

ILLINOIS SOCIETY OF ARCHITECTS

MONTHLY BULLETIN

Vol. 16

JANUARY AND FEBRUARY, 1932

Nos. 6 and 7

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LABOR COSTS REDUCED TWENTY PER CENT BY

REDUCTION IN WAGES

More than 125,000 Chicago building mechanics on February 12th volunteered to take a cut of 20 per cent in the union pay scale for one year, beginning March 1. The action was made known at a conference of union representatives and employees.

Members of the arbitration board, composed of the Chicago Building Trades council and organizations affiliated with the Building Construction Employer's association, after ratifying the pact, issued a statement in which they said:

"We feel confident that the wage adjustment will loosen the log jam that has gripped local construction work."

The conferees added that approximately \$150,000,000 of new construction in the Chicago area was put aside in 1930 and 1931 because of high building costs and difficulties in financing. They predicted with this new scale in effect that a large part of this contemplated work would be thawed out and 1932 be a year of much higher employment than the last two.

Estimates were furnished to show that it now costs less by fully 25 per cent to build than it cost in 1930 or 1929. With labor down 20 per cent and building materials cheaper by 30 per cent, it was asserted it is now cheaper to build than it has been at any time in the last twelve years.

Old and New Wage Scales

Hourly wage rates in the city before and after the cut are shown below:

	Old.	New.
Asbestos	\$1.67½	\$1.34
Bricklayer	1.70	1.36
Bricklayer's helper	.97½	.78
Carpenter	1.62½	1.30

Cement finisher	1.62½	1.30
Electrician	1.70	1.36
Hoisting engineer	1.62½	1.30
Structural ironworker	1.67½	1.34
Ornamental ironworker	1.62½	1.30
Laborer	.97½	.78
Lather	1.70	1.36
Painter	1.75	1.40
Plasterer	1.70	1.36
Plasterer's tender	1.03½	.83
Plumber	1.70	1.36
Roofer (composition)	1.70	1.36
Roofer (slate)	1.75	1.40
Sheet metal	1.70	1.36
Steamfitter	1.70	1.36
Stonemason	1.75	1.40
Tilesetter	1.62½	1.30
Tilesetter's helper	1.12½	.90

The labor representatives were congratulated on their agreement, which was made without compulsion other than that furnished by the general economic conditions. The existing scales had been adopted to run until May 31, 1934, and the representatives said they made the change only in the hope of persuading prospective home owners and investors in real estate to build.

According to the statement, civic and trade organizations have mapped out plans to stimulate building and to modernize structures already existing, and these projects are certain to go ahead with the lowering of costs.

Patrick F. Sullivan, president of the Chicago Building Trades council, said:

"The council and its affiliated unions are more than anxious to do their part in restoring public confidence. If our action today accomplishes the result we will feel that we were more than justified. Labor has done its full part, and if the Architects, The Chicago Association of Commerce, the Bankers and other groups do theirs, we will soon be again on the road to prosperity."

INDIVIDUALITY AND HOUSING

Your editor heard Frank Lloyd Wright speak on "An Architecture for the Individual" at the City Club on Tuesday last. The subject was handled in a most scholarly and interesting manner. On the evening of the same day our own Alfred Granger gave a delightful address to the Members of the Chicago Chapter A. I. A. and the Association of Arts and Industries and the members of the Illinois Society of Architects in the Administration Building of the Century of Progress Exhibition on the subject "The Housing Problem in Vienna."

His talk was illustrated with lantern slide pictures of the different projects.

A notable feature of the different groups, in addition to the large courts in and the general open spaces around the buildings, the community laundries and kindergartens, was the delightful use of color particularly in walls and roofs and the unique placing of ornamentation on the buildings and in gardens.

The stark outlines of so-called "modern" architecture when executed in materials of a monotone are most depressing. However, the addition of color, texture and sculptured ornament to these buildings has produced a really cheerful and homelike result, well worthy of consideration by our own architects.

The subject of housing, whether an individual house in the broad acre city of Mr. Wright or an individual flat or apartment unit in a huge tenement similar to the Vienna housing so ably described by Mr. Granger, is one of deep interest to Illinois Architects.

It is particularly interesting to Chicago architects as the Chicago Chapter now has a committee at work on a possible solution of the housing problem as applied to the slum districts of our city.

FUNCTION, SERVED RAW.

