

THE

# WISCONSIN ARCHITECT

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE STATE ASSOCIATION OF WISCONSIN  
ARCHITECTS — THE WISCONSIN CHAPTER A.I.A. AND THE PRODUCERS  
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OCTOBER - NOVEMBER

1947

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## PROCEEDINGS

*of the*

## FIFTEENTH ANNUAL

## CONVENTION

*of the*

## STATE ASSOCIATION

*of*

## WISCONSIN ARCHITECTS



## THE WISCONSIN ARCHITECT

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## Fifteenth Annual Convention

The Fifteenth Annual Convention of the State Association of Wisconsin Architects was held in Milwaukee at the Plankinton House on Friday and Saturday, October 16 and 17.

Friday was given over to registration, the Pre-Convention Executive Board meeting, visiting of exhibits shown by the Producers' Council, Wisconsin Chapter, a lecture by E. P. Lockhart on "Daylight in Class Rooms," a cocktail party at which the Producers' Council members were hosts, and a banquet at 7 o'clock.

In addition to the speaker of the evening, Thomas S. Holden, President of the F. W. Dodge Corporation, New York City, the guests of honor were Paul Gerhardt, Jr., Director of A.I.A. North Central States District, Chicago, and Branson V. Gamber, A.I.A. Unification Chairman, Detroit. The complete text of Mr. Holden's address will be found on another page of this issue.

### CONVENTION PROCEEDINGS

The opening session of the Fifteenth Annual Convention, held in the Colonial Room, Saturday, October 18, convened at 10:05 A. M., President Mark F. Pfaller presiding.

The President announced that the first order of business would be "a motion to authorize this convention to convene under the revised set of By-Laws that were tentatively approved but not generally approved, or ratified, at any previous convention since the change was made."

The following Resolution was then read by Allen J. Strang, Chairman of the Resolutions Committee:

"Whereas, The revisions to the By-Laws adopted at the 1941 convention at Madison have not been officially ratified, and

"Whereas, A thirty-day notice is required by the By-Laws for such ratification, and

"Whereas, Such notification has not been given; therefore, be it hereby

"RESOLVED, That the proceedings of this convention and of the Executive Board at this convention, be conducted in accordance with said revisions."

A motion to ratify the changes in the By-Laws was made, seconded and carried.

The next issue of the Wisconsin Architect will contain the Constitution and By-Laws of The State Association of Wisconsin Architects and the Articles of Organization, and also the Revision of these By-Laws as published in the January 1941 Wisconsin Architect and submitted to the Tenth Annual Convention of the State Association in Madison.

## PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

Members of our State Association of Wisconsin Architects and Guests:

It is my special privilege and honor this morning to welcome you officially to this 1947 Annual Convention. It is my hope that out of this convention each of you may derive some positive benefit warranting your personal sacrifice of time, effort and money expended in attending here today.

There are so many grave problems perplexing the nations of the world, such overwhelming tasks facing our brother architects in bombed-out cities of other lands, that we might well wonder how we can seriously convene to discuss our professional cares here in Wisconsin. Yet it is indeed important for us to gather as a professional group on a state level; for the sooner we help to unleash the productive capacities of our great state by building needed schools and factories, the more machinery, capital goods and trained personnel will be available for export to aid a shaken world back to its feet and a more stable economy. How to plan and erect schools, factories, store buildings, depots and dwellings as efficiently and promptly as possible is our business; and the exchange of ideas and discussion of professional practices to equip us to do a better job as architects is the business of our annual convention.

We have already viewed the Exhibits of building materials displayed here with the friendly aid of the Producer's Council. We have been enlightened with the remarks of Mr. E. P. Lockhart, Mr. Paul Gerhardt, Jr., and the distinguished president of the F. W. Dodge Corporation, Mr. Thomas S. Holden. Now as to the business affairs of the State Association itself, I will not repeat to you a resume of the activities of the State Association during the preceding year. The reports of the Secretary and the Committee Chairman will inform you as to such activities. However, I do wish to acknowledge the efforts of the directors and officers and every member who directly participated in serving the membership of the Association this last year. I sincerely thank them on behalf of the membership.

During the preceding year, in my capacity as President, and near to the center of the activities of architects in Wisconsin, it was possible for me to observe more clearly some of the trends of thought among our members. Most encouraging is a growing spirit of critical thought and constructive suggestions.



Everywhere in the State, Architects have been raising problems, making complaints, and urging action. On one hand I hear complaints of unethical actions of architects and the need to clean house in our profession. Someone else complains of growing delay in obtaining approval of plans from the State Building Inspector's Office. Elsewhere is heard a charge that the public is not getting what it deserves and expects by way of licensed professional service because of inadequate enforcement of the state laws regulating the building industry. Still another complaint concerns sorely needed changes in our building code. These are just a few of many subjects of discussion and thought.

