

WANTED - ONE GOOD BUILDING CODE

by William Paul Fox, Chairman, I. S. A. Legislative Committee

It's safe, it's durable, it's sound, it's an improvement over present construction — and it's against the law. All too often that is the reception doled out to new methods and new materials in the building trades. Rather than risk work stoppages and well meaning court orders, architects and builders are forced to side-track a new and perhaps better product for the type of material specified in the building code.

Obviously, well constructed buildings which have withstood the wear of the years are evidence of the value of building codes. At least they prove that an honest code is better than no code, regardless of how much is lacking. But the 20th Century deserves a better break than a code that merely states — this is safe; use it. Perhaps there is something else that is just as safe and decidedly more durable.

Codes that are generally followed today specify standards of quality, of materials, of performance, of good practice for branches of the building industry. However, usually these codes are detailed to the point of stifling legal restrictions. In practice the effect of the enforcement of such building laws is an apparent freezing of a given standard until the local governmental body has the time and the inclination to change it. As a result buildings go up and meet standards that are long outdated. In a few cases slight "alterations" are slipped in "in the dead of night" but, generally, builders defer daylight construction.

Science and industry pour millions of dollars each year into research on new methods and materials. And more often than not, these laboratory dwellers come up with something that is just a bit better than the things we are using. But when they present us with new building material, we find we have to pat them on the back with a sincere "thank you", followed by a muttered reservation about an ancient building code specification that doesn't seem to allow for it. All is not lost because in a few years the material will be accepted when the code is shifted slightly. But quite likely, just about the time the shiny new code reaches you through the mail, someone else has a product that is an improvement over the one at long last recognized and the vicious circle races merrily round and round.

ISA Plans

The Illinois Society of Architects plans to remedy the situation, at least in Illinois. At its state-wide meeting in Peoria, Illinois, the Society passed a resolution to present a building code to the State Legislature. They empowered the president to appoint a committee of 15 architects, 10 from outside Chicago and five from the Chicago area, to thoroughly investigate building needs and to present to the board of directors their recommendations. The following architects were named to serve on the committee: William Paul Fox, Chairman, Chicago; David Saul Klafter, Chicago; Arnold J. Kreugel, Joliet; Kenneth A. McGrew, Evanston; Murry S. Hanes, Springfield; Herbert E. Speiler, Aurora; J. G. Gatewood, Mt. Vernon; Thomas B. Imbs, Bellwood; Raymond Orput, Rockford; Louis H. Gerding, Ottawa; Joseph W. Royer, Urbana; Charles F. Behrensmeyer, Quincy; Hamilton B. Dox, Peoria; Clarence W. Doll, Mattoon.

Building codes are justifiable only when their expressed purpose is to promote the health, safety and welfare of the

people for whom the code is formulated. Building codes, generally, have attempted to succeed in this purpose, but like much other legislation could be considerably altered. The type of code that is good for today tends to become antiquated long before it is even accepted for popular use. At times this type of code has failed because of requirements set up by selfish motives. It can be a simple matter to discriminate against a type of manufactured material merely by specifying another material. It is easy to avoid saying, "No", while never saying "Yes". To eliminate the possibility of this being repeated, it seems advisable to adopt a code that can neither grow old nor be aimed at specific materials to the exclusion of all others. It would be part of the job of the code committee to incorporate into the Illinois code ways by which these results could be accomplished.

The Society, perhaps more than many organizations, is interested in seeing a well defined building code in Illinois. But Illinois Society architects understand that *well defined* does not mean detailed, confining or hampering. The code they hope to draft will insist upon safe minimum requirements while allowing the builder the maximum choice in materials and methods of construction. They are openly in favor of a building code based on performance — in place of the present code based on specification. In the past they have listened to the specification code tell them what materials they must use and what methods they must employ to install them. They have found that the specification code makes it difficult, and in many instances impossible, to use materials and methods introduced to the building trade after the code had been completed. Unfortunately, this type of code is most generally used throughout the country today.

Performance Idea

The performance basis for a building code demands a definite result, but does not stipulate how that result must be caused. It leaves the field open for the result to be brought about in a variety of ways left to the choice of the builder and his client. Because past experience has shown that code revisions cannot possibly keep abreast with developments in construction, the logical type of code for the safety and health of building owners and occupants is the performance code that is self-revising. The flexibility of this system provides for new materials and methods if they produce the results set down as necessary by the code.

For example, fire resistance is an important building factor that effects the owner, occupant and the community. In a performance code the only specification indicated would be a "four hour" wall for a particular type of structure. Materials, methods and slide-rule measures would be absent from the code. The "four hour" wall would be the only requirement; its thickness and its construction method would be determined by the builder. It could be built of brick, steel, cement or any other material that would have the fire resistance of four hours.

In practical application, the result of such a code regarding fire protection is, 1) a fire resistant wall — safety protection for the occupant and investment protection for the owner, and, 2) a wide choice of materials — freedom for the builder to exercise his art and freedom for the manufacturer to market his product. Apparently nothing

has been detracted from the protection of the owner and occupant, but the builder and manufacturer have gained from the code. In fact, the builder probably has chosen the materials in preference to others because he finds it to be the best fire resistant on the market for his purpose — a substantial gain for both the builder and the occupant.

The People Count

Without question a code of this type must be scrupulously planned with the general public as the benefactor. It must be aimed at giving the people safe, healthful, sturdy buildings in which to live, work and play. The responsibility of the code maker is a grave one. He can consider only the people of the community, of any community. He can save no space for pet specifications that favor particular products or industries. His only concern must be a just code that insures the people of the state protection against faulty homes, offices and utilities, while assuring them of the opportunity to use the best in building materials and methods when they are tested and proved.

