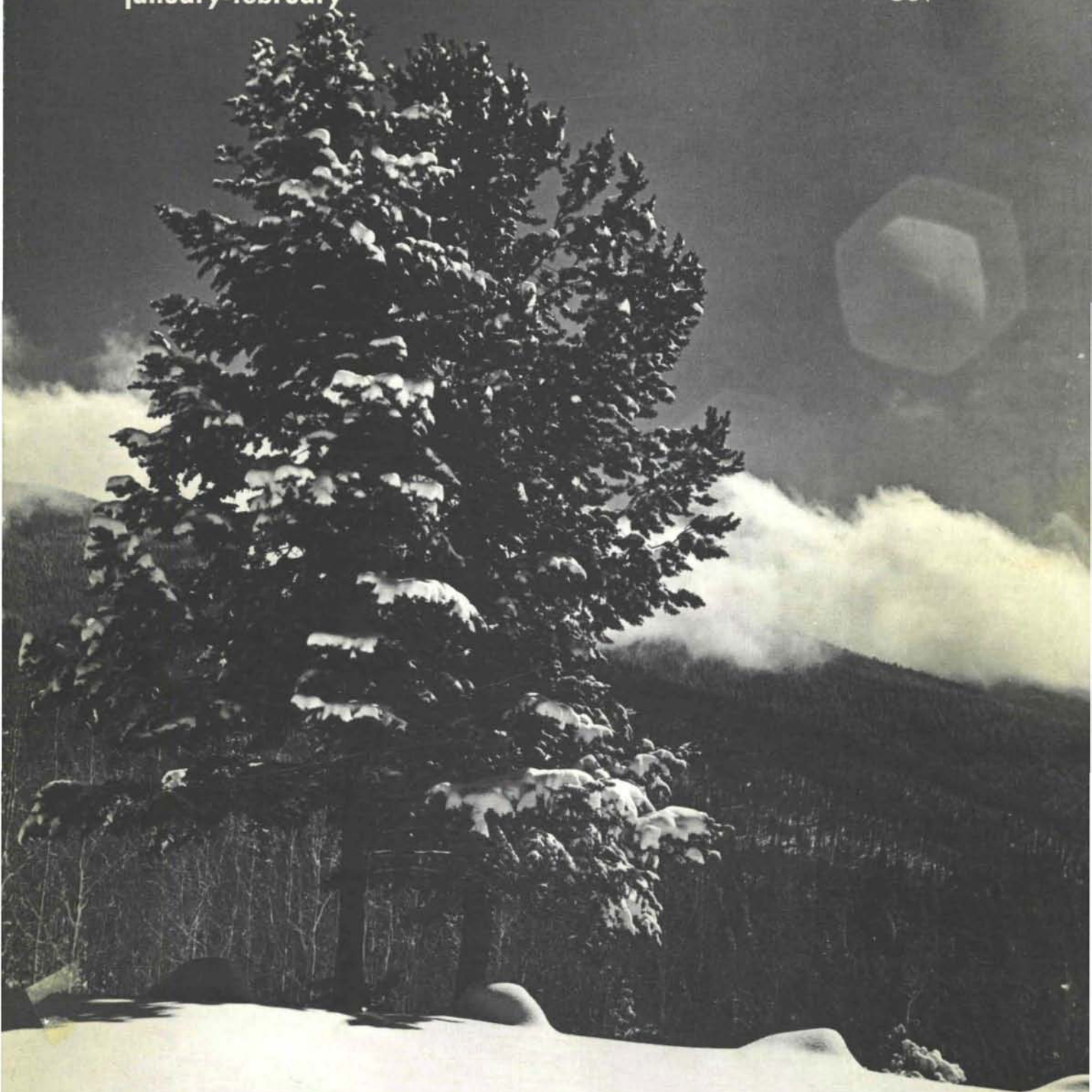


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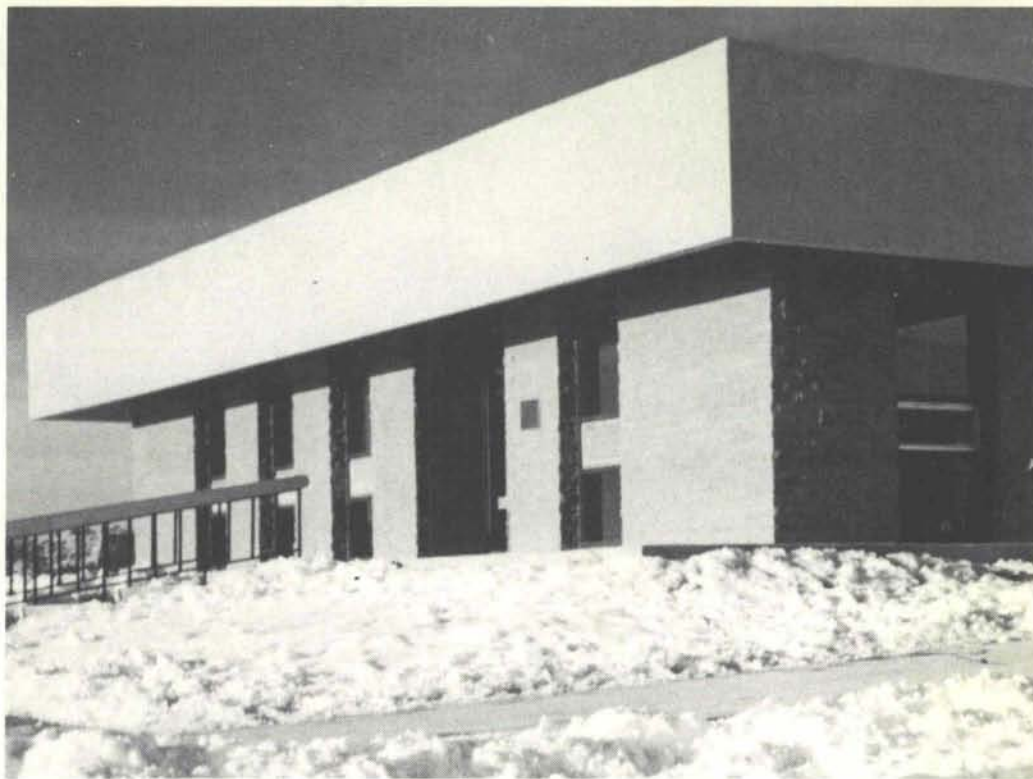


