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The Louisiana Architect

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As an expression of the LAA's interest in labor-management harmony and in support of Governor McKeithen's efforts to this end, the following resolution was given to the Governor February 19, 1968.

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the courageous public stand taken by Governor John J. McKeithen concerning the current labor-management strife in Louisiana has been recognized by the Louisiana Architects Association, and

WHEREAS, the governor has placed the full force of the state behind an investigation and said that he would urge that any local official not discharging his office be addressed out of office, and

WHEREAS, the governor has pointed out that new industries are requiring his assurance that the state would continue its drive against the disruptive elements, and

WHEREAS, the Louisiana Architects Association area feels that such labor strife, including bombings and shootings and intimidation in various forms, is a detriment to the state in that it reduces the efficiency and raises the cost of construction projects, and further that it tarnishes the image of Louisiana in the eyes of industries considering this state for future expansion, now, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, that, the Louisiana Architects Association strongly support Governor McKeithen in his efforts to eradicate these evils and offer him whatever support this Association may give in his efforts. The LAA further urges that Governor McKeithen continue his strong stand to eliminate all disruptive friction between labor forces and the working man and between labor and management, that he curb any outside elements which may be adding to this detrimental situation, and further that he carry out his pledge of jail for persons causing this strife without fear or favor for the welfare of the people of the State of Louisiana.

Howard C. Sherman

HOWARD C. SHERMAN, President

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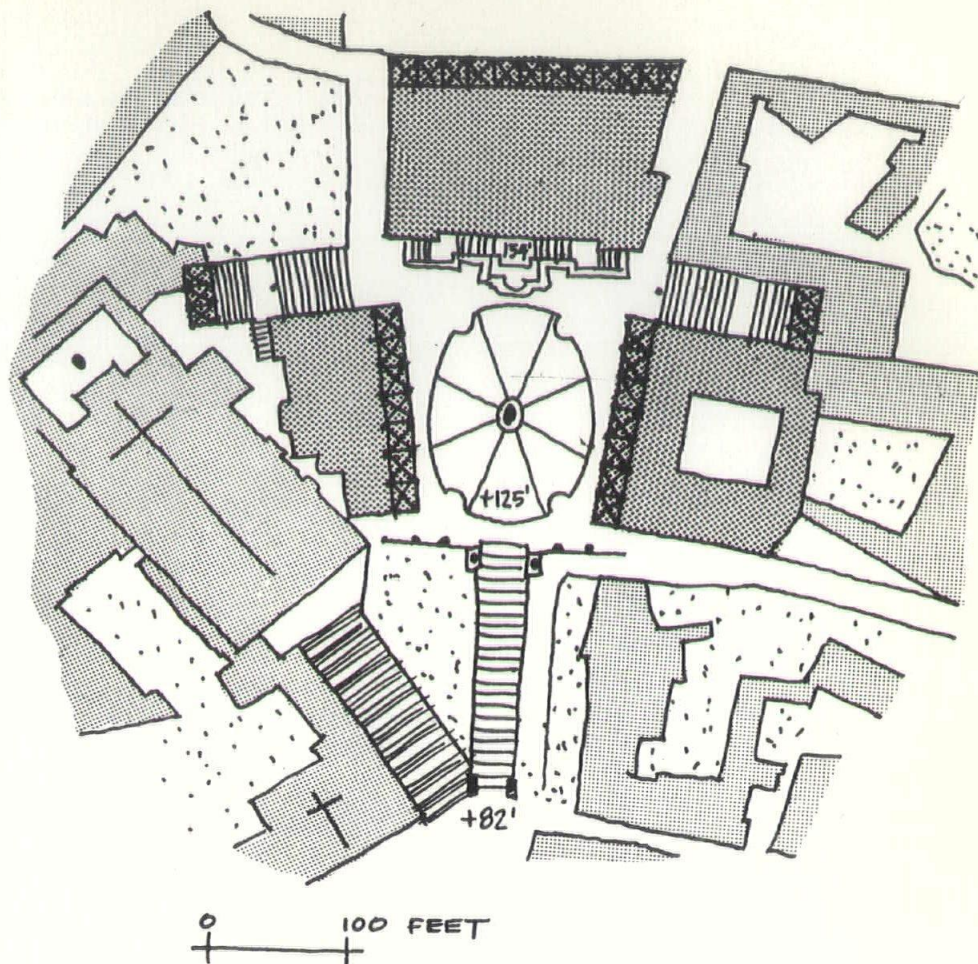
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The Louisiana Architect

AIA Commission on Architectural Design

By JULES GREGORY, AIA
(Delivered at Grassroots
Operation, 1968)



The Commission on Architectural Design might more accurately be called the Commission on the Environment. Its committees cover the fields of urban design, aesthetics, collaborating arts, housing and historic buildings.

It is obvious to all of us that the major problem confronting the profession today is the urban crisis. The physical problem of an inhumane environment in the cities and suburbs is something which cannot escape us.

There has been an unprecedented reaction from the government and from the public. In committees of the Senate and House of Representatives, hearings have been held to get to the root of these problems. The editorials in the press and the riots testify to the public concern.

The current demand for urban design services is dynamic. It has been estimated that 130,000 man-years of design time are required for work that is already on the books and that one-half billion dollars worth of pre-schematic design services will be required for work to come in the next twelve months.

If this challenge is not squarely met by the profession, the respect of so-

ciety will be lost and we will be denied the leadership we have always claimed.

I must tell you what we are doing right now to respond to this crisis.

You have just received a copy of "Check List for Cities." This guide is designed as a summary of significant factors common to most cities and towns in this country. Its purpose is to stimulate and aid your chapter in taking strong initiative toward seeking solutions to your urban problems. Also under development are manuals of Urban Design Case Studies and Street Furniture.

You have received a copy of the report of the Potomac Basin Task Force. The implication of this important work reaches into every corner of the country. It has been commended editorially in the "New York Times," and in the press across the country.

We have sent assistance teams into Rapid City, South Dakota and Frankfort, Kentucky. Their purpose is to awaken the public to the problems of these cities and recommend a plan for planning for the solutions. The effect has been indeed dynamic. Next on the list is San Juan, Puerto Rico.

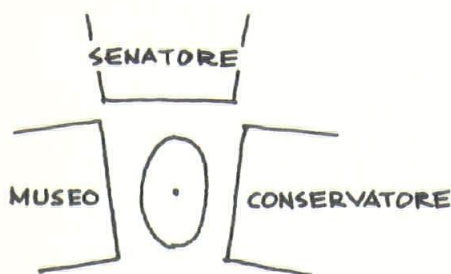
Concept teams for the multi-use design of urban highways have been successfully established in Baltimore and Brooklyn. This represents a huge step forward in translating the theories of urban design into the hard facts of practice.

Three workshops in urban design have been held at the Octagon, one on Socio-Physical Design, one on Design in Federal Programs and one on Advocacy Urban Design. These are new terms, but in a short time I am sure they will be a part of our working vocabulary. Six additional workshops are in the planning stage.

An urban design street furniture pilot project is being organized correlating the efforts of five cities: Dallas, Cincinnati, Philadelphia, Boston and Frankfort.

Major liaison has been maintained for urban design policies with the White House, Bureau of the Budget, Civil Service Commission, Department of Transportation and Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Testimony by representatives of the Institute has been given before the Ribicoff Hearings, the Urban Highways Hearings and the Senate Public



Works Committee Hearings on the Urban Highway. More papers and testimony are in preparation.

Through the Aesthetics Committee the Institute's directors have established the Architectural Criticism Award. The Honor Awards procedures are being studied in detail. A study is also under way of the principles of the profession's involvement in design review boards.

President Durham has appointed a task force to study in depth the implications of the "Turnkey Method," of HUD. Secretary Weaver has defined this as, "An approach to getting low-rent public housing built more quickly and more cheaply than ever before." Meetings have been held across the country, and I am sure that

many of you have received questionnaires from the Institute. This is a thorny problem but it is hoped that a firm policy will be developed within the next few months.

Detailed Institute position papers have been delivered to Congressman Reuss on his Low and Moderate Income Housing Act and to Senator Percy on his Home Owners Achievement Bill. Institute reaction has been asked for and given to several other FHA-HUD proposals.

The work of the Historic Buildings Committee has assumed large proportions in light of its relationship to urban design. Very soon the government will be putting millions of dollars into the preservation field. The committee has concluded that the profession must mobilize now in order to be in a position to assure that wise and fruitful programs be administered in each state. The committee maintains close relationship with national and government organizations concerned with this work. A slide program for your chapter's use is in production. It will demonstrate the need for and the techniques of accomplishing preservation.

