

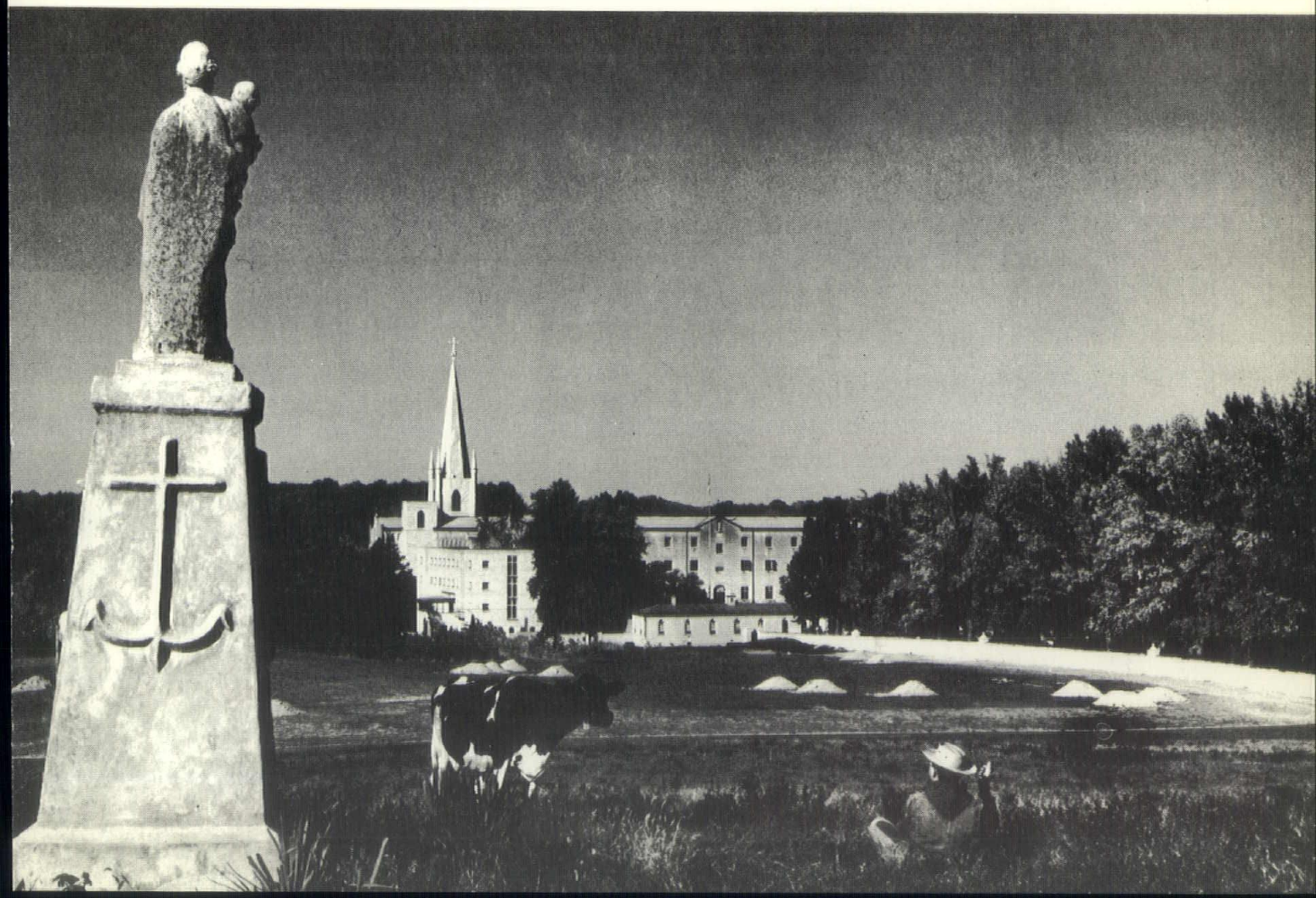
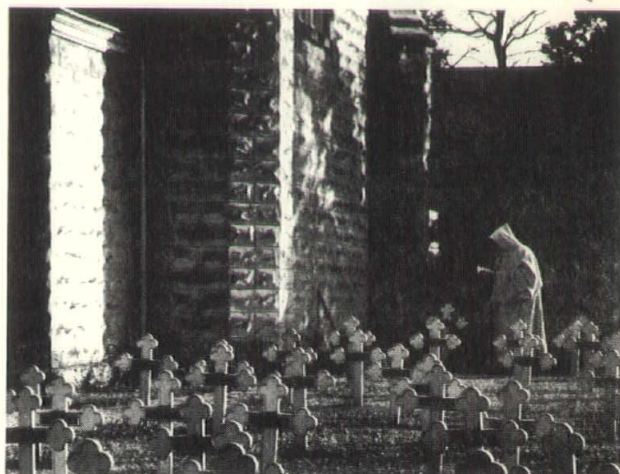
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A New Monastic House
for the
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THE KENTUCKY ARCHITECT . . . publishes significant expressions of the use and control of space.

KA Publisher Submits New Plan

A special meeting concerning the current status of The Kentucky Architect magazine was held by the Board of Directors of the Kentucky Society of Architects May 9 at the Frankfort Country Club.

After a lengthy discussion, the present publisher, Marvin Gray, presented a proposal outlining a new procedure in publishing the magazine.

The meeting was concluded with the Board of Directors' referring Gray's proposal to a joint committee composed of members of the board and the Editorial Council of The Kentucky Architect.

