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ARCHITECTURAL THESIS

GRAND HOTEL D'ALEY

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UNDER THE TUTORSHIP OF

B.S.C.E

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I STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM.

The project consists of designing a first class resort hotel at Aley in a lot near Khan-el-Cheikh, the plot plan of which has been taken from the municipality.

II CHOICE OF THE PROBLEM.

Since a long time, it was recognized that tourism is one of the chief assets in the economic situation of Lebanon. Lebanon has for many years attracted the tourists of Near East countries who come to Lebanon to spend the summer in our refreshing mountains.

One of the first problems to deal with in connection with the development of tourism is the problem of hotels.

In view of the importance of this problem for the future of Lebanon and of the good name of the country abroad, the gouvernement has taken the first steps to improve the present conditions. Apart from repairing old roads or constructing new ones to connect the summer resorts to the capital or to each other, it has created a new office called "Bureau de l'estivage et du tourisme" and it sponsors and encourages such companies as "Société pour l'encouragement du tourisme" and other.

It has also created a commission to fix the different classes of hotels, those of 1st, 2d, or 3d class, and to determine the proper requirements for each class, according to their importance and the accommodation they provide for tourists.

Among the summer resorts of Lebanon, one of the most important and oldest centers of the mountain is Aley.

It is already the administrative and political capital of the mountain and may be considered as the most important center of summer tourism.

These last years, new and beautiful buildings have been erected at Aley for the comfort and well-being of those who come to Aley to spend the summer. Among those buildings are very nice cafés and casinos, "La piscine", cinemas, dancings... etc. Although Aley possess many hotels, not any one of these may be considered a modern hotel, worthy of that name. They are, most of them, very old and do not have the modern equipment and facilities which nowadays and ever more to-morrow are considered necessary.

For these reasons, mainly : national utility as well as most favorable circumstances, I have chosen for a project the design of a large, modern, first class hotel at Aley, the capital of tourism of Lebanon.

III OUTLINE OF THE PROBLEM.

The site of the projected hotel is a large hill, situated near Khan-el-Cheikh and forming one lot, the area of which is $24,140\text{m}^2$. This lot is surrounded on two sides by roads which could easily be enlarged and widened and both of which lead to Aley. These roads which turn around, and at the bottom of, the hotel allow it to be seen^{for} a long distance and under many angles.

The fact that this hill is limited on two sides by roads and on the two other sides by very steep ground insures its isolation and makes it free from the danger of any future construction obstructing its views.

From the road up to the hotel, there is a gentle slope and an existing path that could easily be turned in to an interesting entrance boulevard planted with beautiful trees. To the right of the path, the ground is somewhat flat and a parking space for automobiles is possible to install in this area. The rest of the lot can be turned in to gardens enclosing a beautiful swimming pool.

DIMENSIONS AND DESCRIPTION OF THE HOTEL.

The "GRAND HOTEL D'ALEY" will be a large hotel containing over all 76 guest rooms not including 4 royal apartments situated on the two middle floors two apartments per story on the eastern and western wing. The over all dimensions of the hotel will be $67.4\text{m} \times 31.40$, the basement not included.

A. GROUND FLOOR.

Through a covered porch between a news and cigarettes stand on one side and the doorkeeper's room on the other, one enters to the lobby. This area 7m.50 wide and 6m. long is flanked on the left by the administration and treasurer's offices and on the right by a reading room.

The main salon is a large area designed so as to give together with the entrance lobby and the immense plate glass window of the staircase behind the salon a combined impression of effective grandeur and harmony.

The salon is centrally occupied by 4 cylindrical columns, around which lie in half-a-circle, a light colored furniture and which emphasize the volume of space and perspective of the building.

The western half of the ground floor is devoted to recreation and entertainment activities. A corridor leads to the casino which is built on a generous scale and is designed for the combined use of outside and inside guests. This casino 21m x 9m. large is provided with a large dancing floor 6m x 4m. a platform for the orchestra and a bar.

Beautifully decorated, it forms with the veranda behind it which runs along one half of the building and is 5m. wide an immense recreation space.

With the veranda adjoining it that possess a magnificent view on Beirut and will be attractively planted, the casino is intended to be the fashionable meeting place of Aley's seeking-pleasure, summer population.

A living room, smoking room and a large gamble's room semi-isolated by a door under the staircase form the rest of the western wing.

