1940 most of the growth in the metropolitan region has taken place in the

suburbs, and the city, although it has grown at a rate greater than the average for the country as a whole, has not increased so spectacularly as its surrounding areas. Moreover, 27 per cent of the land within New York's borders is still vacant. So even the one consistent tendency may not continue. Patterns of future development may well be at variance with those of the past; the process of differentiation of the parts of the city from each other can be expected to go on unabated.

The most dramatic index of change in New York is the number of landmarks constructed since 1925. Yankee Stadium, the Chrysler Building, the Empire State Building, Radio City, the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, the United Nations, the Coliseum, La Guardia Airport, New York International (Idlewild) Airport, the George Washington Bridge, and dozens of other nationally and internationally famous edifices that have become symbols of the city did not exist thirty-five years ago. Other equally famous symbols have vanished. Through it all, though, New York remains New York; change is part of it and does not destroy but sustains the city, reinforces its nature, preserves its flavor. "Everything alters," declares poet Phyllis McGinley, "except the City":

When the Murray Hill wore its stately honors
Champagne came served in a satin shoe.
Now it and the El are phantoms, goners,
Like Ward MacAllister's happy few.
At the Hippodrome, once, trapezes flew.
Once organs ground us an April ditty.
Once we could sail to Coney, too.
Everything alters except the City.

They swarm with rivets and cranes and spanners
And landmarks go while we're saying "Boo!"
We change our minds as we change our manners.
For Harrison (Rex) we swap John Drew.
But while on some ultimate Avenue
The great voice roars and the air is gritty,
Always the Town comes bursting through.
Everything alters except the City.[1]

GOVERNMENT AND THE CITY

Government is the city's central agency of change and conservation. It is the city's prime rule-maker, the omnipresent supervisor. Its officials are always important actors in the negotiations, the bargaining, and the numerous settlements which comprise the decisions by which the city lives. Equally

[1] McGinley, Phyllis, "Ballade: Eccentric for an Egocentric Town," *The New York Times Magazine*, April 29, 1956, Part 2, p. 20.

important, the government is often the innovator and the provider of indispensable facilities and services for the city and its people.

Many of its piers that serve world shipping, for example, were built by the city. During the nineteenth century a large number were sold to private interests—shipping companies and railroads—but this led to difficulties in accommodating all the vessels seeking to enter the port, and the city subsequently bought back as many piers as it could, to manage them on a coordinated basis. Because the railroads were reluctant to relinquish the advantages of their own facilities, the Port of New York Authority was eventually created by New York State and New Jersey in 1921 to help these companies develop joint operations so as to reduce the number of piers they would need and thus to free the piers for ships. The Port Authority's program was not successful in this regard, but it later did acquire a grain terminal in Brooklyn and a section of the Brooklyn waterfront and renovated these, as well as instituting a large-scale port-promotion program, while the city began to improve its own waterfront properties under the pressure of competition from other Atlantic seaports. Water-borne commerce in the port owes a great deal to governmental action.

The same is true of air-borne commerce. Floyd Bennett Field was constructed by the city in 1931, its first response to air traffic at a time when the airplane was still an experimental and uncertain vehicle. In 1939 air-minded Mayor La Guardia was responsible for the completion of the airport later to bear his name, and in 1941 he initiated work on the mammoth air terminal in the Idlewild district of Queens. (Ultimately, Floyd Bennett Field was purchased by the Navy, and the other two air fields were leased to the Port of New York Authority for development and operation.) It was inevitable that the new medium of transportation should converge on New York, but New York's leadership in air commerce could not have asserted itself had there not been imaginative and resourceful government officials to encourage it and to take the necessary action.

Governmental accomplishments in the realm of ground transportation in New York City are even more dramatic. There are 6,000 miles of streets, virtually all publicly built, illuminated, and maintained. Thousands of traffic lights and other traffic engineering devices keep the colossal stream of traffic moving. Ten major vehicular bridges connect Manhattan and The Bronx; one joins Manhattan, The Bronx, and Queens; another runs from The Bronx to Queens directly; four bridges and two vehicular tunnels span the waters between Manhattan and Long Island (Brooklyn and Queens); there are three Hudson River crossings between Manhattan and New Jersey, and three between Staten Island and New Jersey; and there are many lesser bridges and tunnels scattered elsewhere through the city. The original subways were built by the city, although they were initially leased to private companies for

operation; today, all the subways—241 route miles of them—as well as a large number of bus lines are city owned and operated. The Port of New York Authority built and runs a truck terminal and a union bus terminal in Manhattan. A network of limited-access parkways and highways, free of grade crossings and traffic lights, speeds express motor traffic into, out of, and through New York. Without all these, the city's commerce would have strangled itself, and population and commerce could not have grown to their present dimensions.