Members of the present Editorial Council, who had submitted their resignations at the January meeting of the Board, agreed to continue functioning until a new agreement can be reached concerning the new publication procedures.

Construction of extension centers planned this year by the State will put a vocational school within driving distance of every Kentuckian, says Governor Edward T. Breathitt.

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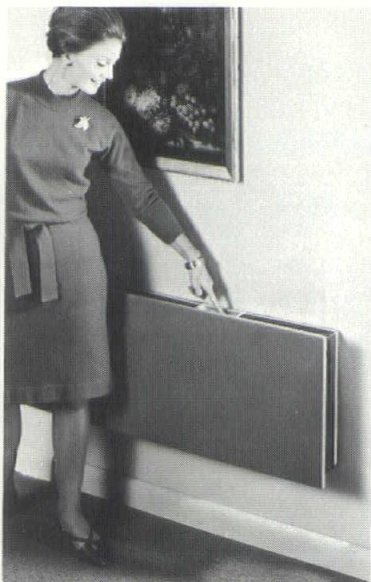
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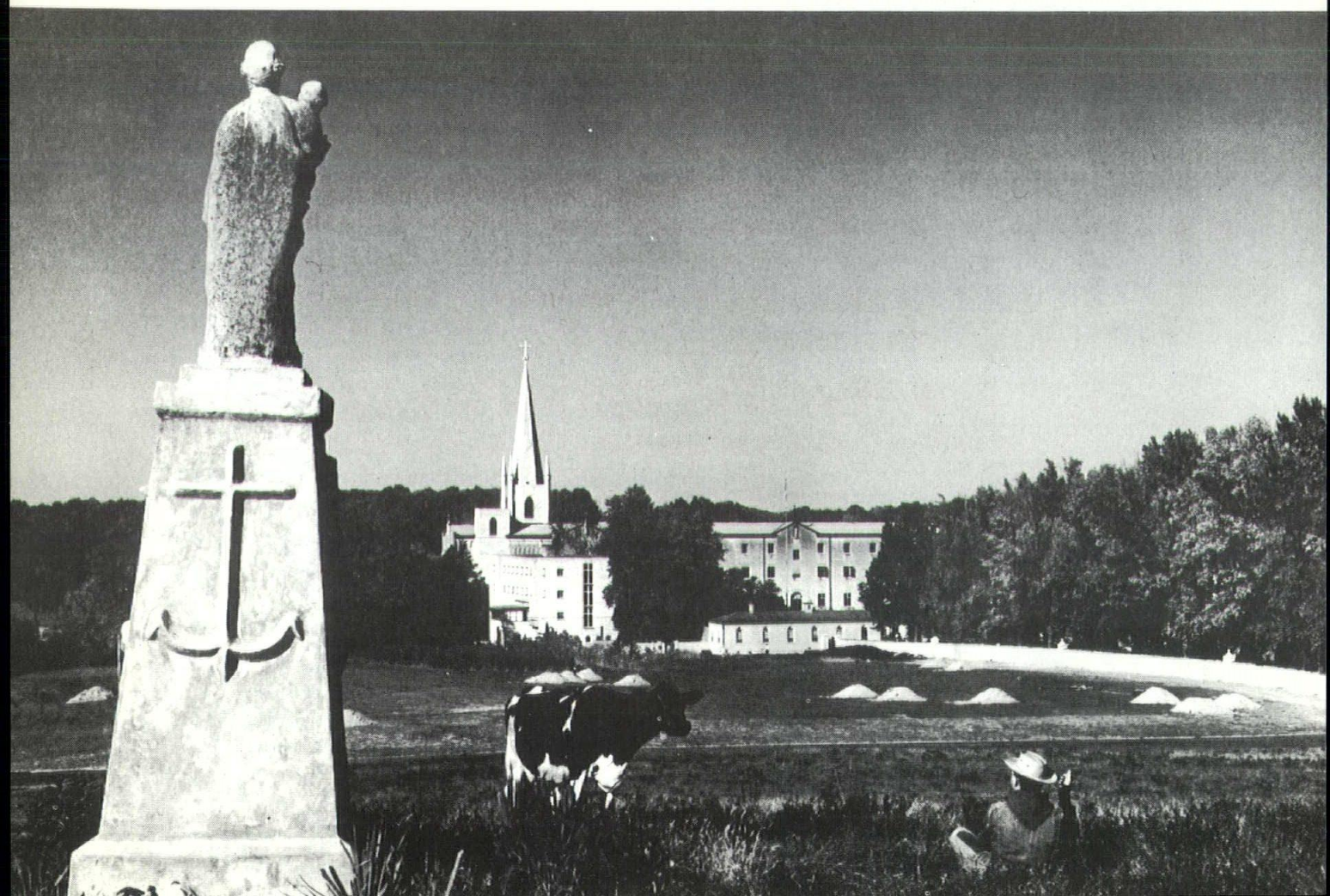
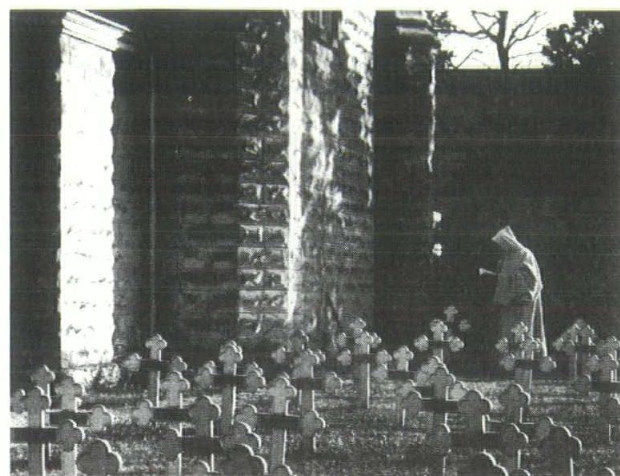
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A Problem in Design

