

Let's talk

'Let us
to have

By GEOFFREY

AUSTRALIA'S DEFENCE,
Heinemann, 20/-.

DR MILLAR has produced a most timely Intelligent Man's Guide to Defence Matters. Eschewing highflown strategic theories and recondite analyses of technical problems, the book is specifically aimed at the public.

It begins by stating two assumptions: that the public can readily understand defence matters and that it is possible for it to receive sufficient information of a non-secret kind to enable it to discuss such matters in a useful fashion.

It then proceeds clearly and judiciously to deal with the various policies, organisations, and resources relating to defence, here deliberately treated in its purely military form.

It ends with the exhortation: "Let us not be frightened to have a public discussion on defence. It is the public, after all, which seeks and needs to be defended."

The problems involved in defence thinking may be stated simply enough in the form of two questions: "What is the nature of the threat, its direction, its size and imminence? What resources can we draw upon to meet that threat?"

But of course, as Dr Millar makes clear, this "is only the

beginning of the solution. It is one thing to declare: "To survive, we must be ready to defend ourselves by all means in our power, including military means. We intend to survive." It is quite another thing to slough off a now unreal defence heritage: to be persuaded as a nation that the observable threat to security demands, say, higher taxation or smaller funds for national development; and to decide precisely how much commitment should be undertaken in specific Asian situations.

Dr Millar proceeds very carefully to establish the case for improvement in defence organisation and future increases in defence striking power.

First, and hugely importantly, he points out a fact that many members of the public seem to be quite unaware of (a fact that is peculiarly obscured by present events in Vietnam): the U.S. and UK presences in South-East Asia are not necessarily at all to be of long duration. But ANZUS and All That? the public murmurs optimistically. Dr Millar points out that "all these treaties are somewhat ambiguous, and their implementation is subject to 'constitutional processes'."

This is spelled out in an excellent chapter on defence agreements and arrangements. Dr Millar, being an exceptionally honorable man himself, seems to weaken the trenchancy of his point here by also arguing that the U.S.'s moral commitment to Australia is so strong that not to meet it "would do extensive harm to its moral stature throughout the world, a matter in which American administrations of whatever persuasion have great interest."



This is quite indubitably true so far as moral intent is concerned; but a number of members of the important Australian minority not of "British stock" to whom Dr Millar refers would argue that the unfavorable circumstances the Western powers are quite capable of — indeed feel honestly justified in — abandoning allies to preserve world peace. Which raises the all-important question of the nature of the threat to Australia. In what circumstances is the defence of Australia, not South Vietnam or Malaysia, likely to become a real issue?

Again, Dr Millar proceeds with admirable care. The potentiality of Japanese militarism is lucidly discussed; the unlikelihood at present of militaristic expansionism well established; but the possibility of a rapprochement with China, especially in the event of a Chinese-dominated South-East Asia, is also rightly pointed up.

So far as China is concerned, Dr Millar begins by underlining the militarism of this resurgent power: 160 divisions and an "atomic device" (now two) among other things; the growth in power of Peking-oriented, militarised communist parties in South-East Asia; the claims to territories subservient in some form or other to China in the past; a predatory attitude to South-East Asia for reasons of food, oil, rubber, and tin; and



Fruehauf Trailer Company, largest manufacturer of trailers in the United States. Under dynamic leadership its sales boomed by almost 75 per cent from 1954 to 1956. Then things went wrong, and profit turned to a deficit.

In 1958 a new executive assumed control. The recovery was swift and dramatic.

Other concerns have not been so fortunate. The experience of the Underwood Corporation is typical. It was once the king of typewriter makers, but its management slipped. It failed to grasp the importance of the electric typewriter, and turned it down. Underwood had been content to rest on its reputation as the maker of the best typewriter in the world.

International Business Machines snapped up the electric machine. Today IBM is one of the giants in its field. And Underwood — did you know? — has been taken over by Olivetti.

It all adds up, Allen says, to the fact that management must become a profession.

His book goes into infinite detail about the theory and practice of management, sometimes to the point of emphasising the obvious to a ludicrous degree. Still, if you really want to be a leader — which may mean simply becoming the manager of a section of a department store or the executive in a newspaper office — you cannot do better than read this book.



Functional beauty — flats built in Berlin in 1929.

Ahead of the trend

By ROBIN BOYD

THE NEW ARCHITECTURE AND THE BAUHAUS, by Walter Gropius (112 pages, Faber, 13/6). GARDEN CITIES OF TOMORROW, by Ebenezer Howard (168 pages, Faber, 9/6).

TWO CLASSICS of the literature of early twentieth-century design have been re-issued in paperback. After 63 years in one case and 30 years in the other, each has at once historical fascination and vital relevance to our cities and buildings of today.

Both of them sought a bridge, in a physical sense, between two cultures. In 1935 Walter Gropius was concerned with uniting rationalism and poetry in architecture. A generation earlier, around the turn of the century, Ebenezer Howard sought to combine the best things of city life with the good things of country living and in effect founded modern town planning.

For some years now both men have been misunderstood, often deliberately, and their writings ignored, because it was easier and more comfortable to avoid the disciplines they proposed. Howard's great garden city idea has degenerated, except in Britain, into petunias and the suburban sprawl. Walter Gropius's great concept, as discredited in the 1950s, called a cold materialist, functionalist, and considered to be internationally-minded to a suspicious degree and insensitive to regional nuances.

Many architects then revolted against the moralistic overtones of Bauhaus teaching and the seemingly puritanical ban on ornament. Historical styles crept back, as well as decoration, and false effects for art's sake. Evidence of this phase is available to us wherever we care to look. But in 1965 there is also evidence—though less in Australia than in some parts overseas—that this period of adult delinquency in twentieth-century architecture has almost run out its time.

