



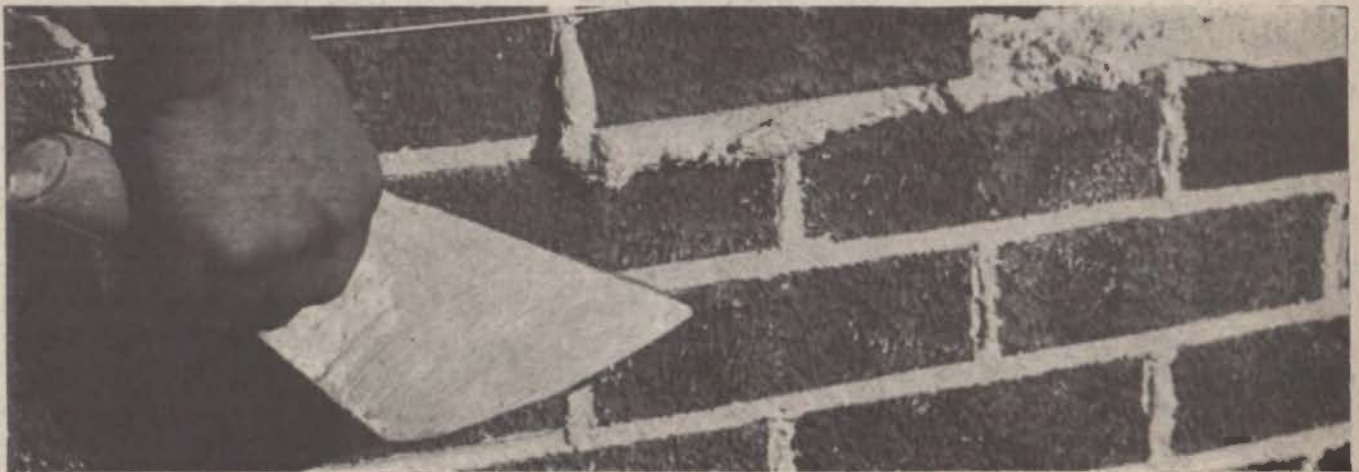
TEXAS ARCHITECT

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# THE TEXAS ARCHITECT

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OOPS!

Hopefully the printer's gremlins have had all their fun with us early this year; it seems the February *Texas Architect* had enough of the little fellows' pranks to account for our full annual share of errors.

First off, the Texas Research League *did not* write the article "State Buildings Construction Administration." Mr. Joseph L. Cummins *did*. He is a Research Analyst for the League, and the article is an outgrowth of work Mr. Cummins was involved in during the League's study of this subject.

As if to add insult to injury in the same article, Table I, "Analysis of Fees," became un-analyzable when our mischievous friends removed the footnote references from the body of the table! While one might read *footnote a*, and be enlightened in learning that "10 of which were for less than usual architectural services," he was to fruitlessly search for an "a" within the table proper. Perhaps some very interesting analyses resulted from readers cheerfully applying footnotes at random.

Doubtless some of our more patient analysts thought they had discovered still another error when they read in Table 2 (same article!) that Firm F's statement regarding their direct job costs was "#!, \$)%." No mistake. This is precisely what Firm F did say. Well, we did omit a few of the riper expletives to clean it up a bit.

Having thoroughly mistreated the League and Mr. Cummins and shaken our readers' confidence, we have hopefully set our gremlin traps, offer our sincere apologies to all, and wait with bated breath for what rude shocks this issue may produce.

The Editor

## COVER

*The harmony of repetitive shapes in these buildings combine with variety on the ground to make a simply-stated, and pleasant complex of the Spring Creek Apartments. Designed by Craycroft-Lacy & Associates, AIA, the project is a Texas Architecture 1965 award winner.*

PRESIDENT LYNDON B. JOHNSON

*"Our conservation must be . . . a creative conservation of restoration and innovation. Its concern is not with nature alone, but with the total relation between man and the world around him. Its object is not just man's welfare, but the dignity of man's spirit . . .*

*". . . We can introduce, into all our planning, our programs, our building, and our growth, a conscious and active concern for the values of beauty . . .*

*". . . Now that the danger is clear and the hour is late, this people can place themselves in the path of a tide of blight which is often irreversible and always destructive . . .*

*"Our stewardship will be judged by the foresight with which we carry out these programs."*

## *A Call for Beauty*

### *Highlights of The Presidents Historic Message*

Beauty—in nature, the cities and in and along highways—became a major objective of national policy for the first time in history when President Lyndon B. Johnson sent a special message to the Congress calling for a "new conservation" to save our cities and countryside from continuing blight.

Covering a wide range of ills destroying our environment, the President said, "there is much the federal government can do, through a range of specific programs, and as a force for public education. But a beautiful America will require the effort of government at every level, of business and of private groups."

"Above all," he asserted, "it will require the concern and individual action of individual citizens, alert to the danger, determined to improve the quality of their surroundings, resisting blight, demanding and building beauty for themselves and their children."

Acknowledging that "the storm of modern change is threatening to blight and diminish in a few decades what has been cherished and protected for generations," the President said, "the same society which receives the rewards of technology must, as a cooperating whole, take responsibility for control."

"To deal with these new problems will require a new conservation. We must not only protect the countryside and save it from destruction, but we must restore what has been destroyed and salvage the beauty and charm of our cities . . . In this conservation the protection and enhancement of man's opportunity to be in contact with beauty must play a major role."

Echoing John Kenneth Galbraith's recent prediction that this country's next economic breakthrough will be in the field of aesthetics, the President termed beauty "one of the most important components of our true national income, not to be left out simply because statisticians cannot calculate its worth."

"Association with beauty can enlarge man's imagination and revive his spirit. Ugliness can demean the people who live among it. What a citizen sees every day is his America. If it is attractive it adds to the quality of his life. If it is ugly it can degrade his existence."

The President issued a call for a White House Conference on Natural Beauty to meet in mid-May to "produce new ideas and approaches for enhancing the beauty of America" and to "serve as a focal point for the large campaign of public education which is needed to alert Americans to the danger to their natural heritage and to the need for action." Other highlights of his message:

*On Cities:* The challenge of the city "will not be met with a few more parks or playgrounds. It requires attention to the architecture of building, the structure of our roads, preservation of historical buildings and monuments, careful planning of new suburbs." The President directed the Secretary of the Interior to "give priority attention to serving the needs of our growing urban population." He promised future messages on several programs to improve the cities.

