Need For Uniform Code Of Building Requirements

Representative Selection, Panhandle Chapter, AIA

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**Concrete folded plate roof achieves large, unobstructed floor area**

One of the basic requirements here was to achieve unobstructed floor space with economy. Architects Weed, Russell, Johnson & Associates found the answer by using a concrete shell in the form of a folded plate. This construction made it possible to span the entire floor area with only one interior row of columns... and suspend the second floor from the roof. The result: 163,715 square feet of fully flexible floor space, so important to any retail selling operation.

Folded plate design is, in itself, unique and interesting. And only concrete can give the added boldness of the wide, cantilevered overhang.

It's one more example of the way new uses of concrete are bringing big economies and added vitality to both conventional and modern architecture.

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*A national organization to improve and extend the uses of concrete*
Uniform Building Codes Badly Needed

Efforts of the American Standards Association to obtain a uniform set of building code requirements for one- and two-family houses across the U.S. should be widely acclaimed and supported. As reported in the last issue of THE TEXAS ARCHITECT, the long-delayed adoption of such codes could result in savings up to $1,000 per home once the architect is freed to design houses without archaic or unnecessary requirements.

A general conference in New York last month, attended by representatives of almost 100 national organizations with interests in home building, failed to take definitive action but began concrete exploration of the complex problems involved. It is hoped that the next step will be a vote to undertake an ASA project on the specific problem of standard building code requirements.

Known as the national clearinghouse for standards in the U.S., the American Standards Association enjoys well-merited respect. Numbering more than 2,000 company members as well as 119 trade associations and professional societies, it can be a potent force for the long-needed development of voluntary standards throughout the nation. Among the active professional members of ASA is the American Institute of Architects, and the roster includes a wide cross-section both of professional groups and of representatives from business, industry, and labor.

Laymen could well take an active interest in this move for voluntary uniform standards, for they stand to profit most from its success.
Even the holes are new in Kaiser Fir-Tex acoustic tiles! Our unique new drilling process produces more and cleaner holes per tile, assures high Noise Reduction Coefficients. Two new patterns—Regular (529 holes/sq. foot) and Casual (316 holes/sq. foot—in three diameters)—combine with smaller beveled edges to help you achieve continuous perforated ceiling effects. Available now in ½", ¾", ¾", and 1" thicknesses, in 12" x 12", 12" x 24" or 24" x 24" tiles. Contact your nearest Kaiser Fir-Tex Representative for data bulletins for your files.

KAIser Gypsum

Kaiser Gypsum Company, Inc. Kaiser Building—1924 Broadway, Oakland, California
meant to create a feeling of reverence as the narthex is entered through a large glass vestibule and covered porch. The vestibule is spacious, glassed on all sides. It is intended to serve as an area for friendly greetings and conversational groups.

A feeling of great height is evident when entering the nave. This is achieved by the use of steep laminated arches. It is further expressed by the use of a white acoustical material.

The large stone cross is 17' in height. It is set in ledgestone to give symmetry to the chancel and to make the communion table in front of the pulpit an interior focal point. These were among the design criteria expressed to the architects by both the minister and the building committee of the Washington Avenue Christian Church in Amarillo.

Exterior Focal Point

The exterior focal point was to become a large vertical glass area in the narthex, which is balanced by the massive campanile and cross. A large glass area and massive panel doors, the exposed laminated beams seemingly coming out of the ground, give further feeling of height. The narthex achieves additional height on the interior by the use of skylights. This is meant to create a feeling of reverence as the narthex is entered through a large glass vestibule and covered porch. The vestibule is spacious, glassed on all sides. It is intended to serve as an area for friendly greetings and conversational groups.

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Simple Materials Used

Simple materials of brick, stone, wood and glass are used both on the exterior and interior of the structure.