A New Monastic House for the Abbey of Gethsemane



Allan Russell Johnson, a 1967 architectural graduate from the University of Kentucky, did not back into a degree the easy way. For his graduating thesis, he chose to design a Monastic house for the Abbey of Gethsemane, Trappist, Kentucky, near Bardstown. Even the most uninformed layman can appreciate the ambitious nature of Johnson's self-appointed challenge. In surveying Johnson's work, one can see he blended together the tangible and intangible qualities of planned space and materials with the mystic and dedicated life of the Trappist order.

In approaching his thesis, Johnson thoroughly researched the history and traditions of this spiritual communal body in the following section entitled "Purpose, Scope and Design Criteria." Thesis topics are as follows:

(1) What Is A Monastery?, (2) Monasticism Today, (3) The Monk and the Liturgy, (4) The Life of Penance, (5) The Monastic Family, (6) History of Cistercian Architecture, (7) History of the Abbey of Gethsemane, (8) The Daily Life of a Cistercian Monk, (9) Qualifications for Admission. A program analysis section included description of spaces and their importance and square footage requirements. An interesting passage concerned an examination of two monasteries designed by Marcel Breuer and Le Corbusier. Text matter and illustrations of Johnson's site analysis were also included.

In a graphic sense, a monastery and its grounds is literal evidence of man's humanity to not only man but also to God. In the holy silence of the Trappist environment, quietness assumes an articulation beyond words, and, therefore, shapes, shadows, forms, textures, designs, contours, landscapes, a thousand spacial arrangements and relations, weave, in a dance with each other, the spiritual voice of the Abbey of Gethsemane. In an intellectual and intuitive sense, the monastic client and the architect must come to terms with each other, in recognizing the nature of each to the task at hand. Mr. Johnson has illustrated this in his research involving the works of Thomas Merton, a Trappist monk at Gethsemane, and other religious and architectural books and periodicals. Of special use were histories relating to the work of Marcel Breuer and Le Corbusier. The complexity of Johnson's thesis work was somewhat described in Jean Petit's record of Le Corbusier's assignment.

"To dwell in the silence of men of prayer and study and to construct a church for them—this was the program proposed to Le Corbusier in 1952 under the urging of R. P. Courturier, by the provincial chapter of the Domini-

cans of Lyons. The monastic complex was to comprise a church, cloister, chapter room, study rooms, library, refectory, kitchens and about a hundred cells."

To understand more about the man who has influenced Johnson in his thesis, we can look to the November issue, 1965, of the AIA Journal in an article entitled "Remembering Le Corbusier, What We Have Lost," by Jose Luis Sert, FAIA:

"He was a generalist and, like all great men, he was far ahead of his time. An architect and city planner has to be a generalist by nature. This type of man will be in increasing demand. We are possibly moving toward the period when specialization as we understand it today will not be as necessary; when synthesis and coordination (interprofessional included) at all levels will be required to put our physical environment in some kind of order.

"His small vest-pocket notebooks were packed with big ideas and lively sketches. Whenever something interesting happened or some problem presented itself, he got out his notebooks. He had a wealth of ideas to draw from."

In uncovering an analysis of Le Corbusier's work on the La Tourette, the Dominican monastery designed by Le Corbusier, Johnson included information which indicated Le Corbusier gave the Dominicans "...a work of great fullness whose harmony, boldness and vigor have not ceased to astonish us." Johnson also gleaned: "There will be those who will try to classify the convent within a strict formula as did those after Ronchamp who tried to recall the Baroque, but the work defies classification...And even if one were to refuse to admit the creative power, will not the final judgement belong to the men of religion, who, living in this convent of our times, have discovered a work whose sacred character affirms itself in a manner both spontaneous and reflective?"

In stating why Le Corbusier's work was chosen as a study example for his graduating thesis, Johnson wrote:

"This monastery was chosen because of its similarity in architectural design to what Cistercians believe a monastic house should be. Yet, they differ because the Trappists are self-sufficient and this brings farming and various shops to the monastic community. How to relate these functions to a monastic house is a primary problem of a Trappist monastery. In order to solve this problem the Trappist monks have decided to relocate the monastic house away from the shops and farm buildings. This building was chosen also, because the Dominicans, like the Trappists, moved from their old house to a new house thus resulting in a new look at the architectural significance of their buildings to the world. This is one of the goals the Trappists hope to obtain when they build their new house."

Marcel Breuer, in designing Saint John's Abbey, the Benedictine monastery located in Collegeville, Minnesota, was faced with the necessity of studying and appreciating monastic life in its modern embodiment at Saint John's a community to the Rule of monastic life in its modern embodiment at Saint John's, a community to the Rule of Saint Benedict. In this sense today's monastery, Johnson maintained, is an outgrowth of fourteen centuries of balance between constancy to the Rule on the one hand, and adjustment to the changing social world on the other. At its inception, organized monasticism placed its emphasis on group worship and manual labor. In the course of its evolution the original Benedictine emphases have been expanded to include special dedications to missionary work, scholarship and education. The schools within the University combine yearly to educate fourteen hundred people: clerics of the Order of Saint Benedict, diocesan seminarians, and lay students, wrote Johnson.