*On the Countryside:* The President requested full funding of the Land Water Conservation Fund to make this a "Parks-for-America" decade. Saying that our present system of parks, seashores and recreation areas do not meet the needs of our growing population, the President proposed a land acquisition program in several regions of the country.

*On Highways:* The President urged a two-fold program to insure that "roads themselves are not destructive of nature and natural beauty" and to "make our roads ways to recreation and pleasure." He will recommend legislation "to insure effective control of billboards along our highways" and the "elimination or screening of unsightly, beauty-destroying junkyards and auto graveyards."

"I hope that, at all levels of government, our

planners and builders will remember that highway beautification is more than a matter of planting trees or setting aside scenic areas. The roads themselves must reflect, in location and design, increased respect for the natural and social integrity and unit of the landscape and communities through which they pass."

*On Rivers:* The President plans to send a bill to the Congress to establish a national wild rivers system. He wants to identify and preserve stretches of "our great scenic rivers before growth and development make the beauty of the unspoiled waterway a memory."

*On Trails and Pollution:* The President recommended a national system of trails for "the forgotten outdoorsmen of today . . . who like to walk, hike, ride horseback or bicycle." He urged several programs to attack pollution of water and air and from solid wastes and pesticides.

More information on this and subsequent messages to the Congress and legislation relevant to them will be given in a future issue of the REPORT.

Lauding the messages of the President before last week's meeting of the Committee on State and Chapter Organization, AIA President Arthur Gould Odell, Jr. FAIA challenged the profession to respond. "We are witnessing an explosion of feeling of national urgency to improve our environment."

"Now we must take constructive action and produce the leadership on the chapter, state and national level. This is our greatest challenge and opportunity. Our task is a big one, but if we, as architects, don't take up the challenge, we will have lost by default our role as shapers of a better American environment, a role which we have said is our right. But our right is not a divine one; it must be earned. It must be demonstrated that we not only care about our physical environment but are eager and willing to contribute our talents toward its improvement. This must be the goal and pledge of all members of the Institute."



Richardson Dilworth

## BEAUTIFUL CITIES... A CHALLENGE

### RICHARDSON DILWORTH

We find ourselves thrust suddenly and with little preparation into a vast urban civilization. At the turn of the century our society remained essentially rural, but today almost three-quarters of our population is concentrated in just 160 great urban areas.

This massive movement of people to the already heavily congested urban areas is constantly accelerating, and it could, literally, swamp our civilization unless we plan with skill to meet our urban problems.

To cope with such problems, our city planning must have scope and authority. Every city should adopt a comprehensive plan and the integrity of that plan must be respected and maintained. We cannot let the work of career planners be nibbled away either by avaricious politics or by avaricious business. No city can solve its problems without good planning—planning which stresses grace and beauty, and open space.

It is the fact that our cities in the United States grew, like Topsy, with little planning; and, in the second half of the nineteenth century and during the first 30 years of the twentieth century, the government of our large cities was generally incompetent and corrupt.

Business evinced little interest in the welfare of our cities—in fact it was guilty of exploiting them outrageously. All this resulted in the mess in which our American cities found themselves in the early 1930's. Happily, the crisis of the Depression, which threatened the very existence of our cities, also awakened the people and the business interests in our cities.

*Presented at the annual meeting of the Texas Society of Architects*

We began to recognize that there is no need for the public squalor which has in the past offended the eye and disturbed the spirit in so much of our urban environment. We know how to check blight and rebuild neighborhoods. We have the ability to create lively and prosperous centers for our metropolitan areas. Where downtown sections are dying, it is only because we are afraid to use curative surgery, or unwilling to pay the doctor's bill.

Fortunately, today our planners are making us conscious of the fact that an essential of good planning is to provide plenty of open space, and to bring beauty, charm and grace to our cities. We must avoid the shoddy. It is not enough for a city to be safe and sanitary. It must have style, and must be embellished so that it is a joy to the eye, and a comfort to those who dwell in it. We simply exist, we do not really live unless we are enriched by some measure of beauty.

In order to accomplish this objective, the cities must renew themselves in such a way that the best of modern architecture can live in harmony with the fine inheritance of the past. It will serve no good purpose to obliterate the decay if the essential character of a city is lost in the process, or if the renewal lacks quality and charm.

A great city is a wonderful thing when it receives loving care. It can be a place of beauty and grace, and of infinite variety. A great city presents the challenge of people of every conceivable background, race and religion. It is the ideal place for creativity, and the perfect marketplace for the exchange of ideas. The city can develop our finest skills and produce our richest wares.

Let us consider some examples of what beauty can do for a city—and, let us remember that the city is the appropriate heart of every great urban area for the culture, science, higher education and the arts of the area which it serves.

First, our government buildings.

In Philadelphia we have an enormous City Hall which dominates the central square of our city, and which is topped by a gigantic tower.

Construction of our City Hall was commenced in 1872 and took 30 years to complete. It is an extraordinary example of baroque architecture; and is, of course, highly embellished with statuary, marble, fine stones, fine woods and fine bronzes.

Once the building was completed, the powers-that-be ignored its maintenance, as well as the maintenance of the square upon which it rests, with the result that by 1950 it was a huge, dreary mausoleum, surrounded by a large run-down sidewalk area which was used principally for parking the cars of City Hall officials.

The effect of this upon the surrounding square had been devastating. All the buildings which make up this great square had become shabby and run-down, and the small park which occupied the far corner of the square consisted of little more than asphalt and run-down benches, populated almost entirely by the denizens of Skid Row.

You can have no idea what a depressing effect this had upon the entire life of our city. A half-million people a day pass through this great central square on foot, or by automobile.

It is one of the first things that a visitor to our city sees and it certainly was not a sight to endear the city to them.

I am happy to be able to report that one of the first things we undertook, after coming into office, was to restore City Hall to its pristine glory, and to surround it with a plaza which would set this building off in appropriate fashion.

