



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute  
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Curriculum Unit 80.ch.13  
by Francis P. Lynch

In 1950, Connecticut was a state where the structure of government was dominated by small towns largely Republican because under the Constitution of 1818 the law of the land till 1965 each existing town was given two Representatives to the General Assembly, regardless of population. Thus the many small towns normally held an effective majority for Republicans in the Rouse. Chester Bowles, a Democrat, was Governor (1949-1951). Bowles was an avowed liberal who managed to create much controversy during his time in office by advocating increased state programs for more housing, better schools, and increased social services. Bowles' proposals would cause little stir today, but at the time they shocked Connecticut's politicians. During his campaigns, and as Governor, Bowles made heavy use of radio time to bring his message to the people. Television was in its early stages in the state, and radio was the most effective medium when Bowles chose to go to the people.

Bowles, ever in search of more efficient government, appointed a Commission for the Reorganization of the State Government which issued its findings in the so-called *Bowles Report* in 1950, recommending many changes in the ways Connecticut people governed their state. Included in recommendations of the report were that the 202 existing state boards and commissions be reorganized into twenty agencies; representation in the General Assembly be restructured; direct primaries and broad court reform be instituted; and a submission to the people by the General Assembly of a revised Constitution, among other things. <sup>1</sup> These recommendations appeared to come with a sudden rush to most legislators, and almost all Proposed Reforms were shunted aside. Little was done with these recommendations until the 1959 session of the General Assembly, strongly controlled by the Democrats.

Governor Bowles ran for re-election against conservative Republican John Lodge in 1950. The campaign reflected American tensions of the Cold War, and emotions stirred up during the early days of Joseph McCarthy's well publicized hunt for subversion. Repeated accusations were made during the campaign that Bowles was at the very least, "soft on communism" since he had been active in formation of Americans for Democratic Action, a liberal organization held in deep suspicion by most conservatives. Lodge (1951-1955) won in a close election, and became Connecticut's first Governor to serve a four year term, thanks to a Constitutional amendment extending the term from two to four years. <sup>2</sup> At that time, the Republican party in the state was controlled by a group of conservative businessmen from the Fairfield County area, who felt that Lodge was the best man available. Democratic strength lay in urban areas and among ethnics, while basic Republican power lay in small towns, and through them, an effective veto power in the General Assembly. <sup>3</sup>

John M. Bailey, a Hartford lawyer of Irish descent, took an active interest in state politics during the 1920s, and was named to the Democratic State Central Committee in 1932. Over the next fourteen years, Bailey worked his way up through the ranks of the party until he was elected as chairman in 1946. Solidifying an intensely personal control of the party organization, Bailey remained as Democratic State Chairman until his death in 1975. After the election of John Kennedy as president, Bailey also served as Chairman of the Democratic National Committee 1961-1968. <sup>4</sup>

Bailey worked diligently and successfully to promote candidates and programs which would appeal to voters of the state. He held no publicly elected office, but chose to play his role as power broker. Few Democrats challenged his control, and Bailey was able to work effectively with several Republican state chairmen to obtain political action on programs, especially dealing with writing a new Constitution in 1965. <sup>5</sup>

As state chairman, Bailey was particularly adept at balancing state Democratic and congressional tickets along ethnic lines, working within the framework of the existing situation. He constructed his tickets carefully, apparently preferring to include an Italian, an Irishman, a Jew, females, a Pole, and other ethnics or members of voting blocs. Bailey stressed that however he managed to balance the ticket, candidates must be first-rate people, with no fill-ins for the sake of appearance. <sup>6</sup> During the 1960s and 1970s, Republicans tended to select candidates who were business oriented, and generally cut in the old Yankee mold. Victories in elections and effective government by the Democrats contributed to a continuing growth in Democratic voter registration until by 1960, there were more Democrats registered than Republicans. Neither party had a majority of the electorate, since unaffiliated voters held the balance of power.

Bailey appeared to judge programs and issues on what they would contribute to Democratic victories. He felt that good programs run by good people was the major factor. However, he also preferred to take as few chances as he could, and despite pressure from individuals in his own party, Bailey never came to favor removal of the party lever on voting machines, which he felt helped the Democrats. Bailey was also active during each session of the General Assembly in guiding legislation he wanted.

In the 1954 election, Democrat Abraham Ribicoff defeated incumbent Governor John Lodge by slightly more than three thousand votes, the first Jew to become Governor of Connecticut. In spite of Republican fears, Ribicoff proved to be a moderate, particularly on fiscal matters. He worked to avoid new taxes, and to come in with balanced budgets. Ribicoff was re-elected in 1958 by an unprecedented margin of nearly 250,000 votes. This victory was a measure of Ribicoff's personal popularity in the state, and of weakness among Republicans caused by a growing liberal-conservative split in the party. <sup>7</sup>

Led by the huge Ribicoff majority in 1958, Democrats took control of both houses of the General Assembly, the contested United States Senate seat, and all state level offices. The Democratic majority in the House of Representatives was their first there since 1876, an interruption of Republican small town control in that body. With this strong Democratic control, the 1959 session of the General Assembly removed most aspects of county government, allowing the state to take control of jails and other county duties. The General Assembly also instituted extensive court reforms, abolishing the colonial system of town courts and instituting a system of regional circuit courts. <sup>8</sup> Parts of the reforms suggested by the *Bowles Report* in 1950 were thus implemented. More were to come.

Because of an increasingly bitter internal fight among Republicans, and popular policies and leaders among the Democrats, Connecticut's political balance of power began tipping toward urban oriented Democrats. Republicans were to regain their control over the small towns, and through that control, a measure of veto

power over legislation. But Republicans were in disarray as other political problems were rushing in on them.

