

ARCHITECTURAL RECORD



BUILDING TYPES STUDY
SMALL MEDICAL
BUILDINGS

225

AUGUST 1955

WHAT KIND OF CRITICISM HAS CONGRESS HEEDED IN

*This Congressman, a Former Bricklayer, Asserted Design Is "Not American,"
Warned Against Use of Such "Experimental Materials" as Glass and Metal*

(From Congressional Record — Appendix)

EXTENSION OF REMARKS

OF

HON. JOHN E. FOGARTY

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 20, 1955

Mr. FOGARTY. Mr. Speaker, my office has received a number of protests concerning the design of the new Air Academy as made public by the Air Force several weeks ago. Investigation of the situation leads me to bring this matter before the House. Unless Congress calls a halt to the present plans of the executive department, it would appear that the Secretary of Air and the Air Force are about to make a serious mistake, one with which we would have to live for many years.

Establishment of a national Air Academy as the Air Force counterpart of West Point and Annapolis was the lifelong dream of the late Gen. Billy Mitchell. This dream moved close to reality last year when Congress authorized an expenditure of \$126 million for this purpose. Subsequently, the Air Force appointed as Air Academy architects a Chicago architectural firm which designed the Lever Brothers glass building in New York and a number of industrial structures throughout the country. The firm, Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, was appointed to design the Air Academy, coordinate the engineering services, and supervise construction. On May 14, models of the design were unveiled at Colorado Springs, Colo., the site of the new Academy.

What was seen by the congressional observers and the press caused considerable consternation. A spontaneous protest by churchmen throughout the Nation caused the Air Force to withdraw almost immediately the design for the chapel. This glass-and-metal creation was described variously as an accordion lying on its side and a line of telescoped Indian tepees. Outside this tin building, hanging from a metal rack in the fashion of the ice cream wagon we see in summer, were the church bells. The whole business sat on a terrace which one ar-

chitect said was Egyptian and another said originated with the Incas.

The balance of the plan has not been altered, we are told. The over-all plan consists of a number of glass, aluminum, and steel buildings on stilts. When he first saw the design, Representative HARDY, of Virginia, commented that it looked like a cigarette factory. Congressman HARDY proved to be something of a prophet, because only a few days later, Frank Lloyd Wright, the famous architect, declared flatly that the Air Academy design is a violation of nature. He predicted that the Air Academy, if built as planned, would become known — not as the national shrine it should and must be — but as Talbott's aviary and a factory for birdmen. Mr. Wright said in a letter which was published in the Colorado Springs Free Press of May 27:

"The Air Force Academy looks to me as if another factory had moved in where it ought not to be."

Since that time, there seems to have been considerable confusion. According to the Air Force's Public Relations Department, work on the Air Academy is to begin this summer. Yet, Secretary of Air Talbott has been quoted in the press as saying the design is not yet in its final form.

My purpose in discussing this subject today is to urge its revision — in its entirety — for two basic and most important reasons. They are quite simple: First, the design is not American in conception and is unworthy of the tradition of this Nation; second, the taxpayers should not be saddled with an initial cost of \$126 million for construction of the Academy and its supporting facilities, and heaven knows how much more for maintenance over the years, to build a monument to experimental materials.

Let us take these points one at a time.

The Air Academy should be a national shrine, as are the historic buildings of West Point, and the Naval Academy in Annapolis. Like its Army and Navy counterparts, the Air Academy should reflect our Nation's origins, its culture,

represent its teachings, and symbolize its humanity. It should have warmth, and beauty, and an atmosphere of American history. The Air Force has stated publicly that, besides teaching our future airmen mechanical skills, its duty is to inculcate unimpeachable character, an unflagging sense of duty, and devotion to the best interest of the Nation.