This was an expensive project, for to restore a building such as our City Hall, both inside and out, of itself required some \$15,000,000.

The construction of an underground garage, with underground approaches to eliminate the parked automobiles from the broad sidewalks which surround City Hill, came to another \$5,000,000; and, to purchase the land necessary to create the plaza, and to create the plaza itself, together with a supplemental municipal services building, involved another \$30,000,000—making a total of \$50,000,000.

Has all this been worthwhile?

Indeed, it has. In the first place, the great square of a city sets the tone of the city and of its people. In just dollars and cents it has led to private investors putting up a series of fine buildings, worth considerably more than all the money spent on City Hall and the City Hall plaza.

Even more important, these improvements are spreading along the two main streets which converge at City Hall.

Just to emphasize this point, let me remind all of you what the great, modern, City Hall squares in Stockholm and Oslo, together with their magnificent City Halls, have meant to those cities. And, where would great cities like Paris, London, Rome and Brussels be today without their magnificent squares, and the fine public buildings which grace them.

The same is true of great boulevards, such as the Champs Elysees in Paris; or, in our own nation, Michigan Avenue in Chicago, and the magnificent park area which has been created along Lake Michigan.

Now, let us look at a simple thing like a playground. Thirty years ago it was considered that a playground should consist merely of indestructible swings and benches, and a concrete surface that could not be chipped. The average playground looked more like a prison yard than a playground, and had about the same popular appeal.

Today, a playground in most of our large cities is a

pleasure to the eye, and a most pleasant place for the entire family—from the children right up to grandparents. It is attractive, and it is functional. And, what is most important of all, it is widely used—whereas, the old playgrounds were largely shunned. Now, as to parks.

Every large city needs not only large parks, conveniently located, but also a great number of attractive squares where people can walk or sit, and relax and enjoy what they see.

Finally, let us consider transportation in a large city. There is no excuse for our thru-ways being as stark and ugly as they are.

It is possible to create an attractive center strip, and to plant the areas alongside the thru-way with trees and attractive shrubbery.

There is one thing of which I have no doubt, and that is that the cities will solve their problems—and they are many.

The great asset the cities have is the deep and unshakable attachment people have to their cities. History shows that the city has a power of survival beyond all estimate. Great cities survive bombardment, siege and rape; as the fires burn down, the inhabitants return to build anew.

The great challenge which attracts so many people to the cities is that it is within the power of all of us who live in them either to let them decay into places of horror and squalor, or, by our own hands, our own intelligence and our own efforts, make them into communities of beauty and charm, and the market-places of the intellect.

Our frontier history is not ended. Today the cities are our frontiers in every sense of the word. It is in the great urban areas that, for the balance of this century, we shall fight and win or lose the battle for liberty, for human dignity, the pursuit of happiness, and even life itself.



TEXAS ARCHITECTURE 1965  
HONORED FOR DISTINGUISHED DESIGN

SPRING CREEK APARTMENTS • DALLAS, TEXAS



ARCHITECTS

CRAYCROFT - LACY & ASSOCIATES  
DALLAS, TEXAS

### SPRING CREEK

Faced with a site some twenty miles away from the center of Dallas' urban life, the architects and owners recognized that the project must be superior to command its share of the potential rental market.

The site plan was conceived as a series of four-plexes composed on the land in such a way as to create interesting open spaces, large and small, and to present the buildings themselves in varying postures, here in harmony, again in contrast.

Buildings were grouped about parking courts of different sizes and shapes so dispersed as to minimize through traffic and to maintain a separation of automobile and pedestrian circulation patterns.

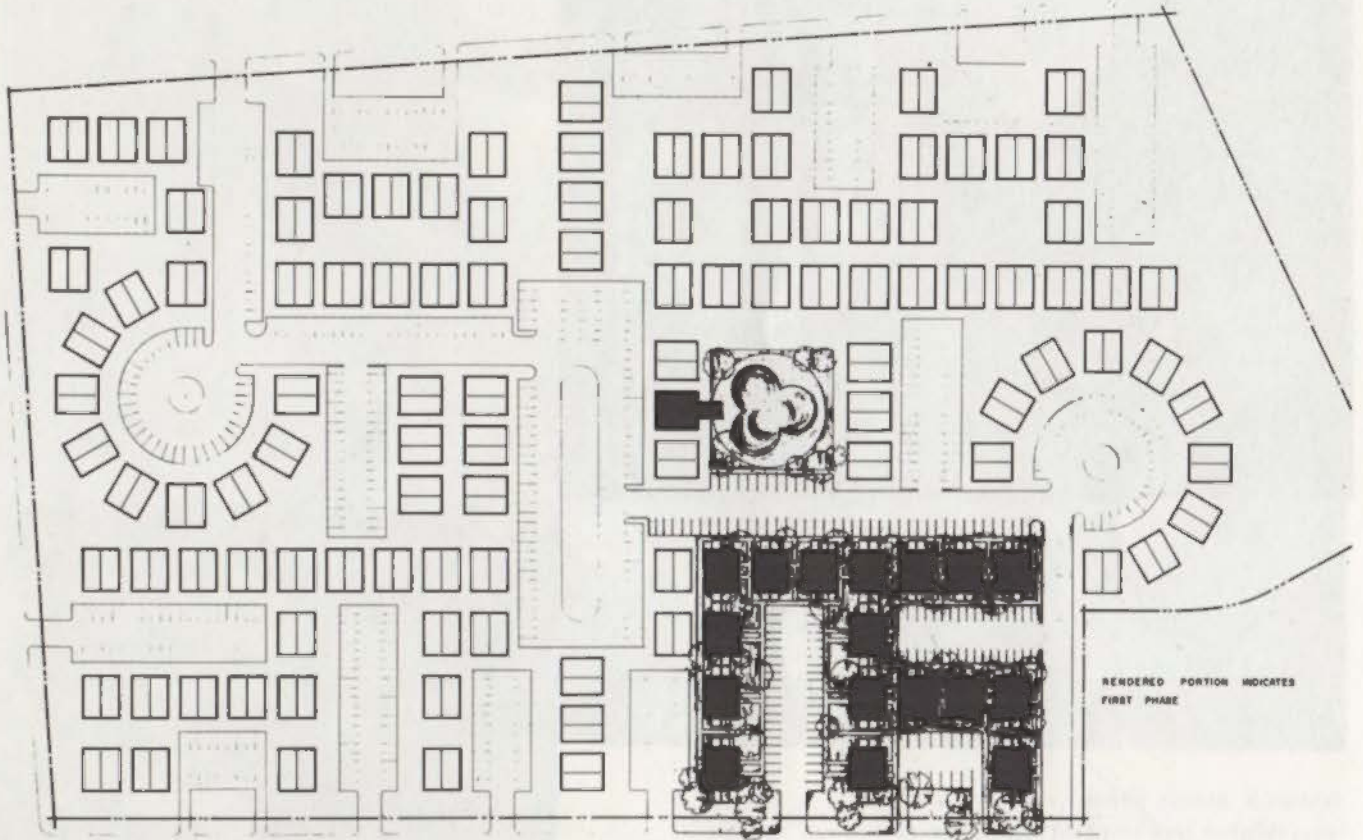
Such a site composition was reinforced by the belief that the apartment dweller should be able to see the confines of his dwelling and should be able to step outside his apartment into some small plot of enclosed ground all his own.

