

over a period of time where nothing was really leveled, demolished and a grid overlaid on that ground.

Rockwell: I used to think that way, too. I used to hope that I could prove that a city would be better because it built itself on natural topography. I haven't been able to find very many examples of it. Washington was one city that tried to do this. Washington was a swamp also. A good many of these three towns I told you about were all built on swamps. Swamps must make good sites and here's the Washington swamp, flat as it can be here. It was dictated by topography only in the sense that it stopped the line of development when it got to the hills. You see how the streets come right up here to the hills. Each of these is a hill. Have you ever seen La Defense in Paris? The next time you go to Paris, go out and see where they put all the skyscrapers. It's at the end of the Champs Elysees as you come out there. La Defense was a port during the Franco-Prussian Wars, and the Parisians had enough sense to say the hell with any more high-rises downtown; let's build them all on the edge of town. And La Defense is where United Biscuit is, and all the other American corporations.

Blum: Chicago is very understandable because it is on a grid but we had the fortune, or misfortune, to have had the Chicago fire. Now, would Chicago, with or without that fire, have developed in this way from a planner's point of view?

Rockwell: Every city that has had a great catastrophe, all the way from Rotterdam back—Rotterdam was destroyed by the Germans. Rotterdam, London, Chicago—all those have rebuilt themselves on their old lines of development because we've been too lazy to take the time to work out new ways of giving a person an equivalent amount of real estate for what he had before the fire so that he would feel satisfied. He wanted that little corner there. He'd grown up right there in this little corner; he wanted that even though it was destroyed. Now, when Haussmann did this in Paris, that man who gave up the land was paid. The Dutch tried to find a solution to it called the *lex Atinai*, where if you redesign the city everyone in the original area was given