1973

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A look at the recent AIA
Regional Conference
page 10

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IN THIS ISSUE:

The recent Western Mountain Region, A.I.A. Conference held in Albuquerque discussed Architectural Education. The panel of speakers included present and former deans and one architectural historian. The editors of **SYMPOSIA** were taping the entire conference and were planning a full reporter's report for their December issue. Because of magazine schedules, the November/December **NMA** was already in preparation and could not contain a conference report, and the December **SYMPOSIA** would be in the hands of its readers before this issue of **NMA**. Further, Rosalie Merzback, of the **Daily Journal**, Denver, Colorado published a fine report of the conference in a November issue. Therefore, I decided to ask for a conference overview from a conference participant. Because historians are those people who have "perspective," I asked panelist/historian Buford Pickens, FAIA, to write his views of the conference and to put its purpose into historical perspective. Beginning on page 10 is Mr. Buford's article. Admittedly, it takes a sometimes less serious view of this conference, and all conferences in general, than does **SYMPOSIA**, or Ms. Merzback. But it also brings out Mr. Pickens' concern for the present structure of architectural education in general and the American Institute of Architects in particular. Real and serious questions faced the panelists and, as Mr. Pickens points out, these questions remain unanswered.

The book reviewed on page 9, and the articles on pages 14 and 15 address themselves to a national concern: the rampaging, piecemeal sale of small plots of land for a new home, a vacation home, a retirement home, an investment, or whatever. The New Mexico Legislature is in session and is again feeling the weighty pressures for and against strong sub-division control legislation. What shall be the outcome?

The type in this issue is small, but we too feel pressures. The cost of production versus the advertising income! We had too much to say in too little space! Sorry about that.

JPC

jan. - feb. 1973 • new mexico architecture

nma

Book Review 9

"The Great Land Hustle," by Morton C. Paulson
—reviewed by John P. Conron

Revival Meeting or Call to Action? 10

—a look at the recent AIA Regional Conference
by Buford Pickens, FAIA

Californication Comes to New Mexico 14

—Mark Duran

Land Subdivision Legislation 15

—Sally Rodgers

Index to Advertisers 18

(Cover photograph by Robert Nugent)

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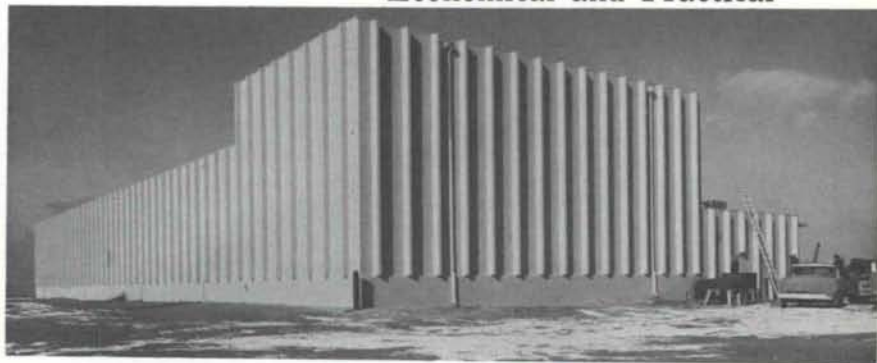
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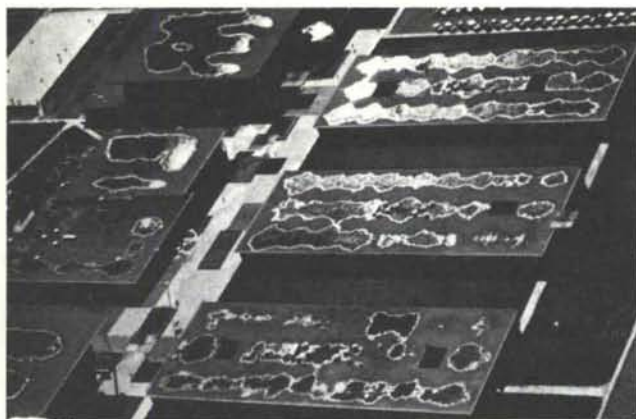
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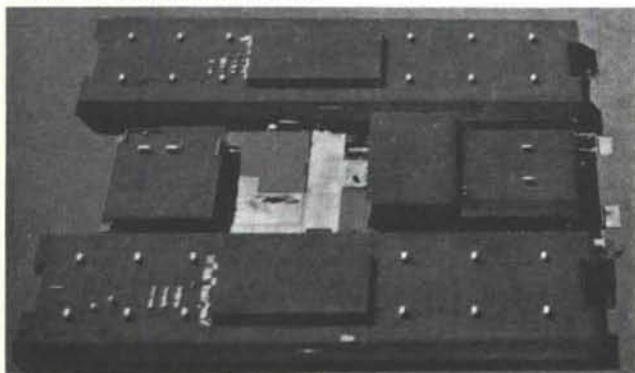
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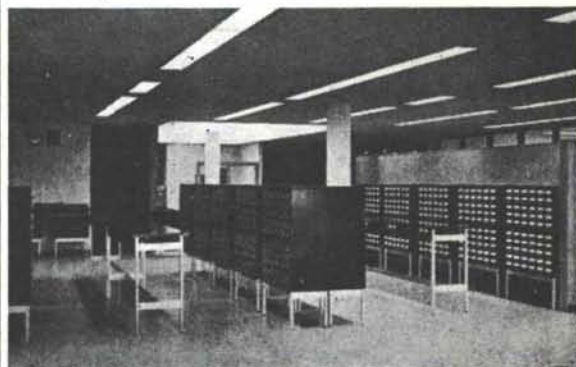
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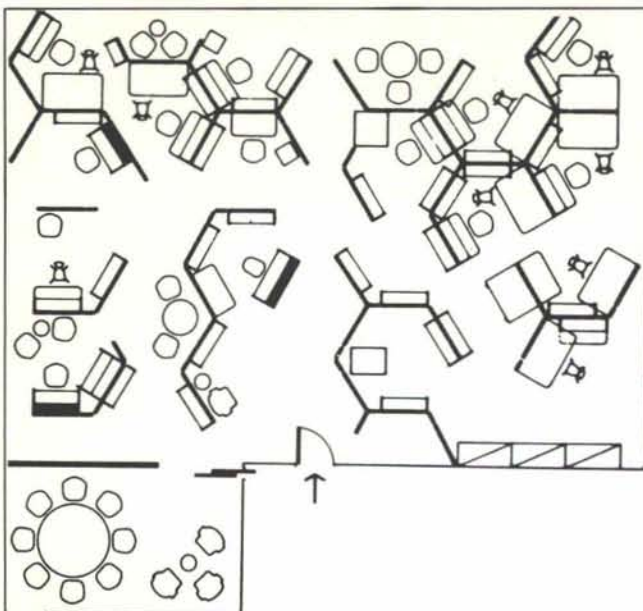
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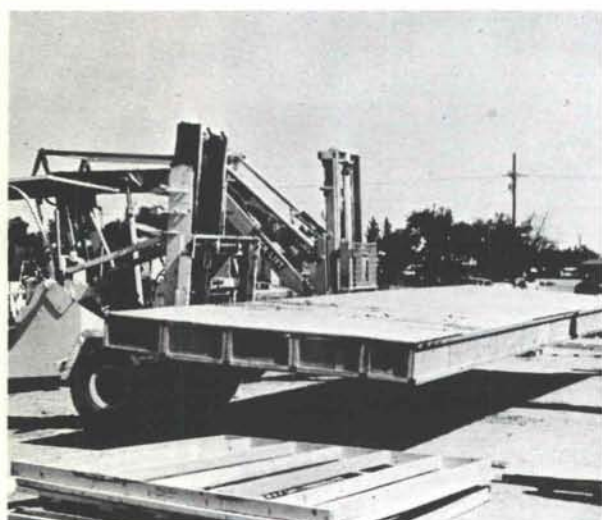


