



THE WISCONSIN ARCHITECT

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE STATE ASSOCIATION OF WISCONSIN ARCHITECTS — THE WISCONSIN CHAPTER A.I.A. AND THE PRODUCERS COUNCIL CLUB OF WISCONSIN

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M A R C H

1944

VOL. 12 NO. 3

Mail Bag

At least one reader has come forward in response to the Editor's plea for zone numbers in connection with mailing addresses. He is John Howard Stevens, Secretary of the Main Chapter, The American Institute of Architects. His letter follows:

As Secretary of the Maine Chapter, I have been enjoying the "Wisconsin Architect" regularly, and regret that our Chapter cannot reciprocate in kind.

On Page 9, of the January issue, "Keep the Editor Posted," leads me to forward my zone number to you, since in no place in the issue can I find the name of "Ye Ed." *Portland 3, Maine.*

Sincerely yours,
John Howard Stevens,
Secretary.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Curiously, the "you" mentioned by Mr. Stevens, happens to be none other than "Ye Ed" himself. Hence, the letter was addressed to the proper person. Not only that, his thrust, although couched in politic words, was sharp and telling. It cut. As a matter of fact, Mr. Stevens has proved to be the most daring of any who thumbed the pages of the January Wisconsin Architect.

Now that the omission has been brought out into the open, as a skeleton from the closet, the story may be told. In January, this periodical, with its new make-up, was given a new dress, the cover page being taken over for reading matter, as we hope is herein noticed.

Unhappily, as the officers of the three groups were lifted forward from the second page to their new position, the mast head, (heaven only knows how or why) seemed to have been forgotten along the way and "Ye Ed" apparently landed on the cutting room floor.

However, he was rescued in time for the February issue and has since continued resting securely, we trust, at the top of Column 1, Page 2, where Mr. Stevens and others, likewise inquisitive and observing, may find him.

* * *

Under ordinary conditions, it is indeed unfortunate sending out mail incorrectly addressed. However, in the case of the Wisconsin Architect it has its compensations. It very quickly prompts the belated recipients to send in their changes of address. Thus, it not only helps keep the mailing list up to date but brings to light the whereabouts of various members of the State Association and the Wisconsin Chapter. News of the wartime nomads is very gratefully received.

(Continued on Page Four)

THE WISCONSIN ARCHITECT

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CONGRESSMAN WRITES ON POSTWAR ACTIVITIES

The following correspondence was exchanged between Walter G. Memmler, Chairman of the State Association's Practice Committee, and Congressman Thad F. Wasielewski, Representative from the Fourth Congressional District, Wisconsin.

February 16, 1944

Hon. Thad F. Wasielewski, M.C.
Newhouse Office Building
Washington, D. C.

Dear Congressman:

It is the writer's desire to have an interview with you here in Milwaukee during your next visit home.

The Architects of the country are interested in the governmental activities for the Post-war period and my interview with you will relate to this problem and others confronting the profession as a whole.

Awaiting your reply, I am

Sincerely yours,
WALTER G. MEMMLER

February 23, 1944

Mr. Walter G. Memmler, Chairman
The State Association of Wisconsin Architects
1825 East Hartford Avenue
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

My dear Mr. Memmler:

This will acknowledge receipt of your letter of February 16 in which you express a desire to meet with me at some future date to discuss the post war activities and other important matters that are confronting your profession.

I will be happy to see you the next time I am in Milwaukee. At the moment I plan on leaving Washington for Milwaukee about the 9th of March and hope to be able to spend at least a week or ten days in town. My plans, of course, are tentative depending on how much work accumulates in the meantime.

Sincerely yours,
Thad F. Wasielewski, M. C.

Interview was held on March 15th 1944 at which time a request was made to write letter to him in Washington. Letter below:

March 21, 1944

Hon. Thad F. Wasielewski, M.C.
Newhouse Office Building
Washington, D. C.

Dear Congressman:

In reference to our conversation relating to the architect in private practice and in the Post-war period, the writer is enclosing a bulletin which embodies our request of you. This bulletin explains "The Program" on page 2 and 3 and under Paragraph 9 on page 3, it suggests the administrative policies of the Federal Bureaus, those which we architects believe they should engage in.

Under paragraphs 5 and 6, the private architect is closer to the construction industry and knows more of new developments both in design and execution, therefore the best work in governmental building has been done by private practitioners. The bureaus within the government have not been able to acquire under the civil service the better qualified men. These men must remain in private practice for the good of the nation and should not be regimented into governmental agencies by bureaucrats.

Advise me whether you are in favor of governmental Bureaus doing this Post-war work or are you in favor of giving architects in private practice the just right they are entitled to and continue in their offices in the communities which they reside.

Sincerely yours,
WALTER G. MEMMLER

April 8, 1944

Mr. Walter G. Memmler
The State Ass'n of Wisconsin Architects
152 West Wisconsin Avenue
Milwaukee 3, Wisconsin

My dear Mr. Memmler:

This will acknowledge receipt of your letter of March 21 with enclosures. Please excuse the delay in replying. I was out of the city when your letter reached my office. Upon my return, my mail was so heavy that I could not get at it right away.

With reference to the post-war program, it is my personal hope and my desire to see as little of it as possible handled by the Government. I believe the leadership in this should be taken by private enterprise, which, I trust, will assume the leadership that belongs to it if we are to preserve our democratic institutions. Naturally, some amount of Government work will have to be carried on, but that should be to a limited degree only.

