

THE
OCTAGON

A Journal of The American Institute of Architects



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Volume 14

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1942

Number 1

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SPOT NEWS

Council of War.

On Friday, January 9th, President Shreve called a meeting at The Octagon of the chairmen of the committees most concerned with the effects of the war on the profession. The Secretary, The Executive Secretary and the Washington Representative also attended. Plans were laid for a further utilization of the profession in the war program.

Obvious that governmental agencies will continue to make calls on The Institute for lists of names of architects to carry out special work and special assignments.

Institute proposes to continue system inaugurated on recent appeal and will ask for recommendations from presidents of chapters and state association members.

Recommendations will be tabulated by states or otherwise as requested by agencies and placed on file with agencies. Chapter presidents may be called later on to set up machinery for making recommendations.

Mobilization of Profession.

At present time profession is in effect mobilized through the organization of The Institute, with its chapters and state association members. The general services of the profession have been and are being offered to the Government as a part of the mobilization program.

Housing.

Lanham Bill reported out by conference and passed by both House and Senate. Every indication that architects in private practice will be employed.

Again we call to your attention that suitable acknowledgments should be made by the chapters and state societies in the districts of those Congressmen who argued in behalf of the profession during the debate on the Bill. See excerpts from Congressional Record in the December, 1941, OCTAGON and in this number (pages 7 and 8).

U.S.H.A.

Nathan Straus has resigned as Administrator. L. H. Keyserling is now Acting Administrator.

U.S.H.A. will administer part of defense housing program.

Post-War Planning.

With the first shock of the war now over, the interest of Congress in post-war planning is again developing. The Institute considers its cooperation with and participation in the post-war planning program to be a major effort, and will proceed accordingly.

EDMUND R. PURVES
Washington Representative.

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THE OCTAGON

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THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

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The Outlook for the Profession

THE problems of the architects of the United States are more than ever the concern of The Institute. Through its seventy-one chapters and the twenty-one affiliated state associations or societies The Institute today numbers on its combined rolls more than 8,000 individual architects, many more than ever before in its history. To a greater degree than ever before this body of men is learning to work together rather than to expend its limited revenues in competitive activities. Common interests have led to greater tolerance, broader understanding, more genuine fellowship, and these in turn mean mutual support and greater strength.

It is with this growing solidarity that the architects face increasing difficulties. War-time restrictions bear heavily on those whose practice was concerned with the sunnier side of life—shelter, religion, education, and the lighter phases of commerce. The sturdier plants which thrive in the shadow of the world-conflict retain their activity in the fields of construction for the Army, the Navy and the industrial effort stimulated by the Federal Government.

In its magnitude this building program for 1942 bids fair to be comparable to the great construction years of the last half century, and in connection with it are numerous opportunities for professional commissions or for personal employment. Defense housing, backed by an enlarged appropriation and administered by new leaders and personnel will employ qualified architects located in defense areas or otherwise available to assist in this work.

There is much work to be done. With this mingling of priorities and plenty as its problem, it can be said that never has The Institute done more

or been better organized to be of service to the architects, by presenting the profession's claims to the nation, by issuing information to its members and often to the profession at large, and by establishing the bridge between competence and opportunity by which the architect may cross to a new field of practice. No word from The President is needed to bring to Mr. Purves recognition of the value of the intelligent service which he is rendering in Washington with the assistance of The Octagon staff.

We need not then resign ourselves to confusion or despair; rather we should be unyielding in the determination that each will seek out his most valuable field of endeavor in the war-work of the nation, in the betterment of home and the home community, in the upbuilding of morale—confident that our chosen field of endeavor which has survived many storms will, because of its essential usefulness to mankind, return to an even greater expression of that usefulness after the war-effort has ceased to be our first concern.

It is already evident that through the period of changed or restricted opportunity The Institute, its chapters and the state associations will maintain their activity as centers of professional thought and guidance. In the worst period of the past decade, when contracts awarded dropped to less than ten per cent of the high annual total, The Institute lost less than ten per cent of its members. Today new memberships are reported in surprising numbers from every region of the country.