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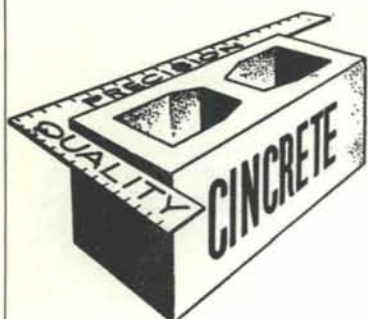
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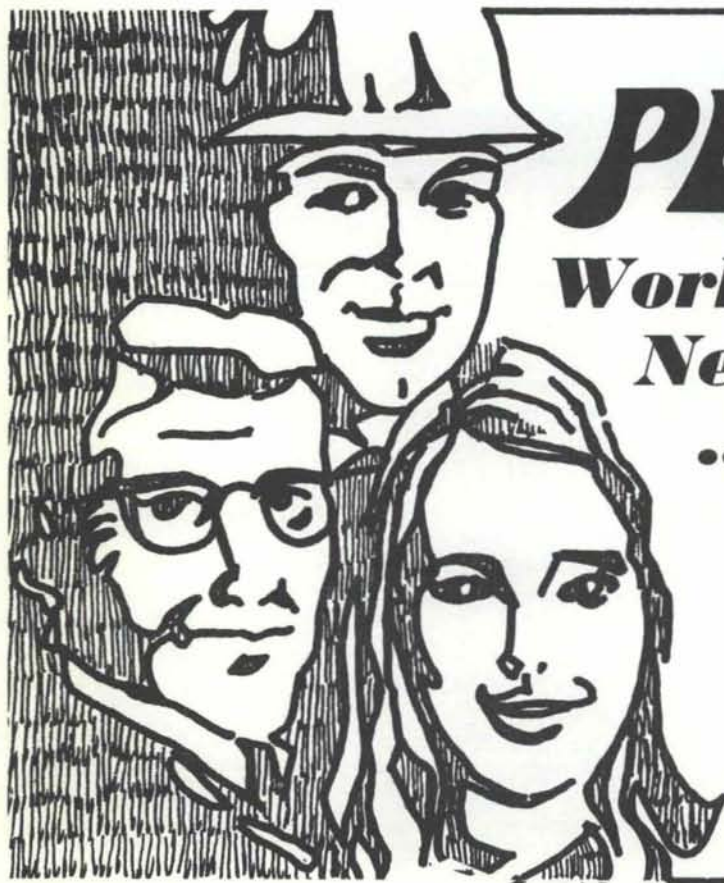
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THE GREAT LAND HUSTLE

By Morton C. Paulson,
Henry Regnery Company, Chicago 1972

"It's time to call a halt. Too many people have been swindled. Too much land has been laid waste. Too much damage has been inflicted on the environment. Too many reputable [land] developers have been besmirched by disreputable ones."

With these opening statements, Mr. Morton C. Paulson, business and financial editor of the *National Observer*, begins to unfold before his readers a detailed "look at the record" of land abuse and misuse, of corporate profits in the billions and of thousands of American suckers.

