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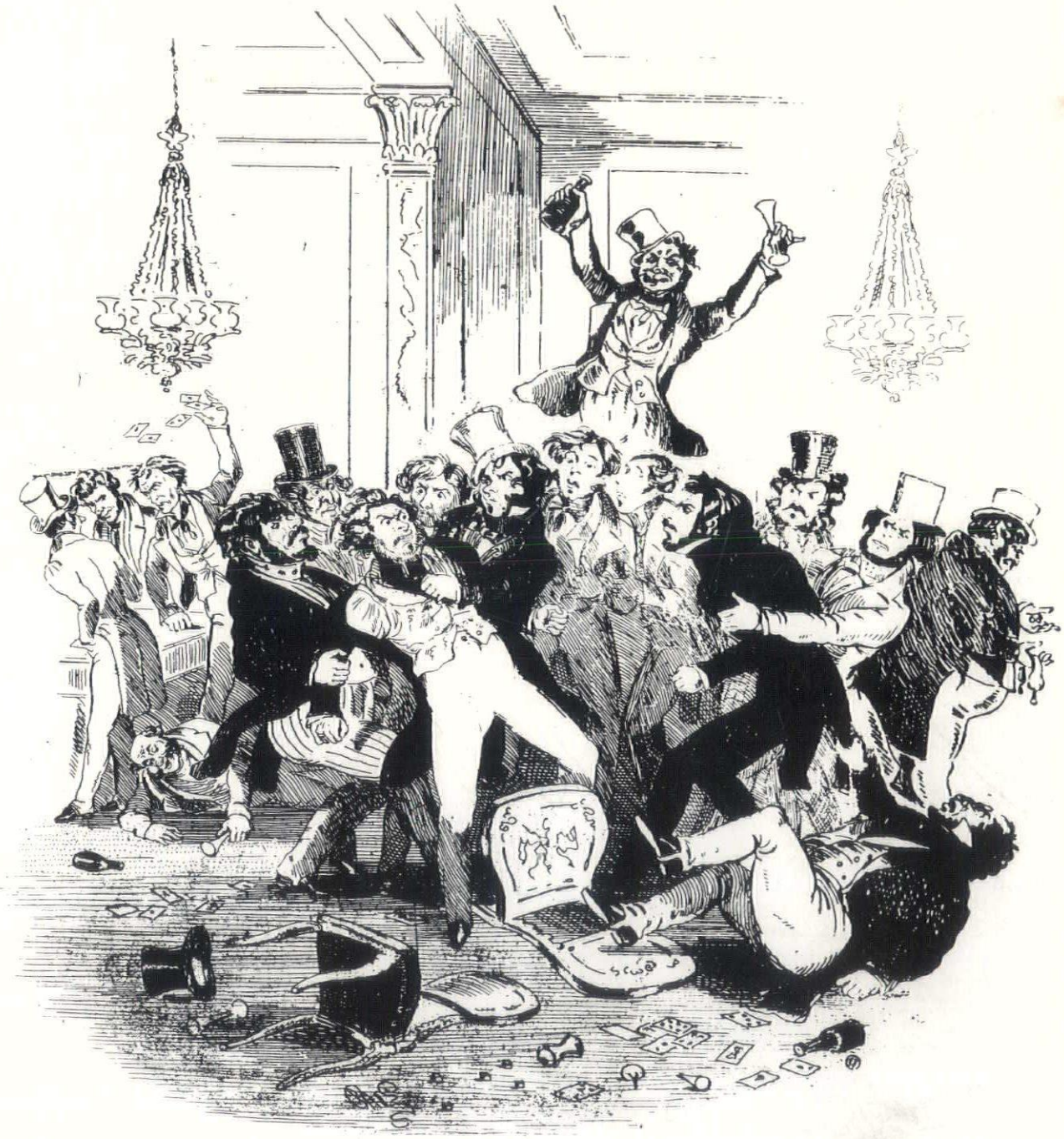

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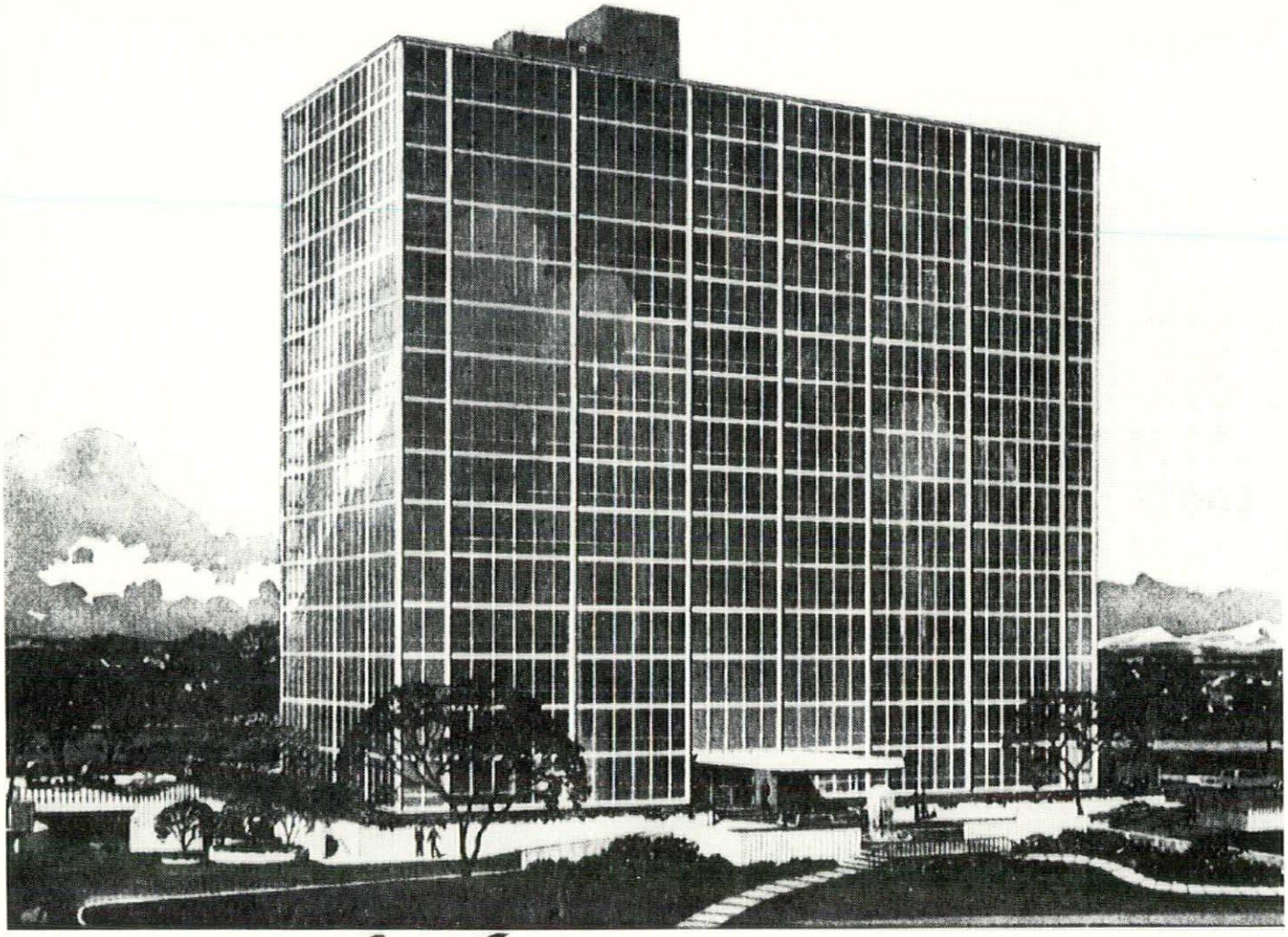

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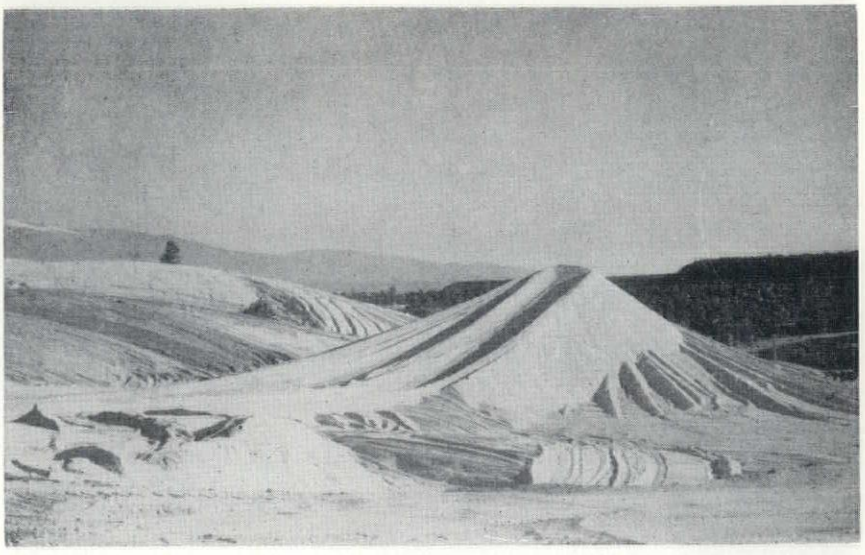

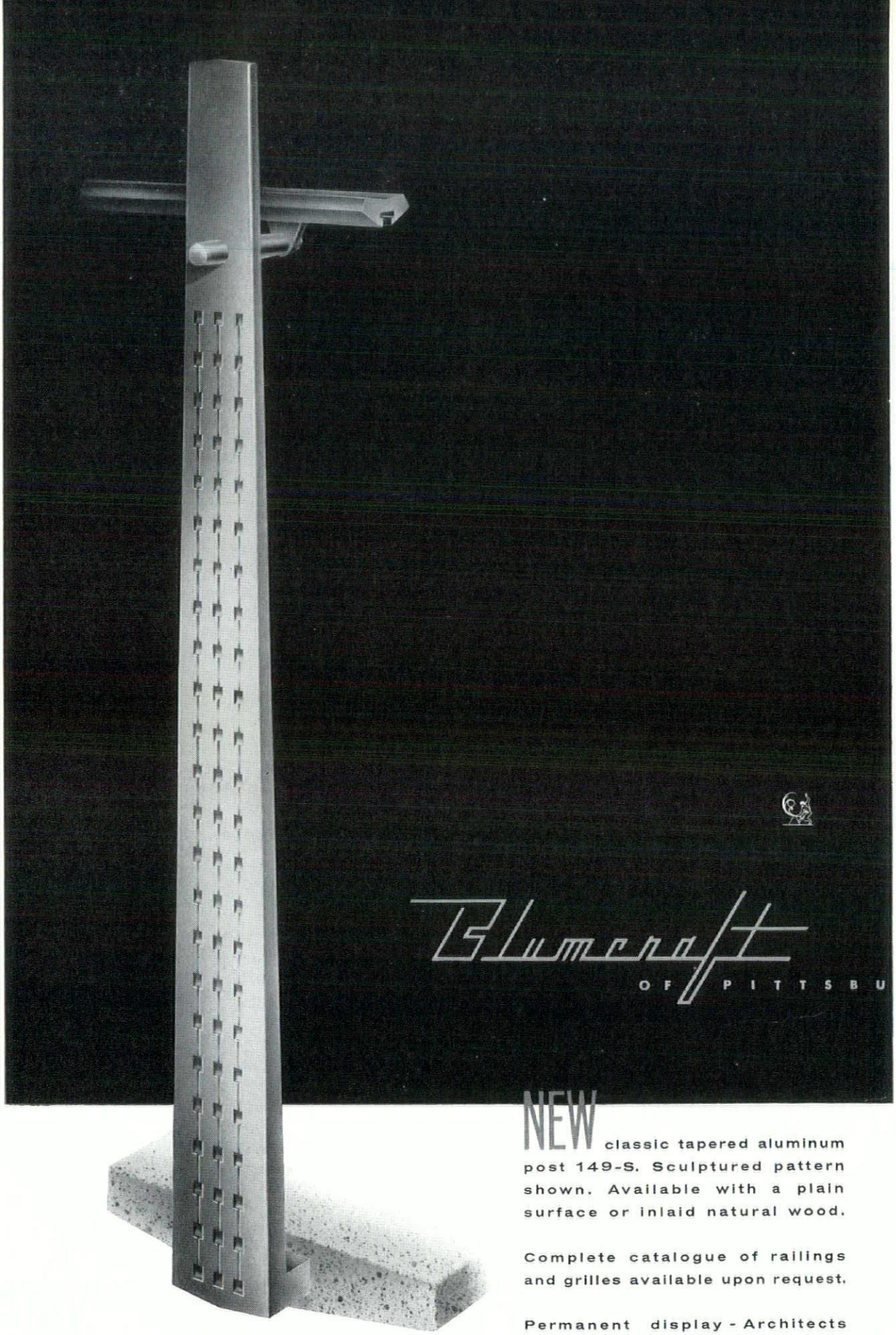

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THE UGLINESS AROUND US

The Second Annual Conference of the New Mexico Chapter of AIA took place April 19 and 20 in Santa Fe. One hundred and thirteen registrants took part in the conference, which was held in the auditorium of the Land Office building in Santa Fe, and there was an estimated 100 visitors. There were three three-hour sessions, one on Friday morning and two on Saturday.