The building code can come only after tedious investigation. The present codes, of course, will be an aid in determining what the minimum requirements must be. But the new code must go deeper. It must delve into the essence of good construction. It must consider every angle of what Americans have a right to expect in their homes and offices — safety, health, stability, practicality, function and beauty. It must set a minimum requirement that gives a sound standard for lighting, heating, ventilation, sanitation, loads, facilities for domestic or business life — all in attractive harmony. If it omits any primary requirements for suitable living and working, it is a code that can be improved. Illinois wants a code that needs no improvement. The architects and builders of Illinois want and expect a code that will be a basis for good building — a code that requires no amendments but allows for the introduction of the new when it meets or surpasses the standards of the old.

The Old Is On Trial

The Illinois building code must be complete and all inclusive. It cannot limit itself to future building. It must also demand suitable standards for buildings already constructed. Owners and occupants of old buildings deserve the same standards of safety and health as those who build or occupy new buildings. A code that considers only these buildings that will some day rise to be a credit to the community has done only half its job . . . it has locked the barn door, but the horse is already gone. Possible tragedies of caved-in floors and fire trapped families can be avoided if they are considered as possible before brick and plaster begin to crash. Decayed beams are apparent after the crash, but the important thing is to discover them before the disaster. That, too, is the responsibility of the code. Provisions must be made for building inspection and condemnation.

Keep Zoning In Mind

Another item not to be forgotten with a just building code is zoning. Because zoning affects both the property owner and the community, it should be considered at the same time as the building code. Legislation on zoning and codes necessarily affect each other; in many ways each is dependent on the other. Regulations passed as necessary to sound construction could not be properly enforced if converse regulations were stated in the zoning laws. Good construction is a prime factor in any building, but modifications and alterations are sometimes necessary in cases where a particular type of structure would be detrimental to a neighborhood or dangerous because of an industrial or land condition. We can't remove water from under property, but we can keep it in mind when planning to build on the site.

It appears that the best course of action is for the building code makers to explore the present zoning laws and deter-

mine advisable changes considering the property rights of present owners as well as looking to the future of those planning to build in the area.

The minimum requirements adopted should apply to all buildings, new and old in each building classification. These requirements should be the minimum deemed necessary for the health, safety and welfare of all the people. Families, office workers, factory workers and people in search of amusement deserve at least the minimum in safety and health protection. The code must cover everyone who lives and works in the state of Illinois.

The Time Is Now

1947 is the time to enact an Illinois building code. The acute shortage of dwellings makes this work expedient. It is imperative that a code be written and adopted before the avalanche of building begins. At present, building is already starting to meet the demands of the public for homes, offices and factories. The time to do it is now, not after we have reached maximum building construction.

At prevailing prices owners are investing enormous sums of money in buildings of all types. The builders of Illinois owe it to their clients to see that they have at least a reasonable chance of realizing their investments. Their buildings must be of such construction that they will not, in a short time, degenerate into slums. Out-moded building codes present little opportunity for the use of materials and substitutes tried and proved during the war years. Our property owners and investors deserve the best in materials and methods to help protect them against falling prices in a few years. A proper building code will not be a cure-all adjustment, but it should be an aid to the protection of the value of an investment.

The Committee Has A Job

Theorizing on a plan and putting it into practice are at two different poles. But both jobs will belong to the committee appointed from the Illinois Society of Architects. One course of action for the 15 members might be for them to split up into small specialized committees to break down the entire building code into its component parts. One group might salvage what it can from an existing code; another might determine the standards; while a third sets-up the proper tests. Another might outline administration necessary to enforce the code. A supervisory committee could keep informed of all the group progress and finally direct the drawing up of the over-all code from the findings of the various groups.

Whether the committee prefers to work as individual groups on separate problems or as a complete committee exploring all the factors — each of the parts will have to be considered in detail. The time element will also have to be fixed by the committee, but they undoubtedly realize that a good code requires much thought and investigation and that the present building situation demands that code as soon as possible.

Sorting Good From Bad

Taking the problems of the committee as mentioned, salvaging what is usable from another code is first. Since a code that has been used carries with it an immeasurable amount of material, some tested and true — others tested and discarded — it furnishes a skeleton, at least, on which to build the new. Committee members will have to root-out the details that no longer hold true and eliminate obsolete building practices. After they have extracted those harmful items, they can start the laborious work of evaluating the passages that seem plausible. Too often a commonly accepted practice or principle may seem perfectly logical merely because it is commonly accepted. An approach to this problem involves clarification of questionable provision, interpreta-

(Continued on page 7 column 1)

Officers

HAROLD SMITH.....	President
30 North LaSalle St.	Tel. State 0139
WILLIAM PAUL FOX.....	First Vice President
6225 N. Claremont Ave.	Tel. Rogers Park 7720
ARNOLD J. KRUEGEL.....	Second Vice President
4 East Clinton St., Joliet	Tel. Joliet 2-3241
RAY C. ORRELL.....	Treasurer
228 N. LaSalle St.	Tel. Dearborn 7801
ATHAN KOENIGSBERG.....	Secretary
155 North Clark St.	Tel. State 4206
L. PALMER.....	Financial Secretary
BULLETIN CIRCULATOR—CONTRACT DOCUMENTS	
134 North LaSalle St.	Tel. Central 4214

Chicago 2

Board of Directors

for 1 year	MASON G. RAPP	FELIX M. BERNHAM
for 2 years	BENJAMIN F. OLSON	R. HAROLD ZOOK
for 3 years	R. E. SCHMIDT	ARTHUR WOLTERS DORF

Board of Arbitration

JOHN C. CHRISTENSEN	
LEON E. STANHOPE	SIGURD E. NAESS
JOHN W. ROOT	JOHN A. ARMSTRONG
HUBERT BURNHAM	BENJAMIN HORN

Editor Monthly Bulletin

ARTHUR WOLTERS DORF, 520 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago 11, Ill.

