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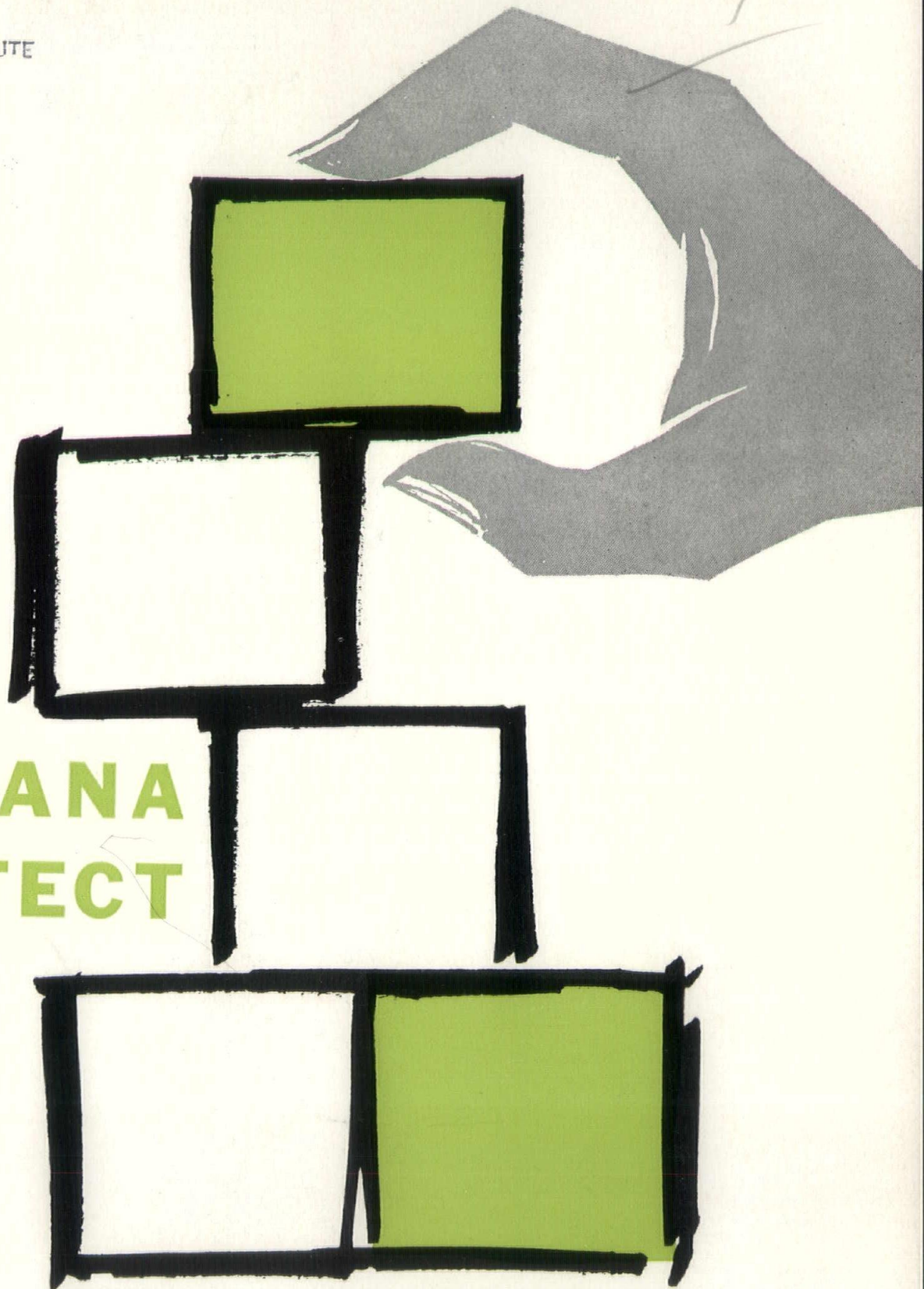
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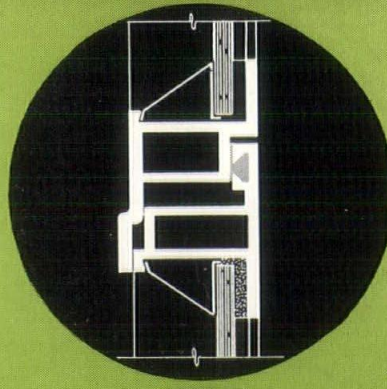
# LOUISIANA ARCHITECT

December Issue



OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE  
LOUISIANA ARCHITECTS ASSN.





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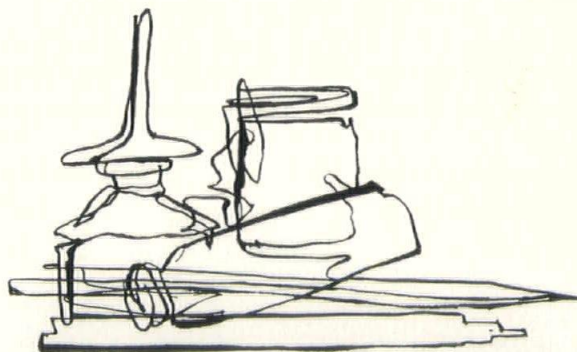
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# LOUISIANA ARCHITECT

OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE LOUISIANA ARCHITECTS ASSOCIATION

VOLUME 1 NUMBER 2 1961

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## LAA OFFICERS — 1961

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## IN THIS ISSUE

Your New LAA President Plans Advisory Council .....	5
Meet the Nominee .....	5
Honor Awards .....	6
The Future of the Architectural Profession .....	7
Stock Plans . . . And the Advantages of Individual Planning .....	10
News, Notes, Quotes .....	11
Convention Lens .....	12

THIS MONTH'S COVER: Remote controlled space stations and other electronically operated gadgets have replaced many simple toys of yesteryear. Simple building blocks, however have withstood the forces of technological encroachment. On Christmas morn, many a tot will get his first taste of satisfaction in design when he finds the time-tested gift under the tree.

