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The Urban Design Group is a collection of individuals who present two awards each month to examples, in their opinion, of good and bad design in the urban context. Last month's "Black Ribbon Award" went to the new provincial courthouse on Churchill Square; the "Canadian Champagne Award" was given to Professor Richard Baird for saving two elms from destruction on 83 avenue. November's awards will be announced December I.

Nominations for future awards are welcome c/o The Urban Design Group, 11132 83 Avenue.

Someone associated with the campus plan once claimed that it was modelled after Florence or Venice--intimate little Piazzas, medieval-type passageways, "manageable" open spaces, stimulating jumble of shapes, sizes and textures. Those of you who cannot yet see Florence rising on the banks of the Saskatchewan now realize how deep the gulf is between yourselves and the people building our campus.

It is easy to lose one's cool discussing the campus plan. And that gives an important clue to what is wrong. What we see at odds at the U of A is a "system" versus the particularism of its opponents. It is all the logic of an internally consistent model (the plan) versus the volition and "irrationality" of individual human beings (the people). So we see a quick flush of anger when living critics are opposed by an inanimate and approved system. It is a microcosm of the larger struggle that characterizes our society.

The logic of a system is internal. Thus an elegant model can be defended repeatedly and successfully as long as the defenders stay within their own terms of reference. Indeed that is precisely the defensive tactic they take when confronted by critics. But it should be obvious that no system can be all-encompassing. What remains outside the system always stands as an indication of other values and perceptions.

The existing campus plan has characteristics typical of a system - well articulated assumptions. A growing university in the middle of the city indicates to planners that we will have an ''urban campus'' with certain consequences for form and the use of space. With our sometimes cold winters the plan assumes that all major areas should be connected and there should be no on-campus walk that requires longer than ten minutes. In sum, the plan starts with a general statement that we aim for an enclosed compact urban campus.

But a plan should be capable of taking non-system factors into account. A plan might be very sensitive indeed to "outside" factors yet retain its own integrity. And that is what is relevant to the U of A. Our plan has proceeded on its own logic without serious reference to factors outside the system. That is why one can accuse the plan of insensitivity without opposing the plan's concept per se. What many people are really saying, and what the Urban Design Group supports, is that the implementation of the plan has been disasterous, not necessarily the concept itself. This obviously need not be a paradox. One need only recall the phrase: "The road to hell is paved with good intentions.'

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designed and situated on the S interior space, with no cons entigiven to their relations to each of with evidence makes that clear. In doin with a developed appreciation brut exterior standards of relat me therefore shocked, alienat Edn depressed by what has happened liter of A. To be outside is to be offer sur Moreover, the plan proceed great

similar disregard for sentimer mos historic values (as most syste The Where a physical environment leav part of the campus has survi scho affection in tens of thousands inde and hearts, the plan un

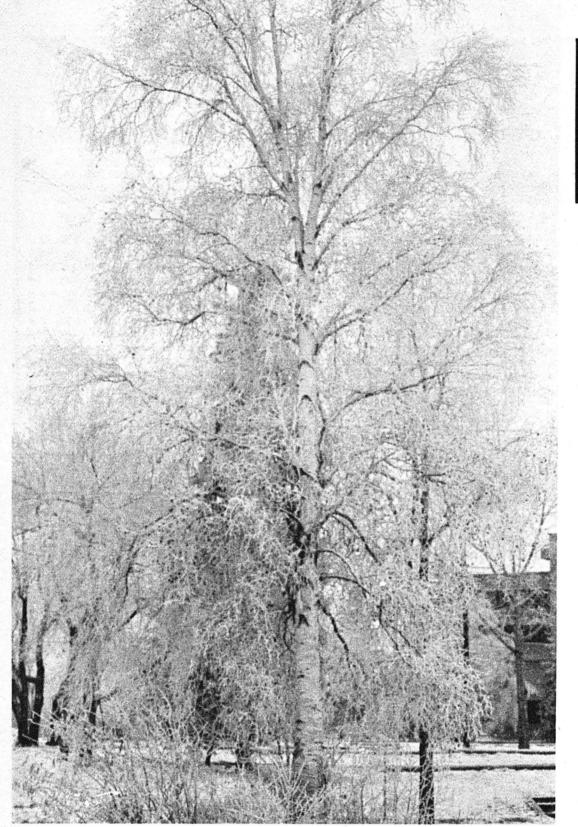
eliminates it. The new plan, the 1968, proceeds as though the L T were starting anew after fifty y is o none of its thousands of earlie cam has any claim to respect. Thus winincreasing disaffection of the alu an i the U of A, disaffection bred e year of insult.

