

The Best of All Possible Worlds. USA 1949-1959: God's Own Country

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ABSTRACT

After the 1945 atomic bombings over Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the awareness of the two world super powers – USA-URSS – that conventional arm would have not been adequate anymore for political confrontation, led the two opposite blocks to the Cold War, fought almost exclusively on the basis of persuasion. Following WWII, the US, having to face the quick and unwanted unfolding of communism over the rubles and ruins of Europe, decided to organize their own propaganda machine to contrast the Soviet "soft power". This paper intends to deal with the persuasive intent delivered by the US – with Shows, Exhibitions, International Fair and the help of the whole government apparatus – in order to convincingly popularize the advantages of their way of living throughout the world. It will be pointed out how, in cultural and anthropological terms, such initiatives led to the penetration of American culture, a sort of colonization, all over the world. An enormous endeavor of persuasion aimed to inform and convince that what the American way of life could secure to everybody would have been, amongst other things, a prosperous world of freedom, the best of all possible worlds.

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Two months after the atomic US bombs were dropped over Hiroshima and Nagasaki, George Orwell wrote a piece in which was clear that the groundwork for his novel, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*¹ had been defined by the following article: «The atomic bomb [put] the possessors of the bomb on a basis of military equality. Unable to conquer one another, they are likely to continue a combined ruling of the world. It is difficult therefore, to predict any upset to such balance except through slow and unpredictable demographic changes [...] the kind of world-view, the kind of beliefs, and the social structure that would probably prevail in a state which was at once unconquerable and in a permanent state of "cold war" with its neighbors, [the atomic bomb] is likelier to put an end to large-scale wars at the cost of prolonging indefinitely a "peace that is no peace" ²».

Nineteen Eighty-Four (1984) was set in a very near dystopian future, ripped apart by an ambiguous and eternal war enslaving the whole of Europe to the nightmare of a totalitarian dictatorship and a policing state, where *War is Peace, Freedom is Slavery, Ignorance is Strength*³.

In 1958, Aldus Huxley wrote on George Orwell's novel *1984* describing it as «a magnified projection into the future of a present that contained Stalinism and an immediate past that had witnessed the flowering of Nazism»⁴. On the contrary Huxley's novel *Brave New World*⁵ was written before the rise of Hitler in Germany and when Stalinism had not yet turned into a dictatorship. For Huxley, in 1948, Orwell's novel – *1984* – was considered possible, despite the fact, that the recent developments in Russia and the recent advances in science and technology had deprived *1984* of some of its likeliness. Huxley hypothesis was based on the idea that the Great Powers could be interested in something like *Brave New World* more than something like *1984*. Society, in *1984*, was controlled by fear and certainty of punishment. In *Brave New World*, punishment was rare and moderate, government control was achieved by systematic reinforcement of desirable behaviours, by non-violent manipulation, and by genetic standardization. Moreover, happiness, in *Brave New World*, was the certainty of personal satisfaction, guaranteed to everyone, in anyway.

After Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the two superpowers – USA and URSS – newly achieved awareness that the political confrontation could not be fought anymore with conventional weapons, led the two opposing sides toward what George Orwell defined the "Cold War"⁶: two global social systems facing each other up on matters of persuasion because «unable to conquer one another⁷».

After WWII the US have to face the problematic spreading of Communism throughout European continent in ruins. They start to organize their activities to contrast the Soviet "soft power" by creating the *Central Intelligence Agency* (CIA) – founded thanks to the 26 July 1947 *National Security Act* – and the *United States Information Agency* (USIA)⁸.

1. George Orwell, *1984* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1949).

2. George Orwell, "You and the Atomic Bomb," *Tribune* (October 14, 1945); George Orwell, "You and the Atomic Bomb," in *The Collected Essays, Journalism And Letters of George Orwell*, Vol. IV, eds. Sonia Orwell, Ian Angus (London: Secker & Warburg, 1968): 6-10.

3. Orwell, *1984*.

4. Aldus Huxley, *Brave New World Revisited* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1958): 5.

5. Aldus Huxley, *Brave New World* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1932).

6. Orwell, "You and the Atomic Bomb": 9.

7. *Ibid.*

8. In March 1944, in occasion of the Congress in favor of military help to Turkey and Greece – countries that the White House considered directly threatened by the communist expansion plan – President Truman announces the role of the US power as custodian of world stability: «One of the primary objectives of the foreign policy of the United States is the creation of conditions in which we and other nations will be able to work out a way of life free from coercion [...] we are willing to help free peoples to maintain their free institutions and their national integrity against aggressive movements that seek to impose upon them totalitarian regimes [...] I believe that we must assist free peoples to work out their own destinies in their own way. I believe that our help should be primarily through economic and financial aid which is essential to economic stability and orderly political processes» [Address of the President to Congress, Recommending Assistance to Greece and Turkey, 80th Congress, second session, March 12, 1947]. In July of the same year, the Congress acquires the *National Security Act*, drawn up by the financial broker Ferdinand Eberstadt. The Act institutionalizes, in a times of peace, the synergies adopted in times of war by the 3 sections of the armed forces and by the private one too: the Pentagon, the industrial production, military and university research, all in the name of National Security needs. The State Apparatus is somehow rationalized and every obstacle is removed from the National Policies Program turning it into a global strategy. Not only, but in terms of global overview, Truman also predicts a concerning division not only between East and West but also between North and South: «We must embark on a bold new program for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas. More than half the people of the world are living in conditions approaching misery. Their food is inadequate. They are victims of disease. Their economic life is primitive and stagnant. Their poverty is a handicap and a threat both to them and to more prosperous areas [...] Only by helping the least fortunate of its members to help themselves can the human family achieve the decent, satisfying life that is the right of all people»; See: "Truman's Inaugural Address", January 20, 1949, transcription, NARA Archive.

Their decision, to specifically engage the cultural field was determined by their awareness that winning culturally was as important as winning economically and politically. Wilson Compton, director of the State Department's *International Information Administration* (IIA), stated: «As a nation we are not really trying to win the "cold war." We are relying on armaments and armies to win a "hot war" if a "hot war" comes. But winning a hot war which leaves a cold war unknown will not win very much for very long. Our present facilities for the "war of ideas" should enable us to retard the advance of international communism, dull the edge of its propaganda and help to give the free world a breathing space. This itself is important. But these facilities will not enable us to win the "cold war". Nor perhaps will even larger facilities enable us to win it, until as a nation, or mutually with other nations, we can couple what we are able to say overseas more effectively with what we are able to do overseas⁹».

Anti-communist US policies implementation started in 1947 with the *House of Un-American Activities Committee* (HUAC). In 1953, based on the proposal by the Wisconsin Senator, Joseph Raymond McCarthy, started the enquiry on the presence of communist propaganda on American soil, which later on led to the infamous *Black List*.

Such a "divided" world, characterized by suspect and underground conspiracies of spies and "007" agents, is masterly described in the novels by former agent of the *Naval Intelligence Division* (NID), Ian Fleming¹⁰. The American writer Ray Bradbury, in those same years, interprets the atomic phobia. He pictures, in *The Martian Chronicle* (1950), a nuclear war as an inevitable landscape for the palingenesis of humanity, forced to "start again" – after the destruction of the planet caused by the war – on a different planet¹¹. Also in *Fahrenheit 451* (1953) a nuclear conflict annihilates cities and the modern civilization, so that humanity can rise again, thanks to rebels a marginalized individuals, from the ones that turned into books, – forbidden object to be burnt¹² – were the sole custodians of "memory." The only ones able to survive the conflict because alien to cities, technology and the happiness of goods.

On one hand the US Government concentrates all its efforts to overthrow the perception of unease and social unrest caused by the recent past – despite the high level of scientific knowledge, or probably because of it – on the other it starts to implement a propaganda project aimed to persuade the world of the benefits of American culture. Such will be the task assigned to the *Economic Cooperation Administration* (ECA), the *European Recovery Program* (ERP), the *Foreign Broadcast Information Service* (FBIS), the *International Press Service* (IPS), the *Office of International Information* (OII), the *Radio Free Europe* (RFE), the *Voice of America* (VOA), the *United States Information Agency* (USIA), the *Atomic Energy Commission* (AEC), a small listing of the many agencies appointed to promote and divulge the *American Way of Living*.

9. Wilson Compton, "Cold War", in *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952-1954, National Security Affairs, 1645. Vol. II. Part 2. A/MS Files, Lot 54 D 291* (Washington: 1984).

10. NID, the British Armed Forces investigative Intelligence Agency akin to the US Office of Strategic Service (OSS) which in 1947 becomes the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA).

11. Ray Bradbury, *The Martian Chronicles* (New York: Doubleday, 1950).

12. Ray Bradbury, *Fahrenheit 451* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1953).

Jointly with the USIA initiatives – whose function was to coordinate the activities to boost American culture, history, literature, art and cinema – the US Government also implements a plan to inform – a form of propaganda – on the reconstruction activities and the economic recovery operated by the Marshall Plan. Thanks to the *European Recovery Program* (ERP) and the *Organization for European Economic Cooperation* (OEEC)¹³, they are able to show the advantages that could be assured to the Countries part of the *Mutual Security Agency* (MSA)¹⁴, and of the *North Atlantic Treaty Organization* (NATO)¹⁵, and, thanks to the *United States Atomic Energy Commission* (AEC)¹⁶, they decide to promote the enormous possibilities for a peaceful use of nuclear energy.

This study will mainly address the initiatives that have contributed, in anthropological and cultural terms, to the colonization, the affirmation and the absorption of American culture in Europe and in the rest of the world. For this reason the wide-spreading and the “knowledge” of American architecture in publications and magazines¹⁷, will not be taken into consideration in this paper, as it is unlikely that such knowledge might have been the cause of such huge cultural change. Certainly more important were probably the movies released in the early 40s: *Gone with the Wind* (1939), *Stagecoach* (1939), *The Grapes of Wrath* (1940), *Sunset Boulevard* (1950), *Rebel Without a Cause* (1955) and *Love Me Tender* (1956); the novels by John Steinbeck, William Faulkner and Ernest Hemingway, and, in the early years of the 1960s, cartoons such as *The Flintstones* and *The Jetsons* created by William Hanna and Joseph Barbera. The first ones driving cars fueled by human propulsion and using dinosaurs as airplanes or domestic appliances; *The Jetsons* using space ships instead of cars, robots to do the house-works and operating domestic appliances that have very much in common with the ones produced at that time, giving, in that way, an image of the future very much at hand. Also very influential, in this case to convince the masses of the benefits of nuclear power, were comics like *The Fantastic Four* and *Hulk* by Stan Lee and Jack Kirby, whose superpowers had been acquired thanks to the use of nuclear energy or, like in the case of *Spider Man*, thanks to a spider accidentally “exposed to radioactivity.”

The persuasive commitment carried out capillary and diffusely by the US resulted in a sort of educational work, or, should one prefer to say, indoctrination, to popularize the appeal of the American way of living throughout the world, without bafflement or misconceptions.

The *Bulletin Books, Exhibits and Cultural Activities in the Overseas Information Program*¹⁸ infers that to assure the knowledge of American culture the US government lavished huge amounts of energies in helping publisher to translate and print in the national languages American Literature, to distribute in cinemas American films, to broadcast through the radio American music and finally to boost the knowledge of the American

13. The Marshall Plan was announced on 5th June 1947 by the secretary of State George C. Marshall to an audience of students and teachers at Harvard University, it was adopted on April 3, 1948. The Plan provides a budget of 14 billion US dollars, for the period 1948-1952, aimed to the re-construction and economic recovery of the European Countries involved. European Recovery Act; General Records of the United States Government Record Group 11, NARA.