DIRECTORS—IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT: G. Scott Smitherman; BATON ROUGE CHAPTER, William R. Brockway, Clifton C. Lasseigne; NEW ORLEANS CHAPTER, Murvan M. Maxwell, Carl L. Olschner, August Perez, III, F. V. von Osthoff; SHREVEPORT CHAPTER, Lory Smith, Jr., Ralph Kiper; SOUTHWEST LOUISIANA CHAPTER, John M. Gabriel; CENTRAL LOUISIANA CHAPTER, Oscar C. Butler, Jr.; MONROE CHAPTER, Lon S. Heuer; SOUTH LOUISIANA CHAPTER, Harold J. Lagroue, Jr.



# YOUR NEW LAA PRESIDENT PLANS ADVISORY COUNCIL

At a special board meeting after the LAA Annual Meeting on November 15, the shiny new Association president M. Wayne Stoffle, accepted the gigantic job ahead with a firm pledge to do all in his power to foster the interests of the profession.

Stoffle offered one eye-opening observation: "The LAA has accomplished a great deal in this past year, but I've long felt a crying need exists in one sector of our membership. That weakness has been a lack of participation on the part of our elder statesmen. This deficiency has not been of their choosing."

Stoffle maintained, "We have not been successful in putting their talents and years of experience to work simply because we have not asked them. I can count on one hand the men in this category who have been given an opportunity to contribute to this organization.

The new president continued, "Perhaps there's a solution to this problem. I propose to name an Advisory Council of elder members to actively help us guide this worthwhile program." He explained that these members would receive copies of the minutes of board meetings and would be encouraged to comment on the actions of the policy-making body. The advisors would be called upon for counsel from time to time.

The board members listened, and they liked what they heard.



## MEET THE NOMINEE

For the next three years, the Gulf States Region will benefit from the energies and abilities of a young man who has come to earn the title of "Mr. LAA." He's G. Scott Smitherman, LAA's president for two terms during the reorganization effort which culminated with a full-time headquarters.

Smitherman's nomination is tantamount to election and will become official at the National AIA Convention in Dallas in May, 1962.

The "old B-24 pilot" is a native of Shreveport. He received his Bachelor of Architecture from the University of Pennsylvania in 1946 and a Master of Architecture from Harvard in 1947.

Smitherman has been a leader in numerous civic organizations and community agencies in Shreveport. He is also a past president of the Shreveport AIA Chapter.

Look for no letup in the active program waged by Bert Brush during his term.





## HONOR AWARDS

Four honor awards and seven awards of merit were granted by the jury at the Gulf States Conference.

### Honor Award Winners:



PROJECT— Home Office — Empire Life Insurance Company  
Little Rock, Arkansas

ARCHITECT—WITTENBURG, DELONY & DAVIDSON  
Little Rock, Arkansas



PROJECT— St. Thomas More Catholic Church and School  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

ARCHITECT—DESMOND-MIREMONT & ASSOCIATES  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana



PROJECT— Catholic Student Center Southeastern Louisiana College  
Hammond, Louisiana

ARCHITECT—DESMOND-MIREMONT & BILL BURKS, ASSOCIATE



PROJECT— Redeemer Lutheran Church  
Alexandria, Louisiana

ARCHITECT—GLANKLER & BROADWELL  
Alexandria, Louisiana

PROJECT— Southland Canning & Packing Company  
Harahan, Louisiana

ARCHITECT—STOFFLE & FINGER  
New Orleans, Louisiana



PROJECT— Residence of Mr. and Mrs. Walter Antin  
Hammond, Louisiana

ARCHITECT—J. BUCHANAN BLITCH  
New Orleans, Louisiana



## AWARDS OF MERIT



PROJECT— Les Passes Rehabilitation Center  
Memphis, Tennessee

ARCHITECT—MANN & HARROVER  
Memphis, Tennessee



PROJECT— Dyer, King & Hoffman Clinic  
New Orleans, Louisiana

ARCHITECT—GEORGE M. LEAKE  
New Orleans, Louisiana

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PROJECT— Georgian Hill Junior High School  
Memphis, Tennessee

ARCHITECT—GASSNER, NATHAN, BROWN  
Memphis, Tennessee



PROJECT— Raceland Bank & Trust Company

ARCHITECT—H. T. UNDERWOOD & ASSOCIATES  
New Orleans, Louisiana



PROJECT— Sam B. Reid Residence  
Jackson, Mississippi

ARCHITECT—JAY T. LIDDLE  
Jackson, Mississippi

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# The Future of the Architectural Profession