The conference banquet took place Saturday night April 19, at La Fonda Hotel. There was no banquet speech, as President Henry L. Wright of the AIA national office had a prior commitment for that particular date. He delivered the speech that he had prepared for the occasion, however, at the first session of the conference. At the banquet, which was attended by 73 persons, the New Mexico Chapter Design Awards and the Art in Architecture Award were presented. Prior to the dinner a lively cocktail hour was sponsored by the Structural Clay Products Institute.

The Conference social calendar was a busy one. Thursday evening saw the beginning of festivities with a cocktail party at the office of Conron and Lent. To this were invited panel members and state officials, including Gov. Jack Campbell. Dinner followed at the Palace Restaurant. Friday night was a most enjoyable one, for conference-goers were divided into small groups and feted in the homes of various Santa Fe architects. This was certainly a high point of the conference. On Sunday morning, guests were given the choice of a game of golf and breakfast at the Santa Fe Country Club or a hospitable brunch at the home of AIA president, John McHugh. Friday noon saw AIA members gather at the Desert Inn for luncheon and a business meeting.

Conference attenders were generally agreed that the talks and discussions were very worthwhile. It is probably not surprising that the ability of the attenders and speakers to define the ugliness about them surpassed their abilities to designate remedies and cures for that ugliness. There was wide agreement that architects individually and as professional groups had major roles to play in providing and in safeguarding the physical environment for modern society. Both the Santa Fe and Albuquerque Sections of the state AIA plan positive programs for the development of their respective downtown areas.

One interesting aspect of the conference was the wide variety of skills and backgrounds which the conference speakers brought to the discussions. Yet despite this diversity of interest, the tenor of the meeting was remarkably coherent. This fact was in large part due to the skillful direction of the discussion by the two moderators, William Lippincott of Santa Fe and Franklin Dickey of the University of New Mexico.

HENRY L. WRIGHT, F.A.I.A.

Here follows a summary of the conference speeches as well as the discussion from the floor. On page 20 is an announcement of the conference Design Awards as well as the Art in Architecture Award which was presented to John Tatschl.

The first session of the conference on "The Ugliness Around Us" convened at 9:30 on Friday. Mr. Richard Halford, chairman of the conference, introduced Mr. John McHugh after he had acknowledged the many individuals who had assisted in the conference arrangements. Mr. McHugh, president of the New Mexico chapter of AIA, introduced Mr. Henry L. Wright, national president of the AIA. Mr. Wright delivered the following speech, which he had prepared for the conference banquet, but which he was unable to deliver there because of a certain confusion in dates.

This conference, like many others that meet within the framework of the American Institute of Architects, is concerned with the subject of ugliness. The theme "The Ugliness Around Us," suggests that we identify ugliness, isolate it, and then take measures to eradicate it in much the same manner we approach the eradiction of a disease.

Disease and architectural ugliness have much in common. Both thrive in a climate of apathy. Both must first be controlled before they can be obliterated. One is deadly to the body; it destroys first the strength and vigor of the victim and then it destroys his life.

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Ugliness, in the sense that it is considered at this conference, is deadly in other ways. It too destroys the strength, the vigor and the ambition of a community and, having done this, utimately destroys any hope for growth and progress that the community might have had.

Ugliness is a word for deterioration. It is another word for the slums of our large cities. It is a word that describes the living conditions endured by families of five, six or even seven who are crowded into two or three small rooms in a tenement that should have been demolished twenty years ago. Ugliness is a word that describes a once prosperous business street that has deteriorated into a Bowery or a skid row. It is a word that summarizes the experience of the social worker who deals in human misery—in terms of juvenile delinquency, drug addiction, alcoholism and chronic idleness and moral degradation. Ugliness is all of this —and more.

It can, it should be, the greatest challenge of our profession. Ugliness is architecture at its degenerated and deteriorated worst. Social workers can devise countless schemes for raising the goals of people who live in substandard areas. Legislators can pass countless laws aimed at correcting moral evils. But one fact looms foremost, and that is the inescapable relationship that exists between social and moral laxity and environment.

What is the quest of the architect? Is it to strive toward the evolvement of an environment that will result in a productive, responsible and mature society? Is the task of environment that of the architect? Is it the duty of the legislator, or the social worker? Is our profession fitted by training and temperament to assume the responsibilities of the environmentalist?

It has been said that all man-made physical environment is architecture and that we are professional architects, and that, since we are responsible for architecture, we are coincidentally responsible for environment. There is ugliness around us and the steady attrition of time will add to it unless our plans for the future include a program for eradicating the eye sores of our communities, replacing them with buildings and facilities reflecting an attitude of progress and optimism that is more in pace with the fast moving technology of this age of jet propulsion and space pioneering.

Ugliness is and has been of serious concern to the American Institute of Architects. It has become the subject for extensive committee work, exhaustive research, and a series of seminars aimed at identifying the problem and the objectives: identifying and placing responsibility, and mobilizing opinion and enthusiasm among those whose cooperation is vital to the success of a program of this kind.

Who is Responsible for Ugliness? This question, expressed more in the sense of a challenge than a query, served as the title for a seminar that was sponsored by the A.I.A. at the national level and conducted by the New York A.I.A. Chapter in its home city last year. The seminar provided a forum for a full airing of the subject of urban ugliness and all of its attendant social evils. The program effort was geared to bring together all of those segments of New York social, business, professional and political life which shared the interest, the talent, and the position needed to do something about ugliness.

Newspaper people were present because communication is essential to accomplishment. Political leaders were present, not only those who currently occupy public office but those who are regarded as influential forces in guiding the destinies of political candidates. Social service officials were present. Business leaders were present. Members of professional society, doctors, lawyers and educators, were also on hand. The seminar represented an effort, by no means conclusive, but nevertheless an effort by the A.I.A. to mobilize the responsible elements of the community so that it could be made to recognize ugliness and determine to do something about it.

This, then, is the A.I.A. approach to the ugliness around us. Locate it, define ugliness and its causes; fix the responsibility — not for ugliness but for its elimination — — and then proceed with forceful determination to do something about it.

Ugliness is tolerated because public opinion permits it to exist. Public opinion cannot congeal, cannot become militant unless and until it is informed. It cannot become informed unless authoritative sources of information elect to remain in the foreground of community events long enough to be recognized, heard and understood. Public opinion will not become aroused, in New Mexico or New York, unless some group, individual or agency assumes the mantle of leadership.

Many years ago, F. W. Woolworth was seen sweeping the floor of one of his stores. The situation was little short of amazing since Mr. Woolworth had already reached a position of wealth and eminence. When he was asked why he chose to pick up the broom his reply was candid and simple. "The store needed sweeping, he said, and since no one else was around to do it, I did it myself!"

In the same sense, there is a crying need for leadership. The ugliness needs to be swept away. The broom is handy. We are here and the interest is very much our interest. The question, then, is how do we begin, and where?

The first step is participation. The A.I.A. has always regarded its responsibilities to the community as something to be given more than lip service by its members. Architects, by and large, are creative, well informed and well educated people. They are equipped by education and a day to day professional perspective to understand the combination of circumstances that conspire to blight a segment of a community. It is this aptitude that should compel them to become active participants in community affairs.

Archtects belong on civic committees where they can exercise influence in city planning, in developing building codes and ordinances. Architects belong on committees that act as advisors to legislative bodies in matters related to appropriations for slum clearance and new construction. They belong there because that is where they can do the most good, giving the community the benefit of good, sound, practical advice, based on knowledge and experience, but not, as so much legislative counsel is, based on wishful thinking.

The eradication of the ugliness around us is something that will result from the joint action of many groups of many people. It is an action that will commence when people have a plan and the inspiration of advice and leadership.

The panel that has assembled here for the purpose of discussing the subject of urban deterioration is representative of the more sensitive segment of our society.

Writers, reporters, artists and architects share a capacity for the perception of aesthetic values. They are equally capable of articulation, able to judge the course of events and to translate the hazards of ugliness into a language that will be readily understood by those who are able to do something about it.

We are talking in terms of a program that will have a profound influence on the way of life of millions of people. We are talking in terms of "changing their habits" of altering customs and the environment that have been theirs and their predecessors for as long as 200 years. Architects are quick to agree that there is beauty in our old landmarks, beauty that is closely bound to tradition and a history of growth and achievement we will always honor and remember. We place a value on landmarks, however, because of their historical significance, not because of any contribution that they may make to contemporary society in terms of functionalism or aesthetic impact.

The masons who were responsible for the design and construction of the Old World's great castles and cathedrals left their mark on a milestone in architectural progress. The early skyscrapers, the Woolworth Tower of New York, the Wrigley Building of Chicago, all were milestones in their day but were surpassed by the architecture that followed them.

Much has taken place during the past fifty years. We have been given new tools with which to do our work, we have been provided with new materials. More than anything else, we have reached the place where we can examine ourselves and our work with some degree of objectivity. Architecture as a profession today implies that we must become concerned with the product of our effort, not only as it conforms to the requirements of our client and the surrounding community but how it will conform to the future within the forseeable lifetime of the structure.

When we say that we are concerned with ugliness we assert that we are concerned with environment and all of the forces that, for good or evil, are unleashed under its influence. It is within our scope to provide an environment that will enrich the culture of our own time and place and contribute to the continuing development of the generations that will come. We can anticipate much of the future if we will be willing to take our lesson and heed it from the book of the past. . . .

Ugliness is an environmental blight and must be removed. But while it is erased with one hand, it must be replaced by something else with the other. It is with replacement, with renewal, with new environment that we must become concerned. If we remove ugliness but fail to plan properly for the future, our victory will have been short indeed.

Man is changing with his environment. He is no longer chained to the oar in a galley or forced to trudge behind a plow. Man's own mechanical aptitude has evoked the forces of a revolution that will reach far into the future. All of us have seen a single piece of power equipment dig more trench in one day then could have been done by a hundred men. The farm tractor, by no means new or novel, released not only horses but farm workers. Automation, a new word in the story of industrial growth, poses a promise on one hand and a threat on the other.

We are only on the threshhold of change, yet, in our time, we have seen the work week of the average industrial worker shrink from 72 hours to a so-called standard 40 hours. In many areas the regular work week has lessened to thirty hours, and there are indications that it may decline to twenty-five. A wise regard for a well balanced economy has accomplished many of these transitions with a minimum of dislocation. In some industries, the retirement age has been made earlier in order to lessen the hazards of unemployment. The presence of social security and pension systems has voided the need for man to work until he is no longer able physically to perform his duties.

Man's need for gainful occupation will continue. But he will work a shorter work week because there is a need for a wider distribution of job opportunities. He will be well paid for his shorter work week because he and the public must maintain his buying power. All of this adds up to leisure. And it is with leisure that we are concerned in the planning of an environment that will replace the blighted areas of urban ugliness.

