

**Wartime housing. [An exhibition in 10 scenes, presented at the Museum of Modern Art, sponsored by the National Committee on the Housing Emergency, and prepared in cooperation with the National Housing Agency, April [22]-June [21], 1942**

Date

1942

Publisher

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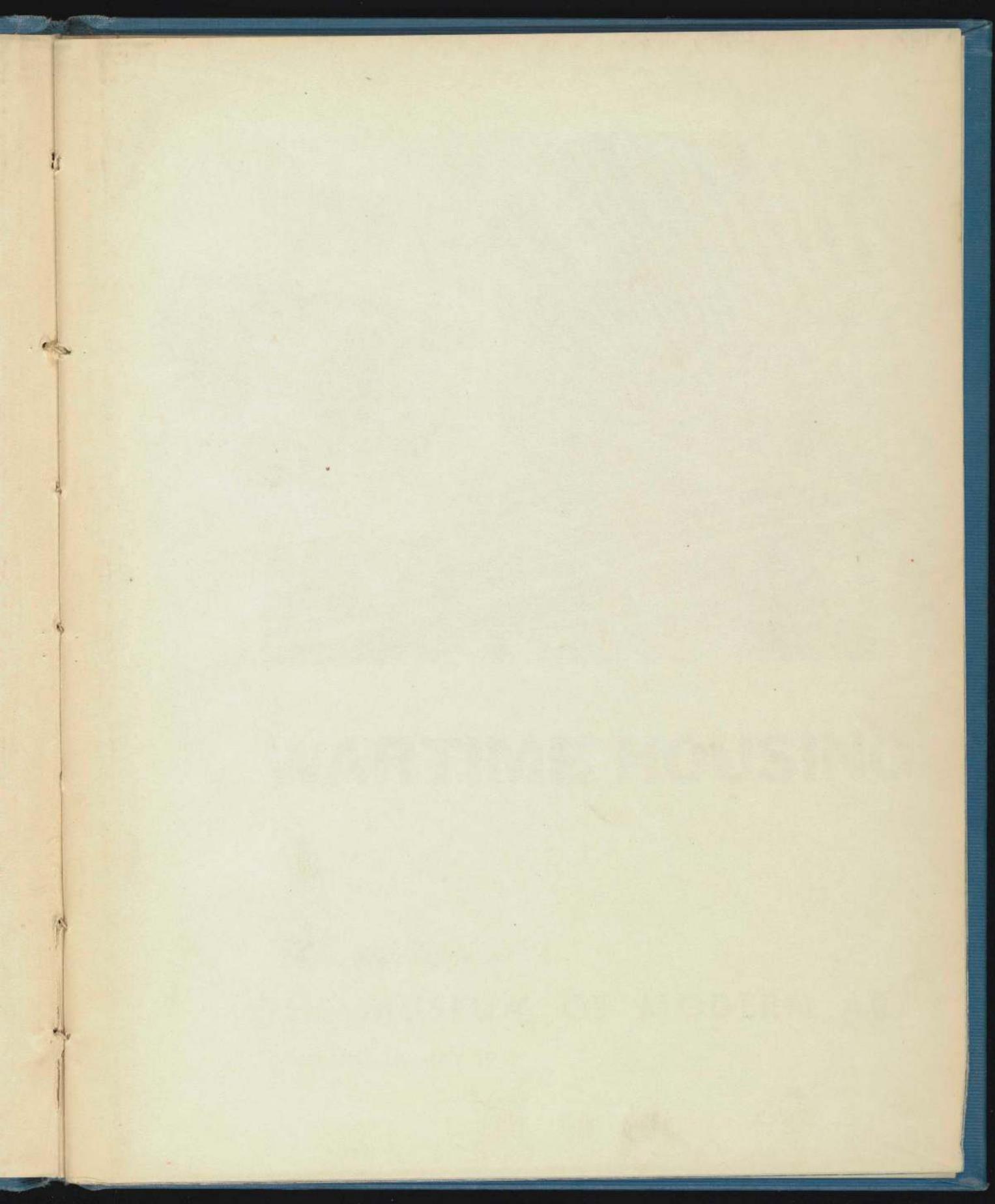
Exhibition URL

[www.moma.org/calendar/exhibitions/3034](http://www.moma.org/calendar/exhibitions/3034)

The Museum of Modern Art's exhibition history—from our founding in 1929 to the present—is available online. It includes exhibition catalogues, primary documents, installation views, and an index of participating artists.

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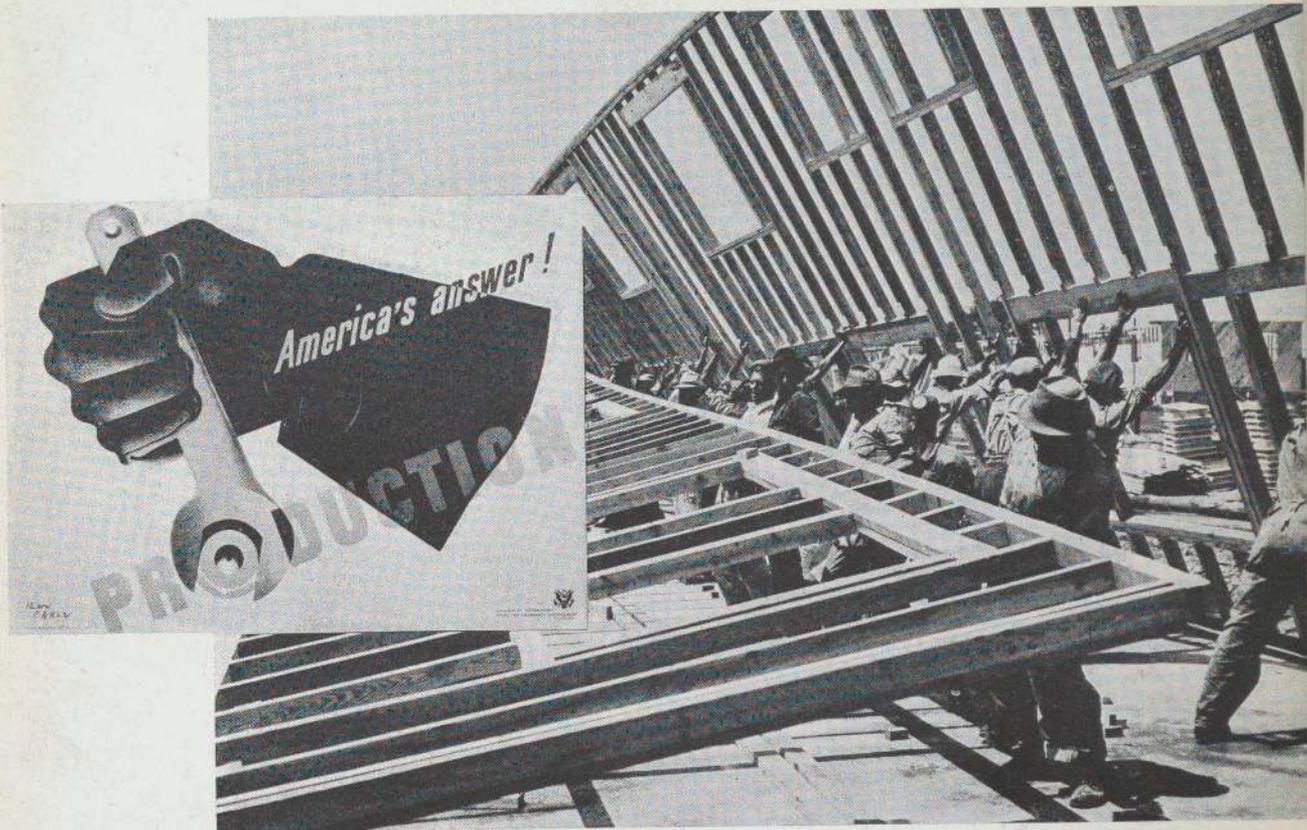
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# WARTIME HOUSING

MMA  
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*The Bulletin of*

**THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART**

4 VOLUME IX MAY 1942

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

I am interested to learn that the National Committee on the Housing Emergency and the Museum of Modern Art are collaborating in presenting a public Wartime Housing Exhibition at the Museum.

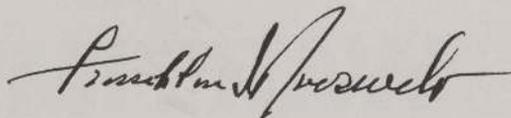
Such an exhibit will, I am sure, serve to bring forcibly to public attention some of the problems involved in providing adequate housing for war workers and their families in the present emergency. It will also serve to demonstrate how closely interrelated are the questions of wartime housing and wartime production. Sufficient homes for workers in war industries are an essential element in the whole program of making the weapons of war. Local citizen interest in the provision of war housing will provide a great stimulant in this effort, especially in those localities throughout the country where the situation is most acute. Citizens' organizations such as your Committee can be most helpful in promoting not only this local interest but a widespread national interest as well.

An appreciation of the necessity for providing a war worker with the comfort of a proper home for himself and his family will lead to close cooperation between Federal officials and the officials and citizens of different localities in the United States. I am confident that with such cooperation we can make great strides in attaining the objective of adequate wartime housing, not only with public funds but through the stimulation of the use of private capital as well.