An address by

PHILIP WILL, JR., FAIA

National AIA President

to the Gulf States Regional Council

Baton Rouge, Louisiana

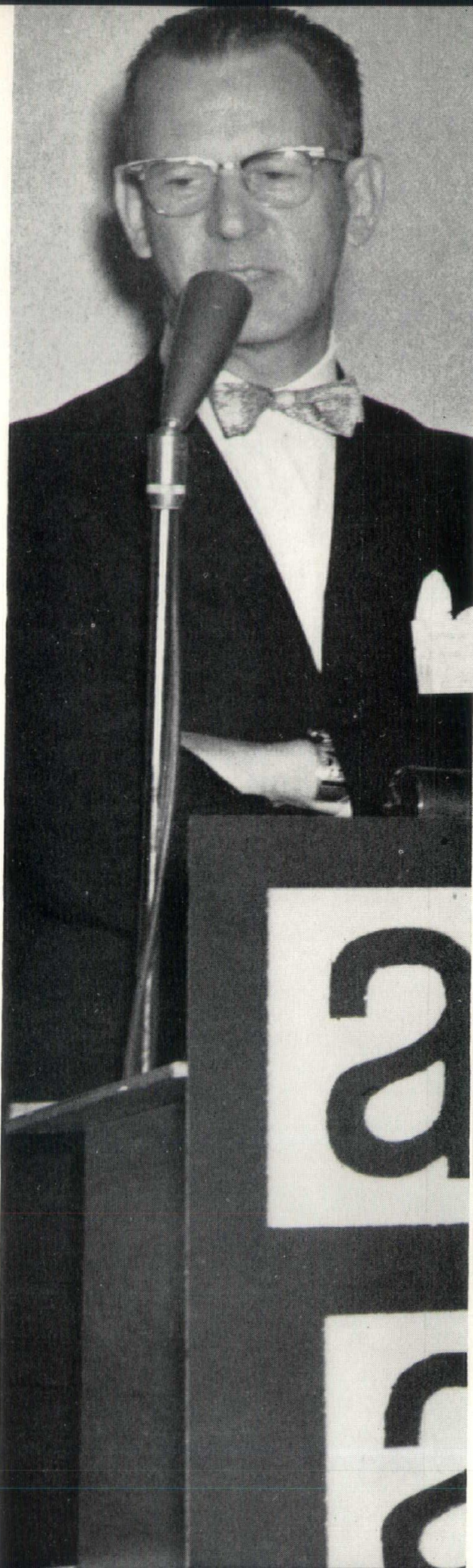
November 17, 1961

As one contemplates the precarious state of mankind, teetering on the brink of total destruction, it is not irrational to wonder if our chances of survival are sufficient to warrant consideration of any subject less immediate than the preservation of life itself.

In his speech accepting the Gold Medal of the Royal Institute of British Architects, Lewis Mumford compares our conduct to that of the "passengers and crew on a disabled ship, who . . . continue to polish the brightwork, caulk the lifeboats, play shuffleboard and bridge, and place bets on the dummy horses in the usual shipboard manner—though they would instantly know, if they dared lift their eyes, that a black tornado was fuming across their path, and that the captains of all the national vessels, disregarding the storm warnings, are blindly steering by out-of-date charts and wild compasses for a non-existent destination. . . . The moral: . . . At such a perilous juncture as this only one act is rational, only one command possible: All hands save shape!" Unquote.

But before you become too depressed, warranted though it be, let me say that I am not about to dwell longer on the muti-

(Continued on Page 8)





## THE FUTURE OF THE ARCHITECTURAL PROFESSION—WILL

lation of the human race through thermonuclear war but instead would apply Mumford's metaphor to architecture and its practitioners. It might also revive your spirits to hear the final words of his address to the British architects: "So have faith and be of good cheer: the human race always behaves best when the odds are against it, and, if we do not flinch or retreat, life may still happily surprise us."

So let us assume that sanity will prevail; and that the world and its people will continue to exist; and that some creative profession (or professions) will still be needed to shape our physical surroundings to the needs of man.

Unfortunately too few people are concerned about what needs man actually has (or will have). Too few are dreaming about what physical arrangements, on a grand scale, will satisfy human wants, let alone encourage a better, more noble way of life. And finally too few are worried about the nature of the profession itself which will react creatively and responsibly to the design challenge.

We are the victims of our own success. In the enjoyment of the greatest building boom in world history we are too absorbed in the routine problems of today to worry about the nature of tomorrow. Are we too smug and prosperous to see the signs which surround us?

By some of us the signs can be read and they do NOT say that the profession of architecture will inevitably survive as we know it today. Quite the contrary. Society is totally heartless. It doesn't care whether architects eat or not. What we say of ourselves is of no consequence; nor does the layman study our mandatory rules with breathless anticipation. People simply want certain things done and with complete indifference to our wishes will seek out those who will serve them best, at the lowest cost to themselves in effort and money. The fine points of difference between a profession and a business are of little consequence to a pragmatic society which measures success solely in terms of results.

With the ability of people in general and architects in particular to deal with new technologies I am not concerned. Except for automobiles and other weapons of destruction, the human race has demonstrated its ability to adapt itself reasonably well to technological change.

Unhappily, our record in dealing with so-

cial problems, with human problems, is quite unmarred by success. Certainly our collective ability to anticipate needs in an effective way is notably deficient. Progress is typically measured by the correction of past errors and the digging away of messes we have allowed to accumulate.

