

Fire Drill

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pg. 26

well designed—unusually so for a city project—but it is also unconventional. The U.D.C. built it for the Fire Department, which claims that its specifications were not met and has refused to use it. As so often happens in interagency jockeying, everyone seems to have got some of the signals slightly wrong. The irony is that when the details are finally straightened out, because of budget cuts there will be few firemen to train.

But the real point is that the design represents change, or progress, or something different, and change is what New York is supposed to be pinning its hopes on now. If the city trips and falls over a little innovative architecture, how can it handle any innovation at all? Inertia is obviously easier. And change in New York is going to be all uphill.

Fire Drill

If the snafu over the city's new Firemen's Training Center is a reliable indicator, official business is proceeding as usual in New York. Completed, controversial, and to date unoccupied, the new complex on Ward's Island seems to be a standard case of city operating procedure: a battle of bureaucracies, a failure of communication, and the inability to cope with anything that breaks the mold of familiar practice. The problem seems to be that the complex is very

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