Instead, we have a design and choice of materials reminiscent of a cafeteria. A knowledge of architecture is unnecessary in sensing the faults of this plan. It is difficult to find any trace of American heritage in the cold, impersonal, and mechanical appearance of these buildings. Several leading architects who studied the drawings and photographs of the models made several interesting observations. What they said can be compressed into two sentences. The design is not American. It is based on a hodgepodge of European and Near Eastern influences, and not even the best of those. When you examine the models, you find the Egyptian or Near Eastern terraces. The senseless elevation of everything on stilts, I am told, was popular in Europe — particularly in Germany — during the 1920's, but has since been discarded as outmoded.

The cold surfaces and lack of decoration follow the fad we have seen expressed principally in New York City. Last April, Bishop Fulton J. Sheen, commenting on so-called modern architecture, described the United Nations building and the new glass and metal buildings on Park Avenue as — and I quote — "illuminated cracker boxes or elongated shoeboxes on stilts." One of the Air Academy designers stated in unveiling the models that his was a timeless design and will be good 100 years from now. He is a brave man, and a wise one, too, to look so far into the future and tell us what it holds.

I wonder if some of our so-called modern architects, back in the days of the Civil War, were not saying the same sort of thing about the jigsaw architecture which became a craze for a brief span. You may remember the jigsaw architecture — the odd-looking cutouts and

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DEBATE OVER AIR FORCE ACADEMY DESIGN CONCEPT?

Lay Critics Said It Wasn't Traditional; Wright Said He Had a Better Design

On July 14 the House of Representatives voted to refuse construction funds for the United States Air Force Academy. It did so on the recommendation of its Appropriations Committee, which felt "it would be most unwise to provide funds for construction until the design is more firmly established." The Committee added, "The new Academy should reflect the best traditions in American architecture; the design should inspire the confidence and respect of the American people." The Congressmen who were publicly quoted on the subject left little doubt that in their minds "modernistic" design could hardly achieve this. The only witnesses in addition to representatives of the Air Force and their architects to testify at Appropriations subcommittee hearings on the subject were Frank Lloyd Wright (see page 32A), who said he had a much better

design "in the back of my head"; Adin M. Downer, legislative counsel, Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States ("the proposed design does not reflect American history and tradition"); and Henry Hope Reed Jr., writer and member of the Municipal Art Society of New York ("our Jeffersonian tradition is the only one which offers a style so broad as to admit the best we can do in the arts, and to give room for history and memorials").

To introduce some "expert testimony" into the public discussion, the RECORD invited comments on one Congressman's views (across-page) from the president of the American Institute of Architects, a leading architectural historian, and the president of the Producers' Council, Inc. Mr. Wright, who is quoted in the speech, was also invited to comment.

Professional Views Sought by the RECORD

From the American Institute of Architects came a copy of a statement sent earlier to Secretary of the Air Force Harold E. Talbott:

It was called to the attention of The Board of Directors of The American Institute of Architects at its recent meeting held June 25th in Minneapolis, Minnesota, that the design for the proposed Air Force Academy for the United States, Colorado Springs, Colorado, is receiving a certain amount of adverse criticism and that this criticism has been widely publicized.

In view of the importance of this project historically and architecturally and in view of its significance to the American people, The Board of The American Institute of Architects felt it should state The Institute's position with respect to the engagement of and confidence in American architects. The Institute believes that matters of principle and policy are involved.

In arriving at a selection of architects and architect consultants for the design of this important work, the Secretary of the Air Force followed ethical and objective procedures that were in the public interest.

The architects and architect consultants selected by the Secretary of the Air Force are among the most distinguished of American practitioners. Their experience is extensive, their reputations are world-wide and the buildings and projects to their credit are among the most significant productions of the American professionals. It is understandable that any structure or work of art will find itself the target of criticism, sometimes

voiced without a knowledge of the problems involved. Design is best accomplished by men who are trained and experienced. There is no question of the experience and ability of the professionals engaged by the Department of the Air Force.

The United States of America now leads the entire world in the excellence and progress of architectural design and construction techniques. The Department of the Air Force has chosen its architects through proper and ethical methods.

The American Institute of Architects is firmly convinced that the commissioned architects should continue with the further development of their plans and the Department of the Air Force should proceed with confidence knowing that the final result will be in the best interest of the American people.