14. Established on October 10, 1951.

15. Established on April 4, 1949.

16. Atomic Energy Act of 1946, Public Law 585, 79th Congress.

17. Let us think about the historical work by Bruno Zevi which at that time contributes to promote the thought and work of Frank Lloyd Wright by setting up the “Associazione per l’Architettura Organica” (APAO) – Bruno Zevi, *Verso un’architettura organica* (Torino: Einaudi, 1945); Bruno Zevi, *Toward an organic architecture* (London: Faber & Faber, 1950) – and by creating an interest around the architects of the Bay Region and the Prairie School, as well as Richard Neutra and Marcel Breuer American activity and work.

18. *Books, Exhibits and Cultural Activities in the Overseas Information Program* (Washington: USIA, 1956).

language, both spoken and written. An educational under-layer on which global modern culture was going to feed upon because, in order to accept the new culture, a good knowledge of its benefits was needed. The US government was then ready to present the American *Way of Living*.

How do Americans live?

Following on the peace keeping effort, the policies for development and the cultural and economic exchange program of the *High Commissioner for Occupied Germany* (HICOG), the *Amerika Häuser*¹⁹ were built in occupied Germany. They were used to organize exhibitions, conventions and other initiatives to extend the knowledge of American culture: the emblematic *Wir bauen ein besseres Leben (We're Building a Better Life)*²⁰ opened in 1952, at the Marshall House in Berlin-Charlottenburg²¹. It was a typical Marshall House event, focused on showing the *American Way of Living*: a home containing supplies of consumer goods manufactured by Marshall Plan member nations in demonstration of the benefits of international exchange guided by the market. Designed by the Peter Harnden and Associates²², the exhibition showed a roofless ideal model home, representing the home of a middle class family living in the Atlantic Community. It consisted of a kitchen, laundry and utility room, dining room, nursery, bedroom, bathroom and living room as well as a garden with outdoor furniture and tools. Visitors could see the interior from a rectangular balcony running around and above the house. The house included the latest in Western consumer technologies. Everything was intended to demonstrate that a better standard of living can be attained by the Atlantic Community people through increased productivity and integration.

At the same time at the exhibition *Wir bauen ein besseres Leben*, at the Marshall House in Berlin, were put on show 6,000 products, all manufactured in Marshall Plan member nations, including Eames and Hermann Miller chairs. The State Department often helped establishing European showrooms for the US furniture company Hans Knoll and sponsoring many other travelling furniture exhibitions, for example, in 1951, *Design for Use, USA*²³, a European version of MoMA's *Good Design* exhibition, showed in New York in the same year²⁴.

Wir bauen ein besseres Leben was shown first in Berlin, then transferred to Stuttgart in early December and lastly in Hanover. Successively the exhibition toured Austria, France and Italy²⁵.

Mobile Exhibitions

The 1940s and 1950s "travelling" exhibitions were meant to show and divulge in the many European countries, still devastated by the war and often lacking available exhibiting places, the results of the US cultural

19. The *Amerika Häuser* is an institution developed following the end of WWII to provide an opportunity for German and Austrian citizens to learn more about American culture and politics, and to engage in a discussion and debate on the transatlantic relationship. The most important American Houses were built in Berlin, Hannover, München, Freiburg, an Tübingen.

20. See: "We Build a Better Life", *Information bulletin* (February 1953): 2; Alfons Leitl. "Wir bauen ein neues Leben", *Baukunst und Werkform*, no. 12 (1952): 39-50.

21. The Marshall House is the *Amerika Häuser* of Berlin, designed by Bruno Grimmek with Werner Düttmann, was opened in October 1950.

22. Peter Graham Harnden was born in London in 1913. Following after his father, a member of the U.S. Diplomatic Corps stationed in Europe, he attends primary schools in Spain, Germany and Switzerland. After moving to the United States at eighteen, he attends some courses at the Faculty of Architecture in Yale, moving later to Georgetown (1932-36). In 1941, when America enters WWII, Harnden is in the U.S. Officer Corps. A period of instruction takes place at Camp Ritchie, Maryland (where he becomes friends with Peter Blake). Using his knowledge of contemporary Germany, he works mainly at administrative tasks in the American information services, participating in the Nuremberg Trials in 1945-46. From 1946, Harnden becomes a member of the Office of the Military Government in U.S. occupied Germany (OMGUS), he is in the Information Control Division in Monaco, Berlin and Nuremberg. He becomes head of an "Exhibition Program" devoted to promote US cultural, social and scientific life to a German audience in the immediate postwar period. When ERP starts in 1948 the Marshall Plan Office Paris was the centre where exhibitions across the Europe were organized. Harnden is the chief of those exhibition programmes and then he is responsible for the design of the exhibits that toured the European countries, housed in different vehicles like canal barges in Holland, the Europa Zug train in Germany, caravan and trucks, to show American support, all around Europe.

23. See "Design for Use, USA", *Information bulletin* (May 1951): 26.

24. On Show at MoMA, from November 22, 1950 through to January 28, 1951. The exhibition, sponsored by The Merchandise Mart in Chicago and the MoMA, contained 250 items of home furnishings.

25. "La Casa senza frontiere", *Domus*, no. 298 (1954): 20.

and economic policies in Europe. They were not chosen for educational reasons, for the effectiveness of their set up, adaptable structures easy to move around, or even for their intent and purpose, but rather for the fact that they brought within Europe – and not only – the informational doctrine promoting the economic and political reconstruction program that the US operated during the post war years, from 1947 to 1959. Those exhibitions introduced the strategic intents of American culture at International Fairs and cultural events in the 1950s.

Europe Builds

In December 1949 the Information Division ECA and the Office of the Special Representative (OSR) implemented their projects with the support of the OEEC: *The Caravan, The Train of Europe and Barges*²⁶.

The first large mobile exhibition was called *Caravan*, telling the story of the Marshall aid and its part in the reconstruction of Europe to explain the economic advantages of co-operation between European countries, the commercial and cultural links between Europe and America, and the need for increasing productivity.

The Caravan exhibition was designed and planned by The Peter Harnden and Associates Studio. It was contained in four expanding trailers and a large circus tent which was erected in the central space in each town where the convoy stopped. The tent housed the main exhibition space and the trailers themselves served as auxiliary pavilions. Outside the circus tent, in which visitors paused to view a 20 minutes movie of European recovery, they were given the opportunity to watch other short documentaries. Other devices in the exhibit included electrically operated question-and-answer panels and a telephone dialling device allowing the reception to answer questions concerning the free inter-European exchange of goods. From April 1950 to March 1951, the Caravan visited Belgium, France, Denmark, Sweden, Germany, Holland and Italy and it was viewed by 1,852.768 people.

*The Train of Europe*²⁷ began its tour in Munich in April 1952, and travelled continuously on the many European railway lines throughout Germany, Denmark, Norway, France, Italy, Austria and Benelux. By December 1952 it had been visited by over five million visitors.

The Train of Europe was originally a German military hospital train and consisted of seven couchettes. Four of them housed the main exhibition, one adapted and changed the exhibits according to each country visited, one was set up as a cinema, one contained generating equipment and the last one provided accommodation for the crew. A telephonic question-and-answer device was also put in place. The train could be taken

26. See: "Foreign-aid Program in Europe: Report of the Investigations Division of the Committee on Appropriations, United States Senate, Relative to Activities of the Foreign-aid Program in France and in the Regional Offices of the MSA in Paris" (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1953); "Four mobile exhibitions," *The Architectural Review*, no. 675 (April 1953): 216-225; Howard Calkind, "OEEC Truck Caravan", *Information Bulletin* (October 1950): 33-34. Ernst Scheidegger, "Mobile Ausstellungen", *Werk*, no. 4 (April 1953): 109-123.

27. See: "Europa-Zug in Munich on Eve of Tour", *Information Bulletin* (May 1951): 73; See also: "Train Of Europe," *Information Bulletin* (September 1951): 23.

off the railway tracks to be shown in alternative public places other than railway-stations, like for its preliminary show in Paris²⁸.

The Barges Exhibition was set up in two standard Dutch barges, it included an exhibition on productivity designed for the Holland Productivity Council and the Dutch *Mutual Security Agency* (MSA). It opened at Nijmegen in April 1952, and it toured around the Dutch canal system. One barge was set up as a cinema and the main exhibition was placed above deck, protected by tent.

The Caravan of Modern Food Service and Supermarket USA Exhibitions

The offer for the best life possible and the State Department exhibitions on modernization demonstrate as the promotion of the *American Way of Living*, could have not been partial and had to include all aspects of life. That is why, besides the home space, great relevance was given to general goods, industrial products, devices and electrical appliances of modern living: the fridge and the kitchen were the symbols of a distinctively American invention, representative of the essence of people's capitalism and its possibility of choice and abundance. The American Kitchen, full of appliances and equipment, is the ultimate US convenience product that European countries had to adopt, what people in West Germany called the American "Fat Kitchen"²⁹. The USA promote this commodified domesticity with a mobile exhibition supported by the *Mutual Security Agency* (MSA).

The Modern Food Service, designed by the Peter Harnden and Associates, was a mobile supermarket model that opened in Paris in May 1953. The circulating version resulted in the usual caravan-trailers format. Its set up provided, outside the trailers, signs in seven languages explaining the theoretical and practical aspects of the trading and distributing system of a supermarket. Inside was placed a bookshop and a small theatre showing documentaries. The showing area within the trailers was organized into a real grocery store which included products and refrigerated shelving units from which one could take the goods according to the "obscure" principle, at least in Europe, of self service. With a "real" trolley, visitors could experience the real "practice" of the entire shopping ritual, from the autonomous selection of products right through to the payment at the checkout counters.

The Modern Food Service Exhibition became *Supermarket USA* which displayed a fully-stocked American supermarket. It will also be part of the US pavilion of the agricultural exhibition shown in June 1956, in Rome, and Zagreb, and in September 1957 in Barcelona, during the 27th International Trade Fair, held there from June 1 to June 20, 1959. More than one million visitors viewed *Supermarket USA*, the major attraction among the US exhibits.

28. See: "Press Division," OEEC-263, 03/1951-03/1961.

29. Greg Castillo, *Cold War on the home front: The soft power of midcentury design* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010).

In 1959, at the American National Exhibition in Moscow (ANEM), the "kitchen debate" represented the diplomatic surrogate for the nuclear arms race³⁰.

30. See: Ruth Oldenziel and Karin Zachmann, *Cold war kitchen: Americanization, technology, and European users*, (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2009).

At three other trade fairs in the 1958 July-December period, the Department of Agriculture assisted in planning, staffing, and financing agricultural sections of exhibits directed by the Department of Commerce. The supermarket exhibition was then displayed in Salonika, Izmir, and Zagreb and the actual opening of commercial supermarkets in Rome (where it was previously shown) gave evidence of its success. *Supermarket USA* was shown with US exhibits throughout Europe until 1962.

The Caravan of Peace

The success of *Europe Builds* led to the creation of a new similar exhibition, as requested by NATO authorities, devoted to explain what NATO stood for and emphasizing the economic as well as the military aspects of its long-term policy. The exhibition was housed, similarly to *Europe Builds-Caravan*, in a large circular circus and four expandable trailers. They had two themes: NATO as a whole, and the role within NATO of the countries where the exhibition was being shown. *The Caravan of Peace* opened at Naples in February 1952, and then toured through the principal cities in Italy, Greece and Turkey³¹. Back to France it left from there to other NATO countries.

31. See: "NATO Atlantic Exhibition 1952-1954, Italy, Greece, Turkey, France", AC/52-D/54, 3rd (September 1954).

Atoms for Peace

The portrait of Europe in the early 1950s, still hurt and devastated by the recent war, was very clear. On one side its emergency priority was very much concerned with its own reconstruction, on the other the atomic scenario menacingly emerges in an unquestionable way. The United States, politically well aware of their role on the international stage, chose to develop a peaceful and persuasive campaign on nuclear power, employing the same massive effort as for the promotion of its own *Way of Living*, which was presented worldwide on December 8, 1953³².

