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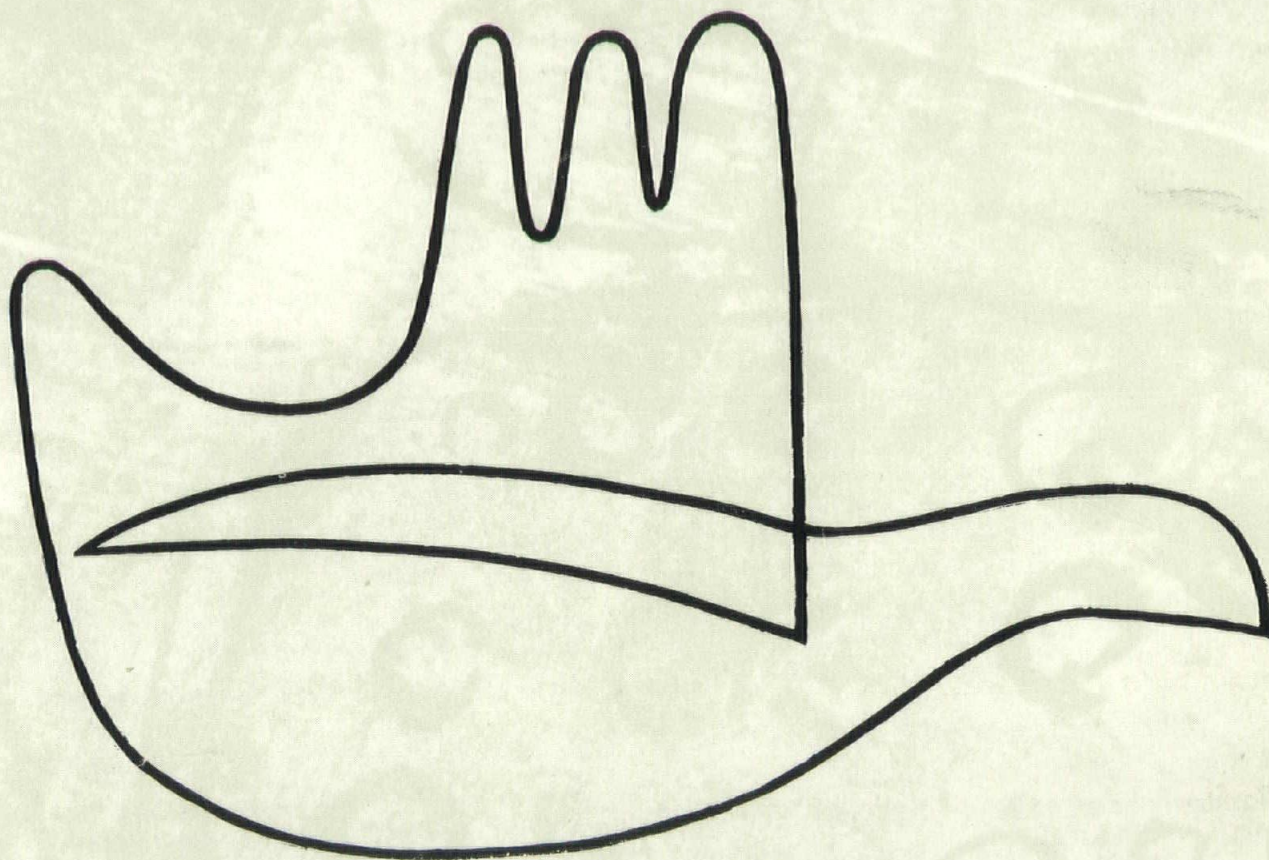
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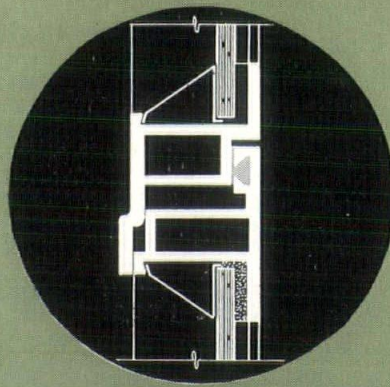
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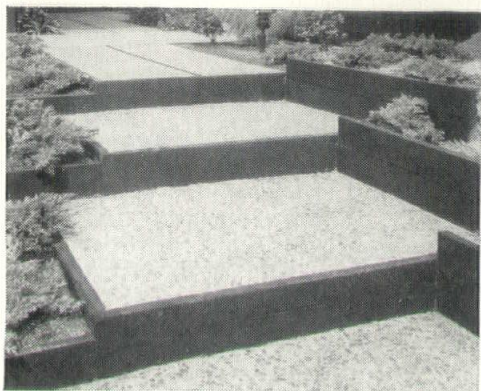
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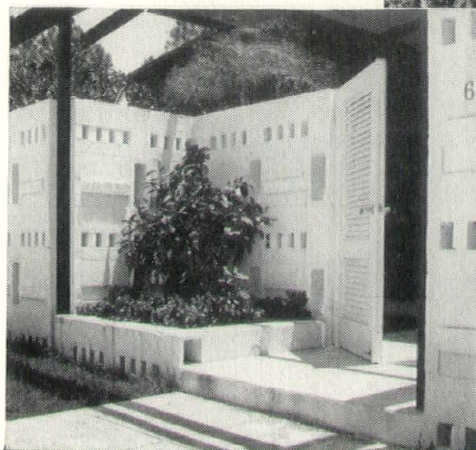
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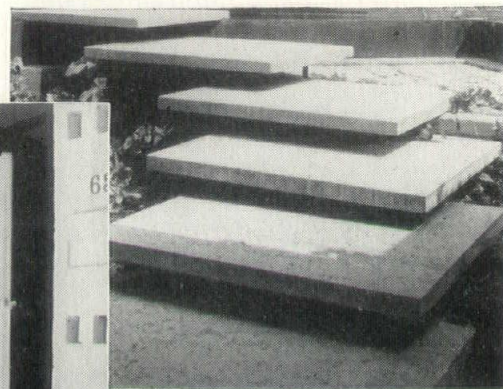
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LOUISIANA ARCHITECT

OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE LOUISIANA ARCHITECTS ASSOCIATION

1962

VOLUME 1 NUMBER 5

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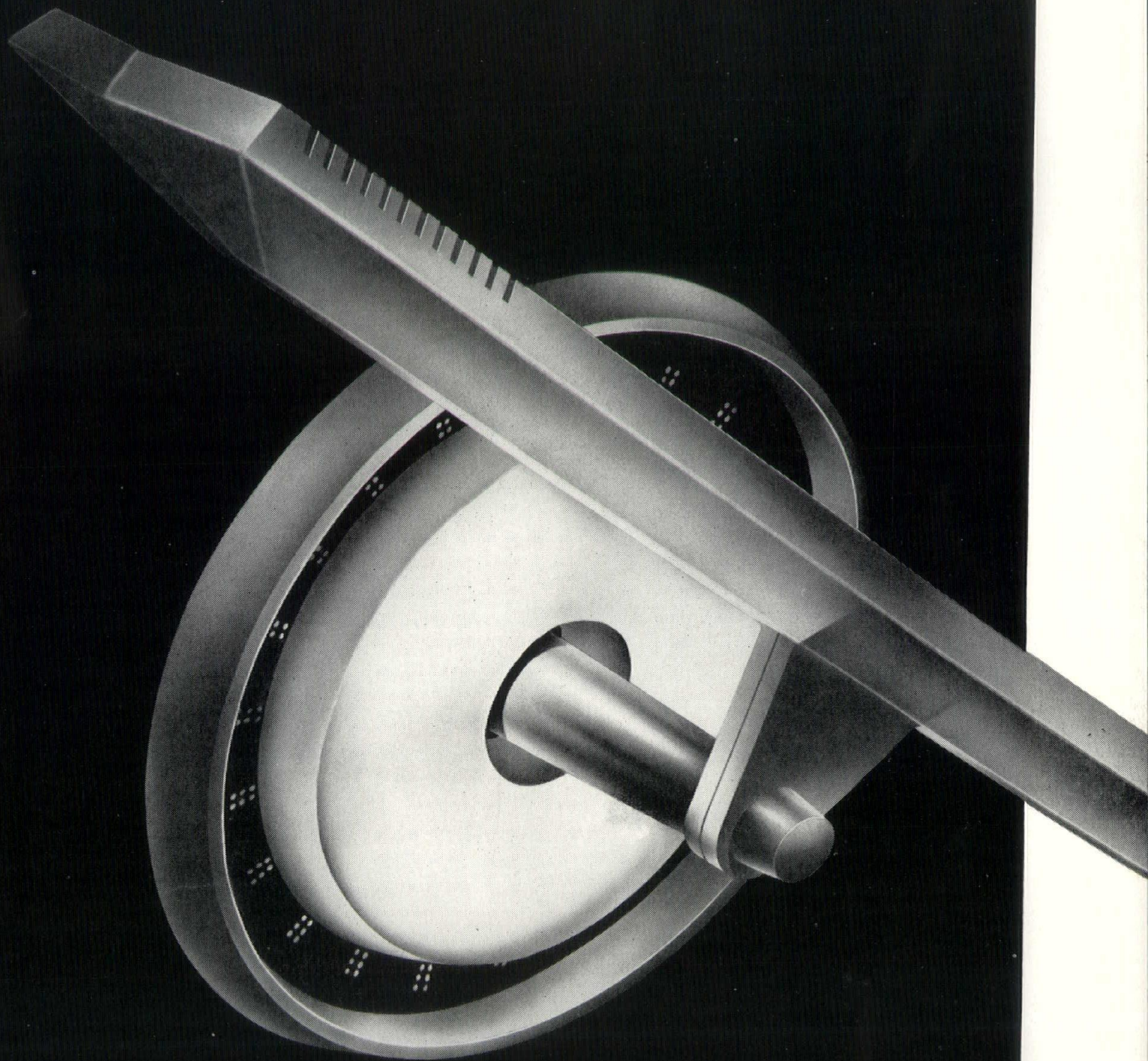
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COVER: The lead article in this issue concerns itself with urban planning and design. For the cover this month John H. Schaeffer blends a photograph of the very old with a sketch of the very new.

1. The background aerial photo shows the whole plan of a now buried neolithic village as it existed 5,000 years ago. Taken over the Foggia Plain in Italy, the photo shows a round enclosure, 240 yards across, containing 14 smaller circles, each of which was a compound for the livestock and living quarters of a neolithic family.

2. The superimposed is a line sketch of "The Open Hand" ("to receive and to give") which springs almost 100 feet out of the "Ditch of Consideration" in the Le Corbusier designed village of Chandigarh.