It always seemed incongruous to me for the Government to engage in the practice of law, medicine, engineering, and architecture. It is possible that to a limited extent the Government may have to hire some professional men. However, insofar as is possible, these men should not be taken out of private practices in order to become agents of the Government.

I am very happy to receive the views of your association on this very important subject matter.

Very truly yours,
Thad F. Wasielewski, M.C.

LEGAL NOTES

by

GERALD J. RICE, Attorney

Another interesting case relating to architects' problems, Mitterhausen -vs- S. Wis. Conference of 7th Day Adventists et al, has just been decided by the Wisconsin Supreme Court. In this case the architect entered into a written agreement on an A.I.A. form for a fee based upon a percentage of cost of construction to build a church and school for an unincorporated church congregation. Certain members of the church signed the contract as "trustees." The mother church corporation did not sign the contract but was sued on the theory that it became bound by acquiescence and was enriched by the contract since it held title to the real estate on which the buildings were to be erected.

When plans and specifications were completed, the church terminated the contract and offered in settlement a sum less than the architect was entitled to, claiming that they had promised to keep the cost of the buildings to \$40,000 but that the cost based on bids would be \$60,000; and that he did not complete his plans until a year after the time he had promised to commence construction. The architect then commenced suit for fees earned, for fees for services which he was wrongfully prevented from performing, and for extras.

The lower court held on trial that:

1. The architect had orally agreed to a cost limit of \$40,000 and to a time limit, but these agreements were waived by the church by reason of their requests for changes which involved considerable re-drawing of plans and additional cost of construction.

2. The architect was entitled to 60% of his fee based on the reasonable estimated cost of construction under the terms of the contract.

3. The architect was also entitled to the remaining 40% by reason of his being wrongfully discharged.

4. The individual members of the church were personally liable, the church being unincorporated, and that the mother church corporation was also liable having acquiesced in the contract.

The trial court disregarded the claims for extras, stating that the various changes and re-drawings were normally to be contemplated to be done by the architect where no special understanding was had that they were to be in fact extra services.

On appeal, the Supreme Court agreed with the lower court that the architect was entitled to 60% of his fees based on the \$60,000 estimated cost and that the trustees who signed the contract were individually liable.

The court found also that the mother church corporation was not liable and that its acquiescence did not go so far as to establish agreement to become liable.

On the question of the oral limitations, the Supreme Court held that the lower court erred in admitting evidence of such oral agreements tending to vary or contradict the written contract, where it was not shown that the agreements were fraudulently made to induce the church to enter into the contract.

As to the 40% allowed in the lower court, the Supreme Court held that under the contract the church had a right to discharge the architect and hence did not wrongfully prevent him from performing. The Court cited the following paragraph from the contract as giving the owner such right.

"If any work designed or specified by the Architect is abandoned or suspended the Architect is to be paid for the service rendered on account of it."

This clause was differently interpreted by the architect, as allowing him payment for work done where the owner asked for extensive changes requiring considerable re-drawing of plans. The Supreme Court however followed the weight of authority in this Country.

This case is interesting because of the mis-understanding between the architect and owner although they had used a written form. The answer is that a form should only be used as a guide and that the complete understanding of the parties should not be left to additional oral agreements.

As to limitations on cost of construction and time of performance, both of these questions should be honestly and courageously dealt with in writing by the architect when the owner insists upon limitations; and when the owner is not insistent upon limitations, the contract should specifically state that no representations or limitations on the cost of construction or time of performance have been made by the architect. In the instant case the trial court did not regard the following clause of the contract as a clear denial of representations or limitations on cost, etc.:

"8. When requested to do so the Architect will furnish preliminary estimates on the cost of the work, but he does not guarantee the accuracy of such estimates.

The Supreme Court merely considered such clause together with other circumstances to show that the oral agreements claimed by the church were not representations. This case, and other cases decided by the Wisconsin Supreme Court in recent years, show a reliance by architects on forms and clauses which are differently interpreted by the Courts.

* * * * *

FORECAST OF STEEL SUPPLY

By ROBERT T. BROOKS, Executive Vice President
AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF STEEL CONSTRUCTION

PAST records of building trends in this country indicate that wars are followed by rapidly expanding demand for building of all types—from homes to railroads, bridges, highways, public works and commercial and industrial buildings. The country's resources always have been adequate to meet this demand.

The present war has made drastic changes in the economy and living conditions of millions of Americans. This has been paralleled in industry by radical changes in techniques and also by great development of fundamental processes. A hundred kinds of new weapons were needed. They were manufactured for the most part in buildings constructed along the lines of good modern design and upon a skeleton of steel. The structural steel demand therefore was great, yet it was met.

What is the likelihood of a repetition of the usual postwar expansion of building? Are available resources in structural steel likely to be sufficient?

Some predictions of postwar building trends picture a demand that will be extremely large, possibly exceeding the peak demand of 1929.

To forecast the availability of structural steel, five factors need to be considered. (1) The predictable supply of raw ingot steel. (2) Structural steel rolling mill

(Continued on Page Four)

MAIL BAG—Continued

From Naval Flight Preparatory School, William Jewell College, Liberty, Missouri, Lieut. Elliott B. Mason has sent the Editor the following letter:

Just received my February copy of Wisconsin Architect which has covered a lot of territory since first mailed. Please use my Milwaukee address in the future and it will be forwarded to me wherever I may be stationed at the time.

I am out of the teaching end and have been Executive Officer for the past six months. It is interesting work. The boys selected for aviation training are the cream of the crop and great to work with.

I note a reference to "the late Herbert Tullgren." He was a good friend of mine. Please drop me a line and tell me what happened.