The eastern wing is occupied by the dining and kitchen areas, and by 6 guest rooms located on the north side and separated by an open space.

The main dining room is connected to a cocktail lounge intended to be used as a supplementary dining room through a folding partition which, when opened, increase considerably the dining area.

The dining area covers 240m² and will provide ample accommodation for all the guests of the hotel (80 rooms x 2pers. per room = 160) on the basis of 1.5m² for every person not including the children who have a special dining room on each upper story.

The kitchen is 60m², without the pantry, cutlery and storing area. It will be provided with the utmost modern equipment such as electric ranges, fully automatic waterheaters, home freezers (for freezing and storing foods) and refrigeration cooling units. Automotic dish washers will also be used. The meals are prepared on cooking tables and when finished, put on a counter from which they are taken to the pantry and the dining room in front, as well as up to the 2d, 3d, or 4th floor through an elevator placed in the pantry.

THE BASEMENT.

It covers an area of 26 x 8.5m² and constitutes an independant wing to the east of the hotel and flush with the north side. As it is recessed a considerable distance from the front, it will not be seen by those people coming to the hotel from Beirut.

There are two storeys in the basement, the lower one which will be thoroughly waterproofed is intended to the housing of the servants who reside continuously in the hotel and the upper one for the laundry, ironing and storage of linen together with a drying space on the deck of the lower storey. This disposition was chosen so as to give easy access to the hotel from the linen room and to insure an easy circulation between the hotel and the service quarters. This is also done through an open two-storeid alley that leads from the staircase room to the basement.

B. THE SECOND FLOOR.

A large lift will get us to the 2d, floor. The central part is occupied by the salon and on the front are an indoor games room(8.80 x4.30) and a room devoted to ladies hairdressing of the same size separated by a gallery.

A central corridor separates two rows of rooms. The rooms on the front of the hotel are large two-bed rooms having each of them its own bath room and two closets. Every room is shut by a door which permits the bath room to be visited and cleaned by servants without disturbing the occupants of the room itself. On the north side, there is another row of two-bed rooms which overlook the main road to Beirut and Beirut city itself.

These rooms like most of the other rooms of the hotel have been specially designed so as to be used either individually with a common bath room for every couple of rooms or as a two-room apartment in which case they form a well enclosed and private unit.

Owing to the steepness of the ground on the sides of the lot, the necessity of having a regular rectangular plan and exploiting to the maximum the area available, an open space is provided in the middle, 3m wide on the left side and 3.5m on the right side to aerate and give light to a third row of single bed rooms. This open space will have on the 3d, floor only an open balcony (cantilever) so as to give access to the rooms on the north side.

On the right wing, there is a large dining room for children 80m² large with an adjoining kitchenette. There are also provided two toilet rooms with W.C....etc, for men and women.

THE ROYAL APARTMENTS.

On the eastern and western ends of the hotel ^{they} are located so as to have the best rooms in the hotel. The entrance to these apartments is made through the adjoining staircase, which makes them more private and every apartment contains one bed room with its bath, one living room that opens, through a folding partition, into a circular salon. These apartments, with their rich interior decoration, are devoted to the use of the celebrated or rich personalities who will be coming to Aley.

THE 3d, STOREY.

It is identical to the 2d, storey.

THE 4th, STOREY.

It has 6 rooms on the front only, without circular apartments and 12 rooms on the north side. All the middle area will be occupied by a roof garden planted with many flowers and small trees ^{and} provided with osier chairs, this roof garden is specially designed to be an attractive recreative space for the guests of the hotel.

IV. CONSTRUCTION SIDE OF THE HOTEL.

Foundations : The external walls are built on continuous bearing foundations in stone. The interior structure is made of reinforced concrete frame ; of floors, beams and columns resting on spread footings.

Walls. Exterior walls are of white limestone taken from a quarry nearby and the tiers of masonry are from 27 to 30cm. high. The thickness of the walls is 40cm. in the ground floor and 25cm in the upper floors. In the former, there will be 25cm. of exterior stone masonry and 15cm. of cast concrete on the back. The exterior joints are made rectangular and slightly projecting, with a rosy colour, a little darker than the white of the stone masonry. Interior walls are made of 15cm. hollow blocks of concrete and there will be an internal plaster painted with "Ripolin" stippled.

FLOORS. Reinforced concrete floors covered with terrazo having a marbled appearance, in the lobby and salons, dining rooms and

living rooms and corridors; quarry tiles, cement finish and carpeting in the guest rooms, semi-vitrified tile floors in bathrooms, dark brown tiles in kitchens.