Mr. Paulson is not writing about small fly-by-night swindlers, but about some of the nation's largest, and sometimes seemingly, reputable(?) companies. Boise Cascade, ITT Community Development Corporation (a subsidiary of the International Telephone and Telegraph Corporation), Horizon Corporation, and AMREP Corporation are among those whose history of land selling come in for vivid reporting. The book is a well documented attack on the abuse by the mighty few upon the face of this nation. "The shell game operators and snake oil peddlers who roamed the country-side a century ago were amateurs in comparison with many modern-day land sellers."

Although the 1968 Federal Truth-in-Land-Sales Law has helped to eliminate the most blatant land sales practices, it has had little effect on the more sophisticated sales methods. And, as Mr. Paulson details, the law seems to have been made good use of by some land sellers. "By far the largest percentage of bamboozlement in land sales results from perfectly legitimate tactics, consisting largely of outrageous baloney about land values, garnished with half-truths, and delivered with pile-driving sales pressure." To be sure, one can say that if the customer is so gullible, then let the seller have his nice fat profit. As State Senator Eddie Barboa (D-Bernalillo) exclaimed during the 1972 legislative ses-

sion: "I don't see why we should spend hours worrying about somebody in New York spending \$1,500 to \$2,000 on a worthless piece of New Mexico land. If they're that stupid, let them do it."

However, the results from such an approach can be devastating for the long range interest of this, or any other state. New Mexico has no state-wide land use plan—nor has it any meaningful sub-division legislation. (See page 15 of this issue of *NMA* for the Central Clearing House's analysis of the current proposal before the 1973 Legislature.) The selling of "worthless" and not so worthless land to "New Yorkers" results in a myriad of tiny plots, which will thereby hamper, or more likely prevent, the eventual large scale planning that could lead to putting New Mexico's vast land resources to their best long-range use.

Mr. Paulson explains how the sales system works, how the truth-in-lending law can be—if not violated—circumvented. It would appear that the present truth-in-lending law has too many industry inspired loopholes which the land sales personnel use with agile abandon. And not only is the notion that "gullible clods are the only victims completely false. Professors, engineers, doctors, newspaper reporters, public officials, and even lawyers have been duped. Of the many older people who are persuaded to relocate in retirement communities, some encounter all sorts of unforeseen problems and disappointments, including higher living costs than they had expected."

Read the fine print
in a sales contract along
with your lawyer.



However, there are many good guys in the business of development, both large and small. Intelligent planning and legitimate demand for living space has resulted in well designed and executed communities. Columbia, Maryland and Reston, Virginia (even with its earlier growing pains), are among those sited by Mr. Paulson.

Continued on page 14

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Of special interest will be the displays of several manufacturers of environmental equipment. Fume scrubbers, compactors—even noise abatement devices will be on exhibit. "The ecologically minded electrical industry has engineered solutions for many of the problems," Vitus said, "and the public should be aware that we are responding to the need."

Six seminars have been scheduled in conjunction with the Trade Show. Each seminar will be offered on both February 14 and 15.

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This will be the largest electrical trade show ever held in the Southwest. One hundred fifty-two booths will be on display at the current show.

The Electric League of Arizona is an association of all segments of the electrical industry. Primary purpose of the 300-member organization is to foster the conservative, intelligent use of electricity in marketing and installation of residential and commercial electrical equipment.

Revival Meeting or Call to Action? a look at the record

Last October the editor of the country's most prestigious AIA Society publication invited me to write a modest contribution for its pages. He suggested that *New Mexico Architecture* could use a short but pithy piece about the four-day AIA Western Mountain Regional Conference held in Albuquerque, October 18 through 21, 1972. The theme, as I recall, was: "Education of the Architect." The editor's invitation came rather informally, whispered through the dulcet strains of a well-rounded mariachi ensemble during one of the spirited hospital-ity events. Since I was a guest panelist, I had assumed that this offer, if I heard it correctly, should be accepted as a flattering tidbit to be consumed along with pickled onions and gin-soaked olives provided for bobbing purposes by our gracious hosts.

Thus it came as a pleasant surprise some six weeks later to be reminded that my recollections were confirmed. Somehow, I had imagined that your editor would be up to his ears in recorded tape made during the four-day session at the Four Seasons. However, I did not know that he was unable to keep his recorder plugged in. It seems that during the conference the motel was still under construction, and the electricians had installed only two receptacles (actually one, two-hole convenience outlet). As a chivalrous gesture and unobserved by the audience, the NMA editor shared his plug-in rights with the two charming lady journalists from Denver. Because of his generosity, apparently he was left short of material. Readers should be warned that I already delivered an oral summary of the conference proceedings at the final banquet session. Apologies are hereby extended to any NMA subscribers who have already heard this recapitulation of the serious side. However, the editor has reassured me that some repetition is permissible since many left early, and those who stayed would have been too drowsy to remember.

Our era will go down in history as the great epoch of the panel-conference; it is modern society's partial remedy for an overdose of passive spectator sports; it gives the illusion of participatory democracy, especially when the feedback response (or hot line) is an essential part of the program. Conferences in our day, including those on architecture and education, seem to have descended directly from old-time revival meetings that were held annually back in the days of the horse-and-buggy. Sinners within driving range would come together once a year for two or three days of singing, praying, preaching, picnicing and holding hands. It was a time of general spiritual release pregnant with temporary therapeutic values. After careful preparation by the local congregation and their deacons, out-of-town evangelists would take over the proceedings, exorcise evil spirits, convert transgressors and reassure the faithful. Usually, the most notorious reprobate in

the community could be inspired to rise up, shout testimonials and, amidst a chorus of amens and hal-lujahs from the audience, would accept the path of righteousness. Back in those early days people called it a moving event; today, under controlled hotel-motel circumstances, we refer to it as a meaningful dialogue or, if confrontations appear, a happening.