I trust that the exhibit will be viewed by as many people as possible in the several months during which it will be continued.

With kindest regards,

Very sincerely yours,



## WARTIME HOUSING—An exhibition in 10 scenes

Presented at the Museum of Modern Art, sponsored by the National Committee on the Housing Emergency, and prepared in cooperation with the National Housing Agency. April-June, 1942.

### SCENE 1: (See illustration on back cover.)

*“In this year 1942 we shall produce 60,000 planes, 45,000 tanks, 20,000 anti-aircraft guns . . . Our task is hard—the time is short.”*

*Extract from the President's message to Congress of January 6, 1942.*

## SCENE 2:

1938—Housing shortage already acute.  
Street cars used for dwellings.

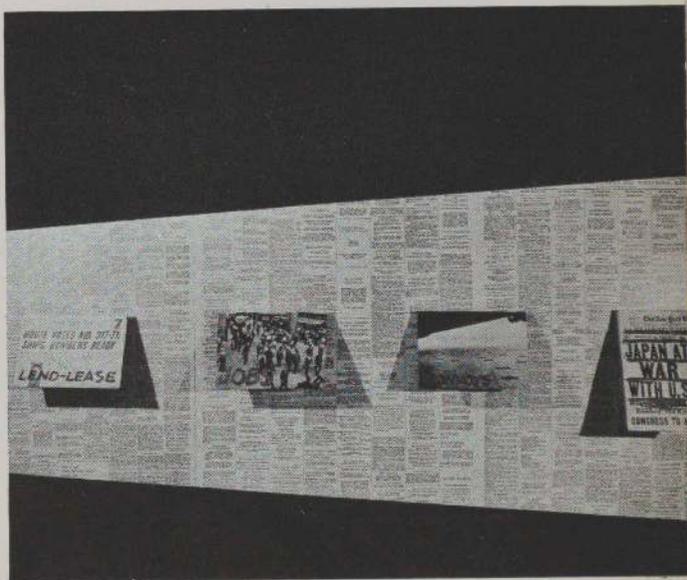
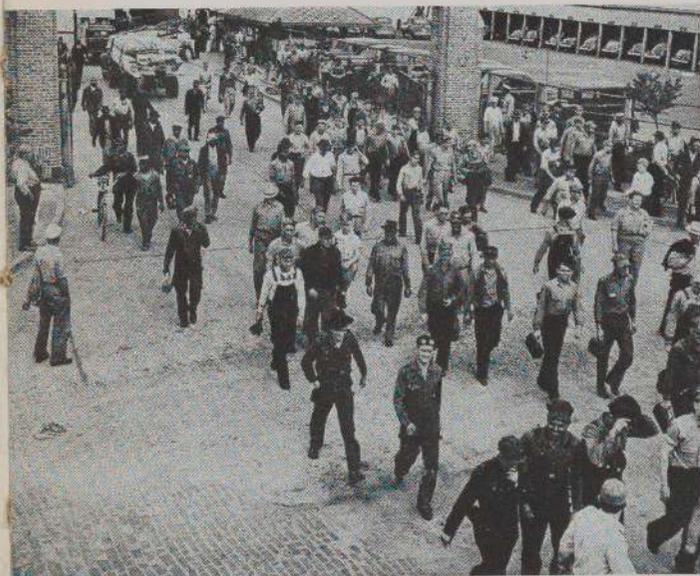
1939—War declared in Europe.

1940—Defense program begins in U. S.

1941—Lend-lease bill passed.  
Production program under way.  
**WAR WITH AXIS**

1942—Factories strive to meet war production needs.  
Greatest labor migration in U. S. history.

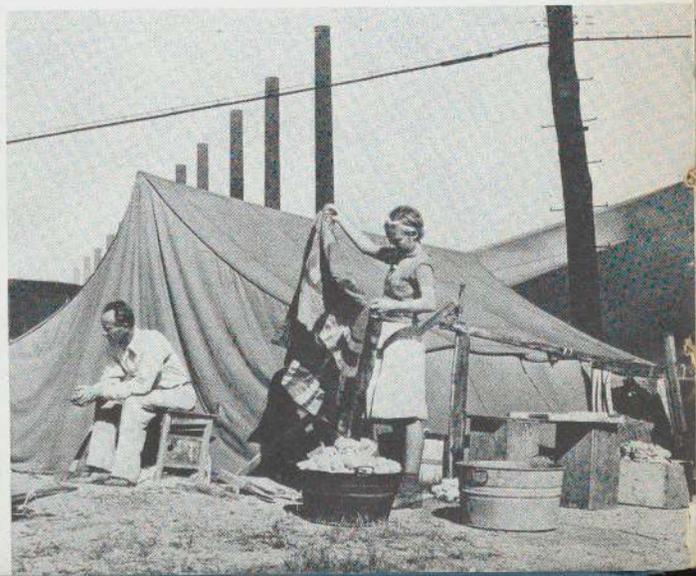
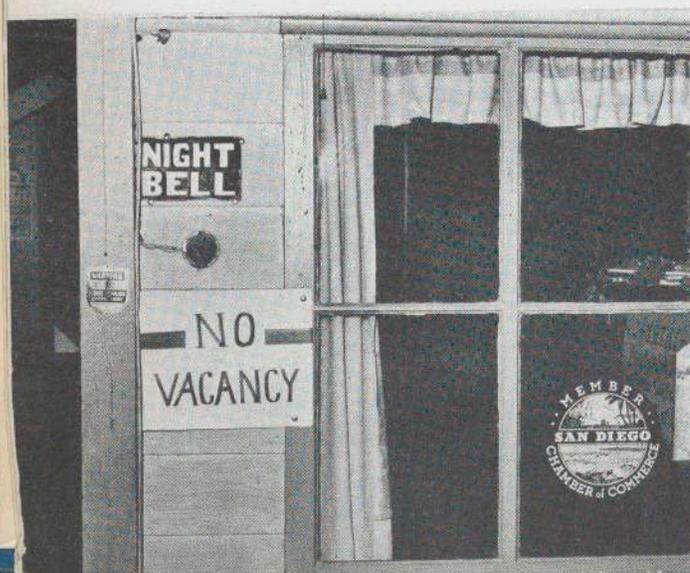
*"This is a tough job and a long one"*—President Roosevelt, April 28, 1942.

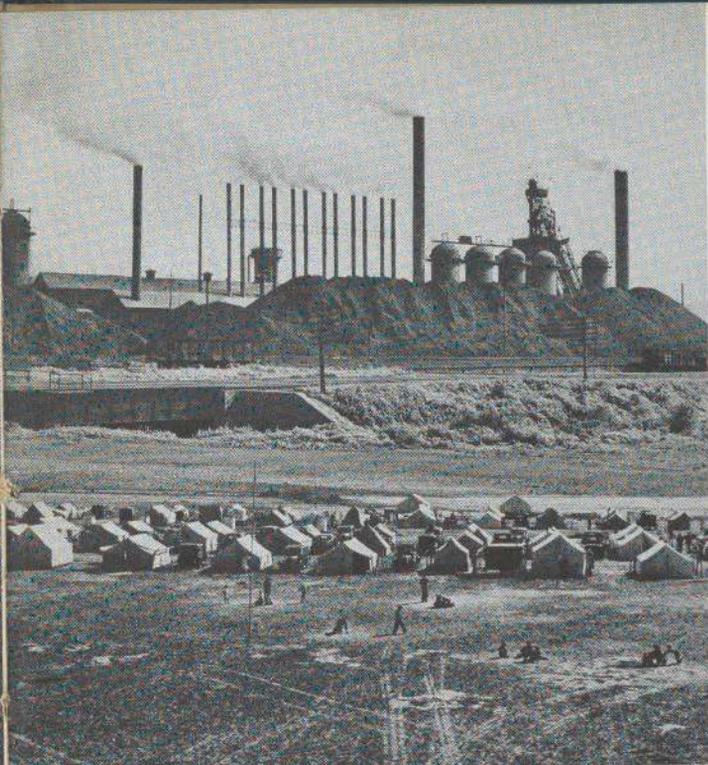




### SCENE 3:

Bad living conditions confront industrial workers moving to wartime industrial towns.

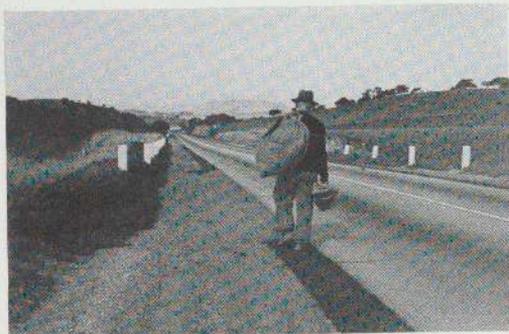




Home is a place where you hang your hat, where you eat, where you sleep. It's where you listen to the radio and take a bath. It's the place your wife washes your socks and the children do their homework. . . Suppose you're bucking rivets for eight hours a day and some overtime. Maybe you're feeding a strip mill. You're running a press, a crane, a Fay lathe, a drill. You've got to sleep and eat and rest. . . It's part of your job. You've got to put a roof over your machines. You've got to put a roof over the men who run them. If you haven't got a place to live, you can't work. That's all.