Bailey and Ribicoff were strong and early supporters of John Kennedy, and after Kennedy's election as President in 1960, Ribicoff resigned as Governor to become Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare in Kennedy's cabinet. Returning to Connecticut politics after less than two years in Washington, Ribicoff was elected to the United States Senate in 1962, a position he held until 1981. When Ribicoff resigned as Governor, he was succeeded by Irish-born John Dempsey (1961-1971), former mayor of Putnam.<sup>9</sup> In 1974, long time Bailey supporter Ella Grasso (1975) was elected Governor after serving several terms as Secretary of the State and as Representative to Congress from the Sixth District. The first woman elected Governor of Connecticut, Grasso was also the first person of Italian heritage to hold that office. Thomas Meskill (1971-1975), a former mayor of New Britain, was the only Republican to be elected Governor after 1950.

After the extensive Democratic reforms of the 1959 General Assembly, Connecticut became involved in the developing controversy about legislative representation the one man, one vote-issue. *Butterworth vs Dempsey* was a suit involving a challenge to Connecticut's constitutional method of apportioning the General Assembly. Once the United States Supreme Court established the principle of one man, one vote, Connecticut moved toward a Constitutional Convention as a way to solve the problem. A Constitutional Convention was called in 1965, held in the Old State House. Great care was taken by the organizers to assure an equal balance between the two parties for convention membership. Fundamental to the new Constitution was a restructuring of how districts for election of members of the General Assembly were established, harkening back to some recommendations of the *Bowles Report*. With the threat of a court directed authority using a Yale professor and his computer lurking in the background in case the job could not be done through normal political channels, both sides agreed to structuring district lines in such a way that towns would be divided between assembly districts so that each House district would have approximately the same population, each feature a considerable innovation for Connecticut. The number of House districts was reduced to 151, with one representative from each, while Senate district lines were redrawn, but Senate membership remained at thirty-six.<sup>10</sup>

Connecticut's Constitution of 1985 provided for annual sessions of the General Assembly, and established several new elements of state governance. Restrictive residence requirements within the state and town for voting were dropped. Registration procedures were made easier in an attempt to encourage more people to become involved in the political process. Literacy restrictions were eased. Because of the way the Assembly districts were established, the New Constitution had the effect of eliminating much Republican power in the General Assembly, and redistributing these powers among normally Democratic cities and often Republican suburbs. In part because of this, social services, highway programs and education grants were more equitably distributed by the state. Led by such urban political leaders as Richard Lee of New Haven and Nick Carbone of Hartford, the major cities pushed legal and political pressures for more state help with city problems, especially in social services, education grants and low income housing.

None of Connecticut's political leaders since 1950 can be considered radical. In recent years, few but Chester Bowles prided themselves in bearing the label "liberal," whatever their party, and Bowles was considered an outsider by many loyal Democrats. Considerable change has taken place in Connecticut politics since 1950, but the changes have occurred with relatively little fuss. Change was a logical and necessary thing which seemed sensible to most of the voters. Politically, Connecticut is a very different place from what it was in 1950.<sup>11</sup> Almost all political leaders have made common cause in avoiding an income tax by the state, and in fact avoiding any major tax reform. The lack of a state income tax has become a selling point for the Economic Development Commission, and has been a factor in the rapid growth of corporate headquarters

moving into Fairfield county. With county government almost gone, fifteen regional planning districts have been formed to deal with what the towns of the district view as common problems. All but two towns in the state are included in such planning districts.

With its economic life heavily dependent on federal defense contracts, with a system of interstate highways serving the state, easier communication systems and increased mobility of its people, Connecticut is *much* more integrated with the rest of the United States than in 1950. Budgets have grown enormously, state services are much more widespread than in 1950. Politically, Connecticut is now considered a Democratic state, although no Democrat has come to assume the kind of power John Bailey held. Republicans are still disputing among themselves.

### **Changes in population**

The people of Connecticut have changed considerably since 1950 in terms of numbers, but also with regard to ethnic and racial composition. The state's population in 1950 was 2,007,280. By 1970, the number had grown to 3,032,217. Preliminary 1980 census figures indicate that we are now approaching 3,300,000. This is a population increase of about 45,000 people a year, a total of 1,300,000 more people in the same space, on the same natural resource base as in 1950. Population growth slowed after 1970, and in keeping with the rest of the United States, Connecticut's birth rate declined during the 1970s. <sup>12</sup> During the 1950s and well into the 1960s, shortages of school buildings and teachers were major problems in most towns. There always seemed to be more public school pupils than there was space for them. Education budgets became major political questions in the towns. State colleges and the University of Connecticut began to bulge at the seams with increasing enrollments, and in 1965, a community college system was established by the state. <sup>13</sup> Today, the population has grown older. There were few nursing homes in Connecticut in 1950, but the Great Society programs of President Lyndon Johnson which started in the mid-sixties, included Medicaid and Medicare. Life expectancies continued to increase, and new demands were made on all levels of government in caring for the elderly. Nursing homes may now be found in almost every town in the state, and many towns have moved to construct housing for the elderly, and some sponsor active programs for senior citizens.

In addition to growth in simple numbers, there have been major shifts in where people live in Connecticut. All counties have grown in population since 1950, with Hartford, Fairfield and Middlesex Counties showing heaviest growth, while Litchfield and Windham counties have grown more slowly. Belts of heaviest population run all the way along the shoreline, and northerly from New Haven through Hartford into Massachusetts. These population belts coincide with the location of the interstate highway system, and construction of the Connecticut Turnpike and the proposed completion of Interstate 84 across eastern Connecticut have raised hopes in that part of the state for increased economic development.

