

BALTIMORE CHAPTER A. I. A.

# ARCHITECTS' REPORT

*Due to an unusual overseas assignment, this issue of the "REPORT" is being edited many thousand feet in the air, several thousand miles from files, references and helping hands. We therefore apologize for any discrepancies or shortcomings—GWL*

## THE ARCHITECT AND TOMORROW'S CITY

The Chapter can look back with pride at the two day Regional Conference with the above title that it staged last month.

Its success was pre-ordained by the unusually distinguished starting line-up of panelists, speakers, and moderators which attracted fellow architects from all thirteen chapters in the Middle Atlantic area and distinguished citizens from all walks of life in Baltimore. The fact that all but one of the participants showed up (even architects break their legs) was indicative of the importance that these leaders in planning, banking, government, architecture, and development attached to this meeting. Sonorous platitudes were conspicuously absent as each of the twelve participants presented his or her provocative ideas on planning, often at the risk of contradicting his distinguished predecessors.

VICTOR GRUEN urged us to become architects of the total urban environment, to throw off the congestion caused in our brains, in our cities and on our highways by "autorosis"; to separate flesh and machines, each in its proper place; to use our automobiles for transportation to, but not into, our communities where we will once again learn to participate in the social, cultural, and spiritual aspects of life. He explained his cluster system of planning, developed like pedestrian nuclei of various uses served and held together by a continuous flow highway system.

JAMES W. ROUSE, JR. declared that the time had come for public acceptance of city planning and that the legal economic, engineering, and architecture tools had finally been developed. He bemoaned the fact that it was apparently so easy to raise \$45,367,557 for the Chesapeake Bay Bridge and then a few years later raise another \$130,000,000 for the Harbor Tunnel and yet so difficult to interest the people and government officials in comparatively small sums for city planning.

MRS. CHLOETHIEL SMITH promptly refuted Mr. Rouse's claims about the handy tools and described

several amusing ruses she had to resort to in order to get some of the simpler amenities into Washington's largest Urban Renewal project.

SENATOR JOHN J. SPARKMAN, of Alabama, honored the banquet by making a major policy address and stating that it was his intention to set up an Urban Renewal Program based on an expenditure of \$350,000,000 annually.

DAVID WALKER of the Housing & Home Finance Agency pointed out that very little of the money already allocated for advance Community Planning had ever been applied for and suggested that architects could and should be leaders in getting this advanced planning started.

CHARLES A. BLESSING presented an illustrated talk on the truly amazing work that is actually being done in Detroit, as described in a previous issue of the "REPORT".

HERBERT S. GREENWALD, Chicago, New York, Newark, and Detroit Developer, and only recently described in FORUM as a latter day Renaissance Prince, proved with his provocative remarks to be a fitting valedictorian. He challenged the architects to design better, finer, and more efficient buildings and chastised them for trying to become sociologists, economists, and planners.

The above are a few of the high points of a very lively two days of discussion. As did the panelists, we leave it to you to continue this discussion, and hence the benefits of the Conference, and to eventually start to pick up the job of planning in Baltimore that, to quote Mr. Gruen: "by default we have left to the traffic engineers, planning administrators, real estate developers, and garage builders".

Our heartiest thanks and congratulations to Messrs. Archibald C. Rogers, Van Fossen Schwab, Allen C. Hopkins, Kelsey Y. Saint, Alexander S. Cochran, and Robert R. Fryer on a job extremely well done, and particularly to the panelists for a fine performance.



## Building Costs Rise Two Percent In Year

Building construction costs, notwithstanding market weaknesses general across the United States, have managed to squeak up another two percent for the 12 months ending in March. All of this came about in the first half of the period. Since then there has been enough price deterioration in retail quotations to builders for items of building materials, equipment, appliances and accessories, to slightly more than offset the impact of high wage rates to building trades craftsmen.

Commenting upon the significance of information received from several hundred contributors in 48 States, Myron L. Matthews, Manager-Editor of the Dow Real Estate Valuation Calculator, says "As for the future it appears reasonable to expect that the cost to build almost anything from a cottage to a skyscraper will push on upward at a rate of about one percent every four months, or three percent for 12 months. But things are in such uncertain balance that a moderate drift in psychology could change the outlook one way or the other, almost overnight."

Of the two major components of construction cost—materials and labor—labor has again exhibited the greater strength. This has been enough to overcome the rather severe drops in retail lumber price quotations and the minor weaknesses in other prices for items in the market sampling basket.

The price tag on construction is 149 percent higher than in prewar 1941. Generally speaking, the average level of cost was then approximately equal to the average for the years 1926-1929. In between there had been a depression and a recovery. At any rate the cost to build is today roughly two and one half times what it was in '41. Saying it another way it takes \$2.50 today to buy what \$1.00 bought 17 years ago. The \$8,000 house of 1941, exclusive of land and charges other than labor and materials for construction, would come today with a tag for \$20,000. Thus the current purchasing power of the 1941 building dollar is 40 cents.

These observations do not hold uniformly true in all of the 150 cities tested—it's just the way the averages happen to work out. In some places material and wages are substantially lower than New Yorkers pay. Extremes are: Greenville, S. C., 40 percent less; Montgomery, Ala., 39 percent less. Generally, costs average 12 percent under New York.

The 17-year post-1941 range of cumulative cost increases is from 122 percent (Newark, N. J., Boston, Mass., and Utica, N. Y.) to 203 percent at San Francisco. On this basis it takes from \$2.22 to \$3.03 to buy as much construction today as \$1.00 bought in Pearl Harbor 1941, and the purchasing power of the prewar building dollar ranges from 33 cents at San Francisco to 45 cents at Newark, Boston and Utica, depending upon where in the United States the building is located.