Award-Winning Amarillo Church

An interior view of the new sanctuary and classroom addition to the Washington Avenue Christian Church in Amarillo, showing details including exposed laminated beams, skylights, massive campanile and cross, and other design features. Architects for the structure, which was chosen by members of the Panhandle Chapter, AIA as representative of recent architectural work in the area, are Clayton B. Shiver and Russell A. Megert, both of TSA-AIA of Amarillo.
By Hubertus Junius

Architecture is the oldest of the professions, (see A. I. A. Journal, September 1953, "Adam Before Eve") yet unlike law and medicine it has no experience literature.

Architects had advanced to the glory of Nineveh before Hammurabi wrote the first code of laws and the Greeks were still trying to cure dandruff by offering goose livers to Hermes long after Athens was attracting tourist traffic by its architecture.

Your author, due to a slight case of senility and much blatant flattery by George Pierce, is at this time engaged in pioneering the A.I.A. "Log Book" program in North Texas. Many of the trainees lack professional education and I find no literature to which I can refer them for the techniques of our profession.

Architects by and large do not write and those who attempt it most frequently are trying to justify rather than improve.

Not a Medieval Guild

Certain design processes are taught in the schools but those architects known for their design ability modify and change these standard processes in many ways and develop individual approaches to design problems which could be of great value to the student.

We are no longer a medieval guild protecting trade secrets and it is time we followed others in the publication of the detailed techniques perfected by our top men.

There must be a beginning to all such things and I shall offer myself as a sacrifice to an idea. I shall set forth as meticulously as possible my own work in designing a building. I shall never pick up a pencil until things have taken form in my mind. This stage may last for a day or two or for a week or more. Nothing very definite occurs but an infinite number of nebulous forms flit through my subconscious and like unvac it seems to produce at least a starting point, though unlike unvac a nebulous one.

2. This is the first doodle period. With a pad of cross section paper I try various arrangements of plans for area and fitness for the site. I use tracing cross section paper so that this may be more easily accomplished, and I draw to the scale of the site survey. Sooner or later I come up with a plan which satisfies the requirements of area, traffic patterns and relation of functions. At the end of this stage I submit a small scale floor plan to the owner with the information that his original cost estimates will be about 20% too low. I omit the subsequent scene as not pertinent to the processes of design. The results of this interview however, determine whether or not this is a situation or a termination of my design process.

3. An apprenticeship under David R. Williams in the early twenties conditioned me to the second doodle stage. This consists of many small sketches for mass, done on my business cards with a 4b pencil. I have designed these cards with my name high on the card leaving room below and on the back for these sketches.

5. Once satisfied with the mass of the building I have the drafting room block out a perspective in outline, locating the door and window openings. I place sheets of "layout" paper over this perspective outline and work in whatever color medium strikes my fancy but generally in colored pencils. I may make a few larger scale studies of important details depending on the budget or the need for further elaboration.

When this stage is completed I take all of this data to a professional deli-
Stran-Steel joists and beams frame the classrooms of Crain Junior High School, Victoria, Texas.

Stran-Steel joists are designed to fit snugly between the flanges of Stran-Steel wide flange beams, as shown in the diagram of a typical installation below. This eliminates the need for dropped ceilings or boxed beams and reduces height per floor by one course of bricks or equivalent. Nailable Stran-Steel joists save time and labor, too. Metal lath and roof decking can quickly and easily be attached with ordinary hammer and nails. No welding is necessary. And pre-punched holes speed conduit installations.

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The mosses of the building express three main types of space in the program. At ground floor level there is a two-story unit for medical and personnel departments, and a rental unit of similar size for a branch bank. The main office building straddles these two bases, leaving an open space through the building to develop a sense of enjoying the views from either side.

The frame is reinforced ribbed concrete designed closely for lightness and economy.

Architect Exports Know-how With Color

handsome park with a grand view of the Andes—designed color into the exterior of the building. He hoped to establish a trend toward color in buildings which have been colorless and drab traditionally.

Opaque glass spandrels of Edificio Esso are deep blue; metal fenestration grid is dark brown with white sash; tile end walls are in a variegated pattern of white, tan and dark brown. Other spots of color enliven the overall effect.

