

The original documents are located in Box J30, folder “West Front Extension: General, 1965-1973 (3)” of the Gerald R. Ford Congressional Papers, 1948-1973 at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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[Special]

"West Front"

(CAMPOLI, Mario E.)

re: emergency work

December 30, 1969

Mr. Mario E. Campioli
Acting Architect of the Capitol
United States Capitol
Washington, D.C.



Dear Mr. Campioli,

I have your letter of December 19 and am pleased to say that I, too, approve of your proceeding with the emergency work as outlined in your letter.

Sincerely,

Gerald R. Ford, M.C.

GRF:mr

ARCHITECT OF THE CAPITOL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515

2320

December 19, 1969

F/OK.
Indicate to
Architect

Honorable Gerald R. Ford
Minority Leader of the House of Representatives
Member, Commission for Extension
of the United States Capitol
United States Capitol
Washington, D. C.



Dear Congressman:

The Congress recently provided funds in the Legislative Branch Appropriation Act, 1970, for emergency repairs of the temporary shoring, and providing for other protective and related work on the west central front of the Capitol, pending a final decision on the extension or restoration of that portion of the building.

The funds are appropriated to the Architect of the Capitol, for expenditure under the direction of the Commission.

The work involved is summarized as follows:

1. Provide protective screen for balustrade \$16,000
2. Repair, rewedge, provide weepers, and paint
buttresses; reinforce and paint other
supports and timbers; paint housing over
stairs; reseal coping joints; seal cracked
water table; and repair displaced cramps 7,000
3. Provide one further set (March, 1970) of
survey readings (showing movement and/or
settlement of walls) and analysis 3,500

Total estimated cost \$26,500

We would like to proceed immediately with purchase of the supplies and materials for items 1 and 2 and commence this emergency work "in house" around the first of next year. We would like also to let the contract with the surveyors and consulting engineer for item 3 so this work may proceed on a timely basis.

Honorable Gerald Ford

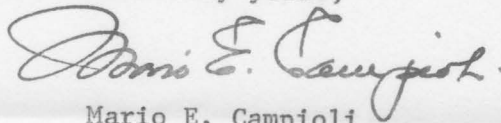
- 2 -

December 19, 1969

Speaker McCormack, Chairman of the Commission, has approved proceeding with this emergency work as outlined and has asked that we also seek your approval.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Mario E. Campioli". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "M".

Mario E. Campioli
Acting Architect of the Capitol



December 19, 1969

Honorable Gerald R. Ford
Minority Leader of the House of Representatives
Member, Commission for Extension
of the United States Capitol
United States Capitol
Washington, D. C.



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Honorable Gerald Ford

- 2 -

December 19, 1969

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With best wishes, I am

Sincerely yours,

Mario E. Campioli
Acting Architect of the Capitol



[Special]

~~legislative~~

"West Front"

(MCCORMACK, John M.)

re: consultants'

December 30, 1969

Honorable John M. McCormack
Speaker
U. S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C.



Dear Mr. Speaker,

I have your letter of December 16 and want to say that I concur wholeheartedly in your proposal that you should direct on behalf of the Commission for Extension of the United States Capitol a request ~~of~~ the American Society of Civil Engineers to review the Conference Report and to suggest to the Commission the names of several well qualified engineers or engineering firms.

I understand that Congressman Yates has suggested that similar requests be made to the deans of some of the largest architectural schools in the country. I would say that if in your judgment you want to extend the request to these deans, I would also concur.

Sincerely,

Gerald R. Ford, M.C.

GRF:mr

John W. McCormack
9th Dist. Massachusetts

Eugene T. Kinnaly
Administrative Assistant

Martin Sweig
Legislative Assistant and
Secretary, Washington Office

Boston Office:
James W. Hartrey
Secretary

The Speaker's Rooms
U. S. House of Representatives
Washington, D. C.

December 16, 1969

Honorable Gerald R. Ford
Minority Leader
U. S. House of Representatives
Washington, D. C.

*Agree
glad to meet after 5:15
Dec concern
in person
let file*



Dear Mr. Ford:

This letter is being directed to you in your capacity as a Member of the Commission for Extension of the United States Capitol.

As you are aware, with respect to measures to be taken to remedy the conditions of the West Front of the Capitol, the House and Senate conferees on the Legislative Branch Appropriation Act, 1970, recommended a total appropriation of \$2,275,000 under the appropriation "Extension of the Capitol". This amount was agreed to by the Senate and the House and the bill was signed by the President December 12, 1969.

Of this total amount, not to exceed \$250,000 was provided for a feasibility study of restoration. The conference report, in this connection, provides in part:

"That not to exceed \$250,000 shall be used for the employment of independent nongovernmental engineering and other services for studying and reporting (within 6 months after date of the employment contract) on the feasibility and cost of restoring the west central front, under such terms and conditions as the Commission may determine."

The conference report also provides:

"In recommending the language to be offered in the motion, the conferees of both Houses are agreed that the nongovernmental engineering and other necessary services engaged by direction of the Commission to study and report on the feasibility and cost of restoration should be, in the Commission's opinion, completely independent, with no previous connection with proposals to either extend or to restore the west

John W. McCormack
9th Dist., Massachusetts

Eugene T. Kinnaly
Administrative Assistant

The Speaker's Rooms
U. S. House of Representatives
Washington, D. C.

Martin Sweig
Legislative Assistant and
Secretary, Washington Office

Boston Office:
James H. Hartrey
Secretary

Honorable Gerald R. Ford

-2-

December 16, 1969



central front, including any expressed predisposition for or against the extension or the restoration of the west central front. The conferees are especially anxious that the selection be made from among highly reputable firms or individuals generally noted or regarded for their excellence of ability, to the end that all Members may have confidence that whatever report is submitted is qualitative and impartial in character and content."

In line with the agreement reached, it is the responsibility of the Commission to direct the employment of the necessary independent non-governmental engineering services to make the study and prepare the report on the feasibility and cost of restoration, keeping in mind the desire of Congress, as expressed in the conference report, that the study be completely independent, the firm or individual selected to have no previous connection with proposals to either extend or to restore the west central front or having expressed any predisposition for or against the extension or the restoration. In view of the foregoing, it is my thought that I should direct, on behalf of the Commission, a request to the American Society of Civil Engineers, with headquarters in New York City, to review the conference report and then suggest to the Commission the names of several well qualified engineers or engineering firms, with experience in restoration or reconstruction of old buildings such as the Capitol. Assuming this society cooperates with us in preparing this list, we could then meet early next year and develop the criteria for a contract and select one of the firms or individuals to carry forward the work which the Congress has ordered.