Were these complaints to be merely voiced and the matter to end there, as it has so frequently in the past, there would be no point to my mentioning them. But I am happy to report that a number of our members have been aroused to action and will make their proposals here today. If a practical program, to solve some of our professional problems, is charted, and action taken at this convention to implement such a program; if architects help themselves to do a better job of construction for the public then this convention will certainly have been worth-while.

Our profession is faced with a challenge today to keep up with a fast moving world. We can meet this challenge with the energy and ability latent within us. But we will need harmony in our ranks and sincere cooperation from every architect and particularly from the young men among us.

In closing, I wish to thank the Association for the high honor conferred upon me with the title of President and for the opportunity to serve our profession. I have sincerely enjoyed my duties and I know I am a better architect for having served my fellow architects, thank you.

MARK F. PFALLER.

## REPORT OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR THE YEAR 1946-1947

The Board of the State Association of Wisconsin Architects has held seven meetings since the Fourteenth Annual Convention on October 25 and 26, 1946, at the Plankinton Hotel, Milwaukee. There was practically 100 per cent attendance as there were only three members absent during the year.

The Board's principal activities since the last convention had to do with legislative work. The Legislation began its sessions in January of this year and the Board employed Gerald J. Rice as counsel to attend seven legislative sessions. The Secretary attended six, and Walter Memmler, one.

A report by the Legislative committee will be made following this report.

At the March Board meeting, Mr. Milton Werner of the Milwaukee Sentinel offered a prepared program which included the publishing of 25 houses in the Sentinel and publishing a book of Plans.

The Practice Committee had several meetings and made one trip to Madison. The Chairman of that Committee will make a report.

At the June Board meeting action was taken on the Unification of the Architects in Wisconsin. The Secretary was directed to communicate with the President of the Wisconsin Chapter, and a committee was appointed which included Allen Strang, chairman, and Mark F. Pfaller, Edgar H. Berners and Leigh Hunt. A report will be made by Mr. Strang following this report.

This year the A. I. A. Convention at Grand Rapids, on April 28, 29, 30 and May 1, was attended by Mark F. Pfaller, Allen J. Strang and Leigh Hunt. Mr. Strang will report on the convention, as chairman of this committee.

The Board selected Milwaukee and the Plankinton Hotel as the meeting place of the Fifteenth Annual Convention, as the members know. As we have done for several years in the past, we invited the Producers Council, Wisconsin Chapter to have their members exhibit their materials. The board urges all members to visit the exhibits and at the end of the afternoon's program, attendance prizes will be awarded.

The Board instructed the secretary to send a copy of all documents to the members and publicize the fact that the Secretary had additional copies which might be purchased. The change in the Minimum Fee Schedule from 25% for supervision, made it necessary that the Fee Schedules be revised, and there has been quite a demand for these documents.

The membership has improved and the secretary is pleased to report that as of the tenth of October there were 150 paid-up members and that the Seventh District was 100% paid.

The Board is sorry to announce the death of one of its State Association members, Mr. Claude Steffes, of Appleton, partner of Maury Lee Allen.

The Board received the resignation from Walter G. Memmler as board member and accepted it with regret, and appointed George E. Foster of Wausau, the candidate who was next in line of votes at the 1945-46 convention.

Respectfully submitted

LEIGH HUNT, Secretary

Upon making his report, the Treasurer added "This year we really spent more than we took in, so you can see the need for additional income."

The balance of the morning session was given over to the hearing of committee reports and nominating of the Board of Directors.

NOTE: The convention proceedings of the Saturday morning and afternoon sessions were covered in entirety by the Stenotype Reporting Company and are in report form.

The report of the Plan Book Committee, made by Allen Strang, resulted in lengthy discussions, pro and con, following which it was voted that the details of the project be left in the hands of the Executive Board.

Following the distribution of ballots, it was voted that those seven who were nominated by their districts, be elected by acclamation as members of the Board.



They are E. F. Klingler, Eau Claire, Districts Nos. 1 and 2; Harry Williams, Green Bay, District No. 3; Gage M. Raylor, Stevens Point, District No. 4; Sylvester Schmidt, Two Rivers, District No. 5; William V. Kaeser, Madison, District No. 6; Carl Ames, Milwaukee, District No. 7; A. J. Seitz, Racine, District No. 8.

From the nominations by the Nominating Committee and from the floor, seven directors at large were voted upon by secret ballot, the results to be announced at the closing of the afternoon session.