See An Architect If You Are A Prospective Home Owner!

The first job of an architect is to understand what you have in mind for your home so he can suggest ideas that will match your house to your hobbies, your children, and you. If you are considering an older house, he examines it for structural soundness, plan convenience, neighborhood values, potential worth, and schools.

If you're going to build a new house, but don't yet know where, he'll help you choose a suitable lot to fit the size and type of house you're planning, and your budget. If your lot's already chosen, he'll visit the property to determine the local conditions firsthand: orientation, grade, breeze, view, excavation conditions, and any special considerations.

Next, your architect develops rough sketches and final working drawings, which he thoroughly discusses with you. Then, a group of builders, selected by you and the architect, bid on the plans and specifications. The architect helps you choose the builder who will give the most performances for the lowest price.

The architect then follows construction progress closely, keeps builder payment records and guarantees. An architect will save you money in increased value of your house, not only in dollars but in more family pleasure.

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Awards announced by The James F. Lincoln Arc Welding Foundation in a recent welded bridge design competition indicate that taxpayers are getting a break on their highway money being spent for bridges. The award designs, made for welded bridges now being built on the new interstate and defense highways, not only showed substantial savings in steel and cost, but also indicated that welded bridges were more beautiful and easier to maintain than riveted structures.

Farland C. Bundy and Charles S. Matlock, engineers with the Bridge Division, Texas Highway Department, Austin, received the $10,000 First Award in the recently judged $50,000 bridge design competition for welded bridges for interstate and defense highways, sponsored by The Thomas F. Lincoln Arc Welding Foundation, Cleveland, Ohio.

Bundy and Matlock shared the award for the design of the recently completed Buffalo Bayou Bridge in Houston, a 668 ft. all-welded continuous plate girder bridge. Designs were judged on the basis of economical use of labor and steel, appearance, cost, general quality of detail, and other advantages of welded construction. The designers described their bridge as "one of the longest welded bridges" on which "unit prices bid were among the lowest." The bridge has also received recognition in a competition for the most beautiful steel bridges erected in 1957, sponsored by the American Institute of Steel Construction.

Three Third Awards of $5,000 each were shared by three design teams. Emory Bond, Jr., and Gene E. Ellis of Topeka, Kansas, submitted a 273 ft. haunched girder turnpike overpass. Earl D. Schwartz and Marcello H. Soto of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, designed a 495 ft. 5 span railroad overpass. Costas Demos, Harry V. Lundstrom, Jr., Donn S. Robenalt, and Paul M. Shepard, Jr., all of Columbus, Ohio, together designed a 5 span 867 ft. haunched girder railroad overpass. The Columbus group used a digital computer to reduce design time and make a more precise design for the site conditions.

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WACO, TEXAS
17 MILLION AMERICANS LIVE IN SLUMS

Economic prosperity has worsened rather than curbed the slum problem in America's big cities, Fortune magazine says in a recent article of interest to all Texans because of our booming urban population.

According to the magazine there are now more than 17 million Americans living in virtual squalor in the nation's metropolitan areas.

Fortune says the slums have spread because there are "jobs to be had." The "very vitality" of the big city is "responsible" for luring laborers and semi-skilled workers into the undesirable living areas of the large industrial centers.

The report is the fourth in Fortune's major series on the problems of this country's "exploding" metropolitan areas.

Fortune says that migrants are drawn to the city by the promise of better paying jobs. Because they are usually members of racial minorities they are forced to live in already rundown areas where the dwellings are "decayed, dirty, rat infested, without decent heat, light or plumbing."

Slum formation is not primarily a "matter of race", however, the magazine report says. "It is the impoverished rural background of the immigrants that counts." They are unfamiliar with city living and create slums as they go.

New Housing Needed

Only if cities can "generate new housing on a large scale," Fortune contends, can they hope to arrest the growth of slums. The magazine says there is "widespread discouragement" and "disillusionment" among city planners with the government's renewal and slum clearance programs.

