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Washington, D.C. 20515

November 2, 1971



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

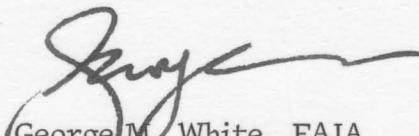


Dear Congressman Ford:

At the request of Senator Hollings, Chairman of the Legislative Subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Appropriations, I appeared before his Subcommittee today to present an up-to-date report on the West Central Front of the Capitol. A copy of my prepared statement before the Subcommittee is enclosed for your information.

I shall be pleased to expand it to whatever extent the Commission may deem either necessary or appropriate for its further use.

Cordially,


George M. White, FAIA
Architect of the Capitol

ARCHITECT OF THE CAPITOL
REPORT ON WEST CENTRAL FRONT OF THE CAPITOL

Mr. Chairman, I am presenting this report to you in my capacity as Architect of the Capitol, without instructions from the Commission for Extension of the United States Capitol. The Commission has not yet made any decision on the Engineering Report authorized by the Congress.

In the Legislative Branch Appropriation Act, 1970, (Public Law 91-145), the Congress simultaneously appropriated \$2,000,000 for preparation of final contract drawings and specifications for carrying out Plan 2 for extension of the West Central Front of the Capitol and \$250,000 for engineering and other necessary services for studying and reporting on the feasibility and cost of restoring the front.

The law provided that pending the completion and consideration of the restoration study and report, no further work toward extension was to be undertaken.

The law also contained the following provisions which are pertinent to our hearing today:

,"****That after submission of such study and report and consideration thereof by the Commission, the Commission shall direct the preparation of final plans for extending such west central front in accord with Plan 2 (which said Commission has approved), 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, lumpsum, 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: Provided further, That after consideration of the restoration study report, if the Commission concludes that all five of the conditions hereinbefore specified are met, the Commission shall then make recommendations to the Congress on the question of whether to extend or restore the west central front of the Capitol."



Upon direction of the Commission for Extension of the United States Capitol, after exhaustive study, the engineering contract for the restoration study was awarded to Praeger-Kavanagh-Waterbury, Engineers-Architects of New York City.

The Praeger report was received at the end of December, 1970, and was forwarded immediately to all Members of the Commission and released to the press and others interested.

Early this year, as the newly appointed Architect of the Capitol, and in anticipation that the Commission in Charge, before reaching a conclusion on the matter, would seek my professional judgment in assisting them to evaluate the Praeger report, I began a detailed professional review of all available information relating to the history and development of the West Central Front proposals. My efforts, of course, were spurred on by your interest, Mr. Chairman, expressed when we last appeared before you regarding the annual budget request.

Among the activities in which I engaged during the review are the following:

1. A careful and diligent open-minded study of the Praeger report.
2. A physical examination of both the interior and the exterior of the original west walls.
3. A careful review of testimony given over a period of many years before various House and Senate Committees concerned with the proposals for the extension of the West Front of the Capitol, and before the Commission for Extension of the United States Capitol.



4. A reading and review of the record of the floor debates in both the Senate and the House that led to the various actions of the Congress.

5. A review of the legislation, committee reports, and other documents on the subject.

6. Study of the Mueser, Rutledge, Wentworth & Johnston engineering report of 1957.

7. Study of the 1964 engineering report of The Thompson & Lichtner Co., Inc.

8. A study of the various reports of the former Architect of the Capitol, as well as reports made to him by the Associate Architects for the Extension Project.

9. Meetings and discussions of the various past studies, and of the Praeger report, with the staff of the Architect of the Capitol.

10. Requested and received advice and counsel from the American Institute of Architects which responded by appointing a new Task Force to re-examine the AIA position. We engaged in several conferences and a written report from the Task Force was received.

11. Asked three prominent general contractors, an officer and members of the AGC, for their opinion with regard to estimates of cost as outlined in the Praeger report and the feasibility of obtaining competitive, lumpsum bids.



12. Conversed at some length with Mr. E. H. Praeger himself in order that I might obtain verbal clarification of a number of what I considered to be ambiguous or contradicting portions of the written report.

13. Conferred with the Advisory Architects, Consulting Engineers, and others.

14. Conferred with other individuals who have maintained a long interest in the Capitol, including Senators, Congressmen, and design professionals.