(The New York Sun)

If building a house is a scientific problem and nothing more, if the architect sets out to achieve certain practical objects and nothing else, then the model housing development shown privately the other day at the Museum of Modern Art may be nearly perfect. The architects made their plans for an apartment dwelling designed to admit plenty of light and fresh air to all the rooms and provide ample space for playgrounds and other outdoor facilities. But the result, as shown in pictures of the model, looks like a skeleton for such a structure, rather than like a finished building.

It certainly is not the type of building that would be an ornament to its neighborhood, no matter how bright and clean it might appear when new. It may embody the most advanced ideas in moderately priced living quarters. From the viewpoint of a factory engineer it may look perfect. It may be a thousand times more sanitary than any of the old tenements on the east side. A square block of these new buildings may provide comfortable homes at low rent for 10,000 persons. The sun and air may pour freely into their long windows and the breezes blow across their roof terraces and whistle merrily among the stilts that hold the first floors above the ground. They may be built at relatively small cost because all the parts are standardized and can be bought in carload lots. But the result is repulsive.

The case against modernism that runs to such extremes was epitomized in the annual report of Prof. William A. Boring, dean of the school of architecture of Columbia university. "In architecture it is claimed that function is the most important expression," he said; "there is no doubt that this quality is evident in all good architecture, but the raw exterior statement of its purpose on the outside of a building in no way assures it to be beautiful." Is it not possible to erect modern apartments to replace ugly tenements without going so far to glorify function at the sacrifice of good design? Nobody expects such a building to look like a palace, but it should be made so attractive that its occupants would be happy to call it home.

LET US TAKE GOVERNMENT OUT OF OUR PROFESSION

Enactment of legislation in Congress to check the rapid growth of government bureaucracy is being sought by the American Institute of Architects with the support of the nation's building industry. The Institute has embodied the proposed reforms in a bill known as H. R. 6187, which was recently introduced in the House of Representatives and which has been referred to the Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds.

The Institute asks that the designing of public buildings be entrusted to the nation's ablest architects and that the activity of the office of the supervising architect of the Treasury Department be limited to supervision. "The government is no more qualified to design our buildings than to paint our pictures and write our books," Louis La Beaulme of St. Louis, chairman of the Institute's Committee on Public Works, stated in making the announcement. Savings in the federal building budget and greater vitality of architectural design would also result, he stated.

"The purpose of this bill is to bring to the service of the government the ablest professional ability in the nation," Mr. La Beaulme continued. "The country is entitled to these services and the employment of skilled architects and engineers outside of the federal bureau will inevitably result in the creation of a more vital architecture appropriate to the regions in which federal buildings are to be erected.

"It cannot be denied that to restrict the designing of our federal building to a single department, no matter how efficient, must inevitably narrow and stereotype the expression of our architectural ideals. Moreover, we share the belief of a large body of public opinion that the rapid growth of governmental bureaucracy, which we have witnessed during the last few years, should be checked. We oppose the further encroachment of the government into the field of private initiative.

"The responsibility of the government for the encouragement of good architecture is without parallel. Its federal buildings are symbols of its greatness. The elimination from the service of the government of the knowledge, gifts and inspiration of all architects except those confined within the treasury building would reduce our architectural dimensions to those of a single architect's office and limit us to the architectural control of one man, whereas the government should have at its disposal every bit of architectural ability that the nation possesses."

THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

The Octagon, 1741 New York Avenue

WASHINGTON, D. C.

December 19, 1931.

My dear Mr. Hall:

At the direction of Mr. Louis LaBeaulme, Chairman of the Committee on Public Works of The American Institute of Architects, we send herewith several copies of H. R. 6187.

The bill is self-explanatory, and was considered in detail yesterday at a meeting in New York, called on short notice by Mr. LaBeaulme for the purpose of enlisting the interest of the Editors of the Architectural Press who were available in New York City.

Herewith is copy of a telegram sent by those at the meeting to Honorable Robert A. Green, who introduced the bill.

Mr. LaBeaulme hopes very much that you will support the efforts of the Institute to secure legislation which is believed to be sound in principle, and that the Monthly Bulletin of the Illinois Society of Architects can find opportunity to give encouragement to this movement for bringing about Federal recognition of architects and engineers in private practice.

The effort to secure the legislation may be extended over a long period but the Institute is determined to carry it forward until success is achieved.

Mr. LaBeaulme, by direct communication or through this office, will keep you informed of developments.

Sincerely yours,

E. C. KEMPER,

Executive Secretary.

Mr. E. S. Hall, Chairman,
Committee on Public Information,
Illinois Society of Architects,
175 West Jackson Boulevard, Chicago, Ill.

ALLIED CONSTRUCTION COUNCIL

We have just learned of the creation of a new organization which has all the appearances of being just what we need in our Chicago district.