The federal public-housing program is not in good shape, says Fortune. Public apartment projects have cost so much that "it might have been cheaper in some cases for the government simply to give each tenant a $10,000 or $12,000 house in the suburbs."

Fortune reports that the Title I redevelopment program of the 1949 Housing Act, while a major tool, has moved "very slowly" with projects completed in only six cities. Too few investors have participated in the program.

Fortune calls for greater efforts to stimulate private investors to participate in slum rebuilding.

It suggests these steps:

- Insurance companies and other financial institutions should be encouraged to put up equity capital as well as mortgage money.
- Businessmen might form local investment trusts to stimulate residential building. In Cleveland a group of industrialists have organized a Cleveland Development Foundation to help finance builders unable to find the equity money ordinarily required.
- Investors might be given the right to lease cleared land, perhaps with an option to buy later.
- Metropolitan building codes, which are now generally stricter in the central cities than in outlying areas could be equalized and modernized.
- Outlying areas might somehow be made to take on some of the tax burden now carried by city real estate.
- Put land-use planning on a metropolitan area basis, and give investors better information as to the opportunities available in the areas.
- Finally, and perhaps most important, an expansion of the federal government's anti-slum effort.

Fortune says that the real core of the problem might possibly be that "Americans simply do not care enough about the city slum problem to tackle it in a big way, which is also the expensive way."

Just "nibbling" at the problem, the magazine observes, "may well prove more expensive to the cities' health in the long run. To this can be added the vast, immeasurable price that is exacted in human dignity. One way or another, we will continue to pay plenty for our slums."

Santa Fe Builder Destroys Own Sign

Some scenery-loving citizens of Santa Fe, N. M., recently used a power saw to cut down seven big billboards along U. S. highway 285. Home Builder Allen Stamm, whose nearby billboard advertising his housing tract was spared, decided good public relations outweighed good advertising. With two of his office staff he ripped the sign down, promptly got congratulations from many citizens and concluded: "I feel this will definitely help sales." His advice to other builders: give thought to removing directional signs before the public comes to regard them as eyesores.
ASA Pursues New Uniform Code At NYC Meeting

Representatives of 83 organizations with an interest in home building met in New York City recently to discuss whether a project for the development of a uniform set of building code requirements for one and two-family houses should be launched under the procedures of the American Standards Association.

The motion proposed to the meeting was: Shall an American Standard Association Project on Standard Building Code Requirements for one and two-family residences be initiated? Fifteen of the organizations present said they would cast their vote by letter. The count on the other votes was as follows: yes, 24; no, 17; not voting, 27.

Decision Awaits Ballots
The decision of whether the motion was carried will be deferred by the Construction Standard Board of the American Standards Association until the letter votes are received, Cyril Ainsworth, deputy managing director of the association announced.

The original request for the development of residential building codes was made to the American Standards Association last July by publisher Henry R. Luce on behalf of 14 national organizations concerned with home building.

Mr. Luce, who was present at today's meeting, pointed out that antiquated and contradictory building codes may add an average $1000 to each American home built.

As a result of Mr. Luce's request, the American Standards Association invited about 120 national organizations with an interest in home building to attend the general conference.

The American Standards Association is the national coordinating agency and clearinghouse for standards in the United States. It is a federation of 119 trade associations and professional societies, and it has more than 2,000 company members. The association provides systematic means for the development of voluntary standards in the United States.

July Construction Contracts Up Substantially Over Year Ago At $249,000,000

July contracts for future construction in Texas amounted to $248,911,000, a substantial increase over July 1957, F. W. Dodge Corporation, reported.

According to Dodge figures, a breakdown of contracts by the major construction categories in July, compared to the like month of 1957, showed: non-residential at $117,586,000, up substantially, residential at $91,192,000, up 29 per cent; and heavy engineering at $40,133,000, also up substantially.