\* \* \* \*

#### VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTION

Among the most important matters of business brought before the Convention, was that of the raising of funds by the State Association for improving the status of the Architects. In order to avoid a thirty-day delay stipulated by the Revised Bylaws if the dues were raised, a resolution was adopted that additional funds for 1947-48 be raised by voluntary contributions, to be requested of the members at the time that annual dues were billed. It was the consensus of the Convention that the dues are out of line with those paid by other organizations.

The meeting recessed at 2:35 p.m. for luncheon after which Branson V. Gamber, F.A.I.A., State Association Director of The American Institute of Architects, addressed the members.

\* \* \* \*

#### SATURDAY AFTERNOON SESSION

The meeting reconvened at 3 o'clock, President Pfaller presiding.

The next order of business was a report on Unification by the Chairman, Allen J. Strang.

NOTE: Due to lack of space, Mr. Strang's report cannot be printed in this issue, but because of the importance of the subject, it will appear in a forthcoming issue, together with the informal remarks by Mr. Gamber on his address, "Unification Within the A.I.A."

\* \* \* \*

#### ELECTION OF DIRECTORS

The polls having closed at 1 o'clock, the next order of business was the report of the tellers.

The Secretary called attention to the fact that Mark Pfaller had not been nominated and therefore under the revised by-laws could not be eligible to the presidency to serve his second term. He then made a motion that the name of Mark Pfaller be added to those who had been elected Directors, as the fifteenth director in accordance with the revision to the by-laws. The motion was seconded and carried.

The tellers announced that the following would serve as Directors for the coming year: Mark Pfaller, E. F. Klingler, Harry W. Williams, Gage M. Taylor, Sylvester Schmidt, William V. Kaeser, Carl Ames, A. J. Seitz, E. J. Berners, Allen J. Strang, Leigh Hunt, Robert Chase, Sylvester Stepnoski, John P. Jacoby, and Carl Schubert.

The Fifteenth Annual Convention was adjourned at 3:25 p.m.

#### ELECTION OF OFFICERS

At the post-Board meeting of the new Executive Board, the following were elected officers for the year 1947-48: President: Mark F. Pfaller; First Vice President: Emiel F. Klingler; Second Vice President: Allen J. Strang; Secretary-Treasurer: Leigh Hunt.

\* \* \* \*

#### FORECAST FOR 1948

The building materials supply situation in 1948 is expected to vary from "comfortable" to "fairly adequate" with the probable exception of steel and steel products, according to a forecast prepared by the economists of the Producers' Council, national organization of building products manufacturers, David S. Miller, Council president, stated Saturday.

"The coming year will see a further improvement in the supply of the vast majority of materials, and a continued building up of dealers' inventories," Mr. Miller said.

"This forecast must be qualified, however, in view of the announcement that the Administration is seeking authority for allocation and control over the use of basic products. Even though housing or construction as a whole might receive favorable treatment in such a control system, the imposition of controls could



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seriously interfere with the progressive re-establishment of orderly markets.

"The degree of materials shortages next year also will partly depend upon ultimate decisions in respect to foreign aid. So far as building materials are concerned, the indirect impact of a foreign-aid program, accompanied by steel and freight car shortages, is likely to be more important than direct demands for building products.

"The physical volume of total new construction expected to be put in place during 1948 is 10 to 20 per cent below the 1941 volume. During the summer months of 1947, production of most building materials was at or above the average rate of 1941 output. If this rate is maintained the difference between physical construction volume and materials production should provide an ample margin for an increase in inventories plus, in some cases, more deliveries to foreign countries. For there was no semblance of materials shortages in 1941.

"However, the composition of construction in 1948 will be different from that of 1941, with resulting changes in materials requirements: less military and other public construction; more private and, particularly, residential building.

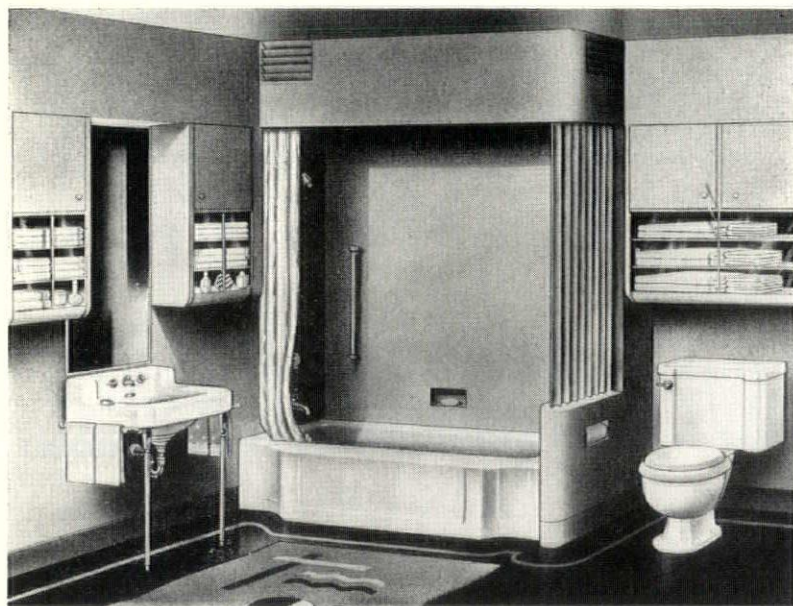
"In addition, a few groups of materials in the late summer of 1947 had not yet come up to 1941 produc-