32. See Trumans Atoms for Peace Draft [C.D. Jackson Papers, Box 30, "Atoms for Peace - Evolution (5)"; NAID #12021574]; Press Release, *Atoms for Peace* Speech, December 8, 1953 [DDE's Papers as President, Speech Series, Box 5, United Nations Speech 12/8/53]; Preliminary Proposal for an International Organization to Further the Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy, June 8, 1954 [C.D. Jackson Papers, Box 29, Atomic Industrial Forum; NAID #12022796]. See also: Public Law 703-AUG. 30, 1954, Atomic Energy Act 1954.

As the result of President Eisenhower's *Atoms for Peace* program, the United Nations – in August 1955 – conduct the first International Conference on *Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy* in Geneva, Switzerland.

The *Atoms for Peace* project had the task to avert a possible, global and catastrophic nuclear war, proving that such destructive force could be put to the benefit of mankind and human development³³. That is why many of the topics dealt with by the "cultural" exhibitions and by the *International Trade Fairs* are closely linked with the promotion of nuclear issues in

33. See: *The International Atomic Energy Agency* (Washington: US Department of State, 1957).

agriculture, medicine and as a future source of power, translating into practice the political principles and intents.

The Mobile Exhibition *Atoms For Peace*, presented in Paris by the USIS, is not to be confused with the meetings and exhibitions organized by the *International Atomic Energy Agency* (IAEA), aimed at a knowledge exchange among insiders, and most of all addressing the issue of a common settlement between the super powers. On the contrary, the Mobile Exhibition *Atoms for Peace* was meant to illustrate the peaceful potentials and the possible uses of nuclear power for “common people”.

The itinerary of those mobile exhibitions included the stop-over of a few days at the most representative spots within the hosting nation. The travelling show, planned and designed by Peter Harnden and Associates, consists of “Five expandable Deplirex trailers.” Two of them hosted the introductory section – to inform and supply basic notions and principles to understand nuclear energy – the other three showed each one the diverse and practical applications of such power in agricultural, industrial and medical terms. The trailer, catered to host the show, were supplied with electricity. The Deplirex system provided electrical expansion of the side walls, the roof, and the floor in less than two minutes and allowed the outward opening of the sides, clearing, like that, the indoor area. In the back of one of the trailers was positioned the projection equipment for the screening on a screen surface placed outside. The indoor room of each trailer roughly amounted to 50 square meters and the sides were lifted for outdoor sheltering purposes. When cleared, the sides walls of the trailers were replaced by sliding glass ones, large windows that permitted visitors to look through them at what shown inside. The display was made of central structures and mobile elements supported by aluminum piping fixed on the floor and on the ceiling³⁴.

34. “Mostra Atomica”, *Domus*, no. 294 (1954): 63-66.

International Trade Fairs

The US propaganda strategy to promote the *American Way of Living* was also implemented by the *Trade Fairs* and the *Industrial Exhibitions*. As the official government bulletins show us, the *Foreign Commerce Weekly* or the *World Trade Information Service*, for example, published by the *US Department of Commerce*, international trade really took off again in 1947 and with it the *International Trade Fairs*³⁵. US participation at the international Fairs was therefore extremely relevant as it had the same aims as the travelling exhibitions.

The international trade fair program of the *US Department of Commerce* sought to develop greater interest on the part of American companies in exhibiting at fairs abroad and in attracting more favorable foreign attention for American products and their industry³⁶.

35. NARA, Records of the International Trade Administration, Record Group 489.

36. See: “Ausstellungen der USA in Europe”, *Innenarchitektur*, no. 7, (Januar 1956): 399-412; Eugenio Gentili, “Architettura americana per esposizioni”, *Comunità*, no. 32 (Settembre 1955): 34-37.

It will only be in 1952 though, that the *Department of Commerce* will actively start to take part to the *International Trade Fairs* organizing a network of planned designs and constructions easy and quick to assemble, dismantle and transport – thanks to the newly developed opportunities in the prefabrication system – and making use of advertising as an important vehicle for the ideological colonization of European in any way possible.

Many of those displays were planned and designed by the Peter Harnden and Associates Studio. After 1956, though, when the US government decided to transfer the Marshall Plan Exhibition office from Paris to Washington and the Studio turned down the offer to follow them there, they continued their activity as free-lancers, first with a professional office in Orgeval, near Paris³⁷, then, from 1962, in Barcelona. That permitted them to work with the *Office of International Trade Fairs* (OITF) and also gave them the opportunity to participate to the designing of the American pavilion in various fairs in Europe and around the world. In 1958, they planned the Exhibitions in the American pavilion at the Brussels World Fair. Yet, after 1959, the most important Exhibitions and Fairs outside the Europe will be entrusted to Jack Masey³⁸, who employed other architects and designers: Peter Blake³⁹, Richard Buckminster Fuller, Charles and Ray Eames and George Nelson.

1958 Brussels' World Fair. US Pavilion

The events surrounding the US participation at the Brussels' *World Fair* are emblematic in demonstrating the climate of friction and diffidence between the two superpowers, as the peaceful confrontation expressed by the so called "Soft Power" will not be enough. The attempt by architect Bernard Rudofsky, who worked with Harnden and Associates, in offering an alternative image of the US, will not be found acceptable by the institutional system. To the image of the States as a land of freedom and endless possibilities was preferred the one of a consumer society where happiness was promptly delivered by goods.

Before giving the job for the Brussels World Fair Exhibitions to the chosen planners and designers, the USA General Commissioner for the Public Affairs Division, Howard S. Cullman, consulted with the State Department and the USIA «to ask for assistance in preparing a theme [...] that might subsequently be translated into the visual terms of the exhibit»⁴⁰. The initial proposals glorify the "cultural side of American life"⁴¹, and to balance such ideas the Vice Commissioner James S. Plaut writes to the Dean of the MIT, John Burchard, with a proposition: «we wish to present science and technology as the setting in which the new humanism may be developed and considered⁴²». It is established, therefore, that, between 'influential realities' and what informs 'daily life' (which for the European public

37. "Alle porte di Parigi", *Domus* no. 327 (Febbraio 1957): 45; "A Orgeval, fuori Parigi," *Domus*, no. 366 (Maggio 1960): 3-8.

38. Jack Masey was born on June 10, 1924, in Brooklyn. During World War II, he serves in Europe with the Army's Camouflage Engineers, alongside the future fashion designer Bill Blass and the future painter Ellsworth Kelly. They are part of the Ghost Army, a special unit, of a thousand men, that uses visual and sound effects to impersonate larger forces, taking these strange creations into action in France after D-Day. Back in the US, Masey works at the New York offices of *Architectural Forum*, then studies architecture and graphic design at Yale, where, in 1950, he earns a bachelor degree in fine arts. In the 1957-59 period, he is responsible for some USIA exhibitions for international fairs in West Berlin (*Amerika Baut, Kalamazoo, Medizin-USA*), and in September 1958 USIA names Masey chief designer of the National Exhibition in Moscow, where he invites the Eameses, Fuller, Nelson and Blake to design the exhibitions. On Jack Masey see: Jack Masey and Conway Lloyd Morgan, *Cold War Confrontations* (Baden: Lars Müller, 2008).

39. Peter Blake was born in Berlin in 1920, in a Jewish family. His father is an important Lawyer who served in the German Army in WWI. In the 1930s' his family leaves Germany for Britain, where Blake attends the London Regent Street Polytechnic School of Architecture. He emigrates to the US, where between 1940 and 1941 he is a student at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. With the help of Walter Gropius he continues his studies in the US and he works for the Magazine *Architectural Forum*. At the same time he enrolls in the US army, as an intelligence officer, until 1947. After the war, he works at the *Architectural Forum*, and from 1948 to 1950 at the MoMA. He then goes back to work, as editor, at *Architectural Forum*. On Peter Blake see: Peter Blake, *No place like Utopia: Modern architecture and the company we kept* (New York: Knopf, 1993).

40. "Brussels '58: The United States speak to the world. Progress Report," *Interiors*, CXVII, # 2 (September 1957): 134.

41. *Ibid.*

42. *Ivi*: 135.

requires an integrated explanation around culture and technology), there are: «The enormous amount of electrical energy at the command of the average individual. The amount of leisure time made available to each individual by machines both as implements of production and as household servants. The collapse of distance resulting from rapid transportation. Immediate communication. Increased average longevity⁴³».

The press release specifically stated that the Austrian architect Bernard Rudofsky would work in association with Peter Harnden on the planning, «to draw up the master plan for the show, and to outline some of the so-called cultural exhibits⁴⁴». In the pavilion, the objects exhibited should have been arranged in the structure created by Edward Durrell Stone: a huge circular structure, measuring 341 feet in diameter with a ceiling supported by a number of imaginative golden columns, 85 feet tall.

The Cultural Exhibitions, curated and displayed by Rudofsky and housed on the ground floor, are *Face of America*, *Streetscape*, *City Scape* and *Islands of Living*, the others ones: *Folk*, *Indian and Contemporary Art*; *Atomic Energy and International Geophysical Year*; *Automation*; *Industrial Entertainment*; and *Unfinished Business*; on the balcony, *Domestic and Industrial Architecture and Children's Creative Center*⁴⁵.

Rudofsky's installations enjoyed no such favour, provoking such front page headlines as "Brussels Exhibit Irks Eisenhower."⁴⁶ However, as reported by the *New York Times*, the most frequent recrimination of the American visitors was that the Rudofsky exhibitions were superficial and delivered an inadequate and distorted image of the many characters of Americans⁴⁷.

In occasion of the photographic shooting for *This is America*⁴⁸ the different ambience of the *Island of Living* were completely transformed and clogged up with all the desirable national products, indispensable to represent America⁴⁹.

The European public appreciated the exhibitions in Brussel, unlike most Americans who perceived them as little more than a cold war episode in opposition to Russia. The American press and the public opinion did criticize Rudofsky's displays and actually judged more positively the Russian ones, as witnessed by President Eisenhower's words: «The Soviet Union's exhibit presented all of those things I expected to see in the American exhibit, tremendous murals showing happy people playing and working together and industrial displays, including airplanes, modern automobiles and a model of the Soviet Sputnik⁵⁰».

The American National Exhibition in Moscow 1959 (ANEM)

During the 1950s, advocates of both capitalism and communism attempted to conquer the hearts and minds of other countries by claiming

43. *Ivi*: 135-136.

44. Bernard Rudofsky, *On exhibition design*, unpublished conference, Tokyo 1958, (Rudofsky Papers, Getty), (International House, Tokyo, December 5, 1958): 12.

45. See: *This is America: Official U.S. Guide Book. Brussels World's Fair 1958* (Brussel: The Office of the U.S. Commissioner General, 1958).

46. See: John D. Morris, "Brussels Exhibit Irks Eisenhower," *New York Times* (June 18, 1958): 1.

47. Walter H. Waggoner, "Guidebook to Aid U.S. Fair Exhibit", *New York Times* (May 11, 1958): 23.

48. *This is America: Official U.S. Guide Book*.

49. Marjorie J. Harlepp, "U.S. Revises Home Show at Fair Site," *New York Times* (May 6, 1958): 43.

50. Bernard Rudofsky, *On Exhibition Design*: 37.

to offer the best system when it came to people's welfare and their future. The ideological battles of the Cold War increasingly focused on citizens' well-being and on different models of consumption.

Nikita Khrushchev initiated a process of reforms and changes aimed to the de-Stalinization of the Soviet Union called the "thaw." As part of those reforms, the Soviet Union willingly engaged in a relationship with the United States through what was termed "peaceful coexistence."