From this concept of siting, there evolved the buildings themselves. To achieve the economies of enclosing space with roofing materials, the steep roof form was selected. Thus there developed the simple, well ordered apartment plan, effectively separating living functions, providing ample storage, and creating an efficient, pleasant living unit.

Four of these dwellings, then, combine under a single steep roof to form the simple, brick-faced geometry of each building.



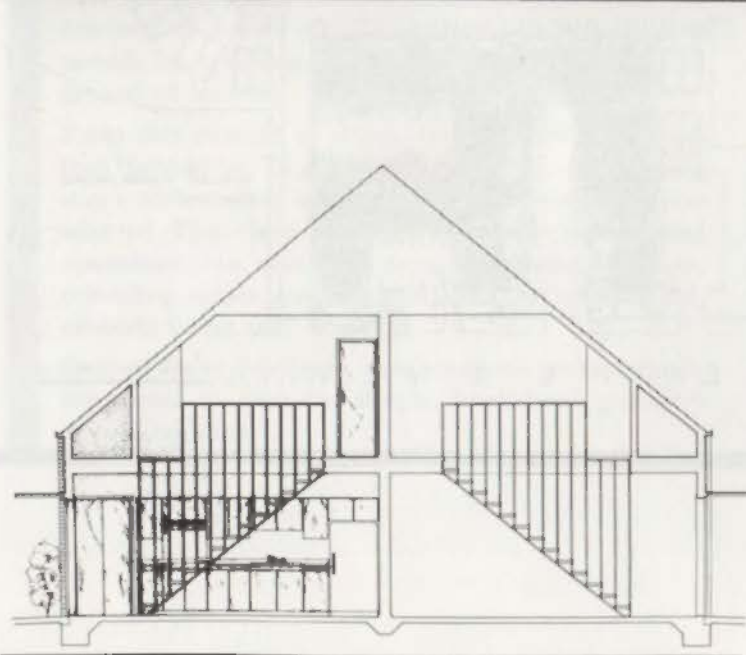
SPRING CREEK APARTMENTS



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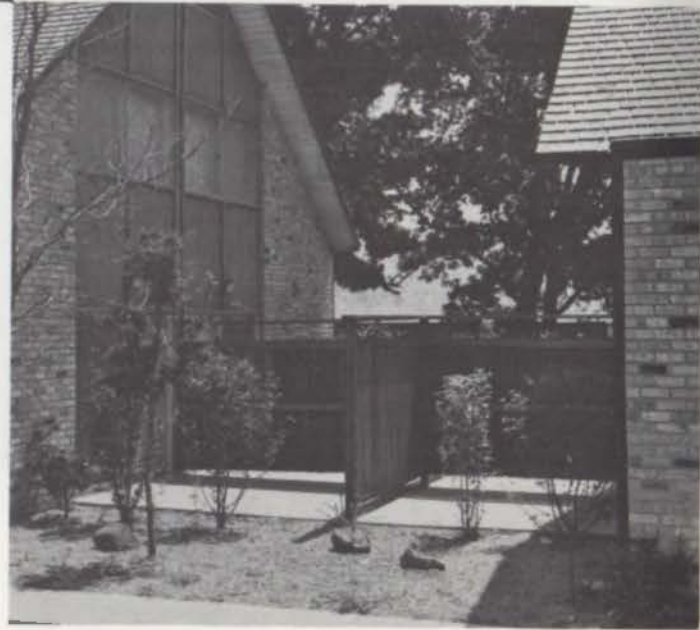
*Long narrow, landscaped spaces looking toward focal planting create unusual urban entrances to some of the buildings.*



S E C T I O N

SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"

*This section, cut through a typical building, illustrates the volumes created by use of the modified A-frame structure.*



*Partly enclosed terraces for each apartment are sometimes joined to form a variety of outdoor volumes and living spaces.*

SPRING CREEK APARTMENTS



*Existing trees, gentle slopes, contrast in materials, textures and heights contribute to make the repetition of shapes a pleasant harmony.*

CRAYCROFT-LACY & ASSOCIATES • DALLAS, TEXAS



*Though all of these buildings are alike, thoughtful planning has created visual variety. The voids between buildings become design elements, narrow, tight spaces open into larger, lighter areas. Planting contributes to altering the shapes of these outdoor volumes.*

*Contrast this pleasant, sophisticated environment with the sameness of the typical relentless tract housing development!*

*Open riser stairs serve to divide the interior space into functional areas.*



PART II

# NEW TOWNS IN EUROPE

EDWARD MOK AIA, AIP



This is the final part of Mr. Mok's observations of housing and New Town developments in Europe. The first, dealing with England, appeared in the October, 1964 *Texas Architect*.