**NO-VACANCY**

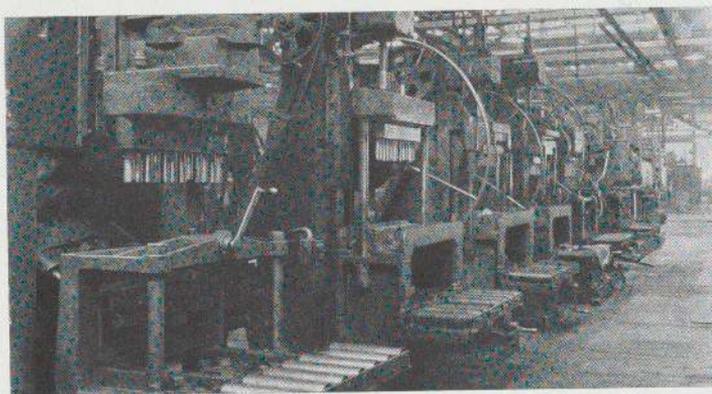


#### SCENE 4:

*For want of a nail the shoe was lost.  
For want of a shoe the horse was lost.  
For want of a horse the rider was lost.  
For want of a rider the battle was lost.  
For want of a battle the kingdom was lost.  
And all for the want of a horseshoe nail.*

—BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

Workers move away from industrial centers.



Machinery is idle.

**Pitt**  
*Daily*  
FIVE CENTS

ESTABLISHED 1792, by Matthew Potts  
Vol. II — No. 188  
Monday, March 9, 1942  
Rain and colder.

COMPLETE EDITION

THE NATION Pages 11-14  
Found: Tons of  
**IDLE  
STEEL**

**H. R. Knickerbocker**  
Cables After Flight From Batavia:

**We Could  
Have Saved  
Java**

**With a Few Days'  
Plane Production**



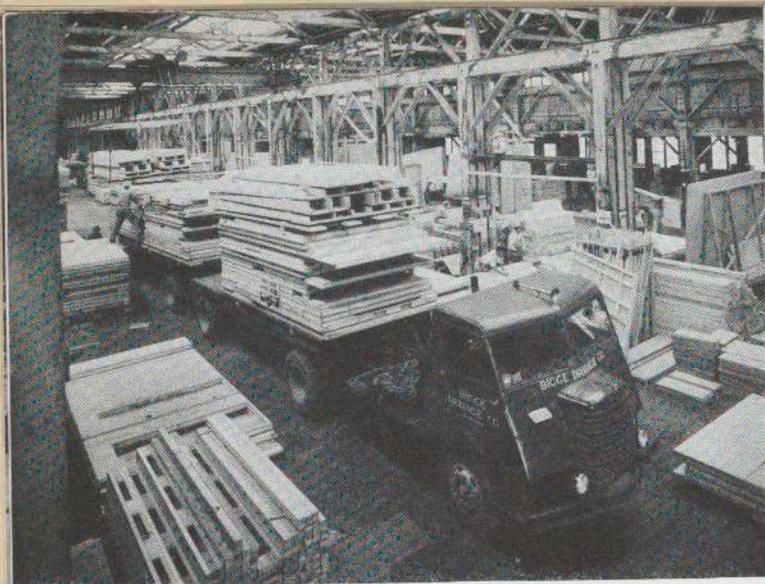
Production is lost.



. . . . The Battle Was Lost

**SCENE 5:**

The task is long . . . . the time is short.

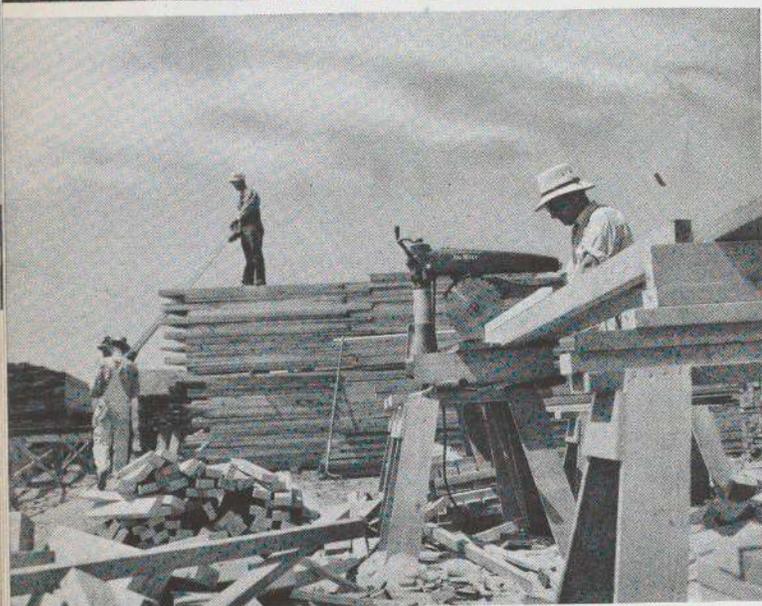


## SCENE 6:

### Quantity Production of Houses

Factory assembly of panels.

New building technics make for quantity with speed and economy.

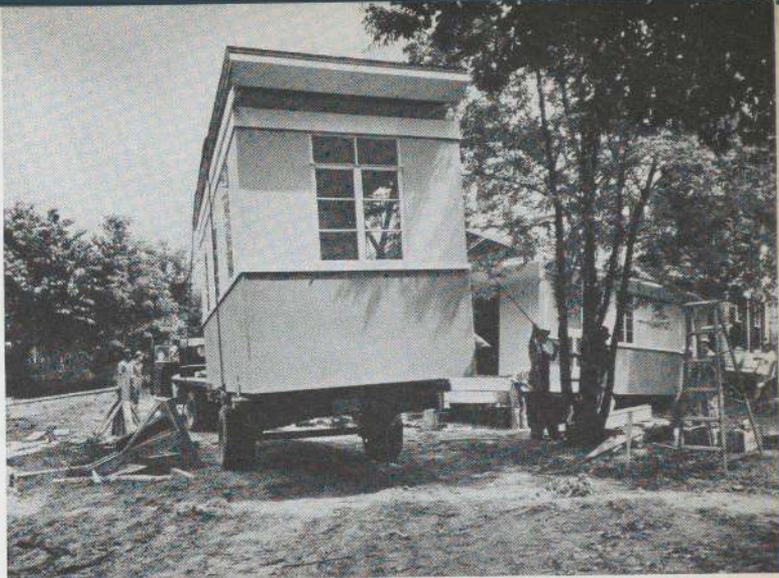


Power tools set up on the site turn out house parts by production line methods.



Plumbing is installed in large pre-assembled units, sometimes completely built-in and ready for use as soon as water and drain connections can be made.

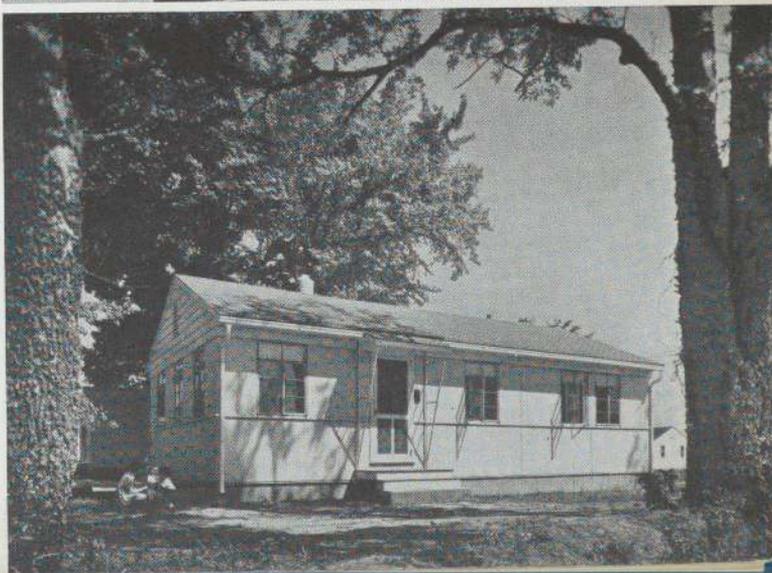
In the case of the TVA demountable units, completed sections arrive on trucks and are bolted together into a solid house.

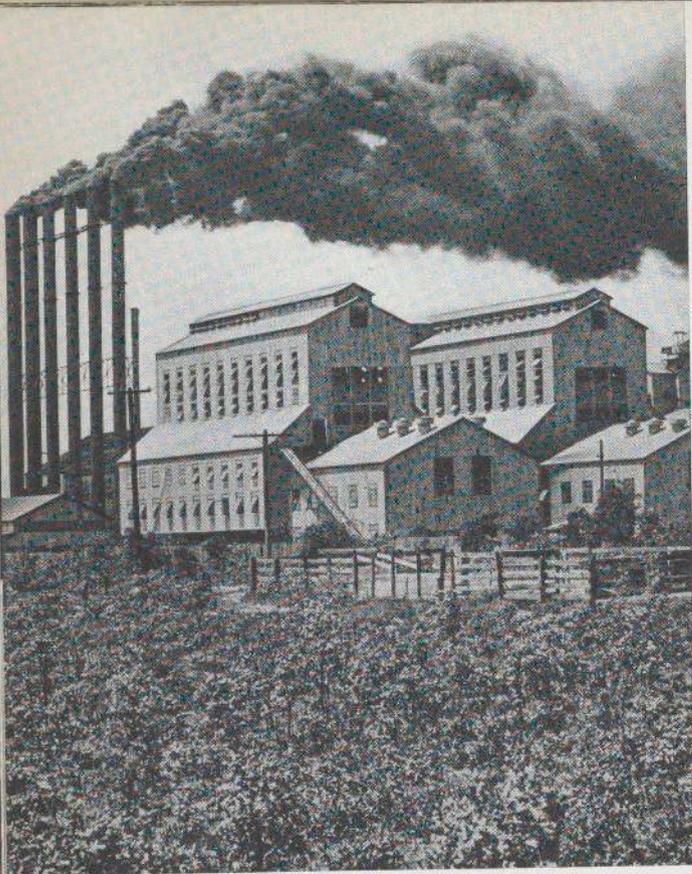


These houses are produced on outdoor assembly lines, beside which pre-cut lumber is stacked ready for use.