tion rates: hardwood flooring, certain types of millwork, structural steel, concrete reinforcing bars, nails, cast iron radiation, and rigid steel conduit and fittings are in this group. In the case of a few other products, such as plywood and gypsum board, production has reached 1941 levels but construction as well as non-construction uses have increased so rapidly that output at the 1941 rate is inadequate.

"Moreover, freight car shortages during 1946 and 1947 have hampered the reorganization of the distribution system. This difficulty did not exist in 1941.

"For 1948 we anticipate a smaller list of short products. Structural steel, reinforcing bars, sheet steel for warm air furnaces, duct work, downspouts and gutters and nails will remain hard to get. Cast iron soil pipe may still be tight during the first few months of next year. The freight-car shortage will not be fully overcome during 1948, which means continuation of distribution problems even where output is adequate.

"Lumber including millwork and hardwood flooring promises to be in sufficient supply next year. New or expanded plants for gypsum board, plywood, and other comparatively new products will come into operation during 1948 and help to boost output. Inventories will improve though they will probably not be up to normal standards.



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## PRODUCERS' COUNCIL AWARDS PRIZES

What were only in the minds of men, or on paper, during the war years, were shown fully developed in concrete form in the exhibits which the Producers' Council, Wisconsin Chapter, displayed at the Convention. Any inducement to attract the architects to such an enlightening showing, should have been unnecessary. Nevertheless, as an added impetus, the Council announced the awarding of attendance prizes, cannily displaying same from the opening of the convention to the close. As a result, the architects came, coveted, and promptly descended in a body, upon all of the exhibits to have their cards punched, as proof of 100 per cent attendance. Some, be it known, were over-zealous. Although there were only twenty-nine exhibits, the punch cards erroneously carried thirty numbers. However, the over-zealous souls, bent on capturing a prize, managed mysteriously to find the "Number Thirty" exhibit, which definitely was not there.

After the adjournment of the Convention, R. F. Rriauff, in the absence of the Council's president, R. J. Patterson, announced the winners as the cards were drawn, in the following order:

C. W. Schubert, Stetson Hat, Pittsburgh Plate Glass Co.; A. C. Eschweiler, Jr., Box of Cigars, Gagnon Clay Products Co.; Fred Wegner, \$10 Merchandise Certificate, Frederick Post Co.; E. A. Kuenzli, Electric Clock, Wauwatosa Fuel & Supply; Albert F. Keymar, Putter, Owens Corning Fiberglas; Paul Brust, Box of Mixed Cheese, W. H. Pipkorn Co.; Karel Yosko, Chronotherm Regulator, Minneapolis Honeywell; E. F. Klingler, Mirror, Libbey-Owens-Ford Glass Co.; Allen J. Strang, Automatic Colored Pencil, deGelleke Co.; F. E. Drolshagen, Pressure Cooker, Aluminum Co. of America; Walter Pollatz, Blanket and Case, Master Builders; Julius Sandstedt, Subscription to Fortune, Western Mineral Products Co.; Noel R. Safford, Gift Certificate, Glynn-Johnson; Henry Auler, Gift Certificate, Josam Mfg. Co.; Stanley A. Rypel, Bath Scales, Crane Co.; G. J. deGelleke, Gift Certificate, Johns-Manville; Robert S. Chase, Fishing Equipment, Unit Structures; Edward J. Law, Carving Set, Armstrong Cork Co.; E. A. Wagner, Desk Lighter, Globe Van Doorn; Frank J. Stepnoski, Gift Certificate, Insulation Industries; Walter A. Domann, Large Mirror, Patek Bros. Inc.; R. O. Steffin, Door Knockers, Chase Brass; Walter M. Trapp, Picnic Table and Bench, L. J. Novotny; Harry W. Williams, Gift Certificate, Chamberlin Co.; Sylvester J. Stepnoski, Large Mirror, Harry Glass & Erection Co.; R. W. Surplice, Gift Certificate, Ceco Steel Co.; G. J. Lefebvre, Barometer-Thermometer, Celotex Corp.; F. J. Hinton, Marble Ash Trays, Milwaukee Marble Co.; Urban F. Peacock, Utility Cart, Milcor Steel Co.; Elmer Scharpf, Pressure Cooker, Roth Appliance Co.; Henry Slaby, 3 Door Closers, Morton Door Closer Co.