To the best of my knowledge and belief, the American Society of Civil Engineers has taken no position either for or against extension or restoration. We could assume, therefore, that they would make an independent judgment on this proposition in the spirit of the conference agreement.

John W. McCormack
9th Dist. Massachusetts

The Speaker's Rooms
U. S. House of Representatives
Washington, D. C.

Eugene T. Kinnaly
Administrative Assistant

Martin Sweig
Legislative Assistant and
Secretary, Washington Office

Boston Office:
James H. Hartrey
Secretary

Honorable Gerald R. Ford

-3-

December 16, 1969

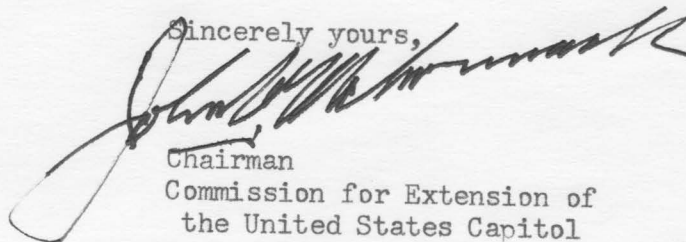


In the interest of expediting this matter, I respectfully request your concurrence in proceeding accordingly.

A copy of the conference report containing the full text of the agreement on this matter is enclosed for your convenience.

With kind regards, I am

Sincerely yours,



Chairman
Commission for Extension of
the United States Capitol

Encl.

LEGISLATIVE BRANCH APPROPRIATIONS, 1970

DECEMBER 9, 1969.—Ordered to be printed

Mr. ANDREWS of Alabama, from the committee of conference,
submitted the following

CONFERENCE REPORT

[To accompany H.R. 13763]

The committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendments of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 13763) making appropriations for the legislative branch for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1970, and for other purposes, having met, after full and free conference, have agreed to recommend and do recommend to their respective Houses as follows:

That the House recede from its disagreement to the amendments of the Senate numbered 36, 38, 42, 43, 44, and 45, and agree to the same.

Amendment numbered 35:

That the House recede from its disagreement to the amendment of the Senate numbered 35, and agree to the same with an amendment as follows:

In lieu of the sum proposed by said amendment insert \$468,165; and the Senate agree to the same.



The committee of conference report in disagreement amendments numbered 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 37, 39, 40, and 41.

GEORGE ANDREWS,
TOM STEED,
MICHAEL J. KIRWAN,
SIDNEY R. YATES,
BOB CASEY,
GEORGE MAHON,
MARK ANDREWS,
ODIN LANGEN,
LOUIS C. WYMAN,
FRANK T. BOW,

Managers on the Part of the House.

JOSEPH M. MONTOYA,
WILLIAM PROXMIRE (except
amendment No. 37),
RALPH W. YARBOROUGH,
JAMES B. PEARSON,
NORRIS COTTON,

Managers on the Part of the Senate.

STATEMENT OF THE MANAGERS ON THE PART OF THE HOUSE

The managers on the part of the House at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendments of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 13763) making appropriations for the legislative branch for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1970, and for other purposes, submit the following statement in explanation of the effect of the action agreed upon and recommended in the accompanying conference report as to each of such amendments, namely:

SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Amendments Nos. 1 through 34, under the "Senate" heading, and Nos. 39, 40, and 41, under the "Architect of the Capitol" heading, relate solely to expenses of Senate operations and activities.

Amendments Nos. 36 and 38, under the "Architect of the Capitol" heading, deal with Senate matters.

Amendment No. 37 relates to the west front of the Capitol.

Amendments Nos. 1 through 34, and Nos. 39, 40, and 41, relating to Senate operations, are reported in technical disagreement. But in accord with the long practice, under which each body determines its own housekeeping requirements and the other concurs therein without intervention, the managers on the part of the House will offer motions to recede and concur in these amendments.

Amendments Nos. 36 and 38, under the "Architect of the Capitol" heading, relate to appropriations that are joint in nature, but the amounts in conference relate to Senate operations and thus fall in the same category as the above bloc of amendments. The House recedes and concurs in amendments Nos. 36 and 38.

JOINT ITEMS

JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE

Amendment No. 35 adds \$27,000 to the amount in the House bill, instead of \$35,000 proposed by the Senate.

ARCHITECT OF THE CAPITOL

WEST CENTRAL FRONT OF THE CAPITOL

Amendment No. 37, relating to the west central front of the U.S. Capitol Building, is reported in technical disagreement. The managers on the part of the House will offer a motion incorporating a conference agreement in the nature of a substitute for the House provision and the Senate provision.



The House bill provided \$2,000,000 for preparation of detailed plans and specifications for extending the west central front in accord with extension plan 2 approved by the Commission for Extension of the U.S. Capitol. The Senate bill, by floor amendment, struck this provision and substituted an appropriation of \$250,000 to be transferred to the National Park Service of the Department of the Interior for use in conducting studies to determine the feasibility and cost of restoring the west central front.

The case for extension rather than restoration was stated in some considerable detail in House committee hearings held September 8; in House Report 91-487, of September 11, at pages 19-26; and in House floor debate of September 19. *The case for restoration* rather than extension was stated variously in Senate committee hearings on the 1970 appropriation bill, in the Senate committee report on the bill, but especially in Senate floor debate of October 21 when the \$2 million extension funds were stricken and the \$250 thousand inserted for a restoration study.

THE CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

The conference agreement to be put in the motion of the House managers will, as stated, be a substitute for both the House and Senate provisions. It will provide—

A. An appropriation of \$2,275,000.

B. That the appropriation is to be expended under the direction of the Commission for Extension of the U.S. Capitol (now composed of the Speaker as chairman, the Vice President, the majority and minority floor leaders of the two Houses, and the Architect).

C. That such portion of the appropriation as may be necessary shall be used for emergency shoring and repairs and related work on the west central front. (The conferees were, very recently, apprised of the results of a periodic but continuing engineering check on the condition of the west front which discloses the need for some emergency protective and maintenance measures).

D. That not to exceed \$250,000 shall be used for the employment of independent nongovernmental engineering and other services for studying and reporting (within 6 months after date of the employment contract) on the feasibility and cost of restoring the west central front, under such terms and conditions as the Commission may determine.

E. That pending completion and consideration of the restoration study and report, however, no further work toward extension of the west central front shall be carried on.

F. That after consideration by the Commission of the restoration study and report, the Commission is to direct the preparation of final plans for extending the west central front in accord with extension plan 2 already approved by the Commission, *unless*

such restoration study report establishes to the satisfaction of the Commission:

(1) That through restoration, such west central front can, without undue hazard to safety of the structure and persons be made safe, sound, durable, and beautiful for the foreseeable future;

(2) That restoration can be accomplished with no more vacation of west central front space in the building proper (excluding the terrace structure) than would be required by the proposed extension plan 2;

(3) That the method or methods of accomplishing restoration can be so described or specified as to form the basis for performance of the restoration work by competitive, lump-sum, fixed price construction bid or bids;

(4) That the cost of restoration would not exceed \$15,000,-000; and

(5) That the time schedule for accomplishing the restoration work will not exceed that heretofore projected for accomplishing the plan 2 extension work.