What will people do with leisure? How will they use their time? How will this affect the architect and his plans for the future? Architecture is our environment. It shapes our thinking because it is an influence to which we are constantly exposed. The shape of architecture can convey the image of knowledge when it is expressed in an educational institution. It can express the feeling of hope when it is the hospital, of security in a house of worship and vitality and progress when it is a structure of industry or commerce. The environment of man is his inspiration, his encouragement. his hope for today and his promise for tomorrow. He is exalted or elated or inspired by his surroundings; or he is depressed or disheartened by them, depending on what those surroundings are.

It is the architect's job to design environment. When his job is done with consideration to the effect that it will have on those who will be influenced by it, his job will have been well done and within the finest traditions of our profession. We have taken the first step in admitting to ourselves that there is ugliness around us and that this is a problem of serious import, one about which something must and will be done. We have taken the first step in our effort to recruit the best talent, the "opinion makers" of the community so that we can join forces for the common good.

Ugliness is a community disease and its effect is disastrous and far reaching. It can be eliminated; the habit of tolerating community blight can be changed, a new environment can be created, if we will press our cause with unrelenting determination and unceasing vigor.

During the next nine months there will be 12 conferences such as this one, all planned as regional A.I.A. seminars and all aimed at probing for the cause of ugliness and the projection of programs for its elimination. Ugliness is a community problem and needs to be resolved at the community level; this compels the close cooperation and enthusiasm of the best leadership the community can provide.

This Santa Fe conference is a step, a big one, in the right direction. It might well be, that the decisions made here will provide inspiration and guidance for those in other parts of the land who are faced with the same problem. Your tools are your talents and your intellect. The job you face is one that offers challenge, plus the promise that your success will be felt by more people than you will ever know.

Your position can be summed up quickly. You are the ones to do the job. Your community is depending upon you to get it done. —Henry L. Wright.

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Incidentally, Elastizell Cellular Concrete products occupies a booth in the Albuquerque Building Center, 16th Floor of the First National Bank Building East. Mr. Eaves would like very much for all interested persons to visit the Building Center and become better acquainted with the product.

Mr. Eaves feels that he, as representative in this area, has a product that will prove very advantageous to those interested in its many attributes and is in a position to discuss further its merits, as well as furnish technical and descriptive information to those that seek it. One only needs to either write or call Mr. Eaves at the address or phone number given below in the Elastizell ad.

FIRST SESSION

Following President Wright's speech Mr. Halford introduced Mr. John Conron, chairman of the program committee, who outlined the program and announced the "casualty list," i.e., the panel members who, at the last minute, were unable to attend. He then introduced the moderator of the first panel Mr. William Lippincott, and the four panel members. The first speaker was Mr. J. B. Jackson, Editor and publisher of *Landscape* magazine and resident of Santa Fe. He spoke from notes which he had prepared in the interest of precision and brevity. His remarks are recorded in full.

All of us, I suppose, have been interested in the way this problem of ugliness and uglification has recently come to the fore in architectural discussions. As a protest movement it began more than ten years ago in England, but it has since spread throughout the Western world. This winter in Germany they were having competitions to list the ugliest buildings which had been built in that country since 1945. One of Le Corbusier's was included. Last spring the magazine Landscape Architecture *launched a campaign for a National Design Committee to help control public design, and the AIA chapter in New York held a two day conference on Esthetic Responsibility. The* Saturday Evening Post *published a widely reprinted article by Stewart Allsop on "America the Ugly;" the* Arizona Architect *and the* New Mexico Architect *have devoted issues to uglification, and many of you have doubtless received the recent reprint from the* Kiplinger Newsletter *called "America the Beautiful, Heritage or Honky-tonk." And now finally we are discussing this topic here in Santa Fe.*

It is a very urgent topic, and the more people who become concerned with what is happening to our environment, the better; that almost goes without saying. But I wonder if we have not got beyond the stage of denunciation and lamentation by now, and if it is not already time to define where we intend to go, and what we are after. It might, for instance, be a good idea to define, however sketchily, what we mean by ugliness in the American environment and how we expect to cope with it.

We are all agreed that billboards and slums and noise and polluted air and poorly designed highways are ugly; but the trouble is, they are all ugly in different ways; each of them has a different cause and a different cure. Some forms of ugliness can be eradicated with a few strokes of a paint brush, others call for a constitutional amendment. Some of them belong in the field of soil conservation or engineering or public sanitation; those which concern the architect, it seems to me, belong in the field of architectural and urban design. And finally much of this whole question of ugliness is a matter of individual judgment, and esthetic judgment can be trained and disciplined like any other mental activity. It is not entirely a matter of improving the environment; it is also a matter of improving the manner in which we look at that environment.

So let me offer a tentative, dictionary type of definition of ugliness in public design—which, as I see it, is what we are dealing with here. An architectural or urbanist composition is considered ugly when it clearly rejects the accepted contemporary standards of beauty or fitness. In other words, a design is thought to be ugly when, among the other characteristics, it is nonconforming.

L-R: WINFIELD SCOTT, RUDOLPH KIEVE, M.D., WILLIAM LIPPINCOTT, OLIVER LA FARGE, J. B. JACKSON

Now at once we have to make a distinction between different kinds of non-conformity. We have to consider the motives which presumably inspired the designer. It is quite clear, for instance, that the non-conformity of Frank Lloyd Wright's Guggenheim Museum is not of the same sort as the non-conformity of an oil company which puts a flashy filling station in a homogeneous residential area — as is happening here in Santa Fe — or when an advertising company puts up a billboard in front of a spectacular view. Frank Lloyd Wright doubtless justified his violation of the setting by saying that he was creating a more genuine and intense kind of beauty which others could imitate. The oil company and the billboard company deliberately destroyed the setting in order to call attention to themselves and to attract more business; but they would greatly resent any competitor moving in and imitating them. I think that Frank Lloyd Wright's motive for nonconformity is healthier and more important than that of the other two, and that is why I think these two kinds of ugliness have to be treated differently. Society has the right and the duty to protect itself against antisocial behavior which is inspired by low and selfish motives.

But we must be realistic: commercial ugliness cannot be divorced from certain very fundamental aspects of the American social and economic order. If we want to abolish or control this kind of ugliness we have got to have a definite program of radical social and economic reform; we have got to attack the sanctity of private property and private initiative, we have got to change our whole tax structure. Protests and persuasion will get us nowhere. It's either a matter of organizing on a national level for certain drastic changes in American society, or else putting up with billboards, honky-tonks, used car lots, neon lights and fraudulent land speculation. We can't have it both ways.

Commercial ugliness, however, is by no means the whole story. Even if we were to eliminate all commercial non-conformity from the American scene we would still have a very non-conforming environment. We would still have monotonous housing developments, shabby downtown areas, churches designed like hands folded in prayer, banks like chromium trimmed merry-

go-rounds, archeological monstrosities. We would still be surrounded by poor design. And what are we supposed to do about this kind of ugliness, this non-conformity inspired by bad taste? The answer is, there is nothing we can legitimately do about it; we must learn to tolerate bad taste as long as it appears to have been inspired by a genuine artistic impulse. We have no right to try to prevent designers from devising new kinds of beauty, even when they fall flat on their faces. There is no worse tyranny than regimented refinement and good taste; we can no more prohibit designers from making mistakes than we can prohibit people from reading cheap literature; we merely refrain from imitating them.

There are two distinguished artists on the panel, Mr. La Farge and Mr. Scott, who are far more capable than I of defending the sanctity of the artistic impulse, even when it is inept and unsuccessful; I need, therefore, say nothing more about the necessity of tolerating bad taste. And I hope the psychiatrist on the panel, Dr. Kieve, will back me up when I say that there is a monumental kind of ugliness that we have to have in our environment if we are ever to learn to see and understand beauty. That is the function of true ugliness: it irritates us and stimulates us and makes us think; It demands an effort of us that acceptable beauty does not. But I am sorry to say that many architects are apparently determined to destroy this kind of ugliness whenever they can. I mean the Victorian courthouse, the gaudy turn-of-the-century mansion, the neo-classic railroad station. Architects want to remodel these monuments and rob them of all their character. We ought to remember that Gothic architecture was for centuries looked upon with horror as the very symbol of barbaric non-conformity — until we learned to understand it. The first Anglo-American visitors to Santa Fe could not find words harsh enough to describe its low adobe houses. They compared them to a prairie dog community or to an abandoned brick kiln. And now we fight to save the least of those old houses. I happen to be one of those who dislike almost all of Frank Lloyd Wright and Saarinen; but I hope I have sense and humility enough to realize that eventually this very complex and earnest kind of ugliness will be assimilated into our scheme of beauty. So there is a kind of ugliness which inspires, and which we must cherish.

There is one last kind of ugliness which we have to cope with; and that is the kind which comes from neglect and a sort of contemptuous indifference to public opinion. The crooked telephone and light poles, the dirty vacant lots, the filthy back alleys, the abandoned houses, the poorly paved streets, the ill-kept sidewalks and facades. There is much of that kind of non-conformity, particularly when a town is in transition, as most of our towns are. And how are we to deal with this?

It would be very convenient to say that this form of ugly neglect is a matter for political pressure — for ordinances and fines; and so it is in some cases, notably with power lines and ill-kept streets. And it would also be very convenient to call it picturesque and let it be. But actually it is here that the well-intentioned individual, artist or architect or plain citizen, can really be effective. It ought not to be impossible for the lovers of civic amenities, singly or in groups, to make their houses or offices or gardens into oases of care and beauty in their neighborhood. We lament the inertia of the municipal authorities in such matters; but how about our own inertia? What is to prevent us from decorating ugly blank walls, from landscaping empty lots, from planting trees and flowers, from laying attractive sidewalks, from providing those amenities which we admire in the glossy architectural magazines? And it seems to me that architects and designers should be the leaders in this kind of anti-ugliness activity.

Now you will say that this is cosmetic treatment, that it is trifling and superficial. But it is not superficial when it is undertaken in conjunction with other efforts. It is this sort of work, much more than grandiose designs for wholesale reform, which creates a beautiful and livable city. For the answer to ugliness as we know it in America is not large scale and expensive rebuilding; it is not enforced canons of good taste; no. The answer to ugliness is an abundance of artistic creativity; a never-ending affirmation that color and form and light and sound are essential to our happiness and wellbeing, no matter how modest the scale, or how inexpert the result.

We are all familiar with Voltaire's advice to cultivate our garden. Translated into architectural terms this means that each of us is to produce his own kind of beauty so that in the end he will be living in a beautiful environment.

We on this panel are not supposed to discuss what to do about ugliness, but I have nevertheless done so, and I apologize. My solution is this: outlaw the most depraved and commercialized forms of ugliness; learn to tolerate the ugliness which comes from failure, learn to admire the ugliness which we cannot at once understand — and finally to think and talk less about ugliness, and do more and more toward creating beauty to the best of our ability.

The second speaker was to have been Richard Snibbe, AIA, who organized the famous New York City conference on ugliness in 1962. Mr. Snibbe was unable to be present, but he did send his paper which was read by Mr. Conron. Mr. Snibbe's paper is also reproduced in full.

On April 3, 1962 a conference was held by the A.I.A. at the Plaza Hotel in New York City. Called "The First Conference on Aesthetic Responsibility," it asked the question, "Who Is Responsible for Ugliness?" Twenty-seven speakers in three panels spoke for ten minutes each followed by discussion from the floor. Editors, builders, artists, architects, city and federal government officials, musicians and teachers attempted to answer the question.

When the day was over the question appeared to be unanswered, as was inevitable, but the essence of the problem had been exposed. The fact that the conference took place at all, seemed to be the important thing to the press. The answer to the question is complex, composed of many facets, as is the nature of our social structure in a democracy. It seems appalling that a conference on beauty should be so rare in our country that its existence alone is editorial material, and that the answers attempted are avoided. This apathy toward beauty and blindness to ugliness is so universal that when someone asks why our country is ugly the only response is not an answer, but a startled awareness, "By God it is ugly isn't it?" Nobody seems to be looking at it at all, much less thinking about it. Until people learn to see it, and respond to its hideousness and waste, it will go on getting worse. The "why" will not be answered.

There isn't a person here who has not seen something he loved as a child and admired for its beauty either torn down or desecrated by "progress" or "commerce." The "why" must be approached headlong and with the courage of reason.

