

SEVEN ON ARCHITECTURE

buildings is the worst thing you can do. The architecture here is not good Eighteenth Century architecture and if we think so much of a style of architecture that is two centuries old, then why not build good Georgian or Eighteenth Century architecture. I am completely against this approach of building in the past. We are living in 1965 and we should have architecture that reflects our time, what's going on the world, the place in which it is built, and the attitudes of the people concerned. The architecture on this campus doesn't represent anything.

Brunswickan

Larson and Larson are giving us a very reasonable fee due to the magnitude of their contracts. Can we afford to search elsewhere?

Green

Cost is not an argument because of the slight percentage that goes to the architect, minimal now because he's doing such a bad job.

Brunswickan

What about the tendency towards mass education to unlimited entrance which makes numbers grow so rapidly that new buildings have to be built all the time. There's not money available to build these fine structures which all would like to have.

Green

It is untrue that one can't build modern University buildings in a modern architectural style, at a cost just as low as ours.

Brunswickan

What do you think, is the educational philosophy of the

administration?

Green

I think that their educational philosophy is that we've got a very big problem in New Brunswick, we've got to educate a lot of people; it's very expensive and we have to build lots of buildings; we chose an architect so many years ago to build these things and he builds buildings in which things go on; and everything is OK; and besides, it doesn't cost us that much for architecture. I think they should be concerned with what goes on within the walls and how a building fits around a person's life — which is important.

Brunswickan

Have Larson and Larson done well on their overall planning of the University?

Green

There couldn't possibly be an overall plan. I mean no overall plan could possibly put an infirmary for sick people in between two residences. As far as I know we've got 6,000 acres. Well I think it's ridiculous to cram it all into one acre. We should use the other 5,999. It's terrible, and especially in New Brunswick, a province of trees, yet how much land they allowed between the buildings for trees?

Brunswickan

Any final comments?

Green

You wouldn't wear a llama vest, as an undershirt, because it's very uncomfortable and not very pleasing. Just as this, why build a building which makes you itch a lot when you see it but doesn't bother you very much after you get used

to it as then it only keeps you warm. There are so many things that are much better and perform the same function — why not use them?

My final gripe is that when an architect is asked to build a structure, I expect to be struck by the splendid manner in which he has solved the problems sent to him. But continually I've been struck when I look at the buildings around here — Good God, is that all he could do!



Bruno Bobak
Resident Artist

"They look like factory buildings."

Brunswickan

As an artist you must have several images and ideas on campus architecture. What are some of your stronger sentiments?

Bobak

I would like to have seen a much more imaginative and contemporary type of building programme on the campus. Trying to imitate a period piece never works because it

always looks as though you're something old. I think its better to stick right with the times and use whatever technology is available for the kind of building you need and want today.

I don't think there is anything you can do about the appearance of buildings, for its up to the University to decide how they should look. I think it's unfortunate myself, because I feel they could have been far more beautiful than they are. When you look at structures around here you don't get any feeling that they've grown that way at all. They look like factory buildings with little bits of decoration: a lantern or a railing. Strip the buildings and you have something that could be a warehouse. And when you think of the residences, they're more like prisons with their long corridors and little floor lights.



Stuart Smith
Curator of the
Beaverbrook Gallery

"It's like cottage cheese hard to get excited about."

Brunswickan

Since 1955 we've had many buildings erected on this campus, the majority designed by Larson and Larson. What is your opinion of these buildings?

Smith

Well its like cottage cheese hard to get excited about. Its neither good nor bad, just different.

Brunswickan

What do you not like about it?

Smith

I dislike the fact that they could have been built anything in the last 75 years. There is no indication from this new SUB, for example, that it is in fact a building being put up in 1965 — it looks very much to me like a conservative building of the 1920's.

Brunswickan

What could we be building?

Smith

Structures that first of all take advantage of the site. We have a beautiful hillside but on what is Larson's concept: look for a space and we put it there and modify the floor plans to suit the fact they're on a hill. The design of the SUB is flat and level and there is no indication that it to hang from a hillside — sheer lack of imagination.

