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NEW YORK CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS
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PUBLIC RELATIONS

If the smallest grain of all the sand that forms Sahara's waste
Were embellished with publicity's allure,
And mentioned in the press with comment prominently placed,
It would suddenly become a cynosure.

But if Gibraltar's sturdy rock should dance the Highland Fling,
And the bowels of the earth were deeply stirred,
If the art of publicizing failed to focus on the thing,
We should never know a miracle occurred.

The ultimate objective of any program of public relations is to disseminate correct information concerning the business or profession involved. As regards architects, this translates itself into telling the public what an architect does and how he does it.

It has been, and is, the intention of your Committee on Public Relations to achieve this objective through a process of public education by visual, written, and oral means. At the meeting on Dec. 16th, the Chapter voted that additional funds be made available for this purpose. This makes possible an extended plan of action.

To aid us in carrying out this program, your Executive Committee has engaged the services of the firm of Schnall & Krug Associates, Public Relations Consultants. Mr. Schnall is a graduate of Yale School of Architecture. Since returning from the armed forces he has been engaged in public relations in the architectural field. His training thus makes him particularly qualified to present the architect to the public. Mr. Krug, during the war, had practical experience as a public relations officer with the army.

This firm of consultants is anxious to accumulate a reservoir of material prepared by architects, to be used in newspapers and trade magazines, exhibits, and for radio and television talks. By the time this issue of the OCULUS is distributed you will have received a list of suggested subjects. You are asked to check any of these subjects upon which you would be

willing to write or talk, and to return the list to Miss Waters. As occasion arises, our consultants may then call upon you for written material or subject matter for discussion, in accordance with your selections. If your material is published, proper credit will be given both to you and to the Chapter.

In the OCULUS for December, it was suggested that we take some action calculated to impress newspapers with the injustice of omitting the names of architects in connection with publication of their work.

With the sanction of the Executive Committee, a campaign has now been launched. A letter of protest has gone out to the New York Herald Tribune, calling attention to a complete page of buildings in a recent issue with no architects mentioned. It is the plan of the Editorial Committee to follow this letter with brief notes enclosing clippings from time to time as such omissions are noted. Other publications will be given the same attention.

By repeated bombardment of the offenders we hope to correct this condition. If the plan is to be effective, it is imperative that we bring eternal vigilance to bear upon it. To this end, the cooperation of every Chapter member is sought. Whenever you note the absence of architectural credit, clip the item, noting the name and date of the publication, and mail it to Miss Waters. Your Committee will do the rest.

ANNIVERSARY DINNER

The Chapter will celebrate its 79th Anniversary at dinner on Wednesday, February 25 at its headquarters. Presentation of our Medal of Honor will be a feature of the evening, as well as our own version of "Information Please."

The Presidents of the other architectural organizations in the Metropolitan area are to be our guests.

Cocktails at 6:30; dinner at 7:15. Ladies and guests welcome. Black tie.

NO MORE CITY WORK?

Identical bills have been introduced in the New York State Assembly and Senate which will amend the New York City administrative code to provide that the planning, design, survey, supervision of construction or maintenance of any public work or project financed in whole or in part by city funds shall be executed by civil service employees. The New York Chapter has been advised that the bills will effectively eliminate the private architect from city work by requiring the approval of the municipal civil service commission to their employment and that passage of the bills would upset the present exemption clause in the City Charter and related statutes which have been construed by the Court of Appeals as authorizing the employment of private architects on city work without limitation as to type or character.

The Chapter has expressed itself in opposition to these bills which come up in some form in every session of the legislature. Members are urged immediately to advise Assemblyman John Robert Brook of 27 East 95th St., New York 28, Chairman of the Committee on Affairs of the City of New York in the Assembly, and Senator Paul A. Fino of 391 East 149th St., Bronx, New York, Chairman of the Senate Committee on the Affairs of the City of New York, of their

opposition of these bills. Should the bills be reported out of committee, members are urged to write their Senators and Assemblymen as well. The Assembly Bill is No. 37 and the Senate Bill No. 80, both dated January 7, 1948.

WHITE HOUSE BALCONY

The spirited controversy over the construction of a balcony within the South Portico of the White House has been largely concerned with two factors—first, the unnecessary expenditure of public funds for such an undertaking at a time when the funds could be employed to far better purpose and second, the principle that a structure of such national importance and architectural merit should be preserved in its present form or restored to its original condition. It has even been suggested that the executive offices, swimming pool and other structures be removed from the White House grounds and a tunnel constructed under the street to new executive offices.