In January of 1954, wrote Johnson, Breuer introduced to the entire community a model of the proposed Church, of the monastic wing, its adjoining buildings and a model of the whole comprehensive plan for one hundred years development. With the model he presented volumes with photographs and designs illustrative of various phases of the over-all plan.

Breuer explained in detail the technique of building without previous demolition, a technique that would involve completing the monastic wing and the church before tearing down the old church. The new administration and library building could then rise on the site formerly occupied by the old church. Further, Breuer described how the Abbey could build a new building in the shadow of an old building, so that at no moment in the future would the functioning of the community be hampered. Johnson reported that Breuer's program was considered the best of its type in its field in the history of modern architecture due to its unique planning concept and the cooperative spirit between both patron and architect.

Designs in *Architectural Record*, February, 1964, illustrated the outstanding characteristics of Breuer's work. Specifically shown is the use of concrete in the folded plate arch and the atrium-baptistry at St. John's Abbey Church. In commenting upon the folded plate arch, *Architectural Forum* wrote "...The compelling rhythm and strength of the bents is emphasized by the austerity of their surfaces, symbolic of the monastic life...another shining example of concrete serving as structure, form and detail (as Breuer's atrium-baptistry). Echoing tradition, the atrium-baptistry is top-lighted by plastic domes over the central, recessed font area. Artificial lighting serves the same purpose (halo lighting) at night.

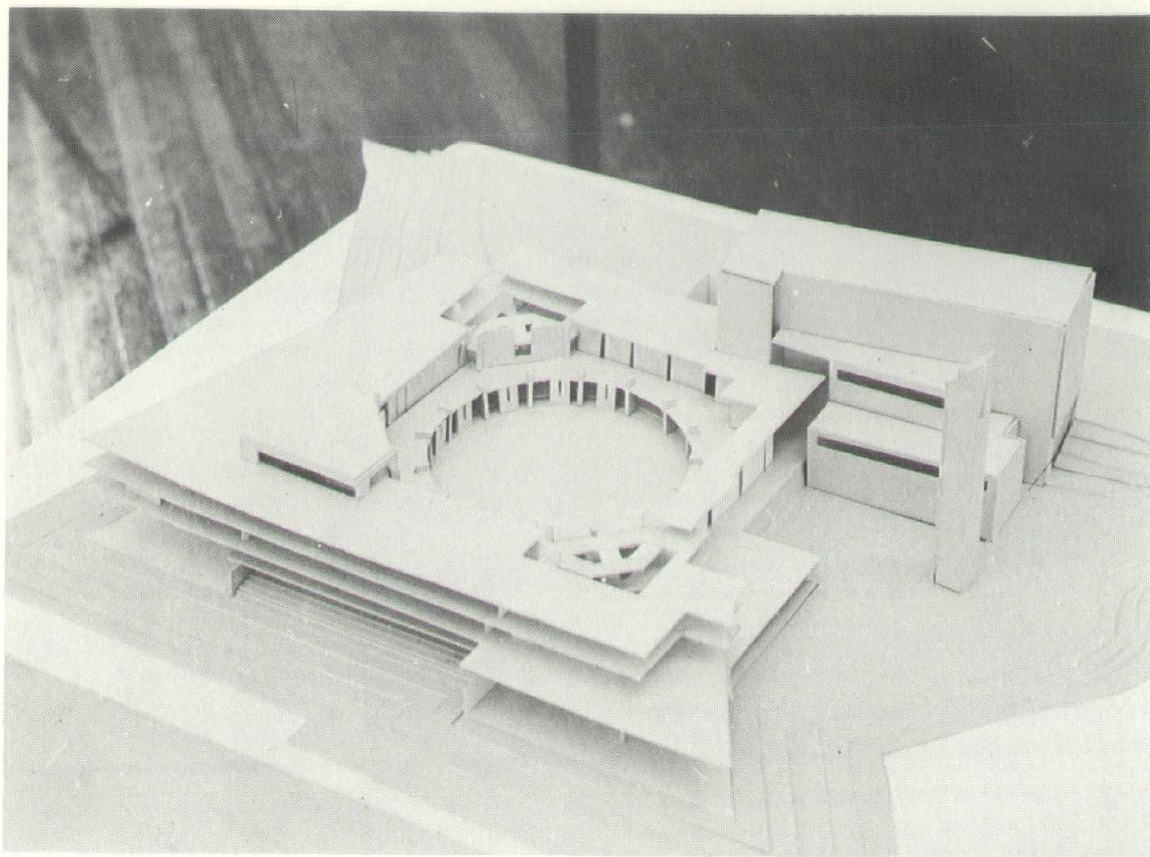
In Johnson's personal interviews with the Abbey's representative, it was decided that the monastery house, due to functional relationship problems, should be relocated. This decision was reached in spite of historic ties with the present monastery.