Brunswickan

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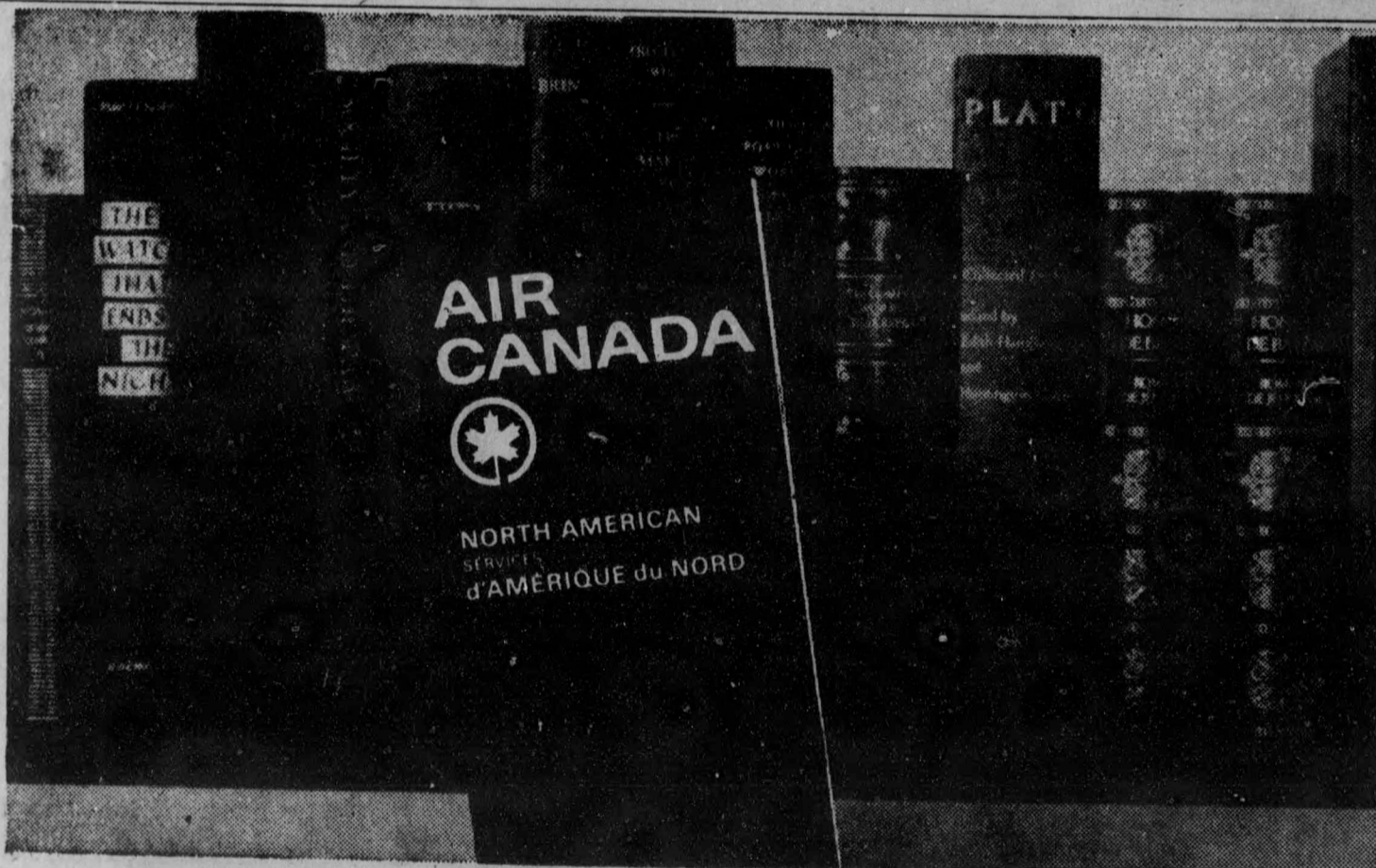
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