The greatest similarity between the old-time revival meeting and the AIA-Educational conference lies in the generating of a temporary exhilaration followed by a predictable backsliding effect to status quo. Six weeks used to be the maximum duration, under the most favorable circumstances, for visible signs of salvation to remain. Today everything seems to be speeded up. For too many architects who do not attend, the time period of a state of grace is zero, especially if they also do not read. For the architect who participates, the euphoria of good intentions may last until he is bumped by the old practice of job-stealing, fee-cutting and miscellaneous chiselling that is accepted as part of the game. For the educator who attends the conference, realities of budget, administration, faculty deadwood and unmotivated students soon forces him to give up any thoughts of redesign, and to feel virtuous enough just to tinker away at the old curriculum: two-two-two, two-by-four or, as at Harvard, 2 plus 2 equals 6. Another means of obtaining instant applause from students is to change the course from table d'hôte to smorgasbord with no limit on dessert and with icebox or pantry privileges for those who can't make the schedule of classes.

The accepted standard of ethics in professional practice gets conveniently set aside in the outwardly polite, dog-eat-dog competition. The same code that ambiguously defines the transgression implicitly prevents the policing of any but the most flagrant violations by small fry. All architects seem to live in glass houses. Fear of retaliation protects especially the big-boys who usually have their spokesmen installed as officers at the national as well as regional and local level. In some cities smaller firms know that they exist almost by courtesy of the larger ones. In this regard individual chapters and regions will vary but the problem seems to be general. Under these circumstances, with images of the "successful" architect conspicuously before them, the schools are forced by conscience and by students to look elsewhere for their models.

There should be no quandry about which comes first, the chicken or the egg, in relating cause and result to the practice of architecture and education of the architect. Today's profession has to be the chicken, positively or negatively responsible for tomorrow's architect. The school is the incubator providing an artificial, temporary environment with necessary heat and light until graduation, but with

IA Regional Conference held in Albuquerque... by Buford Pickens, FAIA

no control thereafter. The most talented, idealistic and responsible graduate from the best school gets lost in attempting to cope with the reality of professional practice—which is not the printed code of AIA. He soon learns the possible options: either 1. adjust to the operative norm; 2. keep a low profile as employee; or 3. run a very small office; or else 4. get out.

The AIA needs a two-party system.

Having known and observed five or six generations of students and their later progress in the profession, it is sad to witness the metamorphosis. Unfortunately, the national AIA organizational structure seems to reward and encourage "operator" types; the prescription of rewards and promotion through the committee structure seems designed to weed out the idealist, the creative thinker, and the designer. A few make it through the Chapter level and the Region to the National Board where they are outnumbered and their best efforts frustrated. The present system has reached a dead end. If, as I believe, the improvement of schools depends upon the inspiration of major reform in the profession itself, and if the profession depends upon its tightly organized Chapter-Region-Octagon web, then one must conclude that the AIA needs a two-party system. Major reform is impossible without a loyal opposition to force the upgrading of performance by the establishment. Perhaps then the students would prefer to be trained as *architects* and not cop out into the various hyphenated hybrid fields.

The 1972 WMR Conference, thanks to the courage and skill of its program committee, succeeded in exposing most of the basic issues before representatives of all who are primarily concerned viz., students, faculty, school administrators and practitioners of various ages. That in itself was a major accomplishment not possible in many regions I know. Furthermore, the conference was long enough to permit after-thoughts to surface. Everyone was given a chance to be heard and reheard with a conscientious effort made to answer questions by individuals. The incident about who should or should not sit on the platform was a nice theatrical bit well played impromptu by all the cast. Too bad that architects as space planners don't experiment more with the effect of seating arrangement on group dynamics. They continue to neglect the lessons of history of architecture from the functional design of a kiva to the British House of Commons. A depressed cockpit, as demonstrated so appropriately by the performance at The Barn Theatre, would have served better as a conference setting. Dean Colbert could have been quietly elevated into the haymow and the students could have dramatized their entrance and exit from all four corners. Best of all, the par-

ticipating power-to-the-people audience could have enjoyed refreshments at their tables, elevated properly, well above the speakers who could spin around on revolving chairs. When will architects learn the lessons of history?

The opening discussion of the College Curriculum focused attention on the nature and usefulness of a "core" which is the same question Adam must have asked Eve. The core of a curriculum in the past has been that essential minimum of required studies all architectural graduates had in common. Today, when some architectural students want to be social workers in housing, researchers in industrial pre-fabs, city planners, or work for a consortium in the field of environics, there can be little overlapping, at least for some schools. However, if the profession of architecture was led by creative thinkers and designers who could hire and fire their salesmen and accountants instead of the other way round, perhaps the schools could devise a core of studies that would relate to better ways to design buildings for people.

DISTINGUISHED CONFERENCE PANELISTS:

Daniel Boone: Practicing architect in Abilene, Texas. Past President of the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards.

Charles Colbert: Practicing architect in New Orleans, Louisiana. Former Dean of Columbia University School of Architecture.

Buford L. Pickens: Educator-Historian. Former Dean of the Department of Architecture at Tulane University and Washington University at St. Louis.

Ambrose M. Richardson: Chairman of the Department of Architecture at Notre Dame University. Past President of the National Architectural Accrediting Board.

Forrest Wilson: Director of Ohio University School of Architecture. Former editor of Progressive Architecture magazine.

Richard C. Peters: Chairman of the Department of Architecture at the University of California, Berkeley.

Conference Moderator: John B. Reed, practicing architect in Albuquerque and conference program chairman.

About this time in the conference, Daniel Boone, FAIA, from Abilene, Texas described the newly devised, wide-mesh, no-graphics exam for National Council of Architectural Registration Board applicants. After considerable discussion about passing the buck back to the schools, one sympathetic, old-time gentleman from Utah asked how in tarnation we could expect the schools to prepare the poor be-

wildered students of 1973 when the professionals themselves do not understand the residual connotation, nor even the digital, non-responsive functional analysis? The answer from the panel, according to my notes, was that today's neophyte, while he is still in school, must be provided with a total mechanism for his own sequential, decision-postponement patterns that will be needed by 1984, only twelve years hence.