G. In other words, if the restoration study report does not establish to the satisfaction of the Commission that restoration (rather than extension) treatment meets all five of the conditions noted above, then the extension work is to proceed.

H. If, on the other hand, the Commission, after consideration, concludes that the restoration study report meets all five of the conditions noted above, the Commission is then to make recommendations to the Congress on whether to extend or restore the west central front.

In recommending the language to be offered in the motion, the conferees of both Houses are agreed that the nongovernmental engineering and other necessary services engaged by direction of the Commission to study and report on the feasibility and cost of restoration should be, in the Commission's opinion, completely independent, with no previous connection with proposals to either extend or to restore the west central front, including any expressed predisposition for or against the extension or the restoration of the west central front. The conferees are especially anxious that the selection be made from among highly reputable firms or individuals generally noted or regarded for their excellence of ability, to the end that all Members may have confidence that whatever report is submitted is qualitative and impartial in character and content.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Amendments Nos. 42, 43, and 44, make reductions, as proposed by the Senate, in Library appropriations proposed in the House bill, as follows:

Library, salaries and expenses (No. 42)-----	\$23, 500
Copyright Office, salaries and expenses (No. 43)-----	4, 000
Books for the blind and physically handicapped, salaries and expenses (No. 44)-----	3, 000

OFFICE OF SUPERINTENDENT OF DOCUMENTS

Amendment No. 45 reduces by \$100,000, as proposed by the Senate, the appropriation proposed in the House bill for the Office of Superintendent of Documents.

GEORGE ANDREWS,
TOM STEED,
MICHAEL J. KIRWAN,
SIDNEY R. YATES,
BOB CASEY,
GEORGE MAHON,
MARK ANDREWS,
ODIN LANGEN,
LOUIS C. WYMAN,
FRANK T. BOW,

Managers on the Part of the House.

*Commission on
Ext. Ford*

November 6, 1969

Honorable Gerald R. Ford, Member
Commission for Extension of the
United States Capitol
Washington, D. C.



Dear Congressman Ford:

The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, acting under authority of Public Law 89-173, as amended by 40 U.S.C. 672, has prepared plans for construction of a rail rapid transit line, extending from Glenmont, Maryland, via the Union Station, through the north end of the Capitol Grounds to Judiciary Square, continuing on in loop fashion to Rockville, Maryland. The plans, insofar as they affect the Capitol Grounds, have been prepared in collaboration with the Architect of the Capitol and his staff.

I am attaching, hereto, a statement explaining these plans, how they affect the Capitol Grounds, and other related factual data.

The plans and construction program, as proposed by the Transit Authority, meet with the approval of Mr. Stewart and myself. They now require approval by the Commission for Extension of the United States Capitol under the provisions of the Act authorizing the rail rapid transit system, insofar as the plans relate to the portion of the transit line to pass under the north end of the Capitol Grounds. The Transit Authority has requested Mr. Stewart to take the necessary steps

Honorable Gerald R. Ford

- 2 -

November 6, 1969

to obtain the Commission's approval. Mr. Stewart, as Architect of the Capitol and a Member of the Commission, has asked me to act in the matter of securing the Commission's approval during his absence due to illness.

Mr. Stewart and I both recommend that the approval requested by the Transit Authority be granted by the Commission.

The Speaker has reviewed and approved the proposed plans and programs, insofar as they affect the Capitol Grounds, and has requested me to write to each Member of the Commission for Extension of the United States Capitol and to request each Member's consideration and approval of the Transit Authority's request, as recommended by the Architect of the Capitol and approved by the Speaker as Chairman of the Commission. This letter is being written accordingly.

If our recommendation meets with your approval, it is requested that you indicate your approval by signing in the space below prepared for such purpose and return this letter with your signature of approval to me.

Sincerely yours,

Mario E. Campioli
Acting Architect of the Capitol



APPROVED

Member, Commission for Extension
of the United States Capitol

Signed
11-7-69

SIDNEY R. YATES
9TH DISTRICT, ILLINOIS

Office Copy

COMMITTEE
APPROPRIATIONS

CHICAGO DISTRICT OFFICE
ROOM 2050
FEDERAL BUILDING
219 S. DEARBORN STREET
60604

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

October 6, 1969

COPY

Mr. John Vander Meiden, Jr.
Vander Meiden, Koteles & Associates, Inc.
1203 Beechtree Street
Grand Haven, Michigan 49417



Dear Mr. Vander Meiden:

You were kind enough to send me a copy of your letter to Congressman Ford. Inasmuch as I was one of the members of the subcommittee which approved extension of the West Front of the Capitol, I thought I should reply to you.

First, respecting the AIA. I wanted to side with its recommendation and support a restoration rather than extension of the west front but the evidence was predominantly in favor of the extension. Recently I received a letter from an AIA member who is a close friend which enclosed a copy of the speech by Congressman Stratton of New York supporting the AIA position. In his letter, he wrote, "I wish you had made that speech." I replied: "It was a good speech, and I could have made it if I were willing to close my mind to the facts."

You say that you have read all the material furnished you by Congressman Ford. You appreciate, then, that I consider the Capitol to be one of the nation's most important buildings, truly a part of our national heritage which must be preserved for the generations. Members of my committee have this view, and we considered it essential that the best architectural talent in the country be retained to deal with the problem of the deteriorating west wall. You read in the hearings of the qualifications of the Assistant Architect of the Capitol, Mario Campioli. Perhaps you



Mr. John Vander Meiden, Jr.

-2-

October 6, 1969

know of architects with greater experience. I know of none and none was suggested by the AIA Task Force. They did not question Mr. Campioli's qualifications nor has anybody else. Even conceding for the purpose of this discussion that he was biased because he is on the staff of the Capitol Architect (and I do not believe it), certainly his education and experience as the architect in charge of the task of restoring the Williamsburg buildings entitle him to some recognition as an expert in the field. He was consulted as an expert in connection with the restoration of the White House. Knowing him, I believe in his ability and integrity.

Nevertheless, as I pointed out in my statement, I have been skeptical of the capabilities of the staff of the Capitol Architect for years because of the Rayburn Building. I join critics of the huge structure in condemning it as dull, pedestrian, uninspired architecture, to say the least. What a golden opportunity was missed for a noble expression of America's architectural genius! And yet, in all fairness to the Architect of the Capitol, I've come to believe the building was designed in accordance with the conception of Speaker Sam Rayburn, who was a great and good man but not noted for his knowledge or vision in architectural design. He had his own very strong ideas which he wanted reflected in this building and they were. It is truly the Rayburn Building.