Thus the reappearance of Gropius's definitive statement on the "New Architecture," which he helped decisively to found, could hardly be more timely. Exactly one generation after it first appeared in 1935 his book returns to find the international modern movement which it celebrated in a confused, cynical, unsettled state.

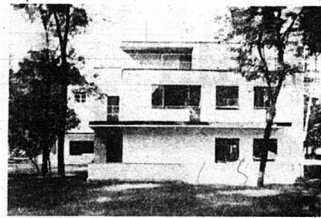
But how confident, morally upright, and hopeful it was then in its youth! And to read it today acts like a tonic. We recapture the assurance and the heroic stance.



The Gropius statement is not long; hardly more than an essay. It is quite personal, starting with a brief explanation of his theory of architecture and going on to describe the teaching of the Bauhaus school in concept and practice. It finishes in Gropius's centering off downhill on two of his favorite hobby-horses of that time: prefabricated houses and skyscraping flats.

It was written in England, during the short interlude in Gropius's career between his flight from the Nazis and his present, continuing success in the USA. It often possesses a noble and classical simplicity, and to architects is almost as full of quotations as Shakespeare.

Gropius's famous early buildings are illustrated along the way. Some of them, such as the Berlin flats of 1929, are clearly dated to their period by their white box shapes gashed by strap windows. They represent the visual style that sometimes came out of the Bauhaus involuntarily—a purging style, that had few lovers next morning. But others, like the Werkbund Exhibition offices at Cologne of 1914, retain a capacity to excite and delight, and



Forty years after they were built, semi-detached houses are as modern as tomorrow.

to amaze at the sheer precociousness of their design half a century ago.

The sobering fact is that the newest, most avant-garde, with-it architecture in the most sophisticated centres of construction today (too new indeed to have been more than hinted at here) has great overlaps of character in common with that epochal building by Gropius.

But a topical relevance closer to home is the reminder of the Bauhaus methods in this year in Australia when several institutions of higher learning are groping in the dark for an idea on which to base a new school of architecture.



The Bauhaus and the early Continental modern movement which it crystallised has been misrepresented often, but here 30 years ago Gropius answered most of the criticisms. In words which are up to date because the argument is timeless he stresses that rationalisation of building is no more important than "the other side: the aesthetic satisfaction of the human soul," that "architecture implies the mastery of space," that "respect for tradition does not mean the complacent toleration of . . . individual eccentricity . . . or bygone aesthetic forms." He advocates "realistic" building, deriving its architectural significance "solely from the vigor and consequence of its own organic proportions, true to itself, logically transparent and virginal of lies or trivialities . . ."

No aesthetic argument can hold much water against such

remarks and the Bauhaus ethic will surely never die so long as the source material remains available.

Howard's book is more for the specialist: the town-planner or social historian, and for them it is essential reading. Yet it is perhaps the least read most influential book of town planning.

Sir Ebenezer Howard (1850-1928), the son of a shopkeeper, was an inventor of unsuccessful mechanical gadgets who later turned to the problem of the crowded, sordid city. In this book he describes the physical, financial and administrative design for an ideal satellite town, a town-country rather than a country-town, where beauty and intellectual pursuits could mix, a town planned for the delight as well as the convenience of its citizens, and limited in size by a green belt (he cited Adelaide as a partial example).

In an introduction written in 1945, Lewis Mumford describes his concept and the aeroplane as two equally important inventions at the turn of the century. Howard lived to see two garden cities built near London to his idea: Letchworth and Welwyn, and after World War II about 20 new towns were founded in Britain, all essentially based on his concept.

In Australia, the idea has fared less successfully. We have tried reserving green belts, but always have allowed them to become cut and tattered. Nevertheless Yallourn, Victoria, and Elizabeth, South Australia, are Howard towns, and Canberra today would have had his most enthusiastic approval.

Instant leadership

By IRVINE DOUGLAS

THE MANAGEMENT PROFESSION, by Louis A. Allen (375 pages, McGraw-Hill, 89/6).

DO YOU WANT to be a leader? Do you want to manage a big organisation? Do you want to know how to make right decisions?

It is true that most of the great leaders of history were born leaders. Caesar, Napoleon, Hitler, Stalin, Mussolini, Churchill at once came to mind. The genes of leadership were in them from the beginning.

But now, it seems, given reasonable application and intelligence anybody can train himself for the role of leadership. And unless you are a good leader then you will never, according to the modern concept, be a good manager.

This do-it-yourself theory of learning how to lead others—really, how to become a successful executive—is explained at great length in Louis A. Allen's book. Allen is an American who runs courses in management, and to him management is an art and a science, and the modern manager is a new kind of professional, destined to take his place with the scientist and the educator in shaping the society of the future.

In the years ahead, says Allen, competence in management will mark the difference between the leaders and the also-rans. Until very recently, management in most organisations was practised haphazard-

ly, but the situation is fast changing.

Management is now a special kind of work that can be identified and defined and practised in terms of verified knowledge.

No longer will leadership be learned by trial and error, and the leader-manager will go about his work with a cool precision, knowing exactly where he is heading and what to expect from his efforts.

Allen gives some frightening examples of how great enterprises have failed because of inefficient or just unprogressive management. Where, he asks, are such former giants as the Central Leather Co, American News, Hupmobile, International Mercantile Marine, and a thousand others?

Of the 20 largest companies in the United States 40 years ago, only two are still among the first 20 in size.

There are, he says, certain universals in the way groups grow and die, and it is possible to identify a predictable pattern of growth in the organised endeavor, much of it influenced by leadership.

He takes the case of the