### *Vallingby, Sweden*

Vallingby is a new town designed for 23,000 people in a site of four square miles. The electric train arrives at this terminal station nine miles west of Stockholm and one is emptied into the Centrum—the town plaza of Vallingby. All types of shops, department stores, restaurants, cinema, office buildings surround the plaza in an irregular pattern not unlike that of a medieval city. To the right of the Centrum is a group of handsome public buildings perched on high ground, forming a visual barrier. The feeling of architecture in the Centrum is distinctly Scandinavian and reminds one of the much published photograph of Alvar Aalto's new Town Hall in Saynatsalo, Finland. On all sides of the Centrum are 10- and 12-story apartments. Beyond the high-rise towers are walk-up apartments, row-houses, and villas. The variety of housing types is good, perhaps a little too much emphasis on high-rise types.

### *Planning of Vallingby*

Vallingby was planned in the early 1950's by the Town Planning Office of Stockholm. Land use, population density, siting, housing types, and community facilities were carefully considered. Vallingby was not intended to be merely a bedroom community but a microcosm of a city, a cultural center for not only its own residents but for 60,000 others living in the neighboring communities near Grimsta Forest recreational area and the beautiful Lake Malar. The town plan of Vallingby called for 25% of its residents to be employed by local industry and commerce.

The thoughtful and painstaking planning process is evident everywhere: the excellent siting of buildings, the preservation of scenic areas, the separation of automobile and pedestrian traffic and the consistently high standard of building design and construction. Except for a small degree of sameness in the architectural designs, the overall impression of Vallingby is one of handsomeness and order.

### *Farsta, Sweden*

Farsta, to the south of Stockholm and at the other end of the rapid transit line, is similar to Vallingby in planning concept. It is somewhat larger and built several years later than Vallingby. My visit here was on a Sunday. Lacking a host and not knowing Swedish, I could only rely on what is visual for my impression. The Centrum in Farsta and the highways leading to it bear greater resemblance to an American city than the other European New Towns. One out of four Swedes owns a car; this ratio is no doubt much greater in Farsta where most of its residents are younger and more prone to owning a car. Here the signs of the Caltex (Texaco) red star and the Esso oval make their appearance.



Moving on to Scandinavia, my first stop was in Stockholm, Sweden. 160 years of peace and prosperity have made this a nation of the highest standard of living and social welfare. Here, urbanization also forces the capital city of Stockholm to take unusual measures to ease the housing demand. The new suburban communities of Vallingby and Farsta were built in the post-war years for the purpose of easing the population pressure of Stockholm.

Unlike the New Towns of Britain, Vallingby and Farsta are not self-sufficient communities; each is connected to Stockholm by its amazingly clean and efficient rapid transit system. This is by means of electric trains shuttling between the capital and the suburban communities, underground when traveling within this city of islands and above ground after the train reaches the scenic outskirts. I feel that this marvelous rapid transit, passing through well-preserved, delightful countryside is a strong contributing factor to the success of the two new communities. The tedious pendulum motion of commuting between the new towns and the mother city is greatly reduced by the general pleasantness of the journeys.



The problems associated with popular ownership of cars also received greater attention in Farsta. A new multi-level parking garage is nearing completion at the Centrum. There are more traffic signs, more pedestrian and bicycle underpasses where their paths cross the automobile roadways. Parking areas are provided for the high-rise apartments. Here proud owners of the shiny Volvos, Fiats, Mercedes, tinker at their mechanical marvels much like new toys. The rapidly growing car ownership in Europe present their city planners problems that we in America have experienced for many years. I believe their problems in this respect are rising, whereas, in America, the situation is almost stabilized.

### *The Contented Life*

Farsta is built on a beautiful site. Tall pine trees cover almost all vacant land, huge granite boulders jut out exposed over the hilly terrain. Bicycle and pedestrian paths find their ways between the pine trees and the boulders. Children playing and cycling unattended along the pathways, teen-age girls sitting on a bench nearby chattering, young mothers strolling with their babies in the prams. The weather was a little brisk but agreeable. This is a blissful picture of the contented life in a Swedish New Town.

The Swedes are highly cultured people. They have a small country beautifully endowed by nature; a small population with nearly a fourth of them living in or near Stockholm. They are a homogeneous people in racial and social compositions, well educated, with a high standard of living and protected by every form of social security. Out of this advanced civilization comes the housing schemes of Vallingby and Farsta that are perhaps a decade or more ahead of the United States.

### *Finland*

My immediate arrival in Finland gave me a distinctly different impression than Sweden. Here, the northernmost capital of Europe still retains a rugged frontier feeling. Finland is a new nation, having won her independence from Czarist Russia only in 1917. Before that she was under the sovereignty of Sweden for over 600 years. Not having been the seat of a great monarchy in her modern history, Helsinki is absent of the grandiose baroque palaces and boulevards. The ravages of the two world wars have also stifled the development of this valiant nation. In terms of human suffering alone, one out of four Finnish families lost a loved one in the last war. Today, Finland maintains a delicate but determined political neutrality between the Soviet Union, where Leningrad is a mere 300 kilometers from Helsinki, and the West. The Finnish language is singularly unrelated to the major linguistic origins; this and its geographic remoteness probably contribute greatly to the rugged individualistic charac-

ter of the Finnish culture.