One of the more obvious reasons for our ugliness is in the composition of our population. We are a polyglot people from nations with variant cultural backgrounds. When the melting pot boils it doesn't necessarily produce beautiful soup. The various imported cultural forms and mores persist in their worst bastard forms, stripped of refinement as the least common denominator of taste — a conglomeration of the mediocre. The best of each culture boils away upon contact with other cultures. The refinement of a style requires centuries of unified and relatively isolated contemplation and effort. It occurs in small geographic areas, mostly in civic centers, and it involves concentrations of homogeneous groups of people such as occured during the Golden Ages of Greece, the Inca and Mayan city state of 1000 AD, and the Scandinavian countries today. Its destruction may be accomplished in a few years by a Hitler or a Stalin. This is because of the many abstract and tenuous elements necessary to create it. A mere shrug of an alien shoulder may dissipate a brilliant idea. The fact that we are a land populated by immigration a short historic time ago and imported forms from elsewhere contributes to our confusion and ugliness. Transplanting forms away from their native habitats is as destructive to them as it is to plants and animals. Our composition and complex cultural heritage are therefore some of the elements creating ugliness in America. We have just not had the time to develop an aesthetic. Perhaps we cannot from these diverse ingredients but our work, though doomed to eclecticism, can be much better than it is.

The emphasis in our country upon amassing wealth through any means is another reason for the ugliness around us. If a man obtain money, he is respected whether he leaves a broad path of destruction behind him or not. He could have cut down thousands of acres of forests, built row after row of slums, broken the spirit and backs of hundreds of people and we still, upon meeting him, have feelings of respect, mixed with envy and awe. This response is not our own national possession. It has been apparent in every society since the beginning civilization. It is an accepted fact, then, that some men will obtain a disproportionate share of the weath. Where we differ lies in the way this money power is obtained and used. If it is obtained by year's of destruction, how can it be suddenly spent for the public benefit. Strangely enough, some of it has been in the past. We have had our periods when the wealth was returned to the people in the form of public works of quality and lasting beauty. Why is this not the practice today? Reasons such as freedom, individual initiative, the tax laws, the welfare state and unfair representation are all likely rationalizations. None of these, particularly the ones based upon "principles" or "political reasoning" seem to answer the question. We have a better economic reason now than at the turn of the century to build more beautiful buildings; many of them are deductible expenditures. Mr. Carnegie could have kept his millions, but he chose to build handsome libraries with his excess wealth. The important fact is that he felt the need to enhance his city just for the pride he felt in doing so. This kind of pride is nearly alien to our period of the 20th Century.

We live in a period of research into the origins of life and matter. Specialization is a necessity in this era for this search. Our culture is so dominated by this one drive that all the arts have been neglected. This drive is so powerful that those involved in the arts have unconsciously adopted the specialized approach to fields where the universal or multiple talented man is an essential. Our best painters and sculptors are studio artists painting and sculpting for museums and galleries, not to adorn our structures or parks.

The lack of master planning of our cities is sufficient evidence of the paucity of generalized thinking. Each little specialist has added his expert bit to our environment producing a patch work of incredible chaos and discomfort. All this is done in the name of democracy. It must be this way to retain our individual freedom. It barely needs mentioning that these reasons are obvious lies disguising individual power drives and status quo notions.

We are collectively and individually delinquent and ignorant if we do not at once begin to rectify these obvious fallacies in our approach to our visual environment.

Who makes the crucial aesthetic decisions for our public works? They are made by Congress with perhaps a majority of two whose background qualifies them to judge matters of aesthetic importance to us all. They are aided by an art commission comprised, inevitably, with the most conservative, influential and by definition, successful (i.e. wealthy) members of the fields of art and achitecture.

It is probably too much to ask that beautiful new things be buit by great architects and artists instead of the vast amount of tasteless and shoddy work being done all around us by hacks. It is probably equally as foolish to suggest that things be done according to a well thought out design with foresight and logic. The height of ridiculousness is to request legislation for beauty — that is, aesthetic controls. But all of this is possible and will become increasingly necessary as our population grows and our land resources diminish. The necessity becomes apparent when we consider the intangible factor of our cultural prestige in the world for the survival of man's freedom. Imagine the shock to an intelligent visitor from a Soviet sattelite nation when he sees how his countryside will be blighted with car lots and supermarkets if he embrances our democracy.

In a society characterized by such baffling contradictions we are challenged beyond our powers to offer pat answers. Each individual new law, design problem, or human contact requires a separate solution. But there may be some questions we can ask that remain applicable to many situations. Is what we do directed toward the public benefit? Are we educating ourselves and our children to assume full responsibility for a better visual environment? Are we contributing our best efforts toward the advancement of a richer cultural life? Are we able and willing to hold out economically while attempting to conduct our lives ethically and with dedication to beauty?

The answers to these questions lie within each of us and the more affirmative answers that multiply the sooner an atmosphere will be created in which we will all be expected to design for the public benefit.

Mr. Winfield Townley Scott, a widely read poet and resident of Santa Fe, was the third speaker to be

introduced. A transcription of the main portions of his speech is recorded here.

I have one simple point to make. Some years ago, Picasso said a rather terrifying thing; in sum he said, "When a man makes something new in the arts people consider it ugly; later other men come along and make it pretty." I think we all know what Picasso means because we have had the experience in relation to the arts. We know how a new score in music disturbs us and puts us off or how the new thing in painting seems strange and ugly to us.

In twentieth century verse, two poets in particular come to mind—Ezra Pound and T. S. Eliot. Now I can't say that they are the greatest poets of the century for I do not know what value future generations will place on them. But of their pervasive influence through a large part of this century there can be no doubt. Each of these men forged a style which was derived from many traditions, but each style is stamped with the personality of the poet. It was a long time before many people cared about them or were at least not put off by them. Then along came a man such as Archibald MacLeish who, as Picasso would say, made it pretty. I don't mean to pick on MacLeish; ti's perhaps that he does this so brilliantly that he illustrates exactly what I am talking about. He has made an amalgam of the tricks that Pound and Eliot has discovered; he makes them smooth. Take his long poem El Conquistador; it's a lovely shellaced version of the style of of Pound's First Canto. *"Ugliness," therefore, can be an ambiguous word. What it comes down to is imitation. In mere copying we have the seeds of ugliness.*

What I am getting at is the differences between using a tradition and merely conforming, merely imitating. The point toward which I am speaking is that any set of rules or laws, which are put up to preserve the indigenous quality of a town like Santa Fe, are all very well so long as they do not constrict the creative abilities of those who can design and build. Williamsburg is all very well in its way, but as Frank Lloyd Wright said, it is an outdoor museum. Santa Fe is not that; it is a living city.

I'm all for the use of tradition. I think in all the arts the valid things in some way attach to tradition. But they change. Mr. Henry Wright just now spoke of the Wrigley Building as fine in its day but that we had surpassed it. This term "surpassed" troubled me a little. In science you surpass because you are always correcting past mistakes. In the arts you don't surpass; you merely change. We don't surpass Shakespeare or Michelangelo. But we do change. If we didn't, we would be dead. Any language that does not change is dead.

And so here. I think that there must always be left that flexibility which will allow many things to be done with adobe — not some standard set of rules which must be met just so. In other words, I think that any art that is important, from a small poem to a huge building, must bear the stamp of the creator, the stain of personality. Let me give you one more quotation because I like it, from the poet W. H. Audon: "A new style of architecture, a change of heart."

Mr.Oliver La Farge, nationally recognized author and crusader for the preservation of the distinctive quality of Santa Fe, was the fourth commentator. A tape recording followed his remarks and serves as the basis for the following account.

I want to concentrate on the idea of "ugliness in a democracy." Here the range of ugliness, of non-beauty is terrific. Speaking primarily of visual ugliness, we can crudely classify it under three headings: one, the ugliness of thoughtlessness; two, the ugliness of profit; three, the ugliness of creativity that did not work. I am keeping away from the word "beauty" for a reason.

The first category accounts for things like the trash, the cadaverous automobile chassis rusting by the roadside, the slum condition with buildings gone to rack and ruin. We can spot these things and we have nearly universal agreement on them; we would all like to eradicate them.

The second type of ugliness, the ugliness of profit, is as obvious as the first. It ranges from the billboard that ruins a piece of scenery or the repetitious and yammering series of little signs that pester you all the way across New Mexico to the filling station placed where it has no business to be. We know that it clashes, that it is ugly and that it upsets. The source of these, of course, is a lack of feeling and a preference for some other value at the moment.

When electricity and the telephone came to Santa Fe the price of having the amenities meant also having the visual mess of wires and cables strung from poles all along our streets. If Santa Fe had then reached a point where it would have dug in its heels and said, "No, we will continue to use gas and kerosene lamps until you agree to put your wires in the ground," this would have been an extraordinary phenomenon and it would have delayed the electrification of the city for many years. At that time, however, people were thinking of progress; they wanted electricity and comfort and good light so they accepted the price of overhead wires.

Eventually the people of Santa Fe even got to the point where they did not even see the overhead wires anymore. Indeed, I had to go down and look at the Governors'Palace again to make certain that one could not take a picture of the building without photographing also the overhead electrical construction.

The mass of the people don't love that kind of ugliness, they just don't see it. These things will be prevented to the extent that people can be made aware of them. But occasionally something happens in a democracy to cause all the people to respond positively and violently to some situation. It is the role of the architect who, by his training and profession, has been educated to an awareness of the ugly, to perform the essential democratic function of helping mass opinion crystalize against ugliness and of leading the campaign against it.

Next there is creativity that didn't work. In history we find certain specimens that are conspicuously ugly. They represent instances where the architect and client tried valiantly if unsuccessfully to be up-to-date by means of cupolas and turrets and stained glass windows, etc. We have a few of these left here in Santa Fe and they should be cherished as period pieces. They are the result of what happens when a client and architect buy whatever is fashionable at the moment. This is not creativity but another kind of conformity of which the glass box for a house is a recent case in point. This fad has swept around the world; we have examples of it here in Santa Fe with all-glass walls fronting the southwestering sun much of the time and causing absolute torment. We are presently outgrowing this particular fever, but creativity is always going to make some mistakes.

Now I have put off mentioning beauty. But it is time for me to observe that you cannot legislate beauty. You can legislate certain kinds of dead and drab good taste, but when you do, you are apt to prevent beauty. If we are going to have beauty, we are going to have to take chances. Within our historical area here in Santa Fe, what we have done is to set aside a restricted area in which to exercise style control. Within this section we have set up a series of essentially negative rules which restrict the creative impulse of the architect. This restriction may also offer the really creative person a still greater challenge. I would not like to see the whole city put under it; this would be deadly. But within the restricted area, it is, I think, defensible.

But the best that we can do in a democracy is a negative thing. What we must always do is to keep on educating the public, forming public opinion. If we can influence it, if we can sensitize the common man on this score of beauty, we can thereby achieve room for people to try at least for beauty. That is about as much as we can ask.

The last speaker of the first panel was Dr. Rudolph Kieve, M.D., a psychiatrist, author, and resident of Santa Fe. Throughout the sessions Dr. Kieve functioned as official gadfly, posing questions and making unorthodox pronouncements — a role which he obviously enjoyed. Here is a portion of his opening statement.

The whole question of the responsibility for ugliness rather shakes me, for who else is responsible for ugliness but the person who makes the ugly thing? And who else should be called to task than that individual? On the other hand, a too harsh attack on ugliness would certainly deprive us of the tools with which to sharpen our perception, our ability to distinguish the good from the bad.

Mediocrity is always the outcome of any kind of human enterprise, whether in psychiatry, in painting or architecture. As a whole, I think we are born to be mediocre. Mediocrity is an aspect of the nature of man and so is his inability to not let ugliness occur and his fortunate ability to not see ugliness when he does not care to. I can sit in my back yard which is rather handsome and completely overlook a telephone pole which, if I fastened upon it, I could say ruined my back yard. Fortunately I do not have to fasten upon it and it rather magically disappears if I do not emphasize it.

Following these statements, which the moderator had conscientiously restricted to 15 minutes each, the discussion was opened to the floor. A very important point was made and several times reiterated by the Santa Fe architect, Roger Millington, A.I.A. Exerpts of the exchange between him and Mr. Jackson follow.