A completed three-bedroom type house needing only lawn and shrubs to make it look permanent. Yet it was moved onto its lot and assembled in half a day and could as easily be moved out again.





The Industry

## SCENE 7:

But housing is more than houses. You can't just call in an architect and expect him to work everything out. It is a community job that takes a lot of planning by every one in the community. Before you start building houses, you've got to think of the **INDUSTRY** in your town:

Was the industry there before the war?

Will it remain after the war?

How many shifts do the men work?

Will there be fewer shifts when there is no war?

Will the plant be converted to peacetime production?

What is the wage scale of the workers?

How is the plant located in relation to possible sites for housing?

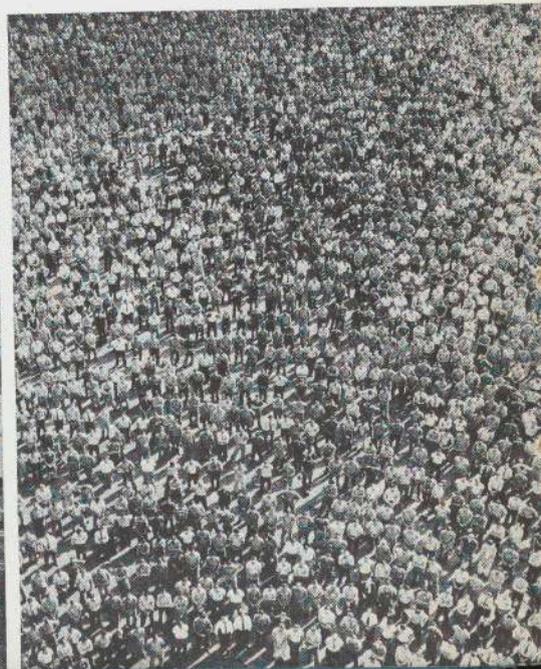
Which way does its smoke blow?

What provisions are there for its waste?

The Community



The Workers



Before you start building houses, you've got to think about the **COMMUNITY** itself:

Can private enterprise supply housing?

Should the new housing be temporary and demountable or is permanent housing needed anyway?

How will the workers get to work?

Are there adequate facilities for water supply and sewage disposal? Are there enough schools, hospitals, recreation facilities?

How can all these problems best be solved so that the community will be better and not worse as a result of new housing?

## SCENE 8:

By using new building technics and by solving these problems of the workers and the community, you can obtain housing faster and at lower cost, you can help war production and you can have something of permanent value.

Wartime housing facilities can be converted to peacetime use instead of leaving slums and the industrial ghost towns like this which resulted from the last war.

Before you start building houses, you've got to think about the **WORKERS** who are going to live in them:

How many workers are going to be needed now?

How many will be needed after the war?

Where do they come from—your own town?—the outskirts?—nearby towns?—far away?

Are the workers young or old?

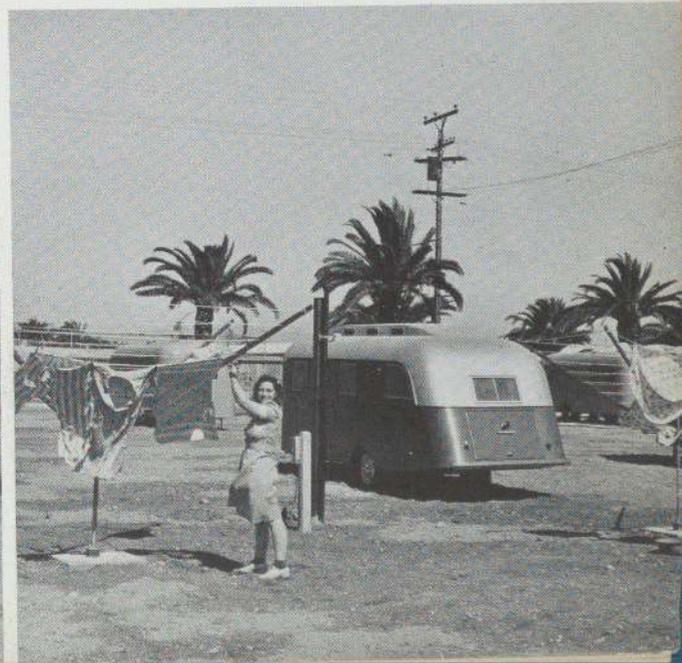
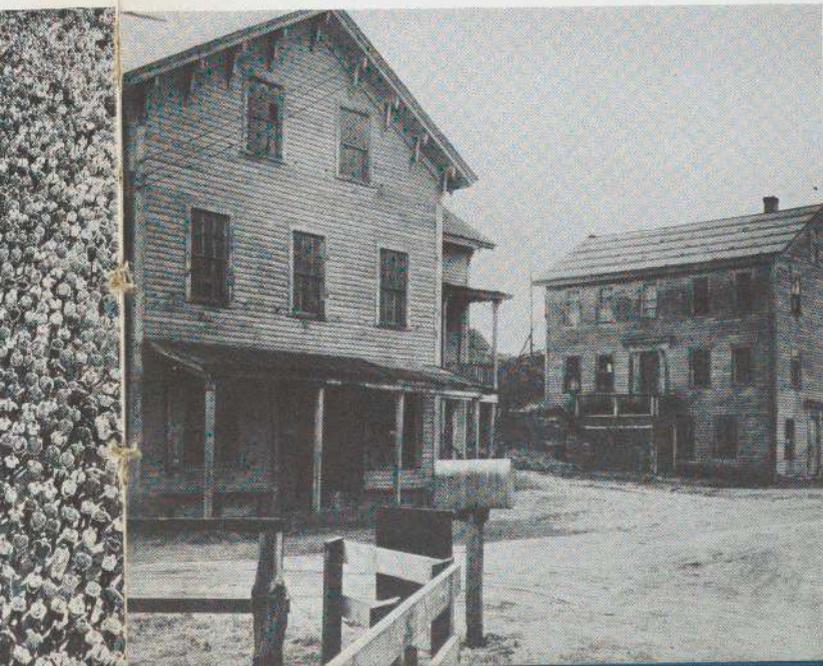
Are they skilled or unskilled labor?

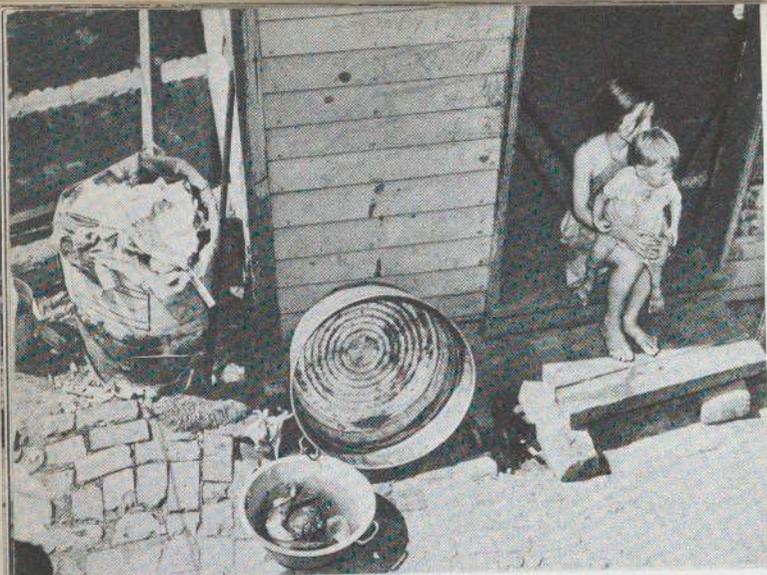
Have they families? How many children?

How can these dislocated people be made to feel they belong to the community?

The smartest thing a town can do is to start thinking right now what it wants to be when the war is over. The community can benefit or suffer as a result of this housing. War work can be the best thing that ever happened to a town—or the worst.

Where housing needs are of brief duration only, trailer camps serve the purpose with comfort and economy, and they may be moved at will to new areas of need.





## REPLACE THIS

Two children in the back yard of a three-room house with no bath, electricity or gas.



Slum interior.



Laundry tubs.

**WITH THIS**

Nursery school of a Farm Workers' Community.



Built by a community Housing Authority with USHA aid.



Laundry and utility building in a Farm Security Administration camp for defense workers.





**NOT THIS—**



**BUT THIS**

Recreation facilities are needed for both children and adults: playgrounds, gardens, workshops, libraries, meeting-places.