The following statement is the response from Prof. Hugh Morrison of the Department of Art and Archaeology at Dartmouth College, a director of the Society of Architectural Historians and author of the book Early American Architecture, a standard reference in its field.

Representative Fogarty has made a skilful and plausible attack on the proposed design for the Air Force Academy at Colorado Springs. His chief point is that "the design is not American in conception and is unworthy of the tradition of this Nation." He seeks "an atmosphere of American history," comparable to that which he claims for the buildings of West Point and Annapolis.

As an historian of American architecture I am deeply disturbed by such an erroneous conception of architectural tradition.

All great ages have created architectural beauty in their own way and expressive of their own day. The succession of past architectural styles—Greek, Roman, Gothic, etc.—affords ample proof that while architectural beauty is permanent, it is not permanently the same. We admire the Parthenon and Chartres Cathedral, but too often forget that in their day they were daringly modern buildings.

The age which produced the U. S. Capitol had been immersed in several generations of a "classical" wave of style. It found itself unable to escape completely from these European precedents, yet it is clear that the great men sought to express a distinctively American spirit. Jefferson, behind his classical columns, was searching "the course of a nation looking far beyond the range of Athenian destinies." Latrobe, Jefferson's friend and a designer of the Capitol, strove valiantly to create an "American order."

Robert Mills, architect of the Washington Monument, the Patent Office and many other Federal buildings, aspired to an American beauty which he did not himself yet know how to create. "I say to our artists," he proclaimed, "study your country's tastes and requirements, and make classic ground here for your art. Go not to the old world for your examples. We have entered a new era in the history of the world; it is our destiny to lead, not to be led. Our

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vast country is before us, and our motto *excelsior*."

Horatio Greenough, creator of the great statue of Washington, wrote feelingly: "I contend for Greek principles, not Greek things. . . . The men who have reduced locomotion to its simplest elements, in the trotting wagon and the yacht *America*, are nearer to Athens at this moment than they who would bend the Greek temple to every use." What new architectural inspiration might he not have found in the swift lines of modern planes?

Shall we, more than a century later, urge *imitation of the superficial forms of the past rather than work in the creative spirit of that past*? Shall we, with enormously greater advantages in knowledge and in technique, be less bold in vision than our forebears?

They told us clearly that by being ourselves we can best become great. European critics for the past half century have regarded our modern architecture as the only distinctively American style we have produced.

Mr. Fogarty fails to perceive the truly classic and enduring qualities of the proposed design for the Air Academy. Set on a series of rising plains high in the Rockies, and ascending to an impressive "acropolis," these buildings have a clean-cut, quiet and simple beauty that echoes the serenity of the Parthenon —

and yet is American, not Greek.

He disparages them as "cold, impersonal, and mechanical" and deplors their lack of decoration. But what better decoration than the warmth and color of plants and flowers against these spacious terraces, what better ornament than the glistening glass walls, adorned by dark reflections of the great mountains and the shifting images of clouds and sky?

Preserve us, in this day, from going back to the knights-in-armor architecture of West Point. Impressive indeed are the frowning ramparts above the Hudson, but they speak of the age of Coeur de Lion and Godfrey de Bouillon. Cannot we speak, in dynamic modern beauty, of the realities and ideals of America in the air age? Tradition is of value only when it is behind us, pushing forward.

From William Gillett, president of the Producers' Council Inc., the major association of U. S. building materials manufacturers:

You have invited comment on the recent remarks in the Congressional Record by the Honorable John E. Fogarty of Rhode Island on "American Architecture and Building Materials".

Architectural styles of buildings, like art of all kinds, can evoke pro and con arguments and there are many in this land who will speak highly of the pro-

posed design for buildings of the United States Air Force Academy. Regardless of the architecture selected, there will be a division of public opinion as to whether or not the appearance of the completed academy is appropriate. The same argument will hold as to the appropriateness of the choice of materials to be used. To say it is obvious that "Glass and metal, of course, are alien to American monumental design — even to European" is not too evident in the architectural effect gained by many architects in today's building designs.

