

ward Durell Stone's building for the 1957 Brussels Fair and Minoru Yamasaki's Science Pavilion at the Seattle Fair this year—produced outstanding results that have been widely praised.) G.S.A.'s architect-selection procedure seems to be a completely internal system in which designers are chosen by the agency's own staff architects, with approval by G.S.A.'s Commissioner of Public Buildings and the Administrator. This curiously incestuous process is subject to no checks or balances by consultant experts or qualified outside advisers.

The architects for G.S.A.'s gigantic domestic Federal building program are commissioned by the same system, and this is the real issue. In contrast to G.S.A., the State Department's overseas building program has employed an Advisory Committee of some of the country's finest architects, and has a consistently high record of architectural achievement. The unevenness of G.S.A.'s performance—all-too-rare excellence lost in a sea of bureaucratic timidity—points up the dangerous deficiencies of the present situation. The question of the Fair Pavilion merely serves to focus the larger problem.

The Government Architect

The design for the Federal Pavilion for the 1964-65 New York Fair, which is due to be presented to the public shortly, is much more than a simple architectural commission of limited interest to designers and future Fair-goers. Since last August, the building has been the center of serious criticism and controversy in professional circles—a controversy that has particular significance because of its much broader implications for the country's huge Federal building program. Although no design was ever released, descriptions were circulated freely of a flashy "flying saucer" which aroused much negative critical comment.

The important question raised by the controversy is how the General Services Administration, which not only selects designers for fairs but also commissions all Government construction in this country, chooses architects for these purposes. (It is noteworthy in this context that G.S.A.'s two previous efforts in this area—Ed-