Traditionally, architecture has been regarded by the public and even by most of its practitioners as a technical art. Like the engineer, we are supposed to deal with the structural enclosure of space logically allocated in the service of human purposes. Under the police power of the State the law holds us responsible for health, welfare and safety. So also does it hold the engineer.

Unlike the engineer, however, we are concerned with aesthetics, with beauty, with human emotional response to those elements of design which comprise the architect's basic palette: space, form, light, color, texture, odor and sound. To the logic of engineering necessity we have added art as the special province of the architect. But with the rapid development of the behavioral sciences even environmental design is becoming technical and objective. Less and less can our aesthetic failures be attributed to personal and subjective insensitivity. More and more must success be based upon tested knowledge in the special and related fields of psychology, sociology, biology and others.

The late, great architect, Dwight Heald Perkins (my partner's father) once said: "Sticks and stones are the materials of building; ideas and ideals are the materials of architecture."

Such a definition suggests a total reorientation and reappraisal of the practice of architecture.

If ideas and ideals are the materials of architecture, then architecture becomes a social art. If architecture is a social art, we must accept a commensurate expansion of our professional goals and responsibilities. The techniques of planning, engineering and aesthetic design remain important skills but become tributary to the highest over-riding skill of all: the determination of social purpose.

Here lies the great frontier for the architectural profession. New frontier? Yes, yet also partly old.

Certainly an understanding of the needs of people in terms of their physical environ-

ment has always been a fundamental goal of architects. With the achievement of such understanding we must ask ourselves to what purpose should we apply it? What are the boundaries of our concern or, in stronger language, of our responsibility?

If, as I believe, architecture is a social art, then it follows that we must be concerned with the purposes toward which our technical skills are directed.

Are we hirelings and mindless tools to be employed by others or do we have a moral responsibility to shape the purposes for which we build?

Who is our client? The one who pays for our services or the voiceless public which also suffers or benefits from what we do?

The answer, of course, is both. Without responsibility to both, architecture ceases to be a profession. For without moral responsibility a profession becomes no more than a learned trade of little consequence or status. Conversely, as a profession assumes responsibility for that aspect of public welfare for which it qualifies by reason of education, training and commitment, it wins honor, respect and the rewards of accomplishment for its practitioner.

What is the responsibility of architecture?

I hold that the mission of the profession of architecture is to assume responsibility for nothing less than a nation's man-made physical environment, an environment in harmony with the aspirations of man.

An overwhelming challenge?

Yes, of course, but what lesser challenge would be equal to a great and honored tradition.

Let us recognize, however, that a vacuum exists, that there is today a void in leadership. The question is not WHETHER the void will be filled but . . . by whom. Someone will slip in. Will he be the banker? Realtor? Developer? Politician?

Rightfully, none of these. For physical environment is the product of design and design is the province of the architect.

And the time is now.

Our country is only now beginning to realize the enormous problems of urban growth with which we must contend. Two-thirds of our nation is now concentrated in less than 200 metropolitan areas. Popula-



## THE FUTURE OF THE ARCHITECTURAL PROFESSION—WILL

tion is growing at a rate of 3.4 million per year and rural land is being gobbled up by our cities at the rate of a million acres a year. Frightening as these statistics are, they are not nearly as appalling as the actual and visible debauchery of our fair land.

The great metropolitan explosion keeps tearing up woods and green spaces, polluting air and water and spoiling human habitation in general. We foul our own nests and spawn new slums faster than we tear down old ones.

It is revealing that until the Housing Act of 1961 our federal government spent more money on fish breeding and wild life sanctuaries than on conserving human beings through slum clearance.

I wish that I could say that we know what we are going to do about it. Steps are being taken both nationally and locally. But I fear it is the simple truth to say that we have yet to decide how we would like to live. There is no consensus on what kind of communities or cities we should build. Yet we have already lost our lead time. With little purpose, other than quantity, we are forced to build now.

I recognize, of course, that in a free society economic necessity will force answers. The needed building will be accomplished. The question before us is, therefore, not whether but how.

Are the traditional relations between the design professions, the producers, the builders, the sources of money, the brokers of land and government geared to the need in scope and in time?

Are we architects educated, oriented and organized to design, build, re-build, preserve and restore whole communities, cities and regions?

And if WE are not, are others?

I know of no law which says that our traditional ways must be followed; that private architects must survive; that private combines of vast capital resources cannot hire the salaried hands and package the entire job; or that government cannot create more bureaus to provide whatever services an impatient public may demand.

Of course, I don't think the profession will expire even if it fails to adapt to a changing world. As a Canadian architect recently remarked "This is a civilized country, requiring architects. When nearly all of us are working for the government and only a small handful of architects remain in private practice, in their so-called natural state, legislation will be passed to preserve

the species. As with the Whooping Crane, steps will be taken to protect their breeding ground. Only perfect males, of course, will be allowed to mate; there are not enough women in architecture to go around."

All of which suggests that we need more women in architecture or find other ways to preserve the genus *architectus* or both.

It is with the other ways that your A.I.A. is presently concerned.

Those of you who attend conventions, read the A.I.A. Journal and generally keep informed on what your professional organization is doing already are aware of the directions of our thinking. You know, for example, of our belief that architects must expand rather than contract the areas of their services.