It takes more than commerce and transportation to sustain the city's population and a large portion of these other things is provided by public agencies. It takes two billion gallons of pure water a day, removal of four

TABLE 6. LARGEST CITIES OF THE WORLD, 1957[a]

City[b]	Population
New York	7,795,471
Tokyo	7,161,513
Shanghai	6,204,417
Moscow	4,847,000
Buenos Aires	3,673,575
Chicago	3,620,962
London	3,273,000
Bombay	3,211,000
Sao Paulo	3,149,504

[a] *The New York Times*, using a different definition of the term "city" and its own estimates of current populations, reports Tokyo and London as larger than New York. The *Times* list of the seven largest cities in the world includes, in order of size, Tokyo, London, New York, Shanghai, Moscow, Mexico City, and Peiping. See the issue of September 20, 1959, section 4. The figures in the table above are the official UN statistics.

[b] City proper only.

SOURCE: *United Nations Demographic Yearbook, 1957*. Statistical Office of the United Nations in collaboration with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, pp. 152–160.

million tons of refuse, thousands of miles of sewers and huge sewage disposal plants, regulation and inspection of food and food handlers and processors, disease control to prevent epidemics, air pollution control to prevent the poisoning of the atmosphere, and a fire-fighting organization capable of handling every kind of blaze from small home fires to immense conflagrations in tenements, skyscrapers, industrial structures, and the waterfront. The basic physical and biological requirements of urban life are either provided or guaranteed by government.

So are some of the fundamental social conditions. People would flee the city if they could not educate their children here, and at a cost within reason. The city provides free education from kindergarten through college. For recreation the city furnishes one of the most extensive municipal park sys-

tems in the world, hundreds of playgrounds and ball fields and golf courses and even archery ranges, and eight beaches with a total of 17 miles of salt-water surf. The city subsidizes or supports (at least in part) the principal museums, three zoos, botanical gardens, and the aquarium, and maintains an extensive free public library system. It strives to set a floor under living standards for everyone by providing health, hospital, and welfare services for those in need. It protects its residential areas by land-use regulation (which also serves to guide the growth and development of the city). It regulates a great many types of business, either to assure satisfaction of at least minimum standards of quality or to prohibit the kind of destructive competition that might deprive the people of some needed goods and services altogether. Over

TABLE 7. LARGEST REPORTED METROPOLITAN REGIONS OF THE WORLD, 1957[a]

Metropolitan areas[b]	Population
New York	14,066,000
Tokyo	8,471,637
London	8,270,430
Paris	6,436,296
Chicago	4,920,816

[a] *The New York Times*, employing its own definitions of metropolitan areas, or adopting definitions of planning groups, reports Tokyo as the largest metropolitan area in the world with a population of 20 million, New York as second largest with a population of 16.5 million, and London as third with a population of 10.4 million. See the issue of September 20, 1959, section 4. The figures in the table above are the official UN statistics.

[b] Core city and environs.

SOURCE: *United Nations Demographic Yearbook, 1957*. Statistical Office of the United Nations in collaboration with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, pp. 152–160.

84,000 families live in public housing, and urban redevelopment, slum clearance, and enforcement of housing codes have been applied to the fight against urban blight. City agencies combat prejudice and discrimination against minority groups; wage a continuing struggle against juvenile delinquency; furnish protection against crime and disorder. All these things combined help make the city habitable, satisfying, and even reasonably comfortable. And they therefore help it hold together its prime source of greatness: its people.

GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS IN THE CITY

Much depends on the decisions and actions of governmental organs and agencies in the city; some group or groups always have a stake in the outcome of a particular governmental action or decision. Because the city is diverse

and constantly changing, rarely do all interests coincide; unanimous approval or disapproval or total indifference with respect to a decision almost never occurs. In the quest for the stakes imbedded in what governmental officials and employees decide and do, competition is the usual state of affairs. Government and politics thus have many attributes of a contest.

The interactions of all those engaged in government and politics have a fascination of their own. There is drama and tension in the conflicts and clashes, the alliances and coalitions, the negotiations and accommodations, the bargains, the surrenders, the victories and defeats comprehended in the outward manifestations of public policy. In the end, however, the most fascinating, and perhaps the most amazing, aspect of this complex of phenomena is that it works. The stakes involved are extraordinarily high; the incentives to acquire them are consequently unusually strong; the opportunities, the risks, and the contestants are numerous; the magnitude of the stresses and strains on the political system is correspondingly great. Yet the system does work. Rarely has the capacity of men of many backgrounds, many statuses, many outlooks, many interests, to live together in peace and mutual respect been put to a severer test. Rarely have men responded as successfully as have the people and the politicians of New York City in devising their political institutions and practices.

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