For the Russians the competition with the US and their propaganda was not only based on weapons and space technologies, but increasingly on living standards and on consumption issues, resulting in a much harder time for them.

Khrushchev knew that the URSS was a great power, but he thought that that was not enough. Material changes in the daily life of ordinary Soviet citizen were also essential. After the sacrifices that the Soviets had suffered during the war and under the Stalinist terror, the new political climate had raised expectations for material wealth and better times to come.

On 27th January, 1958, a Soviet-American deal was made concerning exchanges in the fields of culture, technology and education. On 10th September of that same year a deal on a mutual exchange of exhibitions set the seal for a new policy of peaceful coexistence between the two countries.

Soviet National Exhibition came to New York City on June 30, 1959. At the "Coliseum" centre they showed until 10th August to showcase the Soviet technological know-how.

The Soviet exhibition displayed the latest mechanical equipment: the ice-breaker "Lenin," the Stalingrad power plant, the latest models of Russian cars, the *Sputnik*. The range of items on show went from watches to full-scale, fully equipped 3-room model apartments, radios, TV sets and refrigerators, articles of clothing and food. Despite the display of consumer goods, however, the real Soviet showpiece was the heavy machinery and the three *Sputniks*.

Before Khrushchev came to the US, American vice-president Richard Nixon visited the American exhibition mounted in Sokolniki Park, near Moscow, which he personally opened on 25th July and then was closed on 4th September.

The ANEM was the first major American exhibition ever held in the USSR. It was expected to draw 3,5 million visitors from various parts of the Soviet Union. The goal of the exhibition was to demonstrate «the projection of a realistic and believable image of America to the Soviet people through exhibits, displays, films, publications, fine and performing arts⁵¹». A reflection on how America lived, worked, learned, produced, consumed

51. "Facts About The American National Exhibition in Moscow July 25-Sept. 4, 1959" (Office of Public Information, Republic 7-8340 Ext. 2743): 2.

and played and on what kind of people Americans really were, what they stood for. A “corner of America” in the heart of Moscow showing, amongst other things, American’s cultural values

The exhibition’s topics focused on America’s Land and People. The exhibition was shown in different building: the Geodesic Dome; the Exhibition Hall, the Plastic Pavilions, and the Circarama.

George Nelson was the chief designer for the exhibit, responsible for all interior and exterior displays and for the design of the plastic pavilions and the exhibition hall. The Geodesic dome, designed by Welton Becket & Associates⁵², was the “information centre” for American Culture, and it housed the exhibitions on space research, education, work, health and medicine, agriculture, and basic research on synthetics and nuclear energy. The Eames’ documentary was screened on one-third of the dome’s interior surface using a unique motion picture technique which used seven simultaneous screens with a single Russian-language soundtrack. At the exterior of the dome was placed the “Gallery of Americans” with photographs of American’s most representative figures.

The Exhibition Hall was a 50,000 square feet, fan-shaped steel structure, 28 feet high, with grass at the front and covered by an aluminium roof. It displayed the American cultural achievements and exhibits, the fruits of the American economic system, its abundance so broadly shared by its people and reflecting the freedom of choice enjoyed by American families. The display framework allowed for mezzanine areas from which visitors could observe the exhibits from above, below, and on the same level as they were placed.

The three Plastic Pavilions covered 15,000 square feet. In one was housed the Museum of Modern Art’s exhibition, “Family of Man” by Edward Jean Steichen; the second one housed contemporary American architecture’s exhibits – designed by Peter Blake,⁵³ – showing models and 100 black-and-white photographs of schools, churches, shopping-centres, skyscrapers and other buildings throughout the United States. The third plastic pavilion was devoted to the display of American clothing, ranging from work clothes to formal attire. The Circarama, an all around “360 degree movie”, very successful in Brussels, was housed in its own circular building, was remade and up dated by Walt Disney with new sequences and a Russian sound track.

The outdoor Area was devoted to showing the fully furnished American ranch-type home: the *Splitnik*, twenty-two 1959 automobiles from all US industries; sporting and camping equipment; farm equipment, such as tractors and combined machineries; a children’s playground with a playhouse and an iron grid “magic carpet” and a sand lot for toddlers. The Polaroid camera demonstrations did not only illustrate the “picture-in

52. As Jack Masey and Conway Lloyd Morgan wrote: «There is one mystery concerning the Moscow Dome. Although Buckminster Fuller has for nearly half a century been given credit for its design, no evidence in the form of architectural drawings attesting to Fuller’s role in the design of the dome appears to exist. Rather, a set of architectural drawings stored at the US National Archive [NARA] are from Welton Becket and Associates». Jack Masey and Conway Lloyd Morgan, *Cold War Confrontations* (Baden: Lars Müller, 2008): 170.

53. For more detailed aspects of the Exhibition in Moscow see: Peter Blake, *No Place Like Utopia*: 228-248.

a minute" technique but also provided 15,000 Soviet visitors with self-portrait souvenir photographs.

Brightly coloured kiosks served free Pepsi-Cola to visitors and others ones displayed American newspapers, magazines and books.

The American house *Splitnik* was designed for a middle class family costing around \$12,000. When built in Russia, the house had a 10-feet wide corridor splitting it right down the middle, allowing all of the estimated 3,5 million Soviet visitors to see its interior. The house provided a total living area of 1,144 square feet with kitchen, living room, dining room, three bedrooms, and one and one-half bathrooms. Inside, the Russians could observe typical American family possessions such as an all-electric kitchen with kitchen cabinets, a built-in oven and a counter top range, adding to its overall comfort and graceful living.

Nixon's visit became the platform for the so-called "Kitchen debate,"⁵⁴ through which the American vice-president and the Soviet premier fought the Cold War in terms of consumption.

54. Ruth Oldenziel and Karin Zachmann, *Cold war kitchen: Americanization, technology, and European users* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2009).

That summer, his visit to Moscow had taken Khrushchev by surprise as the debate shifted from the contest over space-race to a struggle over domestic appliances, even though the Soviet Union, less interested in individual kitchens with gadgets, continued its far more effective rhetoric around space conquest and the Sputnik.

During the ANEM Richard Nixon, deliberately shifting the attention away from the space race to consumer culture, seemed to have taken the upper hand in focusing on consumer goods and abundance, during his visit Khrushchev tried to shift the international attention back to the Soviet production debate. He presented the Soviet Union as a developed nation, whose output in terms of cattle breeding, meat, eggs, and wool production had been greater during the five years previous. The American point of view incessantly stressed the link between political freedom and consumer goods: freedom meant above all freedom of consumption and freedom of choice in free-market system. The US government was set on peppering the debate with the notion of "plenty" at any point – a particularly dangerous route for the Soviets.

Conclusion

Besides the *Space Race* though, or the Nuclear arms race, what really still lingers on today, of the idea of modernity in the post-atomic and post-modern age, is actually based on what Nixon stated in Moscow: the importance of the link between consumer goods and political freedom, reifying the concept of freedom to the freedom of consumption, freedom of choice, and the free-market system.

It is not by chance that with the loss of intensity of the ideological conflicts, the knocking down of walls and globalization still currently in process, market and political strategies are the consequences of that same process and, inevitably, the natural development of the 1950's US propaganda policies. The promise for a better world resulting from the freedom of choosing markets and goods and the circulation of people and ideas, determined a supremacy over any possible alternative.

The 1959 *American National Exhibition in Moscow* is the last event to take into consideration. It is the last exhibition with which US politics gave proof of its efficacy paving the way for the Capitalist-consumerist ideal victory over the feeble attraction offered by its USSR Communist counterpart. As in *Brave New World Revisited* Aldus Huxley pointed out: «Recent developments in Russia and recent advances in science and technology have robbed Orwell's book of some of its gruesome verisimilitude. A nuclear war will of course, make nonsense of everybody's predictions.

Assuming for a moment that the Great Powers can somehow refrain from destroying us, we can say that it now looks as though the odds were more in favor of something like *Brave New World* than of something like *1984*⁵⁵». The promise of prosperity and of immediate and universal happiness – acquired by objects, goods, freedom of personal achievement and consumer power – will be the last brick in the edifice built by the US propaganda to convince the world of the supremacy of its social, economic and political system. What happened in that very recent past determined our present and, undoubtedly, that massive work of propaganda impacted enormously on the way we live our daily lives. The mother of illusion, still committed to convince us that this is the best of all possible worlds.

55. Aldous Huxley, *Brave New World Revisited* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1958).



FIG. 1 Model house at "Building for a Better Future" exhibition, Berlin, 1952 and the demountable tent on a framework of ball jointed steel tubes; Caravan of Peace on tour in south-east Europe, in *The Architectural Review*, no. 675, 1953, pages 216-217.

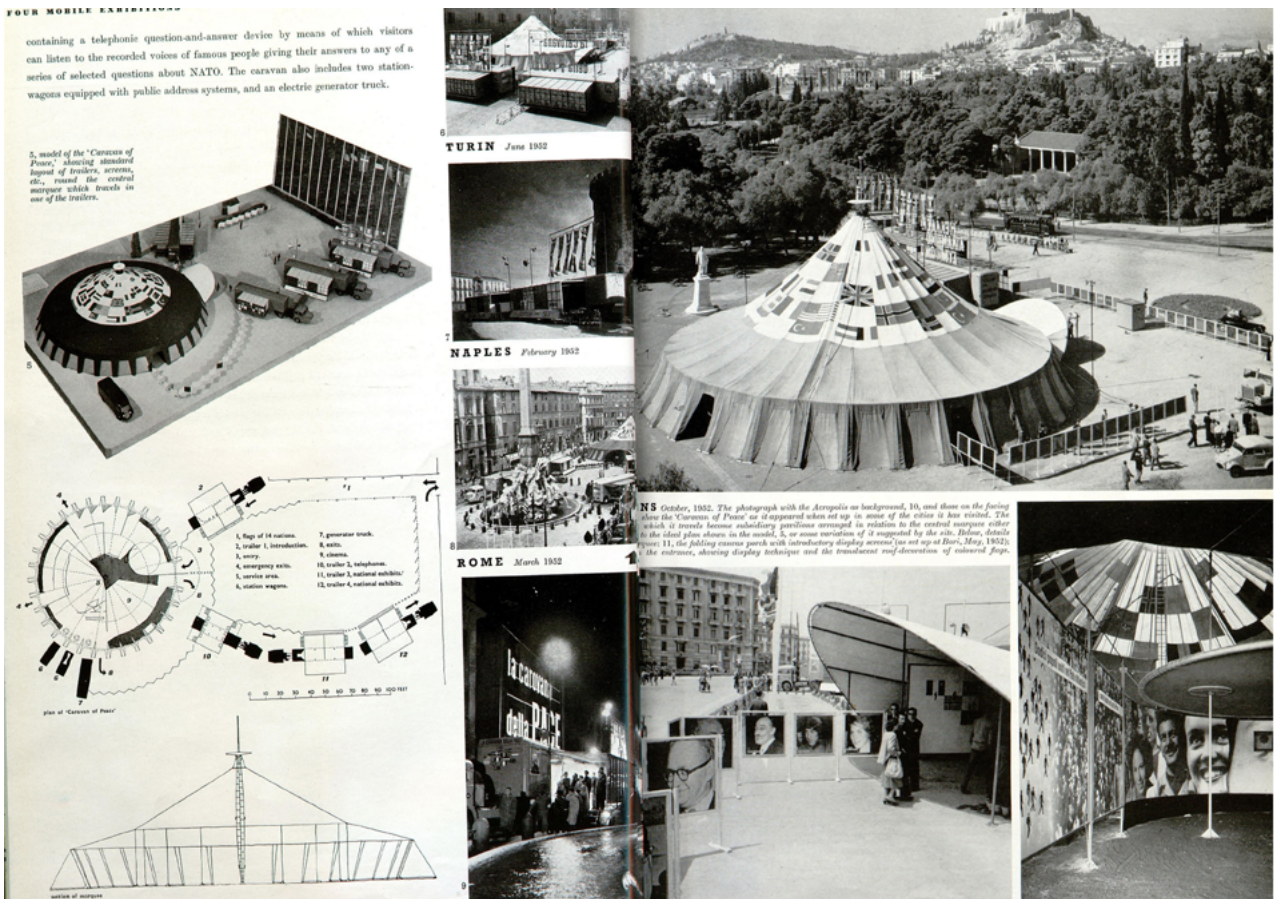


FIG. 2 Model of the "Caravan of Peace" exhibitions; "Caravan of Peace" in Athen, in *The Architectural Review*, no. 675, 1953, pages 218-219.