My best to all the Wisconsin Chapter,
Elliott B. Mason.

The February Wisconsin Architect had been mailed to Lieut. Mason at U.S.N. Training Station, Ohio.

* * *

A letter from Gus A. Krasin is headed 4722½ S. Twenty-fourth St., South Omaha, 7, Neb.

He writes: When there were no materials available in the spring of 1942 for private or commercial construction, I locked up my office in Marshfield and joined in on defense work. Was at the Eau Claire Ordnance Plant for 5 months and then for a year at the U. S. Naval Ammunition Depot at Hastings, Neb., and since last September I am here with the Glenn L. Martin Nebrascos Co. Bomber Plant.

I felt it my duty to help in the winning of the war and when it is over I expect to be back in the good old State of Wisconsin and at the same architectural profession stronger than ever.

Would like to have been with you at the convention but hope to read a full report of the meeting in the Wisconsin Architect which I hope to receive here until I give you a change of address.

As I said before, I expect to be here for a while because we have to build a lot of those big Bombers so that we can knock out the Japs.

With kindest regards, I am
Yours truly,
Gus A. Krasin.
E. S. H.

* * *

FORECAST OF STEEL SUPPLY—Continued from Page 3

capacity. (3) Fabricating capacity. (4) The problem of plant conversion. (5) Present commitments.

All these factors are favorable.

1. Present ingot capacity is higher than in 1929, and will be adequate for the greatest possible demand.

2. The Institute has concluded a survey of structural steel rolling mills which indicates that even if the country continued after the war at its present high economic level, these mills would not use all their present capacity.

3. Fabricating capacity has kept well ahead of demand. Highest war demand was for 2,251,000 tons, in 1942, while in 1929 it had been much higher, 3,597,825

tons. Even in 1929, the industry had a capacity of 25 per cent over demand. There is no question of its ability to fill all peacetime requirements.

4. The structural steel industry built and helped convert the nation's war factories. It did not need to convert its own shops, in order to produce. Thus it will not need to reconvert them.

5. The war building program was completed a year ago. This industry has no commitments which will tie its hands when peace comes.

Thus both an expanded postwar market and adequate available capacity to meet its demand may be forecast on conservative grounds.

But another factor is involved, and here the prospect is not so optimistic. Plans and specifications for the postwar building program must be drawn and written before the war ends. Unless this is done, we shall not be able to take advantage of our great building capacity. We shall lose time. This would be a national disaster.

An orchestra cannot perform a great symphony until every member has a mutual understanding. This is accomplished by giving him a copy of his part of the score. And a large-scale national building program can't get underway and make the postwar contribution it should, unless plans and specifications are completed beforehand.

Architects and engineers should be put to work without delay, the country over, to provide the detailed score for a national symphony of construction. The instruments and the talent are ready. They can do their best work only when they have a score to follow.

* * *

ARCHITECTURAL APPRECIATION

A "talk at large" at the opening of the R.I.B.A. Conference on the Teaching of Architectural Appreciation in Schools on 6 January, 1944

By CLOUGH WILLIAMS-ELLIS [F]

JOURNAL OF THE ROYAL INSTITUTE OF BRITISH ARCHITECTS

I SAW in one of the preliminary announcements of this Conference the statement that a paper would be read by me. There is no paper—I do not read papers; I do not know how to—but, if you will suffer me, I will talk at large for a time on this subject, about which I feel very strongly. As Mr. Sullivan said, one of the directives of this whole idea of teaching the appreciation of architecture was that speeches, addresses, lectures and so on should always be followed by general discussion. I assume that general discussion is the chief object of this gathering, and that just what to do (after I and others have talked at large), will be objective of that discussion. That is the only way of doing what we want to do, for otherwise this would not be a "conference" at all. In the last war I had a very talkative Corps Commander who loved addressing the troops, of whom I was one, and he held perpetual conferences at which he talked almost exclusively, so that the message always came down to us in the form—"At 11:30 a.m. tomorrow the Corps Commander will deliver a conference." I am not going to try to "deliver a conference." A recent schoolboy howler has its mean-

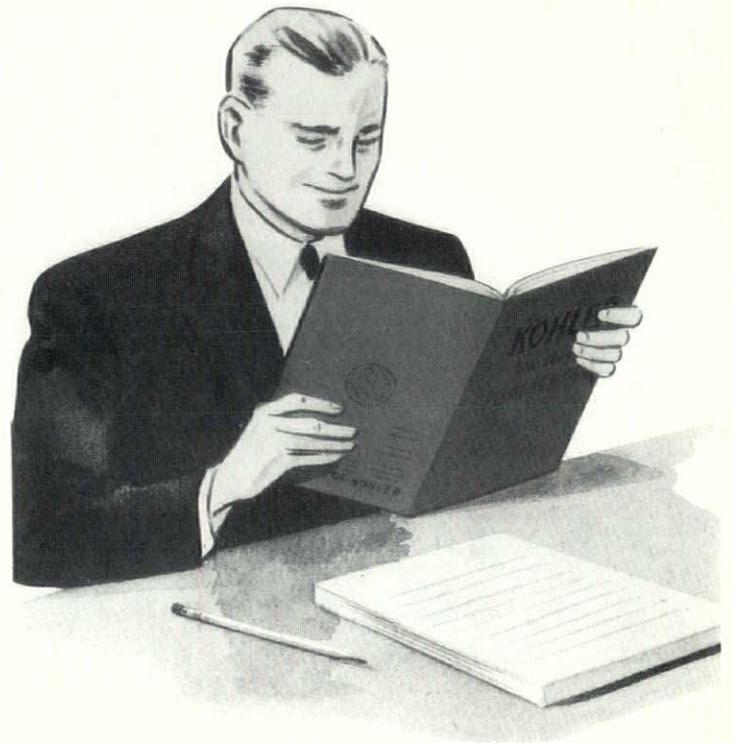
ing for us. Asked what the Four Freedoms were, he replied "Freedom from fear, Freedom from want, Freedom from religion and Freedom from speech." Some of us, after a series of conferences—begin to see his point!