The long held American idea that our cities would continue to grow, that the city was a core for industry and culture, that making it in the city was a sign of personal success have fallen by the wayside today. The 1960 census showed a drop in population for Hartford and New Haven have continued to shrink in population. During the same period, population of most central cities declined. Suburbs of the central cities have made large gains during the same time period. Bloomfield, on Hartford's northern border, quadrupled in size since 1950, and now includes a sizeable minority population. Weston and Monroe, just outside Bridgeport, have quadrupled during the same time, as have North Branford and Woodbridge, just outside New Haven. Hartford and New Haven have each lost some thirty thousand people during this time, and Bridgeport is clearly Connecticut's largest city. <sup>14</sup>

TABLE I Population changes, New Haven, Bridgeport and Hartford with three suburbs of each, 1950-1978.

	1950	1960	1970	1978
Hartford	177,397	162,178	158,017	146,800
Bloomfield	5,746	13,613	18,301	20,400
Simsbury	4,822	10,138	14,475	20,900
South Windsor	4,066	9,460	15,553	16,500
New Haven	164,443	152,048	137,707	130,400
Orange	3,032	8,547	13,524	15,400
Woodbridge	2,822	5,182	7,673	8,900
North Branford	2,017	6,771	10,778	11,900
Bridgeport	158,709	156,748	156,542	148,400
Trumbull	8,641	20,379	31,394	35,000
Weston	1,988	4,039	7,417	9,500
Monroe	2,892	6,402	12,047	13,600

sources: *Connecticut State Register and Manual* and *Connecticut Market Data 1979* , pp. 23-26

Metropolitan areas around the three major cities have undergone heavy population growth. Some once smaller cities and towns such as Stamford, Greenwich, and Middletown have become centers for industry themselves, taking on new importance as core areas. Town lines have not changed at all during this period, and resources are no greater, but much valuable farmland has been taken over for housing, roads and industry.

As part of this population shift into suburbs and rural areas, the automobile has come to play an enormously enhanced role in people's lives. It affects where people live, and there have been great changes in commuter patterns in Connecticut since 1950, as well as where and how people shop. At the beginning of the period, a few small shopping centers existed outside settled areas, while today, the automobile has led us to abandonment of older shopping centers in the middle of cities and towns in favor of patronizing the clusters of stores built between towns, with acres of parking lots. In the 1980s, the suburban shopping mall a complex of stores under one roof have proliferated, with major new malls in West Hartford, Milford, Farmington and Enfield. Older shopping areas in town centers, along with specialty shops and department stores in downtown sections of cities have been seriously hurt by the growth of malls. Residents of suburban towns are much less likely than formerly to venture into the city downtown on shopping trips, when it is easier and more convenient to drive to a mall. New Haven and Hartford have attempted to use multi-purpose civic centers as magnets in downtown revitalization with a fair degree of success, but the older style 'downtown' has faded away. Small neighborhood stores in cities and small towns have been driven out of business by the malls, and if they are replaced at all, it has been by national chains or franchised outlets. <sup>15</sup>

Suburban movement has also been a part of ethnic change in Connecticut since 1950. In that year, Italians and Poles were major foreign born groups in the state, and tended to concentrate in the cities. See Unit XI, Appendix A for a nativity chart; Unit XII deals extensively with the New Haven Italian population. These ethnic enclaves have been diluted as children and grandchildren of the foreign born have moved to the suburbs for better housing, better schools and greener grass. The stereotype of the little Connecticut Yankee town; on the surface at least may be found in many parts of the state, but housing developments are often not far away, and an examination of mail boxes shows that younger ethnics have sharply altered the composition of the population.

Black communities have existed in many towns in Connecticut since colonial times. Between 1950 and 1960, non-white population grew from 53,000 to 107,000, as Connecticut shared with other northern industrial states in the migration of southern rural blacks seeking jobs. It was estimated that in 1960, fewer than ten percent of the total of blacks lived outside the four major cities. <sup>16</sup> In 1980, it is estimated that between one quarter and one third of the population of Norwalk is composed of minorities. <sup>17</sup> Since the middle 1970s, blacks and Puerto Ricans have made up more than half of Hartford's population. <sup>18</sup> It is also possible that final 1980 census figures will show that minorities make up almost half of New Haven's population. There is a clear concentration of minority groups in cities, especially in the three largest Hartford, New Haven and Bridgeport.

Spanish speaking people, primarily Puerto Ricans, began coming to Connecticut in appreciable numbers during the 1950s to work in tobacco fields of the Connecticut Valley. Conditions changed in tobacco and employment declined, but drawn by job opportunities, large numbers of Puerto Ricans moved into Connecticut cities after 1965. Spanish speaking people now represent a sizeable portion of the nonwhite minority, a minority within a minority. Differing language and social customs have raised barriers to assimilation of the Puerto Ricans, and have led to creation of bilingual programs in urban schools.

School populations for 1979 in the three largest cities show heavy concentrations of minorities. The minority population of Hartford's public schools is 83.2 percent, all but less than one percent black and Puerto Rican. New Haven's public schools had a minority population of 76.6 percent, and Bridgeport's schools had 70.9 percent minorities. But 119 small towns, so classified by the State Department of Education survey, showed a minority school population of approximately three percent. <sup>19</sup>

The idea of Connecticut as Yankeeland has faded since 1950, as ethnics and minorities have moved into almost all aspects of life in the state. Concentrations of ethnics and racial minorities still remain, but suburban movements in the state since 1950 have had an overall homogenizing effect.