Johnson's analysis of the site went as follows:

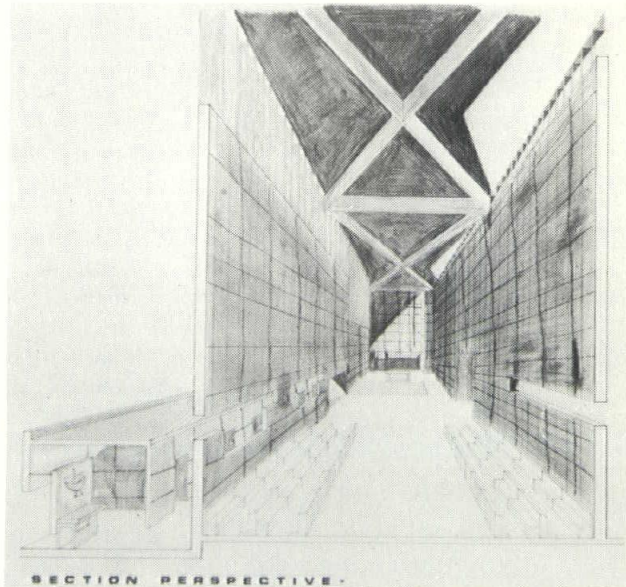
"The first of the functional problems is the way the present site is planned. The farm buildings and shops are located too near the present monastic house and some shops are even within the house due to lack of space. The second functional problem is that the present buildings are not laid out according to their beliefs (such as an East-West orientation) and the library is actually on the outside of the monastic house. The third problem is that the gatehouse and guest retreat house which are used for receiving visitors and people on retreats are located within the monastic house.

"These elements combined to produce an atmosphere of noise and disturbing interruptions within the monastic house. Therefore, it was decided to relocate the monastic house and leave the farm buildings and shops in their present location. The farm operation was completely modernized recently. The shops need more space, therefore, space in the existing house will be used. The existing church will be used for community mass.

"The Abbey owns 2000 acres of rolling countryside so the new site could be chosen from a number of locations. However, for the correct functional relationship to exist the new site will be located on the same side of the road as the present monastery, only further east from state route 417. The new site will provide the location of the gatehouse between the highway and the new monastic



Pictured are a model and a section perspective of a proposed new Monastic House for the Abbey of Gethsemane, located 12 miles from Gethsemane on state route 247. Allan Russell Johnson, a 1967 graduate of the University of Kentucky School of Architecture, is the designer of the model and author of a thesis concerning the Monastic House.



house. Also, from there the monks can walk to the shops and farm buildings without crossing the highways. This is significant inasmuch as walking is the only form of exercise in which the monk can participate."

The feasibility of his project, Johnson wrote, is supported by the existing needs of the client. The present buildings, erected during the 19th century, are growing too small and most are in need of repair. Some of the existing buildings might be retained for historic value,

but the real desire is for a larger and permanent complex now that the monastery is well established.

A selfless community dedicated to the secular world through meditation and prayer was a far cry from the design of the buildings for the ordinary activities of men. Interested persons may secure additional details on the Johnson thesis by writing the University of Kentucky School of Architecture Library, University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky 40506.

The Architect and the 11th Hour Imperative

This is an exciting time for the architect or the young person aspiring to the profession of architecture. It is evident that the architect of today is enjoying a position of growing importance in our society. Because countless books, magazines and periodicals are alerting the public to the need of a vastly improved urban environment, the element of planning through the talents of the architect emphasizes the open door of challenge and opportunity in the field of architecture.

Nothing stirs society quite so violently as the eleventh hour imperative. Our urban centers are now at the dry rot stage—physically, aesthetically and spiritually. When the fact that 75 percent of our population now crowding into the urban centers is coupled to the idea that in the next 40 years more buildings must be erected than in all our past history, the architect is certainly the guardian of the urban stage. He is, to some degree, the social engineer of the future. He must cure the urban abrasives of noise, filth and unsafe streets which have prompted deep and serious questioning of municipal centers.

Life Magazine, in its April 21, 1967, issue said of the widespread questioning affecting our social, political and spiritual environment:

"There is other evidence that the outward forms of American civilization conceal an inner restlessness and loss of faith in the old truths once held self-evident."

A new term is now employed to describe the illnesses affecting our cities. Urban pathology is a "science" used in diagnosing such illnesses. We recognize, of course, there are disputes in handling the dilemma. Should financing be initiated by the federal government or proceed from local government or industry? There are many problems of uninvestigated complexity surrounding the situation all in tangent to the practicing architect in his relationship to society.

While the reliance of this and tomorrow's generation upon the architect may seem exaggerated, we can state that the floodtide of business for the architect is now welling. Statistics bear this out. Common sense bears it out. The tide of human history has accelerated over the centuries and the millenia until, at last in our own day, it has reached a point of culmination. The need for professional services has proportionately increased—and that emphatically includes the architect.

Human population increased slowly over tens of thousands of years. But the rate of increase goes steadily up, until in our time the curve that describes it suddenly approaches the vertical. This is evidenced in other areas such as energy, transportation, weaponry, communication, medicine and the health sciences, and in a world-view of man rather than the parochial and narrow approach.

A planet suffering a population explosion cannot permit a simple-minded approach to its problems because of man's advances and, in equal or greater ratio, new and strange problems. In an era of automation, specialization and diversification, our basically bureaucratic society has escaped the puritanical dislike for intellectuals. (Bureaucracy's distrust of the same brain power criticism is another matter, however.) Indeed, when we are ill with a skin ailment, we consult a dermatologist, and, in like fashion, when our institutions, our urban centers, or our great corporations require functional and aesthetic expertise, the architect is consulted.

This is the ongoing process of creating from the outdated environment of another age a tableau of accomplishment for the generations of today and tomorrow.

