



Newsletter

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- Competition for actual commission for a building which will go ahead is announced in this issue. Junior Chamber of Commerce National Headquarters is the problem; Serval and Trinity Cement are sponsors; Jedd Reiser is Professional Advisor. Competition is open only to young men, which is appropriate to purposes of Jay-Cees.
- Dept. of Commerce figures indicate decline in construction costs from September through November last year. Unofficial figures show that this decline has continued through last month. Lumber, cement, and paint declined, among materials (composite wholesale price index dropped 0.4% in December).
- Illustrating drop in construction costs, N.Y. State Housing Commissioner Herman Stichman points to a housing project in Schenectady which was bid in September, 1948 at \$10,888 per apartment, rebid in February, 1949 at \$7,143.
- It seems a good guess that drop in prices may result in pickup of work, which had fallen off largely due to high costs. F. W. Dodge figures for January of this year showed a 22% decline in dollar volume of contracts awarded (in 37 eastern states) compared with January '48. Biggest drop was in residential work (33%) with hospitals, schools, and churches holding nonresidential decline to 8%.
- Figures on public building construction since the war's end have been compiled by the Construction Industry Information Committee from various government reports. For architects who are looking in that direction for work, here's what happened in 1948. Total public nonresidential construction: \$1 billion. This breaks down as follows: educational, \$553 million; hospital and institutional, \$204 million; public administration, \$64 million; social and recreational, \$51 million. Lesser categories include industrial, penal, commercial.
- U. N. Headquarters building is going ahead rapidly, with excavation completed and cornerstone laid with much pomp.
- Commission for new Civic Center at Phoenix, Ariz., has been given to Alden Dow, Midland, Mich. architect. Sponsors had scouted entire country, talked to many top designers. Individual buildings connected with the Center may be done by local firms, and political skulduggery is already being charged. Dow may have accepted a tough job.
- A Uniform Plumbing Code is expected to come from a recent meeting of representatives of the industry sponsored by HHFA and the Dept. of Commerce. Springboard is Uniform Plumbing Code for Housing, successfully adopted last spring.
- Results of house construction studies at U. of Illinois are announced by Producers' Council. Savings, due primarily to pre-

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