## PROGRESS REPORT ON CONSTRUCTION

*Address by THOMAS S. HOLDEN, President of F. W. Dodge Corporation, before the State Association of Wisconsin Architects, Annual Meeting, Plankinton House, Milwaukee, Friday, October 17, 1947.*

The very substantial recovery progress the construction industry has made this year can only be described in terms of a paradox. It was a progress that resulted largely, though not entirely, from a slowdown in volume of new work started.

During five months of this year, March through July, the total dollar volume of construction contracts awarded in the 37 eastern states ran behind the corresponding months of 1946. As a result, the total dollar volume of new construction started from the first of the year to date falls short 5 to 6 percent of the dollar volume of starts in the corresponding period of last year. There is currently an uptrend which, if continued during the remaining months of the year, will produce a total moderately larger than the final 1946 figure.

The slowdown was a necessary phase of market adjustment, required for getting current demand and supply of materials and labor in better balance, for achieving some degree of cost stabilization, and for improving the rate of project-completion in relation to the volume of project starts. For investors it was apparently a test as to whether construction costs were likely to decline appreciably in the near future. It was also in part a free-market reaction to removal of governmental price controls, and the period during which most governmental restrictions and limitations on construction were gradually removed.

While necessary market adjustments are still incomplete, conditions have improved in very marked degree. Most important is the improved rate of project completions. While there is no complete record of completions, the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics has issued estimates of dwelling-unit completions based on spot surveys. According to these estimates completions in the calendar year 1946 amounted to a mere 56 per cent of the number of units started during the same period. Completions in the first half of 1947 were about equal to the number of starts; these estimates appear to indicate that, for the entire year 1947, completions will run from 90 to 100 per cent of starts. On this basis, the number of dwelling units completed in 1947 will nearly double the number completed in 1946. There has probably been a like improvement in the completion rate for non-residential projects.



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This year's abnormally large carry-over of projects started before January 1 partially explains why the construction activity figures published by the Department of Commerce show substantial volume increases over 1946, as compared with the moderate decline shown by the contract figures. The Commerce Department figures are over-all estimates of work put in place, the contract figures are factual tabulations of projects in the starting stage.

If indeed the number of dwelling units completed this year is double that of 1946, real progress is being made toward relieving the housing shortage. This year's estimated volume of housing starts will be the largest since 1926; it may even exceed the 1926 figure, and it may come within 10 per cent of the number started in the peak year 1925, which had an estimated total of 937,000 units.

It is of some interest to compare this postwar recovery record with that of the automotive industry. There were produced last year approximately 2,152,000 passenger cars, somewhat less than half the peak output of 1929. This year's production of passenger cars will approximate 3,300,000, about 50 per cent more than last year's. Ford dealers are now talking about deliveries in 12 to 14 months; higher priced cars are promised in 8 to 10 months. Construction is not the only major industry which has as yet been unable to catch up with a tremendous backlog of deferred demand.

The backlog of continuing demand for residential and non-residential building and for heavy construc-

tion continues very large indeed. If that were the only factor, or merely the dominant factor in the market, we might expect with confidence a big increase in construction volume in 1948. Before jumping to any such conclusion, however, it is necessary to examine some of the factors in the economy which make for a considerable degree of uncertainty.

In the first place, neither commodity prices nor construction costs have actually been stabilized, though there was hope that they would be during the recent slowdown period. As of October 4, wholesale prices of all commodities, according to the index of the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, were 104 per cent over the 1939 average. However, the building material group, as listed by Bureau of Labor Statistics, includes no metal products. Wholesale prices of the metals and metal products group were 60 per cent over the 1939 average. Highest increases have been registered by the farm products group, which stood at 187 per cent over the 1939 average on October 4. On that date, the wholesale price indices of all nine major commodity groups stood at the highest points recorded in the current price movement.

Some comfort may be derived from the fact that the latest upward movement of wholesale prices has been relatively slow. Between November 9 and March 29, first 20 weeks after lifting of price controls, wholesale prices of all commodities rose nearly 11 per cent. From May 10 to October 4, a period of 21 weeks, the rise was just over 7 per cent.

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present price structure is the world demand for food. This has its effect on prices of our farm products, on the cost of living in this country, on wage scales in manufacturing and in construction, and in the prices of all manufactured goods.

So, the question of commodity price stabilization in 1948 is intimately bound up with the question of how much and what kind of aid we will give to the countries of western Europe, or to other foreign nations.