Cake, Jam and Caviare—and the Early Curly Style

I feel that in all honesty I must be very scrupulous—or try to be, which is rather a different thing—to discount my own private enthusiasms, which I realize may be excessive; for architecture is not only my bread and butter but my cake and jom and caviare and all the rest of it as well; it is my diversion and pleasure and hobby and everything else, as well as my work. In fact, the first book that I ever wrote about architecture was called *The Pleasures of Architecture*, and was an attempt to make the ordinary laymen realize what architecture could yield in the way of really tremendous pleasure, even to the very young.

Being thus determined to understate my really terrific case, as I feel it to be, I will proceed to say this. I cannot pretend (having undertaken to be scrupulous in this way), that it is absolutely *fatal* to be taught just nothing at all about architecture at school. It is not *fatal*—that is too strong a word—but it is a sorry deprivation, a very real handicap. Anyone who learns nothing about architecture at school leaves definitely crippled as a civilized being. I know, because although (about fifty years ago) I was sent to what was then deemed to be the most up-and-coming progressive school of the time, all fizzing with new and forward-looking notions; and although I stayed there for six or seven years, by no means unprofitably on the whole, architecture in all that time was mentioned only once, and then unofficially, when a very ancient clergyman gave a lecture on ancient church porches. That was my architectural pabulum at the most formative time of my life—just like that, completely *in vacuo*, quite unrelated to history, life or anything else, and even unrelated, as far as we poor children could make out, to the complete structure; the porches which he showed us were not even related to the churches to which presumably they were attached. They were just abstract antiquities shown on the screen, with the disembodied voice of the unseen lecturer droning away with a commentary of this kind—"This feature you will observe, is in the Early Cudly style, and this other is in the Late Straight, indicating a lapse of possibly 140 years between their several executions. Next slide, please."

That is not very inspiring, and I may say that that was at the not unintelligent school at Oundle, under the justly celebrated Sanderson, who had, unfortunately, a blind spot, not exactly for the humanities, but certainly for all the arts. We were never so much as introduced to architecture in the whole of my time there. We got on as well as we could, but the shameful fact is that to this day I simply cannot make my mind bite properly on dates and details and chronology and names and styles and all the stuff which is supposed to constitute architectural scholarship. I attribute that to having had the subject first presented to me in this arid and entirely abstract indigestible and debilitating fashion; and that, I may say, also goes for all the textbooks to which at that time I was able to get access. Of course, the popularization of architecture had hardly been attempted at that time, and everything was as dry



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as dust. That is no longer true, though we want new and better books, and it is only the parlous condition of the publishing trade, due to lack of paper, which has prevented us having some more by now.

Naturally I will say that the lack of the attributes of scholarship of which I have just complained does not matter at all, because I take the line of the tail-less fox; but often I do feel, even as a practicing architect, that there is a great deal that I do not know, simply because I have this complex induced by the bad teaching of architecture, or the unsuitable *attempt* at teaching architecture, when I was young. I was absolutely ready to receive it, but because it was presented in this impossible fashion not only did I not receive it but, in the way that humanity does (and children in particular), I "took agin it,"—all the history stuff—and it has never been able to get through to me since. That shows how careful we must be, because if it is done badly it is worse than useless and had better not be done at all.

If privately I had not been a very tiger for buildings, a congenital mason-bee with mortar in my very blood, the little that I was told or was able to read about architecture in those formative years might very well have stifled my interest altogether. Indeed, it would certainly have done so, and I should then have missed most of the pleasure in what has been, on the whole, a very happy life, which has depended for nine-tenths of its happiness on architecture and the allied arts. As Mr. Sullivan said, one of the real merits of architecture as a part of life is that you cannot go very far in it without getting involved in all the other arts, the applied and the fine arts—as indeed is obvious.

Education—Inoculation Against Aesthetic Infection

All of this is merely to make the point that we are now out for something quite different, and in an utterly different way. We are out for far bigger and more important educational game, approached—stalked, indeed—in a more realistic and exciting fashion; at least, I am, and I think that it is certainly true of most of those architects, as well as others, who are concerning themselves with the architectural enlightenment of the layman, the common man and his common children, if we can so call them.

It is now fairly generally accepted that unless we begin to exercise a civilizing influence in the school, and even in the nursery, we are definitely beginning too late; hence my particular and personal interest in securing an acceptable range of toys, models and very junior books to illustrate, extend and generally subserve our educational propaganda. I may say more about that later, if there is time; but obviously and notoriously children have homes and parents as well as schools and teachers. It is a fact of nature greatly lamented by most school masters and mistresses, but there it is, a crude fact of nature, which we sometimes tend to overlook, possibly because it is often so upsetting to our beautiful plans for New Deals and for Child Uplift. I think it was Thomas Hurley who lamented that there was no sadder spectacle in all the world than to see a beautiful hypothesis killed by a brutal fact. I feel that this fact is something that we have to keep in mind, though it is a very saddening one, or may be. As a parent myself, I think that sometimes parents can be quite useful in the upbringing of children, though sometimes they are not.