"Indigenous architecture had provided a heritage and an ideal beyond the generation of its originators. It

typically represents infinite variations within a consistent order and framework, warranting our particular focus and re-examination because, in our complex and multilateral society, we need to encompass infinite variations within a strong, consistent ordering framework. Variations which are translated into physical form." ("Our Unpretentious Past," AIA Journal, November 1965.)

We can see that the expertise and advice of the architect will be used more and more in the planning process within our urban areas. At present, urban leadership lacks the fiscal and administrative devices to alleviate the sicknesses of our cities.

This constitutes a challenge to the architect of today and tomorrow. The architect can enable state and local government to assume primary responsibility in the conduct of urban affairs. Of course, it remains a moot question as to financing formulas, whether or not monetary resources should extend from the federal government, the local and state government or from traditional matching arrangements.

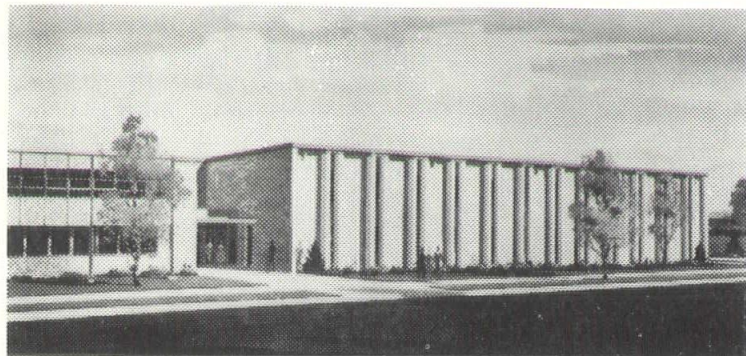
Dr. Robert C. Weaver, secretary, Department of Housing and Urban Development, has said:

"The national goal of improved urban environment ultimately hinges on the capability of local government not only to carry out federal grant-in-aid programs, but also to take the initiative in solving their own unique urban problems. Thus, innovative approaches will be required from a number of different sources—federal, state, local and private. The role of the Department of HUD is to provide national leadership and direction toward achieving this improved quality of urban living." (The General Electric Forum, July-September 1966.)

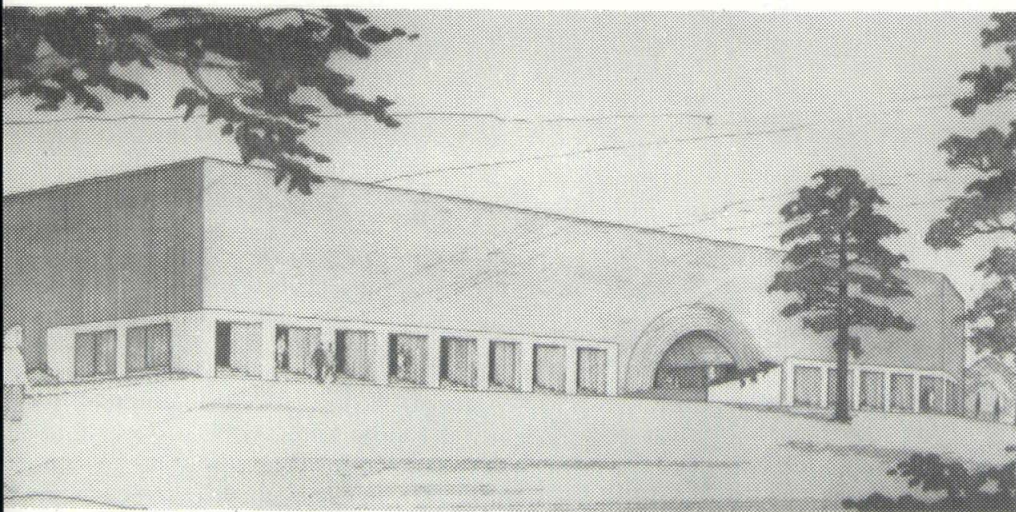
Something must and will be done about our cities. Too many people are disturbed. Edward J. Logue, Boston Administrator of redevelopment

