

PROGRESSIVE ARCHITECTURE

newsletter

May 1950

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Published monthly by REINHOLD PUBLISHING CORPORATION, 330 West 42nd Street, New York 18, N. Y. A. Ralph W. Reinhold, President; Philip H. Burton, Executive Vice President and Fred P. Peters, Vice President and Secretary; Francis J. Williams, Publisher; Gilbert E. Cochran, Managing Editor. Executive and Advertising Offices: 330 W. 42nd St., N. Y. Subscriptions in advance. Subscription rates: Single copy—\$1.00 per copy; U.S. Possessions, Philippine Republic, etc.—\$10.00 for one year, \$20.00 for two years, \$30.00 for three years. All other foreign countries—\$15.00 for one year, \$30.00 for two years, \$45.00 for three years. Single copy—\$1.00. Copyright © 1950 by Reinhold Publishing Corp. Trade Mark Registered. Re-entered as matter, January 22, 1950. Post Office at New York under the Act of October 3, 1917. Volume XXXI, No. 5. Indexed in Art Index.

- Division of Housing Research, HHFA, has now announced seven research projects under Housing Act of 1949 auspices. They include studies of plumbing and sewage disposal, heating and ventilating, chimneys and flues, water vapor in wood frame walls, temperature and humidity desiderata, soil-cover in crawl spaces, rot-prevention from moisture in crawl spaces. Government agencies will conduct some studies, universities some others.
- Municipal treatment plants of one sort or another provided a number of commissions last year, figures show. 665 sewage plants were built or under construction during 1949, and almost 300 communities were building industrial waste treatment plants.
- A.I.A. Convention, headquartered at Mayflower Hotel in Washington, D.C., will draw largest group ever from May 9 to 12. Some contests for minor offices are expected but no major controversies. Younger, newer members are waiting to see what program and plans will offer in way of interest and advance. Proposal to elect vice-president as president-elect will be brought forth by Board; evaluation of Standard Documents and some other matters may be raised from floor by Chapter delegates.
- A National Citizens Conference on Planning will take place in Washington at the conclusion of the A.I.A. Convention. From May 12 to 17, with headquarters at the Statler Hotel, delegates from a number of professional societies will engage in meetings and conducted tours.
- When New York's Mayor O'Dwyer recently appointed as Chairman of City Planning Commission one Jerry Finklestein, who had no apparent qualifications for the job except the fact that he had managed the Mayor's last campaign, eyebrows were raised. However, the new Chairman has astonished everyone including Robert Moses, and pleased friends of planning, by taking a firm stand on important principles and by asking a budget for the Commission which would enable it to prepare the master plan it was supposed to have done long since. His statement arguing for effective planning for New York "in a critical stage of its development" has been applauded by many civic groups.
- A number of recent articles have severely criticized current midtown New York skyscraper design. Lewis Mumford in "The New Yorker," and then William Zeckendorf, in the daily press, spoke of buildings carelessly placed in relation to future needs, and design standards that were no advance on boom methods of 20's. Frederick Gutheim, summing up these and other comments in the "Herald-Tribune," commented that means of getting better and better planned buildings "eluded a precise formula last week."
- U.S. Plywood announces American rights to Novopan, a wood-waste three-ply wood panel, produced in Europe since 1945, now to be made in U.S. as well.