This is then a call to every member, every chapter, every state association, and more than all to

every Officer and Director, to hold fast to our one vital objective, which is that the solidarity of the profession must be maintained and strengthened by membership cooperation, by collaboration with other design professions and with our construction associates, by new guardianship of the integrity of our standards, by legislation to assure us our due recognition in the changed economy of the times and by broad dissemination of those principles of planning which in the years ahead of us can be made the basis

of preparation for better communities and a better nation in which to live.

With this confident hope The President extends to you all, on behalf of the Officers and the Directors, and from himself.

"Best wishes for a Courageous New Year."

R. H. SHREVE
President.

The Washington Situation

A MOMENT'S reflection in these strenuous days reveals the profession of architecture already beginning to play its part in the war program. It is natural that many of the members, prevented as they are from viewing the picture as a whole, have come to regard the architect practically as a forgotten man. This is not the case. Defense projects emanating from the governmental agencies and from private industries, totaling millions of dollars, are in the hands of the architects—these in addition to the very substantial construction that has already been completed by the profession. Many of the architects are in the armed services and many in Government employment. All these facts make for a less discouraging general situation than may be found in a number of the other professions and walks of life, and it is certain that the participation of the architects in the war program will increase. It is very definitely incumbent upon the profession to render such services as to make the country fully aware of the importance of the profession in the national picture.

POLICIES

It has been stated on numerous occasions by various spokesmen for the Government that the entire effort and energy of the country is to be devoted toward the winning of this war. Any activity or work that does not shape toward this end will be discouraged if not prohibited.

Army.

A recent release of the War Department announces a decentralization of the War Department procurement. This release mentions the authoriz-

ing of local contracting and procurement officers to award all contracts amounting to less than \$1,000,000 in their own offices without sending them to Washington for approval, and in addition, authority has been given for the awarding of contracts totaling from \$1,000,000 to \$5,000,000 by the local officers, subject to clearance only by the O.P.M. and the Chiefs of Supply Arms and Services. Contracts for more than \$5,000,000 still require clearance by the Under Secretary of War. A corps officer may at his own discretion determine whether contracts for smaller amounts should be subjected to approval in Washington.

We have been informed that it is still advisable for any architect seeking work from this Department to file credentials with and appear for a hearing before the Construction Advisory Committee of the Construction Division in Washington. It is believed that most of the architectural firms who are qualified for consideration for these contracts have already appeared before this Committee. It is suggested, however, that before coming to Washington an architect visit the office of his District Engineer. The addresses of the offices of the District Engineers have been sent to the Regional Directors and to the chapters and state association members. The number of projects emanating from the Army will probably be few.

Navy.

There has been no change in the policy of the Navy Department with regard to architects in private practice. The Bureau of Yards and Docks maintains a list of reputable and qualified firms and individuals regularly engaged in work of compar-

able magnitude and class to that contemplated. A great number of architects have registered their credentials with the Bureau. Those who have not done so and believe themselves to be qualified for Navy projects are advised to file their credentials with the Bureau in Washington, furnishing information regarding experience, financial condition, personnel available for key positions, engineering and drafting organization, and suitable plant available. Rapid performance of work is insisted upon and no applicant who cannot point to a record of expeditious performance on projects of similar type and scope will receive serious consideration. The work contemplated by the Navy will include practically all types of construction and improvements at the various naval shore establishments throughout the United States and its possessions.

The foregoing should not be construed to indicate that all projects are of a colossal nature.

The Navy Department calls attention to the fact that it maintains no regular mailing list and advance news concerning the projects may appear in the press, technical publications and commercial agencies.

In addition to the Contact and Liaison Section of the Bureau of Yards and Docks, where applicants in Washington may be interviewed and their qualifications submitted, there are the Public Works Officers of the Navy and it is suggested that architects interested interview those Officers before coming to Washington. The Regional Directors and the chapters and state association members have been supplied a list of the names of these Officers.