I wish to take exception to one statement of Mr. Jackson. I feel that it is very wrong to say that nothing can be done about this ugliness at the municipal level because this is where it all starts — in the precincts, in the city council, within the planning commission. At the present time in Santa Fe, the telephone company at the urging of the municipal government is putting its wires underground. The city has a sign ordinance which is ready to go before the people and which could eliminate many of the signs that have been criticized here as objectionable. The trash and litter can only be controlled by city action. This, I think, is our only chance to cure so much of the ugliness, at least the superficial ugliness — around us.

Mr. Jackson: *That is very true, Mr. Millington. I was trying to discriminate between the various types of ugliness. The type that I said I thought could not be controlled locally is the type of the filling station that springs up on College Avenue or around the Plaza. I don't know whether that can be controlled locally or not? I have a feeling that that sort of thing represents such enormous power and pressure brought to bear on civic authorities that they cannot resist it. This kind of thing has to be controlled in another way.*

Mr. Millington: *I don't say that I have all the answers, and if anyone here does have them, I think he should run for city council. I think that every architect should try to get on either city council or a planning commission as the first step toward clearing up this ugliness of which we are talking.*

Moderator: *I applaud Mr. Millington for being specific. This is a suggestion on which concrete action may or may not be taken as opposed to a very vague feeling that something ought to be done in some direction.*

Mr. R. Lloyd Snedaker, A.I.A., of Salt Lake City made a helpful comment along this line. In our planning of down town Salt Lake, one endeavor was to get the newspaper to assign a reporter to us. He has become what he calls "*the poet laureate to the architects,*" and he was recognized in a lead article in the last *AIA Journal.* We have found that in our particular field he listens to us, understands our problems and has a grasp of the problem himself. The result is that the communication between architects and the public have vastly improved.

Mr. LaFarge observed that, just because an educational project is slow, it is not necessarily less worthwhile than one that is faster. Mr. Jackson countered:

I am always aware that the amount of persuasion that the public can apply is always countered by persuasion on the other side. Every time we try to protest against billboards, a campaign is begun to say that billboards are part of the American way of life. And I think that this counter attack negates a great deal of our attempted persuasion. I'm afraid that I think that force has to be used.

One of the aspects of democracy as distinct from anarchy is that a majority will consent to place restriction on itself. But there will always be a minority that will object to any restrictions. A restriction that is self-imposed by a genuine majority is a tolerable restriction; one that is imposed by a dictator or elite is an intolerable restriction. So long as there is money to be made from billboards, there will be people who put them up regardless of how much protest there is. This will continue until one of two things happens: one, when the public comes to hate billboards so intensely that it will boycott the products so advertised, or, two, when it decides that billboards are objectionable, it will support the government in removing them. If the public will not give that support, then the best intent of civic leaders in this effort are wasted. It's a long-term, slow thing: the text book in the elementary grades, the editorial in the newspaper; all these devices going on for ever and ever are part of the necessary battle.

Mr. John Grace, educated in England and serving this past year as guest design critic at the UNM Department of Architecture, made a very well thought-out point about ugliness from land abuse.

Recently in California I attended a conference devoted to land use. Here it was pointed out that the disappearance of land due to the encroachment of subdivisions was happening so rapidly in California that cities simply cannot afford to go on at the tremendous rate. It is not only a waste of land but a waste of food-producing capacity. The problem becomes more acute as populations of cities like Albuquerque double, and then quadruple. Phoenix, for example, covers a vast area, perhaps 200 square miles! I was recently there, and I defy anyone to get any enjoyment out of passing through it or living in it. I think that the educational factor here will be the high cost of land and the fact that the architect should be able to devise ways of housing people other than in those horrible California type "slurbs" — sprawling, formless, shapeless, urban areas.

Philippe Register, AIA of Santa Fe, made an excellent observation and suggestion relative to the ugliness of urban sprawl.

I know from reading and from pictures that some of the older cities of Europe where land is very valuable have made a clear definition between city and country. One finds beautiful farm land right up to the edge of the city while within there will be a well-developed urban environment. Everyone likes it. Now this is in line with the kind of thing that we are attempting to do in Santa Fe with the projected Five-Mile Perimeter area. But I feel that Santa Fe should emphasize her plan more; we must stay within these bounds, planning and building correctly within these areas and not allowing fringe areas to crop up where there is no control.

Mr. Jackson: *I'd like to know what kind of legislation would implement this sort of development which is certainly very desirable.*

Mr. Millington: *The legislation is already there. The County of Santa Fe right now has the authority to regulate building and development within the Five Mile area, but the people do not back it up.*

This is also true within the city of Santa Fe. With the exception of the militant minority, the people simply do not care. And without this militant minority, you would not get anywhere. This gets back to my main point that the laxity lies in the people.

Mr. Jackson: *In theory this may be all right, but America has a representative government. We elect public officials to take care of our business. Individual participation was all right in the New England village in the eighteenth century, but today we can't go around checking on what our representatives are doing. We elect the best person we can and must assume that he will do his duty.*

A pertinent question was next directed by a member of the audience to the psychiatrist, Dr. Kieve: Is there any study of the degree to which beauty affects man? Does man need beauty? Does ugliness affect him? I am not talking about slums, but about aesthetics?

Dr. Kieve: *I am not acquainted with any studies that prove that beauty has a definite therapeutic quality. There is such a thing as music therapy where music has a direct emotional effect upon a patient. I don't think that we should try to justify beauty on the basis that it is good for the disturbed mind. Beauty can certainly stand on is own feet; it does not require psychiatric validation.*

At this point the Moderator, Mr. Lippincott attempted to summarize the findings of the conference thus far and the first session came to an end.

DESIGN AWARDS —

FIRST AWARD

Proposed Plan for the New Mexico State Capitol, Santa Fe — Architects Associated: John P. Conron, David Lent, Philippe Register, Robert Plettenberg.

This plan reflects with subtilty and comprehensiveness, the country and the culture which make this State. The jury was pleased to find this reflection of an indigenous architectural approach which did not merely imitate. But even more important are these aspects of the plan: the relationship of buildings to spaces, to each other, and to the particular place in New Mexico in which it stands; the recognition that both pedestrians and vehicles are essential parts of such a development, and are handled here in a masterly way; the use of indigenous forms and the scale, proportion and dignity with which they properly invest such a complex.

FIRST AWARD

College of Education, University of New Mexico—Flatow, Moore, Bryan and Fairburn, Architects.

The jury found this group of buildings to be an unusually interesting use of traditional elements of the New Mexican culture and was pleased that it should function, through its plans and design, as what it is: a University building complex, not a pseudo Hopi Indian village. The jury liked the fact that various forms of art had been incorporated in the design, and it felt that the particular significance of this group of buildings is in the way it has caught the spirit of the place, and has broken with a tradition in a way which can set the sights of other architects toward carrying on in a similar spirit.

MERIT AWARD

East Exchange, Mountain States Telephone and Telegraph Company, Albuquerque—Ferguson, Stevens, Mallory and Pearl, Architects.

The scale and proportion of the elements of this building, and its simple architectural statement were, the jury felt, handled with an assurance which commended the building, quite apart from the complex problem it involved of incorporating an existing building into the new structure and of adding onto its facilities. The jury would have considered the building on its own merits as a building, without relation to the remodeling.

MERIT AWARD

Marberry Plaza, Albuquerque—John Reed, Architect.

This building introduces into its design, and makes a dominant element of it, a form — the folded plate — which has been widely (almost too widely) used, but handles it as a modular, rhythmically repeated element. The covered walk is a reminder of local tradition and a welcome shelter in windy weather.

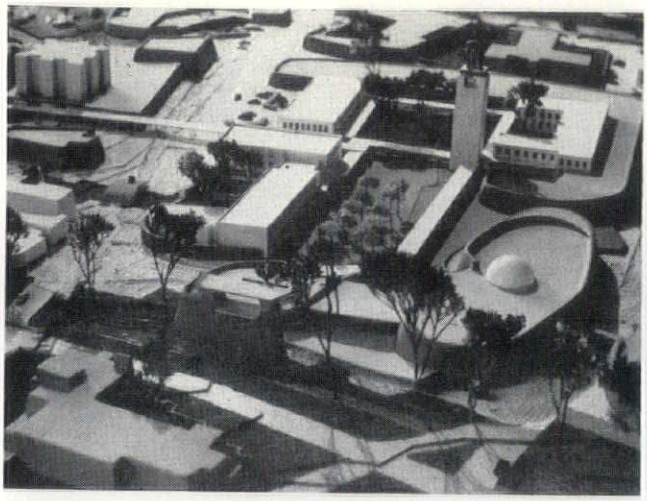
CITATION

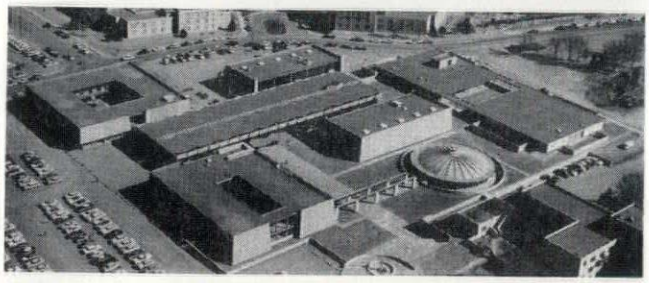
Church Building, Fellowship Unit, Hobbs—W. T. Harris, Architect.

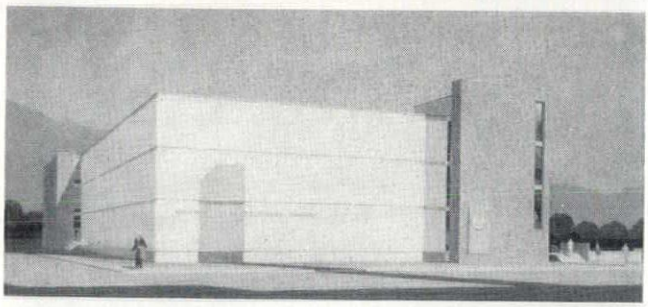
Although the presentation offered only limited material from which to consider this building, the jury felt that the architect had handled very well the problem of the temporary church in a permanent fellowship and school building, and that the solution gave dignity and identity to the function for which it was designed.

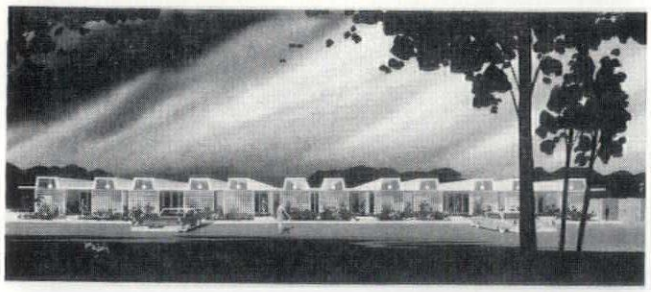
THE JUDGES

Henry L. Wright, F. A. I. A., National President, A. I. A., Los Angeles, California
Elizabeth K. Thompson, A. I. A., Senior Editor, Architectural Record, San Francisco, California
Robert Berne, A. I. A., Chief Architect, Architectural and Engineering Development Division, Office of Civil Defense, Washington, D. C.









SECOND SESSION

The second session of the Conference on Ugliness was opened on Saturday morning, the twentieth, by Mr. Conron. He introduced Dr. Franklin Dickey, Chairman of the UNM Department of English, who served as Moderator for the next two sessions. The first speaker was Mr. Robert Berne, AIA, Department of Defense, Office of Civil Defense, Washington, D. C.

Mr. Berne's message was rather peripheral to the topic of the conference. His real subject was the design of fall-out shelters and the results of a recent competition for a combined fall-out shelter and school which the national AIA sponsored at the bequest of the Department of Civil Defense and of which he showed slides. Mr. Berne related his specialty to the topic at hand by first asserting that fall-out shelters need not be ugly. He seemed to have no more question about their utility or appropriateness than their beauty.

The second panelist, Mr. Joseph Waterson, FAIA and editor of the *AIA Journal*, sent his prepared speech from the hospital. It was read by Mr. Conron.

The question, "Who is responsible for ugliness" has been batted around for quite a while now, and I think we all know the answer — there seems to be only one, and that is, of course that we are all responsible for ugliness.