In the July 9 issue of Engineering News-Record, S. Hill, a retired editor of that paper, contributes an interesting letter on the history of the balloon-frame in wood-house construction. Every member of the Illinois Society and particularly every Chicago architect should know that George W. Snow, a Chicago carpenter and builder, early put his invention in practical construction in 2 houses in the year 1845 or '46. These 2 houses stood on the site of the present Pittsfield Building, southeast corner of Washington Street and Wabash Avenue. No picture of these 2 houses has been preserved. They embodied a new principle in framing that spread from Chicago to every corner of America. They represented another epochal Chicago invention in building.

Chicago's population in 1845 was 8,000; in 1855 was nearly 85,000. Land level was low, averaging 3 to 3 ft. above Chicago River level. Foundations requiring excavation and cellars were impracticable, says Mr. Hill. He contends that no construction ever fitted local requirements more perfectly than did the balloon-frame. Posts or short piles driven through the soft soil to clay offered quick and ample support. Lumber was available in boards, scantling, lathing and shingles. One man could handle this material. Nailing did away with slow frame joinery. The finished frame house was rigid and light.

The Home Insurance Building in Chicago by Major W. L. B. Jenney came along in 1883-5. Mr. Hill recognizes that the steel skeleton as well as the balloon-frame were both of Chicago origin and from there spread over the Americas. By the millions of little balloon-frame buildings that sprang up through the hundred years does its importance power. Henry Ericsson in his book, "60 Years A Builder," says:

"There is lacking a symbol of the invention without which the building of Chicago must remain scarcely understandable. To be true to its history, Chicago should have a tower carrying as high as heres, the figure of a carpenter holding up to the

sky a scantling of white pine. That carpenter might well have been put atop the Pittsfield Building on whose site had stood 2 balloon-frame houses embodying an invention more important in the building of the nation than the steel frame which gave us sky-scrappers."

Thomas E. Tallmadge in his book, "Architecture In Old Chicago," devotes pages to balloon-frame construction and also credits its invention to George W. Snow in Chicago. He goes on to explain the earlier method of framed construction on a heavy timber sill with heavy upright posts at corners, window and door openings, braced with other studs placed between the verticals. The joists of upper stories were supported on a continuous timber horizontal. In closing, Tallmadge says: "Balloon framing was about as far distant as it is possible to conceive from any type of construction that the ancient Greeks ever employed, yet so adaptable was it that it was always the type used, say after 1840, except for masonry buildings, for houses in the Greek Revival style."

The new Chevrolet assembly plant at Van Nuys, California is of general interest to architects in that it is designed to take practically all seismic forces. Besides this it has "sunshades" of lightweight concrete disposed as vertical louvres providing adequate light and ventilation without glare and heat from direct sunlight. Such louvres have been used in South America.

The soils underlying the site are alluvial deposits of high compressibility. The water table is more than 100 ft. below ground surface. Each column was placed on a concrete footing, some carried by as many as fifteen piles. Driven cast-in-place concrete piles were used for columns loaded in excess of 150 kips; drilled cast-in-place piles for column loads up to 150 kips. No use was made of dynamic pile formulas either in designing or in computing capacities after driving. Plans for the building were made by Parkinson, Powelson, Briney, Bernard & Woodford, Architects, with Joseph Sheffet the architects' engineer. Albert Kahn, Associated Architects & Engineers, Inc., were consultant.

World Report, a weekly published in Washington, D. C. says in its January 21, '47 issue: U. S. A. housing goal is 3,715,000 units; completed 700,000 (est.) = 18.8% of goal. Britain housing goal is 750,000 units; completed 125,000 (est.) = 16.6% of goal. World Report prophesies it will be years before U. S. and Britain solve their housing problems.

The Peoria, Ill. Municipal Airport will be the site for a \$2,500,000 National Guard air installation for the 169th Fighters' Squadron.

In an abandoned graveyard, now an unfenced cornfield near Urbana, Ill., is a headstone of 1850 bearing this epitaph:

"My old companion fare ye well
I will not go with thee to hell
I go with Jesus Christ to dwell
So let me go fare ye well."

Color, Light and Health

A New Horizon In Architecture

The Illinois Society of Architects sponsored an address by Dr. Darell Boyd Harmon on Color, Light and Health before a distinguished audience of professional men numbering over 400, in Fullerton Hall, Chicago Art Institute, the evening of December 20, 1946. Admission was by numbered ticket only and tickets were issued on request to the office of the Financial Secretary, Mr. H. L. Palmer. No doubt the majority of attendants were architects confined to no individual society. There were engineers — illuminating and others — doctors of medicine, oculists and the School of Art of the Art Institute, represented in the audience. Universities were represented as follows: D. W. C. Reavis, University of Chicago; Dr. Orvid Eschbach of the Technological Institute, Northwestern University; Dean R. P. Hoelscher, Department of Architecture, University of Illinois, Navy Pier Division; Dr. De Phillips of the Department of Architecture, University of Illinois, Navy Pier Division; R. F. Roman, host, president of the National Chemical & Manufacturing Company, the concern that has endowed the scientific investigation of the subject of the evening; Mr. John Ziv of the same concern who was of assistance to the I. S. A. secretary in arranging the meeting and Mr. Robert Clegg, president of the Producers Council of Chicago.

The speaker of the evening, Dr. Darell Boyd Harmon, is Director of the Division of Educational Service, Texas State Department of Health. Dr. Harmon's 7 years of pioneering work in Texas are said to have reduced eye troubles in certain schools nearly two-thirds. All the work described and pictured in this lecture has been done in Texas, where 14 state professional societies and organizations, including the Texas Society of Architects, the Illuminating Engineering Society, State Medical Association and Texas State Departments of Health and Education collaborated in the Texas Inter-Professional Commission on Child Development to work with the program. Lighting was singled out for further study.

Dr. Harmon spoke extemporaneously. He dwelt on the body supports, the eyes, basic body position for normal vision, how faulty lighting distorts normal positions and general health improvement through better lighting.