Sherman was right about WAR

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I feel that sometimes we have tended too much to accept the Jesuit view—"Give us a child until it is seven, and it is ours forever." That might be true if we were working *in vacuo*, but we are not. Of course, they are right up to a point, good psychologists as they generally are, but obviously no child can be kept permanently *in vacuo*; it continues to have constant contacts with the outside, grown-up world at large, as well as in its own home and with its own parents and relations and so forth and with their views and its environment and their habits of mind. If that environment and those habits of mind are strikingly different from those to which it is being trained and conditioned (as far as that is possible) at school, that will naturally cause confusion and doubt in the mind of the wretched child, and undo a large part of the missionary work on which we are so hopefully engaged.

I think that the astonishing efficacy of education has been terribly exemplified by the thorough transformation of perfectly good children into completely beastly Nazis, and I think that anybody who has had anything to do with education is startled to find how efficacious, after all, education can be. One assumes that that is true not only in that direction but in others, and that it can surely be used with equal effect in the opposite direction. That is one of the reasons why in the last five or ten years my own attention has been turned more and more to education and to what can be done through education.

You may well think that I am wandering, but you must see the point I wish to make, which is that we need to do everything we can to improve and to civilize the child's background — its parents and other grown-up contemporaries, as well as its environment — step by step with what we do for the child itself. In my early days I and many like me applied ourselves almost entirely to the grown-ups in talks and lectures and books and so on, and then I at any rate rather despaired of my own generation, and said, "This is no good, it is too late," and switched over entirely (apart from talks to the Forces during the war) to the child; but I now feel that that again was too extreme, and that in throwing ourselves into this work we must not forget the other part of it, or our work cannot be effective. It is very difficult to know where to start, because an all-round effort is required; otherwise our good work will be largely undone by the disillusioning contacts and experiences outside the school, where real life will seem to deride, neglect, and make nonsense of, all the standards and values which we have so striven to get accepted by our new young.

I confess that in the past I have despaired of my own generation and of grown-ups generally and have thought that the children were our only hope, but, being now I think wiser, I will quite definitely affirm that even the children, with all we may do for them or to them in the way of conditioning, are a poor hope so long as they go out into a world where they are, as it were, exposed to aesthetic infection and reinfection on every side. A child must be very strongly fortified to survive that, and only a proportion of the whole child population is of such a kind that it will meet you fully half way and accept this and be grateful for it; with the others you will have to be very skilful and it really will mean patient propaganda to "get it over." But once it is there, it becomes a permanent asset, and makes the

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child (potentially) a far more valuable citizen than it could be without it.

High Ideals and Nasty Realities

One of the troubles about postwar reconstruction and planning is that while we democratically say that we will give people what they want, the poor dears do not know what they want, and how can they? They do not know the first thing about planning or building or amenities or anything else; they are in the dark. That is why many of us even at this late hour are doing what we can to enlighten those who have votes for local government bodies and for Parliament, to show them what the choices are, what is possible and what is not possible, and what we think is desirable, of course, without forcing it down their throats. If what we are trying to do now had been started a decade or so ago—there is no question about it—the resulting set-up at the end of this war would be far better than in fact it is going to be, because of the lack of intelligent demand. That does not mean that less should be done for the children; God forbid! We are not doing nearly enough as it is, nor shall we be. It simply means that it is all partly labour lost unless and until we do a great deal more for the world at large as well.

In concentrating first on the schools, we are, I feel, starting at the right spot, because they are obviously the beginning and end of every circle, whether vicious or virtuous; but we, or others equally vigorous, need to be working away at that circle right the way round its long circumference—children, teachers, Board of Education, publishers, toy-makers, parents, builders, even architects, and the public at large; which means the

general environment, human and otherwise.

As an illustration of that very point, I was talking not long ago to Mr. Bassett-Lowke, whom probably most of you know through the catalogues that your children used to receive before the war, a maker of models of engines, houses and many other things. I was pleading with him for less conservatism in the way of new lines after the war, and asking whether we could not have something a little less romantic and Tudoresque and nonsensical than the current doll's house, for instance. He said, "Of course I could make them, and I should like to do so"—he lives in a very charming modern house himself — "but we have tried that sort of thing, and it is no good; the children will take only what they consider representative of the real thing. If that thing is a house, the closer that it can approximate to the nasty little villa in which they live, with sham half-timbering and inglenooks and so on, the better; otherwise they will not look at it. I brought out," he added, "a model of a new streamlined engine, looking more like a silver sausage than anything to which we are accustomed as a locomotive, and the latest thing, but it was not accepted at all, because it was like nothing they had yet seen in the world outside."

That illustrates my point beautifully. It is no use providing something in the school which seems quite separate and quite different from reality outside. We have to do it to some extent, of course, because we have to start somewhere; but it is going to have very much less effect than it would otherwise have unless at the same time the children can see some evidence outside of what they are shown as new and good in school. If they do not see it outside, they will wonder whether it really is true or new or good and they will not readily accept it.

The Potency of Nurture

I believe in the potency of nurture as against mere nature, that people are made what they are rather than so predestined by birth. Of course, eugenics are important, but they are merely a foundation, and as yet, I feel, pretty debatable as regards the human animal, who, after all, is so very much more than an animal.

"If the eggs of an idiot hen
Are perfectly sensible, then
What the hell is the use
Or eugenics' excuse,
And why should we try it on men?"

That is just a beautiful and bewildering stanza without much excuse, except to maintain a sort of confused doubt in your mind, or in the minds of the cocksure!