15. Spoke with a British stone preservation expert who inspected the Capitol, and then read several of his papers regarding the deterioration of stone generally and in England in particular.

16. Inspected, at no cost to the Government, several European restoration projects.

17. Personally examined the space needs of the House of Representatives and, to some degree, the space needs of the Senate. Have explored all areas on the House Side of the Capitol, from the basement through the attic, and many of the Senate areas. Several discussions have been held



with Senator Jordan about my proceeding with a full space study of Senate facilities and he has indicated recently that the moves of Senators and others will be completed shortly so the space study may proceed.

18. Examined and studied the matter of how the Congress uses the building, how the public (visitors) also uses the building, and, further, how their respective and simultaneous needs must be considered.

19. Spent untold hours in review of the various data and in the reading of articles by many persons concerned with preservation, planning, the history of the Capitol, and in the re-examination of the Praeger report.

After these many months of study and investigation, I am prepared to offer the following professional judgments, which for the purposes of this brief presentation have been necessarily simplified;

1. The structural adequacy of the west wall is, in fact, indeterminate. As many experts will declare that it is stable as will say that it is unstable. But even those who support the position of stability admit to the indeterminacy of the loading computations, and, therefore, say that the wall should be strengthened as an insurance against the probability of a possible failure. Thus, although there appears to be no imminent danger of an immediate collapse, there may well be concentrations of forces that have accumulated through



structural and other changes over the years and that could, under certain circumstances, be triggered and released. There appears, then, to be no basic disagreement regarding the need to strengthen, and thus stabilize the wall in some fashion. Further, there appears to be no disagreement that this goal may be achieved in at least two ways, one of which is through restoration, or a strengthening of the wall in situ, and another of which is through an extension of the building itself, which will, in effect, buttress and thus strengthen the wall.

2. There appears to be no disagreement with regard to the exterior appearance of the proposed extension, nor any disagreement with regard to the total appearance of the Capitol that would result.

3. That human characteristic which manifests itself in our desire to save and preserve at least some of our heritage, whether it be personal, national, or international, finds a high degree of intensity in some, and it may then be expressed in the feeling that preservation is a primary goal in and of itself. I submit that the intensity with which that desire exists in the spectrum of people's feelings must, in this instance, be weighed against some of the physical needs of the Congress that must be met. If the Congress, for example, were to commission the design of a new legislative



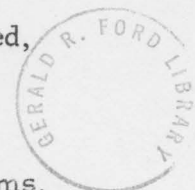
complex, the designers would undoubtedly need to assist in the writing of a program which would describe the physical needs of the Congress in the transaction of its daily business. The configuration of the building or buildings would arise from a study of these needs. In this existing legislative building, viz., the Capitol, these needs have changed and expanded over the years, and, indeed, are continuing to do so. It is apparent that complex problems such as these are not generally capable of simple solutions. Recognizing that it may thus be an oversimplification to so state, it is nevertheless my opinion that the Congress must weigh the sentiment of preservation against its physical needs, taking into account the various alternative methods of providing needed space in close proximity to the legislative chambers.

4. The argument can be made that the fact that the West Front contains the last remaining exposed original wall, is indicative of the past life and hence the growth of this living, working symbol of democracy and freedom that is the Capitol. Sometime, of course, acceleration in the growth of our Nation may diminish and perhaps that point is already in sight. It has therefore been suggested that the existing physical outline



of the Capitol be considered inviolate at its present location. Somewhere that position must surely be taken, but it appears that it is not necessarily valid to presume that it cannot be taken at some other location, such as, for example, that of the proposed extension.

5. The final cost of the proposed restoration appears to be indeterminate. Most experts feel that the cost will certainly be more than \$15,000,000, notwithstanding the written statement in the Praeger report. The requirements of items 3 and 4 of Public Law 91-145, previously quoted, indicated that a lumpsum contract for restoration of not more than \$15,000,000 must be capable of being obtained. I interpret these two items, taken together, as meaning that the Congress has set a fixed, limited, i.e., maximum, cost of \$15,000,000 as one of the criteria for the feasibility of restoration. Experience in the construction of buildings indicates that a lumpsum contract, in and of itself, is not an assurance that the designated sum will indeed be the final cost. It is my considered professional opinion, based upon my recent investigations as outlined above, that the restoration, as proposed, cannot be accomplished for a total final cost of \$15,000,000. In that connection, it is important to recognize that even though the cost per square foot of an extension might appear to be high because of the



particular kind of construction that would be necessary, any expenditure for restoration, because no space would be added, would result in what mathematically results in an infinite cost per square foot.