For laboratory experimentation, Mexia, a town of 7,000 in east central Texas where 1,600 children are enrolled in public schools was chosen. The White Elementary School building there, 27 years old and typical of other schools in that state, became the laboratory. Room areas average 21' 6" x 28' 6" with 3 windows in one wall covering 7' x 7', extending within 6" of the 11' ceiling. Glass area average 25% of floor area. Ceilings were all metal painted a medium gray whose reflection factor had been brought down by oxidation. Desks and furniture were all a brown paint. Artificial light was not a factor.

Dr. Harmon then told of what changes the experimentation involved in glass exposure, color of walls and color of furniture. From a point about 6' above the floor glass blocks extending close to the ceiling were introduced, nearly a continuous strip in the upper part of the wall. Below a transom bar came clear glass. The speaker, after the detailed verbal explanation, showed still and moving pictures, beginning with pupils sitting twisted in their seats, turning to the brighter light. There were diagrams showing the proper normal lines of the body compared with diagrams showing how the child's body had been twisted in his seat turning to the best light.

The speaker told what changes of color in walls and furniture had been introduced, but there was no colored photography shown which would have better illustrated his point.

In leaving the hall after the close of the address, views of listeners were overheard. It might be of value to the experimenters to mention one or two of these. An oculist who is also an expert photographer mentioned that photographs shown on the screen were more than 20 years behind the times—poor; and why had the lecturer not resorted to color photography when he had so much to say about the

cures introduced through color. A teacher and lecturer, living on Chicago's North Shore said many of the points brought up had been discussed years ago in connection with the Winnetka schools, and he thought their deductions had advanced just as far as those shown by the Texans.

The Illinois Society of Architects is to be applauded for having brought together so large a contingent of Chicago's outstanding professional men to hear what the Texas effort had produced.

Illinois Society January 28 Meeting

The meeting of the Illinois Society of Architects as usual was held in the Art Institute club rooms preceded by a dinner. The attendance was 51 men. President Smith presided. Secretary Koenigsberg referred to the October Statewide meeting at Peoria and read the minutes of the November meeting. He gave a report of the special Color, Light and Health Meeting sponsored by the I. S. A., held in Fullerton Hall, Art Institute, on December 20. His minutes were accepted without change. The new members present and introduced were Cedric J. Stewart and E. E. Reddersen. Charles A. Kristen through longtime illness had been absent from meetings. He was cordially welcomed back at this meeting. No correspondence to the President, Secretary or Board of Directors was read. The President asked for suggestions from the members for program subjects for forthcoming meetings. These should be mailed either to the President or the Financial Secretary for consideration by the Program Committee and the Board of Directors.

The special program for this evening was "The Technical Education In The American Tradition." The speaker was Dean Ovid W. Eschbach of the Technological Institute of Northwestern University. President Smith in his introduction of Dr. Eschbach dwelt upon the Dean's university degrees, his pedagogical positions and his positions in scientific industrial corporations. The speaker began his address by stating that education today introduced something quite new. Technology was different than it had been. Our higher education was unplanned. After citing instances the Professor left the speakers' table and walked up close to the screen on which diagrams and graphs were thrown giving results of student training in technology after students had passed through or not the cultural courses preceding. There was a graph showing salaries paid these men at 20, at 25 and at 30 years of age. Then the Dean returned to the speakers' table to continue his discourse. He referred to Prof. Schneider, the head of the Cincinnati Institute of Technology where school work is alternated with work in industrial plants. Reference was made to Antioch College. He opposed year round studies by students as proving unsuccessful, since a vacation period was required by the human body.

The Dean's outline of school history or, shall we say, educational history in the U. S. A. was illuminating. Before our Revolutionary War higher education centered on a study of languages and Harvard University required of its entrants a knowledge of Latin and Greek. After that war the new country's friendly attitude toward France prompted adoption of studies pursued in French schools. In the new states mechanics' guilds were formed and these in time prompted the creation of mechanics' institutes whose teachings were broader than the name implies. Some of these still exist today like Cooper Institute in New York. In Civil War days individual states passed laws creating agricultural colleges which in most cases have blossomed out as state universities with very much enlarged courses including technological specialties. Professional training was referred to—the minister of the Gospel, the lawyer, the medical man, the architect and the engineer. The President invited questions from the floor. These were but few because the Dean's searching address had been very comprehensive.

An unprogrammed speaker was present in the person of E. J. Kelly, F. H. A. District Director in Chicago. He introduced his talk by telling of President Truman's recommendation to stress rental housing in apartments, both elevator and walk-up buildings, from the earlier recommendation of individual home buildings for G.I.s. Mr. Kelly then read a paper written by Commissioner Raymond M. Foley of Washington, D.C., which showed liberalizing of the Government program regarding time, interest rates and top costs which the F. H. A. from now on will consider. There were more questions and answers following his address than the questions put to the Dean in his splendid address.

Chicago Chapter, A. I. A. December 3 Meeting

The Dining Room of the Builders Club was again the meeting place for the Chapter when about sixty-five members and guests sat down to dinner. For the business meeting and program following, a number of students came in at about eight o'clock.

Vice President Yost, who was in the chair, opened the business by asking Secretary Faulkner to read a digest of the minutes of the November eighteenth meeting of the Executive Committee, a policy which the Executive Committee has adopted to keep the Chapter membership posted on its activities.

Following this, Mr. Faulkner read a detailed letter from Joseph D. Leland, chairman of the Institute Committee on Governmental Relations, in which the writer called attention to the number of new members recently elected to Congress and urged architects to acquaint them with the qualifications of the profession. Mr. Leland stressed the importance of contact with the new congressmen and senators immediately to restore the confidence in the profession so carefully built up during the last Congress is to be sustained.

Mark Kalischer, chairman of the Chapter Membership Committee, reported that forty-eight new members had been added to the Chicago Chapter so far this year. Several visitors were introduced, among them members of the staff of the Great Lakes Division of the Corps of Engineers, U. S. Army.