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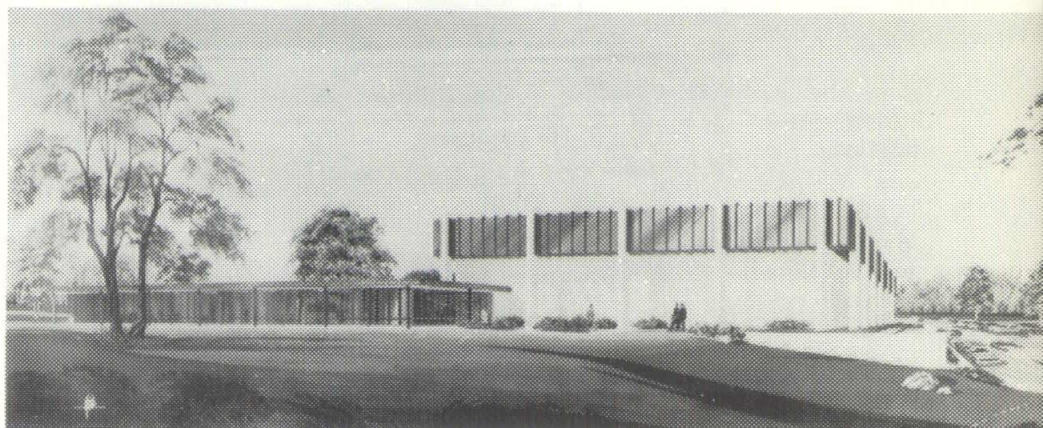
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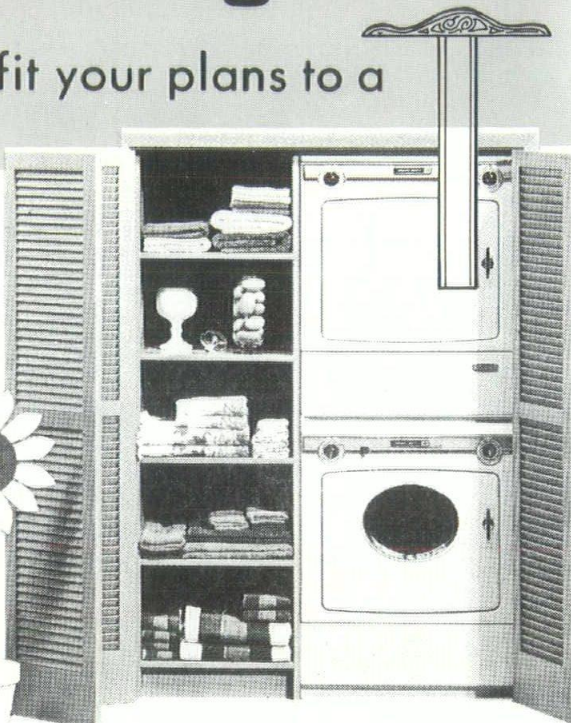
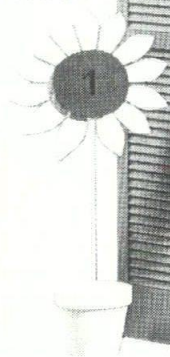


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ment, recently stated in a Time magazine advertisement:

"Presidents and pundits, bankers and civil rights workers join other public-minded citizens in expressing their alarm about the state of America's cities. They are right. In a society of rising affluence, too much of the inner city is sinking into pervasive decay."

What kind of urban environment are we seeking? Sven Markelius, author of "Architecture in a Social Context," wrote in the April, 1964, issue of *Architectural Record* a rhapsodic answer:

"Our aim must be towards a structure of society, and of cities, that promotes the health and happiness of the citizen. Here, our major task should be to find new and better ways of planning our cities, as well as of replanning those existing ones which are no longer workable as instruments for good life.

"Somebody has said that there are three items which necessarily should be considered in the planning or replanning of cities today. These items are safety, silence and privacy. It is evident that these conditions can be fulfilled only by exempting sufficiently large and well-planned areas from motor traffic, from its noise and dangers, its smells and poisonous exhausts. Modern planning can calm down high-strung nerves and let us enjoy healthy walking in pleasant surroundings, in park lanes and shopping centers, in nicely-shaped streets and plazas. Beautiful architecture will have a new meaning when we are able to look at our fine buildings without the risk of being run over."

The mood and temper of human activity are directly affected by the imaginative and creative interest of the architect in conceiving a sane and reasonable answer to the urban problem. One can forecast myriad effects upon the conduct of individual in a vastly improved environment.

Planned space, the forte of the architect, places his considerable skills where the action is. When it is evident that an infinite amount of action is required, one can readily understand why architecture is an exciting profession and can admire and respect those dedicated to its challenge.

The Kentucky Architect

Historic Buildings Survey Scheduled for Summer

A survey of historic Kentucky architecture, sponsored by the Kentucky Heritage Commission, will be conducted this summer by Dr. James P. Noffsinger of the University of Kentucky.

Dr. Noffsinger, a faculty member of the UK School of Architecture, will conduct the study with the assistance of three students from UK and a graduate of the architectural school at the University of Minnesota.

Records compiled during this period will conform to the standards developed by the U. S. Department of Interior's National Parks Service Historic American Building Survey, Dr. Noffsinger said.

"An effort will be made to make the survey as comprehensive as possible with every region of the state represented and coverage being given to broad ranges of structures including bridges, barns, commercial architecture and industrial buildings as well as handsome old houses," Dr. Noffsinger pointed out.

In the late 1930's, the historic American Buildings Survey recorded some 99 buildings in Kentucky but the buildings selected were confined to only 20 of the 120 counties in the state. There is, therefore, an urgent need for recording the three-dimensional heritage of Kentucky which has so far escaped the bulldozer, Dr. Noffsinger said.

Dr. Noffsinger has requested that all interested persons send their suggestions concerning outstanding structures worthy of inclusion in the survey to Dr. James P. Noffsinger, School of Architecture, University of Kentucky, Lexington, Ky. 40506.

THE NEXT 100 YEARS ...

Astronomer, inventor, science-fiction writer Arthur C. Clarke earlier this month told The American Institute of Architects' convention that in the next century the world may be a place where:

Agriculture will have been replaced by the manufacturer of food factories.

Cities will have been "disintegrated" by transportation advances that will enable anyone to live anywhere in the world.

Newspapers will have been re-

placed by electronic communication.

There will be a universal language, perhaps English, due to the impact of "global TV."

There will be "self-contained households" that will produce their own food and process their own wastes, and there will be "mobile towns" that can "go south for the winter and north for the summer."

There will be true "thinking machines" and man will have largely "dis-invented work."

He said he was forecasting "a se-

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lection of assorted futures" which technology would make possible.

Agriculture, he said, is a highly inefficient process because it uses great amounts of land. Its replacement by the industrial manufacture of food would free this land for other uses, he predicted.