Already substantial fields of practice have been lost not only to competing design professions but to wholly unprofessional enterprises. There are few building types in which we have not suffered substantial losses to package dealers. Warehouses, industrial buildings of all types, office buildings, houses, banks and now even schools are on the lengthening list. Regretably we now find ourselves all too frequently in battle with our professional brethren: the engineers. In one Florida County building plans must be stamped by a professional engineer (they don't specify which specie); an architect's seal is not required. In New Jersey the courts have yet to decide whether or not an engineer may design a country club. In Ohio a court was of the opinion that nothing in the law prevented engineers from rendering full architectural services. Both the Landscape Architects and Planners are working on state licensing laws. And so it goes. While we are not doing battle with all, the practice of architecture is none the less suffering encroachment from all directions.

I do not and, in fact can not, claim that, in a world of increasingly complex technology, architects are fully competent in all design disciplines. I do claim, however, that as professional services become more splintered, the package deal becomes increasingly appealing to the bewildered public.

The fact that a typical package dealer works for a profit and is unrestrained by codified professional ethics is of little interest to the buyer whose confidence has been won. In a free enterprise economy it is of no interest whatever to legislatures or the courts.

Q.E.D.; architects must meet the challenge with their own resources.

How this challenge will be met is a major concern of the Institute, one of several top priorities. It is this that has been under study by the Committee on the Profession for many months and on which you may soon expect further reports which we expect will have a major impact on architectural practice.

In substance you may expect a recommendation that architects expand their services into many areas not heretofore considered normal. If we are to compete successfully with the package dealer, we must render similar services and accomplish equal or better results BUT with an important difference. We will render our services on a professional basis. Call it, if you like, the package without the deal. The effect on the mandatory rules is already under study and it appears that little substantive change is necessary. Be assured that the Institute is not about to recommend to the membership that we win a battle and lose a war. The moral responsibility embedded in a code of ethics is still an essential prerequisite to the status of any who would be recognized by society as practicing a learned profession.

Acceptance by the profession of the concept of packaged services, however, is only the beginning to the re-establishment of architecture as the dominant and responsible design profession. There is more to be done; much more.

If, in addition to normal architectural services, the package includes the selection and acquisition of land, the arrangement of financing and the management of construction, each architect must determine for himself where these special skills can be found or how developed. What can he do himself or with converted staff? What specialized manpower must be added to his staff or what services can most economically be rendered through consultants retained as circumstances require? What about feasibility studies, economic analyses, process engineering, cost control? What is a proper basis for professional compensation?

The questions to be asked are legion. While the Institute Board, Staff and committees are concerned with finding generalized answers, specific answers alternately must be found by individual practitioners in terms of their own circumstances and abilities.

(Continued on Page 14)



# STOCK PLANS - - - - - AND THE ADVANTAGES OF INDIVIDUAL PLANNING

A California Senate Committee report suggested, there are many advantages and savings in the individual planning of each school.

One good dollars-and-cents reason is that carefully detailed plans prepared for the specific project bring lower construction bids. THE SAVINGS HERE CAN EASILY BE IN EXCESS OF THE ARCHITECT'S NORMAL FEE. The authorities for this statement are the Southern California Chapter of the Associated General Contractors and the California State Builders Exchange.

The Builders Exchange says that even if stock plans could be twisted to fit each school project, the attempt would ADD millions a year to the cost of California's school building program.

Contractors know from experience that plans of a stock character applied to a new site involve costly change orders and re-lays. In self-protection, they must add a safety margin in their bids. This could not only wipe out any theoretical saving for all of the services of the architect and his consulting engineers, but would add considerably to the cost of the project.

So, on the authority of California's responsible building contractors, the elimination of the architect and engineer on the specific job would add to the cost of our schools, instead of bringing a saving.

Constant competition in the framework of private enterprise, between architects, engineers, building materials and equipment manufacturers, and contractors constantly improves the buildings of America and lowers their comparative costs.

## SCHOOLS SHOULD NOT BE MONUMENTS

Everyone agrees that schools should not be monuments either to the school board or to the architect, and that there is no excuse for creating a school plant beyond the educational needs and the safety requirements of state law. Economy already is the watchword in California school design. The schools are clean, functional, without frills. They are safer and healthier and better equipped for their task of education, and they cost less than the inferior schools built 25 years ago, when costs are compared fairly.

Schools built in California during the 1920's would cost far more, in the same building market, than those being built today. And the modern school, by eliminating ornament and frills so common to the 1920's, by utilizing new techniques, materials, and equipment, and by eliminating waste space, is a much better school—and

a safer one as the Kern County earthquakes proved.

Here are a few examples of how architects and educators are saving money in the modern school, by careful planning and design:

## REDUCE CHANGE ORDERS

First, they have greatly reduced the number of change orders required during construction, by careful preliminary studies and planning, and by complete working drawings and specifications. These change orders can ruin a budget, as anyone who has built any building knows. It is not at all uncommon for the cost of a building not designed by architects and engineers, to be increased by far more than would have been their fee, because of changes made in the plans and specifications during construction. Most of these expensive changes can be avoided,

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**EDITOR'S NOTE:** This is the second in a three-part series of articles regarding the perennial discussion on the merits or demerits of stock plans for schools. The information source for the series is a study conducted by the California Council of Architects.