These, then, are the immediate on-going projects of this commission. Now let's talk about our plans for the future. We see this as the development of response to four major statements:

1. The profession, to respond to the threat of the aero-space industry to take over in the environment design field, must embrace the techniques of systems engineering.
2. The gap must be bridged between **planning**, as two-dimensional paper-mapping, and **architecture**, as the three-dimensional, bricks-and-mortar concept.
3. The AIA must be developed to be an environmental research laboratory.
4. Urban design processes must be applied at the national scale.

I think it is obvious that the implications of all of this will reach every one of us, be our office large or small. It is further obvious that the carrying out of this work will involve massive expenditures of energy and money. The American Institute of Architects, on behalf of each of you and each of your constituents, has made this commitment.

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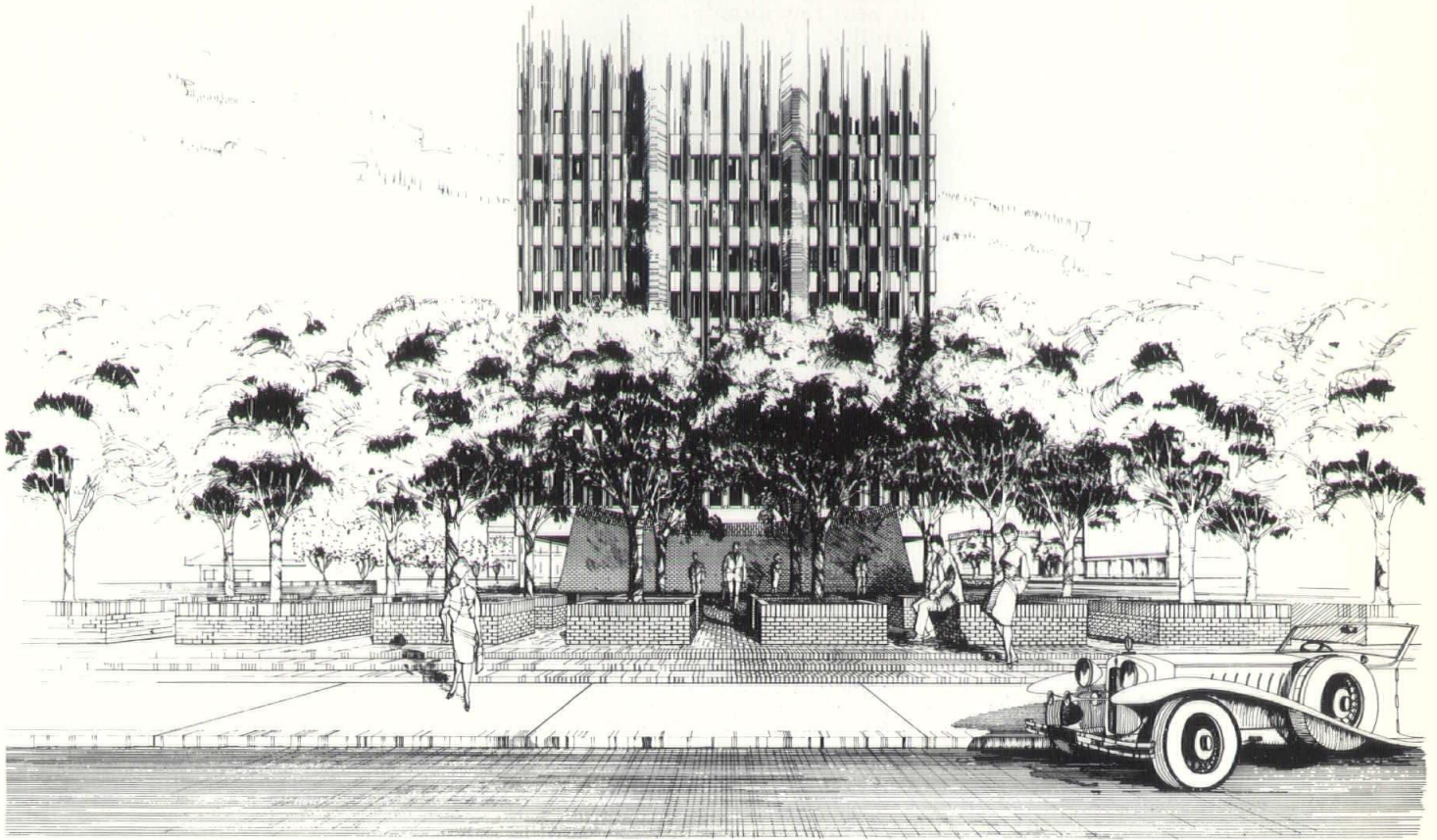
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THE LNB BUILDING STORY



The building and business renaissance in downtown Baton Rouge, took a long step forward recently when the 24-story \$12 million Louisiana National Bank and office building was topped out on its strategic Florida Avenue site.

The new LNB has importance both in terms of the economic resurgence of Louisiana's capital, and particularly its business district, and also as a pioneering and profoundly "rethought," approach to bank-and-office building design.

This building is the first in its category to place the main banking floor at a subsurface level—a vast, tranquil "island of space," 38,000 square feet of column free productive area, surrounded by a subterranean vista of trees and gardens, yet looking up through this buffer of space to the sky. The capital's swarming street traffic on Florida, Fourth, Fifth and Laurel streets circles the building out of sight of the banking floor, which is also large enough to permit customer use

of all departments on one level, in a closely organized layout.

The office building aspect of the project has also been given a dynamic new expression in the freeing of all floors of the building from space-consuming internal columns, by placing the major weight load on eight external reinforced concrete columns which both structure the building and dictate its outstanding appearance characteristic. These towering, tapering columns seem to float the huge mass skyward and contribute an air and posture of lightness to a building which in fact is solidly planted in the earth—three stories deep. Beneath the banking floor are two subsurface parking floors, which will contain spaces for 250 automobiles.

This design is an advanced use of the flotation principle, eliminating the need for pilings, providing three extra floors of usable space, and limiting the soil loading factor underneath to a nominal 2,000 pounds per square

foot, which allowed for economical construction on a mat foundation.

The exterior columns increase their cross-section downward, resulting in a subtle tapered line relieving the strict rectangularity of the tower, and range in width from two feet at a point three stories below the roof to eight feet at their base.

These eight supporting members are also fixed by each floor, acting as a diaphragm, to the load-bearing internal service core, giving the building extreme rigidity. The concrete exterior finish of the building was given an exposed warm aggregate finish by sand-blasting the cast-in-place concrete.

Charles W. McCoy, President and Board Chairman of Louisiana National Bank, said that the building's unique design has provided a total usable area of 302,101 square feet out of a gross area of 376,390 square feet. This, he said, results in an efficiency

(Continued on Page 8)

THE LNB BUILDING—

(Continued from Page 7)

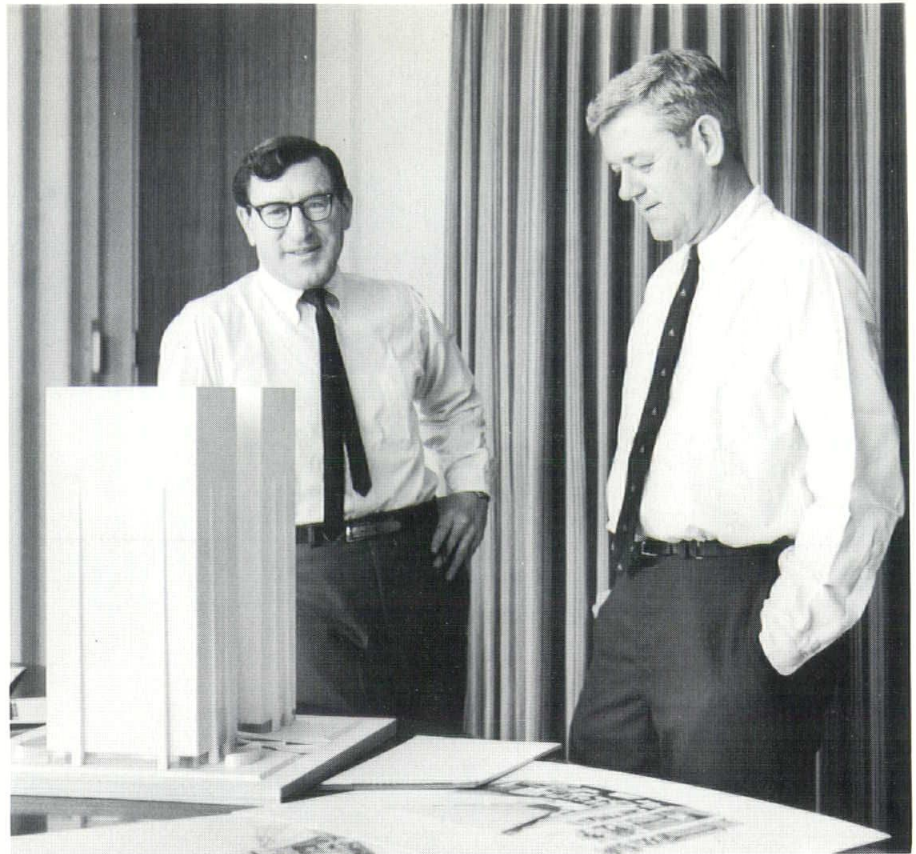
rating for the building of 80.2 per cent, compared with an average efficiency rating of 70 percent for such buildings.