O.P.M.

The Office of Production Management recently appointed the Defense Construction Industry Advisory Committee. The representatives of the profession on this Committee are Joseph Leland, Boston, and the Washington Representative. There are on the Committee the representatives of a number of the elements of the building industry and representatives of the Army, the Navy, the O.P.M. and other governmental agencies. In general, it may be stated that it will not be the policy of the Government to entirely discourage private building. However, as it is absolutely essential to win this war, all critical materials will be used first in the war program. As the available stocks and future of critical materials is by no means unlimited, it is not anticipated that

there will be sufficient materials available to permit the construction of an appreciable amount of private building. The ingenuity of the profession will be put to task to develop ways and means of building without the use of critical materials. It is safe to assume that for the immediate future all critical materials will be devoted toward the war effort.

An announcement has been made by the O.P.M. of assurance that adequate quantities of plumbing, heating and electrical supplies will continue to be available through usual wholesale and retail channels, and under it householders, farmers and businessmen may look forward to well-heated and well-lighted quarters during the coming months. This does not indicate, however, that a large scale building program should be embarked upon.

Legislation.

The Lanham Bill is before congressional conference at the time of this writing. It is possible that the differences of opinion between the House and the Senate will be ironed out before this number of *THE OCTAGON* is in circulation and that the bill will then be enacted in a revised form and signed by The President. It will not be until then that we will know to which agency will be delegated the defense housing funds. We have received many assurances that the architects in private practice will be given the work. The effort that all of you made in communicating with your Congressmen was of the greatest benefit toward the realization of this goal.

In order to complete the story of the Lanham Bill, the following excerpts from the Hearings on December 19, 1941, before the Subcommittee of the Committee on Education and Labor of the Senate may be of interest:

UNITED STATES SENATE
SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION AND LABOR

Washington, D. C.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to recess, at 10 a. m., in the committee room, Capitol, Senator Allen J. Ellender (chairman) presiding.

Present: Senators Ellender (chairman), Chavez, Bunker, La Follette, and Aiken.

SENATOR ELLENDER. The committee will come to order.

The chairman has received quite a few communications from various interested parties, among which is one from The American Institute of Architects, and at this point I

ask leave to incorporate their letter to me, dated December 17, 1941, in the record.

(The letter referred to is as follows:)

THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS,
Washington, D. C., December 17, 1941.

The Honorable ALLEN J. ELLENDER,
United States Senate, Washington, D. C.

DEAR SENATOR ELLENDER: With reference to bill H. R. 6128 now before your subcommittee of the Committee on Education and Labor, may we submit the following:

The members of the architectural profession are anxious and eager to play their part in the war and to strive their utmost to achieve that victory which will be ours. The attitude of the profession is borne out by the many messages that we have received, indicating an intense desire to be permitted to serve the country, and the question often arises as to how this may be done.

The participation of the architects in private practice in the defense-housing program would seem to offer at least one avenue for the employment of their talents and skill in the service of the country. We seek this participation.

In the debate on this bill in the House many assurances were made by Representatives that the profession would participate extensively in the work. It is hoped that we may receive that same assurance if the bill is debated in the Senate.

We realize that Congress will not administer the bill once it has become an act. Therefore, we respectfully request that this assurance of participation by the profession be fortified by a more positive statement than the one now contained in the bill to the effect that "Nothing in this act shall be construed to prevent the employment or utilization of the professional services of private persons, firms, or corporations."

We believe that a proposed amendment on this score has been called to the attention of some of the Senators to the effect that "In carrying out provisions of this act preference should be given to the employment of competent architects, engineers, and landscape architects in private practice on basis of competence and at established rates of compensation, and giving further preference to those resident in or readily accessible to the projects, and distributing the professional contracts as widely as possible." The exact wording of this proposal may for some reason not be desirable. It is the spirit of this proposed amendment which we seek to have recognized.