But the Rayburn Building is not at issue here although, as I said, it left its impression on my thinking. When the initial hearing had been completed, therefore, I called the office of the AIA and spoke to Mr. Hutchinson. I told him I wanted to know in which man or firm the AIA had confidence to make the study it advocated. Mr. Hutchinson told me he would check and let me know. He called back later that day to tell my secretary he had consulted with firms all over the country and he had a list of six recommended in order of preference. The name of Fred Severud of New York City was ranked number one, his name having been mentioned most frequently. I decided to ask Mr. Severud's opinion on what should be done.

Mr. John Vander Meiden, Jr.

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October 6, 1969

When I called his office in New York City I was informed he was away for two days. However, I reached him the next day at his home in New Jersey and asked him point blank whether the wall could be restored. I had read the previous day the letter he had written to the Architect of the Capitol on July 26, 1966, in which he had advocated the extension and I reminded him of the letter. He asked whether he might call me back the next day in order that he might check his notes which were at his office. When we spoke again the next day, he came out flatly against the restoration for the reasons which were stated in the telegram which appears on page H. 8200 of the Congressional Record for September 19.



Mr. Severud has examined the west wall, he has been in consultation with Dr. Clair who did the five volume survey of the west wall. As he said in his telegram, as consulting engineer if he did not agree to the recommendation, he would have said so.

It is true that Mr. Severud has been retained as structural engineer for the job by the Capitol Architect and some have said he was speaking for his client in coming to his conclusion. I prefer to think that Mr. Severud is a man of integrity and that were restoration feasible or even a practical possibility, he would have told me so. I think the Capitol Architect is to be commended for having selected the structural engineer who was rated so highly by many of the architects of the country.

You say, "I believe the AIA would be better satisfied in the west front extension if they were convinced that the restoration was going to cost the amount predicted by the proponents of the extension." There is no question that building costs are sky-rocketing. Had we approved the extension some years ago, we already would have saved 8 or 9 million dollars on the job. Moreover, we cautioned the Architect that we want no "C5A's." I don't know whether you noted that the AIA Task Force, as I interpreted their position, favored the restoration no matter what the cost,

Mr. John Vander Meiden, Jr.

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October 6, 1969

and that Mr. Lethbridge conceded that the costs of restoration might be more than the costs of extension. I cannot escape the conclusion that the AIA Task Force would have refused under any circumstances to alter its position.

Certainly, the responsible architectural work on the Capitol grounds is not controlled by an engineer as you state. It is controlled by the Capitol Building Commission of which Gerry Ford is a member. And it should be noted that the AIA has not criticized the architects who were retained by the Capitol Architect to design the extension, and who, incidentally, were approved by the Building Commission. I might have preferred the hiring of other architects, but that is something about which you should talk to Gerry if you don't think they should have been chosen. Moreover, the AIA Task Force has stated that it has no objection to the design or the esthetics of the proposed extension.

As I said, I might have preferred other architects-- certainly I would have for the Rayburn Building and possibly for other buildings that are in contemplation for this area because my views on contemporary architecture differ from many other members. Mies Van der Rohe was a very good friend of mine and two of his former associates designed my apartment and my furnishings. I like the work of Gropius, Breuer, Saarinen, and the others who have made such notable contributions. Bill Hartman, Walter Netsch, Myron Goldsmith, Bruce Graham of the Skidmore firm are all good friends of mine. But I must tell you in all frankness that there are many members of Congress who do not share my views and who talk freely and vociferously about their dislike "for all the glass and steel" in so many present buildings. If you are unhappy with the architecture on Capitol Hill, Gerry is the one with whom you should talk because he sits in a very prominent position to influence the course of such architecture.

So there you have it. I'm sorry this letter is so long, but I feel very keenly about this matter. I did worry about the decision as did other members of my committee



Mr. John Vander Meiden, Jr.

-5-

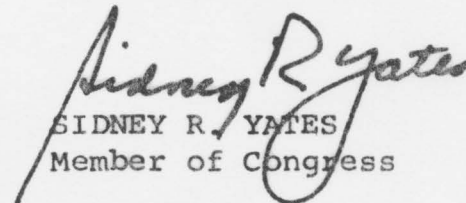
October 6, 1969

because it was a very important one, and I'm sure that Gerry did, too. We would not knowingly desecrate the Capitol and believe sincerely the extension is the best alternative.



As you will see in the Record, it was stated the fact that we have approved the extension does not mean that we have approved the interior places as well. I am opposed to many of the Building Commission's proposals. I think the interior could stand a more imaginative treatment and I have already suggested as one possibility a Hall of the States. If you have any suggestions, I would be pleased to receive them. I am enclosing a copy of the Preliminary Plans and Estimates of Cost for the proposed extension which you may find interesting and useful.

Sincerely yours,


SIDNEY R. YATES
Member of Congress

Enclosures

cc: Hon. Gerald Ford
Hon. Tom Steed
Hon. Michael J. Kirwan
Hon. Bob Casey
Hon. Mark Andrews
Hon. Odin Langen
Hon. Ben Reifel
Hon. Louis C. Wyman
Mr. Mario Campioli
Mr. Walter A. Netsch
Mr. Philip Hutchinson, AIA
Mr. Fred Severud

SIDNEY R. YATES
9TH DISTRICT, ILLINOIS

COMMITTEE
APPROPRIATIONS

CHICAGO DISTRICT OFFICE
ROOM 2050
FEDERAL BUILDING
219 S. DEARBORN STREET
60604

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

October 6, 1969

Mr. Phillip Hutchinson
The American Institute of Architects
The Octagon
1735 New York Avenue, N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20006



Dear Mr. Hutchinson:

I have received several letters from architect friends of mine who have forwarded to me copies of letters you had sent to them urging their support for restoration of the west wall of the Capitol.

I am enclosing a copy of the letter which I have sent in reply. If it is not in accord with the facts in any respect as you know them to be, I would appreciate your so advising me.

Sincerely yours,

Sidney R. Yates
SIDNEY R. YATES
Member of Congress

SRY/jss

Enclosure

West Front

THE VICE PRESIDENT
WASHINGTON

August 6, 1969

Dear Mr. Stewart:

Thank you very much for your July 30 request for my approval of planning funds to be requested for extending the West Central Front of the Capitol.

I am happy to concur in the views expressed by Minority Leaders Dirksen and Ford.