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are architects urban designers?

by
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jordan



Yes, but it seems as though they have just discovered the fact. In the past few years there have been more words written, more speeches made, more speculation on man's urban environment than in the previous 2000. The architectural profession has stepped forward, pounded its chest, and declaimed its pre-eminence in this special field. The furor has the ear marks of a fad; that like Mai Jong, chain letters and the big apple might quickly pass into oblivion, out of our minds, our interest and our practice, but it could be the harbinger of the golden age for American cities.

City Beautiful Movement

Once before in this century we experienced a ground swell of urban consciousness, today called, somewhat derisively, "The City Beautiful Movement." The movement's roots were established in Chicago's Columbian Exposition of 1893 and gained impetus with Burnham's Plans for San Francisco and Chicago. It flowered when Burnham snatched L'Enfant's plans of Washington from obscurity and pushed them to partial realization. The essential ingredients of the "City Beautiful Movement" were a Baroque plan coupled with neo-classic facades. Burnham said "... make no little plans" and this became the goal of the marvelous projects put forward by the architectural profession. They abounded in large axial thoroughfares, dotted with large monuments and fountains, and ending in large civic centers. Some of the projects achieved partial realization, some cities were improved by it, and none to my knowledge suffered, but most of the plans were filed away and forgotten by all but scholars. There were two equally important reasons for the quick demise of the "City Beautiful Movement." First—the cities, faced with new technological and social problems could not afford the expenditures necessary to implement the grand schemes, no matter how much civic pride they could muster. Secondly—it neglected man. Its concepts were those of absolute monarchs, sun kings, and latter

day emperors, not for the man who had to pay the bill. The movement also had two enduring benefits for the country. First, it stimulated some communities to think of the possibilities of orderly planning and several cities date their planning commissions from this time. Secondly, if nothing else had transpired, its rejuvenation of Washington, D. C., from a squalid national embarrassment to a city of merit, would have justified the movement. Perhaps if our renewed interest in cities could produce just this much, we should be satisfied, but our problems are far greater and more pressing, let us hope for more.

To achieve more, the profession must give more than lip service to the city and to the problems that beset it. We architects are often guilty of excessive zeal in terms of our capabilities. Each of us recognizes that certain of our colleagues have limitations in talent, or knowledge, or skill, or integrity, yet when generalizing about the profession we tend to imbue it with our talent, our knowledge, our skill, and our integrity. Self deception fools only one person, but the problems of the American city demand that we live up to our publicity. First of all we must accept our collective responsibility for our existing cities. Through acts of commission and omission, they are the work of the architect, for each person who designs a structure for an urban site is doing not only architecture but urban design as well. The effects of a small project on a city may not be as soul stirring or as far reaching as that of doing a Chandigarh or Brasilia but this is the realistic and important level of the architects contribution. The total city cannot be better than the sum of its parts.

What Is a City?

For the architect who would like to improve his city, a safe starting point is to find out in general what a city is, what it has been, what it should be and in particular the problems of his own city. One must decide if he really believes in cities or not, for if he doesn't, he is not likely to contribute much to its improvement. It is important also to be conscious of the essential difference between urban and non-urban design. In non-urban situations, that is where natural features predominate, the architectural volume dominates and assumes major importance. In urban situations, the space between architectural volumes demands our consideration. Some of our greatest architects have overlooked this important fact. A case-in-point is the Guggenheim Museum designed by Frank Lloyd Wright. His concept of the interior space shows all his proven genius—it is dynamic and moving, yet as a contribution to city design it is a miserable failure. It creates nothing for the city, and its net visual effect is of a wringer washer sitting amidst outsized packing crates. If the structure could have been sited across the street in Central Park it would have been an unqualified success, for it is a piece of sculpture that occupies rather than creates space. Perhaps it would have been hypocritical for Frank Lloyd Wright to aid the city, for he was its sworn enemy.

Lever House Part of Complex

Only a short distance away from the Guggenheim Museum we can find another example appropriate for our discussion. The Lever House is not likely to go down in history as a great architectural monument, yet it is an outstanding example of

A native of Dallas, Texas, Chester Harold Jordan is a former instructor at Texas A & M, a former assistant professor at Alabama Polytechnic, and is presently on the faculty of the Dept. of Architecture at LSU. In 1960-61, he received a Master of Architecture in Urban Design in

the first Urban Design Class at Harvard University. Recently he was appointed to the Planning & Zoning Commission of Baton Rouge. In World War II, he received the Purple Heart, Bronze Star, Silver Star and two Presidential Citations.

urban design. It was conceived as only a part of a larger complex; it created space not only for the movement of people but for their visual enjoyment. Its impact on the profession was one of the primary reasons for our renewed interest in our urban environment. It was a graphic demonstration of our opportunities.

There are good reasons why many of us have fallen short of our potential in creating a new and vital urban environment. First and foremost is the architectural education most of us have received. By and large, our school projects are taken as isolated problems with little concern for the existing environment, yet when specific urban sites are stipulated we allow students to delineate their structure in a verdant forest or an enveloping haze that eliminates the hot dog stand, the boarding house, and the filling station. Even in our history courses we tend to abstract the monument from its setting and study it as a volume out of context, "as the twig is bent . . ." we carry this fallacious approach with us into our practice. When our projects are submitted for awards or publications we engage photographers who are masters of deceit and half-truths (they couldn't stay in business if they weren't) and have them dub in dramatic skies, lush landscaping, and eliminate the harsh realities of life. If we faced these situations forthrightly, who knows, we might find solutions for some of our minor irritants such as draped utility wires, ugly street furniture, and the like. Obviously this approach can create good urban spaces only by accident. It also contributes to the exhibitionist tendencies of our age, where architecture doesn't have to be good, but it does have to be different.