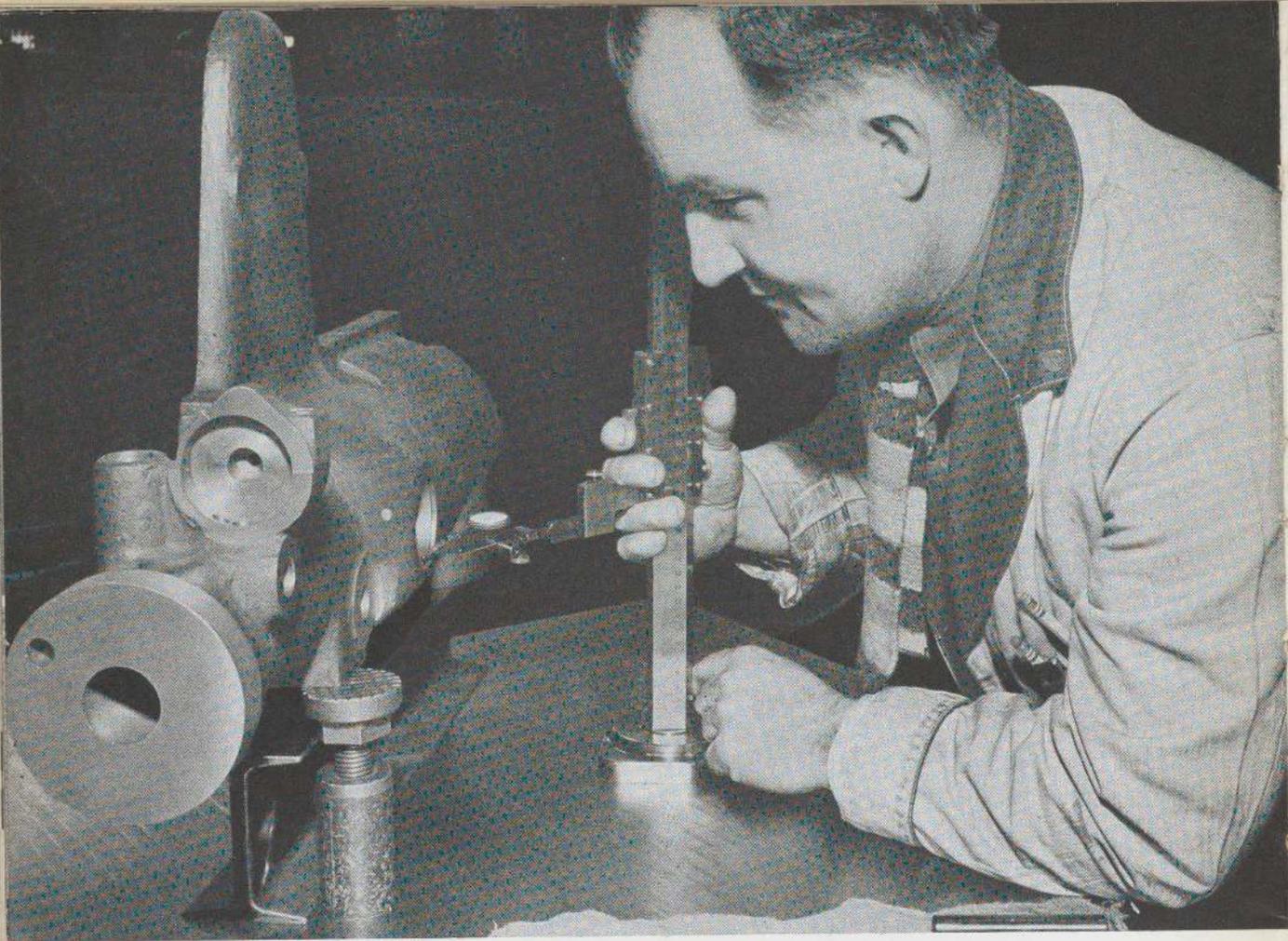
**NOT THIS—**



**BUT THIS**



Segregation of traffic arteries from residential housing, of vehicles from pedestrians.



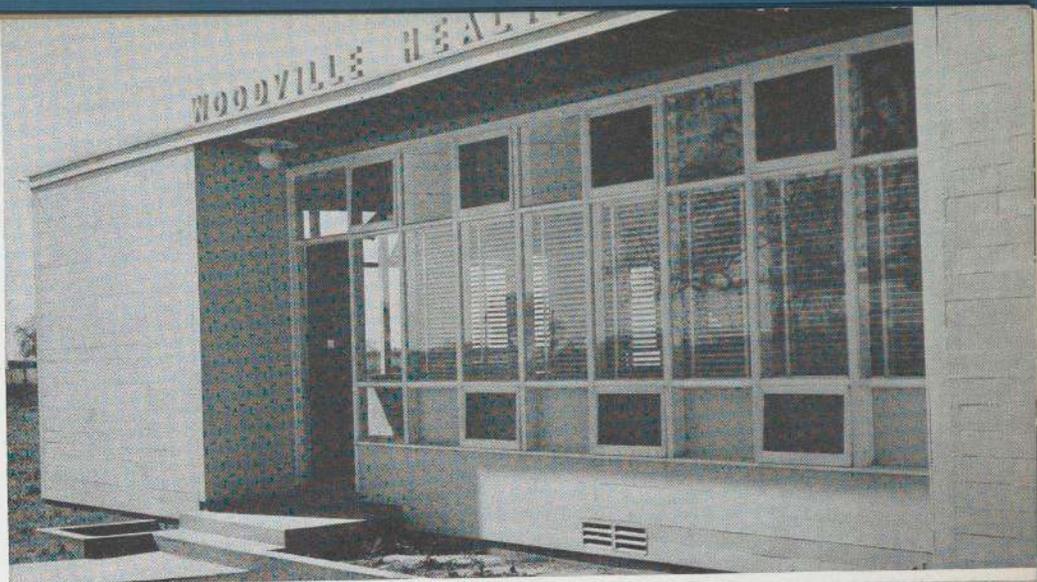
## SCENE 9:

Workers in war industries are more efficient when the community is equipped with such facilities as

The architect or designer can act as coordinator of the size, type and cost of buildings; the site planning and unit planning; the relation of housing to existing town and industry. But good housing is not a one-man job. Practically everyone in the community has a duty to perform in making the plan and making it work.

**Health Centers**

**Architect:  
Vernon De Mars  
for Farm Security  
Administration**

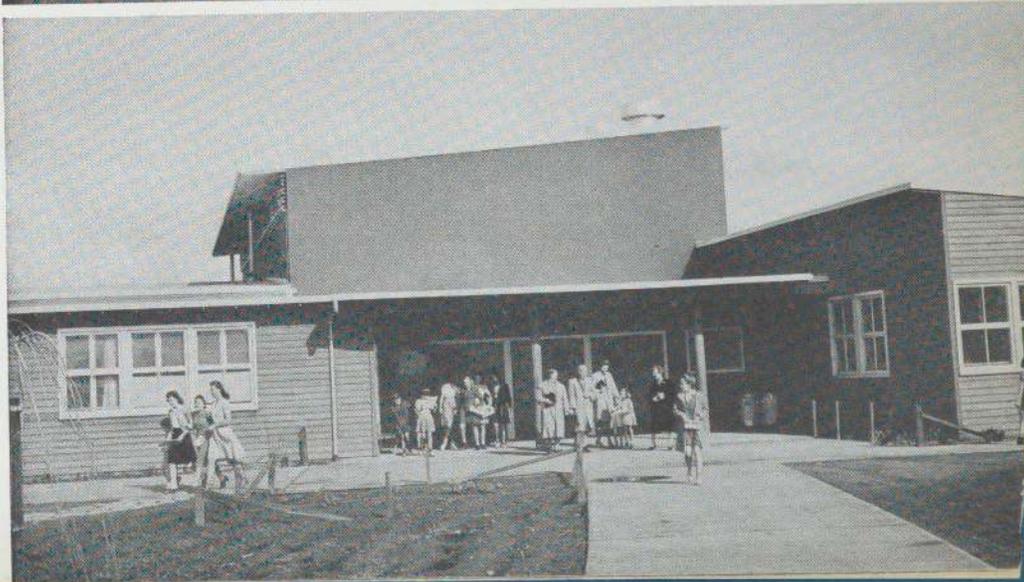


**Fire and Police  
Protection**



**Schools and  
Community  
Centers**

**Architect:  
Vernon De Mars  
for Farm Security  
Administration**



**INDIVIDUALS**

- workers in war plants
- plant executives
- property owners
- builders
- mortgage holders
- architects
- city planners
- publishers
- editors

**GROUPS**

- labor organizations
- real estate boards
- banks
- insurance companies
- chambers of commerce
- citizens' housing and planning councils
- defense councils
- clubs: business
- social
- fraternal
- cooperatives
- league of women voters
- churches
- social agencies
- parent teachers assoc.

**YOUR MAYOR  
or  
CITY COUNCIL**

Good Housing  
depends upon

**YOU**

the Citizen

This chart shows  
you how to proceed

**MUNICIPAL  
DEPARTMENTS**

- buildings
- utilities
- transit
- sanitation
- health
- education
- recreation
- fire
- police
- budget
- highway
- welfare

### **HOUSING AUTHORITY**

If you have a local housing authority, it may act for the Federal Government in the location, construction and management of war housing built with public funds. An efficient local housing authority expedites the provision of war housing.