Sincerely,

Quin T. Evans

Mr. J. George Stewart
Architect of the Capitol
The Capitol
Washington, D. C. 20515

EVERETT MCKINLEY DIRKSEN
ILLINOIS

MINORITY LEADER

CV - MSC
CAN



United States Senate

August 1, 1969

The Honorable
J. George Stewart
Architect of the Capitol
Washington, D. C.

Dear George:

I examined your letter of July 30 and, likewise, the brochure setting forth preliminary plans and cost estimates on the west central front of the Capitol.

The situation is quite like I anticipated it would be after a personal examination of the cracking of the stone in the west front and I presume, since I looked, it has become even more aggravated. I quite agree that there is no time to be lost and we should push forward with the plans and with an immediate request for planning funds.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Everett".

Everett McKinley Dirksen



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LEGISLATIVE ASSISTANT

FRED SCHWENGEL
1ST DISTRICT, IOWA

West Front File

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS

SUBCOMMITTEES:
FLOOD CONTROL
ROADS
PUBLIC BUILDINGS AND GROUND
WATERSHED DEVELOPMENT
APPALACHIA

COMMITTEE ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION

SUBCOMMITTEES:
LIBRARY AND MEMORIALS
ELECTRICAL AND MECHANICAL OFFICE
EQUIPMENT

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, D. C.

April 28, 1969



N/A *Sam*

Dear Colleague:

As one who has had more than a casual interest in the U.S. Capitol Building and also as one who originally opposed both the East and West extensions, I feel it incumbent upon me to make known again why my position and some of the reasons for my support on the proposed West Front extension have changed.

The record will show I was against the East Front extension until I researched the problems and solutions and I agonizingly came to the conclusion that the decision to extend the East Front was a correct one.

The restoration and extension of the West Front seems to be a point of serious debate. This is not surprising because history shows that in every time when there were propositions to extend and improve the Capitol, it was a subject of debate. This is natural because it is a place for debate. There were always those who opposed and/or had other suggestions on changes and improvements for the Capitol. But always after debate, fortunately, the Congress did the right thing in granting authority and the necessary appropriations to make possible the necessary improvements.

After thorough study, personal inspection and evaluation of the proposed extension, it is my feeling that we ought to proceed immediately with the West Front.

The urgency of the restoration and extension is brought out impressively in an article by Wilfred J. Gregson as published in the AMERICAN REGISTERED ARCHITECT, recently. Since I have made evaluations of Mr. Gregson's capabilities and competency, I have confidence in his insights, comments and suggestions.

Enclosed please find, and I hope you will read, this very impressive and descriptive article by a man whom I believe has no interest to serve but the public interest.

I believe you will concur with me the now completed East Front serves us well and is structurally well balanced. When you have read Mr. Gregson's article, you may have further questions on materials relating to this. I'm sure they can be answered by myself and/or by the Architect or the Engineer in his office.

Sincerely yours,

Fred Schwengel

FRED SCHWENGEL
Member of Congress

Will T. ...

FRANK SCHWENGER
1000 ...

Enclosure

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, D.C.
April 28, 1969



Enclosure

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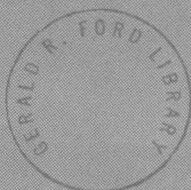
Sincerely yours,

FRANK SCHWENGER
Member of Congress

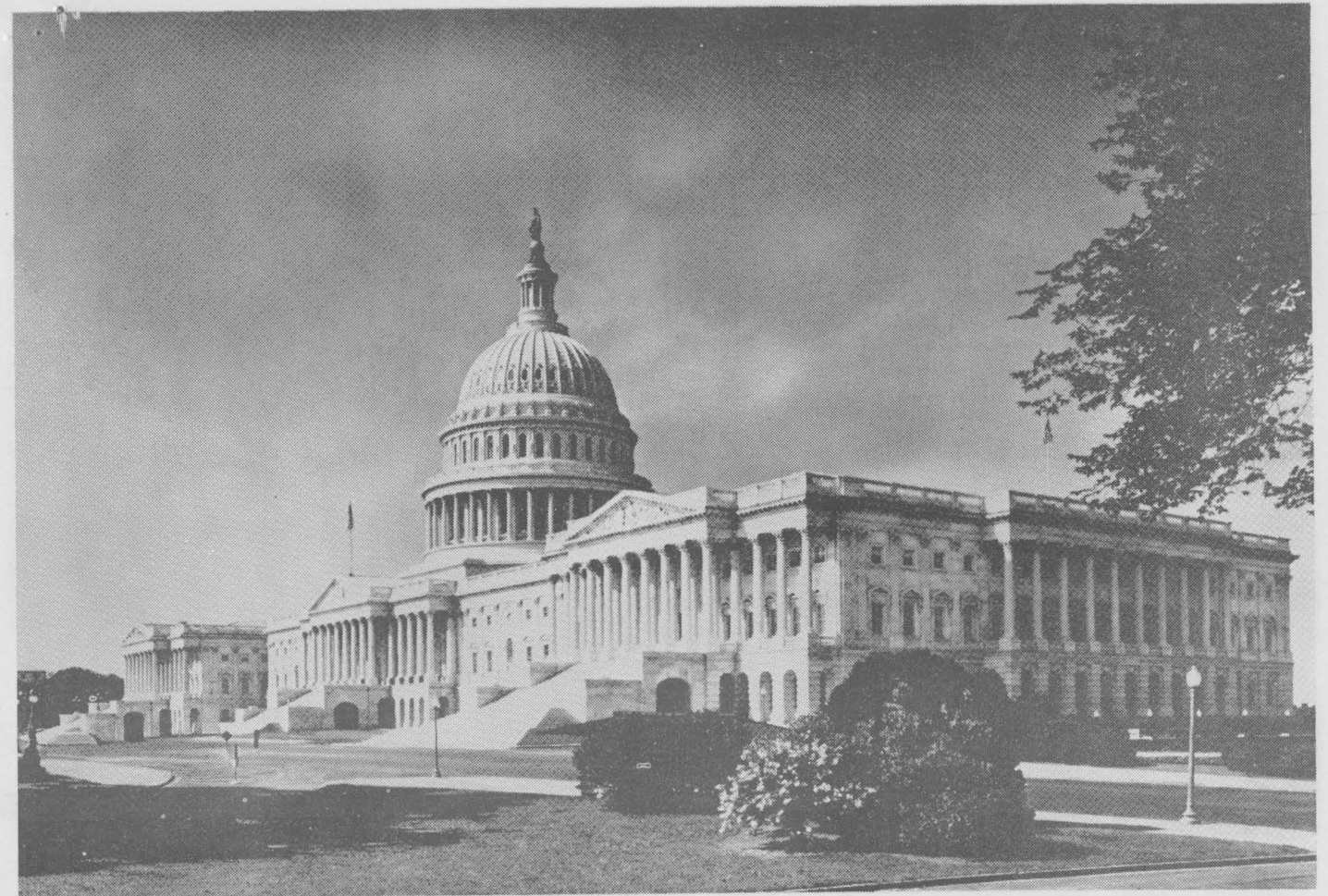
Enclosure



**AMERICAN
REGISTERED
ARCHITECT**



NOVEMBER, 1968



The most famous building in the world — the United States Capitol.