The trend of events far beyond our control has limited the professional horizons of the architects to such an extent that many of its members are confronted with the serious problem of being forced to relinquish their accustomed means of livelihood.

The architects form a patriotic and capable group and seek only the opportunity to be of service and worth to their country.

Very truly yours,

EDMUND R. PURVES,
Washington Representative,
The American Institute of Architects.

Senator ELLENDER. I understand that Mr. Purves desires to say a few words.

Give your name in full, and your present occupation.

STATEMENT OF EDMUND R. PURVES, WASHINGTON REPRESENTATIVE, THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

Mr. PURVES. My name is Edmund R. Purves, and I am an architect from Philadelphia.

For the last 5 weeks I have been down here in Washington at the request of The American Institute of Architects, to act as their representative in Washington on matters pertaining to the emergency situation, and now in regard to the war program.

Under date of December 17, I wrote to the Senator, and I have just heard him say that that letter was to be incorporated in the record, and that was what I came here to request this morning.

Senator ELLENDER. Very well.

I notice in the original Lanham Act in section 8 there appears the following language:

Nothing in this act shall be construed to prevent the Administrator from employing or utilizing the professional services of private persons, firms, or corporations.

Now that, in a measure, takes care of the situation, does it not?

Mr. PURVES. There seems to be some difference of opinion on that. We felt, however, Mr. Chairman, that that was a rather negative provision.

Senator ELLENDER. You want to make it mandatory?

Mr. PURVES. A preference clause rather than a mandatory clause.

Senator ELLENDER. What language would you suggest?

Mr. PURVES. We suggest the language that is contained in this letter which I gave to you a moment ago.

Senator ELLENDER. Will you quote from it at this particular point?

Mr. PURVES (reading):

In carrying out provisions of this act preference should be given to the employment of competent architects, engineers, and landscape architects in private practice on basis of competence and at established rates of compensation, and giving further preference to those resident in or readily accessible to the projects, and distributing the professional contracts as widely as possible.

That was our desired amendment, sir.

Senator ELLENDER. The subcommittee will consider that amendment when it proposes its report to the whole committee today.

The testimony of a number of the witnesses indicated the desirability of broadening the scope of the bill to include additional agencies.

* * *

As we go to press the Congressional Record of January 15 has been received. This contains the debate that took place when the report on the bill

was received from the conference. Excerpts of the debate of interest to the profession are quoted below:

THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, JANUARY 15, 1942

• • •

Mr. Lanham. Mr. Speaker, this is the conference report on the defense-housing bill which passed the House on the 11th day of December. It was amended in the Senate, the Senate amendments were disagreed to, and conferees appointed. We have had several discussions in the conference and have been able to bring in a complete report.

The Senate amended the bill in a great many particulars, and I feel that we have come as near to accomplishing the purposes that we had in view in the House bill as was possible in the conference. Some compromise is always necessary in such conferences, but, in my judgment, the bill as it stands, and with the assurance given by those who will administer this act with reference to these provisions, the principal original purposes of the House bill will be carried out.

I shall be glad to yield to anyone who wishes to ask questions.

Mr. McGregor. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. Lanham. I yield.

Mr. McGregor. I wonder if the chairman would advise the House the difference in the administration under the report of the conferees as he has given it and the present law?

Mr. Lanham. In response to the inquiry of the gentleman from Ohio, I will say that we retained in this bill the section which was stricken out by a Senate amendment, providing for the sale of such housing as expeditiously as possible, and that in disposing of it consideration should be given to its full market value, and that no part of it should be sold, unless it was so specifically authorized by the Congress, to any public or private agency organized for slum clearance or to provide subsidized housing for persons of low income. That was a cardinal principle of the bill as it passed the House. We succeeded in retaining such provision in that regard. That being the case, regardless of the agencies that may do the construction, it cannot be done for any purpose except those enumerated in the law. The Administrator requested that he be not restricted in the use of the various agencies that have to do that construction, but he expressed the purpose of reducing them to the minimum. There is a great deal of housing that must be done and be done quickly. One agency cannot do all the housing. One of the agencies that heretofore existed, and concerning which there has been some controversy, has been abolished—an agency with the Federal Works Agency—and that will no longer be employed.