I think that I should, as my time is disappearing quickly, switch to this. My conviction—and I think that it is the conviction of many of my contemporaries—is that the State can be both glorified and enriched by its artists. That, though an old notion, is being gradually received again, though perhaps more cautiously in England than anywhere else. Lord Keynes, who contributed to my book, *Britain and the Beast*, wrote a section on *Art and the State*, and I think put it magnificently. I only hope that his economic preoccupations will not prevent him, when the time comes, from returning to that thesis. What is the use of artists doing beautiful things unless they have an appreciative audience behind them? Without that audience they would cease even to do them. That audience will, we hope, be provided by the schools.

It is through the schools alone that we can break into the vicious circle of which I spoke, the vicious circle of shoddy education and debased public taste. You may remember that Bernard Shaw once said that if any picture were ever admired by as much as 10 per cent of the population, then it should be most certainly burnt. That is indeed a desperate saying, and I think it is our job to make it also a silly one. The trouble is that I am not sure that he is not right; that is what hurts! We have to try, however, to make him wrong, but it will take some doing!

We who are here know the high place of art consciousness is making existence worth while and joyous, and we are convinced of its almost limitless powers in that direction. There is no question about that. In my own case, if I had not those resources I would much sooner be dead, even if there were no rationing! Art, I feel, is indeed (as Rebecca West described it), "that strange necessity," and I do not mean only the fine arts, but the applied arts, of which architecture is the mother, permeating the whole of civilized living.—If it does not permeate it, it is not civilized living. Lacking "that strange necessity," life, it seems to me, can be but a very poor, maimed thing, whether we are aware of that grave deficiency or not. Those who well serve the arts are assuredly the salt of the earth, without whom its finest savour would be wanting.

Don Marquis's Confidence

Don Marquis, an American philosopher to whom I am devoted—I believe that I am the only man in England who knows anything about him, which is very sad;—though they are letting me broadcast some of his stuff—in his book, *The Almost Perfect State*, he challengingly says this:

"The purpose of the universe is play. The artists know that, and they know that play and art and creation are different names for the same thing, a thing which is sweats and agonies and ecstasies. The artists, who know more than anyone else about play, which is art, which is creation, must be the leaders and the guides, and this earth must submit itself humbly and receptively to the creative spirit. The people of this earth must learn to listen to their artists and make them their guides and governors in all things, and come to realize that to give heed to anyone but the artist on any subject whatsoever, is damned nonsense."

I am provoked into quoting that magnificently reckless passage by a feeling that we have so far modestly underplayed our so obviously winning hand of the humanities and the arts, and we want to be braver about it and speak more as Don Marquis does. Is it an over-statement? Perhaps; but I am not sure. Seeing what we have lately made of our world, one simply cannot help wondering whether some such change of management might not be worth while, and personally I am for risking it! I am for calling in the poets as well as the plumbers to set things right; I think that we have attempted to do things too much with only the latter.

Speaking here today, I suppose that I do so partly as representing the Council for Education in the Appreciation of Physical Environment. You may possibly know, or like to know, what we are doing, and why we think that you may take an interest in our doings. Apart

from the good of the child itself, I think it always sounds more convincing if you can produce a good economic argument, if you can make things sound not just plain selfish, but pertaining perhaps to "the higher selfishness"; and then people will believe you. What I should say, speaking this morning at the R.I.B.A., is that what we are really secretly up to is trying to create a demand for the sort of goods—that is, fine architecture—that we here can produce so readily and at the shortest notice. If there is not that intelligent demand, people will not know how good we are. We are trying to educate the future consumer demand for decent design in the physical background and equipment of living—town and country planning, architecture, and all the things of daily use.

For some time I was President of the Design and Industries Association, which goes on merrily to this day, and that is primarily concerned with the smaller things—the equipment of the house, the pots and pans, fabrics and furniture and so on. We have to tackle all these things, because it is quite fruitless to direct a child's attention to good architecture alone, to good houses perhaps badly placed for lack of proper town planning, or to good houses which are subsequently stultified by being furnished and equipped with the sort of muck which I hope we shall never see again—tho' we probably shall, because the old models survive, and it is easier to fish them out and use them again than to think up new, clean, efficient things. Architecture as such comes in the middle; on one side you have town and country and national and international planning, which carries you into everything, and on the other side you have the details—your equipment, your furniture and the minutiae of living, which all have to be dealt with if the result is not to be a muddle and incoherent.

We aim at producing discriminating customers who will know and demand competent designing and who will no longer love the lowest when they see it. We want to create an appreciative and encouraging audience for the good artist and technician, and to ensure rotten eggs and derisive boos for the bad. As things are the charlatan being unhampered by a conscience, often prospers more than the honest producer, because he can concoct the flashy, meretricious, exciting-looking things that will not work or last, much more easily than the good craftsman can turn out an honest job, and we want to put an end to that. I feel that any school which is doing anything in this direction is very definitely the handmaid of the planner and of all those who are trying to produce a civilized background.

Amenity Vitamins

You have been told how, with the cordial backing of the President of the Board of Education, we have already infiltrated into the State schools by way of lecture courses to existing staffs, who in turn colour and vivify their normal lessons in history, geography, English, art or what ever it may be with what may be called the amenity vitamins which we hope we have given them. And of course we have done what we can to produce lists of available books, and we are having a smaller number specially written. Professor Reilly is writing one of them, which I think should be very good, and I have contributed another, which is only held up for lack of paper. Of course, we envisage an exhibition

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at no distant date, because no movement today is complete without an exhibition of some sort, and we are not going to be left behind. It should be an exciting one.

