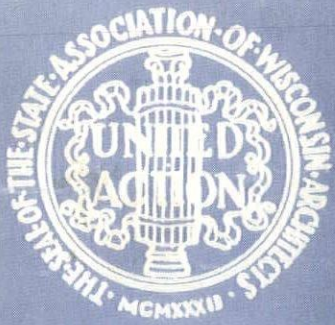


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# THE WISCONSIN ARCHITECT

ARCHITECTURE, when good, is appreciated by all, whether local, national or international, for good architecture is not an acquired taste. It needs no stunts or periods, technical effort or radicalism (called "originality" by some) to interest either the building public, the renter or the intelligentsia. Good architecture has no age. It is the best and most authentic recorder of the history of man's progress and decay.

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CONSTRUCTION?"

by

Dwight L. Hoopingarner  
Chief, Consultation Branch, Bureau of Construction  
War Production Board  
Building Congress of Wisconsin  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
November 20, 1942

So far as restrictive measures by the Government were concerned, construction for civilian purposes continued in line with the initiative and needs of private enterprise without serious handicap for the first year and a half of this Nation's defense effort, as it was known prior to Pearl Harbor.

During this period, priorities had been applied to the use of materials in the manufacture of certain items related to the defense effort, but the use of these priorities was directed toward helping those who needed certain materials for these purposes rather than actually preventing others from getting them if they could find an available source of supply.

No general restrictions had been imposed on the sale or delivery of fabricated products or on their installation in construction. From time to time there were certain exceptions, and a general but gradual trend was developing in the direction of conservation to match men and materials in order to get the necessary production for defense purposes and still meet civilian needs, as well as prevent unnecessary dislocation of labor and industry.

To be sure, the construction of military projects and other new facilities for the manufacture of munitions, machines and other material in the defense program was giving much needed employment to the producers of goods and services entering into construction. However, the movement of men and materials in large quantities to widely scattered construction jobs (some without the continental limits of the United States) along with the rapidly expanding program of production and services related to war caused considerable dislocation of business in various lines. This dislocation affected certain professions and commercial pursuits, as well as labor itself, and these by localities, skills and age groups.

By the Fall of 1941 several specific steps were taken by the Government through the Office of Production Management and the Supply, Priorities and Allocations Board, tightening up on the actual usage of materials in the field of construction and consequently affecting the scope of operations, and therefore employment in various lines, in the entire construction field and especially as related to our civilian economy.

For example, effective September 22, 1941, a broad plan was announced for granting priorities assistance for the construction of 200,000 privately financed defense housing units. Other arrangements had already been made for the granting of priorities assistance to 100,000 publicly financed housing units. The essence of these arrangements was the granting of project preference ratings to expedite the building of essential defense housing rather than relying on the previous procedure which had required different individual applications for different materials. The official statement said in part:

"To qualify for the priority assistance extended under the new plan, construction must be confined to family units not in excess of \$6,000.00, if for sale,

or for which the monthly shelter rental does not exceed \$50.00. These figures represent top prices for housing to receive assistance under the plan."

Defense housing areas were set up and:

"No application for aid will be considered by the priorities officials until it has been demonstrated that the homes involved are designed for and are readily available to defense workers, at prices within their reach, at locations convenient to their employment, and conform to minimum standards as developed by the Defense Housing Coordinator. It must also be demonstrated that such housing is being, or will be, built in such a way as to use minimum quantities of scarce materials."

Along with this, a Defense Housing Critical List on materials was issued and procedure set up for clearance of projects with the Defense Housing Coordinator and the Priorities Division of the Office of Production Management.

By this time actual shortages in the products manufactured from critical materials such as copper and zinc, and delays in securing steel and iron products caused further tightening on metals, as illustrated by the issuance of the general copper order (M-9-c) on September 30, 1941. This prohibited the use of copper in a long list of manufactured products, including many products used in construction and provided for the substitution of less critical materials for the use of copper and certain other products. It is interesting to note that it also prohibited the *delivery* of "any copper insect wire" except for the Army, Navy, etc.

