

ically, Fiat and the other larger firms chose not to hire many southern workers initially, relying instead on an older pool of labor drawn from the northern countryside.

Explosive population growth quickly overwhelmed the city and its unprepared municipal leaders, exposing the serious inadequacies of Turin's housing market, schools, transportation systems, public health programs and other social services. Much as in the past, the recent immigrants bore the brunt of governmental failings. In the absence of any coherent city plan to regulate development or provide affordable public housing, Turin's chronic shortage of housing, for instance, assumed crisis proportions in those years. New arrivals found whatever lodging they could, often in cellars and attics of buildings in the run-down areas of the city or else in abandoned structures on the outskirts. Conditions were especially appalling in the improvised urban barracks where young immigrants shared a room, sleeping in turns in the same bed, while dozens of families shared common bathrooms. One investigation carried out in 1961 found that southern immigrants were typically crowded together two to four or more per room, half relied on external out-houses, and three-quarters lacked thermal heating or bath tubs. Only in the early 1970s did residential density drop to an average of one person per room. In a similar fashion, hospitals and schools failed to keep pace with demand. As a result of shortages of doctors, nurses, and hospital rooms, Turin experienced a sharp increase in infant mortality rates. Despite the construction of new schools in the second half of the 1950s, the number of classrooms remained insufficient for the growing numbers of students, who had to be taught in two or three shifts per day.

The indifference of Fiat's management and the reluctance of municipal authorities to address these problems made a bad situation worse. For his part, Valletta tended to look upon the city exclusively as a location for productive expansion. Technological progress and economic growth, in his view, would eventually lead to rising standards of living that would solve any short-term difficulties stemming from the flood of immigrants. Accordingly, he and the management of Fiat saw little need for any systematic intervention to ameliorate social conditions in the city and surrounding suburbs. Taking their lead from Turin's dominant employer, municipal authorities adopted a largely *laissez-faire* approach to the acute housing problems of the immigrants. The delayed passage of an urban regulatory plan and its subsequent non-enforcement meant that private developers and speculators had a relatively free rein in the real estate market. They proceeded to construct huge cement apartment complexes that lacked parks and green open spaces or basic amenities