

PROGRESSIVE ARCHITECTURE

newsletter

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October 1949

- Construction costs appear to be stabilized at about 10% below the peak postwar point. Associated General Contractors report that "competition has become keen" among bidders.
- Interesting commentary on building economics is provided in figures showing that although construction costs and real estate prices have dropped in last year, assessed valuation of urban property rose. Latest totals are an average of 4.3% higher than a year ago.
- HHFA has a handbook of information on new Housing Act available for distribution. It can be gotten from Supt. of Documents, Gov't. Printing Office, Washington 25, D.C., at 15 cents a copy.
- Public housing projects have been allocated to 26 cities in the form of "program reservations" under Title III of the 1949 Housing Act. These allocations total over 100,000 of the 810,000 authorized by the Act over a six-year period. Applications for such allocation can be filed only by local housing authorities, of which about 700 exist at present.
- Economic Cooperation Administration has announced recently a number of projects involving construction abroad with ECA funds or counterpart funds supplied by the home country. For instance, Italy is to have two steel plants modernized; Belgium will get a new cement plant; France will have several oil refineries improved. Two of Turkey's salt plants will be remodeled with technical assistance from Morris & Van Wormer, N.Y., engineers.
- George Howe, Philadelphia architect, at present advisor to the American Academy in Rome, has been named Chairman of the Department of Architecture at Yale. Howe is now designing the new American Consulate building in Naples, will return to the U.S. and join Yale faculty in January. He replaces Harold D. Hauf, new editor of "Architectural Record."
- General Panel Corp., manufacturing and marketing a wall-panel house construction system devised by Wachsmann and Gropius, has received a new RFC loan which puts it back in active business.
- U.S. Steel is introducing through its subsidiary, Gunnison Homes, a 4-room factory built house planned to cost no more than \$6300 with lot.
- U.S. Rubber compound known as Surfa-Sealz is being tested on N.Y. City street paving, blended with asphalt to produce a blacktop which it is hoped will be more resilient and more durable.
- A.I.A. has moved into newer building at east end of Octagon property. Octagon, designed by Thornton in 1798, will be refurbished for use as reception house.

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