

11476-32
THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

11 WEST 53RD STREET, NEW YORK

Miss Ernestine M. Fantl, Curator of the Department of Architecture and
TELEPHONE: CIRCLE 7-7470

Industrial Art of the Museum of Modern Art, has returned from Europe where she attended the International Congress for New Architecture at Geneva as the representative of the Museum of Modern Art at the invitation of Professor Walter Gropius, Vice-President of the Congress. In preparation for the Exhibition of Modern English Architecture which will be held at the Museum next March and which Miss Fantl will direct, she spent some time in England and visited other countries to see recent developments in modern architecture.

"It is a curious fact," said Miss Fantl, "that the more advanced forms of modern architecture are meeting with increasing success under every form of government except the opposing ones of Soviet Communism and German Nazism. Under Italian Fascism, where the stile rationale is now an official style, in the republics of Switzerland and France, under the constitutional monarchies of Holland, Scandinavia and England and in the midst of the Spanish revolution modern architects are finding work. Because of the destruction of so many necessary buildings, schools, hospitals, etc. the Spanish civil war will provide many opportunities for modern architecture. The most advanced group of architects, the G.A.T.E.P.A.C., is centered in Barcelona, and this group, well organized under the leadership of Torres and Sert, have (or had at the time I spoke with them) in their control almost all the building authorized by the Catalan government.

"In England I saw the greatest advance both qualitatively and quantitatively in modern architecture. For several years modern English architects have enjoyed the perilous pleasures of a building boom which has enabled them to do so much that the result is amazing to the American visitor. German emigrés such as Walter Gropius, Erich Mendelsohn, Marcel Breuer and the Russian Lubetkin, already established exponents of the modern style, have added to the prestige of the movement there.

"In America commissions for buildings of importance are rarely given to modern architects. This is perhaps the reason there is little in this country comparable to such English work as Mendelsohn's Pavilion at Bexhill, Emberton's Store on Piccadilly or Lubetkin's Zoo buildings and apartment house at Highpoint. If the economic structure is sufficiently sound to prevent the building slump already foreseen, England may very well continue the tradition begun in Germany with the Bauhaus.

"In Sweden the most interesting work is that done by the Kooperative Förbundet, a cooperative organization so active that there are now 60 architects on its staff, headed by Eskil Sundahl. In France interest is centered on the coming Exposition of 1937."