Death in the United States Capitol

by

Wilfred J. Gregson, FARA

Two years ago at a Congressional hearing on the West Front of the Capitol, I called attention to the number of dangerous conditions that existed in the Capitol. The one that caused immediate attention and action was the dangerously overloaded attic floor. After the hearing a reporter from the Washington Post asked if the attic overload was as serious as I had testified. I assured her it was. Here is the story as it appeared and subsequently received national and international coverage.

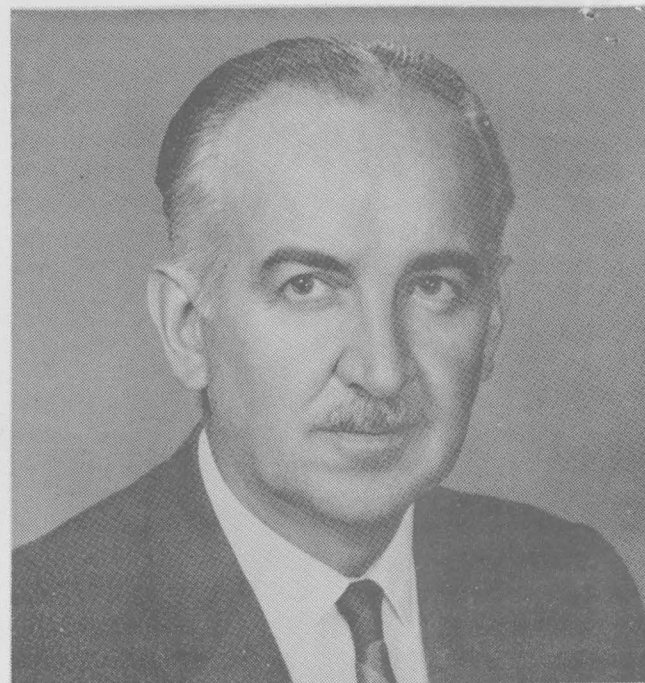
Capitol Attic is Overloaded

Washington Post News Service,
Washington, August 8, 1966

"An architect has told a House



Wilfred J. Gregson



Mario E. Campioli

subcommittee that the attic of the Capitol building is so overloaded with old files that it could collapse.

"A Sword of Damocles is hanging over the building," Wilfred J. Gregson of Atlanta declared. "A national tragedy could occur."

Questioned later, Gregson, Founder of the Society of American Registered Architects, said the attic was never meant for storage and should not be used for that purpose.

"There are stacks and stacks of paper and stacks between the stacks," he said. "Boxes are piled two and three feet above the file cabinets overloading the floors and creating a fire hazard."

The dangerous condition of the attic was confirmed by assistant Capitol architect, Mario E. Campioli.

"I am amazed," he said, "that the building continues to be able to support the tremendous load."

Gregson appeared before the special House labor subcommittee in support of the proposal by Capitol Architect J. George Stewart to buttress the old walls of

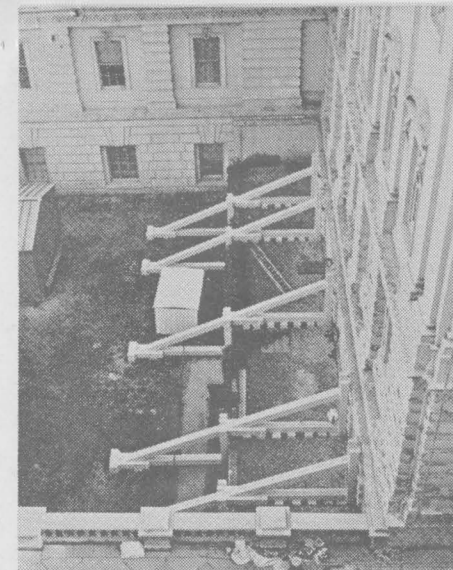
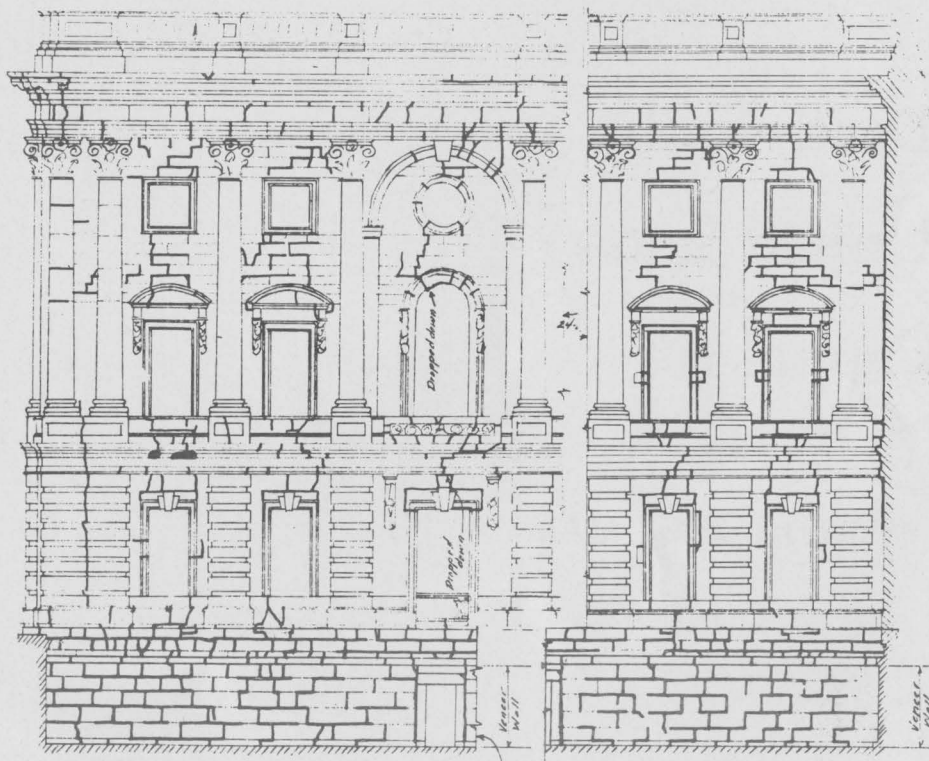
the Capitol by extending and rebuilding the West Front."