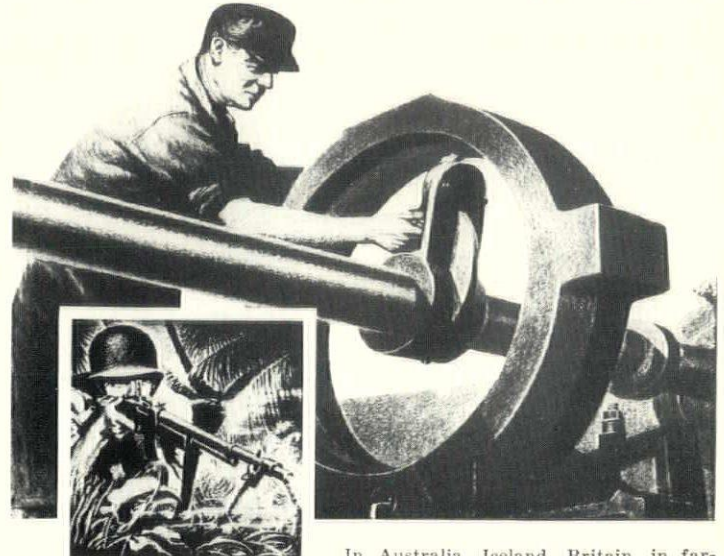
Almost simultaneously (October 9, 1941) what was known as SPAB-9 was issued, giving public notice that non-essential construction as therein defined should not be started. The essence of this statement was that nobody *should* build any projects except those essential to the defense effort, and that no help would be given by the Government in the form of priorities assistance or otherwise to anybody building anything else, but it left the way open to build if materials, labor and equipment could be secured to do so.

This gave, so to speak, a green signal to military and other essential projects with all help possible to them, and a yellow signal to other construction, but no red stop signal was flashed.

The effect of these three measures — the priorities assistance for defense housing, the general copper order and the statement of policy through SPAB-9—soon began to be felt. Along with them came the oncoming winter season. There was also a definite stepping up in the number and extent of various limitation and conservation orders on materials and their use in manufacturing, as an increasing need for the use of these materials in the making of tanks, guns, ships, shells and other material and services of national defense, including defense housing, became more and more urgent in this Nation's cooperation with the Allied forces at that time.

Then came Pearl Harbor. The full impact of war was upon us. We were now in a war economy rather than a defense civilian economy. The demand for new materials for armament, including the greatly growing manpower for military purposes, expanded rapidly. Shifts in strategy dictated by the incidence of war added their tremendous demands not only in quantities but in types, requiring constant readjustments all along the line. Witness Singapore!

**"Whatever thy hand findeth  
to do . . . do it with thy might"**



In Australia, Iceland, Britain, in far-away lands and on the seas, or training in camps and bases, men from the Kohler organization serve our country. Equally in the nation's service are the fathers, brothers, sisters in the Kohler factories, producing with their might the implements of victory.

Long before Pearl Harbor, Kohler plumbing fixtures, heating equipment, and electric plants were going into war uses . . . serving war industries and war housing . . . guarding the health and aiding the efforts of our Army and Navy, at home and overseas.

Now, all the extensive production facilities of Kohler are dedicated to the one imperative task of winning the war. Men and machines work day and night, producing for our fighting forces.

When peace is restored, the knowledge and skill, the special care and unstinted effort, which during sixty-nine years have distinguished Kohler methods, will again be devoted to helping more people enjoy better living. And as a result of continuing research and invention, Kohler will be ready to offer you the finest of fixtures and fittings.

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BUY UNITED STATES WAR BONDS  
AND STAMPS

**KOHLER OF KOHLER**

Before the end of 1941 steps were taken looking toward the regulation and coordination, much more closely than before, of all fabrication and construction activities, both military and civilian, and their articulation with the productive resources of the country. Officials of the Office of Production Management, which was shortly to become the War Production Board, began to work out plans to accomplish the desired military ends with the greatest effectiveness and with the least shock to the pursuits of business and the employment of labor and at the same time to satisfy essential civilian needs in construction.