"In addition to the building's economy and the logic and efficiency of both banking and office spaces, we feel it achieves true distinction in its esthetic character. The building lobby used by the office tenants will be entered by means of three bridges, one from Florida Street and two from the plaza level. The main entrance bridge from Florida is at street level between the banking and plaza floors. Customers and tenants may choose either moving stairways or elevators down to the main banking level, or enter high-speed elevators to travel upward into the office tower.

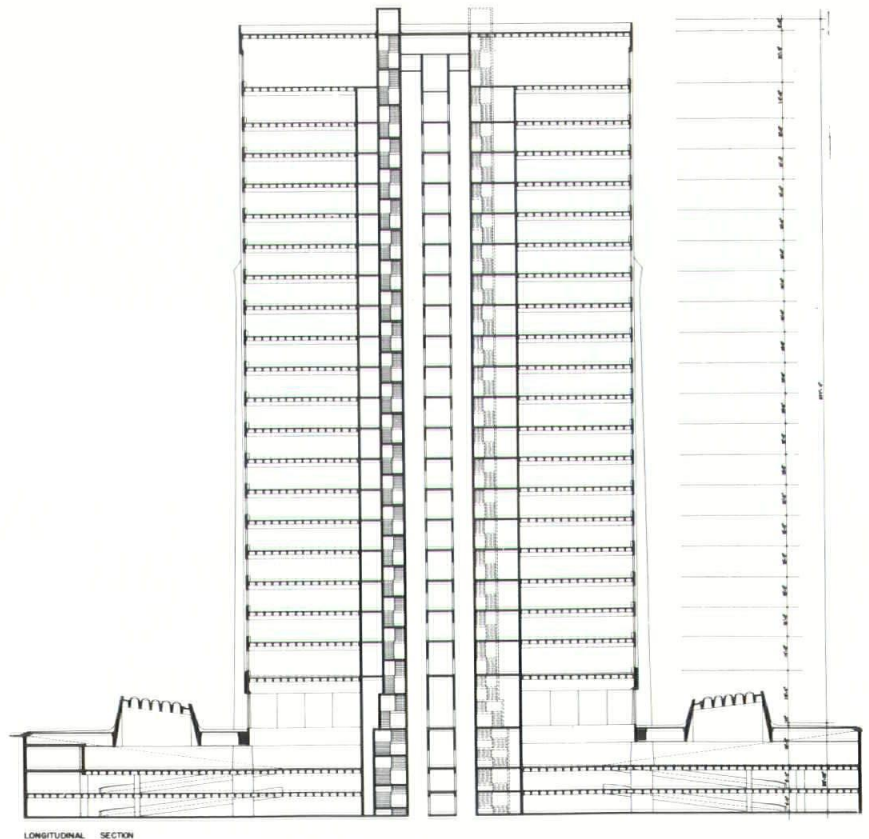
"We at LNB feel that this new building provides a dramatic nucleus and base to serve the awakened Baton Rouge economy for decades to come. Ten years ago the downtown area was clearly shadowed by the threat of accelerating obsolescence. Today that trend has been reversed. The Wall Street Journal has called Baton Rouge and its environs 'probably the hottest new industry spot in the nation at present.' The downtown area alone is undergoing a rebuilding activity which totals well over \$60 million. In addition there is the \$46 million new bridge across the Mississippi, a massive construction program at LSU, the multimillion dollar expressway and a rising activity in land acquisition and investment in the business area.

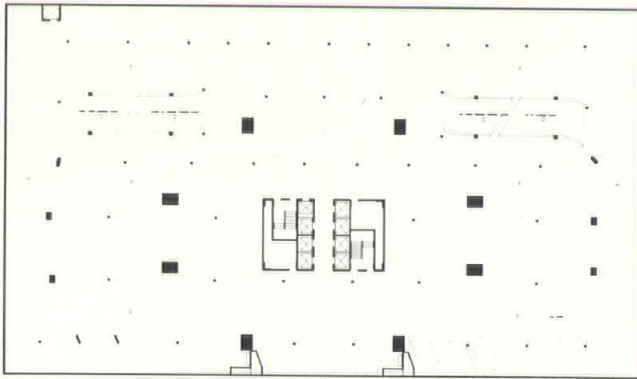
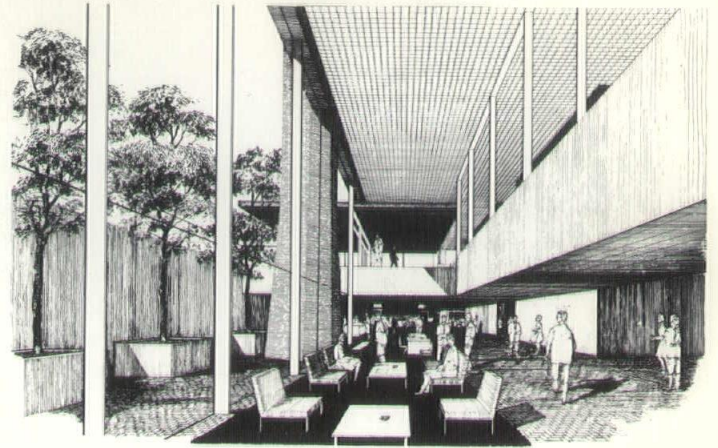
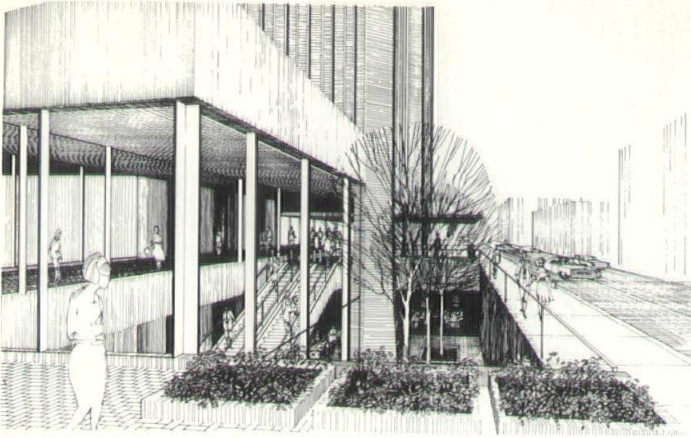
"We believe that Curtis and Davis Architects, as the designers of the new LNB bank building, have provided not only a sound and economic physical structure but also—by its originality, its boldness and its logic—a proper symbol for what is happening in Louisiana in our time—in its economy, in its leadership, in its genuine desire to move ahead by intelligence, patience and hard work."

Henry C. Beck is general contractor for the building. Prime subcontractors include Sam P. Wallace, mechanical; Fisk Electric, electrical; Westinghouse Elevator Division, transportation; and Older and Co., glazing and storefront.