It's exactly the same as the question, "Who is responsible for civic corruption?" Who indeed? Not the gamblers, the touts and the bribe-givers and takers. Arrest them and put them in jail and corruption goes on just the same. It is only when the people of a city get really and truly aroused and "throw the rascals out of City Hall" that any lasting corrective measures are taken, and they last only as long as the vigilance of the public and the new man in City Hall. After the peak of corruption, reached during the administration of New York's snappy and appealing little Mayor, Jimmy Walker, the good folk of the city got really excited and voted in a genuine reform ticket, headed by Fiorello LaGuardia — one of the best and most colorful Mayors New York ever had. But after him the city drifted into its old ways again — the spearhead of the vigilantes was gone.

So it is with ugliness. Not until a sufficiently large number of people become deeply aroused, until vigilante groups are formed, backed up by City Hall, can anything permanent be accomplished.

More on that later, but speaking of New York, here is a point I want to make: Fifth Avenue is unquestionably one of the great avenues of the world. At its best, on a sunny spring day, with all its flags flying and its shop windows sparkling, walking up it from 42nd Street to the Plaza is a genuinely thrilling urban experience — every city should have its own little bit of that Fifth Avenue flair, even if it's only for two blocks instead of twenty. But even Fifth Avenue, with all the thought and care lavished on it by the city, the Municipal Art Commission and the Fifth Avenue Association, is deteriorating — and much of that deterioration is caused by the do-gooders themselves. The curbline is littered with junk, to the point that you can't see the Avenue for the litter.

Last month I was waiting for an appointment with my son on the west side of Fifth Avenue between 54th Street and 55th Street. To amuse myself and as an exer-

cise in the criticism of urban design, I itemized the objects cluttering the curb. Starting at 55th Street and working south, there were twelve objects, all within two feet of the curb in a short two hundred-foot block.

Please note that the majority of those objects were put there to make the city "more beautiful." How could it be done differently? The lampposts are the only practical essentials; the three saplings are the esthetic essentials. The mail box and one of the litter boxes could be built into the sidewalls of the buildings, as has long been done in Europe. The other items could be eliminated. Enough for New York and Fifth Avenue — but I'm sure any city could turn up equal and worse situations.

Unfortunately, the character of the appearance of the landscape, both city and country, is established by the worst conditions, not the best. We seem to be set hell-bent on a program to pave the world with concrete and asphalt. We bulldoze out the forest and sell off the topsoil containing the accumulated natural history of a million years. Then we plant a few saplings. We can plant trees, but we can never restore the forest. We destroy the entire ecology of an area, and then complain because there are too many insects, because our plants are subject to every disease and bug in the book and because we are overrun with floods and erosion, to name only a few of the evils that overtake us.

Perhaps you are saying to yourselves, "This guy is talking conservation, not ugliness. He's off the beam." No, he's not all off the beam. Conservation, the preservation of our countryside and forest land in all its man-tilled and natural beauty, is very much a part of the campaign against ugliness. This problem of combating ugliness has many fronts, and must be fought on all of them. Is there anything uglier than acres of countryside denuded and bulldozed to make a looping interchange.

We must put worst things first. Whether it's billboards, ugly street furniture and too much of it, automobile junkyards, eroded countryside or expressways slashing concrete-lined canyons through the heart of a city that people live in, we must turn our attention to the sorest spot, and do it quickly.

What to do? One of the most important things we can do is to organize our woman-power. Now I do not mean to imply for a minute than an anti-ugly campaign is simply women's work — it is a job for all men. But we must remember that the Garden Club of America gets most of the credit for whatever anti-billboard regulation there is now as a part of the Federal highway program. Carrie Nation and her followers actually took hatchets into saloons and smashed things up. It took another generation, but ultimately they got the Prohibition amendment they so fiercely fought for. That it was a regrettable mistake was not their fault; they fought and won a battle against more deeply entrenched interests than we face today in any campaign against ugliness. And the suffragettes also fought a battle which ultimately resulted in a complete victory.

So, if you'll pardon the expression, don't underestimate the power of our women. Every community has one or more groups of organized women, all do-gooders at heart, and half of them don't have a genuine program worth fighting for, so they fritter away their great potential on trivialities. Over fifty AIA chapters have women's auxiliaries, and I don't doubt that over half of them are wondering what to do with their energies — beyond promoting architecture and hence their husbands' business. Meet with them and help them draw up a program to work against ugliness in their own communities — but don't abandon them, for it's far more than just women's work. Every AIA chapter can be a nucleus for an anti-ugly campaign.

It is also possible to take an active and physical part in the destruction of ugliness. In the summer of 1957 five undergraduates from Cambridge University set out to clear the Pembrokeshire coast of a clutter of decaying wartime pill-boxes, barracks and rusting wire fences. The County Council willingly provided them with sledgehammers and they cleaned the area up. The idea took hold; the Civic Trust became interested and gave it newspaper and TV publicity, attracting many volunteers. In 1958 there were ten camps of young people actively engaged in cleaning out eyesores, and the scheme has expanded each year. It is now extended to urban areas, where the young people are at work clearing out shanties, decayed billboards and piles of junk in vacant lots. What can be done in England can be done here. But it needs impetus and direction. Chapters of The American Institute of Architects can give it this impetus and direction. It is a clear challenge; It can be tied in with many of the already active interests of the Institute and its chapters — it can certainly be considered part and parcel of urban design, it is equally certainly a part of historic preservation, and it is a natural for the support of the many new Committees on Esthetics.

Put worst things first, but start where you can; don't wait for a big issue, start with the little ones and the bigger ones will come more easily. Newspapers will support such efforts, and public opinion will follow. Make anti-ugliness an issue in every community.

Phil Stitt, Editor of the *Arizona Architect*, gave a most interesting talk on the need to do something about the sign-clutter that harrasses our cities and countryside. Indeed this talk was a model of the sort of campaign of instruction and awareness that every AIA chapter in the country should engage in. Mr. Stitt's talk was aimed at the conscience of the Arizona citizen, but it hit its mark with the Conference as well.

Mr. Stitt took as his point of departure Oliver La Farge's three categories of ugliness (ignorance, the creativity that failed, and profit). About the ugliness of profit he was eloquent.

. . . But the third form of ugliness, that of profit or of greed, multiplies with a chain reaction speed. It is the greatest threat to our environmental health and sanity.

The magnitude and complexity of the problem often discourages us from even beginning; it causes us to divide our efforts among so many objectives that we show no progress. We need to realize, however, that we get no power from a stream by letting it wander all over the valley. Concentrate even a small stream in a narrow channel and it will turn a wheel. Thus we must concentrate our efforts on one objective at a time. I think that billboards and excessive signery are good first targets for us. The excesses can easily be shown; they are quite apparent if we will only wake people up to see them; they are harder to justify to an irritated public than power lines.

Economically signs can not be justified. In the motel industry, for example, they have so multiplied that test cases indicate that in areas where motel signs have been removed, the operators have been glad since the signs had lost their effectiveness.

Basil O'Conner, head of the March of Dimes, had a formula. He said that a successful campaign had four aspects. First, he said, you have to have a cause— in his case improved public health; second you have to identify it — in his case, the campaign against polio; third you have to dramatize it, create a constant and grilling awareness of the problem; and fourth, you have to make it easy for people to do what they should do.

I think of applying that formula to our problem. Our cause is a better environment. We identify it in terms of eliminating billboards, power lines, etc., but only one at a time. There are various ways of dramatinzing the case — photographs are certainly one very good way of doing this. And finally you have to assume leadership in the ground swell to eliminate signs.

Mr. Stitt clinched his argument by an eloquent run of slides of ugly signery which, after ten minutes, left nothing more to be said on the subject. The evil had been identified, the ugliness dramatized.

Next panelist was Mr. Albert Solnit, an architect turned planner. At the time of the conference and for two years prior to it, he was the chief planner for the New Mexico Planning Office. More recently he has resigned from this position to teach city planning in Lima, Peru under the sponsorship of Yale University.

There are many critics of urban aesthetics who can reel off what's bad in civic appearance. Far fewer, though, will point out what's good. These I would term the educators — and it's more of them we need. This is because, as Doug Haskell once pointed out, most of the public is in kindergarten as fas as being knowledgable about what's in their surroundings. To use an analogy, our present public sensitivity to environmental ugliness is at the same embryonic stage as our sensitivity to unsanitary conditions was back in the 1890's. I have just come back from Mexico where the government and public health people are still trying to wean people away from washing clothes, animals and themselves in the same water that they drink. The thought of drinking from such a polluted source or eating from a street vendor's fly-covered food stock is so repulsive to most Americans that they instintively react to avoid even touching such food and water. Much of this reaction can be attributed to the high value and emphasis we place on cleanliness and hygiene in our educational and child-rearing systems.

It's not too far fetched to say that if we were able to educate and emphasize better looking environment within our homes and schools to only a fraction of the degree we do on matters of cleanliness — the public would not stand for much of what is unthinkingly imposed upon it now. I have personally seen Europeans, especially Scandanavians, almost as repelled by some of our road town strips as my wife was by the sight of maggoty meat for sale in a Haitian market.

Now that we've achieved education for children and housewives, let's go on and educate a group that needs this sharpening of peripheral vision more than the others. I refer, of course, to those environmental manipulators — the architects and builders. Their un-

L-R: ALBERT SOLNIT, ELIZABETH THOMPSON, JOHN TATSCHL, ROBERT BERNE, FRANKLIN DICKEY

concern with what is or will be around their one particular project is often unbelievable. Only certain Hindu holy men such as those who go into trances on beds of nails might equal the detachment from surroundings and inward-turned vision so common to many of our leading edifice builders. Remembering how I was taught and what I've seen in various schools of architecture, the chaotic results on all sides are not surprising. Virtually every problem handed out to the students required the design of a new building on a pie-in-the-sky plot which had no surroundings — no other buildings to relate to — and often no pre-existent natural features on or around the site. Should it then be so shocking that until recently we have to leave the U. S. to find most of the really good examples of new urban design? By this I mean the building groups that respect views and vistas, the scale and textures of surrounding buildings and most of all, amenities for people, shade, places to sit or rest, places to go to the rest room, places to get a drink of water, places of interest to children, places to leave packages, places to eat or drink out of doors. All this uncluttered by the ample stock of the neon company, the sandwich sign maker, and worst of all, that little old city sign maker who so often insists on notifying you of all the ordinances on the books at every 50 feet in bad graphics. I used the term "recently" because in the last few years some of our regional shopping center developments have made me feel that we are at last going to see some light coming through the window. On the other hand, we're still making mistakes on a grand scale like the New York's World's Fair, the rape of Park Avenue via the Pan American building, and closer to home, we have springing up all over the state the various chain motels done in "Southern California modern."

Perhaps the clearest inditement of our latter day temple builders came from the secretaries; I once talked to some at CBS on Madison Avenue. Many of them spend a good deal of their lunch hour strolling. Interestingly enough, even though they were only a short distance from the street with the Lever Building, the Seagram Building, and many other shiny and handsome works of modern architecture, they avoided that street like a hip-spreading diet. Instead of spending their time in the midst of these monuments of free enterprise, they preferred to walk on to shabby old Second and Lexington Avenues because as they put it,

"so what's to see or buy at the Seagram Building — Second and Lexington have dozens of cute little shops."

If anyone missed the point of this parable, it's that pure architectural form alone, no matter how well designed, will not sustain human interest. I am hoping that these bleak canyons of commerce start decaying soon so that the little people with those interesting shops can get in one day and give these areas the vitality that was autoclaved out by our builders in the contemporary mode.

There's one other area that I'm hopeful about if we get help to it soon enough. This is our mass produced look-alike residential districts. Here again the instinctive human urge for variety may yet overcome the monotony and sterility of the average large tract housing area. I saw some wonderful examples of this, of humanity overcoming economics, in low-cost single family housing developments in Mexico and Puerto Rico. To keep costs low, the builders made all houses boxy and virtually identical in detailing and facade. The over-all results, when finished, were undoubtedly monotonous, but that was before the people went to work. Wrought iron balconies, grills, fences, and porch columns appeared on some houses. The white and watery pastel colors were changed to brilliant yellows, blues, and even some reds. Roof lines were changed by awnings, overhangs, and additions to the parapets. Carports were enclosed, and in some cases turned into soft drink stands, small beauty parlors or grocery stores. While these folk-art solutions were far from ideal, the changes to the area were a decided improvement over the original pristine condition of the neighborhood.