Two resolutions were presented in behalf of the Executive Committee for action by the Chapter. One pertained to a proposed amendment to the By-Laws abolishing Junior Associate Membership and limiting Associate Membership to men not holding an architect's license. The other pertained to a proposed amendment increasing the Chapter dues of Corporate Members to \$25.00 annually and Associate Members to \$15.00 annually. It was explained that the proposed increase in dues would be necessary to defray the cost of an executive secretary as discussed at previous meetings. Following discussion from the floor it was decided to inform the membership as a whole more fully of the costs involved and the additional revenues needed; several members felt that the increases might work hardship on the younger men.

Mr. Cooke, chairman of the Chapter Program Committee, announced the meetings for the remainder of the season and then the program was turned over to the members of the Illinois Architects Examining Committee present, Prof. Lorge H. Provine, chairman and Messrs. Loeb and Dolke.

Professor Provine outlined the history of architectural registration in the United States and particularly in Illinois, then turned the meeting into a sort of "Information Please" session with the experts in both the asking and answering roles.

The older men were much interested to hear what is covered in the present four day state examination and the principles guiding the preparation and grading of the examinations. Several thoughts were brought out in answers to the questions following. It was suggested that membership on the Examining Committee be rotated. It was also recommended that the profession as a whole sponsor a ceremony of institution for the new architects upon their passing the examination.

In answer to a question about lax enforcement of the law, particularly as applied to those not holding licenses, it was pointed out that with a one dollar annual registration fee, the architects could not expect too much. To obtain stricter enforcement, the fee would have to be increased many times over, or the professional groups would have to take a much more active part in enforcement.

The meeting was adjourned shortly before ten o'clock.

—W. Lindsay Suter

Chicago Chapter A. I. A. January 7 Meeting

Tuesday, January 7, 63 members and guests assembled at the Builders Club in Chicago for the monthly dinner and meeting of the Chapter. President Paul Gerhardt presided. As is customary at these Chapter meetings, no regular meet-

ing minutes were read; however, reports of two executive committee meetings were given and here it was stated that the Chicago Plan Commission was in need of a planner.

Treasurer W. Fred Dolke gave a semi-annual report showing that Chapter assets January 1st were \$3,675.66. Membership Committee Chairman Kalisher introduced four new members, Messrs. Drover, Ethington, Thomason and Strandberg.

The programmed addresses for the evening were by two speakers on Practical and Humanitarian Aspects of Housing. The speakers were Miss Elizabeth Wood, Executive Secretary, Chicago Housing Authority, and Mr. Stephen G. Cohn, Mortgage Banker.

Mr. Cohn spoke first. A genial gentleman is Cohn, with a Weber-Fields comedy flair. This flair was shown in the speaker's prefatory remarks when he referred to the writers on economics and mortgaging of building projects. Every name he mentioned as a writer was accompanied by the name of his ghost-writer. He referred to his own work as a ghost-writer and finished the introduction with a statement on who had ghost-written for him. Reading from his manuscript, he stated that the project of building many thousands of individual G.I. homes was a failure, in that such homes could not be built for less than \$10,000 each with prevailing prices, and further, that the majority of the returned G. I.'s were in no position to tie themselves down to one location while they had no definite jobs securing them in the same locality for some time. Mr. Cohn's experiences began soon after World War I. Mistakes in mortgaging property at that time were to be avoided now if possible. Apartment construction, both with and without FHA assistance, was recommended, and such construction could be rented without question. Co-operative apartments with installment financing to purchasers of apartments was introduced. Mr. Cohn prophesied that, as the interest rate on mortgages had fallen in recent years, so during 1947 he expected the tendency rates on mortgages to rise.

Miss Wood, a fluent and easy talker, had the humanitarian and aesthetic side of housing as her subject. She has traveled about the country extensively with her eye and mind on housing for the financially unfavored as well as displaced persons from destroyed slum areas. She has had an advisory part in many housing projects in Chicago, both governmental and private. Miss Wood deplored the interminable flatness of Chicago topography, and the misfortune of having exact sameness in the exterior of buildings. She insisted upon the necessity of providing children with plots where they can dig in the ground, where they can build according to their own bent and where their fathers may try their hands at building. She condemned exact uniformity in landscape planting and pointed to the Ida Wells homes in Chicago as an example of what individual families may achieve if given private space in which they may plant and build. She applauded the fine flower gardens that tenants in the Ida Wells homes had achieved for themselves. Mothers in these housing projects consider shopping time their social hour. Parkchester, the great New York City housing project, Miss Wood said was liberally equipped with janitors and guards and a child out of doors there is held rigidly to the paved walk until an opening is reached giving onto a playground.

There was little discussion of the two set speeches. President Gerhardt announced that a special business meeting would occur on January 21st to discuss increase in dues and proposed changes in membership. By 9:10 the meeting was adjourned.

A. I. A. President Edmunds, Jr., On Hotel Fires

"The American Institute of Architects will undertake a special study of the underlying causes of fires in hotels and similar buildings," James R. Edmunds, Jr., announced in Washington.

"The study will be conducted by the Institute's department of education and research, of which Walter A. Taylor is director, in collaboration with building code and fire prevention authorities and hotel management groups," Edmunds said.

"It will look into the question of fire-safeness as well as fireproofness, the control of gas and smoke as well as heat and fire, better means of isolating and controlling fires, hazards arising from overlapping and conflicting codes, and better legal implementation of existing fire protection standards."

Planning Safety Into Buildings

Dr. Turpin C. Bannister, Dean, School of Architecture and the Arts, Alabama Polytechnic Institute, in a paper presented before the Engineers' Club of Birmingham, said, among other things: "We can find unforeseen and valid delights for our senses if we accept and exploit the potentialities inherent in new building types, new materials, and new structural systems. Today no building can qualify for architectural excellence unless it solves harmoniously the problems of convenience and safety.