For several months every effort, consistent with the war program, was made to continue fabrication and construction in as nearly a normal manner as possible. In this there was gratifying cooperation and a sympathetic consideration between Government officials and business and labor. Through January and February of 1942 numerous conferences were held and administrative actions on particular problems taken accordingly.

More and more, however, it became apparent that no fabrication or construction should proceed except where it would use an absolute minimum of materials, labor and equipment and was necessary to the war effort or to the public health and safety.

To this end, the War Production Board, in the late Spring and Summer of 1942, took a number of steps having a very drastic and comprehensive effect upon our entire economic structure. On April 9th it called a halt to non-essential construction not already undertaken by the issuance of what was known as Conservation Order L-41. This order, to quote, "prohibits the start of unauthorized construction projects which use material and construction equipment needed in the war effort. It also places all new publicly and privately financed construction under rigid control, except for certain strictly limited categories." At last the red stop signal was flashed!

Early in May the Bureau of Construction of the War Production Board was formed to coordinate and otherwise assist in the entire construction program within the WPB in relation to civilian construction, as well as certain phases pertaining to the construction of military facilities, and the fabrication of parts entering all such construction.

Then on May 20, 1942, there was issued the broad statement of construction policy in the form of a "Directive for War-Time Construction" signed jointly by the War and Navy Departments and the War Production Board. Among other things it stated:

"1. In order that the consumption of materials and equipment by construction activities shall not impede the production of combat supplies and equipment, it is essential that all construction, whether financed by Government or other funds, be reduced to the absolute minimum necessary for the war effort. This applies also to construction essential for vital civilian needs."

About the same time came the so-called lumber freeze (M-208), with its far-reaching effect; in July an amendment to the utilities order clarifying the situation regarding utilities connections and the like.

Then came further revisions of the lumber order which in effect rate lumber according to its use with respect to classifications of construction.

Then, effective as of September 7, came the L-41 as amended which sometimes directly and at other times indirectly further affects the fabrication and possible use

of materials and equipment, as well as actual construction operations.

As Mr. William V. Kabler, Chief of the Construction Bureau, said when this amended order was issued, "In carrying out the provisions of this revised order, we intend to apply to each case the basic principle underlying the order, namely, the conservation of materials, labor and construction equipment to the fullest extent possible for the essential needs of war, instead of a mere literal interpretation of the clauses of the order."

Likewise, many other limitation and material orders have had similar results.

We now stand, one year after the enunciation of policy established through the issuance of SPAB-9, in October, 1941, at a third phase of the general programming and administration of all construction and fabrication operations, as well as a further application of the brakes under various special orders as L-41, as Amended.

This third phase is one of extreme caution and control over the use of any and all materials and construction, regardless of amount, type or ownership.

Having materials on hand is no longer a reason to build or fabricate. The question now is—what are they and how essential are they in the war effort or for the public health and safety? All other claims are secondary.

Obviously enough, I trust, it is not the purpose of the War Production Board to do anything to drive anyone out of business or to discriminate against any type of business; the purpose and endeavor, on the other hand, is to see that the distribution of materials, equipment and labor entering into construction and fabrication be directed into the arteries of war industries where it is most needed. This is necessary because there simply are not enough materials for everybody to follow their normal pursuits and still provide for the military needs.

You folks here in Wisconsin, of course, are greatly interested, for example, in problems of food production. In this connection the administration of L-41 and related orders has been as liberal as possible not only with facilities for farm production but also with respect to the facilities for processing and distribution of farm products. Thus, even the food service equipment industry is a matter of careful consideration.

For example, there has been issued a "Memorandum Specifications Covering Construction Requirements for Food Storage, Preparation, and Serving Facilities." These memorandum specifications are drawn in light of Directives and Limitation Orders of the War Production Board and the instructions and outline specifications are made to conform with the provisions of these Directives and Limitation Orders. Any changes or amendments to such Directives and Limitation Orders of the WPB subsequent to the date of this memorandum which conflict with any provisions therein will control.