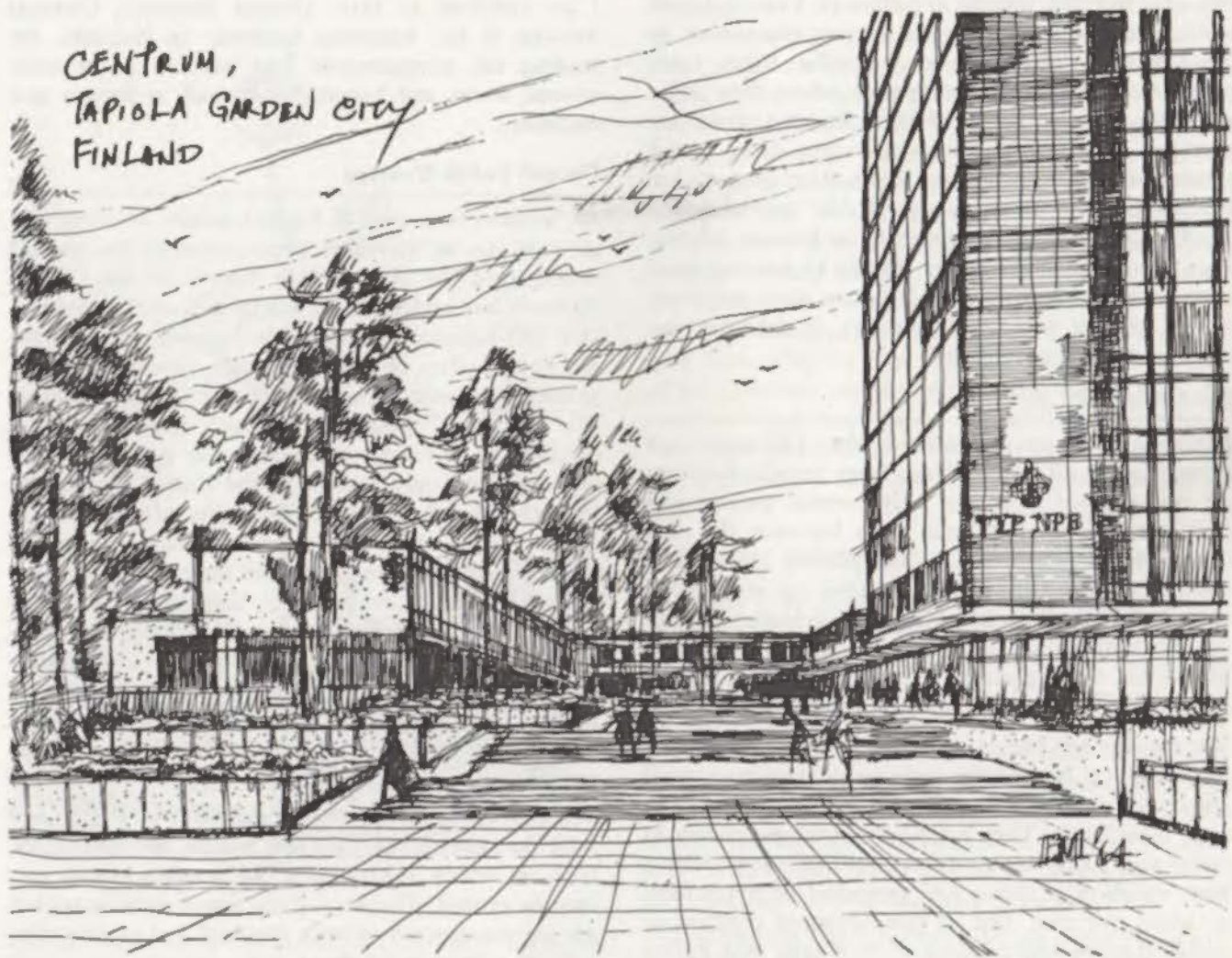
I am indebted to Mrs. Theresa Mravintz, Cultural Attache of the American Embassy in Helsinki, for making the arrangements that enabled me to meet several warm and hospitable Finnish architects and engineers.

### *Finnish Public Housing*

An introductory tour of Finnish public housing was given to me by Mr. Alpo Lippa, who as the general manager of the Real Estate Bureau of the City of Helsinki has under his jurisdiction, planning, production and maintenance of public housing. Here, as are the county flats of London, public housing is not a scheme to provide minimum housing for slum tenants. The fact that there are no such people as slum dwellers in Helsinki, eliminates the type of public housing commonly known in the United States. On the other hand, the limited mobility of their people (as compared with car-owning Americans), the traditional mode of urban living and the extreme shortage of building sites available to the individuals, have forced the municipal government into large scale production of dwellings and into becoming Helsinki's biggest landlord. Since 1951 a total of 62,000 new apartments were constructed in Helsinki, one-sixth of which are produced with the support of the municipal government.

Typical among the projects visited was a group of walk-up apartments. The site is near the central district on which substandard old wooden houses previously existed. The size of the apartments varies but all are constructed of high standard and quality. The entire building is constructed of concrete, using many precast components. Workmanship, material and finishes are generally superior to our speculative apartments. With the exception of the refrigerator, all appliances are provided with the apartments. Downstairs there are the sauna rooms where the Finns take their invigorating bath once or twice a week as a form of relaxation. Standard bath tubs as well as other fixtures are included in the bathroom in each apartment. The rent for a two-bedroom apartment is about \$80 per month. Considering the quality of the accommodations, the cost of living and the earning power of the Finns, this is about equal to the rent scale in our big cities.





CENTRUM,  
TAPIOLA GARDEN CITY  
FINLAND

### *Tapiola, Finland*

One of my chief purposes in visiting Finland was to see the world famous Tapiola Garden City development nine kilometers west of Helsinki. This strikingly handsome New Town borders on the archipelago of the Gulf of Finland and connects to Helsinki by excellent roads. Bus service runs every ten minutes from the Helsinki Central Railroad Station (by Eliel Saarinen). My mode of transportation was by taxicab, passing through picturesque islands and causeways, beautiful pine trees, with glimpses of the seascape. The taxi arrived at the modern town-center, the Tapiontori, where the Housing Foundation is located on the tenth floor of a high-rise office building. Mr. Yrjo Riikonen, chief of the administrative department of the Foundation, was the gracious host of my visit.

### *Incomparable Beauty*

Tapiola is a completely new community of 17,000 people in a site of 670 acres. My outstanding impression after seeing Tapiola is the incomparable beauty

of a new town achieved through careful blending of handsome modern architecture and the richly endowed Finnish landscape. Tall pine and birch trees are everywhere; roadways and greenbelts fitted neatly in the slightly uneven terrain. The architecture in Tapiola is in a happy state of coordinated variety—a total of twelve architects participated in town planning and building designs. The variety is not limited to the building designs alone, but extends to different housing types—high-rise apartments, 4-story walk-up apartments, row-houses and villas. There is a rich variety in even the same type of housing. Some of the row-houses have flat roofs, blockish modern; others have pitched roofs, using the dark brown-green copper standing-seam roofing frequently identified with Finnish architecture. The designs are mostly exquisite as work in Tapiola was awarded to architects through design competitions. Just as important as the variety is the feeling of unity in Tapiola. The housing groups of different designs are located apart from one another, separated by majestic trees and winding roads. The color scheme is predominately white which under-

scores a greater unity throughout the entire development.