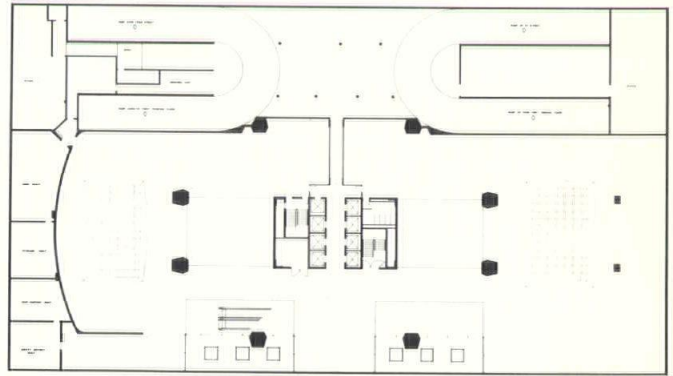


(Arthur Quentin Davis left and Nathaniel Cortland Curtis, Jr.—Curtis and Davis, Architects). With model of Louisiana National Bank and projected twin tower.

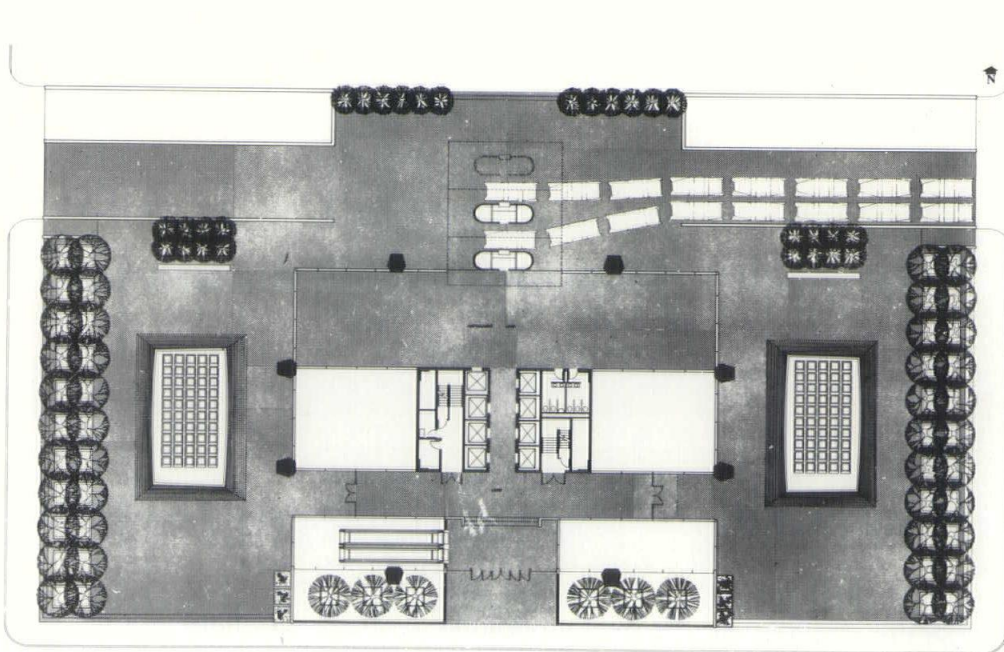




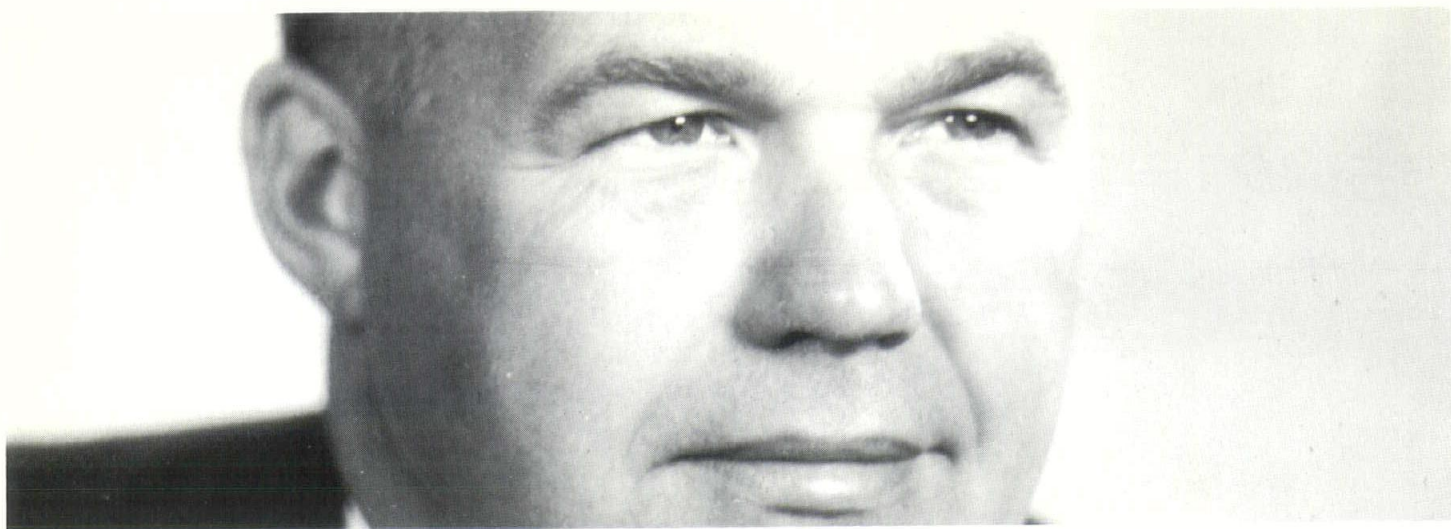
FIRST FLOOR PLAN



BANK FLOOR PLAN



PLAZA FLOOR PLAN



PROFILE OF CHARLES W. McCOY

Charles Wallace McCoy, President and Chairman of the Board of Louisiana National Bank, has a broad range of traits and aptitudes which do not reveal themselves immediately upon acquaintance. Or to say it another way, Chuck McCoy usually holds a great deal of himself, his training, and his abilities in reserve. And the possession of solid reserves, of course, is an admirable characteristic for a banker.

It was Chuck McCoy's family training in banking and his excellent modern education in economics which brought him to Baton Rouge and the leadership-seeking Louisiana National Bank. It was McCoy's personal traits—and his dominant characteristic of relaxed strength, of courtesy and patience mixed with ironclad resolution, and a scholar's sense of systematic preparation—which made his move to Baton Rouge and the LNB work out so well. He had what it took to get along with and to win respect from the amazing variety of human types to be encountered in Louisiana's capital city, at the very vortex of its colorful political life, its entrenched banker and planter aristocracy, its "Ruhr Valley" maze of oil refineries and petrochemical installations, its baffling change of pace from Yankee hustle and bustle to steamboat landing graciousness, and sometimes lassitude. The Civil War is a long time ago; but memories and folkways in the South are also notably long. Yankee and Confederate gunboats once plugged away at one another on the river, and Colonel Grierson's blue-coated cavalry sweep (still alive in novels and movies such as "The Horse Soldiers" and "Band of Angels") was climaxed in the sugar cane plantation country around Baton Rouge. Into this complex and historic river town in 1959, in the final year of Earl Long's third term as Governor, came the young but well-trained Ohio banker who had decided to step out from under the shadow of his banker-father's great career and his older brother's long head start in the family institution (City National Bank and Trust Company in Columbus). And strangely enough, from one point of view—and inevitably from another—the move worked remarkably well from the very beginning.

Banker McCoy, it was soon apparent, could fit in well with many types of people—be-

yond and above the call of duty on the banking floor. With the golfers he turned out to be an excellent golfer. Among the frenzied fans and Monday morning quarterback of "Tigertown" (LSU's following is fiercely loyal) McCoy, it was discovered, had an ex-football-captain's shrewdness and a coach's mental processes. He had been a nine-letter man at Marietta College, and had long and seriously considered coaching as his first career. Instead he had gone to Stanford for a Master's degree; and there he wrote a thesis on "The Future of the Petroleum Industry in California." So he could talk to the oilmen too, in Louisiana.