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but it takes the most careful detailed planning and preparation of specifications to do so. The final drawings for a 10-room elementary school and plant will run to 50 sheets or more, each six square feet in size; the drafting time alone may run more than 5,000 hours. All of this is included in the architect's fee, of course.

It is impossible to eliminate all change orders, because unforeseen conditions can and do arise. For example, site conditions may be found different than surface surveys and old maps showed; materials and equipment may suddenly become unavailable.

But by taking great care in planning, and in the preparation of plans and specifications, California architects and engineers have reduced the added cost of change orders in school construction to a state-wide average of one per cent. This compares to ten per cent in many other buildings, and the saving in this one item alone is more than the architect's fee.

## ELIMINATE WASTE OF SPACE

Another example of how we are stretching the school dollars is in the elimination of waste space. Here is a specific case: an architect was called upon to estimate the

cost of rehabilitating an old school. There were four classrooms, a kindergarten, and a small administration unit. None of them were adequate for their tasks, yet the total number of square feet in the buildings was 9,600. The school district asked the architect to estimate the cost of demolishing the old building, and erecting a new plant on the site, with four larger classrooms, a kindergarten, and a more adequate and practical administration unit. The plans for the new building called for a better school in only 8,060 square feet. This amounts to a saving of 1,540 square feet, or about \$20,000 in cost. So, by better planning, schools are better and cost less.

By taking advantage of new materials, we are able to save today. Had design been "frozen" by stock plans in the past, these economies would not be possible. Our roofs are cheaper than the old tile roofs. Instead of expensive wooden floors, we pour a concrete slab and use asphalt tile. There are many other examples, when you compare the school of today with the school of yesterday.

This task of providing better and better buildings, at lower cost, is never-ending. Every architect's office is working constantly to improve his product. He spends a great deal of time investigating new materials and construction methods.

## ARCHITECT REDUCED PRICE

One example of where a California architect brought a reduction in the price of school equipment and materials is this: a piece of equipment needed in certain school rooms formerly was made exclusively by one firm, in the East. Without competition, it commanded a high price. A California architect designed a substitute which did not infringe the Eastern patent. He gave the design to a California manufacturer, who today is manufacturing this piece of equipment. School districts are paying 40% less as a consequence, than they formerly had to pay for such equipment. The architect retained no interest in the substitute, and receives no royalties or other remuneration for it design.

Many new developments are being designed into our schools, and they are being changed constantly for the better, because of competition in design. Our new lighting, for example, spreads light evenly throughout the room, eliminating eye strain and aiding learning progress. New heating and ventilating systems are superior, and use less fuel or power. Acoustical treatment is a great aid in teaching. (Next month — "What Saving Could Stock Plans Affect?")

THE LOUISIANA ARCHITECT



# NEWS, NOTES, QUOTES

## LOUISIANA ARCHITECT TO COVER FIVE STATES

At a meeting of the Gulf States Regional Council Executive Committee on November 15, a motion requesting that LAA include the regional membership on the mailing list for the LOUISIANA ARCHITECT magazine, was offered, duly seconded and unanimously passed. Editorial items from Alabama, Arkansas, Mississippi and Tennessee are thereby invited and will receive generous consideration. Advertising prospects will be joyously received.

## ANCHORS AWEIGH

It's not the island sun or the tropical sea that is calling to me . . . it's the educational seminars and the business meetings which are exciting everyone about the 1962 regional convention . . . or is it? Never has one seen such interest in a Conference. At the convention banquet in Baton Rouge, ladies' eyes danced as General Conference Chairman Milton Robelot spoke of romance on moonlit waters. Plan to be aboard when the anchor is hoisted . . . or whatever you do with anchors.

## OBLIGING LADIES

Thanks to Mrs. W. J. Evans for waiting until the convention had ended to bring another daughter into the world. While it might have been attractive to miss Red's "Korn" at the banquet, the presence of the outgoing president at the LAA board and annual meetings was not only valuable but necessary. Congratulations.

## SPACE PROBLEM

Because Regional Director Brush has eagerly requested that this magazine carry in full the address delivered at the Conference by President Phil Will, space does not permit a reprint of the story on arbitration promised last month. Director Brush's regional report will run next month. Some of the interesting comments made by panelists will also be presented in subsequent issues.

## COMMENDATIONS

The following projects received commendations from the jury in the Regional Honor Awards Competition:

First Baptist Church, Bolivar, Tennessee, MARTIN & ADAMS; Catholic College for Boys, Memphis, A. L. AYDELOTT & ASSOCIATES; A Rectory Bldg. for Our Lady of Prompt Succor Parish, Alexandria, La., BARRON, HEINBERG & BROCATO; Leader Federal Bank—Lamar Branch, Memphis, WALK C. JONES, JR; Our Lady of the Gulf Elementary School, Bay St. Louis, Mississippi, J. BUCHANAN BLITCH & RICHARD C. MOULEDOUS.