"Of course these problems are not new. Two thousand years before Christ, Hammurabi's famous code sought to protect innocent buyers of houses from the shyster practices of jerrybuilders. The king decreed that if a house fell and killed the son of the owner, then in retribution the son of the builder must be sacrificed. In ancient Rome ten-story lower-class tenements built of mud brick collapsed regularly until the emperor Augustus limited heights and required owners to build of more substantial materials. The Great Fire of London in 1666 brought forth a rash of structural regulations that became the starting point for all modern codes.

"To meet such problems ancient architects and builders worked miracles of intuitive design. After the Roman Pantheon had twice been destroyed by fire, Hadrian rebuilt it of incombustible materials, concrete in its 142-foot-diameter dome, and bronze plate trusses for the portico roof. In France the master masons of thirteenth-century Gothic cathedrals feared that foundation settlement and mortar shrinkage would disrupt the equilibrium of their soaring fireproof vaults. In spite of elaborate external buttressing, they therefore took the added precaution of inserting at several levels strong wrought-iron link chains to reinforce the limestone walls. These men brought to bear on structural problems a considerable body of technical knowledge, but it was knowledge based on inherited rules of thumb derived by trial and error. Medieval chronicles are replete with leaning towers, falling vaults, burning roofs, and rapid decay.

"For the calculation of framed structures, the application of mathematics and the physical sciences has provided in analytical mechanics a key that would seem sheer magic to a medieval mason. Between Leonardo's tentative diagram of the force polygon and the plotting of stress distributions by photo-elasticity lies a revolution basic to modern architecture as well as engineering.

"Thus there has emerged, slowly but surely, a body of technical knowledge, characteristic and unique of our own time, that can be called building science. Like many technicians, architects have been so emersed in special areas of the development, and have become so involved in the dynamic process itself, that they have as a group tended to neglect their obligation to organize and codify the knowledge already gathered. They have forgotten the great tradition of structural leadership erected by the da Vincis, Blondels, Wrens, Pattes, Rondelets, and Walters, who not only built but at the same time carried through invaluable fundamental investigations. Too often in recent decades we have been content to merely exploit the discoveries and inventions of others, to adopt uncritically the pseudo-scientific propaganda of commercial entrepreneurs, and to gloss over deficiencies with fancy gadgets. There are indications, however, that we are beginning to appreciate the technical programs carried on by the leading engineering societies. Frankly, we admire and respect the excellent procedures these societies have worked out to encourage investigation, research, and the dissemination of findings. The American Institute of Architects has recently taken steps to promote such a program in the building field, and I believe that at long last we are moving toward a goal truly worthy of a great professional society.

The State Administration at Lansing announces the appointment of Professor Emil Lorch, of Ann Arbor, as consultant for the restoration of Biddle House, the first, and Cape House, early, locations of medical experiments on Mackinac Island, Michigan, by Dr. William Beaumont.

A Program of Action

Dr. Henry T. Heald, President, Ill. Institute of Technology

Nobody wants Chicago to die. Nobody wants the entire core of the city to rot away, to lose its values, to exist as a festering sore. We can, we must prevent this. *Now* is the time for action. A pattern has to be set, and I submit, as does the Metropolitan Housing Council, that the following four-step program must be adopted if we are to begin this vital task of redevelopment.

1. Acquire slum land by a public agency, using the power of condemnation for that purpose.
2. Use public funds as a one-time subsidy to write-down the land from its acquisition to its real use value.
3. Make such land available, cleared and written off to its use value, to private developers and for such public use as required by proper redevelopment.
4. Provide assistance to displaced families in finding other housing.

In thinking about the problems of Illinois Institute of Technology, we came to a conclusion which I think may have some meaning for all of you. It eventually became clear that we really had only two choices—to run away from the blight or to stand and fight. I submit that this is everybody's choice—and that behind the principle of "Stand and Fight" is where we must all be counted.

University College of The University of Chicago announces the public lecture course—Midwest America: Its Contribution to American Life. The nine lectures in the course began with "The Record of the Midwest" by Paul Angle, Director, Chicago Historical Society on Tuesday January 14. Each following Tuesday to and including March 11 the College presents an authoritative speaker in the subject discussed. The March 4 address is by Rexford Newcomb, Dean, College of Fine and Applied Arts, U. of Illinois, on "The Architecture of the Midwest."

Time & Place: Tuesday evenings, 7:30 P.M., 32 W. Randolph Street (12th floor) Chicago, Ill.

Admission: Series tickets \$4.80; single admission 75 cents. Tickets available at University College office 19 S. La Salle Street and at door at each lecture.

On a brief visit to Washington State Chapter, A.I.A. by the A.I.A. national president James K. Edmunds, Jr., at a breakfast meeting in Seattle, locations for holding the Institute's 1947 Annual Convention were discussed. One plan is to hold the convention on the high seas. Participants would board a privately chartered luxury liner Bermuda bound, at New York. Meetings would be held aboard ship and in Bermuda. The ship would be the hotel home during the entire trip.

Plans are brewing to hold the 1948 Convention at Sun Valley. President Edmunds encouraged his hosts in Washington State in the hope that a far west location would be chosen for the 1948 big meet.

L'Envoi: A.I.A. Regional Director Paul Gerhardt, Jr. announces that the floating 1947 Bermuda bound A.I.A. convention (Atlantic Charter precedent) is abandoned for want of a ship. As a substitute the convention will be on terra firma at Grand Rapids, Michigan, not far from an inland sea, April 29-30 May 1.

I like to see a man proud

Of the place in which he lives.

I like to see a man live so that

His place will be proud of him.

—Abraham Lincoln

I like to see distinctive homes

Which give uplift to modern life.

I like goodwill to all mankind

And peace on earth in place of strife.

—Frank A. Carpenter

The atomic age hails pause for thought,

Design, experiment and trial,

Points new horizons for the architects

Who chart the future sans denial.