If confidence is to be placed in our excellent American building designers then we should leave to them the choice of design as well as the choice of materials to carry out that design. If on the other hand debates are to be carried on in Congress to affect the choice of design and materials, it will cause endless discussion in which, by rights, proponents of all kinds of construction should be heard. This procedure would obviously delay the Air Force Academy for an indefinite period. If our capable architect President, Thomas Jefferson, is to be exemplified as furthering American art and architecture, it should be remembered that he tried many new things and through such trials made numerous contributions to American architecture. Why should we not further our American building art with new ideas?

Wright: "Mr. Fogarty Does Not Go Far Enough"

With Congressman Fogarty's criticism of the design for the Air-Force Academy, which I have just read in the Congressional Record, I agree almost entirely. But Mr. Fogarty does not go far enough. The scheme for the Academy now presented wholly ignores the great opportunity afforded American architecture by the noble character of the site and has no feeling whatsoever for the nature of the occasion. I suppose this is to be expected because expedient government would choose expedient architecture as expedient for the purpose. But what may be tolerated as an urban poster for soap is not tolerable as inspiration for the youth of America. This type of standardization in commercial architecture has already shown severe limitations now so clearly manifest in the mental confusion of this Academy Air-Force design. To execute it would only be to build into our national future a confession of the failure of the vital spirit of America. Our country has a spirit. We

cannot afford to credit — much less build-in — any such victory of publicity-managed commercialism as this already dated cliché represents. These "composites" now omnipresent in the practice of Architecture should never be trusted with a concept. Their function is at best executive. Confine them there.

This exploitation would not only disgrace but establish a future spiritual and technical stumbling-block for the American spirit. The very expediency it exemplifies is bound, sooner or later, to defeat — as it has here overshot — itself. We have seen this sort of thing coming along for some time. On the record now is this depression of the greatest of the arts by planned expediency. But, that an already dated version of the cliché should become national, though feared, was hardly to have been expected. A fresh start with a worthy concept is now salvation but highly improbable: the great opportunity has been

sold. Where the honor of a Nation is thus at stake a nominally paid competition is the only moral proceeding: say one hundred thousand dollars offered to no more than several architects selected for past experience in creative achievement (I should myself like to be one of them to show how practical American architecture, inspired by the site, could be) and these men be invited to submit their several schemes, in sufficient detail, to a proper tribunal composed (certainly not of already lost experts and specialists) but to the as yet unconditioned minds of American youth, say those now in the high-schools of these United States: the several designs to be incorporated in a suitable brochure and submitted to high-school principals to enable students to vote their preference. This Air-Force Academy will be theirs, for better or for worse. The Democratic process might be worth while. It would be educational at least. For all concerned?

AIR ACADEMY DESIGN AS FOGARTY SEES IT

(Continued from page 16)

scrolls of wood that cluttered up every building that was erected for a time. Today, the buildings which were victims of that architectural aberration are archaic curiosities.

Architectural styles are variable and fickle. Yet West Point and Annapolis are as in keeping with American tradition today as the day they were built. It is significant, too, that each of these

great service Academies has found it desirable to tell its history — and the history of the United States — through statuary, busts of its heroes, murals, portraits, and other objects of art. Presumably, the Air Force has the same goals — to immortalize its pioneers, its leaders, and its generations of fighting men. It would seem strange, indeed, if the Air Force has not planned artistic representations of the history of aviation, murals depicting our great aerial victories, statues of Gen. Billy Mitchell, and our other heroes of the air. This

is visual education. Thus is taught reverence for service and country. But how do you execute a mural on a glass wall? Where do you hang the portraits? Is there any place for tradition and a narration of the history of America amid glass walls and aluminum panels? I think not.