These memorandum specifications and instructions will serve as a guide to all those designated to specify equipment for feeding installations in all projects financed by any government agency or private enterprise and will serve as instructions to those who will strip PD-200 applications submitted to the Bureau of Construction.

This memorandum also explains how equipment may be purchased from stock, even though such equipment is already made of critical material. The instructions designate the types of equipment and material that is prohibited from use on all types of installations and also

lists the materials and equipment that may be specified, purchased or used under exception circumstances if proper application is made for permission to use to the sponsoring agency and accompanied with application to the Bureau of Construction.

With respect to the installation of movable refrigerators in building construction, the Construction Bureau is interested only in the service, piping and wiring to the boxes and refrigerating machinery. The equipment itself is not stripped by the Materials Control Branch.

With respect to built-in boxes, the actual construction is reviewed and stripped by the Materials Control Branch, but again the refrigerating equipment is not handled but is referred to the Branch sponsoring the project.

This is just an illustration of the care with which all kinds of private enterprise related to the war effort are given every possible consideration in relation to the demands of the armed forces on the one hand and the available supply of men, materials and equipment on the other hand.

We realize some of this has been more or less of a hardship, but, after all, we are in a war and even though it may seem that the cupboard has been bare for the past eleven months since Pearl Harbor, our job has only just started, as has been evidenced in our first push in North Africa, which has been most gratifying. We still have a big job to do and the need for conservation is not over yet. In fact, much more is to come.

Nobody among us would wittingly take bullets or gun barrels from the person of a single soldier, sailor or marine—or motors from a fighter plane, but that in ef-

fect is just what we are doing if we use up critical materials on needless building that does not aid in the war effort.

Before starting to build anything today, it is necessary to "Stop—Look—and Listen." It may be your neighbor's boy, or a boy of your own blood, who is calling for that extra bullet or bayonet that may save his own life and that of untold thousands of other American boys and their allies, and shorten by just that much this great conflict to preserve human and humane existence itself.

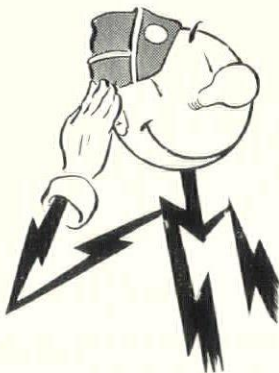
The poet has said that a thing of beauty is a joy forever, but we are now at a time when beauty as such must give way to the cold necessities of this war for existence—until the conflict is finished.

As Chairman Nelson of the War Production Board said recently before the convention of the American Legion:

"And I am sure that you realize that modern war is not just a matter for fighting men alone. It is a matter for the entire nation. . . . Above everything else, it means putting victory ahead of every single thing in our daily lives. . . . It cuts deep. . . . We don't fight this war just with our hands. We have to fight it with our minds and our hearts as well."

And as President Roosevelt said several weeks ago in his fireside talk:

"This whole nation of 130,000,000 free men and women and children is becoming one great fighting force. Some of us are soldiers or sailors, some of us are civilians. . . . Whatever our individual circumstances or opportunities, we are all in it, and our spirit is good."



★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★  
**JUST BECAUSE I'M IN UNIFORM,  
 DON'T THINK I'VE FORGOTTEN YOU FOLKS!**

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Electricity is working for Uncle Sam too. Twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week electricity turns the wheels of industry that turn out weapons that will win the war.

We are all looking forward to the time

when Civilian Activities can again be resumed—when we can again be of assistance to you in planning for the maximum use of all services—services that depend on their correct uses of electricity.

**THE ELECTRICAL LEAGUE OF MILWAUKEE**

Cuts have been made by the War Production Board in the amount of civilian construction to be allowed without specific authorization in a revision of Conservation Order L-4, effective Sept. 7. Order L-41 placed all civilian construction under rigid control.

Types of construction have been reclassified, making distinctions within residential and non-residential categories and, in some cases, reducing the amount of construction for which no authorization is required.

#### PROSPECTIVE BUILDERS CAUTIONED

Prospective builders were cautioned against making commitment for materials until permission to build actually has been granted. The fact that a builder has all necessary materials on hand and needs no priorities assistance will not, in itself, govern whether he should be permitted to use them in construction.