Can the practice of architecture be taught in universities???

Forrest Wilson then raised the fundamental question: "Can the practice of architecture be taught in universities?" Obviously, the question was intentionally loaded. Also, it was a frankly disarming, hair-down confession of confusing the Forrest with the trees because Wilson had just become director of Ohio University's School of Architecture. Such an admission by him invited a straight answer; obviously he was not intending to be rhetorical, even though implying in plaintive tone that he might as well ask how can the blind lead the blind.

Ambrose Richardson, FAIA, newly appointed chairman of the Notre Dame architecture department, and former president of the National Architectural Accrediting Board recalled that during the 40's, the 50's and even into the 60's we still had relatively clear, if limited objectives: first to gain acceptance of a new and non-eclectic architectural form language appropriate to the technology of our era; and second, to win the freedom to use these new four-letter words like f-l-a-t r-o-o-f, p-i-p-e r-a-i-l, g-l-a-s b-l-o-c-k. But instead of progressing with clarity and order toward meaningful statements, we seem to have laid the haphazard foundations for an international Tower of Babel. After this statement, it was apparent that apprehensive apparitions crept into the discussion.

Don Schlegel was cheered on by a block of U of N.M. students, who with firecrackers had recently been forcibly ejected from beneath the platform by "Hot-Foot" Charles Colbert, former dean of Columbia University. Schlegel claimed he had convincing evidence in the form of model studies to show that symbolic use of tinker-toy type of clip-on and plug-in schools will not work in the desert environment. He was vigorously supported from the floor by Jess Holmes and Bob Campbell who reminded the guest panelists that they were in a heap of trouble if they came to the mountain region thinking that certain elements here were the creative response to the interface orbital strategy. Indeed, they were obviously not capable of organic regeneration under the New Mexico systems and subsystems put forward by Bainbridge Bunting in his latest book on the buildings of Back-Bay Boston.

At this point Hal Stroud pointed out that as far as Tempe was concerned "A City is Not a Tree" and furthermore, a building is not jumping cholla

in spite of what M. Whiffen has written to the contrary. Jim Elmore added that as far as he was concerned a building is not a tumble weed either. A young lady student from A. S. U. explained that at Tempe, following the sensitivity experiments at the AIA convention at Boston in 1970, the School of Architecture at A. S. U. has given up freehand drawing for freehand feeling. Jorge de la Torre signed up for a post-graduate course.

Don Stevens cast a critical eye on the notion that cellular agglomerates lack the power either of synchronicity or etiolated stimuli. He explained to the students that he was opposed to such a proposal as being wholly inconsistent with the Spanish Colonial traditions surviving even today in modern form at Rancho Encantado. He believes that contemporary architects could learn a lot from listening to the guitar recitals of Ruben Romero.

At this point Maximillian Flatow objected that the conference was entirely too negative and that the loud speakers were too loud. He said that the imported panel was merely minimizing the maxis and maximizing the minis. This line of totalistic planning did not jibe with his views on hierarchial organization and played directly into the hands of the prevailing elitists from the U. of N.M. graduate school who had taken over his office pueblo. Furthermore, to use his own words: "It is a far cry from the poetic language that Adler and Sullivan perfected and from the organic principles that Wright and Schindler bequeathed to the western mountain folk." Cheers and applause arose from all corners of the hall.

Conference Chairman John (Don Juan) Reed (Rédarigo), a descendant of Ponce de Leon, who came from Mississippi to Albuquerque in search of the Fountain of Youth, called upon Brad Kidder who has produced plans for a back-to-back, tetrahedral megastructure designed to straddle Sandia Mt. Rosemary Merzback, editor of the *Denver Daily Journal*, immediately requested publication rights. At this point the conference recessed while the two sturdy Trunks from *Symposia*, the super-regional magazine, asked if NMA Editor Conron would be willing to help them untangle the mumblistic and twiddlistic articulation that was cluttering up so much of the tape recording. With the recorders turned off, even the students were unwilling to talk so the session broke for lunch and/or the rest rooms.

After lunch on the second day (or it was it the third?) Jason Moore spoke briefly about his research on the new project called Fun-el-Town or Instant City. The feature of this unique conception staggers the living quarters in a cluster of giant funnel superstructures. He was invited by Dick Peters, head of the architecture department at the University of California, Berkeley, to speak to his homogeneous student body. Incidentally, Peter's own distinguished and bearded head was separated from his body by a high, white plastic collar which he said was fine therapy for three slipped discs, but it was embar-



The doodle art of Panelist Charles Colbert.

rassing to wear because he was really a blue-collar person at heart. His school is combining architecture with social work until the California architects can introduce more humanism and less pollution in the built environment. His students have called this the new Peters Principle.

Requesting the mike, the old-timer from Utah said he could now see as well as hear the Tower of Babel. He began to realize how the new language of architecture provided too many hifalutin words—a babel that kept architects even from understanding each other. The vocabulary of technical means has outrun our ability to express fundamental architectural ideas that people can grasp—ideas that relate buildings to the environment. Have architects and students spent too much time thumbing noses at each other and at regional and vernacular traditions? He proposed that “the conference could save itself from the recidivistic [sic] fate of a revival meeting if representatives of each chapter and school would go home and together discuss the subjects presented at the conference; there must be better systems to organize, practice, build, teach and learn.” He recommended to them the following questions which the panel raised but did not answer:

1. Is the issue the training of architects or the education of people?
2. Is teaching a profession or a part-time hobby?
3. Can neophytes teach neophytes?
4. Why are schools so fearful of research in, and evaluation of, educational method, especially in design?