### **Changing technology**

Connecticut's industry was prospering in 1950, but sizeable portions of it were quickly becoming obsolescent as technology moved ahead faster than the thinking or policies of our conservative businessmen. The manufacturing industry had a very early start in Connecticut, and much of the plant capacity was becoming out of date. During World War II and the Korean War, defense oriented industry, grew into even heavier importance in the economy of the state. Submarines from Groton, pistols from Hartford, rifles from New Haven, forgings from Bridgeport, as well as brass and rubber products from the Naugatuck Valley towns, played major roles in arming America during those wars. Today, (1980) Connecticut has a higher per capita defense production than any other state. Approximately twenty-seven percent of Connecticut's industrial output comes from defense related industries. As a result of this concentration, part of our industrial sector has kept pace with high level technology. Many of the defense oriented companies are tending toward non-defense products in order to diversify their incomes. <sup>20</sup>

Most textile factories, on the other hand, have long since departed for other places, leaving eastern Connecticut with a wide scattering of abandoned mill buildings either being put to other uses or moldering where they stand. General manufacturing jobs have been reduced more than fifty percent since 1950, while there has been a major growth in jobs within technical, professional and service areas. <sup>21</sup> The brass industry has fallen on hard times, but helicopters and nuclear submarines now make up a substantial component of industrial production. The typewriter industry is almost gone, but aerospace and nuclear engineering flourish.

Agriculture has followed a trend toward large scale units and increases mechanization. There were 15,615 farms in Connecticut in 1950, while latest figures show approximately 4,000 farm units in the state. In tobacco farming 19,200 acres were in production in 1950, but only 3,200 by 1978. Dairy operations and shade grown tobacco have moved from a large number of family farms to a few large corporations with most of the production. <sup>22</sup> One large scale effort in extensive mechanization of vegetable farming is underway in parts of Bloomfield and Windsor by the Newfield Baggot Corporation. Culbro Corporation has diversified from growing shade tobacco into raising nursery stock, land development, and construction.

Major growth in production has been with corporations such as Xerox in office equipment, United Technologies in jet engines and helicopters, General Dynamics in nuclear submarine construction, and Combustion Engineering in nuclear and conventional power generating equipment. Each of these companies has facilities in many different places, and does business all over the United States. The insurance industry has surged ahead in a rapid expansion, making massive use of computers, and hold vast investments all over the world. Each of these industries and others as well are involved in a rapidly expanding, technologically based series of products, in keeping with Connecticut's tradition of high skill products. However, with automation, fewer workers have been required, but the workers need greater skills. The kinds of jobs young people used to start with in industry are many fewer than in 1950. Educational requirements are higher today.

Since 1950, Fairfield County has become a favorite locale for home offices of large multi-national corporations. Or twenty-nine corporations in Connecticut with assets of more than one billion dollars, sixteen are in Fairfield County. <sup>23</sup>

A chance to build a new corporate headquarters, availability of land, a desire of corporate executives to relocate near their homes, a desire for a better working environment, and no state income tax have been factors contributing to this movement. Nicknamed 'the Gold Coast' because of its affluence, much of Fairfield County is oriented toward New York City, and the use of trains as commuter transportation is heavy, in contrast to the rest of the state. A considerable internal commuter traffic has also been generated in Fairfield County because of the buildup of corporate headquarters there. <sup>24</sup> In 1980, Union Carbide Corporation opened part of its new headquarters building near Danbury on four hundred acres of land, a facility which will employ some four thousand persons when completely occupied.

Young Workers moving into Connecticut's job market of the 1980s will find many fewer unskilled entry level jobs compared to those available in 1950. Skilled and technical jobs are regularly available, but only for the educationally prepared. Unemployment levels in Connecticut have been below the national averages during the 1970s, but young people must accept that job requirements now are higher than they were, and are likely to go higher.

### *Transportation developments*

Transportation in Connecticut has undergone an enormous change since 1950. In that year, the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad was an imposing economic unit and a power in the state, but its great days had already passed. During the 1950s and 1960s this railroad underwent struggles for control among several groups of executives, proxy fights, bankruptcy and receiverships until it was absorbed by the Pennsylvania Railroad in 1969, and even then confusion continued. The story of railroads in Connecticut after 1950 is generally a sad one, as mismanagement, a fiscally irresponsible past, sheer stupidity, and a rapid growth in the number of cars and trucks caused a dramatic shrinkage of railroad mileage, generated a trail of abandoned railroad stations, and reduced passenger traffic to a vestige of its former self. Completion of the

Connecticut Turnpike in 1958, and the floods three years earlier were crushing blows to the already staggering railroad. <sup>25</sup>

Ownership of railroads and bus lines by the government is casually regarded today, but amid Cold War fears of 1950, there seemed to be a real threat of socialism or communism in a government taking over transportation from private enterprise. As railroads declined, the Connecticut Transportation Authority was formed in 1963, charged with subsidizing and maintaining commuter operations between New Haven and New York. In 1967, the Commission's authority was extended to busses, and the area it covered extended. Conrail and Amtrak are federally funded corporations for policy, personnel, and financing. <sup>26</sup> Government is deep into Connecticut's transportation.

Greatly spread out housing patterns, changing job distribution and the growth in number of private cars since 1950 with more than two million vehicles now registered in Connecticut led to a long range drop in use of passenger trains and busses. Despite efforts by the state to abate taxes on property and offer direct subsidies, dozens of bus runs and railroad branch lines have been abandoned. Mass transportation became a victim of the times, except in Fairfield County. State efforts have been directed toward construction of a highway system and expansion of airport facilities, with railroads and busses winning relatively little.