If the major effort in such program as may be adopted is directed toward restoration of European industry, the demand will be for increased export of capital goods, including steel and other structural materials. This foreign demand is a potential limitation upon our domestic construction program. Within our own economy there is potential competition for supplies with such steel-hungry industries as automobiles, farm machinery and railway car production. Construction materials other than steel and products made from steel may be limited by freight car shortages.

This brief summary shows definitely that our market adjustment is still far from completed and will continue to impose some major problems in 1948. Post-war recovery is not yet in full swing.

An important factor in the recent rise in construction activity was removal of most of the federal government restrictions on construction on July 1. As a consequence of passage of the Housing and Rent Control Act of 1947, new rental housing was exempt from rent controls and most non-residential projects were freed from the requirement of securing permits from the Housing Expeditor. Rent controls on existing buildings remain until February 28, 1948 and may be further extended if Congress at its session deems it necessary. This remaining control has an indirect effect on housing activity, through its effect on market demand for rental accommodations.

There is currently some discussion of renewal of commodity price controls in order to halt inflation. Commodity price controls cannot succeed without rationing and they cannot succeed without wage stabilization. Should controls return, undoubtedly construction materials would be included. Some people have advocated removal of construction industry controls in the supposed interest of increased production of housing.

I cannot believe that there is much chance of a return of our economy to government controls. We have not only our own experience as a guide, but we are informed that the countries of western Europe which have made greatest progress in postwar re-

covery, Holland and Belgium, are the ones which have gone furthest in relaxing wartime economic controls. On the other hand, it is the controlled-economy countries which are behind in recovery progress and are making the most urgent pleas for American aid. I cannot believe the American people or their government will put our economy into a strait jacket on any theory of helping a world that needs most of all to get back to a system of helping itself. It is likely, however, that until our economy achieves a greater stability than it now enjoys there will be recurring proposals for renewal of economic controls.

The Housing and Rent Control Act of 1947 was the one bit of housing legislation regularly enacted by the 80th Congress in its first session. The Taft-Ellender-Wagner omnibus bill was not voted on by the Senate, and did not even get out of Committee in the House. It seems safe to say that no such omnibus bill will be enacted, though some of the features of that bill may be reintroduced as separate measures. One of its features, the creation of a permanent coordinating agency, called the Housing and Home Finance Agency, was effected as a reorganization plan under the Reorganization Act.

While legislative action on housing and construction matters was largely negative, the attitude of Congress was definitely positive. A number of committees and a number of Congressional leaders are keenly interested in doing whatever may be necessary and sound for improvement in the nation's housing effort. But this Congress wants to know what it is doing. Its

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positive action took the form of authorizing investigations of various phases of housing activity. Purpose of these investigations is to prepare legislative proposals for the 1948 session.

Three of these investigations are of direct interest to the construction industry. A joint committee under the chairmanship of Congressman Ralph A. Gamble, is investigating the whole range of housing activity, with the hope of discovering what bottlenecks, if any, can be removed by sound federal legislation. Congressman Ralph Gwinn is chairman of a subcommittee of the House Labor Committee which is investigating uneconomic practices of building labor unions, to determine whether any federal legislation other than the Taft-Hartley Act is needed to correct such abuses as may be discovered. A subcommittee of the House Committee on Expenditures is continuing its inquiry into the administration of the public housing program by FPHA.

It is strongly to be hoped that these investigations will be conducted in such a manner as to enlighten Congress and the public, so that any legislation that may be enacted next year will be sound and constructive.

The investigation by Congressman Gwinn's subcommittee is apparently proceeding on the assumption that the Taft-Hartley Act may not be sufficient to correct any labor union abuses that may exist in the construction industry. There does not yet seem to be any very clear idea as to the implications of the Taft-Hartley Act for construction trade unions. The provisions regarding secondary boycotts and closed-shop might be considered as applying, but apparently there is need for authoritative pronouncements by NLRB and its counsel and, possibly, court tests, before the construction industry will know where it stands under this law.

Even though the Taft-Hartley Act may be construed as having little direct application to building

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trade unions, its passage is, I believe, properly included in any list of important trends in the building industry. If its provisions are upheld without serious modification it marks a turning-point in labor-management relations in this country. If its application does not itself correct the uneconomic union practices of building trade unions, it will definitely pave the way to such correction. I say this as one who numbers among friends many able and fine labor union officials, and as one who approves the legitimate aims of labor organizations. Furthermore, I say it as one who does not think union labor is solely to blame for uneconomic practices in construction.

Local building codes constitute a factor frequently, almost universally, criticised as promoting and perpetuating economic practices. The need for building code reform is widely recognized. A very promising effort in this direction is the program of the Building Officials Foundation, an organization jointly sponsored by the Building Officials Conference of America, Inc., and by a number of construction industry leaders.