Architects Are Best Qualified

With all our faults and our past mistakes, we are still the best qualified, the best trained, really the only profession with the scope to lead in alleviating our cities' ills. Many skills and disciplines are involved in the planning of a city, not the least of these being astute politicians, but the visual environment good or bad will be contributed by the architect. Because of this pre-eminence, we architects more than other citizens, must take an active interest in the political and civic affairs of our communities; we must stand up and be counted when decisions are made. Some of the propositions we should support are not apt to be popular, but we may gain in respect what we lose in popularity.

The planning profession is not yet strong enough, or organized enough to define its mission in life. There being no registration laws or even a consensus of opinion on the training of a planner, the planning profession is likely to continue to pick up a number of questionable practitioners, but this undoubtedly will change in the future, and then we can depend upon a strong group taking a central position in urban affairs.

The sociologists, who could accomplish so much by telling us what a city should be in the future, spend most of their time telling us what it is now or has been in the past, but they too will undoubtedly share in the city's renaissance.

Look Beyond Radiator Caps

Highway engineers have the technical ability to perform miracles in the movement of vehicles, but their choice of routes is, at times, so poor that they clobber the city and obviate the need for their genius. True, they are not always responsible for this city surgery, but they too must look beyond their radiator caps if we are to achieve great cities.

All of the foregoing means one thing and I hesitate in naming it, for it is so odious to so many architects, but we must face it, the city demands "team work." No single man is capable of the necessary knowledge and skills, to do the whole

job, so if the architect does not assume the leadership of this team, it is likely to go by default to less capable people. To insure that this doesn't happen, I would suggest the following steps:

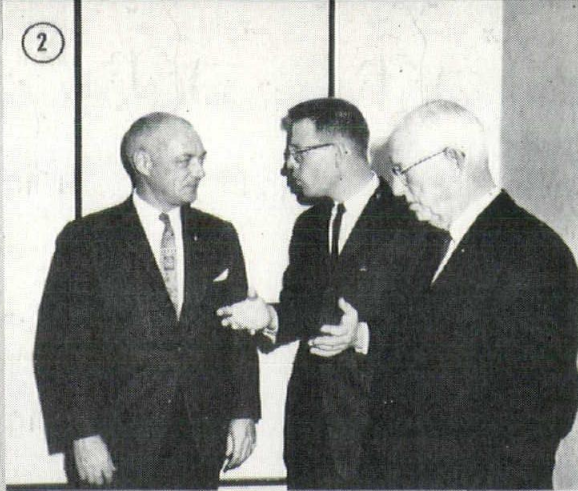
1. Acquaint yourself with cities past and present and and their reasons for being. There is a bibliography included in this article of readily available books. Read them, for education and entertainment.
2. Make sure you understand the problems involved in urban design. By and large they are identical with those of architecture, but there is a tremendous difference in scale that one must become acquainted with. If you are not in the habit of studying architecture as spatial compositions, you certainly must do so for urban design.
3. Decide for yourself the social and technological goals the city should strive for. Some people imbue our machines with Machiavellian human characteristics that will eventually destroy man. Keep your perspective. Most of our machines are useful tools that need only intelligent use, not fear or veneration.
4. Make sure the projects in your office contribute to the urban scene and spread their influence beyond their property lines.
5. Know your city. Find out how you can help it attain its goals both as a citizen and as an architect.
6. With all the background and experience you now possess, you should look into the federal programs of urban renewal and rehabilitation. You will help the city, the people, and yourself.

BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR URBAN DESIGN

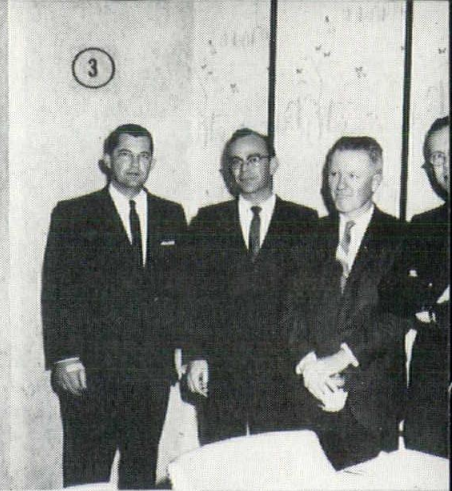
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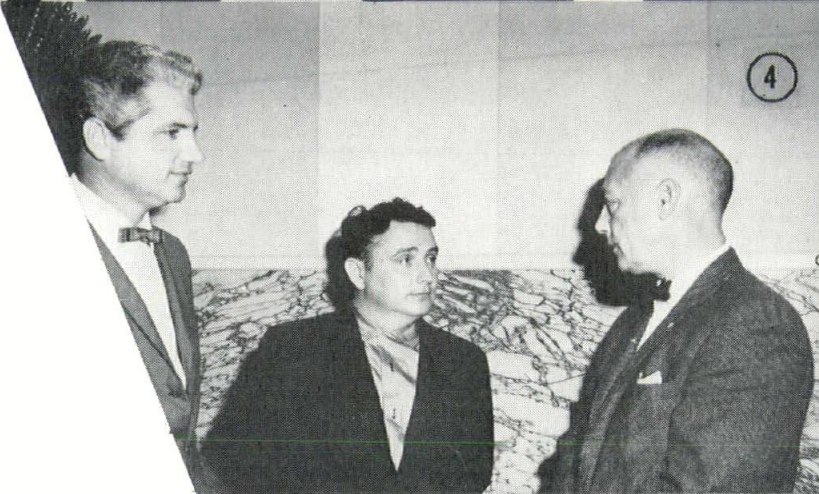
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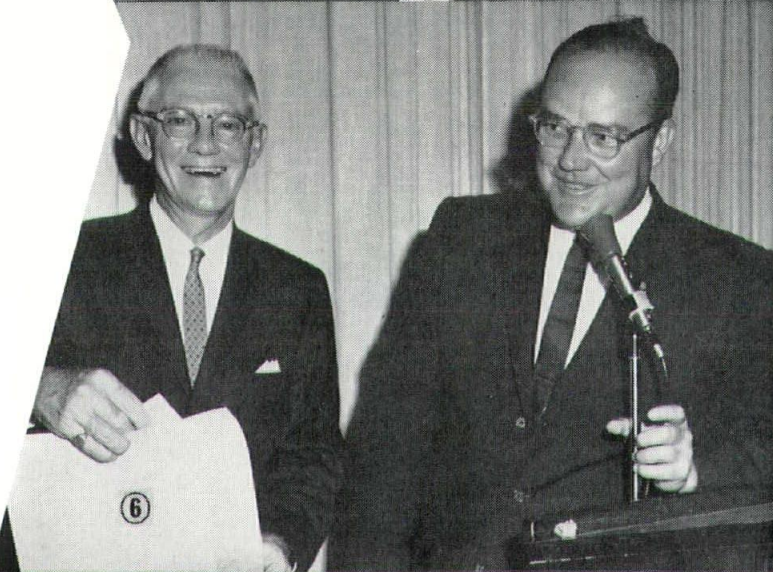
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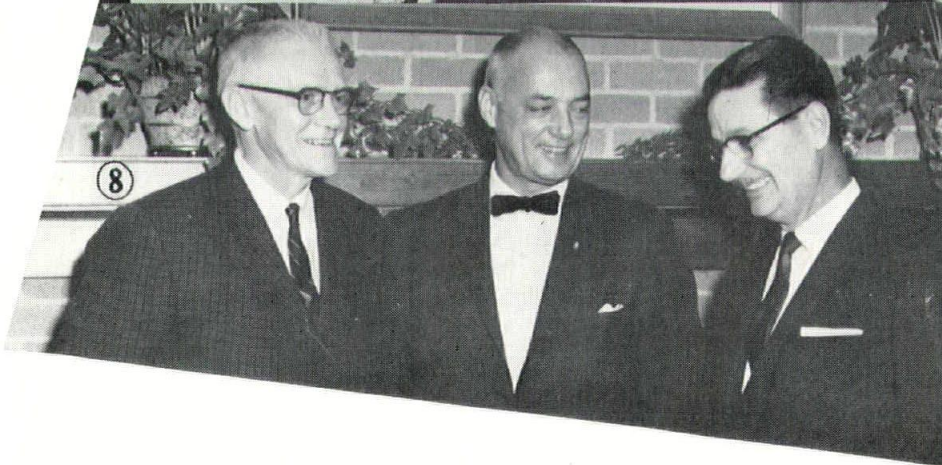
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AIA Officials Tour Louisiana

On Sunday, February 18, Regional Director Clinton "Bert" Brush III flew into Shreveport and spent the day "cueing" his successor, G. Scott Smitherman.

On Monday at noon, Bert met with the Shreveport Chapter. Here he outlined the national AIA's new program, and previewed important business matters scheduled for consideration at the national convention to be held in Dallas May 8-11.

That afternoon, Bert and the LAA Executive Director drove to Monroe to meet with the local Chapter that evening. Tuesday at noon, after John Glenn had been put safely into orbit, they met with the Central Louisiana Chapter in Alexandria.

After the Alexandria session, the duo whizzed to the Crescent City where they were joined by AIA Executive Director William Scheick at a meeting of the New Orleans Chapter.

Wednesday noon found the party in Lake Charles and after a talk at the University of Southwestern Louisiana Wednesday afternoon, the group motored to Opelousas to meet with the South Louisiana Chapter.

They met with the seventh chapter, Baton Rouge, on Thursday evening.

At every meeting, interest in the AIA and LAA ran high.