The new classes of construction established by the revision of L-41, with their former and present cost limits, follow:

Type of Construction	Former Limit	Present Limit
Residential	\$ 500	\$ 200
Multiple residential	500	1,000
Agricultural	1,000	1,000
Industrial	5,000	5,000
Certain types of commercial	5,000	200
Other types of commercial, including highway, subsurface and utilities construction	5,000	1,000

#### CLUBS AND AUDITORIA HIT

Included in the types of commercial construction reduced from \$5,000 to \$200 are buildings designed for use as clubs, lodges, associations, fraternity and sorority houses, auditoria or assembly halls.

Multiple residential construction includes buildings designed to provide living space for more than five families or divided into more than five suites.

Industrial construction includes buildings designed for use in manufacturing, processing or assembling of goods or materials.

#### CAN'T HAVE PRIORITIES

In every instance where estimated costs are under the established limits, the owner, before he may begin construction, must be able to acquire enough material to complete the project without priorities assistance. Furthermore, the project must not require the use of any material, on the site or off the site, to supply electricity, gas, water, steam, telephone or sewage disposal service.

#### REPAIR WORK DEFINED

The revised order makes it clear that repair work, on which there is no limit, does not include reconstruction or restoration of construction damaged or destroyed by fire, flood, tornado, earthquake, act of God or the public enemy.

There is no change in the original provision that residential construction damaged by fire, etc., after December 31, 1941, may be restored without authorization. Agricultural construction damaged in that manner after September 7 may be restored in cases where the Department of Agriculture determines that immediate reconstruction is essential to the agricultural program. It is provided, however, that a regular application form PD-200 must be filed within two weeks of such determination.

Industrial and other restricted construction similarly damaged may be restored where immediate reconstruction is essential to the prosecution of the war or protection of public health or safety. In such cases a telegraphed report must be made to WPB within five days, setting forth certain data, and form PD-200 must be filed within the next two weeks.

#### OUTLINE: PRINCIPLES

In carrying out the provisions of the revision, William V. Kahler, Construction Bureau chief, said that the bureau intended to apply to each case the basic principle underlying the order, namely, the conservation of materials, labor and construction equipment to the fullest extent possible for the essential needs of the war, instead of a mere literal interpretation of the clauses of the order.

Mr. Kahler said: "Every builder is urged to ask himself several questions and give careful consideration to their answers before filing applications for authorization to begin construction. He should ask himself whether his project is necessary to the successful execution of the war. He should ask whether it isn't practical to rent or convert instead of building anew. He should ask if his design is the simplest possible, just sufficient to meet minimum requirements. He should ask if there are available all utilities, water, electricity, gas, etc., needed for his project.

"Even if he can answer all these questions satisfactorily, he should consider carefully the possibility of deferring his project for the duration. If every prospective builder met these criteria himself, there would be considerably fewer applications to handle in the bureau and consequently the essential ones could be handled with greater dispatch.

"We want to caution all prospective builders against making commitments for materials with the hope that the authority to build will be given. The mere fact that a builder has all materials on hand and requires no priority assistance, will not of itself govern whether he should be permitted to use them in construction. The sole criterion is whether the project is necessary to prosecution of the war or to maintain public health and safety."

#### EMERGENCY SPECIFICATIONS EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1st

National emergency specifications for the design of reinforced concrete buildings will become effective Jan. 1, 1943, it was announced by the War Production Board.

The date set in an amendment to a directive, issued Oct. 5, which placed the deadline for compliance on Dec. 5 (WPB-1972). However, there was a delay in printing the specifications in a booklet and it has become available only recently in sufficient quantities for general distribution. Agencies handling contracts were urged, nevertheless, to put the emergency specifications into immediate effect wherever possible.

Booklets are available at WPB field offices.

#### ARCHITECT RECEIVES NAVAL COMMISSION

Gage M. Taylor, a practicing architect at Stevens Point, Wis., since 1933, has been commissioned a lieutenant, senior grade, in the navy and will report Jan. 2 at Ohio State university at Columbus. His work will be in aeronautics.