Now we come to the second point. The choice of materials. Glass and metal, of course, are alien to American monumental design — even to European. This is so obvious it needs no further comment. Let us then concern ourselves with the compatibility of the materials with their demands from the standpoint of structure and environment. The Weather Bureau reports that temperatures in Colorado Springs area range from 27 below zero in February to 97 above in June and July. There is intense sunlight. Yet the Academy instruction building has glass walls, floor to ceiling. Any engineer can provide information on the heating and air-conditioning problems of glass buildings. The problem is difficult; the costs, enormous. I understand the glass walls of the Air Academy buildings are to be tinted to reduce some of the glare. There seems little or no justification for this. There is an interesting — not to say fantastic — rationalization of it.

I will read one sentence from the current issue of the magazine, *Architectural Forum*. Commenting upon the glass walls and their effect on the airmen, the *Forum* states:

"Some days they will squint, but the basic Air Force expression is a cowboy squint, shrewd and appraising."

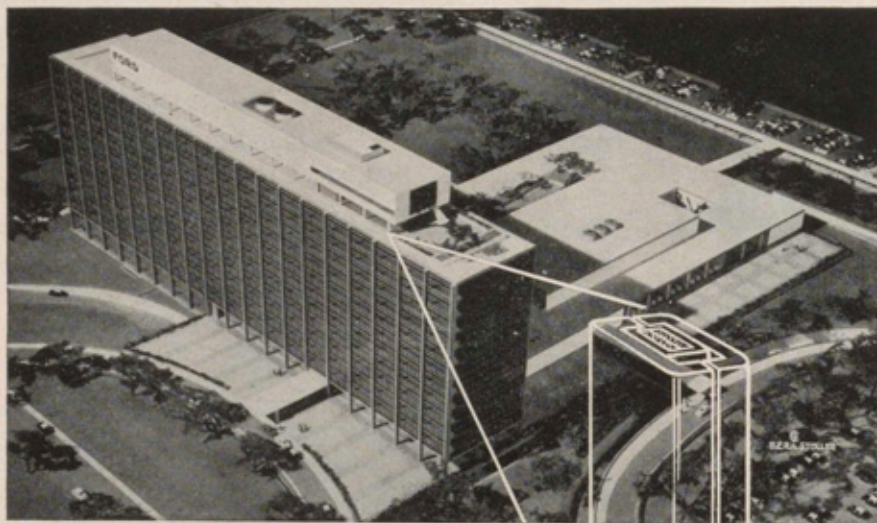
It is a fascinating rationalization — to make a virtue out of a structural fault which makes you squint to protect your vision.

Let us consider another factor. An 8-inch brick wall will easily withstand a 4-hour fire test during which the temperature applied rises to 2300 degrees. Actually, many fire clays will resist up to 3000 degrees. This 4-hour fire rating is mandatory in many parts of the country. Glass, on the other hand, provides little or no fire protection. It shatters easily under lateral force, pressure, and/or heat. Aluminum, of which a generous amount is contemplated in the Air Academy, melts at 1200 degrees. This temperature is reached in less than 10 minutes of the fire-rating test. These fire test specifications are established by the American Society for Testing Materials.

Now let us come back to the aluminum panels recommended for exterior wall

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AIR ACADEMY DESIGN AS FOGARTY SEES IT

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use on several Air Academy buildings. I have a letter written by the Sibbald Mason Constructing Co. to the Structural Clay Products Institute. The contractor, discussing the aluminum and steel construction of the new Statler Hotel in Hartford, Conn., has this to say — and I quote —

"I have observed and been informed by the architect and the vice president

of the Statler chain of an existing condition that has caused considerable anxiety due to several facts as, namely, (1) it is difficult to hold caulking in place to stop leakage as vibration from wind is severe. (2) Shrinkage in aluminum on an 80-foot span is 1 inch. (3) Discoloration varies in panels in less than 1 year. (4) Dirt seems to be more noticeable on aluminum panel than on the white Hanley brick used on same building."