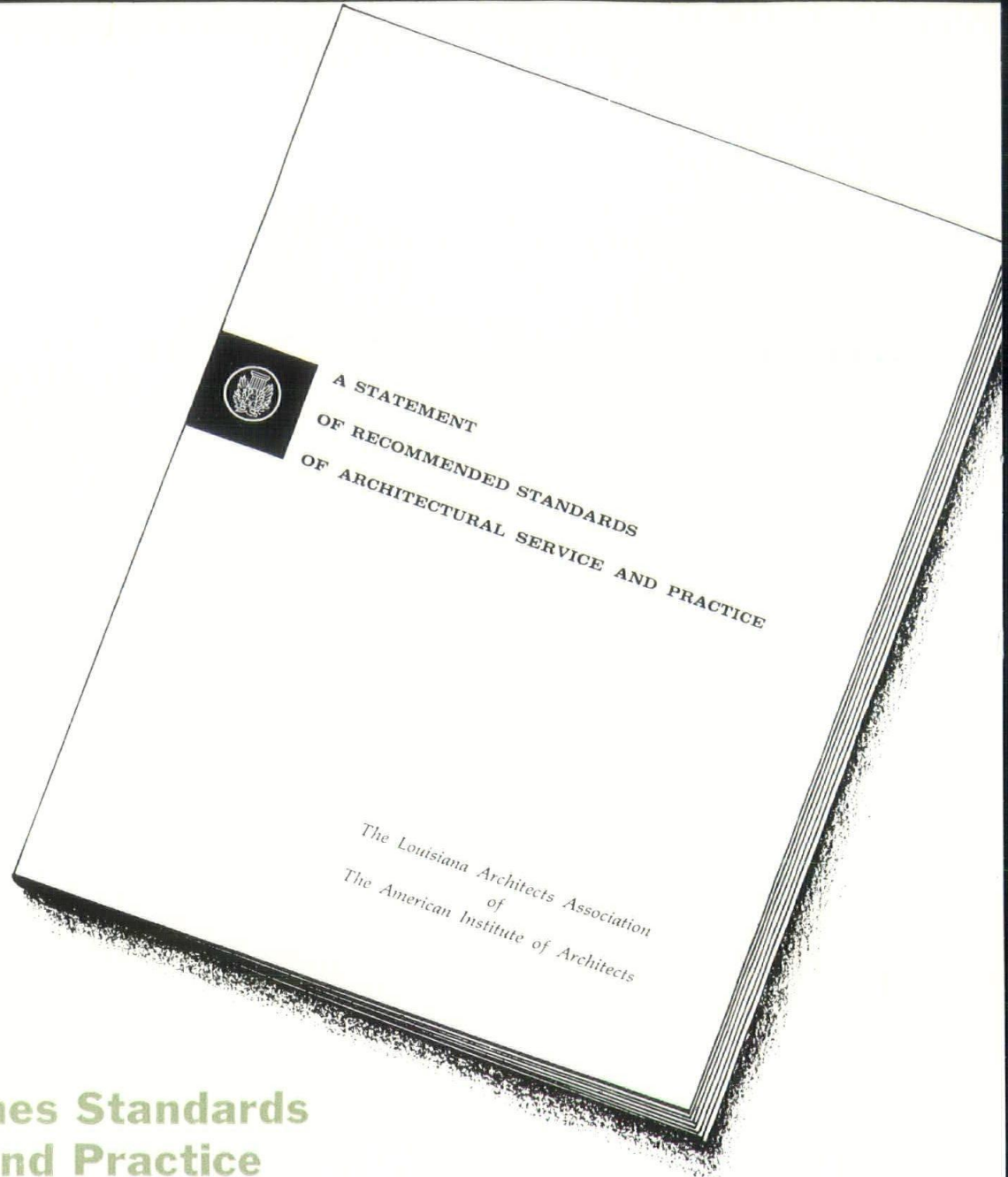
Attendance was encouraging. The LAA executive director found real grassroots support for the State Association. The favorable change in attitude (compared with a year ago) was unmistakably apparent.

Perhaps you may see some of your friends in this semi-montage as Messrs. Brush and Scheick visit their components.

Who's Who?

1. **SHREVEPORT** — Chapter President Pierce Meleton.
2. **MONROE** — Regional Director Bert Brush, Monroe Chapter President Lon Heuer and D. Curtis Smith, president of the State Board of Architectural Examiners.
3. **MONROE** — Chapter members Roy Johns, Beuford Jacka, Howard Rivers, Jack Neel.
4. **ALEXANDRIA** — Eugene Glankler, Oscar Butler, Brush.
5. **ALEXANDRIA** — LAA First Vice President Joseph M. Brocato, Brush, and Central Louisiana Chapter President Walter Price.
6. AIA Executive Director William H. Scheick receives honorary Baton Rouge Citizenship papers from Kenneth C. Landry who makes the presentation on behalf of Mayor Jack Christian. Landry will join Scheick's staff in Washington in April.
7. **BATON ROUGE**—John Bani, Baton Rouge Chapter First Vice President, assumes the presidency of the chapter to fill the vacancy created by Landry's new appointment.
8. **LAKE CHARLES** — Scheick, Brush and Southwest Louisiana Chapter President John Gabriel respond to an amusing anecdote.
9. **OPELOUSAS** — Scheick discusses the aims of AIA after a hearty meal at the home of South Louisiana Chapter President Manny Veltin.
10. **NEW ORLEANS** — President M. Wayne Stoffle suggests French cuisine to Scheick at Antoine's.
11. **NEW ORLEANS** — Members of the Executive Committee and guests at the Antoine dinner include (L to R) Tim Favrot, Stoffle, Scheick, Professor Bush-Brown of MIT, New Orleans Chapter President Murvan M. Maxwell, Brush, F. V. von Osthoff; John Lawrence, Director of the Tulane School of Architecture; Joseph Grima Bernard and Phares Frantz. James Lamantia is hidden behind Dean Lawrence.





LAA Publishes Standards of Service and Practice

It is often said that one of the major problems of the architectural profession is a lack of public understanding of the services an architect provides for his client.

In an effort to erase this problem, the Louisiana Architects Association has published a Statement of Recommended Standards of Architectural Service and Practice. During March, some 600 state, parish and municipal officials will receive copies of the new document. Meanwhile, several thousand copies will be sent by LAA firms to past, present and potential clients.