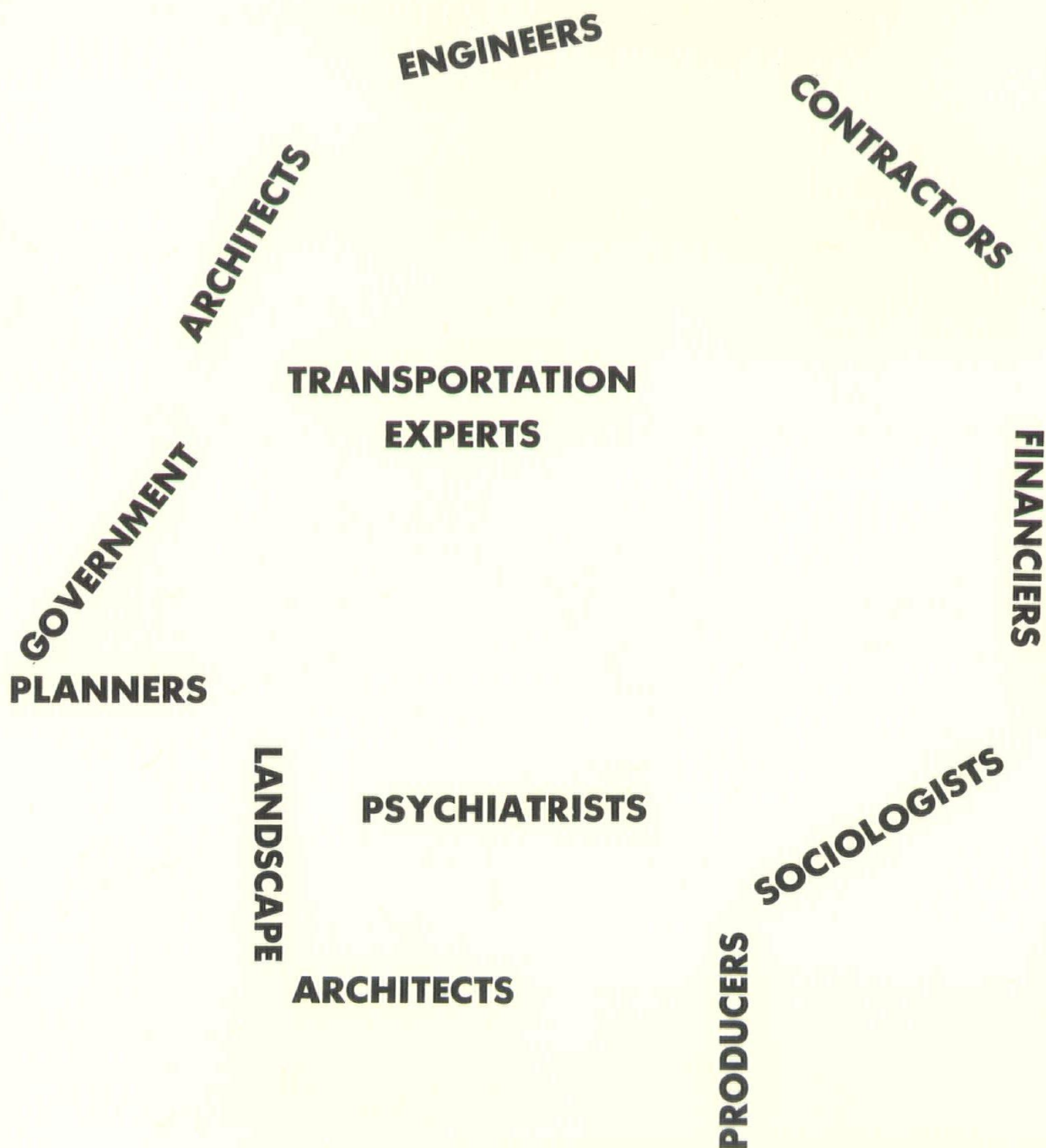
His capacity for problem analysis, for breaking down a complex proposition into its component parts, for methodical preparation, for dealing with the issue at hand while relating it also to the distant and overall goal, became a recognized and relied on factor not only in the affairs of Louisiana National Bank but throughout the Baton Rouge business community. A story told once by Mrs. McCoy about an Alaskan hunting trip illustrates the point. Chuck McCoy had come home one day in Ohio and said an associate had about convinced him—though McCoy was no hunter—that an Alaskan expedition would be a refreshing diversion and work-break for them both. "When?" she asked. The trip was 16 months away, so Mrs. McCoy relaxed and forgot about it. Chuck on the other hand selected a rifle and began to schedule regular practice on a police range in Columbus. A year and a half later he came back from Alaska with a vast polar bear skin (10 by 10, a showpiece in their new home in Baton Rouge), a grizzly bear's and an arctic wolf's hide. Then these trophies, like his earlier sports awards (in tennis, basketball and football) became for the McCoy's a part of the pleasant past while Chuck turned his characteristic drive and powers of analysis to future challenges.

His successful banking and civic careers in Baton Rouge have produced—for both the man and the community—a mounting series of trophies of impressive dimensions, now topped and climaxed by the skyline dominating tower of the new Louisiana National Bank.

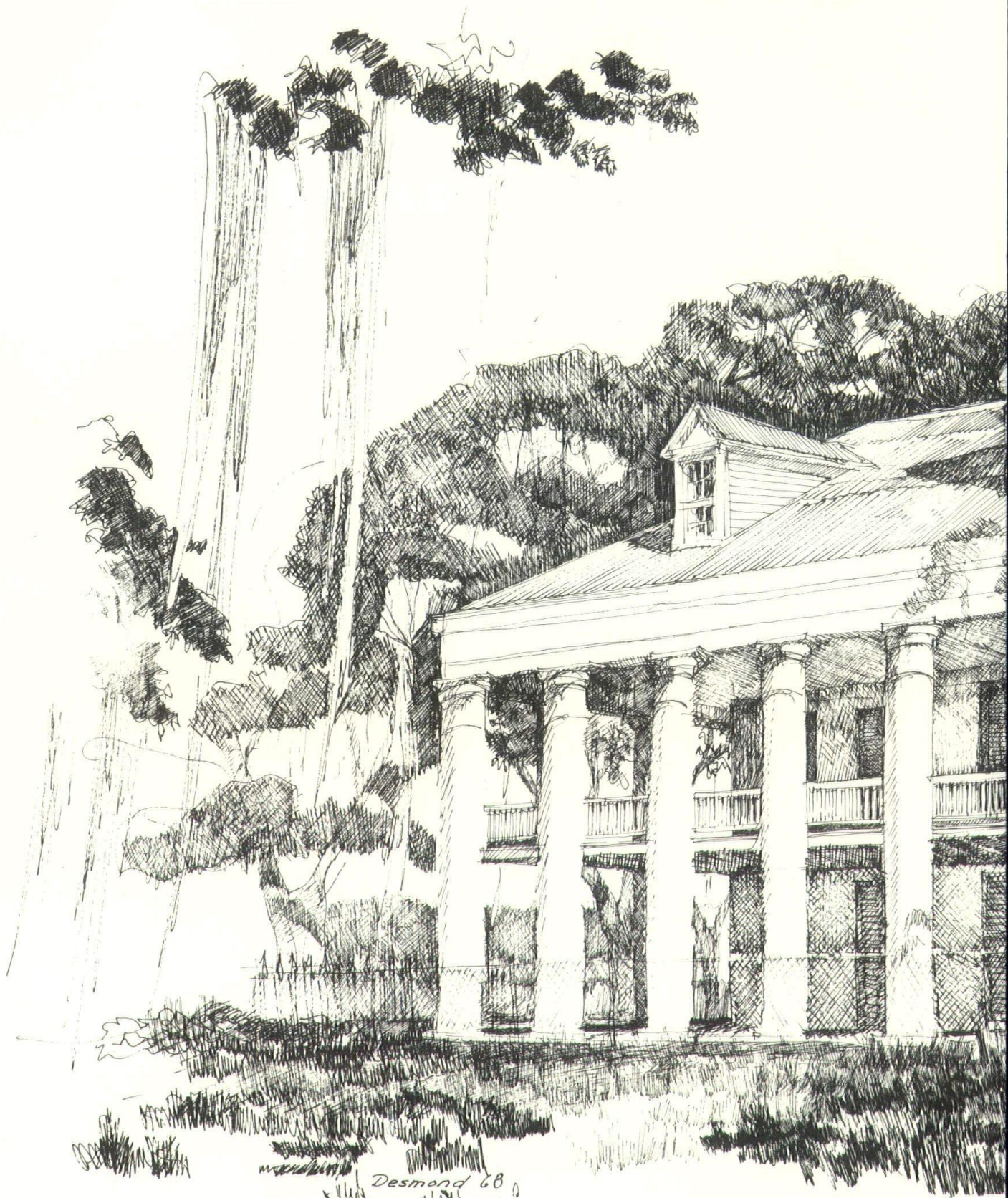
McCoy's successive promotions—Senior Vice-President, President, then additionally Chair-

man of the Board—were recognition of character and personal qualities as much as they were of the bank's growth. The figures for LNB's total resources during his leadership tell their own story: 1961, \$72,253,295; 1962, \$82,546,729; 1963, \$88,958,903; 1964, \$108,338,076; 1965, \$120,749,745; 1966, \$148,679,617. Throughout this period he has also spent a great deal of time analyzing financial and manufacturing trends, and the physical fate of downtown Baton Rouge. It is now acknowledged he has done as much as any Louisianian to stop and reverse the obsolescence which was overcoming many blocks and buildings in the capital. The new bank building was in part an effort to keep one of Ethyl's main offices in Baton Rouge. A later recognition has been McCoy's election as president of the Industrial Development Board of East Baton Rouge Parish, Inc., which has as one goal the construction and leasing of a vast chemical complex for Allied Chemical Co.