Mr. Lewis. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. Lanham. I yield.

Mr. Lewis. Could the gentleman from Texas state what that agency is?

Mr. Lanham. That was the Defense Housing Agency under the direction of Mr. Foreman.

Mr. Sabath. That was the new agency which was created only a few months ago.

Mr. Lanham. Created within the Federal Works Agency itself.

Mr. Sabath. Instead of reducing the agencies it really added one more agency, and that has been eliminated.

Mr. Lanham. That has been eliminated.

Mr. Sabath. That is what I say.

Mr. Lanham. Yes.

Mr. Dondero. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. Lanham. I yield.

Mr. Dondero. Is there any information the gentleman can give the House as to the policy the Government intends to pursue either in the construction of these houses for the Government itself or through building construction firms and through the lowest bidder?

Mr. Lanham. I shall be glad to reply to the gentleman. In the first place it has been contemplated by the administration that it will use the Public Buildings Administration as extensively as it possibly can in the completion of these homes. Their work has been very satisfactory in the construction of this character that they have done. They will use also, where they can, competent local housing agencies where this can be done economically and quickly.

With reference to competitive bidding the bill carries an amendment that competitive bidding shall be used whenever possible in view of the emergency. Some of this housing must be built very rapidly. In view of the fact that it requires a month of advertising for competitive bids, and in view of the further fact that contractors bidding under the competitive system are unable to anticipate prices of labor and material, such bids usually are naturally high.

That construction which must be done promptly through negotiated contracts will, of course, be undertaken, but it is the purpose of the Administration to use, insofar as it possibly can, local contractors in carrying on the work.

Mr. Dondero. That was exactly the point I had in mind and desired to have the gentleman bring out.

Mr. Voorhis of California. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield? I should like to ask him a couple of questions.

Mr. Lanham. I yield.

Mr. Voorhis of California. In the first place, is it the opinion of the gentleman from Texas and his committee that this bill will facilitate the use of already organized local housing agencies wherever they are competent to do the job instead of setting up new Federal groups to do it?

Mr. Lanham. That is the purpose; and in our conferences with the Administrator we were assured that local housing agencies will be used where they are competent, and that no new agencies will be established.

Mr. Voorhis of California. It is not their intention to go into these communities that have competent local agencies and set up an entirely new Federal agency with new personnel to do the job.

Mr. Lanham. They will not; and we provide further for the use of local labor whenever that can be done.

Mr. Voorhis of California. One further question, if the gentleman will permit.

Mr. Lanham. Yes.

Mr. Voorhis of California. What is the reason for making a hard-and-fast provision against the possible use of some of this housing after the emergency is over for the housing of low-income people?

Mr. Lanham. As a matter of fact, we leave that to the discretion of the Congress when the emergency is over and say that it shall not after the emergency be turned over to private or public agencies for such purpose except as authorized by the Congress. We feel that it is impossible now to look ahead to the end of the emergency and know just what will be the best disposition to make of some of this housing. It will still be left in the discretion of Congress.

With reference to slum clearance, of course, there will be some incidental slum clearance in the carrying out of these housing projects, for some of them will be built on sites that naturally will be more or less slum areas.

Mr. Voorhis of California. But Congress will still have control over the disposition of these houses and can say how they may be used.

Mr. Lanham. It is expressly provided in the bill.

Mr. Voorhis of California. In the matter of sale the prohibition is not against sale to a home owner himself, but to a company for the purpose of resale.

Mr. Lanham. That is correct; and that is permissive rather than mandatory.

Mr. McCormack. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. Lanham. I yield.