For a dozen or so years, Louisiana architects have attempted to publish such a document, but because there was no cohesive state organization, efforts were futile.

In 1960, the year when a full-time state head-

quarters was organized, G. Scott Smitherman, then LAA president, disregarded the history of fruitless attempts and appointed Samuel Wiener chairman of a committee to begin work on a Statement of Service and Practice.

Work was slow and tedious. LAA collected samples from chapters and state associations throughout the country. The Octagon library was thoroughly ransacked.

OLSCHNER TAKES OVER

In 1961, the committee, headed by Carl Olschner, took over where Wiener's group left off at the conclusion of the Smitherman administration. Throughout the year, Olschner's committee met and worked. Anyone who attended these sessions will attest to the fact that both patience and work were involved. The chairman reported on his committee's progress

at each quarterly session of the LAA Board of Governors.

On September 8, a draft with minor additions was approved by the Board. LAA Legal Counsel Alvin Rubin offered his sage advice to the Committee. The draft, with Rubin's comments, was sent to the firm of Spencer and Whalen, legal counselors for the national AIA, for its indulgence.

On November 14, the LAA Board approved the final draft and voted to submit it to the LAA annual meeting scheduled for the next day. And so, on November 15, 1961, the Statement was adopted by annual meeting delegates from throughout the state.

DOCUMENTS FOR SALE

The document is being sold to firms at the actual cost of printing. Up to 50 copies, the cost is 25c each. The unit cost drops to 22c for orders of over 50 copies. LAA President M. Wayne Stoffle ordered the first fifty copies. He plans to make extensive and immediate use of the Statement.

Orders began coming into LAA headquarters immediately after sample copies and an introductory letter were sent to the 132 member firms in the state. Comments from members have been more than encouraging. Said one buyer, "In one handsome booklet, I can tell my clients what I do for them. From now on, I will make this document a part of my initial interview. I will make sure to leave it with the client."

LASSEIGNE NEW CHAIRMAN

Clifton Lasseigne, one of Olschner's ardent workers, has been appointed chairman of a committee

charged with the responsibility of promoting the Statement. Lasseigne's group will also receive comments and propose changes, if necessary, to keep the publication current.

Olschner will get a much needed rest as vice chairman of Lasseigne's committee.

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THERE IS A LAW . . . and You Can Help Make It Work

By FRED HIGHTOWER

Executive Director

State Licensing Board for Contractors

In the February, 1962, issue of *Louisiana Architect* there was a very interesting article entitled "THERE OUGHT TO BE A LAW—but how can we help make it one?"

In 1956 the Louisiana Legislature did pass a law known as the contractors licensing law. Act 233 was designed to license and qualify contractors who engage in construction contracts exceeding \$30,000. The law was enacted not only to protect the public but also to benefit qualified contractors and to assist in many ways the architects. The very lifeblood of the art and science of an architect is the contractor who builds the structures he has designed and planned.

As far back as 4000 B.C. there was evidence that architects were a key part of the construction industry where the people in the Mediterranean area developed and built huts, tombs, and temples out of carefully finished stones. The modern day construction industry can also give much of the credit for advancement in building techniques to the foresight and planning of architects and engineers. So when we look back and see what has been accomplished in the last one hundred years and look ahead and try to contemplate what will be accomplished in the next one hundred years, it is really staggering.

Four Sets of Tools

It is even more so when one stops to think that for nearly 2000 years, possibly longer, mankind was satisfied with four sets of tools. These devices were used to relieve muscles so that men could do more of the physical things by means of these tools than he could with his own fingers. You are all familiar with them. The wheel and the axle is one. The lever is another. Without the lever they could have designed but could never have built the pyramids. The incline plane and the pulley were their other tools, and it was nearly 2000 years before much change was made in the use of them. Yes, I think time lapsed by until our generation before there was much change.

Even in my lifetime, I recall in 1930 watching a team of horses on a Fresno scraper putting up highway grades. Now when you watch these monsters pick up thirty yards of earth in one bite and transmit it or transport it at the velocity of forty to fifty miles an hour and dump it without slowing down, you begin to realize what happened. There was a time

when we couldn't change the course of streams. We couldn't change the face of the earth. We couldn't go very high in the sky. Those times have passed and buildings and structures have been designed and built which have exceeded all expectations.

It used to be that one man or one group of men in a contracting firm would take a general contract and do all the work, but today work has become so specialized that we have a multitude of specialty contractors involved in our highways, in our airports, and in our buildings—both public and private. Everywhere you turn you have contractors, subcontractors, specialty contractors, and we need controls because there are a few people who want to make a fast buck and who care

Recently, representatives of the LAA and the State Licensing Board for Contractors, met in Baton Rouge to work out a means by which a section in the Contractors Licensing Law might be altered to be more equitable to architects. At the close of a very fruitful session, a staff member of the Contractors Board expressed a desire to communicate with LAA members relative to the influence of the Contractors Law on the architectural profession. Space is herein provided to Mr. Fred Hightower, executive director of the Board.

not the outcome as long as they can get paid and get away before it is discovered. The development for the laws for licensing contractors in most states has been a natural one and an important one. I do know this—that 99% of our contractors are completely honest, reliable and trustworthy—these men are rewarded for their efforts in a competitive atmosphere and are the essence of our whole free enterprise system and the heritage of a free people.