A lingering but nearly fatal blow to railroads came with the two floods of 1955, each generated by a hurricane. These floods, occurring in August and October, smashed railroads, but they were a major stimulus to environmental awareness, and gave impetus to regional planning by the state. The August floods resulted from massive rains (up to twenty inches in one day) from the stalled hurricane Diane. This great volume of rain had ruinous effects on small streams in the central, northern and eastern parts of the state, with massive devastation in Winsted and Putnam. The October floods struck some of the same areas, but also wrought havoc in southwestern Connecticut. In each flood, highways, bridges, railroads and streambeds suffered heavy damage. The New Haven railroad, already tottering, suffered many millions of dollars in flood damages. <sup>27</sup>

Factories damaged by the floods were often abandoned, or rebuilt away from their old locations, on high ground in the suburbs. The damaged state and town highways and bridges were rebuilt in improved forms suited to modern traffic, while railroads rebuilt at a minimal level. The obvious and far reaching effects of the 1955 floods forced people to realize the perils of having all decisions made by individual towns. Water did not understand political boundaries. This realization led directly into a rapid growth of planning in several levels of state government, and an acceptance that a watershed might make a better unit of governing some things than the more traditional towns. Planning reached respectability in Connecticut in large measure because of the 1955 floods. <sup>28</sup> With county powers curtailed four years later, economic planning units gained in popularity and effectiveness.

The United States Congress passed an Urban Renewal Act in 1954 which gave greatly expanded federal aid money up to two-thirds of the acquisition and clearing costs for approved projects set forth by cities and towns. Congress passed the National Defense Highway Act in 1955 to establish a national system of limited access highways the Interstate road system. These two laws helped bring about a revolutionary change in the shape and accessibility of Connecticut's cities, literally changing the face of the state as well as its habits.

By 1960, twenty-five towns and cities in the state had various kinds of renewal projects underway, with New Haven leading the way and Hartford not far behind. <sup>29</sup> Even small towns such as East Granby and Washington launched major renewal projects. The usual approach was to file a complete plan for the area in question to gain federal approval and financial support. The property was then acquired, structures demolished, the land



cleared, utilities and roads rebuilt according to plan, and the rest of the total plan completed. In Hartford, Bridgeport, and New Haven, urban renewal projects were carried out with strong consideration for location of the interstate highways. Renewal projects of the late 1950s and 1960s resulted in construction of large office buildings, stores, insurance headquarters and other business structures, providing cities with a stronger tax base than before, but removing individual housing from large sections of the city.

Urban renewal, combined with interstate highway construction across already established neighborhoods and industrial areas in Bridgeport, Hartford, Norwalk, and Stamford changed the face of these cities. Public hearings on proposed routes for these highways were held in affected areas, and were often stormy. The highways generally followed a compromise between what might be the best route from an engineering standpoint, and a path where citizen opposition was least and property might be bought most cheaply. In general, highway routes tended to run through areas of poorest housing and most run down industry.

Thousands of individuals lost their homes, hundreds of businesses were destroyed by construction of the Connecticut Turnpike and the interstate highways, and dozens of urban neighborhoods were simply eliminated. These land takings had the effect of ending a period of history as they removed large sections of New Haven, Fairfield, Hartford, Waterbury and other places. Streets and houselots were paved over for highways, interchanges and ramps. This made the inner cities accessible to motorists from the suburbs. It also speeded through traffic, over and around the down town areas, and for some individuals, it got rid of a lot of undesirable housing. Those persons forced to relocate were given help by various agencies of the state and federal governments, but the trauma was severe for many individuals, especially older ethnics whose lives were closely tied with one part of town, or with one street.

In the middle 1950s, the core of most Connecticut cities had decayed as a result of old age, neglect, and a continuing movement into suburbs by active residents looking for a better life. Companies needing new facilities, especially parking for employees and customers, began to look toward the suburbs. Connecticut General Life Insurance Company moved its down town Hartford home office north to Bloomfield in 1957 into a spacious, efficient, and highly attractive building complex. Manufacturing companies whose facilities were becoming technologically outdated moved away, and parts of Connecticut cities were abandoned.

Through construction of various interstate highways with ancillary roads and streets, the downtown areas of the cities are readily available to automobile commuters. The private, car, in Connecticut as elsewhere, has become a magic carpet to some other place. Job locations, commuter patterns, and recreational habits have all been altered by the rising dominance of the automobile. Shortly after they were completed, parts of I-91 and I-84 were filled beyond their rated capacities. Routes #2, #9 and #11 shortened the time needed to reach the Connecticut and Rhode Island shore from the center of the state. Plans to extend I-84 to Rhode Island, widen I-91 north, and to build I-291 around Hartford came under heavy attack during the 1970s by an ever-shifting coalition of advocates of mass transportation, those opposed to building more roads, and environmental groups. Energy questions have come to play increasing roles in questioning the wisdom of more highway building following gasoline shortages in 1974 and 1979 which raised doubts about the future of cars.

The sharp rise in jet travel after 1960 has made a major impact on Connecticut. Bradley Field in Windsor Locks is now classified as an international airport, and has undergone several enlargements since 1950. Brainerd in Hartford, Trumbull in Groton, and Tweed New Haven airfields handle jets regularly. Every part of Connecticut is within easy reach of every other part by car but not by bus or train. Urban sprawl, air pollution, increasing use of state parks and beaches, ever thicker traffic jams around cities during rush hours, weekend crowding at

vacation resorts, gleaming suburban industries, still decaying city cores and neon lighted fast food outlets are all facts of life in Connecticut today. What will the 1990s be like?