## ELECTION OF OFFICERS

At the annual meeting of the Board of Directors of the Building Trades Employers Association of Milwaukee, held recently at the Schroeder Hotel, the following officers were elected to hold office for the year 1943:

A. A. Ornst, President  
 J. P. Gebhard, 1st Vice President  
 Chas. Liefert, 2nd Vice President  
 Rudolph Biersach, Secretary  
 Geo. Toepfer, Treasurer

The Building Trades Employers Association of Milwaukee has 21 representatives of various branches of the Construction Industry on its Board of Directors.

It negotiates wage scales and working agreements with the several divisions of the Milwaukee Building and Construction Trades Council of the American Federation of Labor.

## CONVERSION CONTRACTS LIBERALIZED

Liberalization of the contract under which the government leases private housing and buildings through its Homes Use Service program for conversion into additional accommodations for war workers and their families was announced recently by the National Housing Agency.

Designed to give still further benefits to property owners willing to cooperate, the lease alterations are expected to iron out difficulties encountered during the first few weeks of the program and permit the fullest use of existing structures in crowded industrial areas, according to NHA Administrator John B. Blandford, Jr.

"Under the revised procedures, the government will be obligated to complete any conversion projects it starts, or to restore the building to its original condition," said Mr. Blandford. "Moreover, if the property owner should desire further alterations than those deemed sufficient by the government, he will be permitted to use his own funds for the purpose, participating in the same conversion project.

"If the government takes over mortgage payments on a property and the mortgage is paid up during the life of the lease, the government from that date on will add the amount of the mortgage payment to the monthly rental it pays the property owner.

"If the government exercises its option to extend the lease beyond the basic seven-year period, during which conversion costs will have been amortized, the property owner will be paid the money which previously was used to amortize these costs."

The overall cost of conversion in the future will be limited to \$2,500 per unit produced, instead of \$400 per room—a modification which will permit many projects which would have to be rejected under the government's original regulations, according to Mr. Blandford. He emphasized, however, that reasonable economy and speed of construction will control exercise of this provision.

Another major obstruction was removed by permitting the signing of a lease providing for future occupancy, thus allowing property owners reasonable time for orderly evacuation of their premises. Previously, leases could be signed only with the government taking immediate possession, a provision which led to misunderstanding and delay.

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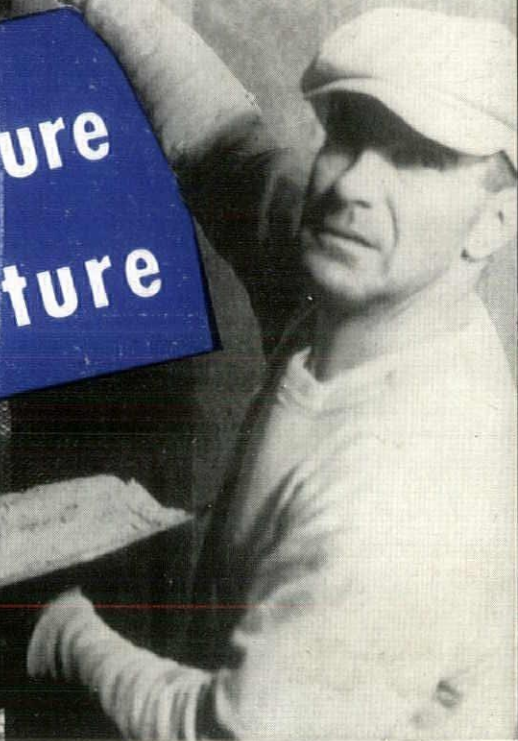
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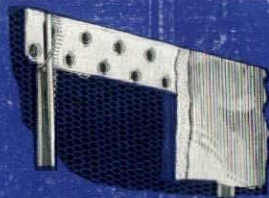
With steel production greatly expanded for war purposes, you can look forward to a plentiful supply and more business than ever, when our soldiers come home. Look to Milcor, as in the past, for the latest advances in fireproof construction.

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