FIG. 3 "Caravan of Peace" in Naples, February, 1952 and Salonika, September, 1952; The "Train of Europe" at Innsbruck railway station, Austria, July, 1952, in *The Architectural Review*, no. 675, 1953, pages 220-221.

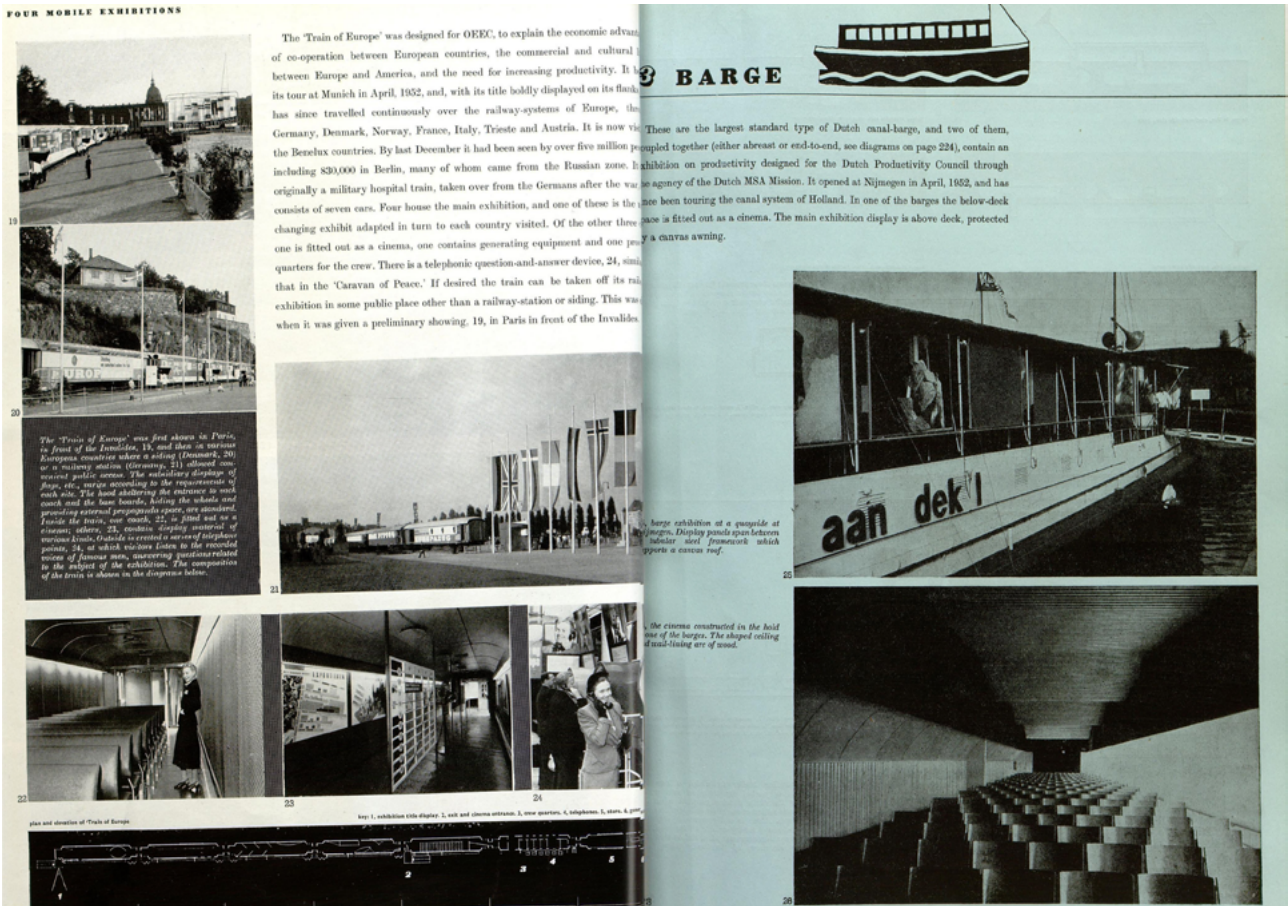


FIG. 4 The "Train of Europe"; "Barge exhibition" at a quayside at Mijmegen, The Netherland, in *The Architectural Review*, no.675, 1953, pages 222- 223.

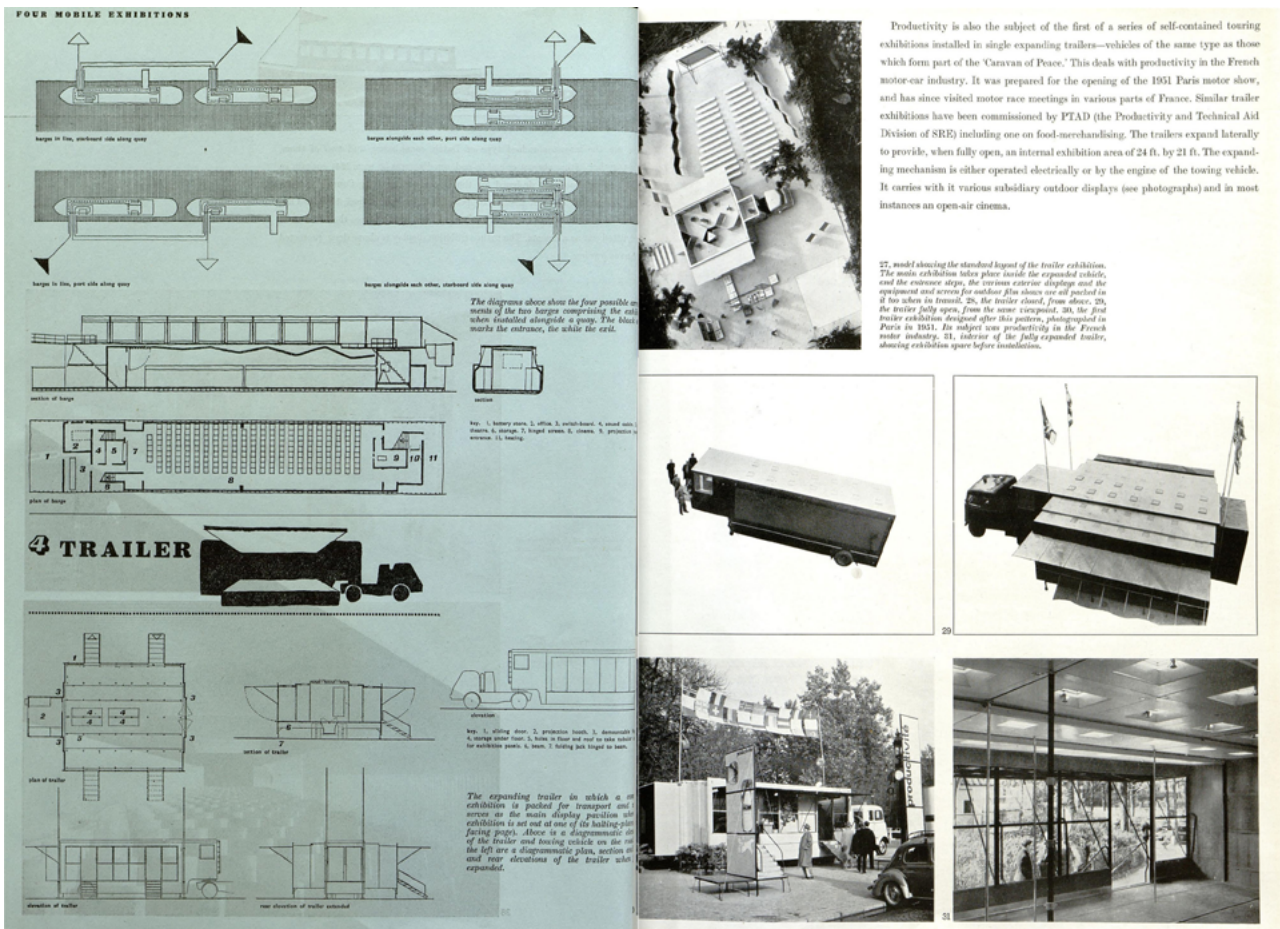


FIG. 5 Drawing of the standard layout of the "trailer" and "barge" exhibitions; "Trailers exhibition" photographed in Paris in 1951. Its subject was productivity in the French motor industry, in *The Architectural Review*, no. 675, 1953, pages 224-225.

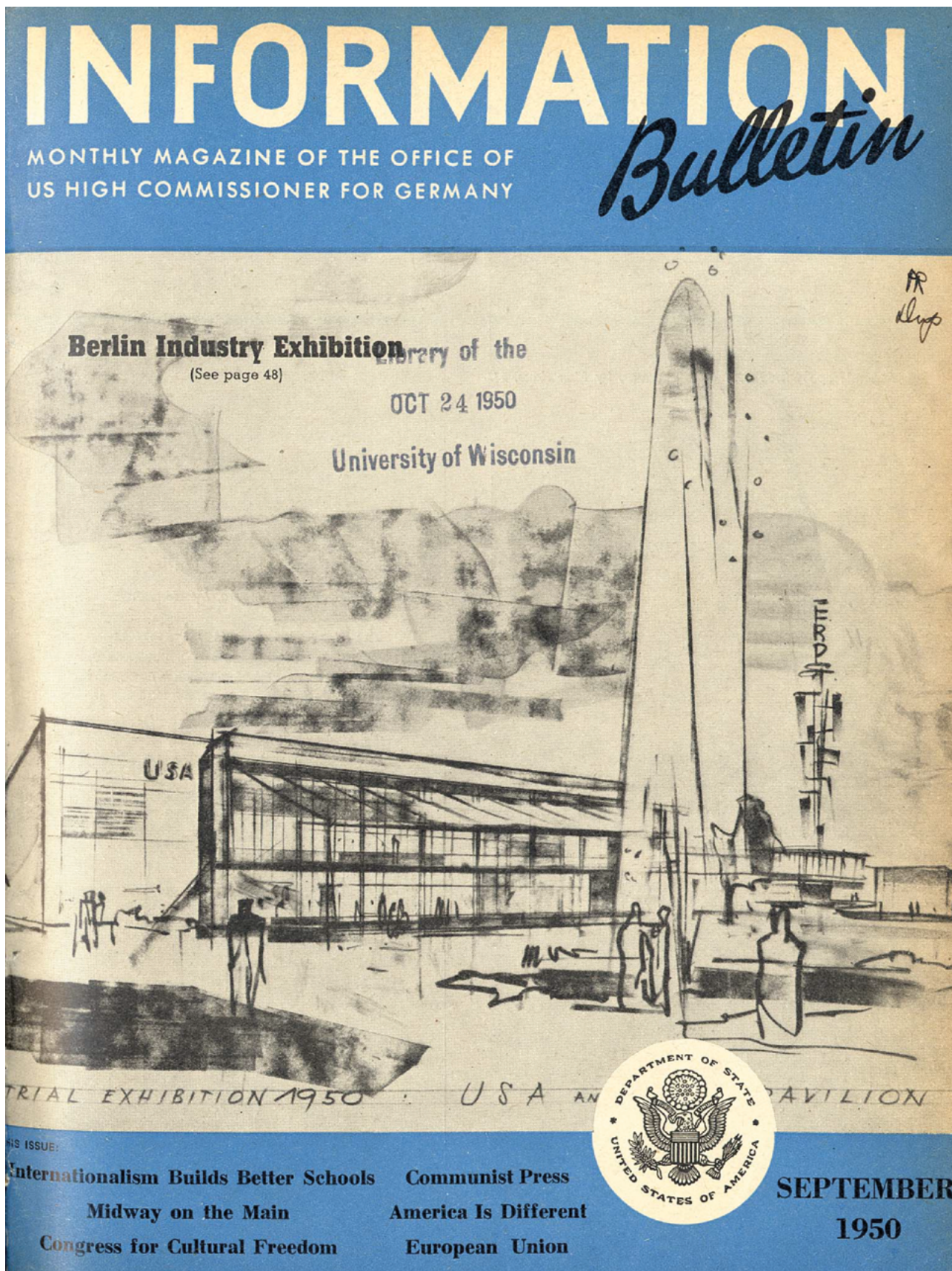


FIG. 6 The Marshall House in Berlin, in *Information Bulletin*, September, 1950, Cover.