The Building Officials Conference has, through a committee of building officials and code experts, prepared a basic building code believed to be adaptable to the needs of practically all communities. It is a performance code, as contrasted with the specification type code which has been generally in force everywhere. Preparation of the basic code is in its final stages and publication is expected some time in 1948.

The Foundation, a non-profit organization, will endeavor to publicize and promote adoption of the code. It will also set up a procedure by which materials may be subjected to performance tests and the results of such tests properly publicized. The plan is for all tests to be conducted by recognized existing testing laboratories, not directly by the Foundation or its staff.

I feel that this grass-roots approach to the problem, which is quite independent of any action by the federal government, is a healthy one promising valuable results. While free of federal sponsorship or financial support, the Foundation will seek the utmost in appropriate technical cooperation by government experts, such as the people who have assembled building code information in the Department of Commerce, the Bureau of Standards, the Federal Works Agency, the housing agencies and others.

A frequent criticism of existing building codes has been met by the Building Officials Conference, which prepared a model code for prefabricated houses. This was, I believe, a sound thing to do. It is important that good houses produced by any means whatever shall find acceptance. However, these particular criticisms may have magnified somewhat the importance of the subject.

This is the year, you will recall, for which the Wyatt program set a quota of 600,000 prefabricated houses. A statement released to the Associated Press in September, quoting the Housing Expediter as authority, stated that only 18,275 prefabricated houses were produced in the first seven months of this year. Mr. Harry F. Steidle, manager of the Prefabricated Home Manufacturers Institute, cited adverse provisions of some codes as one reason for disappointing results.

He also blamed slow progress on buyer resistance, but admitted that prefabricated houses are not yet selling at lower prices than conventional houses.

It has seemed to me that high over-all costs and buyer resistance will persist so long as the prefabricators' effort is directed at selling the superstructure only. It seems to me that quantity production of building lots and of utility connections and services must accompany shop assembly of the superstructure in order to effect a real over-all economy and a lowered price of the complete product, which is the house and lot ready for occupancy.

Conspicuous progress has been made by certain

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home builders who have adopted shop fabrication as part of their development programs. I have in mind the Kaiser Community Homes of Los Angeles, of which Fritz Burns, an experienced land developer and home builder is president. This organization is building 3,000 houses this year, superstructures being prefabricated in a plant which was put in operation last October.

Another organization is Levitt & Sons, of Manhasset, L. I., with a current program of 2,000 houses. Their 1946 program consisted of 1,000 GI houses to sell, with lots, at \$10,000, totalling a \$10,000,000 operation. The Levitts also completed a prefabrication shop last October, in preparation for this year's program. This year's 2,000 houses will sell at \$7,000 each or rent at \$60.00 a month. By designing and producing a house to sell at a lower price, the Levitts are thus expanding their total operation from \$10,000,000 last year to \$14,000,000 this year. That seems to me to be on the beam of industrial progress, American style.

The Levitt organization ran into building code troubles. The Town of Hempstead would not permit the use of plywood for sheathing, substitution believed to be sound and in the interest of reducing cost. A court hearing resulted in a decision by the judge that the code provision was a matter of legislation, beyond the authority of the court to change. The case is being appealed.

Other home builders whose operations are on a sufficient scale to permit it, are adopting site-prefabrication techniques.

It seems to me that the progress that is being made in site-prefabrication contrasts rather sharply with the slow development of factory prefabrication. It looks as if successful factory-prefabrication must be closely tied to lot-production, permitting the sale of the complete product, a house on a lot ready for occupancy.

I question whether the factory-prefabricated house can succeed in any large way on the basis of retail sales. Perhaps the prefabricators can work out arrangements with land developers who will erect and sell the output of the factories on a wholesale basis. It seems to me that site-prefabrication, or something like it is the indicated trend for such industrialization of housebuilding as will produce significant results.

I have listed and discussed a number of current trends I regard as significant for construction. I have not weighed, measured and appraised each one, or put them all together into a blue print for 1948, which is slated to be another year of adjustment of our recently dislocated economy to the needs of peacetime.

Once past this major adjustment, construction industry recovery will swing into the phase of progressive catching up with deferred demands. This phase is likely to be one of continuously increasing volume and is likely to last several years. After World War I it lasted to the end of 1924, a period of six years; that represented, however, a net recovery period of four years, since there was a two-year setback in 1920 and 1921 due to price deflation.

After deferred demands have been taken care of will come a fourth recovery phase. Some people are fearful of a depression at that time. I think these people have an inadequate comprehension of the dynam-

ics of the free-enterprise economy. The essence of the capitalist system is that it must expand to survive; it must expand to larger and larger volumes of activity and to higher standards of living. A dynamic economy thrives on new ventures, new needs and new standards of its people, not merely on a backlog of unfilled orders.