ROOF. It will be made of hollow tiles, "Hourdis" covered by bitumen and concrete ~~alabo~~ on the roofgarden.

WINDOWS. Made of wood casement sash with screens.

DOORS. Good Katrani wood. Flush on both sides. Bathrooms will have the upper ~~of~~ part of glass. The doors will have chromium lever handles.

FINISHES. Windows and doors painted beige, staircase : white painted solid balustrade, handrail painted red.

INSULATION. Insulating tile board Celotex on ceilings and Insulating finish planks CELOTEX on walls of dining rooms, living rooms, in attractive colours (yellow brown beige).

V. INTERIOR DECORATION.

The lobby will be free from any furniture except for green flower pots and pictures on the walls. With its terrazo floor formed with alternately grey and black square tiles, it will have a dignified appearance.

The main salon, will have the four central columns as a main feature. These columns will be painted with a shining beige that will match with the terrazo floor. The two front corners are occupied by two coat rooms, closed with dark red curtains. The two other corners will be emphasized with dark green sloping up plants in pots resting on low platform.

A light coloured furniture (yellow brown) lying in half-a-circle, surrounds the columns and contributes to the formal

character of the salon. The walls of the salon are painted with a light brown colour.

Another main feature of the salon is its lighting which will be of the tube type and arranged so as to have a diversity of colours.

Passing on the right to the dining room, we will see a large room, the walls of which covered with a yellow brown Celotex fiber boards. The chairs will be of osier the tables light coloured and ceiling of Celotex tile boards. The doors are of osier screens.

The cocktail lounge: Separated by a folding partition from the main dining room, possesses a large bar and is terminated by a rotunda. This room is in strong contrast to the dining room, although it is designed to be complementary to the dining room in case the latter should not be sufficient. The bar front and chairs, all in imitation leather are, like the painted plaster walls, in a strong Indian red. The bar top and base are black. The floor is of black. The floor is of black terrazo.

The living room has its walls covered with Celotex building boards beige coloured, which will keep it cool and give it a gay and charming atmosphere, together with the osier chairs and a yellow brown carpet. The walls are decorated with pictures and the doors of the living room are made of osier screens, Over which are hanged yellow and red curtains.

Passing to the casino, a large dancing floor made of shining black terrazo occupies the center of the casino in front of an overlooking orchestra platform decorated with flower pots and richly illuminated along the edge with tubular lights with varied colours.

The dancing floor is indirectly illuminated from a cove in the ceiling of the same size as the dancing floor and made of gypsum plaster (Cf. cinema opera entrance)

Tubular lights are fixed along the wall at 1.m.50 above the ground. and other lighting fixtures giving diffused light are hung from the ceiling.

Wide and comfortable chairs are installed between the columns projecting slightly from the walls which are decorated with bird and flower motifs.

The bar is upholstered in red imitation leather, the top counter is black and there is lighting in the recessed wall display cases and in the soffit above the mirrored back bar. The tables in the casino are of dark oak covered with glass plates.

The veranda is lined with flower pots all along its length.

THE GUEST ROOMS.

Most of the guest rooms are two-bed rooms with one or more closets and bathrooms. The walls are treated with internal plaster painted with Ripolin in gay and bright colours and may have pictures. The floor is of tiles with a cement finish, covered with a carpet under ~~the~~ bed and the windows are closed with osier screens which help to create an intimate and quiet atmosphere. The room contains 2 beds with a night table between, a circular table with flowers, 2 or 3 chairs, a cupboard and a writing desk.

CONCLUSION.

This hotel is designed to be the most modern and one of the largest hotels in the mountains.

With its location outside of Aley and its isolation, as well as its exceptional site, it is a real place for rest and recovery while its position immediately near the main road Beirut-Damascus renders it within easy reach from Beirut and the neighboring localities.

With its casino and the inside entertainments it can afford it may be the meeting place of the elite of Aley population and would not fail to give large returns to Aley people every year.

The erection of such an hotel as has been drawn and described would, by the large amount of accommodation, comfort and well-being it affords, renders it as well as the city of Aley itself such a center of tourism as has never been before.

It would raise the prestige of Aley and set its fame on a sure basis. In a short time after its erection, it would be the pride of the community of Aley and in the long run, will contribute to make of Lebanon the Switzerland of the Near East.