## The Architect-In-Training Program Launched

The Chapter Committee on Education is at present very active looking for improvements that can be made in architectural education in our community and it might be helpful to the young men in our profession if we all took note of this new training program sponsored by the Institute.

"A major event in the history of the Institute and in the expansion of AIA services to the profession is the inauguration of the Architect-in-Training Program.

"It is recognized by the professional schools and the registration laws that the school cannot produce the completely trained architect. Education for the profession is a life-long process and this particular phase between college and registration is a vital part of the young architect's continuing education preparing him to take his place in the profession as a competent practitioner.

"Inasmuch as the architectural profession cannot, by the nature of its operations, establish an intern program such as that operated by the medical profession, the initiative and the continuity must be provided largely by the candidate himself.

"The procedures have been kept as simple as possible to avoid excessive organizational and paper work at the chapter level. The candidate, a degree-holder who intends to seek registration, enrolls directly with the AIA and receives from the Octagon a Log Book including sufficient recording forms for three years of office experience, a Log Book supplement which contains valuable references and material for continuing self-education, and a certificate of his enrollment as an Architect-in-Training. All enrolled candidates will receive from time to time additional material for the Log Book supplement which includes references to all of the leading profession, technical and scientific organizations and trade associations in the building industry. The program has been approved by the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards although there is no official relationship between the candidate's Log of experience and the registration board of the state in which he seeks registration. The primary purpose of the program is not the achievement of registration but the enhancement of the candidate's continuing education in connection with his period of office experience.

"The responsibilities and duties of the AIA chapter are to provide one or more advisers from among the chapter membership, assign candidates in the chapter area to an adviser, and arrange for at least one conference per year between adviser and candidate. Candidates, whether or not Junior or Associate members of the chapter, will be expected to participate in all educational and technical meetings conducted by the chapter. It is anticipated that in chapters where there may be a considerable number of candidates they may work with the chapter



officers in the development of special courses for their benefit. Initially the program is limited to degree-holders. Later enrollment will be available to non-degree men screened by chapter committees.

"The employer architect has only one official responsibility. To initial the quarterly record sheets showing distribution of the candidate's time according to type of work, type and size of building. Employer's endorsements of the record sheets are for correctness of time records, not appraisal of the quality of work performed. Unofficially it is assumed that the employer, in the tradition of the profession, will be interested in the progress of the candidate and arrange for him to have the widest possible variety of experience."

(Reprinted from Nov. 1957 Journal, AIA)

Those who wish to enroll may obtain blanks at the Chapter Office. An enrollment fee of \$5.00 must accompany each application. As these enrollments are approved in Washington, they will be assigned certificate numbers, the Chapter will be advised and members of the Committee on Education will be appointed to interview the candidate and start him on his way.

Further questions should be directed to the Chapter office.

## National Convention

Secretary of the Treasury Robert B. Anderson will be keynoter for The American Institute of Architects' annual convention in Cleveland, Ohio, July 7-11, 1958.

Because the architect's services are expanding and the demands upon him are greater and more diverse than ever before, the convention program this year is geared towards providing a deeper understanding of the economic forces of the nation that are influencing environmental patterns.

Secretary Anderson's opening address on Tuesday morning, July 8, will be followed by the architectural keynote speech of Philadelphia architect Vincent G. Kling. At luncheon that day, Harlan Hatcher, president of the University of Michigan will speak on "The Western Reserve—Part of our Heritage".

Dr. Margaret Mead, Associate Curator of Ethnology at the American Museum of Natural History, will address the convention on Wednesday morning, July 9. Her topic will be "The Anthropologist Looks at Architecture". Dr. Mead is widely known as a writer on anthropological subjects.\*

Specialists serving on panels will discuss such practical matters as how to make better cost estimates, where to find construction money, developing today's building program, working with the home-builder. Other seminars are scheduled on urban planning, office organization, chapter affairs, and on "Professional Status—Your Most Valuable Asset".

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### ARCHITECTS' REPORT

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1025 St. Paul Street (2) • MULberry 5-0933  
Hours: Eleven to Five.

The Gold Medal, highest honor given by the Institute, will be presented at the annual banquet on Thursday, July 10 to John Wellborn Root of Chicago. Regular convention events include the induction of new Fellows, the Annual Exhibition of Outstanding American Architecture, the President's reception, election of officers, business sessions, and the display of new building products and equipment.

The host chapter committee, under the chairmanship of Cleveland architect Joseph Ceruti, is arranging a varied program of tours, exhibitions of architecture and the allied arts, entertainment features and special events for architects' wives. Entertainment and education will be pleasantly combined on tours through General Electric's Nela Park and the Republic Steel Corporation, Monday, July 7.

\*Editor's Note:—This subject deals with the origin and development of races, customs and beliefs of mankind, not just monkeys.

## The New Quarterly

The last month has seen a great deal of activity on the part of your Executive Committee, Quarterly Committee, Editorial Board, and Editor to set up the actual mechanics for producing our new quarterly magazine. As a result, we can present you with some concrete facts about it:

The first issue will appear in September.

The deadline for architectural photographic exhibits will be July 1st.

Schools will be featured in the first issue.

Commercial projects will be featured in the second issue.

Residential projects (single and multi-family) in the third issue.

Religious buildings in the fourth issue.

Although each issue will feature a particular building category, with analytical text, it will also include other building types. Letters have been sent to materials manufacturers and suppliers soliciting their participation in the Product Section.

This is probably the boldest undertaking the Chapter has ever undertaken and we trust that you will give it your enthusiastic support.



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