### *The Housing Foundation*

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Tapiola is established by housing Foundation called the ASUNTOSAATIO. The Foundation is, in turn, sponsored by the Finnish Family Welfare League, the Mannerheim League, the Confederation of Finnish Trade Unions, the Society of Civil Servants, the Central Association of Tenants and the Finnish Association of Disabled Civilians and Ex-Servicemen. This large group represents an extremely broad circle in need of housing. In 1951 the ASUNTOSAATIO acquired 670 acres in the rural district of Espoo and began planning not only housing but all the necessary roads and utilities, including a thermo power station which generates and, through underground lines, delivers heat, warm water and electricity to the entire city.

Today, Tapiola is nearly completed. The town is planned in three neighborhoods. There are two day nurseries, two kindergartens, three primary schools, and one co-educational secondary school. 24% of the residents live in high-rise apartments, 53% in all types of walk-up multi-level row-houses, 8% in semi-detached houses and 4% in single- or two-family houses. There are 389 garages in Tapiola, either attached to the houses, or are in a common structure. Others park their cars in open parking areas. The population density is only 26 people per acre, making it one of the lowest density New Towns in Europe.

### *Private Ownership*

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A significant fact about Tapiola from an American standpoint is the private ownership of the dwellings. Ninety percent of the dwellings are either owned outright, or through the cooperatives, by the occupants. This is in sharp contrast with the New Towns in Britain, where private ownership is rare. Housing in Tapiola carries two sources of loans. The primary loan, covering 40 to 50% of the building cost, is made through savings banks, insurance companies as well as other commercial establishments in the free capital market. The interest rate is usually 7% per annum and the amortizing period 22 years. The secondary loan, in most cases less than 40% of the building cost, is granted by the State Housing Board of Finland. The interest rate of the secondary loan is greatly reduced—only from 1 to 3% per annum, and the period of amortization is extended up to 44 years. The owners, then, must furnish from 20 to 30% of the building cost as his down payments. The monthly payment of owner-occupied apartments or houses ranges from 7½ to 9½ cents per square foot per month, covering the principal, interest and heating cost.

### *Diversed Socio-Economic Groups*

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Another significant fact I found in Tapiola is its success in attracting a broad cross-section of occupational groups to live in this new community. A survey reveals that 36% of Tapiola residents have university degrees and are either professionals or executives; 26% are small business owners, technical foremen, office staff doing responsible work, and persons of similar social status; 38% are white and blue collar workers, store clerks, waiters and waitresses, trade apprentices, laborers, housemaids, and similar social status. This is a most astonishing cross-section, as the housing accommodations do not appear to be varied to the extent as permitting a common laborer to live within the same environment as the business executive. I believe this is only possible when the general standard of living is very high as in Helsinki and the contrast between different social classes is not severe. I seemed to observe that no matter how "low" their occupational stations—tram conductors, lady barbers, waiters, etc.—the Finns maintain a most professional attitude toward their jobs. They gave me the impression as though they were hobbyists at their work with as much enthusiasm and concern for perfection as one holds for his hobby.

### *Employment*

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About 25% of Tapiola residents work in and near their community. Half of these are factory workers, the others are employed by various shops, offices, public buildings, etc. Because of large industrial areas being developed west of Tapiola, eventually 50% or more of the townsmen will be able to earn their living nearby. There are, in fact, several architects who now have their homes and offices in Tapiola.

I had the opportunity to visit an elementary school. School children with their bright eyes and shiny faces are a delightful sight everywhere. These Nordic children with golden hair and fair complexion, dressed in colorful and warm clothing suitable for the Finnish climate, are particularly sparkling in their spirit. I met the school-master and a third-grade teacher, the latter commanded fluent English and served as my guide. We went through a cafeteria, the small gymnasium, looked into the dental clinic where the children were having their teeth examined in a splendidly equipped operating room. The apparent devotion of the teachers and the staff to their respective jobs is no different than the other Finns I encountered. There is a professional air about them that commands respect. The spirit of a people, their outlook on life, their dedication to their community welfare, are, in fact, more important than all the physical installation and natural environment for the success of their New Towns.

## Alvar Aalto

The account of my journey is not complete without the description of my visits to the offices of the celebrated Alvar Aalto and the bright new northern star of Finnish architecture, Reima Pietila. Aalto enjoys the undisputed acclaim as the greatest Finnish architect in his own country. It is gratifying to discover the respect and almost reverence the Finnish people bestow on this distinguished man. People of all walks of life, taxicab drivers, hotel clerks, policemen, know him; their eyes light up with recognition, though unable to speak English, when the name "Professor Aalto" is mentioned. Aalto, a very creative man with great personal style certainly deserves this adulation his people give him, but I feel the fact that an architect can gain such a recognition also bespeaks of the high cultural standard of his society. He is currently doing work in all corners of the globe; but the project that dominates his office, at least physically, is the redevelopment of downtown Helsinki. A very large model occupies an entire room and shows the evolving scheme—multi-level traffic flow, new buildings, new transportation terminals, etc. The answer to my question as to when the project would be completed was that perhaps it would never be. This is almost the attitude of building the great medieval cathedrals—going on continuously and beyond the lifetimes of their creators.

## Reima Pietila

Reima Pietila is a younger man in his thirties, graduating from the Architectural School of the University of Helsinki. Pietila has won many distinguished competitions in Finland, a method commonly used there in commissioning architects for major work. His first important project was the Finnish Pavilion in Brussel's World's Fair, constructed almost entirely of prefabricated wood components and erected very quickly by a few Finnish carpenters. Since then he has won the competitions for the Finnish Embassy in New Delhi, a student center now under construction at the Technical University at Otaniemi, a very large church in Middle Finland and a new housing scheme in Tapiola. His work was covered comprehensively in PERSPECTOR 8, the excellent journal published by the students of Yale Architectural School.