Mr. McCormack. In connection with the general subject of the low-cost housing problem, is it intended that the construction of these houses to meet the immediate situation of national defense shall be of such character that it would not be ghost building after the emer-

gency is over but could be used to meet this other problem that confronts the country in certain sections?

Mr. Lanham. We provide very definitely in this measure and make it mandatory that consultation must be had from the beginning with the local authorities and the local housing authorities; and insofar as possible the building is to be done in accordance with the regular city planning and traditions.

• • •

Mr. Angell. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. Lanham. I yield to the gentleman from Oregon.

Mr. Angell. Is there any provision in the bill requiring the employment of local architects, a matter we had up when the bill was before us earlier?

Mr. Lanham. No; nothing further than the statement that was made at that time that they would be used. I think the gentleman will recall the statement I made regarding the assurance given by Mr. Reynolds that the first step he would take in going into these urban communities would be to employ local architects.

Mr. Angell. The gentleman, as chairman of the committee, can assure us from what he understands from those in charge of the administration of this law that they will employ local architects where they are available?

Mr. Lanham. That is my understanding from the assurance mentioned with reference to housing that is not purely temporary out in some rural community.

• • •

Mr. Dirksen. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. Lanham. I yield to the gentleman from Illinois.

Mr. Dirksen. As I understand, the funds now will be apportioned by the Federal Works Administrator among the component agencies of the Federal Works Agency for the purpose of constructing these houses.

Mr. Lanham. Yes.

• • •

Again on the floor of Congress assurances have been voiced that the architects will participate in the Defense Housing Program.

EDMUND R. PURVES
Washington Representative.

New Director of the Sierra-Nevada District

THE President of The Institute announces the interim election by the Executive Committee of Eugene Weston, Jr., of Los Angeles, California, as Director of the Sierra-Nevada District of The Institute, effective December 10, 1941, to serve for the remainder of the term for which Gordon B. Kauf-

mann of Los Angeles was elected.

Mr. Kaufmann found it necessary to resign as Director due to the pressure of defense program work. He was elected a director in 1939 and his term would have expired with the closing of the 1942 Convention.

The Seventy-Fourth Convention

FIRST OFFICIAL NOTICE TO MEMBERS

THE Seventy-fourth Convention of The Institute will be held in Detroit, Michigan, June 23, 24, 25 and 26, 1942.

It is particularly fitting that the 1942 meeting of The Institute be held in Detroit, inasmuch as that great industrial city in many ways symbolizes the gigantic war effort of the nation in the first year of its active participation in World War II.

The fact that America is at war should not deter members of the profession from attending the Convention. Now, as never before, it is imperative that architects present a united front in the face of adversities brought about by war economy.

The National Convention Committee of which L. C. Dillenback, of Syracuse, is Chairman, and the Convention Committee of the Detroit Chapter, of which Clair W. Ditchy, of Detroit, is Chairman, are now engaged in planning the program.

This is the first official notice of the Convention. Subsequent numbers of THE OCTAGON will carry other notices concerning the procedure for the election of delegates, and for nominating officers and directors, draft of program, and information on transportation and hotel accommodations. Watch for them, read them, and make plans now to attend.

CHARLES T. INGHAM, *Secretary*

The Committee on Civilian Protection

THE Chairman reports that the organization of the committee has been completed, in so far as the Chapters are concerned, with 70 designations out of a possible 71, which means that each chapter now has a contact on *Protective Construction, Protective Concealment and Blackout* to whom all available information is being supplied from Washington and by whom local study and active groups are being organized. To these contacts, circulars of information are going regularly telling what other chapters are doing so that each may build on the other's accomplishments and arrange for exchanges of findings. The same type of organization service is being extended to State Association subdivisions. All associations have been invited to participate and distribution is under way in New York, North Carolina, Georgia, and Indiana.

It is impossible to keep up a good flow of material if time must be spent on committee organization. From now on, it is up to each Chapter and State Association group to make its own local arrangements for the dissemination of information to members concerned and to organize study groups to act as local consultants on problems as they arise. These problems are ranging from individual shelters (which are being discouraged as wasteful of material, man power and morale), through the gamut of surveys and recommendations for group safety measures; to the camouflage of great oil refineries.