Depression was expected to follow after war-deferred demands were caught up in 1924. The reverse happened. Instead of a depression came a five-year period of general economic expansion and greater peacetime prosperity than the country had ever previously enjoyed. Basis of that expansion was a sound industrial development. It was, unfortunately, accompanied by speculative excesses and unsound national policies which caused the collapse of 1929.

Should all go well with the management of our economic and political problems during the catching-up period there will again be an opportunity for an expansion of the American economy, for development of new industries, for creation of a prosperity that will make that of the 1920's seem meager in comparison.

This happy development cannot be predicted as a certainty. Much depends upon sound solutions of the problems the American people are now dealing with through their elected representatives. The solutions we are finding now and which we will find in the near future for our problems of labor relations, of the federal budget and public spending, and of our political and economic relationship to the rest of the world, are largely determining whether that later phase will be one of expanding prosperity, comparative stagnation, or depression.

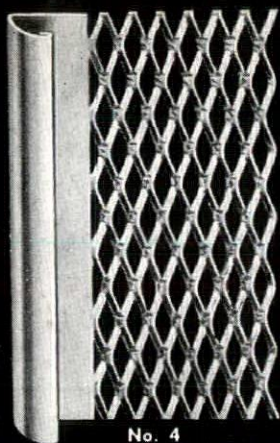
I for one believe that somehow, through trial and error and with such wisdom and energy and good will as we have, this country is going to meet its responsibilities of world leadership, and that, as part of the whole program it will set its own house in order and keep it that way. I am not ready to sell America short.

It is impossible to have an expanding economy without enormous volumes of construction. Every new enterprise, every new development in education, religious, social and community life must be fittingly housed in appropriate buildings suited to their several functions. New needs and families and individuals, new modes of living, new means of transportation all feed the demand for new structures. I don't think America will be finished in your time or mine.

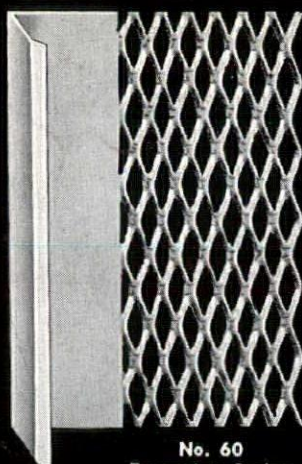
Beyond our current adjustments and beyond the immediate problems being faced in the American economy lies the most promising market for expanding construction activity, and for expanding service of the architectural profession that we have been able to visualize for a very long time.

Carrying the torch of Western civilization is no mean responsibility, no small challenge, no little opportunity. If the American people can this time meet the challenge, I think they can count upon American architects and engineers and builders to express adequately in structural forms the material requirements and the spiritual aspirations of our dynamic New World.

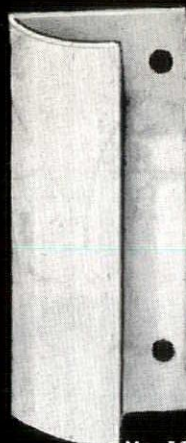




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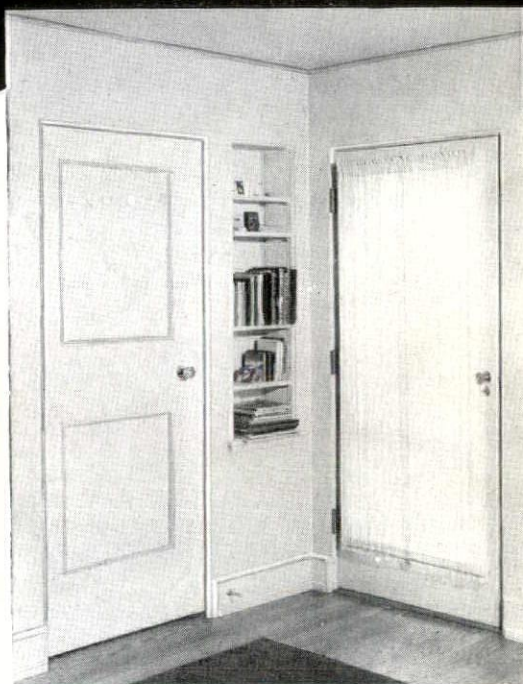


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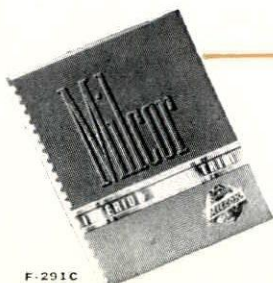
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