### **FPHA**

The Federal Public Housing Authority contracts to build and operates all war housing built with public funds or delegates these powers to local housing authorities.

### **PLANNING BOARD**

If you have a local planning board, its first duty is to correlate the over-all elements which constitute a city or region, so that all developments such as schools, roads, parks and housing shall be part of an orderly pattern. It should advise on the location of all housing, public and private, and exercise control through zoning and subdivision regulations.

### **FHLBA**

The Federal Home Loan Bank Administration makes loans to local lending institutions to aid in providing new houses and in the conversion and modernization of existing houses.

### **NHA**

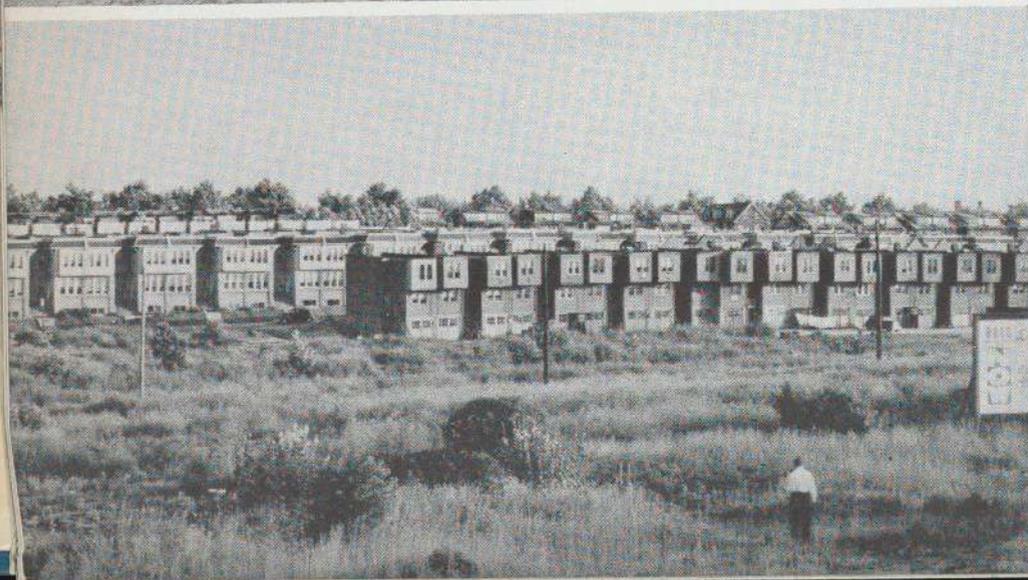
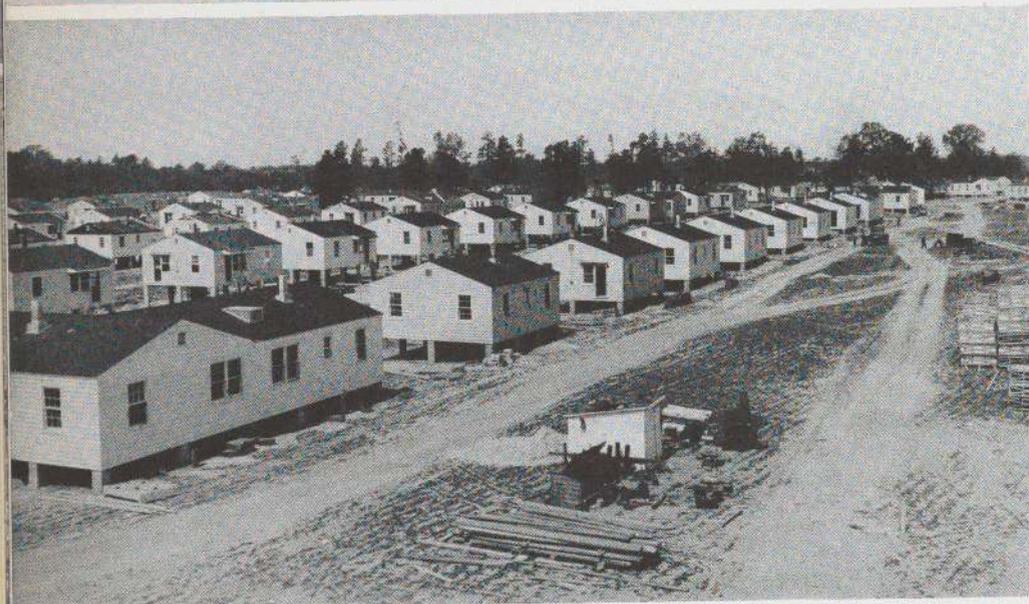
**National Housing  
Authority**

### **FHA**

The Federal Housing Administration insures mortgage loans made by lending institutions for construction of new houses and modernization of old houses.



NOT THESE

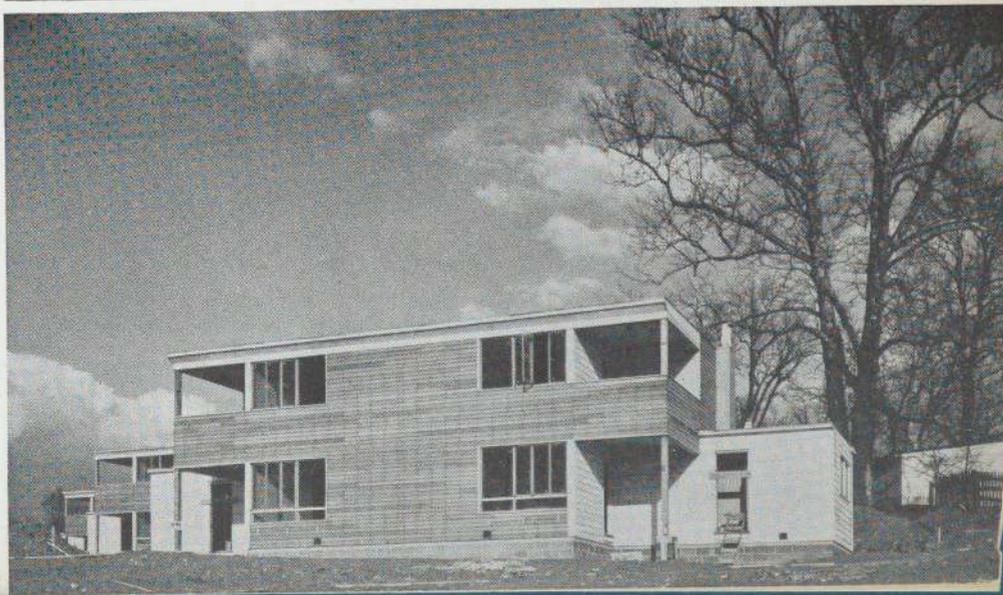
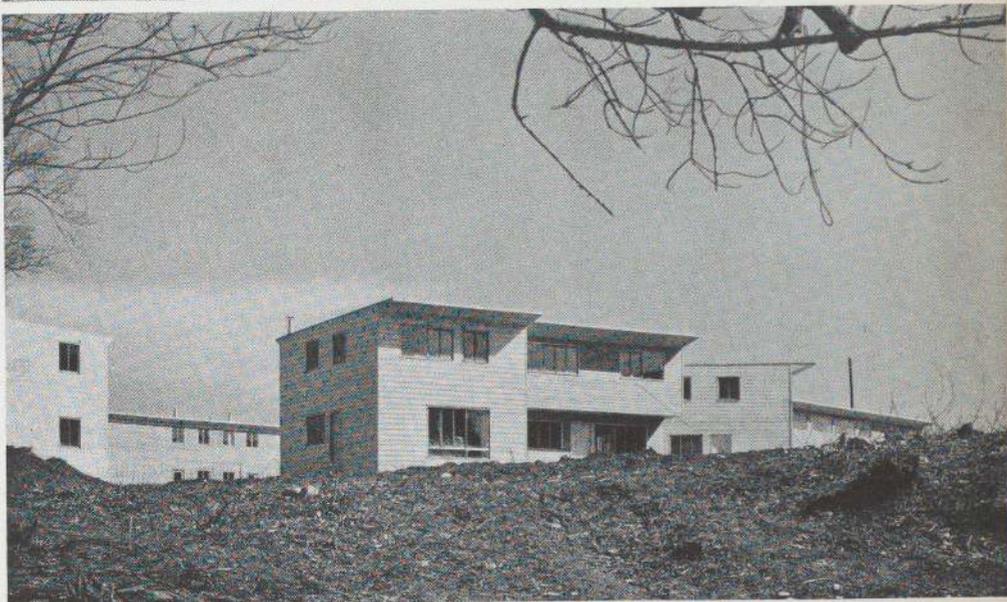


**BUT THESE**

Architect:  
Eero Saarinen



Architects:  
George Howe  
Oscar Stonorov  
Louis I. Kahn



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In addition to the references below, month-by-month accounts of progress are to be found in the *Architectural Forum*, the *Architectural Record*, and *Pencil Points*.

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## Museum Notes

### EXHIBITIONS:

**WARTIME HOUSING:** An exhibition arranged in collaboration with the National Committee on the Housing Emergency; on view through June 21.

