For Everyone a Garden. Moshe Safdie. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1974. Variously paged. $25.

If Moshe Safdie's prime objective was to create shelter, he would have called his new book *For Everyone a House*. But Safdie is an architect who knows what it means to be able to open windows in two directions and bring a breeze through a stuffy apartment. He understands what an expansive vista can do to a one-room unit, and he realizes how much a high-rise dweller appreciates a terrace for shaking out rugs, potting plants or getting sun. His objective is to create choice and to build opportunity into living spaces. It is not surprising, then, that he calls his book *For Everyone a Garden*.

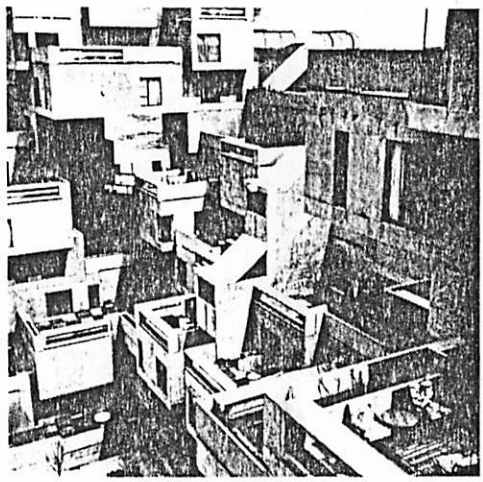
With enthusiasm, Safdie takes on the challenge of designing livable places. Habitat 67, at Expo in Montreal, was his first and best known work. Cantilevered concrete boxes stacked high into the air, Habitat is a complex array of shapes and shadows. At first, it seems to be more of a statement in pure geometry than a response to people's needs. Those needs, however, form the basis for Safdie's qualitative design program. He realizes the program through imaginative building systems.

At Habitat 67, for example, the program included providing each unit with multiple views, roof gardens, privacy and also individual identity. Traditional construction could not accommodate the program. A prefabrication system made it possible.

Safdie's first book, *Beyond Habitat* (MIT Press, 1970, *see* Apr. '71, p. 35), documents the day-by-day drama of how Habitat 67 happened. It is a personal saga of dauntless optimism. His new volume, with its bright, exuberant cover by Taal Safdie, shows the same spirit.

Since Habitat, Safdie has been a busy man. *For Everyone a Garden* updates the work at Montreal and presents a remarkable variety of new work, including habitats in Puerto Rico and Rochester. Baltimore has commissioned him to plan a new town, Coldspring. Israel requested a study on the feasibility of new housing systems. He adapts his modular units to each particular locale and client. Projects range from a student union at San Francisco State College and a rabbinical college in Jerusalem to resort condominiums at Saranac Lake, N.Y., and St. Thomas. Much of Safdie's success lies in his ability to sell ideas to a skeptical public. If he is to stimulate change, he needs a wide audience. Hopefully, numerous nonarchitects will discover him through the book. All who see what he has done and is now doing are certain to share his enthusiasm.

Change, however, is a slow process. Safdie's strongest statement has to do with industrialized building and that remains, as he asserts, a primitive business. At



a time when builders and architects are feeling some of the worst effects of an inflation, fanned by constantly rising construction costs, it is especially important to consider his plea for new ways to organize the production of buildings. Unfortunately, the necessary research and development is hardest to finance when money is tight; labor practices are hardest to change when unemployment is high.

Uncoordinated local planning also hinders innovation. Disparate building codes and ordinances complicate large-scale production of factory-built units. Montreal's fire code, for example, mandated five-inch concrete slabs and walls, while a three-and-one-half-inch thickness sufficed in Puerto Rico. It is almost as if Detroit had to manufacture cars customized to meet the special requirements of every city and town.

For Everyone a Garden is filled with illustrations. (The series of photographs of Habitat 67 under construction is excellent.) Projects are organized by theme. The type is widely spaced on square pages with broad white borders. Still, it is difficult to use the book for reference. The time and place sequence is often vague, as is the status of planned or projected work, and section numbers are a poor substitute for simple page numbers. Somehow, this elegant and even lavish format seems better suited to something which is finished, or someone who is looking back.

Safdie is still happening. His words are timely and most of his works are in progress. A more informal layout, possibly a loose-leaf or workbook format, might have been a good idea. Then Safdie could have kept everyone up to date with more new pages of good sense and ingenuity. *Jane Canter Loeffler, AIP Associate, Washington, D.C.*

Development on a Human Scale: Potentials for Ecologically Guided Growth in Northern New Mexico. Peter van Dresser. New York: Praeger, 1973. 116 pp. $10.
Landscapes for Humans: A Case Study of the Potentials for Ecologically Guided Development in an Uplands Region. Peter van Dresser. Albuquerque, N.M.: Biotechnic Press, 1972. 128 pp. $3.

Good things sometime come in small packages. *Development on a Human Scale* is a book modest in size and in price, large in print, undistinguished graphically and available with two different titles in three different bindings. Already in its second printing, it is written in simple, succinct language and is structured in a direct and logical way. It is first-class, and potentially a classic.

In 1970, Fred Richardson proclaimed: "Workers of the world, disperse." In 1971, Wendell Berry published his "Think Little" essay; in 1972, Peter van Dresser's crisp biotechnic regional plan was first published, and in 1973, E. F. Schumacher's collection of essays was published under the title "Small Is Beautiful."

These are recent expositions of the organic decentralist planning tradition that includes such personalities as Prince Kropotkin, Gustave Landauer, Tolstoy, William Morris, Gandhi, Lewis Mumford, Alex Comfort, Paul Goodman and Murray Bookchin. It is a planning concept out