I will leave that part of the Council's work there, and come back to what I feel that we are up against and what we must not forget in our attempts to civilize the British young.

The British Taste for Objets d'Art

We have probably to accept the fact that the genius of Britain lies definitely in directions other than those of the visual arts. I am quite clear about that in my own part of the country, Wales. As regards buildings and the visual or plastic arts generally we do seem as a whole to be tone deaf. I cannot get through to people; they do not understand what I am talking about. To quote Don Marquis again, I feel screaming at them:

"Your gods are made of putty,
And mine are made of clay,
And so I think you're nutty,
And so you think I'm fey."

(Concluded in April Issue)

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WHO'S AFRAID OF PROSPERITY

By THOMAS S. HOLDEN

Conclusion

This concludes the talk given by Thomas S. Holden, president of the F. W. Dodge Corporation, New York, at the Convention Banquet of the State Association of Wisconsin Architects, Feb. 25, 1944. This first part of the speech was published in the Feb. issue of the Wisconsin Architect.

There is another field closely related to taxation that is tremendously important to construction; very particularly to future public works programs of states and local governments. That field is postwar Federal fiscal policy. In determining what postwar fiscal policy is going to be, Congress will almost certainly be obliged to make a study of the existing lending, mortgage-insuring and other fiscal agencies of the Federal government, reviewing their purposes, functions, administration and relation to the long-term credit needs of our postwar economy. Such a study might reveal the need for setting up some kind of capital-credit or banking facilities for state and local governments. Rudimentary banking functions were performed by PWA and RFC in connection with the PWA programs of the 1930's; bonds accepted by the Public Works Administrator to cover loans to municipalities for public works projects were sold to RFC, which in turn sold them at favorable times to private investors. The RFC performed other banking functions for state and local governments. The two urban redevelopment bills introduced in the Senate last year (the Thomas Bill, S. 953, and the Wagner Bill, S. 1163) both proposed the authorization of Federal loans to municipalities for purposes of rehabilitating blighted areas. Since these proposals did not provide a sound basis for making such loans, they are not likely to receive favorable action. However, they may have pointed out a need, even though they did not indicate a sound procedure for meeting it.

I do not know whether this suggested survey of the fiscal agencies of government and of the long-term credit needs of the country belongs properly on the agenda of Congressman Coffee's proposed National Tax Commission or on the agenda of some other commission or committee of Congress. Postwar taxation and postwar fiscal policy are both very broad subjects, but they are closely interrelated. If Congress determines that the subjects should be handled separately, an excellent precedent for the organization of a National Long-Term Credit Commission is found in the National Monetary Commission of 1907, generally remembered as the Aldrich Committee.

The long-term credit study, by whatever commission or committee it may be made, should not only cover the credit needs of government at all levels, but also the needs of small business and of private investment generally. It should also review the Securities and Exchange Act, to determine whether its operations have been unduly restrictive of private investment.

Gentlemen, the postwar construction prospect is excellent, but full realization of its potentials will depend not only upon the soundness of our management of the transition to peace economy but also upon the kinds of over-all economic policies the country will adopt as long-range measures.

To maintain an expanding economy, to control our postwar inflation and to control our postwar boom will be the principal economic problems of the postwar period; these things will require greater wisdom in managing our affairs than we showed after World War I. It was the mistakes we made during the postwar of the 1920's, not World War I, itself, nor God, nor the devil, that brought on the depression of the 1930's. If instead of repeating those mistakes, we plan wisely to meet the obvious and important problems that lie ahead, I am convinced that we shall see general economic expansion and large construction activity for an extended period of years. I think, however, that we will get prosperity by planning for exactly that, not by planning for an imagined future depression.

The prospect of prosperity should please most of us. It may be somewhat upsetting to economic planners who have come to the front as specialists in depression techniques, to well-meaning collectivists, to piecemeal collectivists, and to scheming collectivists, to all those people who are selling fear of the future, the people who are selling America short. To the rest of us, the principal thing we have to worry about is the problem of holding on to prosperity after we have put salt on its tail.

The construction industry must do its part toward sustaining high levels of activity over an extended period of years. Its first concern should be to watch closely the trends of construction costs.

The general price level, as represented by the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, index of wholesale prices of all commodities, is now about 33 per cent over 1939; a very able economist estimates that it will be about 70 per cent over 1939 at the end of 1946. That estimate assumes reasonably successful management of price controls through the war period and the reconversion period. That means that the general price level of the postwar period will be about 70 per cent over prewar.

Rents are being held down by rent-ceilings. The rent-index is now about 3½ per cent above the 1939 average; it will surely rise when the ceilings are lifted. Construction costs are now about 27 per cent over the 1939 average. Therefore, the present relationship of rents to construction costs is not one that would encourage any investment building. When the ceilings are lifted and construction costs seek their natural postwar levels, I believe that it will be very important, in terms of conditioning a sustained building demand, that costs do not rise disproportionately in relation to such rise in rents as will take place. I believe that the postwar building market that is ahead of us is likely to be much more sensitive to sharp cost increases than was the postwar market of the 1920's.

This is likely to be particularly true of the residential building market, in spite of some of the important economic changes that have taken place. I believe the early

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postwar demands for houses will be relatively stronger in the middle price ranges (say \$5,000 to \$25,000 without land) than in the low-cost brackets. With increased national income, as compared with the depression decade of the 1930's, a larger proportion of the nation's families will enjoy middle-range incomes than in the 1930's, and will, therefore, want houses of better than minimum grade. Nevertheless, demand over the years will be numerically largest in the lower price ranges and every bit of further progress we can see in producing better houses for less money will contribute largely toward sustaining the housing market.