—Frank A. Carpenter, Rockford

(Continued from Page 2—Column 2)

in actual application, comparison of present conditions how they differed from those for which the code was written, changes that have occurred in practice (though not in the code) and an investigation of these changes and what they have accomplished. Current emphasis on the necessity of reducing construction costs and permitting the widest possible selection of materials cannot be overlooked. The code must allow for price short cuts, providing of course, they do not make the building undesirable. Materials must be accepted as generally as possible for two reasons; first, widely used materials are often scarce and, secondly, new products have come along in the past few years and they deserve a chance to prove themselves, granted that a material is not necessarily good because it is new, but neither is it necessarily unreliable for the same reason.

Standard Of Minimum Requirements

One of the most exacting tasks in the drafting of a building code is the establishment of standards on which to base minimum requirements. For the most part these standards could be applicable to buildings all over the country. With the exception of earthquake areas, flood areas and a few other unusual conditions that would alter a small portion of the code, houses in Idaho should be fundamentally the same sound construction as houses in New Jersey. All the things guarding the safety, health and welfare should govern the building of walls that listen to western twangs as well as those eavesdropping on Brooklyn jargon. In other words, the same set of minimum requirements should hold good for buildings of structural likeness regardless of geographic location. Narrowed down, this principle means that a small town building should shoulder the same burden of responsibility as like structures in larger cities.

Another result of well laid standards is material of consistently high quality. If a building code, proved acceptable in one state, were adopted by the several states, the manufacturer would have the opportunity to standardize his production on a national basis. Not only would this constant production bring down his manufacturing costs and, in turn, the cost to the contractor, but it would assure the builder the same quality product whether he builds in one state or in many. Under present codes, many manufacturers of building materials must produce the same products but to different specifications to meet the demands of divergent state and city building codes.

Tests And Interpretation

A code that allows for materials used at the discretion of the builder must make provisions for the testing of such materials. Unfortunately, at present, each locality seems to have its own system of tests. It is entirely possible for a new construction method or material to rate very well in one locality and fail miserably in another where another system of tests is used. A well devised code for Illinois would remedy this situation on a state-wide basis.

The next problem that arises in connection with tests and building codes is interpretation of the tests. Judging whether or not the results of a test prove the material to be safe should not be a matter of the momentary whim of the testing official. The most practical solution to the problem is a clearly defined guide directed to the local officials and boards to be used as a basis for the exercise of their duties. General acceptance of this type of guide would assure fair treatment of all materials and methods, while decreasing the possibility of eye-winking rulings. Even wishful thinking cannot make development such as this anything but comprehensive work. However, good thorough work will develop a sound procedure for putting these tests on an effective basis. If successful, the results will more than justify the perspiration. Acceptance of new and reliable products will give the

building trades a boost, and the owners a better building.

A side issue to be considered by the men who set up the program for testing is the mechanism needed for the inspection of the buildings now standing, or at least standing when last seen. A definite set of rules should be applied to these structures. The rules should be aimed at the health and safety of the community. Traditional old land marks cannot be cherished by the people when large pieces of falling stone keep reminding them of the building's advanced age. Even more dangerous are those structural weaknesses when well hidden. Tests to cover this type of building will probably be most effective after a campaign to convince the public that some of their old edifices need a face-lifting to insure the safety of the people who frequent the buildings. A system of tests might be applied to all buildings within a certain area. The results of such a cross-section would determine the need for the tests in that particular community.

Codes Need Enforcement

After investigations are made, plans are drawn, minimum requirements are set, tests are adopted and the new Illinois building code is ready to revolutionize the state — then the most acute pain sets in. The code must be put into effect. A code, however perfect, is only as good as the value of its administration. The building official is in a large measure responsible for the effectiveness of the code. A good code might set down for him general principles for guidance in his decisions, but it will probably authorize him to deal with situations not specifically covered by the code, as long as they are in the general scope of his authority. This method presupposes a building official with a remarkable degree of intelligence, competence and integrity but if the code does not neglect provisions for public hearings and legal appeals, the system should be applicable with a mere human in charge.

In order to catch possible injustices the building code could provide for a strong board of appeals to handle grievances and differences with the building official. The board probably would be made up of a few well qualified men who meet only when there is need for a hearing. They would have no power to change the code, but it would be their job to re-investigate a case to assure the client of a just decision.

With this sort of administration, the building official and the board of appeals would recognize the need for changes when and if, they were necessary. The code would not be a dormant, on-the-shelf rule book, but a living up-to-date standard for American building. Backward, lazy building codes deprive the people of the benefits of efficiency and economy that mean a great deal to the builders of today and tomorrow.

The Illinois Society of Architects invites all architects, members and non-members, and interested members of the building industry to assist in giving the people of the state of Illinois a building code which will protect them and their homes.

George H. Herrold, Planning Engineer, St. Paul, Minn. City Planning Board, in a letter in the Oct. 17 Engineering News-Record says: "It is apparent that government housing has done a very poor job — they put better material in their houses than any private person would think of doing. The Summerfield federal housing project of Minneapolis, for instance, cost \$2,000 per room."

Doctor (to patient)—"The trouble with you is that you worry too much. Stop thinking about yourself. Bury yourself in your work."

Patient—"Gosh, and me a concrete mixer."

Report of the Illinois Society President

The principal matters before the Board of Directors at its last two meetings have been the furtherance of work on the State Building Code and the Annual Meeting in June.

The Building Code Committee under the chairmanship of Wm. Paul Fox is at work.

The June meeting is the 50th anniversary of the Society. Not many architectural societies can look back over that long a period of service to its members and the public interest. So the Board is determined that the celebration of this event shall be a fitting and appropriate one.

W. Kendrick Ball has been elected to membership in the Society.

—G. Harold Smith, President, I.S.A.