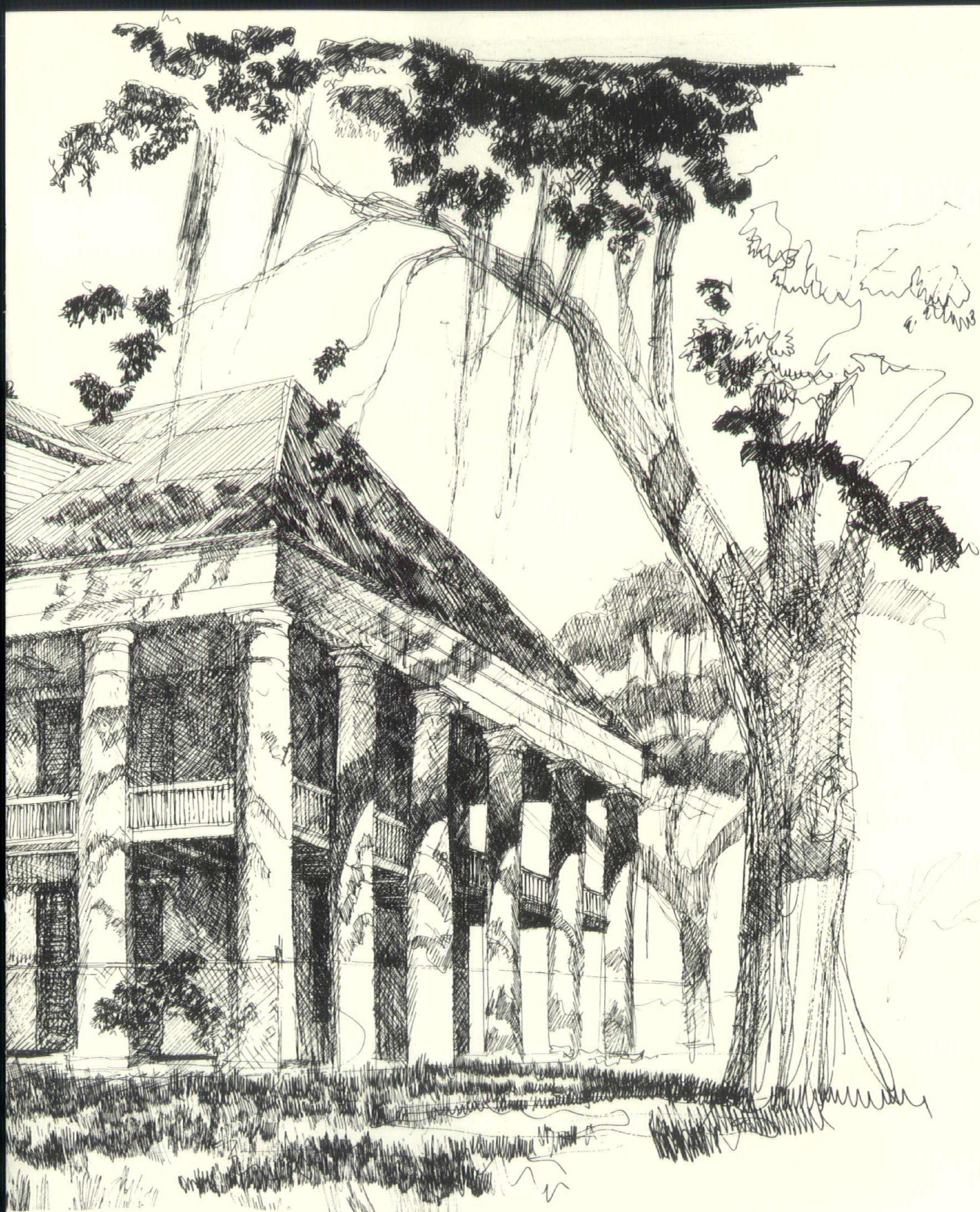
The decision to build the new bank, McCoy related in a recent interview, provided much needed space, new facilities and an exciting symbolic forward step for LNB, plus eight floors of space and expansion potential in "a modern quality building" for Ethyl Corporation—and a physical nucleus for new business of many types. The economic factors could be reduced to a clear and simple equation, and McCoy won forthright support from his board to proceed with the building project—or rather with a building project. The type of building—a utilitarian yet dramatic departure from conventional bank buildings, "with superb emphasis both on the esthetics of design and the simple logic of better and more efficient housekeeping and layout for both the bank and office building functions"—was the characteristic McCoy contribution to the equation. "I knew how much money we could spend; I knew what we had to accomplish; and I set out to find a contractor who could produce the building within the given cost factors, and the architects who could design to these challenging objectives. Our search was successful in both cases, and as a consequence I believe that downtown Baton Rouge now has one of the most important new buildings in the nation about which to send out an ever widening perimeter of growth."



Architects are coordinating the efforts of all these men in the interest of creating a better environment. The Louisiana Architects Association of the American Institute of Architects is coordinating the efforts of architects to create a greater profession.



Desmond 68



THE HERMITAGE

Of the purest and most assured of Louisiana's plantation homes, from an architectural point of view, is the one known as The Hermitage located near Burnside, Louisiana. It was built by Michel Bringier soon after the War of 1812 and was named after Andrew Jackson's Tennessee home. In 1840 it was remodeled and the excellent columns and portico erected with James Gallier, Sr., believed to be the architect. It is probably the most perfect example of the Louisiana form—in the relationship of columns, architrave, balcony and balustrade. The building had reached a sad state of disrepair but is now being restored.

CASE X

Professional Conduct Cases

The following studies of cases of unprofessional conduct, including notes on the totals and types of cases, are presented with the thought of keeping members informed as to the nature and amount of activity in this field. The Institute's judiciary system is probably the most active of any professional society.

It has been found, after careful study, that there are no really typical cases, and only one special area about which the membership should be especially warned — advertising.

Too often, members succumb to pressure or blandishments, and permit use of their names in an advertisement for which they pay, or they allow an advertiser to show their portraits in an advertisement of a product. This latter connotes a blanket endorsement, and puts the architect in a position where he has, apparently, lost his freedom to specify competitive products. It is not permitted.

The Institute's judiciary procedure is intended to do justice in each individual case. Past members of the National Judicial Board point out that in few cases has there been an identical violation of the rules. Many cases involve violation of more than one rule.

Each case has its own special variations and conditions which account for different penalties assessed by the Judicial Board, or by The Board of Directors.

Over the years our ethical rules have undergone periodic revisions. The last major change in the Standards of Professional Practice occurred at the 1964 Convention.

CASE No. 1

An architect paid for a "card" in a religious periodical congratulating the owner on the completion of the building. The architect excused his action by stating that he considered the payment a "donation." He excused another occurrence by stating that such a practice was "customary in the area" and the word "Architect" was not used after his name. The National Judicial Board found him guilty.

An architect's answer to an advertising salesman should be very simple: "Our code of ethics does not allow advertising."

1.4 An architect shall not use paid advertising or indulge in self laudatory, exaggerated, misleading or false publicity, nor shall he publicly endorse products or permit the use of his name to imply endorsement.

CASE No. 2

Architectural firm A was approached by members of the staff of an institution to undertake work for the institution. The prospective client explained that they were not satisfied with the previous work of Architect B and had terminated the contract and offered a settlement. Architect A undertook the work without written notice to Architect B. The National Judicial Board found Architect A guilty of a violation of the mandatory Standards on the principle that written notice is required regardless of whether the approach is made by the client or the architect.

3.4 An architect shall not attempt to supplant another architect after definite steps have been taken by a

client toward the latter's employment. He shall not offer to undertake a commission for which he knows another architect has been employed, nor shall he undertake such a commission until he has notified such other architect of the fact in writing, and has been advised by the owner that employment of that architect has been terminated.