Our people are more mobile today than ever, gas shortages, high prices and all. In many ways, the rise of the private automobile has helped integrate sections of the state on the surface, at least. Commuter patterns are greatly different now than in 1950. The kinds of jobs people hold are different, and where they work is as likely to be suburban as city. Television now plays a major role in communication and entertainment, and becomes a whole way of life for some persons. What was life like in Connecticut in 1950, when there was only one television station in the whole state?

## NOTES

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1. Albert Van Dusen. *Connecticut* . New York: Random House; 1961. pp. 384-386.
- 2 Joseph Lieberman. *The Power Broker: A Biography of John M Bailey, Modern Political Boss* . Boston: Houghton Mifflin; 1966. pp. 143-146..
3. David Roth. *Connecticut: A History* . New York: W.W. Norton Company; 1979. pp. 216-219.
4. Lieberman, pp. 320-326.
5. Ibid., pp. 103-128
6. Roth, pp. 213-216 Lieberman, pp. 119-124.
7. Lieberman, pp. 221-223, 348.
8. Van Dusen, pp. 394-396
9. Lieberman, pp. 253-259, 284-292.
10. Curtis B. Johnson. *Raymond E . Baldwin: Lawyer , Social Scientist , Statesman* . Chester, Connecticut: Pequot Press; 1973; pp: 277-280.
11. Roth, pp. 208-213.
12. *Connecticut state Register and Manual* (The Blue Book) is published annually by the state, and each issue offers extensive census figures for the state, towns counties as well as much other statistical information.
13. Roth, p. 207.
14. *Connecticut State Register and Manual* .
15. Various state and local histories make this point in several ways. Newspaper articles and periodical literature also deal with suburbanization. See Alcorn and Buckley.
16. Herbert F. Janick, Jr. *A Diverse People: Connecticut 1914 to the Present* . Chester: Pequot Press; 1975. p. 80.
17. Elise Vider. "Zone Defense" *Connecticut, July 1980*. Volume 43, number 7. pp. 28-31.
18. Roth, p. 210.
19. Connecticut State Department of Education. *Minority Pupils and Staff in the Connecticut Public Schools October 1, 1979* . Hartford: State Department of Education; 1980. pp. 5
20. *Connecticut Market Data 1979* . Hartford: Connecticut Department of Economic Development; 1979. pp. 2-18.
21. Sondra A. Stave (ed.). *Hartford, The City and the Region : Past , Present, and Future. A Collection of Essays* . Hartford: The University of Hartford; 1979. pp. 165-169.
22. Conversations with personnel in the Department of Agriculture, Department of Marketing supplied statistical information, as well as vital insights into agricultural patterns in Connecticut during the period under

study. July-August 1980.

23. Risa King. "Corporate Body Building", Connecticut, January 1979. Volume 42, number 1. pp. 58-69.

24. Stave, pp. 87-90.

25. John L. Weller. *The New Haven Railroad : Its Rise and Fall* . New York:Hastings House; 1969. pp. 205-232.

26. League of Women Voters of Connecticut. *Connecticut in Focus*. Hamden: League of Women Voters; 1974. pp. 234-240.

27. Weller, p. 219.

28. Stave, pp. 167-169.

29. Van Dusen, pp. 397-400.

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### *Government Documents*

Ames, Harold I. and Chase, Bradford S. *Connecticut, Choices For Action . Urban Development .* Hartford: Interregional Planning Program; 1966.

A presentation of alternatives for planned urban development for the state.

Commission on State Government Organization. The Report to *The General Assembly and the Governor of Connecticut .* Hartford:1950.

The so-called *Bowles Report* on restructuring and streamlining state government for modern times.

Connecticut Commission on the Structure of State Government. *Report of the Committee .* Hartford:1976.

The so-called *Filer Report* (for Chairman John H, Filer) on making state government more efficient.

Connecticut Department of Economic Development. *Connecticut Market Data 1979 .* Hartford:1979.

Up to date statistics to support efforts to sell business on coming to and selling in Connecticut.

Connecticut Interregional Planning Program. *Connecticut Takes Stock for Action .* Hartford: 1964.

A summary of where planning was in the early sixties with options for future actions in the state.

Connecticut State Department of Education. *Minority Pupils and Staff in the Connecticut Public Schools , October 1, 1979.* Hartford: 1980.

A statistical summary of reports to the State Board of Education on racial composition of the schools.

Governor's Commission on Environmental Policy. *An Environmental Policy for Connecticut .* Hartford:1970.

A popular report on what had been done and where the state should go, done in response to the large surge of public interest in such matters in 1970.

Hickey, Joseph E. Jr. *Connecticut : Choices for Action . The Green Land .* Hartford; 1966.

A presentation of alternatives on how to preserve the natural resources and land of the state.

Whyte, William H. Jr. *Connecticut's Natural Resources : A Proposal for Action.* Hartford: 1962.

A pamphlet commissioned by the state to assess what existed, with possible alternatives for protection of resources, and toward useful economic development. This is generally regarded as the vital document which is basic to awareness of resource problems in Connecticut.

### *Periodicals*

Connecticut has many newspapers which have done much in writing about the state and its problems. Complete files for *The*

*Hartford Courant*, *The Hartford Times*, *The New Haven Register* and some other state newspapers for the period of time covered by this unit are on microfilm in the State Library in Hartford. *Connecticut Life*, an insert supplement for a number of weekly papers during the 1960s is highly useful for feature stories and graphics.

