Report From the University: The Business of Architecture

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Recently I returned from a two week seminar on Architectural Education at Grindstone Lake, Wisconsin. This conference was sponsored by the Associated Collegiate Schools of Architecture and The American Institute of Architects. The New Mexico chapter of the A.I.A. contributed a one-half scholarship which made it possible for me to be one of the participants. The seminar was attended by fifty architectural educators. There were morning, afternoon, and evening sessions with prominent architects and educators leading the discussions.

The keynote of the conference was established by John Burchard as he posed the questions "What is the true picture of architectural practice today?" and "Are the schools training architects to fulfill this roll?"

Time and time again the answer was "No." The schools were training men in the tradition of the 19th Century dilettante architect. Each hopes to be another "Howard Roark." Architectural schools emphasize design for all their students, disregarding the fact that only 5% of them ever become designers and that there are many other services an architect must provide. Charles Burchard, Jean Paul Carlhian, Ralph Rapson, Edmond Bacon, Paul Goodman, to mention only a few, expressed many ideas in regard to this.

The summation of the conference seemed to be that the architectural revolution is over. Contemporary architecture has won. Individualism is dead. The basic approaches to architecture are established. Our function is to refine, not to continue the design battle. This is not as exciting as the revolution but is much more difficult. We must now strengthen our positions. We must prove we are worthy of our responsibility of environmental control. We must prove to society we are essential, that our service is for its benefit, that we supply a comprehensive and realistic need.

This is the period of large corporations, demanding a comprehensive design service. If the architectural office doesn’t supply this service some one else will.

It was further concluded that the so-called A.I.A. code of ethics, which in many cases prevents this, is obsolete and the architectural profession today can be compared with amateurism in college football. Every architect talks about ethics, but a great deal of hypocrisy is involved. We must reinvestigate taboo restrictions imposed on the profession, such as, the package deal, architects doing contracting, architects investing in buildings, public relations and fees and answer these questions based on conditions today. Stop this stupid argument as to whether architecture is an art or a profession—architecture is a business.

Charles Burchard, who is a partner in Kenny Corp. in Cincinnati, Ohio, outlined their organization. It consists of 200 people which include 45 architects, 5 designers, planners, engineers including processing engineers, chemists, economists, sociologists, and three public relations men. This company provides (Continued on Page 15)
period Chairman of the Department of Physics at the University of New Mexico. He is an eminent research scientist in the field of Physics. Dr. Workman is one of the co-inventors of the proximity fuse during World War II and has been prominent in the fields of meteorology and military research. For those who would like to know more of Dr. Workman, we suggest you refer to Who’s Who—quite amazing.

There you have it; I apologize for such a lengthy article, but I sincerely do believe that the knowledge of these men, limited as it is, will bring some to the Conference who would not otherwise attend. It should also be noted that there might be friends, not in the profession of Architecture but interested in science in the manner in which we are offering it, at the Conference who would like to attend our sessions. Please make it known to them that we are including in our registration, “Guests”, and they will be most welcome.

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**Report From The University**

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the following service: programming which includes product analysis, future expansion, economic feasibility, master planning, architectural design which includes mock-up of building details for cost and construction considerations. It didn’t include construction.

How can the one-man office compete with this service? He cannot. This is what big business demands. If the architect doesn’t supply this service, some one else will. Remember that of approximately sixty billions that are spent each year in construction in this country, less than twenty billions is designed by architects.

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