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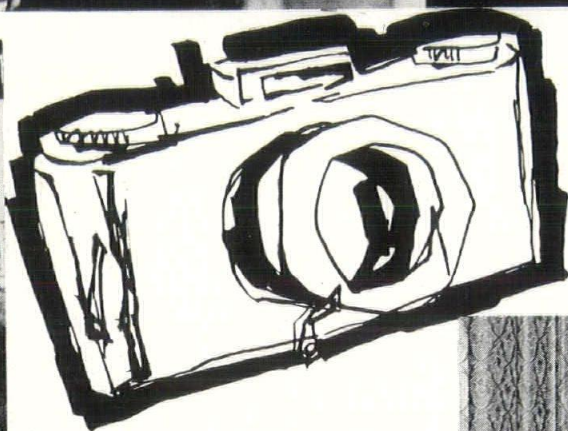
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# CONVENTION







# WOMEN

## THE REGIONAL CONFERENCE:

A lotta fun, much business, education to share. Pre-Convention attendance goal — 250. Final tally — 340. Some of the faces involved are herein recorded.

(TOP ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT) 1. Mr. and Mrs. Samuel G. Wiener and Mr. and Mrs. G. Scott Smitherman; 2. Mrs. Charles E. Schwing, Mrs. William J. Hughes and Mrs. William Cocroft; 3. P. Murff O'Neal, M. Wayne Stoffle and W. J. Evans; 4. Mrs. John Bani, Mrs. J. Roy Laase, Mrs. Clinton Brush III and Mrs. Smitherman.

(MIDDLE ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT) 1. John Bani; 2. W. J. Evans; 3. Mrs. John Wilson, Mrs. J. J. Baker, and Mrs. Marshall Walker; 4. W. John Bleckley and Dexter Keezer; 5. William R. Rockway.

(BOTTOM ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT) 1. Mayor John Christian and Clinton Brush III; 2. James Milstone, Edward Steimel and William Dudley Hunt; 3. Henry L. Wright; 4. Warren Bridges and Mr. and Mrs. Eugene A. Weir; 5. Coffee Cup.





## THE FUTURE—WILL

(Continued from Page 9)

So far the emerging patterns of practice are not too difficult to visualize. In fact, some large offices are already leading the way.

However, what happens when individual firms begin to reach for the higher responsibilities of larger scale planning involving whole chunks of cities and towns? What added disciplines are needed? And how will they be organized and led?

Now we are shaping for years to come the way of life of thousands, yes millions, of people. The inter-relationships of people and their reactions to the environment we create are complex and sensitive. It lies within the power of the planner to create communities conducive to human safety and the fulfillment of human aspirations. Or, as has already been demonstrated, we can build an environment of dullness and despair ruled by the laws of the jungle. We have tried the Garden City, Corbusier's Radiant City and superblock project housing. City planning text books to the contrary notwithstanding, few have been successful except as visual monuments. Few have generated the life they were intended to create and are loved only by their planners, who have stayed around just long enough for the publicity photographs to be taken.

What I am saying is that we tamper with the life of cities only at great peril. We have much to learn directly and from the contributed knowledge of others. Large scale planning in general and urban renewal in particular must be approached by planning teams including many new members heretofore rarely, if ever, consulted by architects. Many could be listed but the key numbers may well be from the behavioral sciences. Unhappily adequate research on human behavior applicable to planning has yet to be done and the definitive text is yet to be written.

Nonetheless the needs generated by obsolescence and a surging population growth are with us NOW, and a beginning must be made NOW.

Let me quote a few words by August Hecksher, writing for the "Architectural Record" in September of 1959:

"The architect today should find it impossible to miss the significance of his position. He stands at the center of almost every great development in our society. The changes which are acting most powerfully upon the American people, and which will run dramatically through

the 1960's, are within the field of his immediate concern.

"He will shape some of them; his career will be influenced by them all.

"For what affects us most deeply today are not, as I see it, questions which might be called political: the organization and forms of government; the division of powers, the distribution of economic gains. There are, of course, difficult problems in this realm; and the supreme issue of war and peace overarches them all.

"But more alive than the strictly political questions are those which might be called social. These determine how people live together, what they do with their years, what kind of a moral and material landscape they call their own.

"The nature of family life is changing. The nature of our cities is changing. The abundance of leisure time and the abundance of material wealth are giving the people new, and sometimes rather frightening, options. In these various areas, the architect must, whether he chooses to or not, play a major role.

"He provides the setting of family life, and the visible substance of cities. By his art he opens before the public new choices as to how they shall spend their dollars and their leisure. In the deepest sense he lays out the paths which will determine, also, how they spend their lives.

"My point is a larger one: that because of the nature of his trade and the dramatic and dominating character of building in America today, he stands as a prototype, and indeed almost as a prophet. Others may have their share in bringing matter under the control of spirit; but unless the architect succeeds in doing it, the cause is lost. It is the same with the shaping of the environment, the organization of space and the establishing of a balance between old and new forces in the social order. Whether he likes it or not the architect is at the center of things, setting the pattern beyond his own works and in a large measure determining whether the remaining decades of the century will see our common life made more rational and rewarding."

It is my exhortation that architects recognize the vacuum which exists. If we move now, seize leadership and act with the wisdom of statesmanship, we can re-create a nation. The respect of the country is waiting to be won. If we are successful, the remaining decades of the century could well be known as the Age of the Architect.

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L.A.A.

Capitol House Hotel  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Dear Mr. Tassin:

Let me congratulate you on the convention. I would travel miles and miles by pirogue and paddle boat to attend such a fine affair again.

Up here in the Northern part of the State, we never get to attend a meeting like this. I told my wife that those big crayfish, was the biggest I ever seen. Some peoples was mixed up and thought they was some sort of Northern or Yankee fish called lobster. But we knowed what they was all the time.