Architects probably do not fear prosperity; nor should they fear technical progress, either in the art of design, in construction methods, or in development of new materials. The romantic nonsense that was being so widely circulated a year ago as to radical innovations and postwar dream houses that were going to make all existing buildings obsolete and put large numbers of building industry people out of business has been rather thoroughly deflated.

Careful appraisal of the potentialities of new materials and new construction methods leads to the following conclusions:

- 1—There will be continued evolutionary progress in producing new materials (plastics, light metals, prefabricated sub-assemblies) and in devising new time-saving construction methods.
- 2—New materials and methods will compete in the market with established materials and methods, which are already of very high standard and quality.
- 3—There will be continued emphasis on the need for producing better houses for less money.
- 4—Present indications point rather to gradual progress resulting from accumulated economies in materials and their use rather than to radical innovations.

While the major interest and the major research effort in the field of technical developments have been concentrated in the small house, progressive developments in materials and techniques will more than likely have

applications to many types of structures. As a matter of fact, design innovations have usually appeared first in commercial structures, and have been adopted last in single-family houses.

It should be obvious that, while the postwar prospect for the construction industry is excellent, the prospect for architects is relatively better than for most other elements of the industry, in terms of anticipated improvement over their situation during the prewar decade. For the construction prospect is not only one of increased volume of activity but also one of increased demand for originality and high quality in design and in buildings. Architects should not fear technical progress. They should do more than welcome it. They should renew their lost faith in the principle that real progress in the art of building comes from progress in design, in sound utilization of new materials and techniques available, in broader adaptation of design to the up-to-the-minute needs of the society they live in, in showing that technical progress is just one of the many elements in the progress of our civilization.

The postwar economy will be an enterprise-economy, not a dole economy. Enterprise is defined in the dictionary as boldness, energy and invention. An enterprise-economy needs bold, energetic, and inventive architects just as much as it needs bold, energetic and inventive technical researchers, industrialists, business men and engineers. I firmly believe that postwar America will again be the land of opportunity.

* * * * *

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The Civic Design Committee of the Wisconsin Chapter, A.I.A., of which Harry Bogner is chairman, presented sketches of a proposed breathing spot facing the Milwaukee river between N. Edison, E. Kilbourn and E. State Sts., to the Milwaukee Land Commission, with recommendations for the establishment of such a spot. The matter was referred to Alvin Bromm, city planner, and Joseph Schwada, city engineer.

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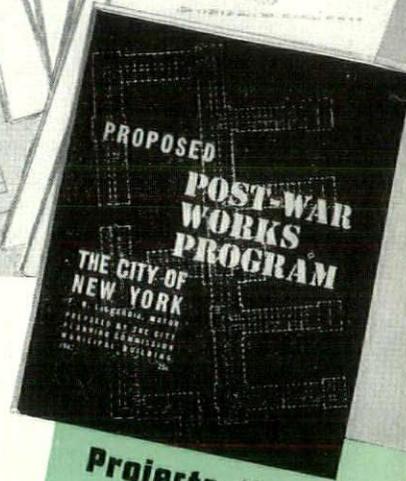
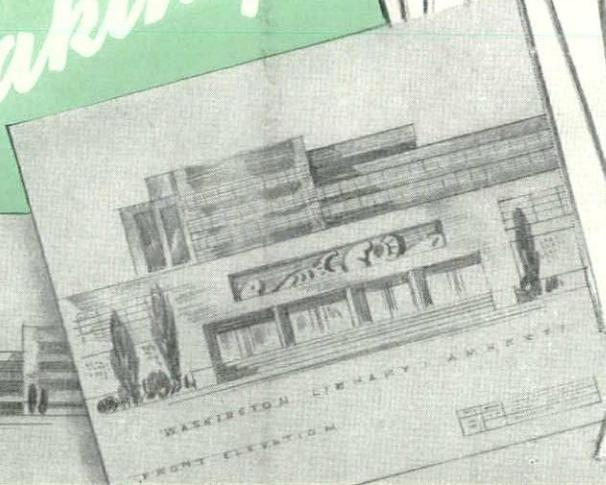
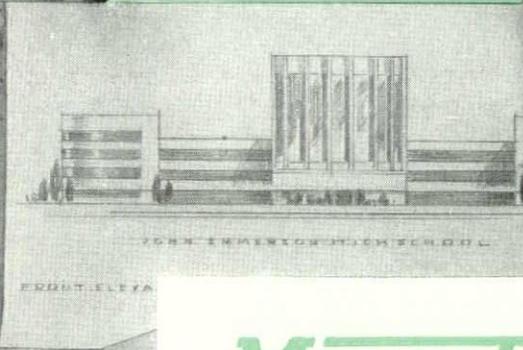
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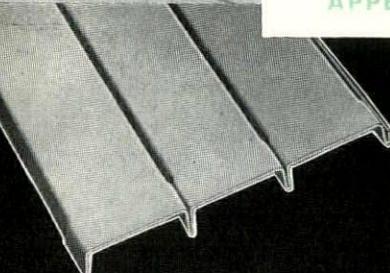
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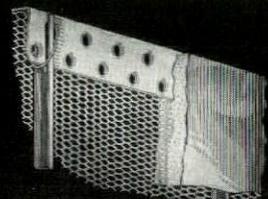
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