Role Is Clear

Our role as the State Licensing Board for Contractors is clear cut. The law requires us to properly qualify and license contractors doing business in the state. We are required by

law to see that the contractors are financially responsible to perform the work as a contractor. Each contractor's experience is checked to see that he has properly and satisfactorily completed construction jobs for the classification for which he desires to be licensed. If he has failed to successfully perform a contract in any way, his application is rejected. We require that a contractor successfully pass an examination for the type construction for which he desires to be licensed. Every construction specialty has an examination which, if successfully passed, indicates that the applicant is qualified to perform and complete a contract. When a licensed contractor receives a contract, you—as the architect—can be reasonably assured that the job can and will be done according to your plans and specifications.

Now—how can you as an architect help make this law work? The law specifically gives the Contractors Board the authority to revoke, rescind or suspend the license of a contractor who does not properly meet the standards required by the law as a qualified licensed contractor. If a contractor fails to properly perform his contract or fails to complete a contract, the Board will immediately investigate and will take the proper steps to protect the public from him in the future. We would appreciate the cooperation of all Louisiana architects in reporting to us any information of this nature. Again, I repeat, that 99% of all contractors are honest, reliable and trustworthy; however, in any group you will always find a few "rotten apples in the barrel."

Requirements Should Be Changed

We fully realize that when Act 233 was written there were several requirements and penalties affecting the architects and agents of the awarding authority written into the law which should be changed. We have a committee working with the Louisiana Architects Association to correct these features of the act at the coming May session of the legislature.

The architect who is the leader in this construction industry is a part of the biggest segment of American business. More dollars go through construction industry hands than any other business. It is America's greatest single industry and, therefore, constitutes one of the strongest bastions of free enterprise in the United States. The architects occupy a very important position in this free enterprise. The construction industry has a great future ahead of it and we want to do something to help that future. We think that the State Licensing Board for Contractors can be an asset to you and to contractors by proper administration of Louisiana's law. A licensed contractor can go forward and bid on a job and say, "We have a license and are qualified to do the job we are bidding on."

The licensing law is designed to benefit the architect, the contractor, and the general public. We of the State Licensing Board for Contractors will continually strive to accomplish this purpose.

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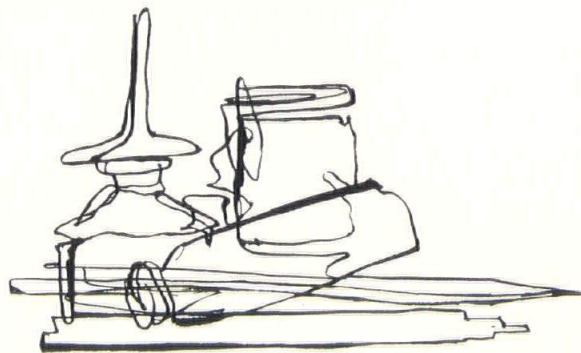
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NEWS, NOTES, QUOTES

Obituary

David R. Williams, 71, who was associated with various governmental agencies as architect and planner died at his home in Lafayette on Saturday, March 10.

He was deputy administrator and chief architect of the National Youth Administration in 1936.

Lafayette area architects will deeply feel the loss of their friend, Dave.

No Blueprint

LAA headquarters did not publish its newsletter, the BLUEPRINT, in February. The reason for skipping this issue lies in the tremendous expenditure related to printing LAA's legislative program. The printing budget is not only strained but exhausted. This situation promises to continue until after the legislature adjourns in June, therefore, other issues may be missed.

Mail Box

February 22, 1962

Mr. Myron Tassin
Executive Secretary
Louisiana Architects Association
Capitol House Hotel
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Dear Sir:

This is to inform you that the State Board of Architectural Examiners hereby endorses the proposed changes to the "Law Relating to the Practice of Architecture in State of Louisiana," as submitted to us on 13 February.

We are most interested in the passage of this legislation, particularly as it will put Louisiana "in step" with practically every state in the Union.

Sincerely,
Seymour Van Os, Secretary
STATE BOARD OF ARCHITECTURAL
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Seymour Van Os, Secretary
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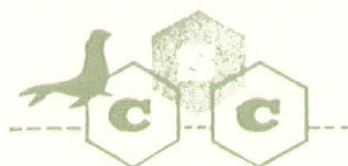
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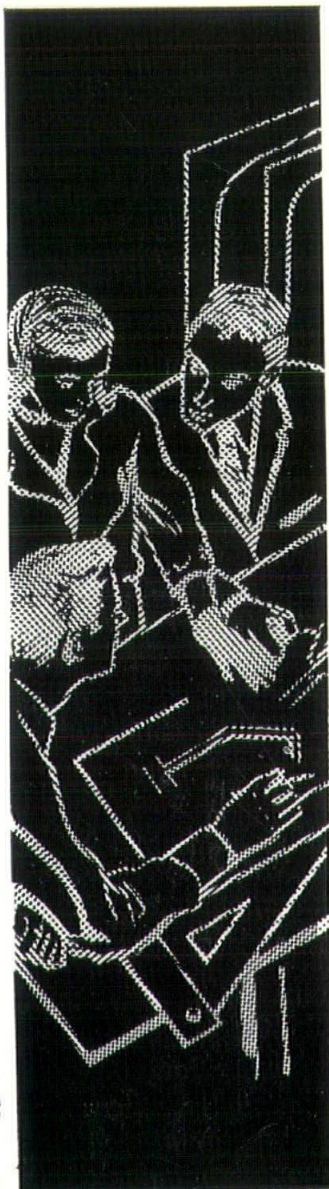
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