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LA VILLE RADIEUSE

(The City Radiant with Joy)

Speech given by Le Corbusier on The Woman's
Radio Review over Station WEAFF--NBC, Thursday,
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As a modest professional man who has devoted his life to the first cycle of the machine age, it is my mission to present in the field of architecture and city planning a series of proposals which demand, of course, the support of all modern technics, but whose ultimate goal lies far beyond the merely utilitarian. It is indispensable in these days to aim at the goal of giving the men of the machine age the joys of health and of heart.

Such a programme is neither specifically European or American. It is quite simply human and universal. It represents the urgent job of our time. Let us replace the present brutality, misery and stupidity by what I like to call the essential joys. The last years have chiefly sufficed to make our cities inhuman.

Monday morning when the Normandie stopped at Quarantine, I saw rising in the morning mists a city which was fantastic and almost mystical. There is the temple of the new world, I thought. But as the boat drew nearer to the city the apparition in the mist was transformed into an image of brutality and savagery. This indeed is certainly the most obvious manifestation of modern times. This brutality and savagery do not necessarily displease me. For it is thus that all great work must begin--with strength. That evening on the avenues of the city I came to appreciate the American people who have been able, following some law of life which is their own, to create a race--a race of splendid men and beautiful women.

The world at present is undergoing one of the great changes of history. Collective interest and individualism are at logger-heads instead of cooperating. Is cooperation possible? Yes, through a programme human in scale and of a human breadth

of vision. The time has come for great architecture. And there can be no new architecture without a new urbanism--that is, new principles of planning cities. New cities have always in the course of time replaced old ones. Today, at last, a new type of city can be born, the city of our modern times, filled with happiness, radiant with the essential joys.

Academic architecture has had its day. Architecture has a new purpose which is the re-arrangement and coordination of all the developments of today. Let us talk no more of style, whether modern or traditional. Style is the thing itself--to paraphrase a famous French saying: architectural style is no more than the society of the machine age as manifested in its thought, its methods of production, its general equipment, and hence in its dwellings and cities.

American, which perpetually evolves, which has infinite material resources, which has potentials of energy unknown elsewhere, is the very country most capable of realizing first and with extraordinary perfection this great task of our day.

I have a profound feeling that the ideas I bring with me and which I am presenting under the slogan of "La Ville Radieuse," "The City Radiant with Joy," will find in this country their natural soil. Coming here to explain this basic doctrine of the equipment of the machine civilization, this constructive thesis, which is optimistic and active, I realize the boldness of my hopes, but I am full of faith in the power of our modern age, and I am certain that I shall meet here many whose experience and judgment has led them to hold similar high hopes.

Le Corbusier