The architectural side of the controversy has brought out the fact that while a number of changes have been made in the White House, none of the more recent ones has seriously affected its architecture. Surely no one objects to the installation of modern plumbing, heating and electrical facilities for the comfort of our Chief Executive. The construction of the present balcony is quite a different matter, however, as it will change the basic architectural character of the South Portico.

While it is now too late to prevent the present alteration, the White House could be protected against future changes by being declared a National Monument. Let us not relax our efforts in this direction now that the present crisis is past.

COMING EVENTS

Wednesday, Feb. 25 Dinner

Celebration of the 79th Anniversary of the Chapter.

Tuesday, Mar. 2 Lunch

New Ways of Testing Materials
Speaker: Dr. Leslie D. Long of the Newark Testing Laboratories.

Tuesday, Mar. 9 Lunch

"Can AIA Contracts be Improved?" A trio of attorneys will cast a legal eye on our documents.

Wednesday, Mar. 17 Dinner

The Fields of Practice Committee will give a graphic presentation of actual industrial design projects of some of our own members.

COMPETITION

A community health centre is the subject chosen by this year's LeBrun Scholarship Committee. Competitors for this prize are asked to plan and design a Health Centre Building which will house all essential health services for a community of approximately 100,000 persons.

The contestant submitting the winning design will be given \$2,800. towards a trip abroad. The Scholarship Committee will, however, urge the winner to spend some time in this country familiarizing himself with the activities of the United States Public Health Service, in the hope that research in this important field, supplemented by his travels abroad, will result in a report of substantial value to some phase of public health.

Preliminary announcement of this competition, with details of nominating procedure, appeared in the December OCULUS.

Announcement of the award will be made on or about April 21st.

MENTOR SERVICE

Under the aegis of the Committee on Education, of which Ben John Small is Chairman, a new and enterprising subcommittee has been organized to be known as the Mentor Committee. Its function will be to offer guidance to students and recent graduates up to the time they pass the examination for license. Its personnel consists of Olindo Grossi, Chairman, Don Hatch, Jedd Stow Reisner, Walter B. Sanders, Esmond Shaw and Maurice Sornik.

This committee describes its services as follows: 1—Direction of recent graduates in obtaining real and practical experience. 2—Advice as to professional potentialities. 3—Advice as to proper understanding of responsibilities in the profession. 4—Information as to the functions of the A. I. A.

Some of these services are already rendered in part by educators, practitioners and such agencies as the Architects' Emergency Committee and the New York Chapter Office. It is intended that the scope be enlarged materially, and that information be more widely disseminated as to the availability of Mentor Service.

The members of the committee intend to enroll themselves as Mentors and to invite all interested Chapter members to join with them in this work. The intention is to make this service known to architectural schools, the Veterans' Administration and vocational guidance services in the Metropolitan area. Factual data to be supplied

will include lists of accredited schools and of states requiring registration, procedure in regard to the N. C. A. R. B. and other information of value to the beginner.

This service should be of great help to the younger men. All Chapter members who wish to become Mentors should communicate with the committee.

BUILDING CODE CHANGES

James B. Newman, Chairman of the Committee on Building Code, advises us of the adoption of a series of local laws revising the following sections of the Administrative Code: C26-239, C26-397, C26-429, C26-432, C26-445, C26-446, C26-495, C26-672, C26-1234 and C26-1235. Details may be noted in the City Records of December 26, 1947 and January 9, 1948. The changes in general affect thicknesses of curtain, spandrel and pent house walls, including concrete, permanent partitions in fireproof buildings, and the use of unthreaded copper and brass piping.

Several proposed changes in other sections are before the Council Committee on Buildings and are listed in the same issues of the City Record. These concern allowable fibre stress in structural steel, additional materials for fire protection and fireproof partitions, and provisions regarding the use of vermiculite as plaster and fireproofing.

GROUP INSURANCE ENCORE

This is by way of reminder. The group insurance plan for the Chapter, presented and discussed in January, will become operative only upon participation by fifty percent of the membership. Please give this your early consideration and if you wish to enter the group, call on the firm of Ter, Bush & Powell, Inc., 19 East 47th Street.

CANDIDATES

The following have applied for Institute membership:

1. Rex Whitaker Allen
Sponsors: Henry S. Churchill
Walter B. Sanders
 2. Alfred Busselle, Jr.
Sponsors: Otto Teegen
Ralph Walker
 3. John Hancock Callender
Sponsors: Sidney Katz
Robert W. McLaughlin
 4. Paul Resnick
Sponsors: Alfred Fellheimer
Steward Wagner
- and for Chapter Associateship:
1. Edward William Slater
Sponsors: William Adams Delano
Carl A. Vollmer