Berlin Industry Exhibition

THE RISING STANDARD of living, fostered in Western Berlin by free enterprise with the assistance of ERP aid, will be illustrated at a gigantic public display of the city's manufactured products next month at the Berlin Industry Exhibition in the expanding exposition area of the Funkturm (radio tower) in west-central Berlin.

Reconstruction of war-damaged buildings of Berlin's huge exhibition grounds and erection of new buildings are being rushed to completion for the opening of the industrial exhibit on Oct. 1. The exhibition will last 15 days, while one building will continue as a permanent display of the city's industrial production for export.

Center of the October exhibition will be the George C. Marshall House for the ERP and American exhibits. The theme of its display will be to illustrate the rising standard of living made possible by the free entrance system.

Speaking at the laying of the cornerstone of the George C. Marshall House, Maj. Gen. Maxwell D. Taylor, US commander of Berlin, said, "It... looks like a historic contradiction that this American soldier, so successful in war, should after the war become the first to forge a lasting peace. Yet the Marshall Plan is far more important than any war plan in which General Marshall had a share."

Models and mechanical devices will be utilized in the ERP exhibit to depict the manner in which West Berlin fits into the European Recovery Program. Stress will be laid

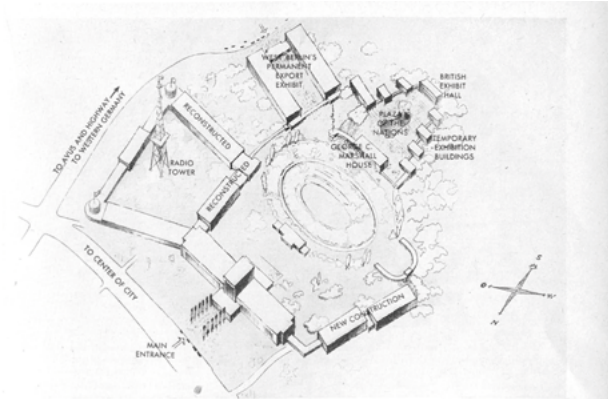


Maj. Gen. Maxwell D. Taylor, US Commander of Berlin, spoke at laying of cornerstone of the George C. Marshall House at the Funkturm July 26. A copy of the charter of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1948, the document which established the Marshall Plan, sealed in metal container (left), was inserted in the cornerstone. At right, Mayor Ernst Reuter of Berlin, who also spoke. (US Army photo)

on the co-operation achieved by the nations of western Europe, including Berlin.

The building, having a floor space of nearly 19,375 square feet, will also have a motion picture screen for showing American documentary films. After the exhibition, the George C. Marshall House will become a permanent center for conference meetings with a section provided for a restaurant.

In addition to West Berlin, ERP and American exhibits, the states of the German Federal Republic and several foreign countries will be represented with displays of their industrial products. One building will be devoted to British and Commonwealth exhibits.

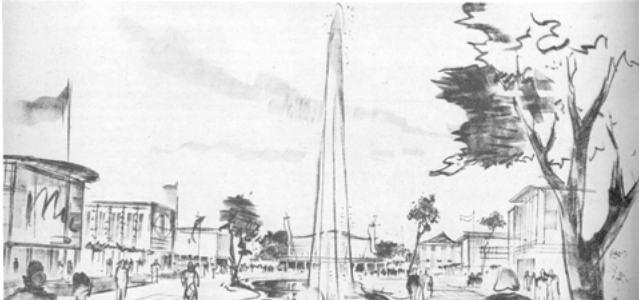


Sketch of the Funkturm grounds showing the buildings which will house the international industrial exhibit opening Oct. 1.

The floor space of the exhibition halls around the radio tower, the tallest structure in Berlin, will be more than doubled with the reconstruction and the new buildings for the October exhibition. To the 193,500 square feet used since the war, 294,300 square feet will be added, making

total of 397,800 square feet available for display purposes. The construction is being financed by DM 4,000,000 (\$952,000) in ECA-allocated (counterpart) funds. Seventy percent of the funds are to go to pay wages. Except for the window glass, all materials used in the construction are

Architect's drawing of Plaza of the Nations in spacious grounds of the Funkturm (Radio Tower), Berlin's tallest structure.



View of the pavilion in the George C. Marshall House which will house the ERP exhibits. Walls are almost entirely of glass.

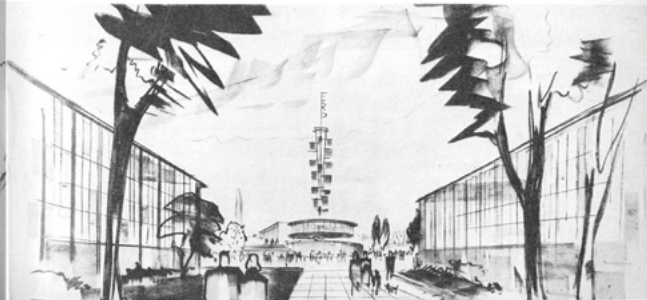
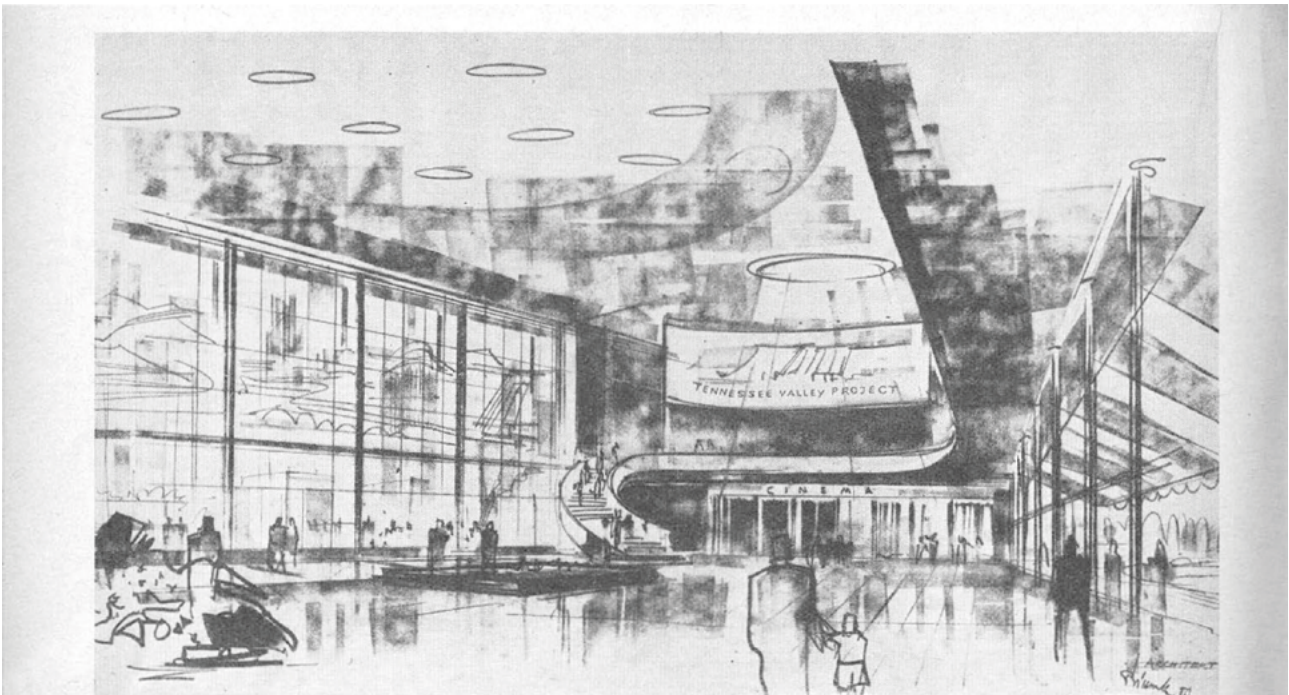


FIG. 7 "Berlin Industry Exhibition", in *Information Bulletin*, September, 1950, pages 48-49.



Architect's drawing pictures spacious interior of main hall in the new Marshall House with huge mural of TVA project.

being manufactured by West Berlin firms. Begun in June, construction is to be completed by Sept. 15.

Five structures, harmonizing in design with those already standing, are being built, forming an architectural group to which extensions can be added without difficulty. The new buildings have walls almost entirely of glass, and

are designed to facilitate the movement of large crowds. Building material is principally from reclaimed rubble of the city. The frames of the buildings are of steel.

After the October exhibition, one group of buildings in the southern section will become the permanent exhibit halls for Berlin's export products. +END

Front of the George C. Marshall House as seen from the large terrace gardens in Berlin's far-famed exhibition grounds.