Pietila's work indicates a major change in the development of modern architectural and planning design concept—that of turning to abstract and fluid composition of masses in distinctively personal style. His inspiration for the Student Center came from the gentle surge of islands at the horizon of the Middle Finland seascape; his new church is a series of 80-foot sheer walls placed at abstract angles of each other, leaving the wide joints between the planes of the walls as sources of light. The new addition of

Tapiola is also rather abstract in its mass composition with several long rows of dwellings placed randomly according to the contours and to Pietila's personal choice. The rows are not uniform in height; rather, high-rise apartments occur at one end and gradually taper in height until reduced to one- and two-story units. The result of the unique and imaginative scheme is most startling.

Reima Pietila and his architect wife and baby son live and breathe in this creative atmosphere every minute of their lives. Their house is a room in their architectural studio; Pietila, in fact, sleeps on a wood platform 3 feet by 7 feet built over his drafting board. Like the public adulation bestowed on the famed Alvar Aalto, the total devotion Pietila gives to architecture (his hobby is to find the relationship of architectural forms and mathematical functions—a discipline called Morphology) and his success in carrying out his unique and personal designs in several major works seem to me to be fitting tributes to the intellectual environment that Finland is providing for her creative talents. Little wonder that this young and valiant nation exerts such influence to modern architecture and planning throughout the world.



**ASPEN  
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CONFERENCE**

"The end of the world as we know it" will be discussed at the International Design Conference in Aspen, Colorado, June 20-25, by a Parisian architect who designed a 100-mile long resort, a Jesuit priest, and a film producer.

In announcing the preliminary line-up of speakers, program chairman George Nelson said they were selected on the basis of what they could contribute toward an understanding of "the new world: that extraordinary pile-up of changes in scale, speed, technique, conduct and motivation."

Architect and industrial designer George Nelson explained that "these vast changes are altering not only the way the world looks but the way we look at the world."

In elaborating on the 1965 theme, Nelson promises that this year's conference "will investigate particularly the contradictions of the new world: our growing inability to distinguish between reality and fantasy during the same period technology is dominating almost every human endeavor; the triumph of technique over content despite our increasing sense of 'social morality;' our intense awareness of all things visual even though at no other time have we produced so much man-made ugliness."

Mailing address for the International Design Conference in Aspen is Box 664, Aspen, Colorado. Pre-registration fee for the Aspen conference is \$75. After June 1, the fee is \$85. Accredited students can register for \$10.

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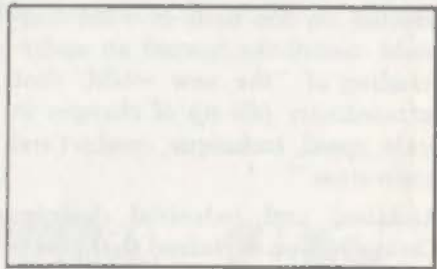


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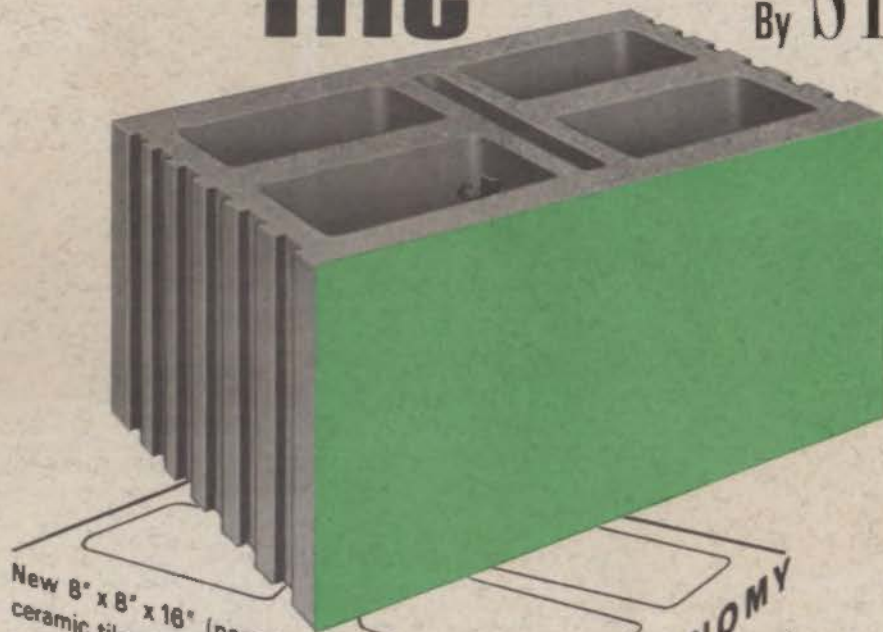
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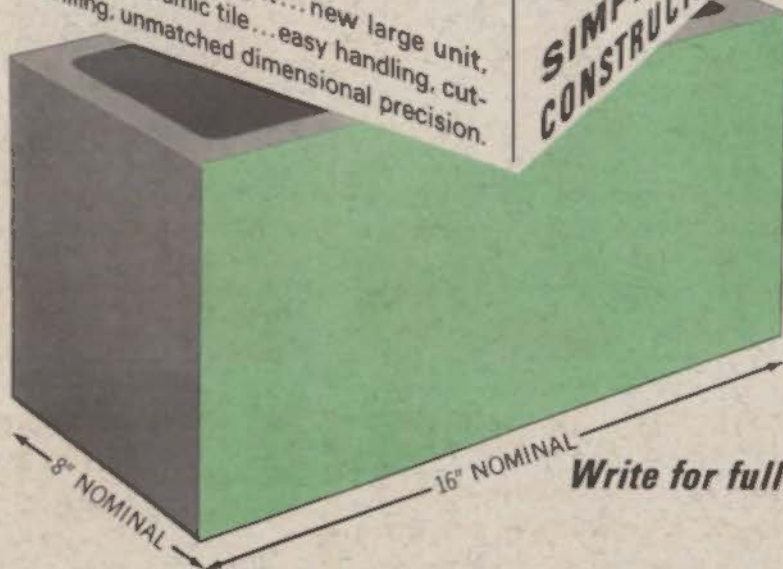
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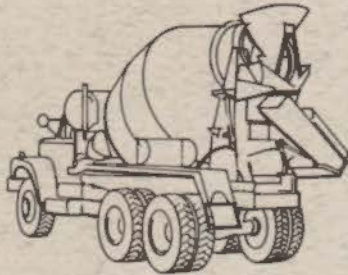


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