The blast of publicity had its immediate effect. The files and stacks of papers were removed the following week according to

another news service release by the Washington Post.

Unfortunately, the other remarks made at the hearing appear to have been overshadowed by the urgency of the attic over-

West side of old Senate wing. At left is the north end and at right is the south end.



House side of west front wall which bulged four and one-half inches—August, 1968.

loading. In any case, the remaining hazardous conditions were ignored. They still exist in a further state of deterioration and a more hazardous condition than was true two years ago.

For example, August, 1966, when I appeared before the hearing there were two shores holding up the West Central Front wall of the Capitol which had bulged 4½" into the court. Three more shores have since been added in an attempt to hold this wall from collapsing.

Two years ago there were two shores holding up the architrave; now there are five shores. Three additional shores have been added because of the danger of the architrave falling down. Hundreds of great fractures have appeared in lintels, sills, keystones and walls which have now been filled and painted. This hides the deplorable condition of the building, but has not corrected it. In the meantime, the old sandstone portico has deteriorated so that large pieces of stone have fallen off the exterior walls with a potential death dealing threat. Fortunately, no one has yet been killed or hit by these falling fragments.

As most architects are aware,

the Capitol is constructed with a series of arches. The West Front restrains these arches with iron ties anchored into the stonework. There is sufficient evidence to show that these have slipped, reducing their buttressing effect on the arches behind the West Wall. Some of these arches, once semi-circular, are now flattened at the top. They are composed of a single course of brick or stone and in many instances are filled with sand over the arch. At times this sand falls like rain through the brick joints. How long can this go before one of the arches collapses? When an arch collapses, it removes the restraint on the adjacent arch. How much of the Capitol will collapse and how many people will get killed when this happens?

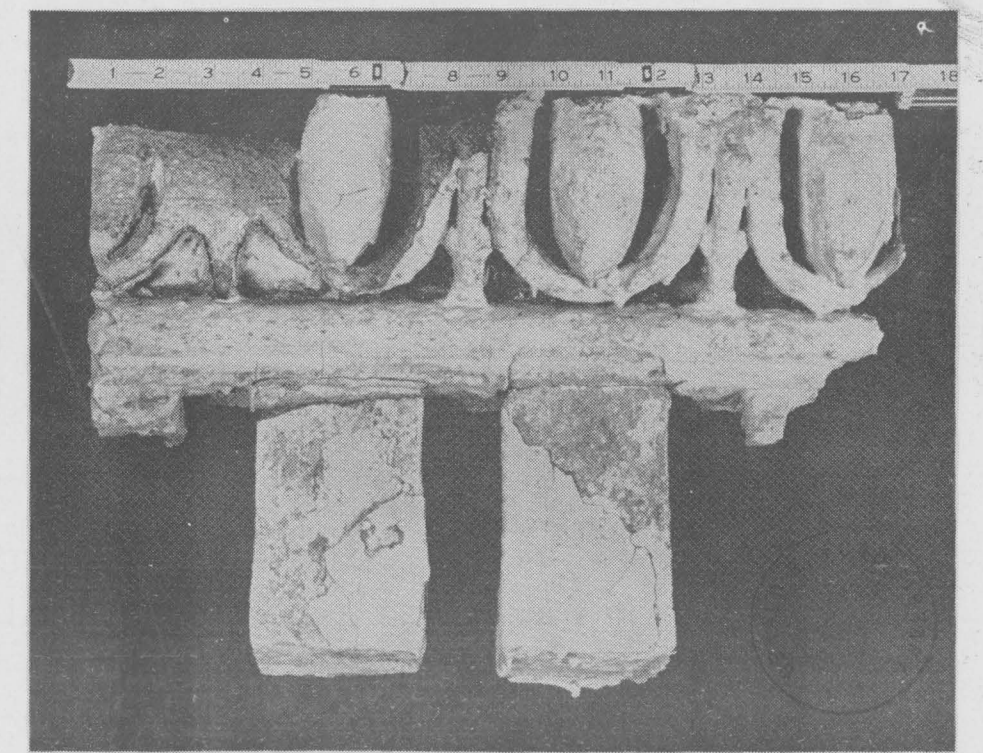
It is inconceivable that so serious a condition can be permitted to exist and to get progressively more hazardous with each passing day. There is no way to project the extent of this impending catastrophe. As architects, we can only call attention to it and insist that immediate action be taken to

prevent so awful a tragedy. When the West Central Front wall bulges 4½" into the court, it is obviously overstressed. Shoring it to prevent it from bulging further adds additional and unpredictable stresses. The wall is composed of an outside layer of limestone with very poor, soft and crumbling lime mortar joints; the inside wall is built of the same material, but has not been subjected to the daily expansion and contraction action resulting from the heat of the sun followed by the cold of the night.

Between the exterior and interior walls of the Capitol, the original builders had dumped loose rubble rock without mortar. This adds neither tie nor restraint, but falls between the walls as the front wall bulges, increasing the stresses.

No building department in the United States would approve the Capitol today, even as it was originally constructed, and would condemn it in its present deteriorated and dangerous condition, barring the public from the building.

A 17-inch piece of the cornice which fell from the west front.



Why is it then that hundreds of legislators can exist in blissful ignorance in a building that is eminently dangerous and fast deteriorating? Why are they not disturbed by the prospects of immediate and awful death that faces them?

Something must be done and immediately to avert the most awful tragedy that this country has ever seen. It can be done by the united voice of architects who, as a group, are dedicated to see that all buildings are safe and free from hazardous conditions.

J. George Stewart, Architect of the Capitol, has the responsibility of maintaining the building in a safe condition, yet his recommendations and warnings have been ignored. He knows, as does his assistant Mario E. Campioli, and every other engineer and architect who has studied the problem, that the best way to protect the West Front of the Capitol is by enclosing it so that the existing stone work maintains the same temperature on both sides and is no longer subjected to the deteriorating effects of daily expansion and contraction and the effects of winter freezings.

Thompson and Lichtner, consulting engineers, made the same recommendation in their 1964 report.

"Retention of the wall as an interior wall of an extended building is recommended as the least hazardous and as causing the least interference with the occupancy of the present structure. A properly designed and constructed extension would also provide desirable lateral support for the West Central portion of the Capitol."

The architects employed by the Government under contract for the purpose of analyzing the complex problems and recommending a solution are:

Roscoe Dewitt, Dallas, Texas; Alfred Easton Poor, New York City; Albert Swanke, New York City; and Jesse M. Shelton, Atlanta, Georgia. The Advisory Ar-



There are now five shores under the Architrave. Picture was taken in August of this year.

chitects are John Harbeson, Philadelphia; Paul Thiry, Seattle, Washington; and Gilmore D. Clarke, New York. Their summation and recommendations are: "It is inescapable that the West Central Front of the Capitol must be extended to preserve the exterior walls."