This information hints at the maintenance problems and costs which the Na-

tion's taxpayers would face with the Air Academy. It would be interesting to have maintenance figures on the United Nations building in New York. The United Nations building is metal and glass. It is said in building circles that the building leaks like a sieve and repairs are constantly in progress. I have been told that approximately \$360,000 was spent on repairs little more than a year following completion of the United Nations building. And, while we are discussing maintenance, let us give a thought to the Lever Bros. building. This is particularly interesting since the architects who designed it are the ones who originated this concept of the Air Academy. I have been told that the Lever building had to have special scaffolding equipment installed on its roof at a cost of \$250,000. The purpose of this equipment was to allow continual washing of the building exterior with the Lever Bros. products — soap. I am told further that the building owners were required by insurance costs and the risks involved to hire scaffolders rather than ordinary window washers for the continual scrubbing of the glass walls.

It must be remembered that glass, like metal, requires constant cleaning, else it quickly takes on a dirty, unpleasant appearance. This is not true of brick, stone, granite, or any form of masonry. Masonry grows more beautiful with age. Architects say it would detract from the beauty of the Washington Monument to clean its stone sides. Recently, the National Press Building here in Washington had its first cleaning in 28 years. The renovation process, according to the newspaper stories, cost less than \$10,000. So here you have it — \$250,000 just to install the scaffolding equipment on the Lever Bros. building — \$10,000 for a once-in-28-years cleaning job on the Press Building.

There is still another factor — that of cost. It is true that in monumental building the question of construction cost can be considered secondary. However, this should only apply, it seems to me, when it has been established that the building material in question is the finest, most suitable, and the most beautiful available. Since we have disposed of the question of beauty and suitability, let us, then, see if there is any argument to be made in behalf of these experimental materials on the basis of cost. You may remember an article which appeared in *Life* magazine last year in which it was alleged that the metal walls of a new building at Park Avenue between 49th and 50th Streets in New

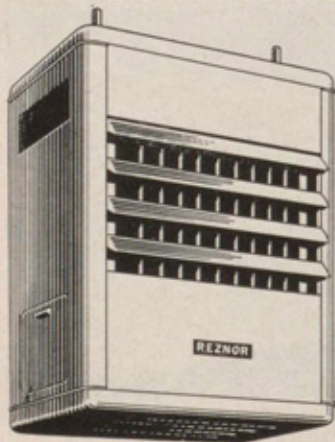
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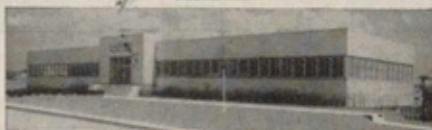
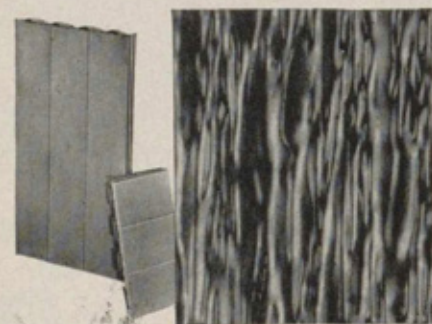
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York City were actually built in 1 day. Actually, one of the Nation's top contractors, John A. Mulligan, established that a crew of 20 men spent 5 months getting ready for that 1 day of slapping metal panels on the building.

And at least a week before the 1-day publicity stunt, all construction trades were laid off while special crews set all the panels in the proper positions for the blitz installation. This 22-story building was constructed with two walls of metal and two of glazed brick. Mr. Mulligan states, in a letter addressed to President Harry C. Bates, of the Bricklayers Union, that all the masonry in the building, including labor and materials — and the masonry backing for the metal panels — cost less than \$250,000. The metal walls cost more than \$1 million.

In last January's issue of *Architectural Forum*, there was an article on New York's new Socony-Vacuum building, a 42-story structure. I will quote but two paragraphs from the story. They state: "And what about the added cost?" asked Harrison and Horr, the architect and builder. 'Would not a stainless-steel skin cost half again as much as brick?' But the steel industry wanted the building, and cost was not going to prevent them from getting it. To meet the competition, they were willing to write off any price differential as the cost of promoting steel. Result: New York's biggest skyscraper in 25 years will have a stainless steel skin." I will cite one other example — the Pennsylvania State Office Building in Pittsburgh's Golden Triangle.