CASE No. 3

Architect D rented a booth at a convention. In addition to display of his work, brochures were passed out to convention-goers. The local chapter brought charges. The National Judicial Board found Architect D guilty.

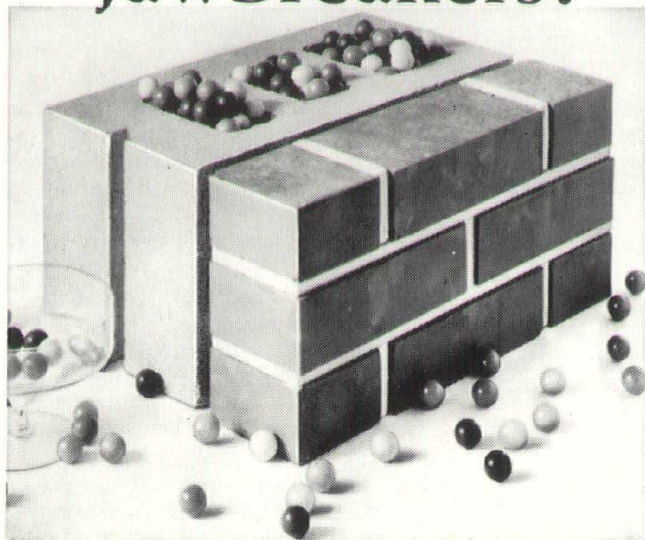
1.4 An architect shall not use paid advertising or indulge in self-laudatory, exaggerated, misleading or false publicity, nor shall he publicly endorse products or permit the use of his name to imply endorsement.

CASE No. 4

Architect B wrote to a number of institutions in questionnaire form regarding recommended standards for that building type. Included in the questionnaire were the questions, "Do you think architects' fees are too high? Too low? Adequate?" "Do you think the standards of architectural service should be improved?" "Do you contemplate doing any work in the near future?" Architect C who had a contract at one institution brought charges. The National Judicial Board found Architect B guilty.

3.2 An architect shall not act in a manner detrimental to the best interests of his profession.

Use *something* to insulate cavity and block walls. How about jawbreakers?



Whenever the temperature differs on the inside and outside of these walls (that's all the time), convection occurs in the cavities. The more different the temperature, the bigger the wind in the voids. The wind carries therms from the side where you want them to the side where you don't. These walls are as good as—or better—than other kinds of walls. But like all walls, they need insulation. Without it the occupants are as miserable as the heating and air conditioning bills.

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Gentlemen:

Somehow using jawbreakers doesn't sound like a good solution to the problem of insulating masonry walls. Send me Zonolite Masonry Fill Insulation Folder No. MF-83, with complete technical data and specifications.

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complex as the
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Church Plans Shaped To Fit Modern Needs

Growing informality of worship and expansion of the church secular activities are finding expression in a new and simpler religious architecture, says The American Institute of Architects.

Many of the new architectural ideas are an outgrowth of religion's new role as a servant of the entire community as well as its parishioners. There is wide agreement that the religious structure must be primarily a house for God's people, rather than a "House of God;" a shelter, rather than a monument; a forthright structure of integrity, not a self-assertive, imposing edifice.

The traditional pattern of church architecture, its origins rooted in medieval life, does not conform to life and religion in twentieth-century America. Authorities are discarding such long-accepted concepts as separation of nave and chancel because the resulting barrier between clergy and congregation discourages ease of communication and unity of worship.

Encourage Rapport

There is a strong feeling among architects, clergy, and knowledgeable laity that religious buildings must be designed to encourage rapport among all participants, in a setting that proclaims an honest statement of faith—free of needless adornment, unhampered by indiscriminate use of symbols, and built of materials that are what they appear to be.

The conventional floor plan of a center aisle that leads to the altar area is being displaced by a more coherent plan. Often asymmetrical in shape, the nave—choir—sanctuary space is unified to enhance the liturgical continuity of the religious ceremony, and dramatize the "unity of worship" concept. Architects are creating more clear space; using materials that are strong, richly colored, and earthy; and providing windows that admit outside light and are frequently arranged in vigorous asymmetrical patterns.

Among trends that depart from the traditional are churches-in-the-round, with altar table at the center and congregation surrounding it on all sides. The circular plan achieves the desired intimacy between clergy and congregation. But, church architects say, it also has a number of drawbacks. Acoustical problems of round rooms are sometimes difficult to solve; the circular shape sometimes detracts from the effectiveness of ritual; and the celebrant has limited communication with that portion of the congregation that sees only his back.

Horseshoe Plan

A refinement of in-the-round churches is a horseshoe plan which retains the advantages of in-the-round intimacy but answers the principal objections to it. It is dynamic, not static; the pastor is in full view of all participants; and the open end permits an easy change of focus as participants—pastor, lector, cantor, choir, organist, and people—assume their assigned roles in the liturgy.

An unusual experiment in Stockholm almost literally brings religion into the home. The Olaus Petri church is part of an apartment house. It is a bright and spacious place of worship on the second and third floor at one end of the building, and is reported to be successfully reinforcing religious ties in the community. Somewhat similar trends are seen in this country; in some cases, small chapels are being located in shopping centers. In some instances, church funds are being directed from building to social uses. One midwestern pastor used construction money to set up a badly needed nursery school.

The trend toward informality of worship is expected to demand substantial church remodeling costing between \$2 and \$3 billion over the next few years.

Renovation can be a practical solution to modernizing both physical plant and ritual. To conform to

changes made in the rites of the Roman Catholic Church during the Ecumenical Council, 106-year-old St. Peter's Church in Cleveland spent \$43,000 for interior remodeling. The communion rail was removed, statues were relocated in inconspicuous positions, and the altar was moved from the back wall so that priests no longer turn their backs to the congregation while saying Mass. In St. Francis de Sales Church in Oakland, a remodeled interior will focus attention on the main altar.

Protestant remodeling follows similar trends, with communion tables and pulpits brought closer to the pews to bring the people physically nearer to the worship service. The physical rearrangement of the century-old Washington, D. C. Episcopal Church of the Epiphany, a renovation to cost \$350,000, is being designed "to encourage more lay participation in the service."

Technology Put to Work

The new emphasis on informality is expressing itself in some surprising uses of technology. Some members of the clergy are wearing concealed wireless microphones under their robes so they can move freely and still be heard by the congregation. Where it has been used, such sound systems are being considered something of a Godsend by both laity and clergy who otherwise strain to hear and be heard in large spaces with poor acoustics.

The close, interpersonal relationships that characterize modern religion will preclude construction of the huge churches and cathedrals of past years, church architects feel. Urban churches and synagogues are thriving, however, as multi-family and high-rise housing attract families back to the cities, and the city churches modernize their buildings to better minister to secular as well as spiritual needs.



A BOOK BY ITS COVER?

By MYRON TASSIN
Associate Editor

Large ante-bellum oak lends creative atmosphere in front of W. R. Brockway's office in Baton Rouge.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Associate Editor Myron Tassin, for six years a close companion and observer of architects in Louisiana as LAA Executive Director, turns critic for a moment as he ponders various traits of architects—traits which he feels connote talent, ability and efficiency and traits which imply otherwise.

A BOOK BY ITS COVER?



Handsome, efficient conference room in James Buchanan Blich's new office in New Orleans.

In 1962, I worked on an important association project with an architect for three months before I saw his office. During these months, the committee chairman kept finding every excuse imaginable to meet in my office, my home, restaurants and bars. When I finally dropped in on him unexpectedly one day, I knew immediately why he had been reluctant for me to see his "creative" surroundings.

His office was dirty, disorderly, with stacks of old periodicals (which probably hadn't been opened since the day they arrived in the mail, if then) on every desk, table and a few chairs—some on the floor.

Plans with tattered ends were in evidence everywhere—atop window sills, on file cabinets, and behind them. Furniture was Classic, Renaissance, Gothic, Georgian, as well as contemporary and contemporary Cajun vintage. In a word, the place was disgustingly unkempt and in extremely bad taste.

I lost all confidence in this person's ability to bring order to our program of work, imaginative solutions to our problems and attainment of our goals. I left his office with a spasm in my lower esophagus.

Thank Providence, his case is the exception, and rare or non-existent it should be.

Certainly, it is to be expected that budgets will vary with each firm and consequently influence the "plushiness" of surroundings. But any office can be improved, with plushiness not as important as simple creativity. Some of the nicer ones I have visited are old residences, tastefully converted. They lend themselves *so hungrily* to a demonstration of ingenuity.