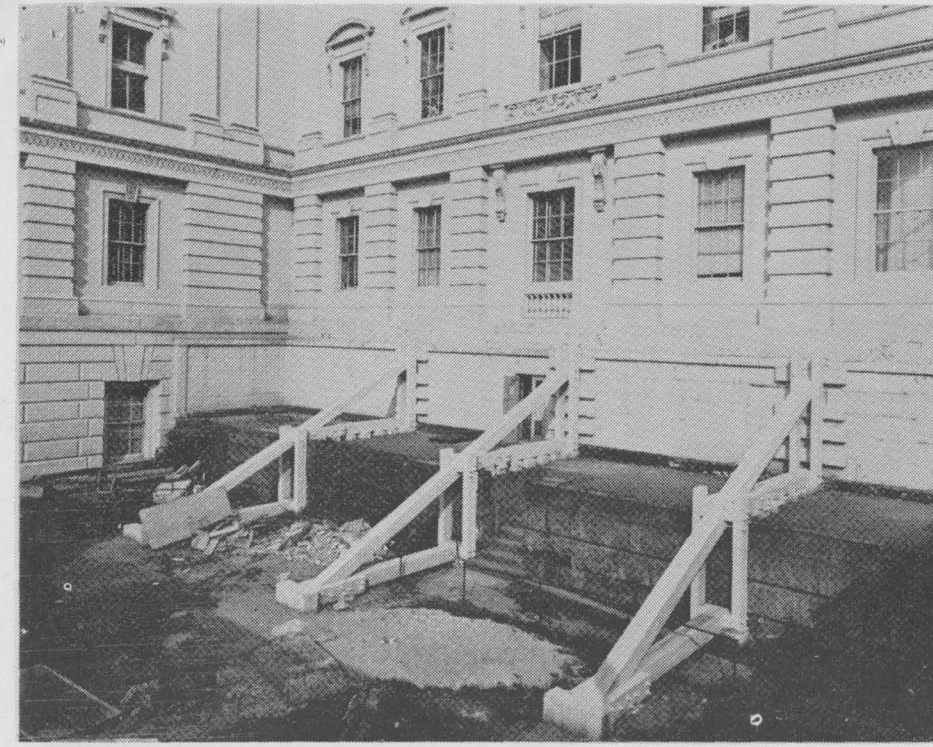
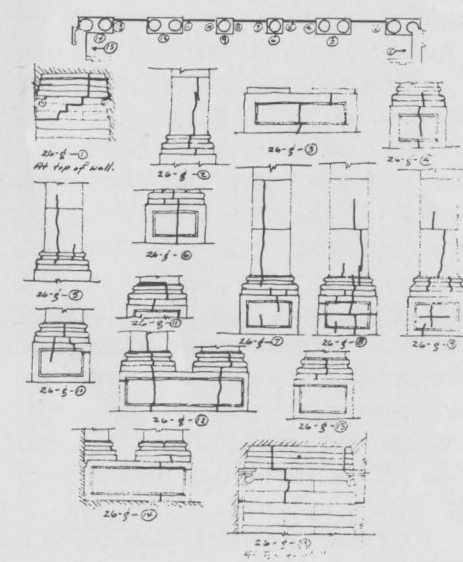
The same action was taken to protect the East Front wall of the Capitol many years ago. In this way, the original East Front wall has been protected for all times. It has been preserved, and significant features of it are seen by thousands of visitors who go to the U.S. Capitol every day. Surely there is nothing wrong with the same treatment to protect the West Front?

Why, then, the outburst of indignation and opposing articles and editorials that suddenly appeared?

Check around and you will find that the public was given the impression that a "modern" front was being planned. It was misunderstood that all that was necessary and recommended was to protect the existing West Front

wall by building in front of it a structure with essentially the same architectural appearance. In no way was it planned to change the style of architecture. The misunderstanding, which was widespread, came about because one report mentioned modern techniques of "design" when it should have said of "structural

This schematic illustrates the cracks in the columns.

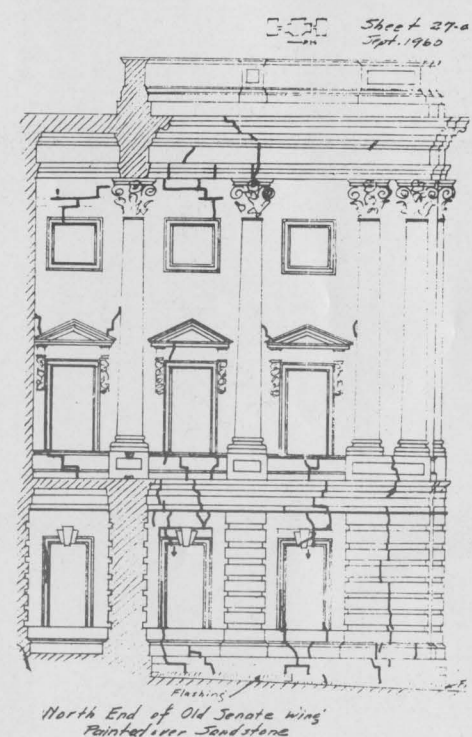


House side of west front wall. Three shores were required to prevent wall collapsing. Same conditions prevail on the Senate side.

design."

The years of work and recommendations of the architects employed by the Government were ignored as the ranks of misinformed and uninformed swelled.

North end of old Senate wing.



Many architects joined in support of the uninformed. At an architect's convention in Denver, Colorado, they denounced their own members and their years of work.

Paul Thiry complained bitterly about the unethical treatment he and his associates received from his peers, who were in no way familiar with the project, yet rushed through a motion of condemnation in time to reach the press deadline. The sound, well-studied recommendations of re-

spected architects of unquestionable renown was stalled by emotional actions.

Shall we, as architects, let it continue to be a windmill for uninformed tilting, or shall we take the action demanded of us by our profession?

We are charged with the responsibility of educating the public. There is no better place to start than the central building of our Government. There is no better time than now. We should call to the attention of our legislators that a shock wave from dynamite or gas explosion in the vicinity of the Capitol, or earth tremor, sonic boom or other of the 20th century shocks to which buildings are subjected, could result in a collapse of a large part of the Capitol.

J. George Stewart and Mario E. Campioli are continually refusing to grant requests of contractors to use dynamite near the Capitol. One day some ignorant contractor might fail to ask for permission. It could result in injury or death and burial in tons of rubble of legislators and visitors who might be in the building at the time.

The Society of American Registered Architects asks that each architect immediately write to his senator and congressman pointing out the need for action without further delay of this most important of all projects.

Model of the west front extended.

