

J. J. J. J.

ara news

SOCIETY OF AMERICAN REGISTERED ARCHITECTS

NUMBER 12

JUNE, 1969



"PROVIDE A TOTAL ARCHITECTURAL SERVICE TO MEET NATIONAL BUILDING NEEDS NOW" — MURPHY

A. A PLAN FOR ACTION

In the last NEWSLETTER, we discussed architectural problems and ARA goals. Response was enthusiastic. Many replies had membership applications saying: "Let's go!" However, many have commented, "fine ideals, but how, specifically, can we put them into practice." This will be an outline "Plan for Action." It is intended for your comments and implementation to "make it work."

B. THE PROBLEMS SUMMARIZED

To review where we stand:

- 1. Population** — in the next 40 years, the population will double.
- 2. Accelerating change** — Due to technological advances, change follows the same accelerated curve of population. Organizations that do not anticipate this change and the resulting forces will become rapidly obsolete and absolutely ineffective in solving the problems of man and his society in this new world.
- 3. Fragmented Building Industry** — not really an industry, but a disorganized group of hand crafts, unallied professionals, separated trades and unassociated industries, making it impossible to develop an orderly building process — much less its systematic control.
- 4. Antiquated Attitudes** — which restrict and regulate due to self-interest of separate groups and the inertia of organizations.
- 5. Skyrocketing Building Costs** — increasing by 10% per year compared to gross national product increase of less than one-half this amount. We have a decreasing supply of money, and an increasing cost of money. Result — there are physically not enough resources to get the job done in the old way.
- 6. Inefficient Building Methods** — unless building methods can be industrialized, there is statistically not enough manpower to accomplish the building job ahead.
- 7. Unproductive Architectural Procedures** — By "re-inventing the wheel" on every custom-designed and detailed project, the man hours required for the task ahead indicate it is impossible to get the work done in the old way with all of the 30,000 architects involved.
- 8. Architects Losing Business** — architects are involved in only 20% of all construction and in only 5% of housing (at \$50 billion next year housing is one-half of all construction. This is a dollar volume as large as the automotive industry.)
- 9. Architects Losing Money** — lack of volume makes it necessary for many small offices to handle their business like a "Ma and Pa Store Operation", although the small office is the backbone of our profession many architects are going out of the business at a time when there is more work than ever in history.
- 10. Bad Image** — due to the architect's ivory tower approach to building problems, the public has considered him a luxury only for those who can afford an artist and certainly not to be trusted with the job of cost control.
- 11. A Need for Dynamic Leadership** — a crying need exists for rationalization of the total building process and vertical organization of its parts in a systematic manner, then: Dynamic leadership by a new breed of architect, who understand and are able to develop and control this new organization — preferably the philosopher-king, but at least one trained to think as a "generalist" for all parts of the team.
- 12. Need for a Plan and Action** — Accelerating change with diminishing-time means that we must plan for revolution. Evolution retarded by the inertia of old doctrines will never catch up.

C. ARA'S POSITION

We are tired of architecture being a third-rate profession. We want to put architecture back on top by performance, not by legislation. We want a new conviction and a new way, not finding the expediency of the old way acceptable.

We are tired of the sickness of cities, tired of the chaotic ugliness of "hamburger" architecture and tired of the jumbled disorder of promoter-oriented development.

We do not want to stand by and watch history — we want to determine history's course.

At this turning point, we want to join ranks not only with all architects, but with all other specialists in the building industry, with this team to give direction and birth to a new super profession capable of building the environment this world needs.

From the numbing shock of the industrial revolution, let us reawaken to sensitivity, using industrial processes as architectural tools to develop a new golden age of total architecture. Let us provide for man's need, not only for shelter and physical comfort, but for complete emotional satisfaction.

TOWARDS TOTAL ARCHITECTURE

D. THE PLAN

First Change Attitudes — An organization must change its attitudes before it can ever change its direction. An organization without the means of change is without the means of survival.

First Priority Change — "An architect cannot build his own design." For an educated professional group to establish such a rule and then attempt to enforce it by law is utterly ridiculous.

In developing a system as an "orderly process of building," it is impossible to think of separating the design and build functions. It is as ridiculous as expecting Henry Ford to design and prepare the drawings for the Model T and then inventing General Motors so that they could bid and build it under his supervision. Or, expecting Lockheed to design a plane and have it built by North American Aviation.

In my office, we custom design using systems and manufacturing methods. It becomes necessary for us to build our own work for quality, control and time co-ordination. The best supervision in this case is our own supervision to provide a good product, a happy client, and a good reputation.

Pride in the work and the desire to get new work is the incentive. Desire for reputation is the best motivation for craftsmanship and quality. Finally the necessity to meet a budget because it is guaranteed. *Those who feel that you will accomplish this by having an architect-police man looking over the builder's superintendent's shoulder simply do not understand the problem.* That is thought is neither new nor recognized only by ARA is indicated by the following quotations.

Walter Gropius — "Complete separation of design and execution of buildings, as it is enforced today, seems to be altogether artificial. . . . We have withdrawn much too far from the original and natural approach, when conception and realization of building were one indivisible process and when the architect and builder were one and the same person. The architect of the future. . . will be forced by the trend of events to draw closer once more to events of the building production. He will build a closely cooperative team together with engineers, the scientist and the builder, then design, construction and economy may again be an entity — a fusion of art, science and business. I will be more specific, the American Institute of Architects at the 1949 Convention added to the mandatory rules of the Institute a new paragraph which reads 'an architect may not engage directly or indirectly in building contracting.' I have very great doubts about the wisdom of this rule which would perpetuate the separation of design and construction."

"When a client is in the building mood, he wants to buy the complete building for a fixed price and a definite time of delivery. He is not at all interested in the question of the division of labor between the architect, engineer and contractor."

Continued on page four