Now let's talk about the matter of personal appearances. A good cut on his clothes is as important to an architect as it is to a businessman or other pro-

fessional. I sometimes think a few architects use the need for on-site inspection of projects as an excuse for never maintaining their shoes—many of their fellows keep an old pair of shoes in the car, which is replaced with the shiny ones upon leaving the site.

Agreed—some ratty dressing architects have more to offer the client than some natty dressers have—but why be responsible for giving the profession a wrinkle instead of a clean crease?

In "The Magic Mountain," Thomas Mann says, "Order and simplification are the first step toward the mastery of a subject—" No doubt about it, an architect's office, personal appearance—even his home—are a mirror of his proficiency. The mirror may lie, but a client might not recognize the lie. It isn't necessarily true that you can tell a book by its cover, but a good cover will often lure a potential reader to open the book.

A BOOK BY ITS COVER?



Attractive receptionist complemented by attractive receptionist in office of Haas & Massey — Shreveport.



Louisiana flavor personified in building housing Charles Schwing's office, Baton Rouge.

Test Your Understanding Of Major Urban Problems

Test your knowledge of the major design and redevelopment problems facing our large cities, suggests The American Institute of Architects. Mark the following four statements true or false.

1. All we need to do to restore our major cities to their former eminence is to re-build our slums and rundown areas.

2. Our present design skills are unequal to their task of restoring physical facilities over such urban areas.

3. What we need most to rebuild our cities is a new building technology.

4. The location of highways and the designing of neighborhoods are separate problems that should be dealt with separately.

If you marked all four statements false, you have an unusually good understanding of urban design problems says the national professional society of architects.

People Move Out

Charles Nes, Jr., the President of AIA, recently told a Fort Worth, Texas, audience that "people have always moved out of the center city." They have done it in Boston and Los

Angeles, in Hong Kong and London. "... The only difference is that instead of moving farther out the streetcar line to a better rowhouse neighborhood, the center-city dwellers who 'get up in the world' today get in the car and drive to another political jurisdiction."

Nes pointed out that the same forces which first encouraged the formation of large cities—adjacency to natural resources, convenient transportation, and the need for intimate personal transportation—are now working against the traditional city and tending to pull it apart.

Because of these factors, Nes said, the population of our suburbs is now larger than the total population within the cities they surround. Both the inner cities and the sprawling suburban areas need the application of design skills, Nes said, but in neither case can architectural design serve as a substitute for the establishment of political and social goals and the creation of an effective urban transportation system.

Concerning the second statement, Nes said that there has never been a time when design skills have not needed improvement. But, he said,

"we need to improve ourselves in much the same sense as lawyers, doctors, and editors need to improve their competence. The design of neighborhoods, towns, and cities is not unprecedented in the history of urban architecture."

Systems Abound

The AIA president said it is tempting to believe that the building industry needs a new technology since the industry "is burdened with inefficient and restrictive practices." At the same time, he said, it abounds with more materials, products and building systems than man has ever had at his disposal. It isn't the technical know-how which is lacking, he said, "but capital and political framework adequate to meet urban design needs over sprawling urban areas."

"The relationship of highways to community design plans is a critical one," Nes said. "Highways stimulate building, encourage the development of new areas, and are equally capable of destroying and dividing neighborhoods that should be protected. The nature and routes of transportation are and must be treated as integral tools of community design."

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Wirescape Blight Will End Soon

Conferences on underground distribution of utility lines have come up with some interesting ideas for eliminating the blighting effect of the wirescape, says The American Institute of Architects.

Improvement starts with a re-analysis of the problem, architects say. There is nothing inherently ugly in a wire or pole, one designer pointed out recently. It's the way they're put together as temporary load-carrying devices which creates the visual chaos we see in many towns, cities and suburban areas, he said.

One fundamental cause of the problem, says AIA, is the lack of advance planning of specific locations and routes for distribution of electrical service. The result is that poles become heavily laden with cross-arms, transformer boxes, and additional wires. This often is not the fault of the utility, AIA points out. It comes from the topsy-like growth that occurs in the absence of binding master plans for community design and orderly development.

Ideas For Improvement

Pulling wires and poles down in areas that are already severely blighted by signs, billboards, and rundown structures is generally pointless, the architects say. No single cosmetic action will suffice. Complete and well-designed redevelopment of such areas is often the only answer to such problems.

Location of low-voltage lines underground has become a familiar procedure in many communities. Other improvements that have been discussed include: Use of competent architects by power companies to improve the appearance of power distribution equipment and reduce disfigurement of trees; design of better-looking poles; running wires behind parapets of existing buildings; incorporation of electrical distribution within buildings, bridges, and other structures on the landscape; and possible reduction of voltage requirements.

However, it is believed that most overhead lines will be buried as a matter of course within a few years. Many power companies are doing it now, using new machinery that digs trenches and lays cable at the same time, in new residential developments. Recently, an engineer of the American Telephone & Telegraph Co. said that AT&T is "firmly convinced" that buried phone lines are desirable and that "all new urban distribution will be buried by 1970." Traditionally, phone lines have been strung on power company poles carrying electrical wires.

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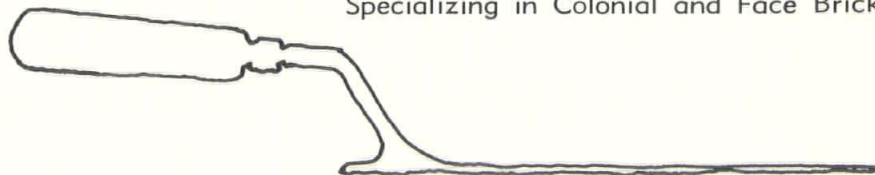
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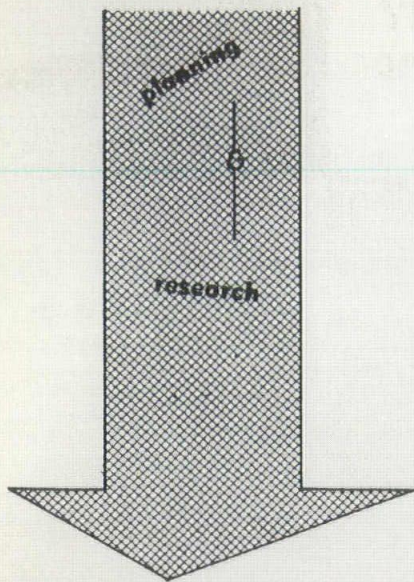


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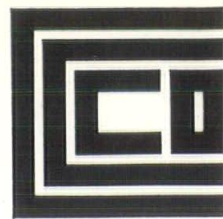
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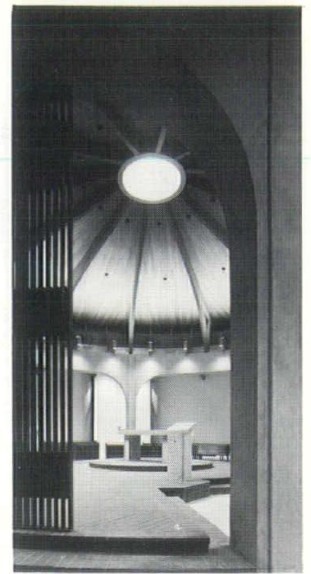


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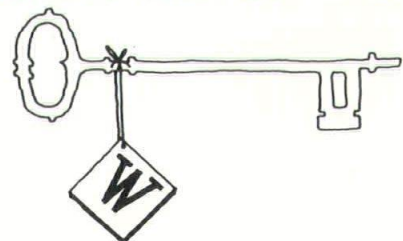
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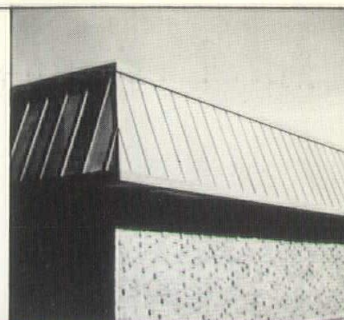
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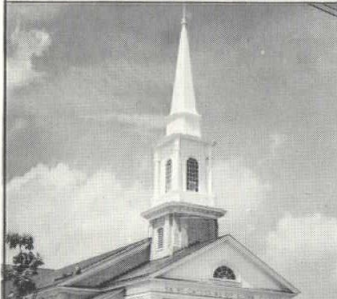
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