

SEVEN ON ARCHITECTURE

certainly we don't want a patchwork of buildings like Mt. UBC?

Smith

What isn't a city a patchwork of variations in height and form?

Brunswickan

Are there any buildings in particular that you dislike?

Smith

No, and this is the problem. Some of them are aggressive enough or adventuresome enough to be singled out. Here we have an immense collection of similar buildings and consequently they all tend to become anonymous — a suburban development.

Brunswickan

The administration has chosen this mode of architecture. When we break away from it without erecting a "sore thumb"?

Smith

It would be difficult. We have to start now with buildings that are functionally isolated, and the SUB is a good place to begin.

Brunswickan

Larson and Larson are giving a substantial reduction in — a reduction which amounts to about \$45,000. Would it be worth our cost to look out and hire an architect who could give us something original?

Smith

I think in a building the size of the Student Centre, \$45,000 is not very important.

Brunswickan

What if the administration threatened to withdraw their support?

Smith

When I was an undergraduate our University went out and bought and paid for our own center — it was ours.

Brunswickan

Do Larson and Larson design functional buildings?

Smith

I lived in a barracks once when I was in the army, and it was a damn sight more comfortable and more pleasant, with much better public accommodations.

Brunswickan

Do you mind that an American firm was asked to do the design work?

Smith

There is no shortage of architects every bit as competent in this country.

Brunswickan

If you were commissioned as University architect — what would you do?

Smith

First realize I'm not a qualified architect, only an architectural historian. To begin with I would consult extensively with the faculty and students to discover the functional needs. Secondly find a suitable site and then call in an architect whose work we knew and admired. Give him a preliminary commission to come up with some preliminary sketches and ideas and if these were suitably interesting and exciting commission him to produce working drawings — which could be checked for functions and needs. You just don't sign your powers of veto away to some firm at the beginning.

Brunswickan

Why does no one really question the plans of Larson and Larson?

Smith

Mostly because they are told to design a building and do just that. When finished you see it in that state. You never see sketches that enable you to consider the building as it suits the site. It's a package deal that enables no major changes. Now with the proposed SUB you have a dramatic fall of land but no attempt to let it edge over the hill, making it exciting and interesting to be in and to look at. Rooms and proportions should be interesting. This is my basic objection to the whole architecture of the campus: it's nothing — it could be anywhere!!

Brunswickan

The proposed SUB is a free-standing building. As such is there any basic flaw in Larson's plan.

Smith

Yes, this is an area which you can approach from all sides, yet the building is a street-building. Notice that the main facade is the only one which they've shown in the drawings. It's laid out like a stage set and what happens when you walk around to the back? Doors opening with garbage cans sitting out. It will look like most of Larson's other buildings — rather odd, and as though they were intended to face an alley. 2500 years ago the Greeks discovered that freestanding buildings had to be appealing from all sides — Larson hasn't realized this yet!



B. F. Macaulay
Vice President (Admin)
"It's something like a painting — it has subtle appeal."

Brunswickan

Do you like the style of architecture on this campus?

Macaulay

Yes. I like this. Now I quite realize that everyone doesn't like it. Architecture is like buying a suit of clothes or an automobile, people go for all sorts of styles because personal tastes vary.

Brunswickan

What do you like in it?

Macaulay

Well I like the form and the shape of it. It's a well-proven and well-tried type of architecture. I just like to look at it — it's something like a painting, it has subtle appeal.



Prof. McLaughlin
Civil Engineering
"The old must make way for the new."

Brunswickan

From a cursory glance of the SUB plans would you say that they are going to serve the students needs??

McLaughlin

Well, it not balanced for your needs. There should be more room to work. You people have to decide what you want. Don't let someone tell you what you need.

Brunswickan

Do you generally like the Larson structures on this campus?

McLaughlin

I would have to balance an aesthetic approach against a professional approach. I think that we should be building structures which represent modern day technology — but for a small campus our buildings do have some aesthetic characteristics.

(SEE page 14)

GRADUATE INTERVIEWS

Ontario Hydro will interview

on

October 18 - 19

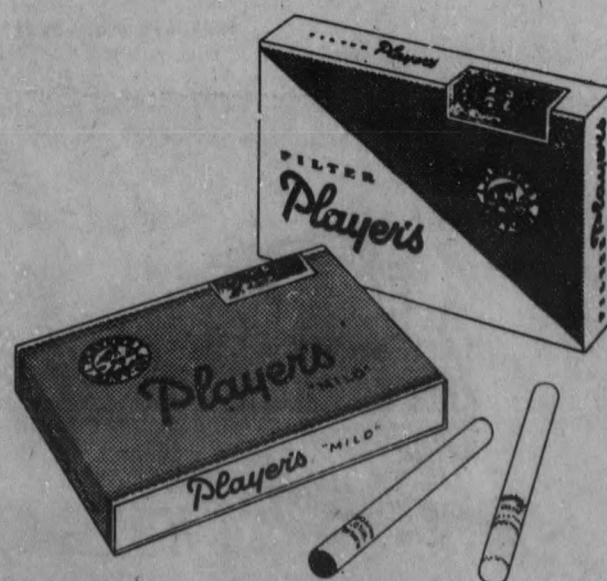
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