**ROAD TO VICTORY:** A procession of photographs of the nation at war, opening May 20. Directed by the distinguished American photographer, Lieutenant Commander Edward Steichen, U. S. N., with accompanying text and labels by Carl Sandburg.

Lieut. Commander Steichen examined more than

### SOCIAL ASPECTS

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- v.1: Historical and sociological.
- v.2: Political economy and civic art. Ed. by Ruth Nanda Anshen.
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### ECONOMICS

- Abrams, Charles. Revolution in land. New York, Harper & Brothers, 1939.
- United States. National Resources Planning Board. Our cities; their role in the national economy. Washington, 1937.

30,000 contemporary photographs in making his selection for this exhibition. A special installation has been designed by Herbert Bayer, who directed the Museum's Bauhaus exhibition in December, 1938. The photographs will be presented in dramatic sequence under four major headings: National Resources, Production, Actual War (including Army, Navy and Marines) and People. Several sections of the exhibition will be viewed from a curved ramp two feet above the floor level, permitting use of floor space. Many large photographs will cover entire walls.

By showing how greatly the war effort depends upon the human element, the exhibition will enable every citizen to recognize his position in the nation's war effort.

**ART EXHIBITION AND SALE FOR THE ARMED SERVICES:** An art sale for the Armed Services will open at the Museum on May 6 and will conclude with a garden party on June 1. Works of art included in the sale will be exhibited on the sixth floor. Although this floor is ordinarily reserved for members of the Museum, members have generously given permission for it to be open to the general public for the duration of the exhibition and sale.

Members of the Museum have been asked to contribute paintings, sculpture, watercolors, gouaches, drawings, etchings and lithographs to the sale, the sole standards of acceptance being that the works be good of their kind and that if an oil painting is submitted, its minimum value be approximately \$100. Other items will be priced as low as \$10. The sale will in no way be limited to modern works of art. Among the hundreds of works received are oils by Winslow Homer, Orozco, John Kane, Speicher, Eilshemius, de Chirico; watercolors by Burchfield and Dufy; drawings by Augustus John, Forain and Berman, and prints by Cézanne, Lautrec, Matisse and Bellows.

The opening of this exhibition and sale will launch a far-reaching program, approved by the War Department, to make use of art for the benefit of the armed forces of the United States. The major part of the funds raised will be used to provide facilities and material for soldier artists in Army camps throughout the country. An exhibition on occupational therapy for disabled soldiers and sailors is also planned.

The director of the Museum's Armed Services Program is James T. Soby, well-known writer and collector who directed the Museum's recent Dali exhibition and who has just been made a Trustee of the Museum. The entire program has the approval of the War Department and the enthusiastic support of the Special Services Branch of the Army, to which the Museum will turn over the facilities for soldier artists in the Army camps throughout the country. The need for studio rooms and materials is acute, as most soldiers cannot afford them and there is no specific appropriation as yet to provide them. In the few camps where such facilities have been provided the response is enthusiastic and results are amazingly good.

**TWO YEARS OF WAR IN ENGLAND:** Photographs by William Vandivert:

Seventy photographs made for *Life* by William Vandivert, the only American photographer in London throughout the first two years of war, are being displayed in the Auditorium Gallery through May 10. The photographs, taken under most trying conditions, cover various phases of the British war effort.

**EDUCATIONAL PROJECT EXHIBITIONS:**

*Children's Festival of Modern Art:* an exhibition for children between the ages of 3 and 12 continues in the Young People's Gallery until May 10.

*Anti-hoarding Pictures by School Children:* the twenty best pictures in a project sponsored by the Museum of Modern Art and the Women's City Club to further national defense, Auditorium Gallery, May 12-25. Original drawings of Mexican costumes by Carlos Mérida. Young People's Gallery, May 12-22. Exhibition of the work done in the Educational Project's Saturday class for Members' Children. Young People's Gallery, May 25-31. Exhibition of the work of students in the Educational Project's classes for students from the New York public schools. Young People's Gallery, June 2-28.

## DEPARTMENT OF CIRCULATING EXHIBITIONS:

**FUTURE EXHIBITIONS:** Department of Circulating Exhibitions recently sent out a questionnaire to its mailing list to discover the effect of the war on organizations holding art exhibitions throughout the country. The Museum offered to provide exhibition material of whatever type seemed most needed, and it is interesting to discover that although wartime shows are among the most popular, an equal amount of interest is shown in the art exhibitions: paintings from the Museum's collection, American architecture, industrial design today, sculpture, photography, etc.

The Department will publish its catalog of exhibitions for 1942-43 within the next few weeks, basing its selection of traveling shows on the results of the questionnaire. At least 25 new exhibitions will be offered for the season.

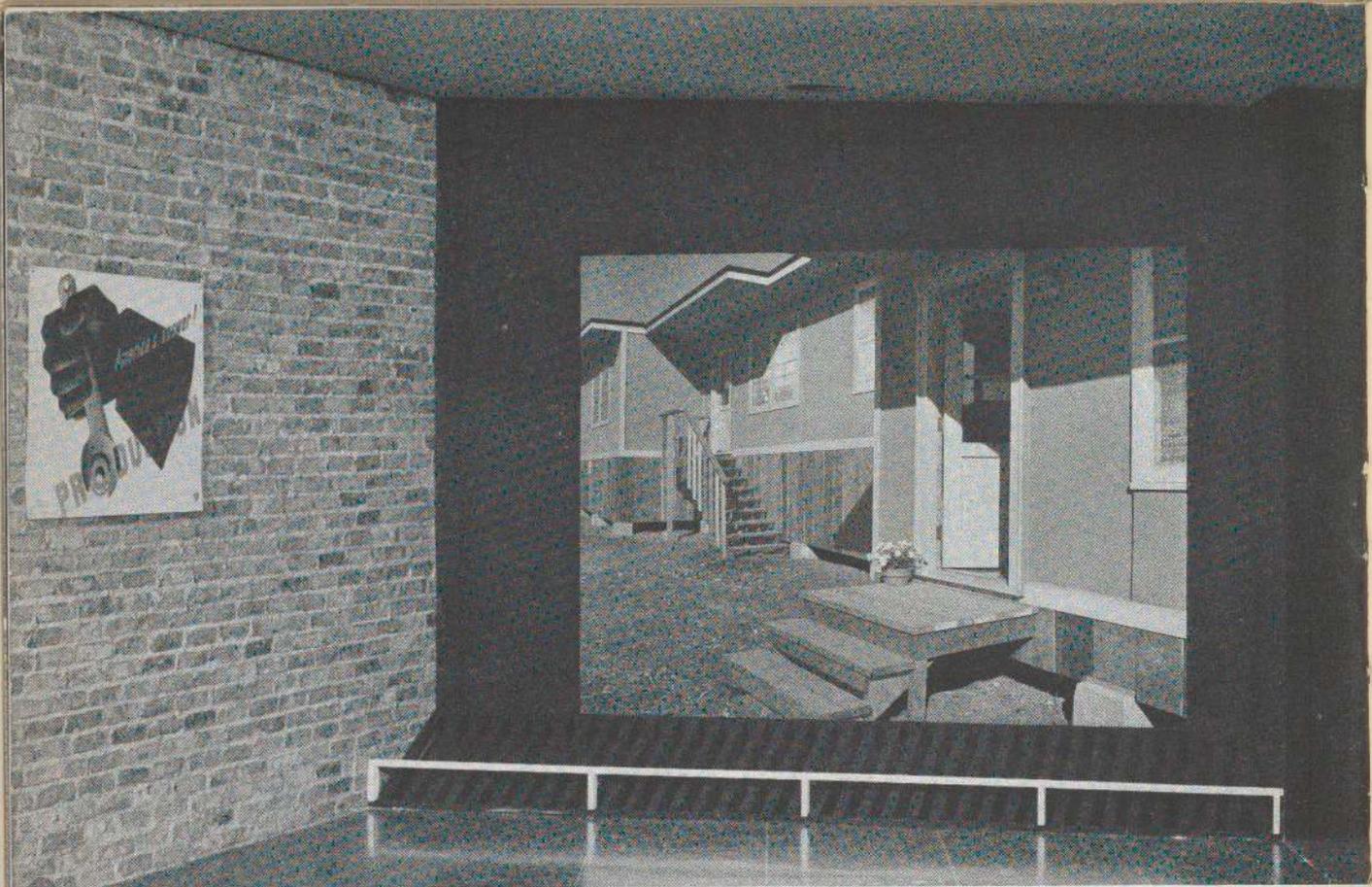
**SCULPTURE EXHIBITION RETURNS FROM HONOLULU:** An important traveling exhibition of modern sculpture left the Museum for Hawaii last October for exhibition at the Honolulu Academy of Arts from December 5 to 15. The collection survived the bombing on December 7 and, surprisingly enough, drew numerous visitors during the remainder of its stay. The collection, which has just been returned in perfect condition, will be shown at the Vassar College Art Gallery as originally scheduled from May 20 through June 15.

## SUMMER GARDEN:

The Museum's Sculpture Garden has been redesigned by Mr. Philip Goodwin, one of the architects of the building, to make it an attractive and pleasant place for members and their guests in town during the summer months. Shade trees have been planted under which tables will be set up and a refreshment pavilion has been built. Lunch and tea will be served.