Here, aluminum was selected as the exterior facing material. There were built 12-inch walls, 6 inches of aluminum, and 6 inches of block backup. For purposes of comparison, let us take a 10-inch cavity wall of brick and tile. This would provide a thinner wall and create more interior room. Now the 12-inch metal walls of the Pennsylvania State office building will pass a 2-hour fire test. The 10-inch brick-and-tile wall mentioned will pass a 4-hour fire test. The square-foot cost of the aluminum wall built in this Golden Triangle building was \$6.73. This is a square-foot cost — in place. The square-foot cost of the brick-and-tile wall, using a glazed-face brick, is \$4.31 in place, a saving of \$2.42 per square foot. The time con-

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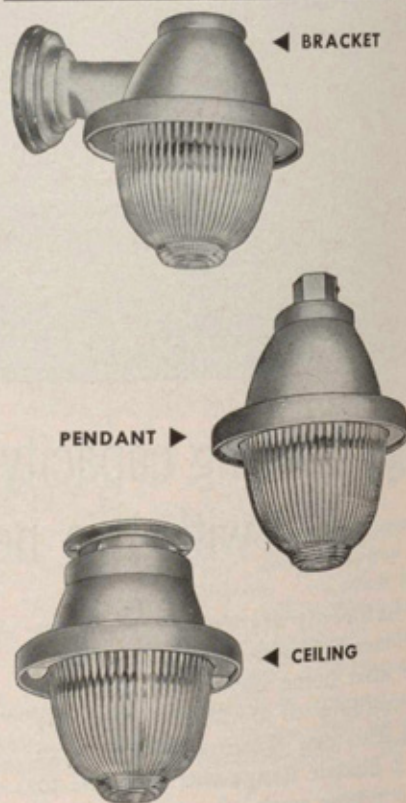
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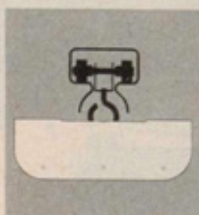
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AIR ACADEMY DESIGN AS FOGARTY SEES IT

(Continued from page 314)

sumed in construction is the same for both materials — 6 to 12 months — assuming, of course, that delivery of the metal is prompt.

I mention this because of the amusement created in building circles by the new Colgate-Palmolive-Peet Co. Building in New York. There a wall of glazed brick was built between January 28, 1955, and May 11. The adjacent metal walls were started November 12, 1954. The last I heard, the date of completion was set for some time in June.

I have singled out these few examples to make the point that purely from the structural standpoint, these materials have not proved themselves. They are experimental. This is not to say that all metal buildings are bad. Many of them may be good. But the over-all question of worth must be decided many years hence. For they have not yet withstood the test of time. It is significant that in the Roman Coliseum, there are bricks and stone standing today in their original positions. The bricks are 1 inch thick and 24 inches long. They are relatively unwarped and in good condition after 2200 years of exposure.

Today we see modern applications of these materials. In San Francisco, the new Equitable Life Insurance Building exterior is Vermont marble veneer. The Prudential Life Insurance Building, Chicago's biggest skyscraper, is limestone backed by brick. In New York, I am told, there is to be built a \$20 million office building at Fifth Avenue and 53d Street whose walls will be fashioned of stone. Interestingly enough, the investment group which is paying for the building has switched from metal to masonry in planning this large project.

I have attempted here to cover some of the very important points involved in the design and construction of our National Air Academy. It is my understanding that a conference on the design has been set for June 20 at Colorado Springs. At that time, I hope, earnest thought will be given to a thorough reconsideration of the plans which have been formulated thus far. American art and architecture moved a great stride forward under the urging of a capable architect who became President of the United States. Let us follow the urging of Thomas Jefferson — to challenge the world in our building as we have challenged the world in our Constitution.