5. Why are both architectural schools and offices almost wholly immune to regular, constructive criticism by each other?
6. Why do architects look the other way when members of their profession either (a) build badly; (b) pollute the visual environment in serving financial interests of the client instead of the public; (c) recommend needless destruction of historic architecture they do not even try to evaluate?
7. Why are architects, as individuals, afraid to take a stand on public or civic issues that are not patently self-serving?
8. Why is there so little about architecture in the mass media?

The venerable gentleman from Utah concluded with this admonition: “If you don’t like my questions or the way I have worded them, compose your own polysyllogistic [sic,] substitutes.”



It would be interesting to find out if the WMR-AIA Chapters or schools accepted the challenge to make the conference a call to action instead of just another revival meeting. Anybody know?

BLP Dec. 12, 1972

As Mr. Paulson reports, some states have begun to take action to protect their citizens and what remains of their land. In some cases, these laws seem to hold promise. A new Florida law allows the state to designate areas of critical environmental concern and exercise regulating authority within them. Colorado has a new Land Use Act, and there are land use policy bills pending in Congress. But, as has happened in the past, "One of the greatest disservices a government can do is to enact protective legislation, but fail to enforce it properly. The public, thinking that it is safeguarded by law, becomes more vulnerable than ever to swindlers and con artists."

Of especial interest to New Mexicans should be Chapter 12. Under the heading, "Raping the Land of Enchantment," Mr. Paulson details the plight of New Mexico. In a 1970 article in the *Denver Post*, former U.S. Interior Secretary Stewart L. Udall described New Mexico as "under siege by speculators." In Chapter 12, Mr. Paulson gives a vivid description of the tactics and pressures brought to bear to prevent passage of sub-division control legislation in the 1972 session, by such companies as Horizon, AMREP, Southwest Land Corporation, and Santa Fe's own Colonias de Santa Fe. Wrote Stewart Udall, "Land speculations are rapidly foreclosing the expansion options in the fastest growing states of the Southwest . . . This is an environmental disaster of major proportions. It is sabotaging a water-short region that desperately needs orderly growth and well-planned communities if it is to protect the fragile environment . . . Irreparable damage has already been done. But, if the slow-footed legislators and public officials don't act soon, they may find the cities surrounded by ghost towns gouged into the desert topsoil while the super-developers laugh all the way back to their eastern banks."

"The territory that has been sub-divided in the vicinity of Albuquerque, New Mexico (population 242,411), could accommodate four cities the size of Baltimore, Maryland (population 895,222)."

This is highly recommended reading. The 1973 legislative session is underway. Send a copy of "The Great Land Hustle" to your state senator and/or representative. *John P. Conron*



CALIFORNICATION COMES TO NEW MEXICO

by Mark Duran

Growth is inevitable in a capitalist country based on an economy such as ours. However, growth can be a qualitative, as well as quantitative phenomenon. New Mexico is presently facing a pe-

riod of unprecedented growth, primarily in the form of land "development."

Subdivisions are not entirely new to New Mexico. In 1950, 5,000 acres of land were subdivided in our state. In 1960 this number had multiplied eight-fold to 40,000 acres. As of 1970, approximately 1,000,000 acres had been platted for subdivisions. Can our land and resources accommodate the estimated 2,000,000 additional people? This is a question which we should all consider as such an increase affects everyone.

Subdivision dwellers will have to compete with natives for existing jobs in a state with unemployment figures over 10% in some counties and as high as 27.9% in one county (from Employment Security Commission of New Mexico, May 1971). Children who live in subdivisions will, in most cases, have to attend existing schools. This is a heavy burden on what are now poor and inadequate facilities in many areas. The mobile, pre-fab classrooms cropping up in school yards attest to the growing pains our school system is experiencing.

Contrary to rumors, Albuquerque does not have its water trucked in from California and water has been a decisive factor—throughout New Mexico's history. During the Spanish conquest of the Southwest, settlements were founded along the Rio Grande or other available water sources. Only by mining water through the drilling of wells have communities been allowed to grow to their present size. This in itself is a dubious achievement, because water obtained by drilling is taken from a reservoir which took thousands of years to form, and is a valuable and limited natural resource. Albuquerque presently receives water from seventy-four wells, in various locations, and a recent study of the municipal water system indicates that many improvements must be made to wells, pumping stations, reservoirs, and distribution, just to meet the projected needs of 1980.

In addition to schools, all public facilities will feel the added weight caused by the large influx of people. Looking at our main thoroughfares during rush-hour traffic or our recreation areas in fair weather, one feels a sense of dismay at the crowding, which is akin to, uncontrolled growth, even in these so-called "wide open spaces."

These new communities require increased energy provisions, perhaps in the form of power plants similar to the Four Corners variety.

Prospective land purchasers should realize that development companies are not obligated to supply water, except when provisions are written into the purchasing agreement. In all cases, water usage is controlled by the State Engineer's Office. Because of the water situation (the question of water rights may be complicated when the land is under lease from an Indian tribe) this office has the power to regulate the amount of water used by individuals or companies on an annual basis. Water rights as governed by the State Engineer is a first come, first served arrangement. All wells must be approved by that office prior to drilling. Approval is based on the criterion that its operation will not interfere with existing water users.

Of similar concern is the question of sewage disposal. Here again the agreement in writing is the only legally binding situation. Often, a developer makes no provisions for sewage disposal, other than individual septic tanks. This arrangement is unacceptable because of geographical and/or geological conditions, in some cases, and a house may be condemned on these grounds. A survey of thirty major land developments in New Mexico showed that twelve listed individual septic tanks as the means of sewage disposal and an equal number listed individual wells as the sole means of obtaining water.