It is not the intention of the snot article to characterize the plan's not implementation. Humanity went plan in some measure in 1968. I humanity has been seen since. The planning issue at U of A.

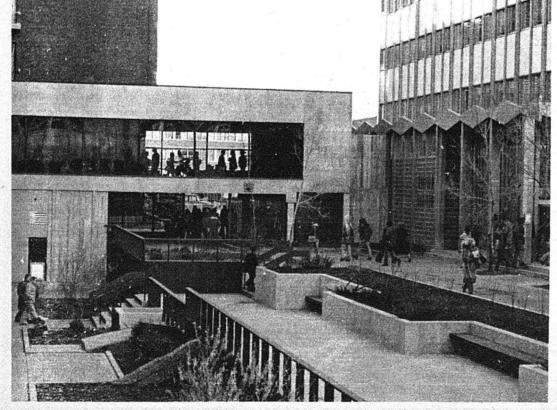
subt

Walking to the University from and in 1970 one could see a large 1 00 glowing through a tall, graceful buil window at the end of 90 avenu wea the Rutherford Library greeting incre snow-shrouded city. Inside, sprin chart the darkening sky through fine large windows, the colours A CC but deepening into the universe deca You can see the windows now char a few feet away and they forc nothing. The Rutherford has s Whe to an afterthought, purposely full onto it and destroying its uniqu prof The harmony of the old caric replaced with the disfigurement NON new. All in the name of fun gara addition HUB locks Rutherfo The from its former access to the co The windows are blinded, the R is amended, imprisoned and in

more. Approaching campus on then north, the eye was once drawn overhanging branches up a long sidewalk to the humane and entrance to the Arts Buildi beautiful street almost seemed for the Arts Building- dra



The plan denies us the seasons. Winter is our most compelling natural fact. The campus plan, rather than coping with winter seeks to reject it. We do not find winter so unpleasant that we care nothing for subtlydrifted fields and trees clothed in snow and hoar-frost. Our shivering does not make us blind to the beauty of old buildings glowing with their orange light through the ice-fogged air. We want no part of any arrangement that trades our comfort for ugliness, our convenience for destruction. If an "urban" campus means isolation from nature in the way we live and build in our environment, we want no urban campus. The U of A has been built for a few weeks of really cold weather, not appreciating that one season increases the value of the next. We need a spring, summer and autumn campus, too.



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It is the refusal of the planners to turn their heads far enough to appreciate values other than their own that generates intense anger. It is anger against the oresumption of any system to universal validity. The inhumanity of that presumption directly underlies the inhumanity of the present campus.

The plan emphasizes compactness and the relations of interior space. The question of exterior relations is ignored. Thus centuries of architectural experience in the relation of form to nature, space and other forms is largely irrelevant to our campus plan. It has been edited out in the plan's assumptions. Buildings are community into the humanitie the university. The street, the the invitation have been e Again the wall of HUB forbids Where a fruit orchard one

Where a fruit orchard once and yielded its harvest to the neighbourhood kids, the Windso now stands.

On April nights past, one the main quad, look through green leaves of an extraordinar down between a series of stal stone walls to the entrano Cameron Library. It was building to be sure located in of the U of A campus. It w even a major mistake, But C clothed in trees and the set became an odd kind of friend. psychic escape route from lower in topography, removed square lines of the remainder of space. A massive concrete smashes through the front of i wall now blots it from consciou nascent friendship between th the Cameron has been killed, the friends themselves.

Having begun, where do Beautiful fields of grain on front ot the old residences.