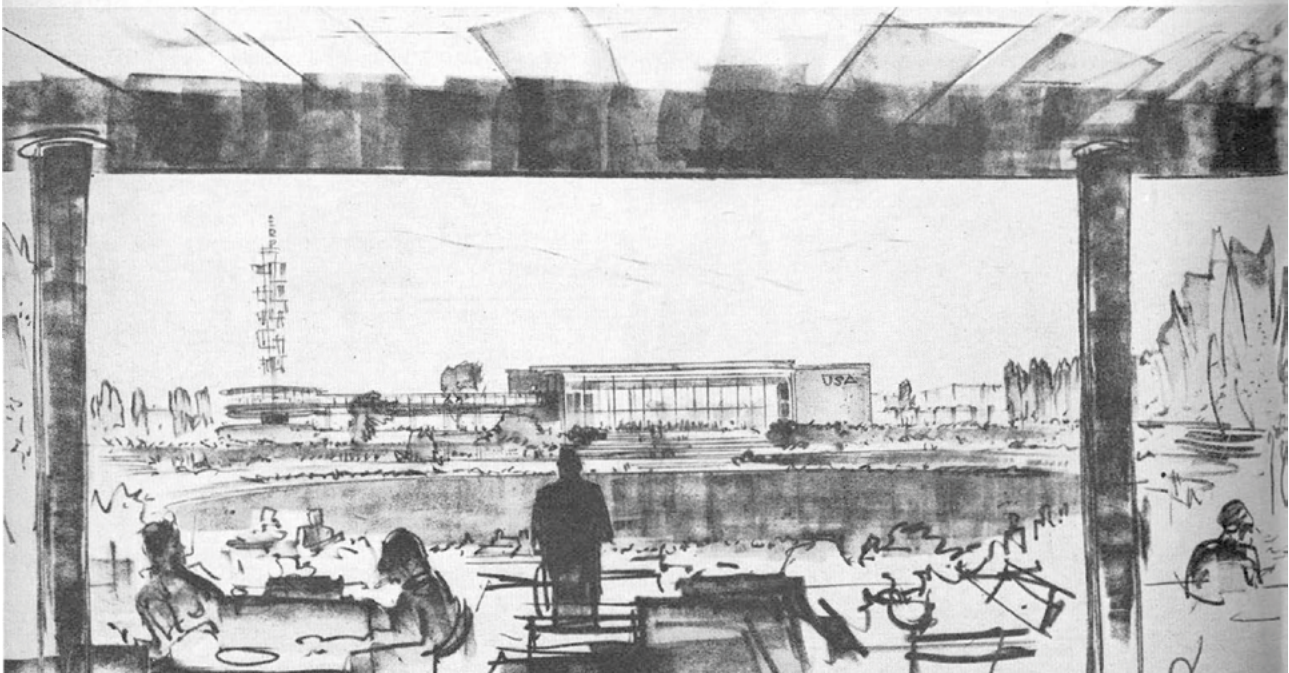
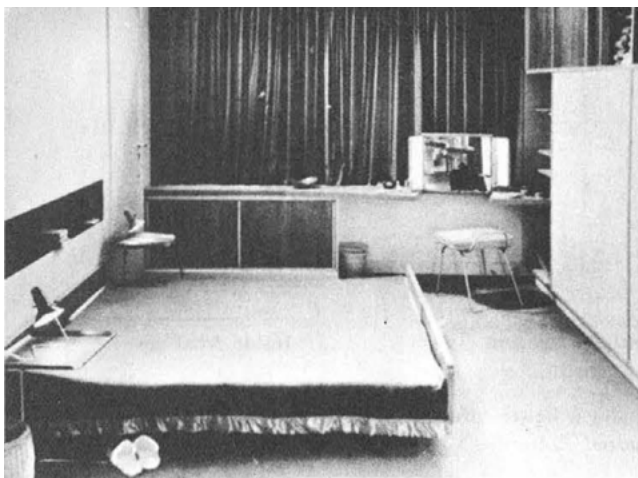


FIG. 8 "Berlin Industry Exhibition", in *Information Bulletin*, September, 1950, page 50.



FIG. 9 "We Build a Better Life", in *Information Bulletin*, February, 1953, Cover.



Bedroom with built-in wardrobe



Children's playground

“We Build a Better Life”

A joint MSA-HICOG exhibit, entitled “We Build a Better Life,” now touring Europe, is intended to demonstrate that a higher standard of living can be attained by the peoples of the Atlantic Community through increased productivity and integration. It shows that the average man living in the Atlantic Community will benefit when higher productivity and the abolition of trade barriers have raised his real income. It also shows that good design is thoroughly compatible with mass production and that rationally designed products from the different countries in the Atlantic Community can be combined harmoniously.

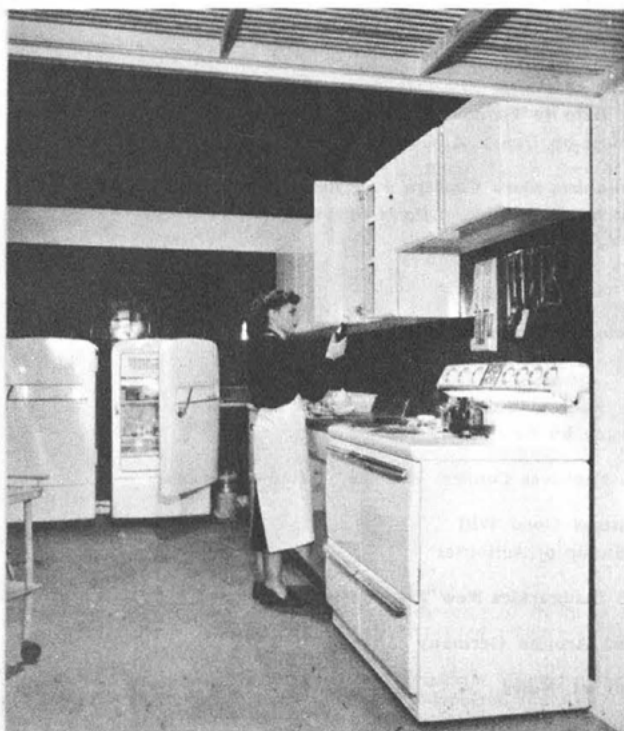
The exhibit was shown first in connection with the Industrial Fair 1952 in Berlin and transferred to Stuttgart in early December. It is then to be shown in Hanover and successively tours various European countries.

The Ideal House represents the home of an average skilled worker and his family living in the Atlantic Community. It consists of a kitchen, laundry and utility room, dining room, nursery, bedroom, bath and living room and also has a garden with garden furniture and tools. The roof is removed so that spectators can see the interior from a rectangular balcony running above the house.

A family of four, man, wife and two children, go through the motions of normal living to demonstrate the interior to the audience. While many of the items shown in the exhibit are still too expensive for the average budget, as is pointed out by a narrator over a public address system, increased productivity and the removal of trade barriers will make them available to the entire Atlantic Community at much lower prices.

There is also a separate display of all consumer items used in the Ideal House, showing country of origin, retail purchase price and the number of hours a skilled worker would have to work to earn enough to purchase the item.

(MSA photos by Wolf Heine)



Kitchen with modern equipment

Modernly equipped bathroom



Comfortable living room



FIG. 10 “We Build a Better Life”, in *Information Bulletin*, February, 1953, page 2.



Eingangsbereich mit Fotomontagen und Flagge. Links zerlegbare Plattenwand mit Abbildungen industrieller Erzeugnisse.

Ausstellungsstand auf der Messe
in Barcelona 1955.

Programm: Querschnitt durch die
amerikanische Produktion.

Ausstellungen der USA in Europa

Das Handelsministerium der Vereinigten Staaten hat in diesem Jahr zum ersten Male ein Amt für Internationale Messen geschaffen und innerhalb dieser Organisation europäische Messen in einem einheitlichen Programm beschickt.

Die gezeigten Ausstellungen bringen den ausländischen Besuchern je nach Thematik einen Querschnitt durch die industrielle, soziale und kulturelle Entwicklung in den Vereinigten Staaten und werben gleichzeitig für amerikanische Produkte.

Trotz des internationalen Charakters, der ihnen eigen ist, bringen sie dem Besucher in einer jeweils seiner völkischen Eigenart angepaßten Weise das Ausstellungsgut näher. Die einheitliche Organisation und Leitung liegt in den Händen von Peter G. Harnden, dem ein ausgewähltes Entwurfsteam aus Architekten, Grafikern und Industriegestaltern zur Verfügung steht.

Eines der Kernstücke dieser Ausstellungsreihe bildet der hierfür entworfene Pavillon, der in Brüssel die Ausstellung aufnahm. Für diese zweigeschossige Halle wurde eine Konstruktion aus Stahlrohr gewählt, die zerlegbar

und so leicht zu transportieren ist. Eine leichte Konstruktion, wie sie hier verwirklicht wurde, wird im Ausstellungsbau vielfach angestrebt; viele erswerende Bedingungen, die sonst berücksichtigt werden müssen, fallen fort. Wie allgemein bei Ausstellungsbauten überraschen auch hier erfindungsreiche Neuschöpfungen, neue Ideen, neue Herstellungsverfahren, die eben nur an solchen für kurze Zeit aufgeführten Bauten angewendet oder zum ersten Male versucht werden können. Außer diesem Pavillon hat die Ausstellungsleitung einen festen Bestand an zerlegbaren, kubisch aufgebauten Leichtstahlgerüsten, die den jeweiligen Ausstellungsgegenständen angepaßt und entsprechend den verschiedenen Bedürfnissen zusammengefügt und angeordnet werden. Neben Aluminium, das wegen seiner Leichtigkeit und der vielfältigen Möglichkeiten seiner Anwendung (als Träger, Rohr, Profil, als Blech und Folie, gebogen, gefaltet, perforiert...) und wegen seiner anticorrosiven Eigenschaften, in den verschiedensten Farben eloxiert oder gestrichen, sehr oft bei Ausstellungsgestaltungen Verwendung findet, wurden in gültiger Weise auch alle übrigen für den Ausstellungsbau



FIG. 12 USA pavilion at the Barcelona Fair, 1955, in *Innenarchitektur*, no. 7, Januar, 1956, pages 400-401

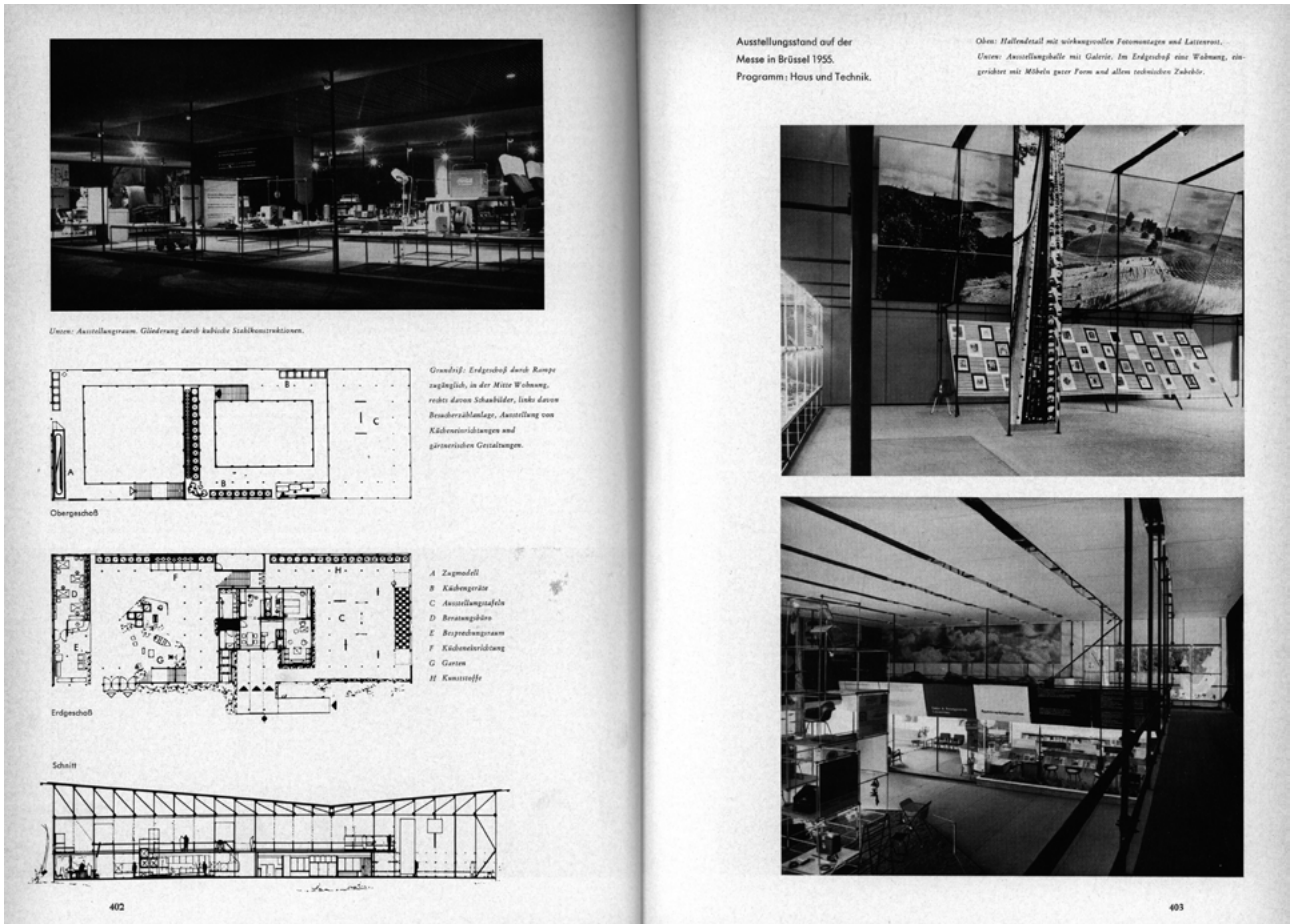


FIG. 13 USA pavilion at the Brussel Fair, 1955. Program: House and Technology, in *Innenarchitektur*, no. 7, Januar, 1956, pages 402-403.