Advances in transportation will make it possible for persons to live anywhere and work anywhere, he declared. "A brain surgeon may be able to use remote manipulators to perform an operation anywhere in the world."

This new freedom to live anywhere will accelerate the disintegration of cities, he said. "They will continue to grow, like dinosaurs, and for much the same reason, but they will become extinct," Clarke stated.

In the next century, "information processing" will have advanced to the point where it will be possible to turn on a machine and have any information delivered to your home at any time, Clarke said. He added that our society is already changing from a producing one to one largely devoted to "information processing."

Homes that are "self-contained" and towns that can be easily moved will help open up great areas of the earth that are now vacant.

Clarke said that "global TV" from satellites will solve the problem of a universal language, and that the victor in the linguistic competition may be English.

He said it is possible to create machines that actually "think," and such machines will relieve man of much of the necessity of working.

Clarke said that man is a "carnivorous predator" who needs new hunting grounds, and that we have them in space and the sea.

The sea will be exploited first, Clarke said, to produce food and water. He suggested the possibility of "whale herding," with "killer whales used as sheep dogs" to produce food. The use of sea water to irrigate some crops is feasible, he said.

Space is a "benign environment," Clarke declared, and by the end of the century space colonies, first on the moon and later on Mars, will be under development.

Clarke called these forecasts

modest, and said some "far-out" ideas for the distant future include:

The possibility that space mirrors can be used to "abolish night" by reflecting the sun's ray.

The possibility that "synchronous skyscrapers" 22,000 miles high can be built.

The possibility that an "astronomical architecture" will be developed which will enable man to enclose the sun to conserve its energy.

AIA Advises No Change In Capitol West Front, Says Restoration Possible

The west front of the U. S. Capitol building should be skillfully restored as it now stands, the American Institute of Architects urged earlier this month.

The AIA also asked that Congress act to prohibit "any further major alteration to the Capitol, other than that absolutely necessary for structural and safety reasons."

The AIA report was the result of five months of study by an Institute "task force." Its five members went over the Capitol building "from attic to basement," with special attention to the condition of the historic west front, the last remaining original exterior of the building.

The task force operated completely independent of previous AIA reports on the Capitol, and was instructed to be completely openminded in its recommendations.

Complete replacement of the west front is not a structural necessity, the architects believe. This is contrary to plans of the Architect of the Capitol to raze the west front and extend the building by a 4.5 acre "annex" at an estimated cost of \$34 million.

The west front, portions of which were completed as early as 1800, ranks with the walls of the White House as one of the earliest surviving pieces of national architecture in Washington.

Its 168-year-old sandstone walls are in need of repair, the AIA report notes; however, none of the defects appear to indicate that danger of collapse is imminent, or that correction is impracticable."

The Capitol, while it is experienc-



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ing some vertical settlement, "is not slipping down the hill," the task force said.

While AIA could give no estimate of the cost of a faithful restoration of the west front as it now stands, it is convinced that restoration is feasible and that modern technology is up to the task.

Two suggested ways of accomplishing safe restoration are indicated by work done on historic European structures. One is the drilling of diagonal holes through masonry, which are then filled with reinforcing rods and grout.

Another successful technique is "needling," which involves the use of temporary steel beams to take the load off parts of the wall while other areas of the wall are being repaired. "Similar, or even more innovative methods could be applied to the west front," said AIA.

In a preface to the AIA task force report, Institute president Charles M. Nes, Jr., FAIA, called for a long-range master plan to guide development of the Capitol grounds and contiguous areas.

He said that Congress has an obligation to create such an orderly plan of development, supervised by a "permanent body of experts" whose function would be to study and advise on all major Capitol Hill construction projects.

"Certainly," said Nes, "the Capitol and nearby areas are of sufficient import to justify a permanent body of architects, engineers and planners whose only function is long-range planning of all construction on Capitol Hill, including new buildings that will probably be needed.

"The more aged, eroded condition of the stone of the west front should be considered honorable evidence of its survival as one of the earliest of our major public buildings... Our greatest monument, the Capitol, despite its scarred and craggy exterior and architectural imperfections, is the most vivid symbol of our democracy. To cherish the building as a reminder of our past is not a maudlin sentiment. To cover up the last remaining exterior portion of the original Capitol would be a great mistake," Nes concluded.

The Capitol Hill "task force" under which the AIA study was com-

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pleted included Samuel E. Homesy, FAIA, of Wilmington, Del., chairman; and members Francis D. Lethbridge, FAIA, and John W. Stenhouse, both of Washington; Louis Rossetti, FAIA, of Detroit, Mich., and Norman C. Fletcher, FAIA, of Lexington, Mass.

Durham New AIA President

Robert L. Durham, FAIA, Seattle Wash., this month became president of The American Institute of Architects, succeeding Charles M. Ness, Jr., FAIA, Baltimore, Md.

He assumed his new office May 18 at the close of AIA's 99th National Convention in New York City.

For the past year, Durham has served as first vice president of the 19,000-member Institute. During the previous year he was a national vice president and chairman of the council of commissioners.

Durham was responsible for initiating efforts in the AIA's nationwide War on Community Ugliness. He headed the first task force to study and set it up, and then served as its coordinator for the first two years.

In Seattle, he was actively involved in formulation of an ordinance establishing the Municipal Art Commission of the City of Seattle, an ordinance that has served as model for other cities throughout the United States.

Active for many years in the Guild for Religious Architecture (formerly the Church Architectural Guild), he was instrumental in its establishment as an affiliate of the Institute,

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