Nine Regional Representatives have been appointed whose job it is to follow through on the prequalifying of architects in their respective Corps Areas and to work with the Regional Representatives of the Office of Civilian Defense and of the War Department in making the services of the profession available and effective.

Of special interest to the profession as a whole is an announcement issued January 13, calling attention to a training course in "Aerial Bombardment Protection" to be held at New York University from February 16 to February 24 under the auspices of the Office of Civilian Defense, U. S. Office of Education, and College of Engineering, New York University.

The course will admit representatives of these groups—40 or 50 university professors; 150-300 municipal engineers or public works commissioners; and 200 or more representatives of various professional institutes and technical societies. Tuition will be free: travel and subsistence to be borne by the individual or his agency. There will be over thirty lectures on kinds of bombs and their effect.

These lectures will be given by outstanding specialists in their respective fields.

Announcements, programs and application forms have been sent to all Chapter contacts and to contacts designated by State Associations.

HORACE W. PEASLEE, *Chairman*.

The Institute Offers Cooperation.

Following President Roosevelt's declaration of the existence of a state of war between the United States and the Axis powers, President Shreve dispatched a telegram to President Roosevelt offering the cooperation of The Institute and the profession of architecture in every way possible in the emergency. The following correspondence between the White House and President Shreve is published for the information of the members:

President Shreve's Telegram

PRESIDENT FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON, D. C.

THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS EARNESTLY PROFFERS EVERY AID AND ALL COOPERATION POSSIBLE WITHIN THE POWER OF THE ARCHITECTS IN THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY AND IN THE WAR IN DEFENSE OF OUR COUNTRY.

R. H. SHREVE, PRESIDENT
THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

The President's Reply

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

December 17, 1941.

My dear Mr. Shreve:

The President has received your fine telegram. He wishes me to convey his deep appreciation of the unanimous and wholehearted offer of service and cooperation of The American Institute of Architects.

It is extremely heartening to the President to receive such genuine and spontaneous responses as have come to him from practically every great organization and group in the country. All of these voluntary assurances give a guarantee of solidarity on the home front and a unity of effort that will ensure the success of our fighting forces.

Very sincerely yours,

(s) M. H. MCINTYRE,
Secretary to the President.

R. H. Shreve, Esq., President,
The American Institute of Architects.

Message from the Cuban National Institute of Architects

The following correspondence between President Shreve and Mr. Gustavo Moreno, President of the Cuban National Institute of Architects, is published for the information of the profession. It aptly expresses the bonds of fraternity existing between the architects of the Americas and evinces the solidarity now so essential to the nations of the western hemisphere.

Mr. Moreno's Cablegram

HAVANA, DECEMBER 10, 1941

MR. R. H. SHREVE, PRESIDENT,
AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS
WASHINGTON, D. C.

CUBAN NATIONAL INSTITUTE ARCHITECTS UNITED EXTRAORDINARY SESSION RESOLVED EXPRESS INDIGNATION JAPANESE AGGRESSION UNITED STATES WE SOLIDLY APPROVE CUBAN GOVERNMENT ATTITUDE DEFENDING DEMOCRACY JOINTLY NATIONS FIGHTING AGAINST TOTALITARIAN TYRANNY REQUEST

YOU TRANSMIT THIS MESSAGE ALL ARCHITECTURAL ASSOCIATIONS YOUR GREAT COUNTRY.

GUSTAVO MORENO, PRESIDENT.

Reply

December 23, 1941

My dear President Moreno:

At the direction of The President of The American Institute of Architects, Mr. R. H. Shreve, we write to send this grateful acknowledgment of your cablegram endorsing democracy's fight against totalitarian powers. Your message will be published to the architects of the United States in the next number of the journal of The Institute.