It is known as the Allied Construction Council of Chicago, its object being to have contact with the building constructions in the Greater Chicago District; to the end that all matters brought to its attention affecting the industry shall be thoroughly investigated, analyzed and recommendations concerning them made to the respective interests comprising this Council.

This means that the many perplexing construction industry problems that the Architects have to contend with will first be thoroughly ferreted out and the results of the Council reported to our Architectural organizations so that we may more intelligently act upon same and thus save much time because of the work of this complex Committee.

The organization is composed of two representatives of the Illinois Society of Architects; two from the Chicago Chapter, A. I. A.; three from the Western Society of Engineers; and six Contractors representing different trades. The Chairman is H. B. Wheelock.

We shall be anxiously awaiting reports from the Council and trust they will get busy immediately on the great unemployment problem, hoping that in their wisdom they may be able to present a solution that we can all approve and put into immediate action.

THE ROCHESTER PLAN

The Rochester plan for giving many an opportunity to be employed during the present depression is being strongly advocated for adoption in Chicago. A meeting is scheduled to take up the subject at once. The new Allied Construction Council comprised of architects, engineers and contractors discussed the matter at a recent meeting.

E. L. Ryerson, Jr., President of the Governor's Unemployment Commission, has been asked to start the movement through his committee under perhaps the sponsorship of the Chicago Association of Commerce; the architects, engineers and contractors assuring the Unemployment Commission and the Association of Commerce of their willingness to fully co-operate in the movement.

The campaign would involve the necessity of a complete organization of canvassers to personally solicit owners to agree to expend such sums of money as they could afford, to do some kind of alterations or modernizing of their buildings. There are thousands of buildings in Chicago which could and should be dressed up and made more habitable and desirable as places of either habitation or of use in business occupations.

Thousands of men could be put to work and eliminate the necessity of the idle being supported by the Governor's Commission on Unemployment and other charitable institutions. Rochester, N. Y., has apparently solved the problem of unemployment in that city. Chicago should emulate that city's example and help the unemployed to provide for themselves, and not be compelled, because of their plight, to accept alms to sustain their families over the winter.

OFFICE OF FINANCIAL SECRETARY
Suite 1015, 160 N. La Salle St., Telephone Central 4214
Chicago, Ill.

February 11, 1932.

Copy of Letter sent to
Illinois Senators and Congressmen

I have been instructed by the Illinois Society of Architects to communicate with you regarding House Bill 6187 and Senate Bill 2956 shortly to come before your honorable body.

Our organization is composed of the practicing architects of the State of Illinois and is deeply interested in the above mentioned bills.

The purpose of this legislation is to bring to the service of the Government the ablest architectural ability in the nation to which the country is entitled.

To restrict the designing of our federal buildings to a single department, no matter how efficient, must inevitably narrow and stereotype our national architecture. Moreover, sharing the belief of a large body of public opinion that the growth of the governmental bureaucracy should be checked, we oppose the further encroachment of the Government into the field of private initiative. This measure does not in any manner effect the duties of the Supervising Architect of the Treasury in regard to maintenance, alterations, repair or supervision of either existing or proposed public buildings.

No doubt, this matter has been brought direct to your attention by some of your constituents as it effects every architect in the State as well as those located in various parts of the United States. The bill concerns not alone the architectural professions, but every branch of the entire building industry.

We shall be grateful to you for your support of this bill.

Assuring you of our appreciation and thanking you very kindly, we remain

Yours very truly,

ILLINOIS SOCIETY OF ARCHITECTS,

H. L. Palmer, Financial Secretary.

HLP-DD

Favorable replies were received from the following:

Edward A. Kelly, Congressman 3rd District.

Harry P. Beam, Congressman 4th District.

A. J. Sabbath, Congressman 5th District.

James T. Igoe, Congressman 6th District.

Leonard W. Schuetz, Congressman 7th District.

Peter C. Granata, Congressman 8th District.

Fred A. Britten, Congressman 9th District.

John T. Buckbee, Congressman 12th District.

B. M. Chipfield, Congressman 15th District.

William E. Hull, Congressman 16th District.

Claude V. Parsons, Congressman 24th District.

William H. Dieterich, Congressman At Large.

Henry T. Rainey, Congressman At Large.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES

House of Representatives

Washington, D. C.

February 13, 1932.

Mr. H. L. Palmer, Financial Secretary,
Illinois Society of Architects,
160 No. La Salle St.,
Chicago, Illinois.

Dear Mr. Palmer:

I am in receipt of your letter of recent date, and in reply, beg to say that I am heartily in accord with your views, and shall watch the legislation in which you are interested.