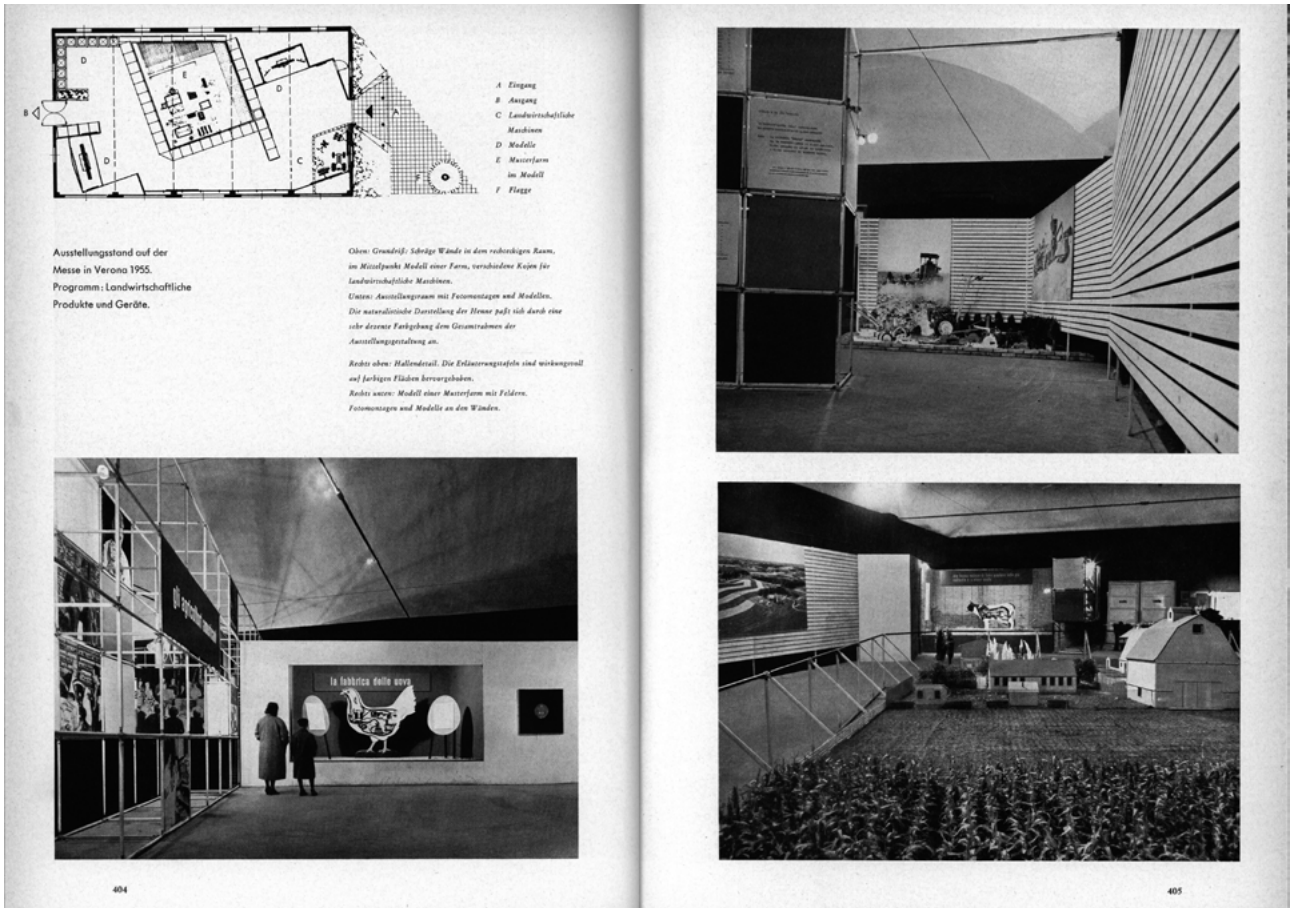


FIG. 14 USA pavilion at the Verona Fair, 1955. Program: Agricultural Products and devices, in *Innenarchitektur*, no. 7, Januar, 1956, pages 404-405.



FIG. 15 USA pavilion at the Liège Trade Fair, 1955. Program: Industry! Shape in the USA, in *Innenarchitektur*, no. 7, Januar, 1956, pages 406-407.

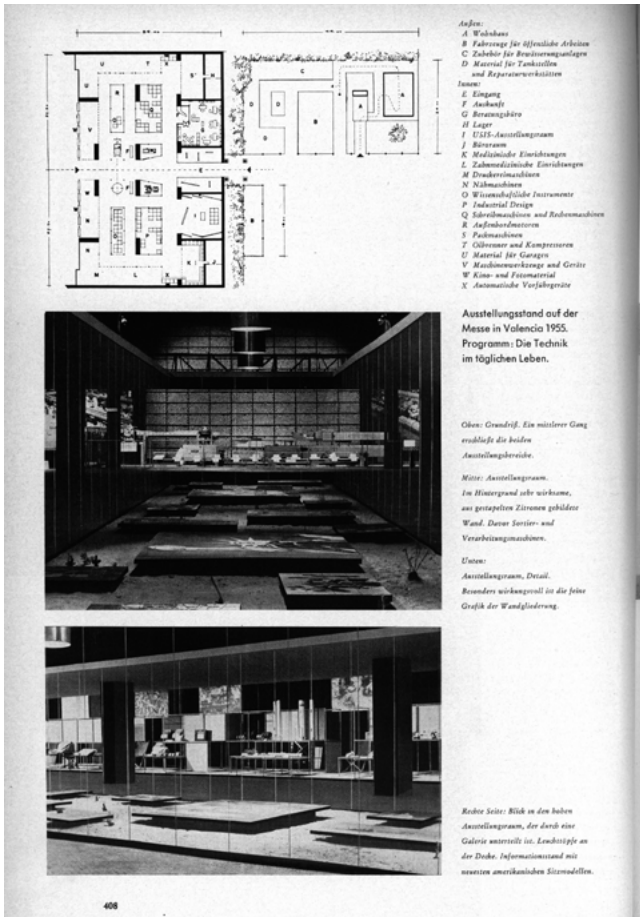


FIG. 16 USA pavilion at the Valencia Fair, 1955. Program: The technology in daily life, in *Innenarchitektur*, no. 7, Januar, 1956, pages 408-409.

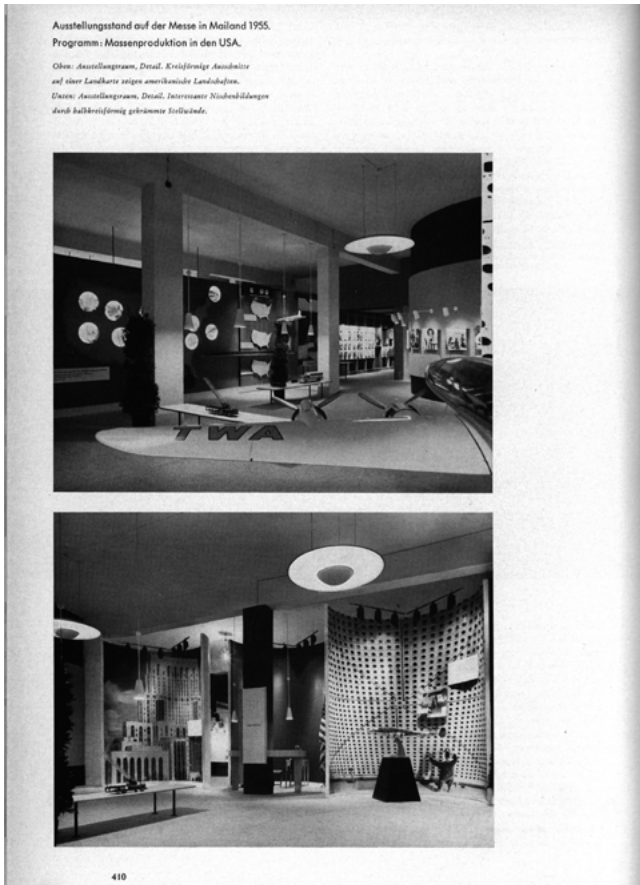
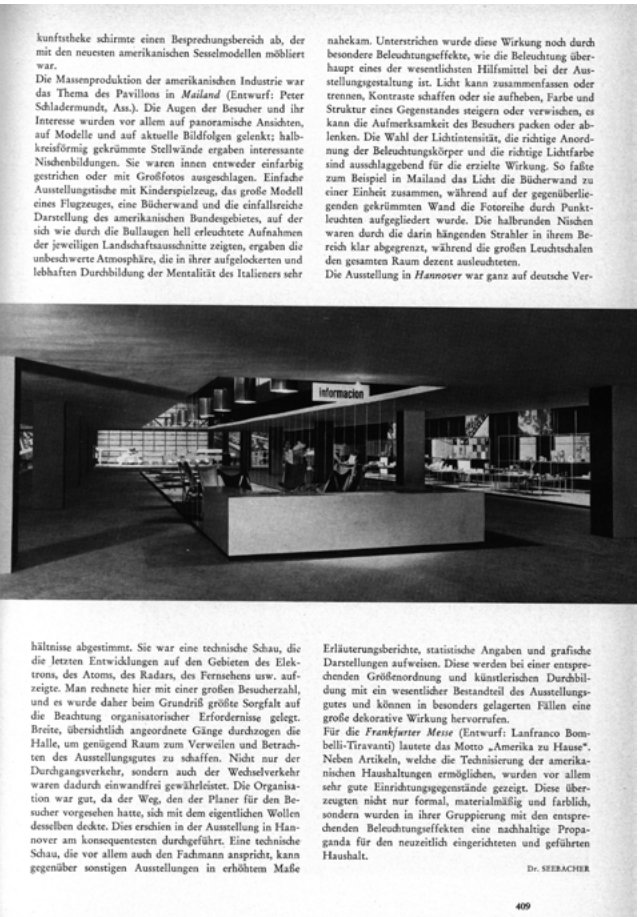


FIG. 17 USA pavilion at the Milan Fair, 1955. Program: Mass production in the USA; USA pavilion at the Hanover Fair, 1955. Program: trends of the technique, in *Innenarchitektur*, no. 7, Januar, 1956, pages 410-411.





Ausstellungsstand
in Frankfurt/Main 1955.
Programm: Amerika zu Hause.

*Oben: Ausstellungshalle.
Stahlrohrkonstruktion und
kubische, aus Rohrgerüsten
bestehende Vitrinen.
Unten: Einrichtung eines
Wohn-Schlafraumes.
Fotos: Archiv.*

Alle Gerüste der USA-Ausstellungen
in Europa sind in Mero-Bauweise
mit 22-mm-Stäben hergestellt.
(Dr.-Ing. Mengerhausen, Würzburg.)



FIG. 18 USA pavilion at the Frankfurt on Main Fair, 1955. Program: America at home, in *Innenarchitektur*, no. 7, Januar, 1956, page 412.