However, I was really surprised to find that you didn't have no pickle relish spread or jowls and greens to offer us Rednecks.

Course, I wouldn't want my preacher to know, but that liquor was pretty good too. If them architects drink like that when they is working, I guess it explains why some of these buildings look like they do now-a-days.

My wife was tickled pink, when she seen that pea-patch somebody planted on yalls main street. She said she reckoned yall thought yore downtown had died and someone was kind enough to place a wreath on the grave. If you would bust up all that concrete, you could really get a good crop going there.

We are enclosing three tickets to the Sorry Chatee (Soiree au Chateau), that we didn't need, I had 6, but three plate full was all we could hold. If you want to save them for next year, and eat your fill.

Best regards,

Roger Redneck

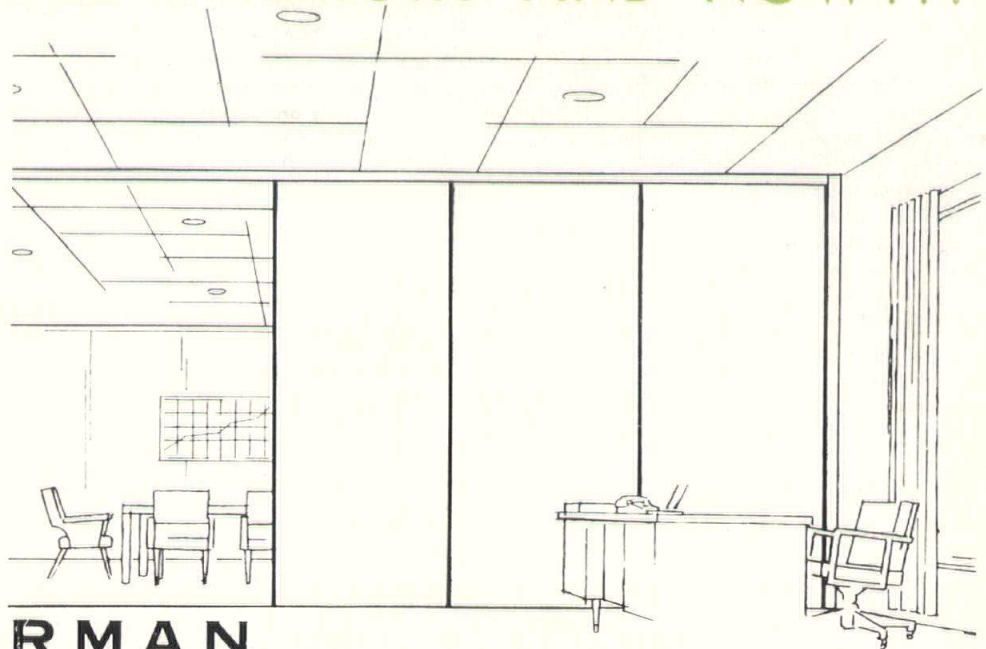
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P.S. My wife said she seen so many of them fur wraps, that she thought we was at a Fox Hound Show. We heard nutria was a pest — now we know.



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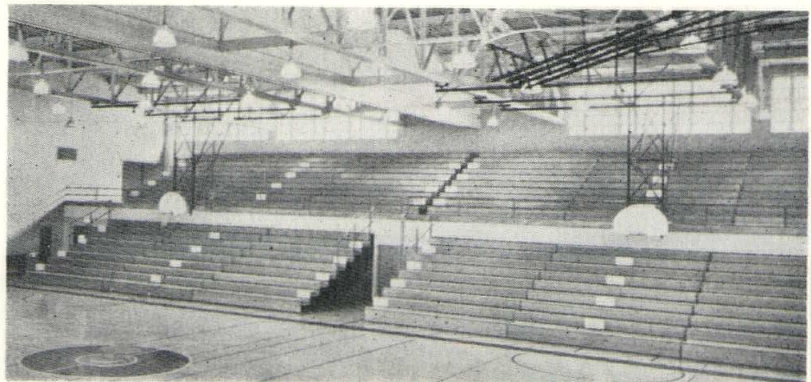
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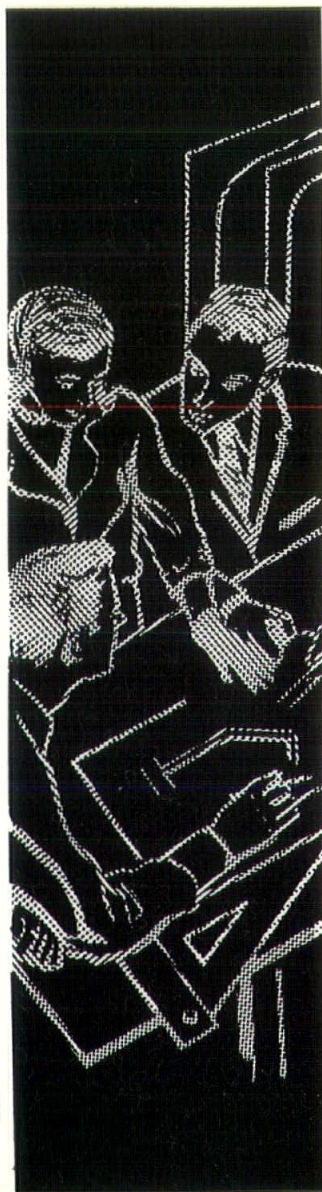
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