Thanking you for calling the matter to my attention, I am,

Yours very truly,

LEONARD W. SCHUETZ.

February 13, 1932.

Mr. Herman L. Palmer,
Illinois Society of Architects,
160 N. La Salle Street,
Chicago, Illinois.

My dear Herman:

Thanks for your frank letter of February 11th and you may be assured that it will be a pleasure for me to support H. R. 6187 and I hope that this legislation may be put through the present Congress.

With good wishes as always, my dear Herman, to you and yours at home, I am

Yours very cordially,

FRED A. BRITTEN, M. C.

February 13, 1932.

Mr. H. L. Palmer, Financial Secretary,
Illinois Society of Architects,
160 No. La Salle St.,
Chicago, Illinois.

Dear Mr. Palmer:

In reply to your letter of February 11 will say that I am heartily in favor of your bill.

With best wishes, I am

Very truly yours,

WM. E. HULL.

February 13, 1932.

Mr. H. L. Palmer, Financial Secretary,
Illinois Society of Architects,
160 No. La Salle St.,
Chicago, Illinois.

My dear Mr. Palmer:

I wish to acknowledge receipt of your letter of February 11, 1932, and to thank you for your views in connection with the House Bill 6187 and the Senate Bill 2956.

I have carefully read your letter and you may be assured when the afore-mentioned bills come before the House for discussion, I shall be pleased to give them my most earnest consideration.

Appreciating your writing to me in this connection, and with best wishes, I remain

Cordially yours,

EDWARD A. KELLY, M. C.

February 13, 1932.

Mr. H. L. Palmer,
Secretary, Illinois Society of Architects,
160 No. La Salle St.,
Chicago, Illinois.

Dear Sir:

I am sorry to say that Congressman A. J. Sabbath is not in Washington at present and will not return for several days.

When he returns I shall be pleased to call your request for the support of H. R. 6187 and S. 2956 bills to his attention.

Very truly yours,

CLARENCE HAJIC,

Secretary.

Mr. H. L. Palmer,
Financial Secretary, Illinois Society of Architects,
Suite 1015, 160 North La Salle Street,
Chicago, Illinois.

My dear Mr. Palmer:

The receipt is acknowledged of your communication under date of February 11, 1932, in which you discuss the merits of the Bills, HR-6187 and Senate 2956 which have for their purpose the bringing to the service of the country the ablest architectural ability possible.

I shall be pleased to give my serious consideration to these measures when they come before the House of Representatives for action and you may be assured the views of the Members of the Illinois Society of Architects favorable to this legislation will be kept constantly in mind.

Thanking you for writing to me in this connection, I remain

Faithfully yours,

JAMES T. IGEOE, M. C.

WANTED, A NAME

We have all been acquainted with the Real Estate Mortgage Bond which most of us agree is the best security for investment that can be had, but like many good things, it evidently has seen its best days under this name.

Therefore, in order to interest capital in like enterprises it seems quite necessary that a new name should be had though in reality it would mean the same as a mortgage bond.

Can you suggest a substitute? If so, will you kindly send your suggestions to the Editor of the Bulletin.

A WAY TO REDUCE YOUR OVERHEAD

Under the present conditions existing in the Architectural Profession many of our members have made inquiries as to whether the Society could assist them to lighten their overhead by communicating with the membership at large and, if possible, ascertain the names of those who desire to double up with some other Architect and cut down their expenses.

We find that there are a number of architects who have much more space than they require and these men are anxious to give up part of their space and thereby reduce their overhead.

In many cases this would work out to the benefit of those who do not want to close their offices entirely and at the same time remain in business and readiness in case of an improvement in the Building Industry. With this in view members of the Illinois Society of Architects are invited to answer the following questions which will be kept strictly confidential.

Questionnaire

Do you want a tenant (an Architect) in your office to share part of your expense

How many square feet of space can you furnish

Do you employ a permanent stenographer and what arrangements may be made for her services to a tenant

What arrangements may be made for the use of your telephone

What is the minimum rental you will charge for your space

Are you in a position to take care of a tenant at once

Are you looking for office space with an architect

How much space do you require

Do you intend to install your own telephone.....

Have you a stenographer or do you require stenographic services on part time

What is the maximum amount of rent you will pay

All questions answered in this questionnaire will be kept strictly confidential and all arrangements will be made direct between the Renter and Tenant.

Address all communications to H. L. Palmer, Financial Secretary, Illinois Society of Architects, 160 N. La Salle St., Chicago, Illinois.