I've seen the same thing happen in New England to rows of the boxiest Cape Cod houses after a few years. This inevitable process of humanizing tracts would probably turn out better if the FHA could provide some advisory help for these home-owning folk artists similar to that now provided by county extension agents to fruit and vegetable gardeners. The cost would be justified by the fact that the FHA, by improving the proposed alteration to a home, may very well be protecting a mortgage it insures. The small cost of such a service could very well come out of the ½ of 1% mortgage insurance charge which is way out of line with the actual loss rate anyway.

As many of you have surmised by now, I'm in favor of placing our bets for improvement of our environment in the educational process, as opposed to more restrictive laws or burning the offensive objects as The Fountainhead *advocated. This is because in my experience with design ordinances, I have formed the belief that you can't legislate good taste — you can at best protect a few examples of it from further incursions by vulgarians — but anything else soon lands you in the position of making personal preference pose as equitable application of the law. After sorting out all the other cures, I would simply leave you with this article of faith . . . that when people learn to tell the good from the bad well enough to notice the difference, they will be well on the way to caring about the difference.*

Mr. John Tatschl, professor of sculpture at UNM and recipient of the Art in Architecture Award was the next speaker. As he very correctly observed, if one wishes to say anything new and original to a conference on ugliness, he had better see to it that he does not come tenth on the agenda. His speech was filled with deft humor and apt references to ideas or suggestions that had been made earlier. As for what he said, there was a certain aloof pessimism that stood rather apart from the general feeling of the meeting that something could and must be done about ugliness. Essentially Prof. Tatschl's point was this:

. . . Ugliness does have a function and ugliness is the inevitable result of our social values. We are not motivated by beauty; we are motivated to make profit and to find comfort. And what is stronger than comfort and profit? These, I think, are the sources of true ugliness.

Would you like to go without a motorcar? You are objecting to all these signs? Well, you need them, if you are going to drive in motorcars; if you had no stop signs where would you be? You want to have comfort. Yet much of your comfort comes via these ugly power lines you so dislike.

If you think that ugliness is an American pattern, let me tell you that this is quite wrong. Ugliness is not American, it is universal. You in America would never be able to create the ugliness of a Tokyo or a Rangoon. For one thing, you are too well washed. Ugliness is not only visible, it is audible and it can also be smelled.

Ugliness is universal and so is humanity, and by its very existence humanity will forever produce ugliness. The only solace is that we have in this mass of humanity a few people who feel that they have been chosen to add beauty to this ugliness.

So we are all together in this boat; there is no sense of accusing each other of all sorts of ugliness. I suggest that we all learn to live with it. Secondly, don't get a national complex that American cities are ugly. Of course they are. But when you go inside a house, you find at least an odorless bathroom which is more than you can find in many a land on this earth.

The second panel's final speaker was Mrs. Elizabeth Thompson, West Coast Editor of *Architectural Record*. Throughout the conference her quiet but beautifully modulated voice was raised in support of optimism and persistent effort. On several occasions she cited personal experiences with merchant groups, planning boards and civic officials to prove that efforts to achieve a better environment were not futile. Unfortunately the last quarter of her talk went unrecorded because of a faulty tape recorder.

Ugliness comes as a slow blight. You do have to be on guard against it. It does have its roots in a lack of awareness, as Mr. LaFarge has said. But this is a kind of innocent responsibility for ugliness. I think there is a more insidious kind because it is so seldom recognized. And that is ignorance, willful ignorance among those people whose business it is not to be ignorant. These are the decision makers: the elected officials, the departmental staffs and the officials at city, county and state level. These people too often are ignorant of what I call "the environmental arts." And they sometimes don't try to inform themselves about this subject.

But I think something can be done about this ignorance since these elected officials are citizens just as we are. We must persuade them that they must seek advice from those who are experts on the environmental arts.

There is still another root which accounts for more ugliness than anything else and that is sheer stupidity. The only thing that can be done to overcome this ob-

stacle is to talk to the offenders, backed up by facts and supported by as many people as you can get. Though I used to think that city councils were pretty terrible, by experience in recent years has shown me that even councilmen can listen, that they do care and that they are open to what is said by those who do know.

Mrs. Thompson then illustrated in concrete detail the constitution of the Civic Arts Committee of Berkeley of which she is a member. The record of this citizen-constituted committee proves conclusively that advances can be made in the amelioration of our urban environments. She went on to say that in Berkeley they had eschewed the notion that any kind of improvement could be brought about by a design control ordinance. We feel that the improvements recommended by the Civic Arts Committee can be achieved through changes in the existing housing, zoning and building codes. But we do not want to inflict and to restrict by means of any sort of design control ordinance.

On Saturday afternoon the conference reconvened for the third and final session. The meeting opened with a statement by Father Michael J. Ferrin, Dominican priest, Ph.D., and professor of logic and philosophy at St. Michael's College in Santa Fe. Father Ferrin, who is also president of the Philosophical Society of New Mexico, had been unable to attend the earlier sessions. The philosophical tone of his remarks rather set the tone of the last session which might more logically have devoted itself to practical steps for eliminating ugliness. In retrospect, it seems rather a pity that Father Ferrin could not have participated in an earlier stage of the conference charged with the task of defining the manifestations and causes of ugliness. His speech is recorded in full.

I would like to make a few remarks concerning what I think is the root cause of the ugliness around us. By ugly I mean that which is essentially chaotic, disjointed, dislocated and out of order. In one sentence I could sum up the basic reason for the predominance of the chaotic and the disjointed by saying that the usual delight and delectation which is afforded by the beautiful has been replaced by a special new delight which is found in the experience of supreme freedom in the night of subjectivity. By this I simply mean that because man has become dislocated within his own mind and in his own emotion, obviously what he makes will be out of order and therefore ugly.

I would like to suggest as the real cause for this dislocation the divorce between philosophy and science. By philosophy I mean man's pursuit of truth, of meanings and values dictated not by that which is useful but dictated by the demands of the dignity of the human intellect which is designed primarily to contemplate truth for its own sake. Because philosophy and science have been divorced, science has taken over the role of the queen of all knowledge. This used to be the role of philosophy. Philosophy, on the other hand, has been degraded to where it no longer is concerned with the meanings of things, but with the meanings of meanings. Because science has nothing to order and direct it, it has been degraded to the pursuit of knowledge for the merely practical purposes demanded by human living.

Since science rules the roost, the mentality of science and the objectives of science, which are primarily pragmatic, have pervaded our whole mental and emotional atmosphere. Science, like art, is a definite making. But the making of science is geared to the production of the merely practical and therefore because of the divorce between philosophy and science, the making of science has displaced the making of art. And because we have become dislocated and disordered in our own mental outlook, we no longer seek the delight of the beautiful — that which is ordered, that which possesses the basic character of integrity, proportion and a special type of radiance. This has been replaced by man seeking within himself this false, supreme freedom in the darkness of the night of self.

Following this provocative statement, the meeting was opened to comments from panel members. Dr. Kieve spoke first with these pertinent observations.

Two things have struck me throughout this conference. One was mentioned by name, and I'm afraid misnamed; the other was something that emerged as a reaction within me.

The word "education" was raised time and again and referred to as a kind of cure. Especially when people came to an impasse and did not know what to do about it, they said, "We need more education."

I attend a great number of meetings a year that deal with one or another aspects of human frailty. Now in the twentieth century one is expected to give answers. —I think this is the first century in which we are expected really to give answers; before that it was just people that asked questions. — At my conferences in lieu of answers one always hears "What we need is more education." And whether one is dealing with mental health or architectural health or with any sign that man is finite and fallible and has essentially not changed much, one always hears that what we need is more education.

Now sometimes I seem to hear "propaganda" when the word "education" is mentioned; at other times I seem to understand "seduction." And it also seems to me that the people who shunt their perplexities onto the siding of education never distinguish between "content," which is really converted into propaganda, and "method" which has to do with how one approaches information. It would appear that when people talk about education, especially in the adult field, they are really talking about exposing people to their own convictions in the form of propaganda and calling this education.

The second thing that emerged in me as a feeling, and a nagging discomfort, was this: where do you get all this optimism that the limitations of man can be put out simply by pushing forward the frontier of knowledge? The fact that we know more has really not altered man, and there is not the slightest evidence that an increase in knowledge has any real bearing on the operation of human beings.

Mrs. Thompson countered Dr. Kieve with the following:

I feel optimistic because I have seen peoples goals change from the ordinary to something — I won't say "beautiful," for I sometimes think that beauty is not something one can head for. But we can find something that makes a better environment and I have seen people want this better environment because they have been given a different vision. I think it is up to all of us who have the vision to spread it. And why should we be pessimistic when we have everything to do? But we can't do it unless we get involved in it. Nothing is

achieved unless one is involved. There is all of hope ahead.

Mr. Scott returned to the remarks of Father Ferrin:

Now I think I know what Father Ferrin means when he talks about the dislocation of man. If I understand him correctly and to the extent that he is addressing our age and is connecting the dislocation of man with ugliness, I don't follow him. For one thing I don't think that ugliness is peculiar to our age. As for the dislocation of man and our arts, I would say that out of this dislocation, by which he means, perhaps, man without religious belief — has come all of the significant art of the twentieth century — all of our most vital music, painting, poetry and writing of all kinds.

Now it is possible, I realize, to stand up and say that it is all worthless. And it is also possible that some future century will say just that of twentieth century literature. But for us, at least, I think there is no argument that all which is vital in our literature and arts has come out of this very situation.

This observation triggered a somewhat inconclusive discussion as to what degree an artist or an author deliberately sets himself to the job of creating either "beauty" or "ugliness." Mr. Solnit brought the trend of thought back to more practical matters by remarking:

I would like to observe that you people here have revealed to me exactly what is wrong when we start trying to regulate the world into an ordered form of beauty. As a city planner, I have had experience with this. The thing that grows out of these conscious attempts to say, "We will make our environment beautiful; write us an ordinance on it," is insipid mediocrity. The results are comparable to a decision that no one would be allowed to write music without a melody — everything has to sound like the Pastoral Symphony — no one would be allowed to write poetry in a different meter, nor attempt a novel that didn't have an upbeat ending. So you ask me why don't we plan beautiful cities!

Mr. Jackson: *I will paraphrase George Bernard Shaw in answer to that problem. It is frequently said that you cannot legislate beauty. Shaw got tired of hearing it said that you can't legislate goodness. Instead, he said that legislation is the only way ever to get good people. He said that it is only when we abolish slavery that we have decent employers and only when we have certain kinds of income tax that people are willing to support charities.*

Now I believe that the same sort of thing holds of legislating beauty in a city. It will only come when we have legislation that is tolerant of aesthetic effort that we are going to have beautiful cities. If, for example, you have a tax rebate for a certain amount of space which is devoted to landscaping in front of an office, if you have a certain amount of money that is appropriated to the decoration of the town, that is the only way we are going to get aesthetic improvement in our communities. It is not going to be achieved by the individual pioneer effort to make his house beautiful, because everyone around is living by a totally different economic order. That is why I think that legislation is the beginning and perhaps the end of producing beautiful cities.

Mr. Tatschl: *Who is to decide what is beautiful?*

Mr. Jackson: *It's not for anybody to decide. It's for the man himself who does it. If you encourage him to produce art by a tax reduction because he is putting 10% of his expense into art, we will have something worthwhile.*

Mr. Tatschl: *And if he decides to build it in the shape of a Coca-Cola bottle?*

Mr. Jackson: *That's all right. That is better than having him design it only to bring in the most income, which is the way it is done now. I would not object to bad art if only some aesthetic effort were involved. All I am saying is that you should give a man a legislative opportunity to produce art. You pay a man to produce art in his building.*

Mr. Solnit: *Based on personal experience, I would like to comment on Mr. Jackson's last statement. There is a certain city in the east that shares Mr. Jackson's thoughts. It said that all urban renewal work must have 2% of the total cost of the project devoted to the fine arts. They soon reached the ridiculous point where a warehouse had to have the same proportion of basrelief or murals as the city hall or hospital.*

One of the shortcomings of legislation is that there is no humanity to it. Legislation soon becomes a monolith. It is written by lawyers to stand the test of the courts and it is usually quite unsuccessful in being human or sensible.