Presently, *Connecticut*, published monthly with offices in Fairfield is a popular magazine of uneven quality of articles and features about the state. Various publications by state government departments have been irregular in appearance and quality. The Agricultural Extension Service in Storrs publishes considerable material on population statistics and other state related topics. The Connecticut Historical Society publications, highly useful for other periods, does little with recent times.

Useful recent articles, available in school libraries, include:

Abrahamson, Howard. "Abe Checks Out." *Connecticut*. May 1980. Vol. 43, no. 5. pp. 55-60.

Cawley, Peter. "Weathering the Seventies." *Connecticut*. January 1980. Vol. 43, no. 1. pp. 61-70.

Hall, Trish. "The New Connecticut Yankee." *Connecticut*. January 1980. Vol. 43, no. 1 pp. 35-45.

Jordan, Raymond C. "Computers Are Just Like You and Me." *Connecticut*. July 1979. Vol. 42, no. 7. pp. 52-57.

King, Risa. "Corporate Body Building." *Connecticut*. January 1979. Vol. 42, no. 1. pp. 58-69.

Morse, David. "The Giant With the Glass Jaw." *Connecticut*. October 1979. Vol. 42, no. 5. pp. 75-103

O'Reilly, David. "Dying of Exhaustion." *Connecticut*. May 1979. Vol. 42, no. 5. pp. 75-103.

Palm, Robert. "Checking in With Chester Bowles." *Connecticut*. October 1979. Vol. 42, no. 10. pp. 78-83.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Requiem for a Lightweighthu." *Connecticut*. December 1979. Vol. 42, no. 12. pp. 55-60.

Vider, Elise. "Zone Defense." *Connecticut*. July 1980. Vol. 43, no. 7. pp. 28-31.

### *Secondary Works*

Adams, Virginia. *Connecticut: The Story of Your State Government*. Chester: Pequot Press; 1973.

A middle school level book, in story form. This presents a clear picture of government at that level, and could be useful for older slow readers.

Alcorn, Robert Hayden. *The Biography of a Town: Suffield, Connecticut 1670-1970*. Hartford: Connecticut Printers; 1970.

A romanticized local history written by a lifelong 'Yankee' resident. Often humorous, some good insights.

Bowles, Chester. *Promises to Keep: My Years in Public Life, 1941-1969*. New York: Harper's; 1971.

A autobiography by an ex-governor, Congressman from Essex. Useful for Connecticut affairs of this period, as viewed by a controversial participant.

Buckley, William E. *A New England Pattern: The History of Manchester, Connecticut*. Chester: Pequot Press; 1973.

A romanticized local history by an old 'Yankee', but deals interestingly with the transition of Manchester from the decline of the large

silk mills into a suburban city after World War Two.

Conwell, Irma M. *Head in the Clouds , Feet on the Ground* . Hartford: Council on Economic Education; 1969.

Useful for middle school-high school. Economic life in Connecticut.

Dahl, Robert A. *Who Governs?: Democracy and Power in an American City* . New Haven: Yale University Press; 1961.

New Haven and its problems, a history of power groups over the years as they come to relate to ethnic policy and urban renewal in the city.

Hill, Evan. *The Connecticut River*. Middletown, Wesleyan Press; 1972. An attractive picture essay of the whole valley, keying on the immediate environment and appearance.

Hoyt, Joseph B. *The Connecticut Story* . New York:Readers Press; 1962. Written for young people, with little on the modern period.

Humphreyville, Frances T. and Van Dusen, Albert. *This is Connecticut* . Syracuse: J.W. Singer; 1963.

A book for young people, very weak in the modern period.

Hyman, Sidney. *The Lives of William Benton*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press; 1970.

A biography of a highly active person. Useful for a period in the fifties when Benton was politically active in Connecticut.

Janick, Herbert F. Jr. *A Diverse People : Connecticut 1914 to the Present* . Chester: Pequot Press; 1975.

Volume five of a series written for high school students. a survey with several chapters on the period in question.

Johnson, Curtis S. *Raymond E . Baldwin: Lawyer , Social Scientist , Statesman* . Chester: Pequot Press; 1972.

A highly laudatory biography of a major figure in mid-twentieth century Connecticut.

Ladd, Everett C. Jr. *Ideology in America: Change and Response In a City, A Suburb, and a Small Town*. Ithica: Cornell; 1969.

A showing of how places pass from the olden days into the new, using a Connecticut locale.

League of Women Voters. *Connecticut in Focus* . Hamden: By the League; 1974.

A nuts and bolts, very mechanical review of almost all areas of governance in the state. Good for reference.

Lieberman, Joseph I. *The Power Broker : A Biography of John M. Bailey,u Modern Political Boss* . New York: Houghton Mifflin; 196

A narrative biography of Bailey, with what amounts to a good summary of Connecticut politics, from a democratic point of view.

Lockard, Walter D. *New England State Politics* . Princeton: Princeton University Press; 1959.

Sections pertaining to Connecticut are useful for the period up to 1959.

McKain, Walter C. *The Connecticut Turnpike A Ribbon of Hope : The Social and Economic Effects of the Connecticut Turnpike in Eastern Connecticut* . Storrs: Agricultural—Experiment Station: 1965.

An analysis of the early effects of a new highway.

McKee, Clyde Jr. (ed.). *Perspectives of a State Legislature* (Second Edition). Hartford: The General Assembly; 1980.

A considerable enlargement of the first edition, each contains many short pieces written by individuals in and around government. Highly useful.

Merriman, Daniel and Thorpe, Lyle. *The Connecticut River Study : The Impact of a Nuclear Power Plant* . Washington DC: American Fisheries Society;1976.