Probably the most depressing aspect of land development is the selling and promotional aspects. Many lot purchasers are people from out-of-state. Their decision to buy may be based on brochures or tours provided by the developers. This is often combined with free dinners and give-aways hosted by well-informed sales personnel. Though there is no blatant false advertising or gross misrepresentation, certain desirable elements may be emphasized, while disadvantages are understated. New Mexico is portrayed as a year-round sunny and warm, outdoor recreation haven, not an accurate description in view of the wide temperature range and winter snowfall. Developments or streets and roads are given names which conjure images of lush vegetation on rolling hills, when in reality the grading of acres may cause erosion

The corporation known as AMREP has 91,028 acres in New Mexico. Other properties listed include 150 oil wells in various locations, a mobile home community, and 20,000 acres in Florida. It is rated as a \$140 million corporation. Because it is second to Horizon, it has an extensive promotion campaign, including flights from out-of-state areas to Albuquerque. While staying here, prospective customers are given first-class accommodations and meals and taken on tours of the Duke City, a promising metropolis, as anyone can see. These expensive promotional campaigns are probably only possible because developers buy low and sell high.

It is up to each individual to make his opinions about land development in New Mexico known to his representatives. Preventing the active deterioration of a fragile environment should be of major concern to us all.

M. D.

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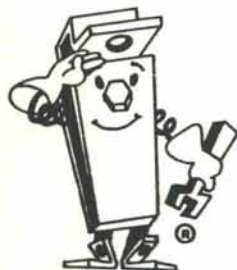


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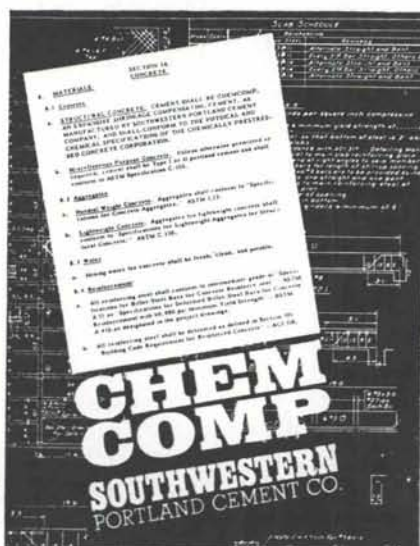
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Albuquerque Testing Laboratory	6
Builder's Block & Stone Co., Inc.	8
Building Corporation of America	4
Design Interiors, Inc.	6
Electric League of Arizona	9
El Rey Stucco Co.	7
Hanley Paint Mfg. Co., Inc.	4
Hydro Conduit Corporation	20
Koepke, Lee A., Contractor	16
Mason Contractors Assn. of N.M.	2
McGill, Geo. B. Co., Inc.	6
McMillan & Associates	18
Neumark Co., Inc.	7
New Mexico Marble & Tile Co.	19
Nugent, Robert, Photography	19
Overhead Door Co., of Albuquerque ..	16
Prestressed Concrete Products, Inc.	4
Public Service Co. of N.M.	8
Plasco Inc., Albuquerque	16
Rocky Mountain Stone Co.	6
Santa Fe Builders Supply Co.	7
Southern Union Gas Company	17
Southwest Vermiculite Co.	5
Southwestern Portland Cement Co.	18
Spectra-Glaze	17
Stryco Sales, Inc.	19
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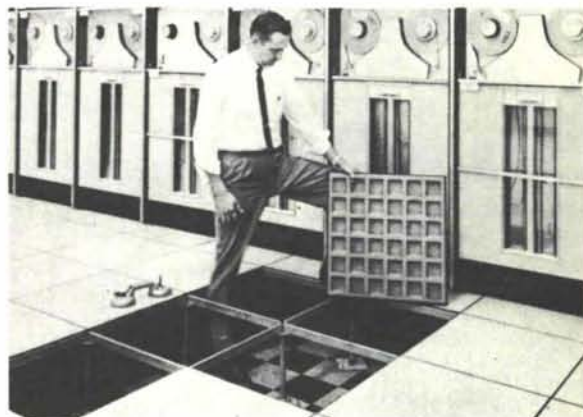
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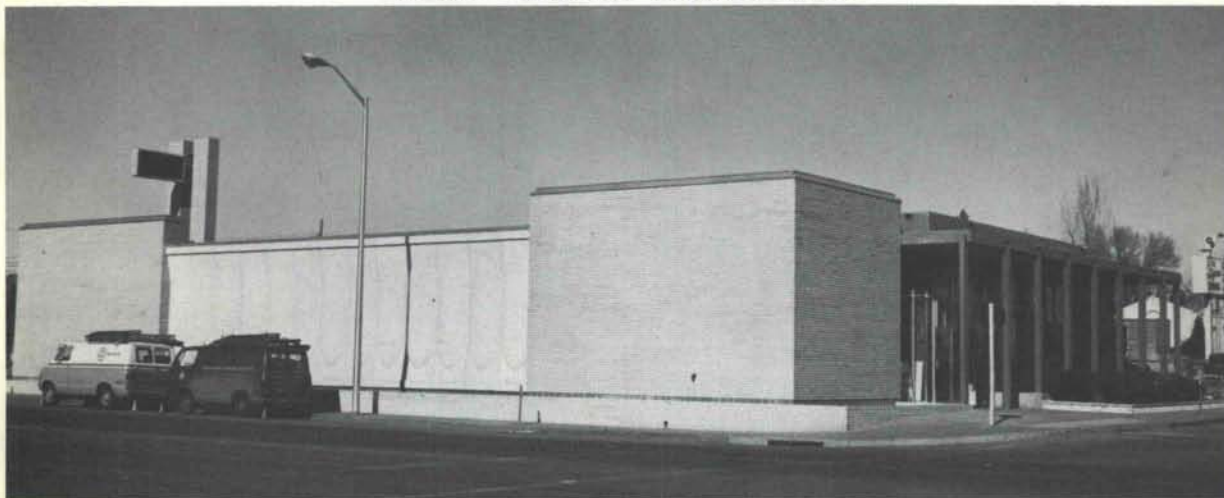
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