## GIFT MEMBERSHIPS:

The fact that more than 200 memberships were given as Christmas gifts and that many renewed the memberships which they had given as gifts the year before indicates that membership in the Museum makes a particularly desirable present. At this time may we suggest gift memberships as graduation presents.



Opening scene of the exhibition with motion picture accompanied by sound track of the President's speech.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Exhibition designed and assembled by Eliot F. Noyes, Director of Department of Industrial Design, with the help of Alice Carson, assistant, and Don E. Hatch, architect, as special consultant.

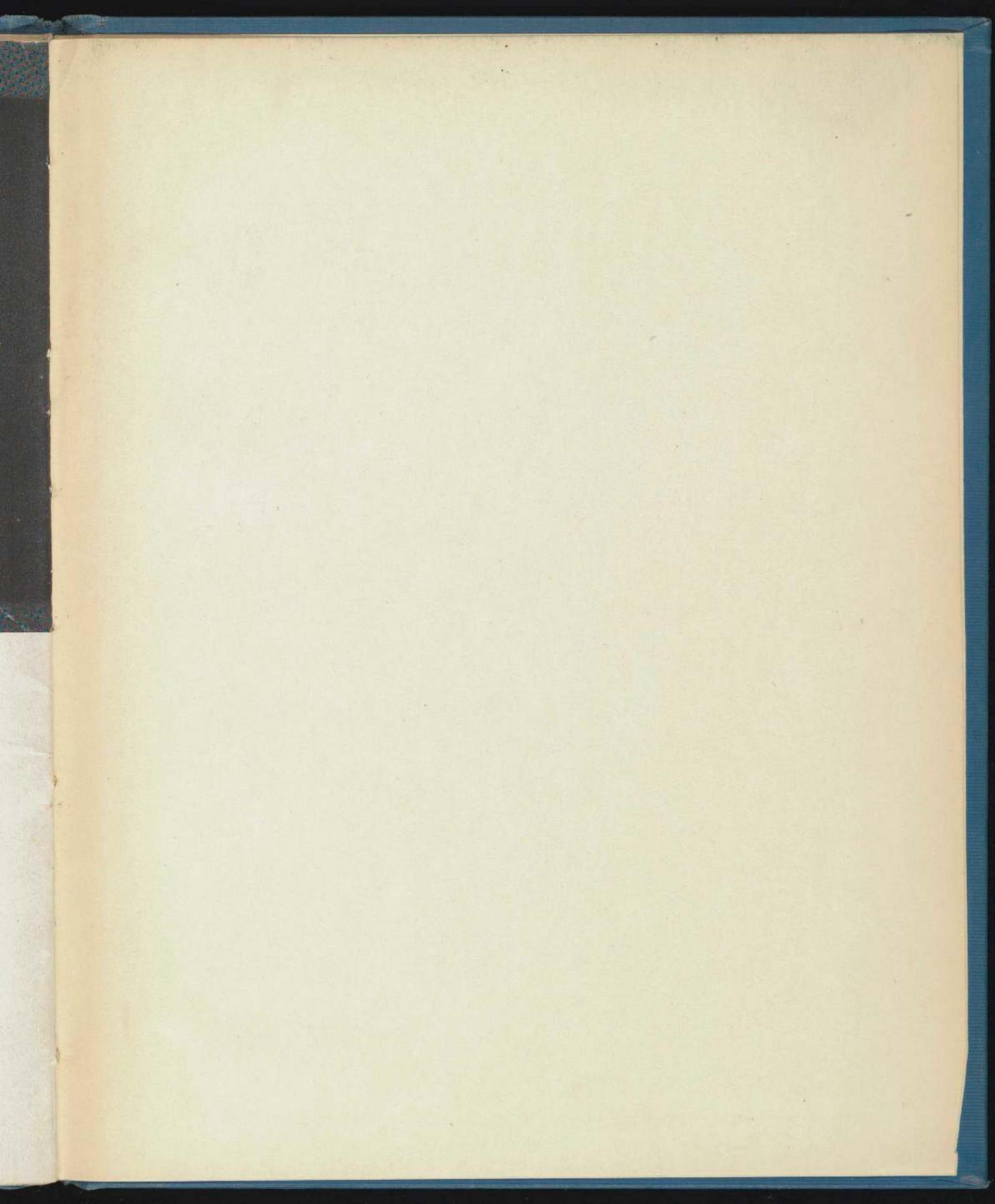
Special Advisory Committee for Exhibition: Max Abramowitz, Carl Feiss, Janet Henrich, Arthur Holden, Edgar Kaufmann, Jr., Gladys LaFetra, George Nelson, Mrs. Samuel I. Rosenman, Monroe Wheeler.

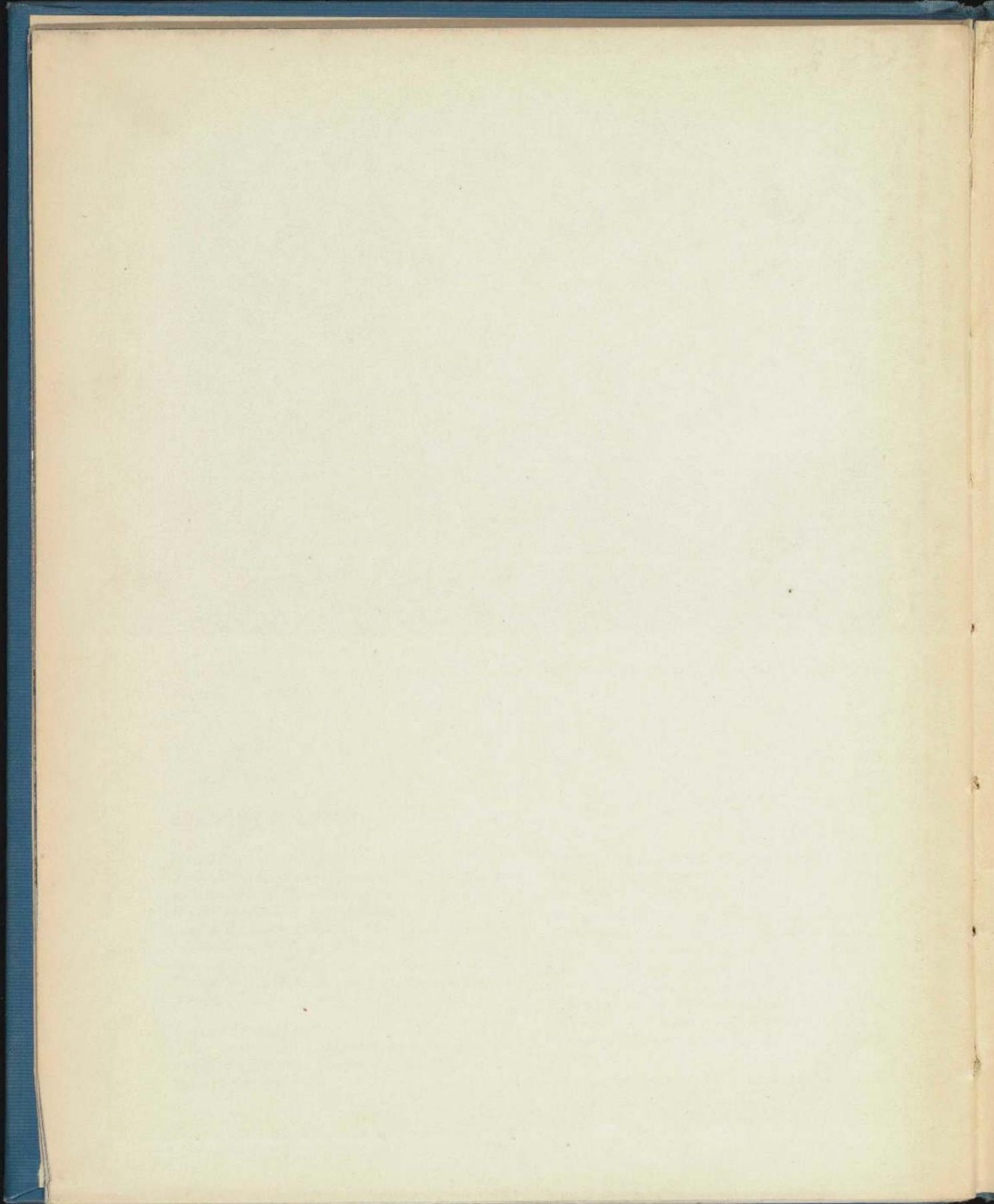
Film made up of excerpts from productions of the Office for Emergency Management. Sound script for Exhibition written by Christopher Gerould, who also directed the recordings.

Cast in recordings: Myron McCormick, *commentator*, Martha Hodge, Marjorie Jarecki, George Jarecki, John Patrick, George Ryan.

Photographs by courtesy of: Office for Emergency Management; U. S. Navy; U. S. Housing Authority; Federal Works Agency; Farm Security Administration; Avery Library, Columbia University; Fairchild Aerial Surveys, Inc.; Captain Harry E. Williams, U. S. Signal Corps; Frank Scherschel; Ewing Gallo-way; Carl Mydans for *Life*; Cortlandt Hubbard; Richard R. Frame; John S. Coburn; George Strock for *Life*.

Poster reproduced on cover designed by Jean Carlu.





Braunstein 11/43

The Museum of Modern Art



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