21% Increase

The cumulative total of contracts for the first seven months of 1958 amounted to $1,264,669,000, up 21 per cent from the like 1957 period. Cumulative total of contracts in the major construction categories showed: non-residential at $421,329,000, up 40 per cent; residential at $514,239,000, up 40 per cent; and heavy engineering at $329,101,000, up 4 per cent.
NEW PRODUCTS

The traditional three "R's" of the classroom are being joined and assisted by three "M's"—Modern, Maneuverable and Magnetic steel chalkboards—a unique "blackboard" which is not only superior in write-ability but also lends itself to numerous applications unknown to the old slate and composition products.

Steel chalkboards have been tried and tested in modern buildings and have proven so successful that the U.S. Air Force has ordered 160,000 square feet of chalkboard for its new academy at Colorado Springs, Colo. The 6,000 individual panels to be installed at the academy will contain 252 tons of various steels — among which is USS Vitrenamel, a special analysis steel developed by the U.S. Steel Corp. and particularly well suited for porcelain enameling and firing at high temperatures.

These porcelain enameled steel boards are produced by the Enamel Products Co., 341 Eddy Road, Cleveland, under the trade name KOROK. Here a glass frit is sprayed on the special analysis steel and is actually fused with USS Vitrenamel, giving the product a durable and lasting quality. This enameled sheet then becomes the outside of a sandwich buildup of a one-inch plywood board plus a galvanized steel backing.

In taking full advantage of this all-purpose board, the academy will suspend the steel chalkboards on rollers and use them as sliding closet doors and room partitions. They will also use the chalkboards for tactical demonstrations by merely attaching cutouts to the steel boards with tiny magnets—another unique feature of this modern "blackboard."

And thanks to a special adhesive paste, developed by Enamel Products Co., steel chalkboards are not only being incorporated in modern buildings but are also being used to replace slate and composition boards in older installations. The chalkboard is simply cut to size and placed directly over the worn-out surface.

Exhaustive tests have proven that steel chalkboards for superior in life expectancy—to the extent of being guaranteed for the life of the building. And there is no squeak or chatter from the chalk!

★★★

A new pattern in Azrock asphalt tile, to be known as "Carpet Tones," has been announced by the Azrock Products Division Uvalde Rock Asphalt Company. The new pattern gives a textured effect closely stimulating the appearance of carpeting.

Initially, four members will be manufactured. They are: K-581, Pebble Beach, brown and white textured effect on tan; K-582, Exmoor, gray and white on green; K-584, St. Andrews, pink, brown and white on gray; K-587, Gleneagle, russet, green, and white on gray. Azrock Carpet Tones is available in 1/16" thickness, 9"x9" size, and will be priced in the "K" group.

Before going ahead with full scale production, the Azrock Products Division conducted a thorough market test on the "Carpet Tones." The enthusiastic response of dealers and builders in the test market was responsible for the company's decision to proceed with the new pattern.

Samples are being sent to Azrock dealers. Additional samples and information may be obtained through Azrock wholesale distributors, or from the Azrock Products Division, San Antonio.

★★★

A new bank burglar alarm, said to be the first of its type to provide full protection for one or more areas, has been introduced by the Mosler Safe Company.

Called the Mosler Century alarm, it will be shown for the first time at the American Bankers Association convention in Chicago.

The vault alarm provides flexibility. It can tie in with night depositories, extra vaults and vault doors, and can protect the building itself, including monitoring of the sprinkler system.

According to Edwin H. Mosler Jr., president of the 110-year old firm, it is the first Grade "A" alarm equipped with a transistorized audio amplifier. Approved by the Underwriters' Laboratories the alarm can earn up to 65 per cent discount on specific burglary insurance. The system can be easily installed in existing buildings or in new construction.

Atlanta Ordinance Saves Subdivision Trees

Atlanta has stumbled on a way to save trees in new subdivisions, HOUSE & HOME, professional magazine of the home building industry reports. An ordinance was recently passed making it illegal to burn trees or roots on construction sites. Purpose of the law was fire prevention. Now, grading subcontractors have found it cheaper to let trees stand than to bulldoze them down and haul them away.

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