With expressions of esteem, and cordial greetings, I am
Sincerely yours,

(s) E. C. KEMPER,
Executive Secretary.

Mr. Gustavo Moreno, President,
Cuban National Institute of Architects,
Havana, Cuba.

The New Orleans Chapter

THE request of the Louisiana Chapter that its official designation be changed to the "New Orleans" Chapter, was acted upon favorably by The Board of Directors of The Institute at its semi-

annual meeting. Effective as of January 1, 1942, the (former) Louisiana Chapter will be known as the New Orleans Chapter. There will be no change in the chapter territory.

New England Regional Conference

NEW ENGLAND architects pledged to President Roosevelt their "united support and services in these momentous days of national stress" in a telegram sent at the conclusion of an emergency regional conference of New England chapters of The American Institute of Architects and state associations held at the Faculty Club of Yale University on December 11.

Architects from Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, and New York attended the conference, held in conjunction with the annual meeting of the Connecticut Chapter of The Institute. Civilian defense, public and private building, and the status of the architect and building under OPM and SPAB rulings were discussed in the afternoon session while the evening session, which followed a banquet at the Faculty Club, was devoted to the subject of post-war planning.

Philip N. Sunderland, president of the Connecticut Chapter, opened the conference and turned the meeting over to H. Daland Chandler, Director of the New England District of The Institute, who planned the program. In explaining the purpose of the conference, Mr. Chandler said, "I believe that if we have been ignored in the national building program by the powers that control it, it is because we have not acted in concert; we have not formulated a general underlying policy with the various architectural organizations giving their united articulate support. To discuss this subject from every angle and to arrive at a resolution that we could endorse and which we could present as a New England group to The Institute, the government bureaus, and our Washington legislators, is the primary purpose of this conference."

President Shreve and Matthew W. Del Gaudio, State Association Director of The Institute, attended the meeting. President Shreve explained the work that The Institute was doing in Washington, while Mr. Del Gaudio urged the architects to subordinate private building interests to the defense program whenever and wherever possible. Mr. Del Gaudio also emphasized the need for state architectural associations to supplement the work of The Institute.

Among those participating were Dean Everett Meeks of the Yale School of Fine Arts; James A. McElroy, director of Public Works Reserve for

Connecticut and Rhode Island; Edwin Howard, Connecticut Director of the OPM; William Davies of the Defense Housing Division of the Federal Works Agency, and Professor Maurice Rotival of Yale University.

"Conflagration is the number one menace to America's civilian population," George H. Gray of New Haven, speaking for the Connecticut Defense Council, pointed out during the discussion of civilian defense. "The cities of the United States are tinderboxes ready to be set off with ridiculous ease by a few incendiary bombs. Fire breaks should be cut through important areas to prevent flames spreading over wide sections of cities. Fire hazards around defense plants, hospitals, communication centers, and other vital zones should be removed at once. Families living in densely populated neighborhoods surrounding natural targets for bombs should be evacuated to temporary camps, spaced apart, beyond city limits."

Other recommendations made for civilian defense were that architects should make surveys on which buildings in a city, and which rooms in these buildings, are safest during an air raid, and that all plans for new defense plants include basic provisions for camouflaging. It was also suggested that cities and towns should begin now to plan for post war public works projects to take up the slack in industrial employment after the emergency has passed.

Edwin E. Cull, president of the Rhode Island Chapter, explained the work the architects were doing for civilian defense in his state, while Walter E. Campbell of Boston, architect in charge of evacuation plans for the Massachusetts Committee on Public Safety, described the work being done in his community. The defense committee of the Boston Chapter has now become the Planning and Technical Division of the Committee on Public Safety.

Mr. Howard, Connecticut Director of the OPM, explained how the priorities system on building materials worked and urged architects to send all their requests to Washington on official forms, instead of appealing to their local Congressmen for aid in obtaining vital materials. Mr. Howard said that 15,000 appeals for materials a week were being received in Washington, and that there were no laws against doing any type of private building which doesn't require critical materials.

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