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AUGUST 1955

“A time to cast away stones, and
a time to gather stones together”

Ecclesiastes III: 5

On Thursday, July 7, 1955 Frank Lloyd Wright appeared in Washington before the Subcommittee on Department of the Air Force Appropriations of the House of Representatives.

There he spoke at length of the incompetence of the design for the Air Force Academy, its architects and the architectural advisers to the Secretary of the Air Force.

That he did not like the design will come as a surprise to exactly no one. His massive contempt for literally all save his own efforts is one of his best known and least noble characteristics.

This contempt, added to his early and continuing eagerness to do the job himself, suggests that his criticism may be virtually free of objectivity. Although it may be suggested also that the tentative nature of the presentation makes his criticism premature as well, few will question his right to criticize.

Many will be saddened at the manner of the criticism and at the seeming irresponsibility in his deliberately disdainful evaluation of the architects and architectural advisers.

Of architects Skidmore, Owings and Merrill he said, among other derisive things, “I think they have five or six hundred draftsmen, and the two men at the head of it, what do they know about architecture?” In reply to a question about their stature as architects: “I would not use that word stature in regard to them.” And later: “If you want something that represents feeling, spirit, and the future, they have not got it.”

Of the advisers he had this to say of architect Welton Becket: “I do not know him but I know of him. I wish that something would happen to him soon. I would hate to see his things going as they are going now.”

Of architect Eero Saarinen, only: “His father wanted me to train him architecturally. That is the young boy.”

Of architect Pietro Belluschi: “He is a teacher. He has done some very nice little houses, but he has had no experience as a builder.”

When the foregoing were further identified to Mr. Wright as the consultants, he had this to say: “I could not imagine anything that would make a bad matter worse.”

And finally, as a clincher to his appeal that he be given the opportunity to prepare preliminaries for the design, he said of the whole group: “None of those men that you have mentioned to me could ever conceive a thing, so what is the use of monkeying along with it?”

This is the man who has so proudly proclaimed — and did so again to the subcommittee — that he has “never joined the

architectural profession because they have never lived up to their so-called ethics."

Someone must dare to suggest that in his public utterances it has been a long time since Mr. Wright has served well the cause of architecture; and that in this appearance he has rendered a distinct disservice to his country as well.

We need an Air Force Academy. We do not need the divisive, disruptive delays that this back-biting will bring. We will get an Air Force Academy. It may very well fall short of our dreams; most buildings do. But we need buildings and must continue to build them; always as effectively and often as swiftly as we are able. And to do this and to bring to bear all our developing technology on increasingly complex problems, architects and engineers must work patiently with each other and with their clients and between them there must exist the greatest sympathy and understanding and mutual confidence. Everything must be done to achieve this goal. Anything which is done to frustrate it — deliberately or unwittingly, in malice, in blind egoism, or in the name of an art which will be honored only as its artists are honored and honorable — must be identified as frustrating the welfare of the country.

The nature of architecture changes but the need for sincere and sympathetic architects remains. Those who deride and demean their fellow artists risk rendering the art trivial in the eyes of all. For those who wonder why the architect is often suspect in the public eye read the full transcript of Mr. Wright's testimony and reflect that for fifty years he has been telling the people of America that their architects are foolish, grasping, charlatans. And like fawning dogs, too many architects have continued to whimper their pleasure at even being mentioned.

Year after year he has been invited back to the lecture halls of our schools and museums where in a curious variation of masochism our faculties and students have bared themselves to his lash. Those not whipped into discouraged despair at his gloomy prediction of their ultimate failure may, under this tutelage, actually come to believe that braggadocio and scornful intolerance are the proper attitudes for the truly gifted artist. It is not an inspiring leadership for young people of talent whose greatest purpose in the schools Mr. Wright so despises may be to discover that men set apart by their God-given talents must labor the more to identify themselves with their fellows in order that those talents may come to fullest fruition.

The great contributions of Frank Lloyd Wright are inevitably being matched by those of other great artists. His achievements in abuse may yet, and tragically, become more distinguishing than his achievements in building.

John Knox Shear