Special Chapter January Meeting

Some forty three members of the Chicago Chapter, A.I.A. responded to a call for a special meeting held at the Builders Club, Tuesday evening, January 21st. This meeting was called for the purpose of (a) deciding the matter of increasing dues, (b) to discuss the employment of a permanent paid executive secretary, (c) to change certain types of Chapter membership. Before taking up the matters for which the meeting was called, a resolution was adopted to the effect that it was the sense of the meeting that the Institute Board of Directors be requested to authorize a change in the by-laws of the Chapter with respect to the method of amending same. This change would require an affirmative vote of 2/3 of the ballots received provided the ballots received represented a majority of the corporate membership of the Chapter. It is believed that the Institute will approve the change.

The discussion, at some length, concerning (c) changing types of membership, resulted in the passage of a motion to place the question of such change before the membership for a vote. This change will result in adopting a sliding scale of dues for corporate members, with a low rate for new corporate members for a given period, which rate will then be increased for another stated period, and finally the full rate will be in effect.

The questions relative to (a) increasing the dues, and (b) providing a paid permanent secretary, proved very controversial. While most everybody seemed to agree that a permanent paid executive secretary as well as a headquarters office and meeting place would be desirable, some of the older members who have had long experience in Chapter matters argued that in past years the Chapter had been very successful with large meetings and much activity with low dues and without a paid secretary. They did not seem to see cause for increasing dues for any other reason than for paying for a secretary's salary and office rent, and felt that with present size of membership the amount of increase in dues necessary to meet such expense would be prohibitive. Those who were in favor of increased dues felt that an increase was desirable to establish a fund for emergencies, legal fees, publicity, tide over periods of depression, and similar reasons, without considering the expense of a secretary and office. The amount of the increased dues talked of was a total of \$25.00 per year for corporate members in addition to the \$25.00 per year to the Institute.

Mr. W. J. Smith provided some very illuminating data as to dues, size of membership, dinner charges to members, etc. of other leading chapters throughout the country. Most of these figures were lower than the proposed similar figures for Chicago. He also pointed out that in the past it had been perfectly feasible to handle administrative details and to provide meetings of such interest as to bring out a large attendance without increasing dues. The subject resulted in prolonged general discussion and finally the matter was placed in the hands of a special committee of five for study and future report.

The meeting adjourned about 10:30 P. M.

—Victor A. Matteson

The Editor: Friends of Robert C. Spencer will be glad to know that he is living comfortably at RR4, Box 599, Tucson, Arizona. Through the Ladies Home Journal Spencer was one of the first architects to enlighten the general public regarding sound planning and general design. His own other work was individual without excess and he was actively interested in the progressive ideas for architectural education advocated

by the then Architectural League of America. He did beautiful work as holder of the two year Rotch Travelling Fellowship and was a visiting professor of architecture at the University of Florida. What a fine, vivid personality! He was president of the Chicago Architectural Club at the turn of the century.

Emil Lorch, F.A.I.A. Ann Arbor, Mich.

Plans for a \$1,000,000 hotel at Harlingen, Texas, are being prepared by Frank Lloyd Wright.

University of Illinois will erect a new health and physical education building at Urbana to cost \$4,500,000.

Martin C. Schwab, 67, consulting engineer, who participated in the rebuilding of Baltimore, Md., after the fire of 1900 died in that city January 2. For years he was consulting engineer for Sears, Roebuck & Co., Chicago.

Zachary Taylor Davis, Chicago architect, died in Mercy Hospital, Chicago, December 16, age 74. Born in Aurora, Ill. he studied architecture at Armour Institute of Technology, Chicago.

In independent architectural practice in Chicago, Mr. Davis' work began with two and three-flat buildings followed by groups of large apartment buildings, all built on Chicago's south side. In 1911 he was architect of a court house built in Kankakee, Ill. Mr. Davis was architect of St. Ambrose Catholic Church, 47th and Ellis Ave. Chicago and of the Sox and Cubs Baseball Parks in that city. Associated with Gustave Steinback, New York Architect, designer of Quigley Memorial Chapel and Educational Buildings, Chicago. Mr. Davis was supervisor of construction of those structures. His last active years were spent functioning as superintendent of repairs for the Chicago Board of Education. Mr. Davis was a member of the Illinois Society of Architects as well as of the Chicago Chapter, A.I.A.

William H. Schulzke, Moline, Ill. architect died in Chicago, September 27, 1946. A graduate in architecture from University of Illinois he became active in Moline's planning and civic life. Previous to Mr. Schulzke's independent practice in Moline he was associated with Whitsitt & Drury, architects of that city. Schulzke was supervising architect of Moline Airport and many large buildings. He was a member of the A.I.A. since 1916.

Carrol A. Klein, architect, interior decorator, artist, died in Davenport, Ia. November 14, 1946, aged 52 years. Mr. Klein was born in Washington, Ia. of German parentage, attending grade and high schools in Davenport before entering the University of Illinois. Here his talent and conscientious effort was rewarded with the school medal of the A.I.A. in 1916 the year of his graduation with the BS degree in Architecture. Successively he was employed as draftsman and designer by Architects Clausen & Kruse of Davenport, served in the U. S. Navy in World War I, on release from the Navy became partner of his old employers under the firm name of Clausen, Kruse & Klein, Architects of Davenport, Ia. During the 18 years of this association Klein designed many important structures that grace Iowa and western Illinois. Withdrawing from practice of architecture in 1938, Mr. Klein, purchased the firm W. S. Holbrook & Co., Davenport, where he spent his remaining years on interior decoration and furniture.

—B.L.S.

Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, director, Institute of Design, Chicago died in Chicago, November 24, 1946, age 51. Born in Hungary, he joined the teaching staff of the Bauhaus at Dessau, Germany (founded by Walter Gropius, about 1920), became stage designer for the Berlin State Opera in 1928, to London, England in 1935 functioning as designer and photographer till 1937 when he came to Chicago. Here he was director of the School of Design newly started on Prairie Ave. at 19th street. This school was followed by the Institute of Design, located on Chicago's North Side. Here Maholy-Nagy served as director from its beginning to his death.