A scientific study on the effects of the Haddam Neck nuclear power station on the Connecticut River.

Miller, William Lee. *The 15th Ward and the Great Society* . Boston: Houghton Mifflin; 1966.

A narrative of a councilman's personal involvement in New Haven's urban renewal and ethnic politics.

Ogle, David B. *Strengthening the Connecticut Legislature* . New Jersey: Rutgers University Press; 1970.

Ways to make the General Assembly more efficient by a worker in the office of Legislative Management.

Roth, David M. *Connecticut : A Bicentennial History* . New York: W.W. Norton; 1979.

A general survey of Connecticut history, emphasis is on political changes. Two chapters on mid-century, a useful modern version.

Schnare, Robert E. Jr. *Local History Resources in Connecticut* . Darien: The League of Historical Societies; 1975.

Of limited use in the modern period.

Smith, Allen K. *Connecticut: A Thematic Atlas* . Newington: 1974. A useful compendium of maps and charts, showing many facets of the state, from climate to radio stations.

Stave, Sandra Astor (ed.). *Hartford, the City and the Region: Past, Present, Future. A Collection*. Hartford: University of Hartford; 1979.

A useful compilation of papers, articles and editorials about the area, past and present.

Talbot, Allan R. *The Mayor's Game : Richard C . Lee and the Politics of Change* . New York: Harpers; 1967.

A narrative of political problems in New Haven, centering around urban renewal of the 50s and 60s.

Van Dusen, Albert. *Connecticut* . New York: Random House; 1961.

The best narrative of politics of the late 40s and into the 50s.

Weller, John L. *The New Haven Railroad: Its Rise and Fall* . New York: Hastings House; 1969.

Very useful for the last days of the New Haven and its stormy illness and death.

## ACTIVITY # 1

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Leaders in Connecticut 1950 to the Present

**Objective:**

To familiarize students with the names of past and current leaders in state government, and to observe political trends. *Materials Needed :*

Multiple copies of *Connecticut State Register and Manual* for the last five ten years. Blank paper, with scotch tape as needed. Perhaps several blackboard panels.

**Strategies:**

Working singly or in groups, with the blackboard or the unlined paper:

- a. have students construct a basic time line of Governors of Connecticut, 1950 to the present, using the *Register* as a reference.

**Questions: 1.**

Which of these persons is still alive and active?

2. What have you heard of any of these people doing?

3. Where have they left their names in places around the state? (The John Dempsey Medical Center, the Chester Bowles Highway, the Meskil Ice Storm, etc.

b. Do the same thing with United States Senators over the same period.

Questions: 1. What names are well known from this group today? (Prescott Bush, Tom Dodd, Abe Ribicoff, Brien McMahan)

2. What may we conclude from this list of people? Where did they come from in the state? What does this show about Connecticut?

c. Try to find the boundaries of the United States Congressional District you live in. Who is your present Representative?

d. At 20 cents a mile, how much does it cost you to get back and forth to work for a week?

e. Have you ever been to:



Springfield Civic Center?

G. Fox Downtown Store?  
Hartford Civic Center?  
The Bushnell?

New Haven Civic Center? What immediate and long range problems would this town (Granby) face without ample gasoline at a price which people could afford to buy it?

## ACTIVITY # 2

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Patterns of your own travel

**Objective:**

To let students work out for themselves the travel patterns which will show them how far their personal shopping, jobs, and recreational travels carry them.

**Materials needed:**

Blank outline maps of the town boundaries for the region in which you live: i.e. For Granby there should be an outline map showing town boundaries for the greater Hartford region from Plainville to Middletown to Vernon and up to Springfield. No route markings are needed.

**Strategies:**

Working singly, have each student show on his own map the flooring: Put in a letter for the town where:

- a. parents work (x)
- b. where the individual works (o)

c. where this individual or the parents go for:

- movies (m)
- concerts (c)
- medical attention (d)
- grocery shopping (g)
- clothes shopping (t)

gift shopping (g)

**Questions:**

eating out (f) Yes, McDonald, Burger King, etc. How many towns did this involve for you? for the class?

Is there a pattern to where you went? Do you tend to work and shop in one town, or one mall?

How did you get there?

Why did you not use mass transportation?

Do any of your parents, or you, use mass transportation to get to work? Car pools? Van pools?

Bicycles? Motorcycles?

Therefore:

## ACTIVITY # 3

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Changes in Transportation in Connecticut 1950 to the Present

**Objective:**

To allow students to work out for themselves how railroad mileage has shrunk in Connecticut since 1950, and to show the expansion of the Interstate and limited access state highways.

**Materials needed:**

Teacher information for Connecticut showing railroads and commercial airports in 1950 and today. Blackboard space for group work or blank sheets of paper for students to work on as individuals.

**Strategies:**

a. Have students draw in major rail lines (include passenger lines), commercial airfields, and limited access highways which existed in Connecticut in 1950. (Merritt and Wilbur Cross Parkways).

**Questions:**

Suppose it is 1950, and you wanted to go to a ball game or a concert in Boston or New Haven or New York. How would you get there? How long would it take? How likely would you be to try?

b. With a new piece of blank paper, have students trace in the approximate routes for the following:

Connecticut Turnpike I-91

I-84

I-86

I 95

c. With the same map, have students trace in Connecticut

Routes # 2, #8, #9, # 11, #52.

d. When were all these roads built?

e. How would you get to Boston or New Haven or New York now? How long would it take? How would you get to Hammonasett? To Misquamicot?

f. Can you get to any of these places by train? By bus?

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