Mrs. Thompson: *Legislation is not written by lawyers only; it begins with others who have studied the particular problem and know what would or would not be a good thing for the community. Lawyers only put decisions in legal language. I would say, Mr. Solnit, that your city had poorly drawn its ordinance.*

Mr. Solnit: *One of the things I run into when I write an ordinance is that the only thing you can do with it is be preventive. Legislation is so damned negative. You can't be positive. You can not write into the law that something is going to come out beautiful or that it will even come out sensibly. You can only write into law that you will prevent excesses, will stop having certain kinds of signs, will prevent encroachments on the right-of-way. This is all fine; I support it; everybody in the planning field supports it. But where you get beyond my depth as a planner is where you try to write "beauty" into law. You cannot require the sign maker, for example, to bring his sign to you for you to decide whether it is beautiful or not. The courts will not uphold this kind of law which they call "legislation by whim and caprice."*

Mr. Jackson: *But under existing circumstances a man has to spend as little as possible on the house or store he is building in order to make a go of it. Otherwise the good man and the artist is so terribly handicapped that he goes under. If he were given a tax rebate on condition that he set it back and landscape it, surely there is nothing regimentary about that.*

Mr. Solnit: *That's fine.*

Mr. Jackson: *In writing this kind of legislation, there is certainly no need why it must be compulsory or universal. You simply give people a chance by giving them a legal reward for producing something that they consider beautiful. As it now is we handicap people for producing anything out of the ordinary. That is one reason we have ugliness and monotony. They cost nothing to produce whereas it costs a great deal to produce something that is satisfactory.*

At this point the afternoon session recessed for a coffee break. Afterwards, when the discussion was opened to the floor, the trend of thought became somewhat less clear. There were wordy hassles over what is beauty while the supposed objective of the final meeting, which was to decide what to do about ugliness, was rather lost.

N. M. CAPITOL PLAN PUBLISHED

The proposed plan for the New Mexico State Capitol in Santa Fe, the design of Architects Associated, was featured in two national architectural publications: **Architectural Record,** Western Section, April 1963, and **Progressive Architect,** May 1963. Commented the latter: Preliminary designs of the entire complex reveals a strong solution that recalls, but does not imitate, the architecture of the region . . . Unfortunately, the design has come under attack for what seems to be its finest qualities—namely, strength and a sense of regional continuity.

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NO. 8 | folded plates

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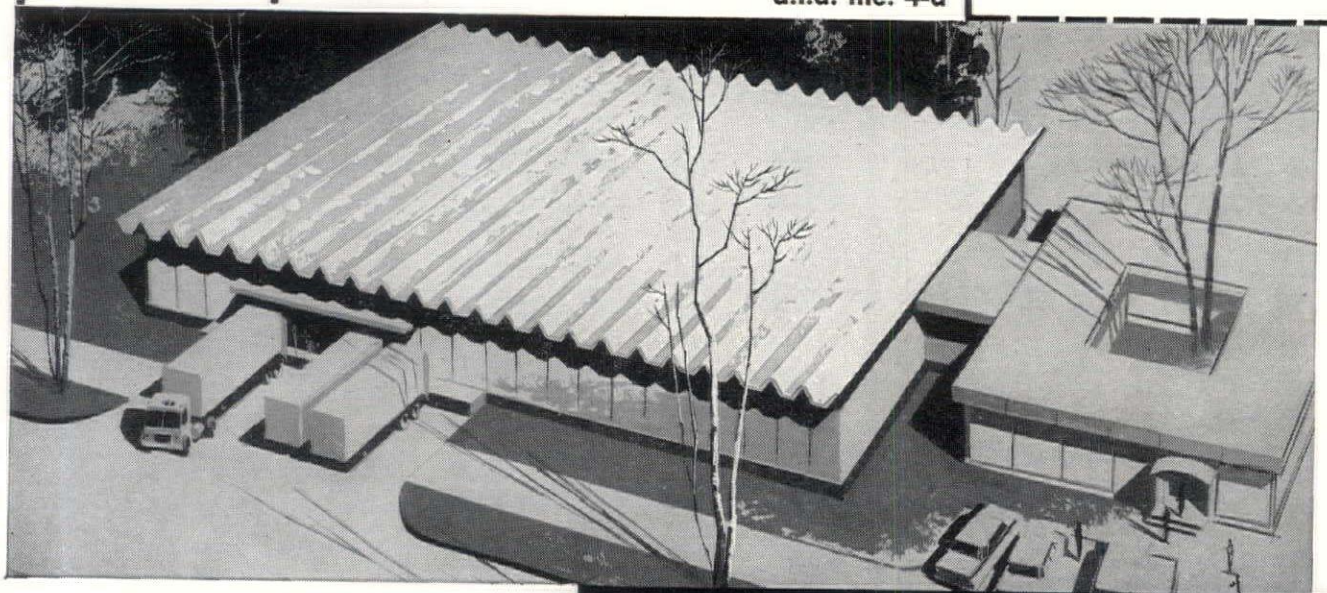

Tremendous span and load-carrying abilities characterize concrete shell roofs in the form of folded plates—also known as F/P's. In industrial construction folded plates are being used more and more to provide great areas of column-free space for manufacturing or storage.

The ability of folded plates to cantilever can be applied advantageously in the design of schools, stores and hangars.

There are three basic types (two shown below) of folded plate shells—V-shaped, Z-shaped and a modified W-shape. The economy of F/P's is increased with form re-usage.

Typical span data for V- and W-shaped plates are shown in the tables below.

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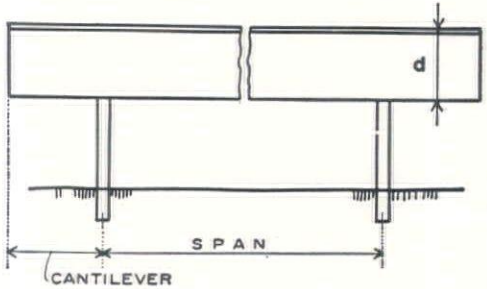


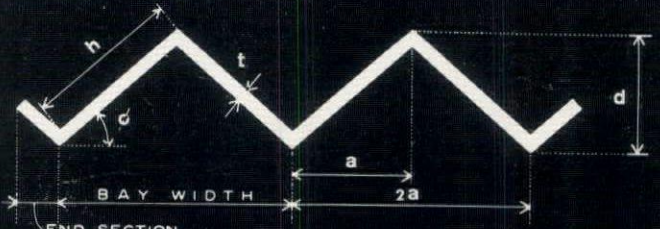
Sufficient cantilever can help to counterbalance the span. The usual span-to-depth ratio varies from 1:10 to 1:15. Example: If span is 40′ long, the usual minimum depth is about $\frac{40}{10}$ or 4′.

Formula:

$$\text{VOLUME OF CONCRETE IN } \frac{\text{CU. YARDS}}{\text{SQ. FEET}} = \frac{th}{324a}$$

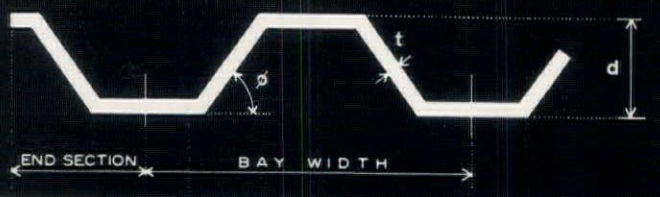
h = ft.
t = in.
a = ft.

TWO SEGMENT F/P



SPAN	ø* max.	ø* min.	d max.	d min.	2a (1)	t (2)	reinforcing (3)
40′	45°	25°	4′-0″	2′-9″	15′	4″	1.2-1.6
60′	45°	25°	6′-0″	4′-0″	20′	4″ 6″	1.9-2.7
75′	45°	25°	7′-6″	5′-0″	25′	4″ 6″	2.6-3.7
100′	45°	25°	10′-0″	6′-9″	30′	5″ 6″	4.0-5.2

FOUR SEGMENT F/P



40′	45°	30°	5′	2′-6″	20′	3″	1.5-2.0
60′	45°	30°	6′	4′	25′	3″ 3½″	2.0-3.0
75′	45°	30°	7′-6″	5′	30′	3″ 4″	2.5-4.0
100′	45°	30°	10′	6′-6″	40′	4″ 5″	4.0-6.0

* max. recommended slope is 45°
(1) values shown may vary with architectural design
(2) average thickness in inches
(3) pounds per square foot of projected area

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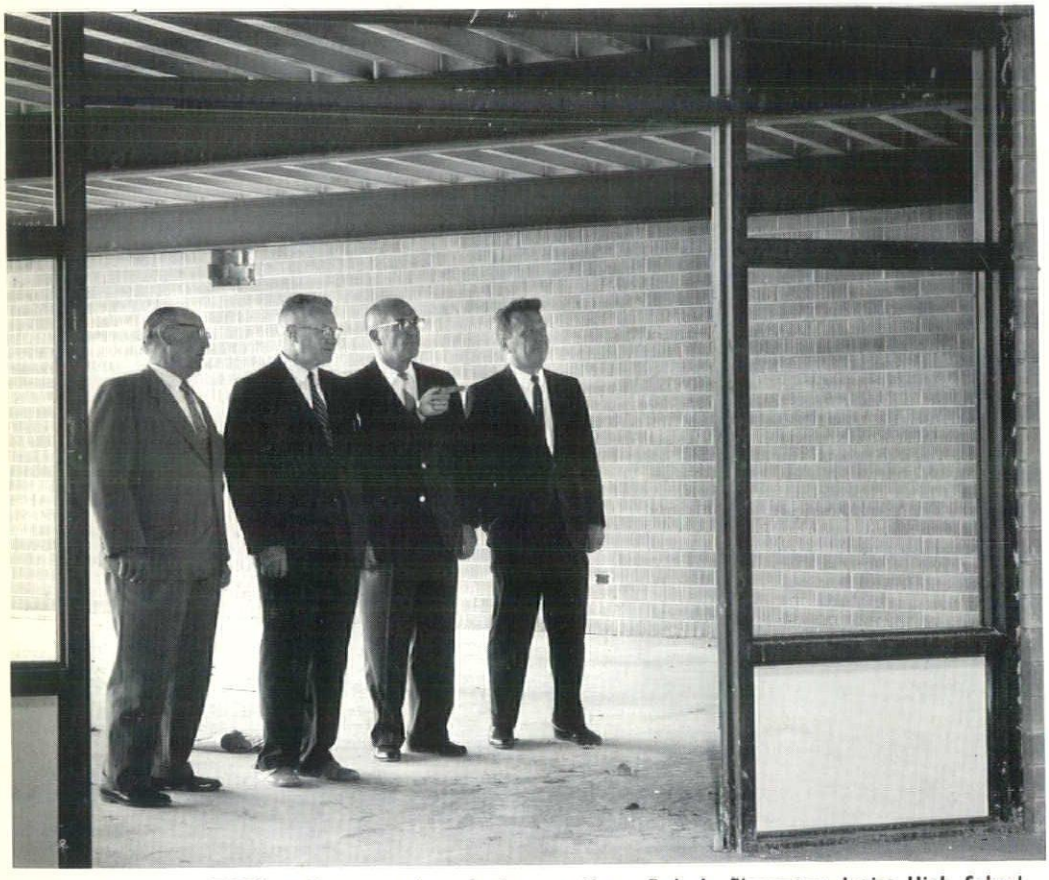

Shown inspecting RMU wall construction of the new Hayes-Embudo Elementary-Junior High School in Albuquerque are left to right, architects Louis G. Hesselden, Dr. Noah C. Turpen of the Albuquerque Public Schools, Richard G. Otto of Edgar D. Otto & Son, Inc., and architect A. W. Marshall, Jr.

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  the wire cut-like face of RMU duces a pleasing multi-hued sh effect.
- FIRE SAFE
  the estimated fire resistance ratin determined by method describe National Concrete Masonry Ass tion Bulletin, "Concrete Masonry Resistance Ratings" is three hours.
- LOWER HEATING & COOLING COSTS
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