It is, further, worthy of note that there is no disagreement among the advocates of the various positions that restoration work generally, and the West Front of the Capitol in particular, should, because of its specialized nature, be accomplished through the medium of a cost plus a fixed fee contract rather than through a lumpsum agreement obtained on a competitive bid basis.

Although the specifics of the other three provisions of Public Law 91-145 can generally be said to be capable of being met, with the obvious possibility for disagreement regarding what is "safe, sound, durable, and beautiful for the foreseeable future", I believe that it would be inappropriate to presume that the cost limitation can or could be met.

Summarizing, then, I submit the following judgments: (a) although it is relatively stable, the west wall needs repair and strengthening; (b) the restoration method of strengthening the wall cannot be accomplished for a guaranteed cost limit of \$15,000,000; (c) the Congress must weigh and



Report on West Central Front of the Capitol
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decide upon the relative importance and the appropriate methods of providing for its space needs, as compared with the admittedly highly desirable goal of preserving the exposed physical wall.



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ALLAN SCHIMMEL
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

CHARLES CAMPBELL
LEGISLATIVE ASSISTANT

FRED SCHWENGEL
1ST DISTRICT, IOWA

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515
May 11, 1971

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

The Honorable Gerald Ford
Minority Leader
House of Representatives
H-230, The Capitol

Dear Jerry:

In response to our conversation and after further thought, I am herewith presenting some pertinent observations I think ought to be noted as you and the Building Commission make your decisions on how to dispose of the West Front.

Let me point out first that time is moving along. The "Praeger" Report is in. It confirms the need for action and is basically in agreement with the previous findings of Messrs. Mueser, Severud, and Dr. Clair.

Condition I

"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." The answer of the Report is that it is possible "...by cleaning the wall, strengthening it by grouting and restoring its appearance by repainting."

Analysis

This program is "Preservation", Jerry, not "Restoration." It contemplates such work as may be possible within the dollar limits stipulated, and insures that the West Front will be the subject of continual replacement of deteriorating stonework over the years, with a continuation of the program of repainting every four years. This is what we have been doing, more or less, and has brought us to the need for something different and better. This cannot be construed by anyone as a restoration of the Central West Front to the original work of Thornton, Latrobe and Bulfinch. Fifteen Million Dollars seems a high price to pay to insure a continued maintenance program into infinity, and to obscure from the public by paint, the pristine early architecture of the West Front.



The Honorable Gerald Ford
May 11, 1971
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Condition II

"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."

The answer of the Report is that since the "Restoration" proposed by the Report is restricted in fact to "Preservation", it will not be necessary to vacate any of the West Front.

Analysis

Obviously, if the work of "Preservation" is restricted to "cleaning the wall, strengthening it by grouting and restoring its appearance by repainting", vacation of the West Central Front may well be not necessary. However, strengthening limited to that possible for Fifteen Million Dollars may well be insufficient to assure that a structural failure may not occur. So, Jerry, it is quite obvious that the stability now enjoyed by all the rest of the Capitol, especially on the East Front and in the Wings, will not be enjoyed in the central section of the West Front if all we do is clean the walls and strengthen by grouting and restoring its appearance by painting.

Condition III

"That the method or methods of accomplishing restoration can be so described or specific as to form the basis for performance of the restoration work by competitive, lump sum, fixed price construction bid or bids."

The answer of the Report is that "Restoration" (SIC) methods can be specified to form a basis for performance of the work by competitive lump sum construction bids.

Analysis

There is no question that lump sum bids could be obtained on a basis of: "do work of cleaning the wall, strengthening it by grouting and restoring its appearance by painting" - to the extent possible for Fifteen Million Dollars. The Report states, however, that "A cost-plus contract seems more realistic----."

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Condition IV

"That the cost of "Restoration" (SIC) would not exceed \$15,000,000.00."

The Report includes an estimate that consists of itemizations of work totalling something less than Fifteen Million Dollars.

Analysis

The entire estimate is presumptive, and is based on quantities of work unknown before the removal of paint reveals the extent of the work.

Condition V

"That the time schedule for accomplishing the restoration work will not exceed that heretofore projected for accomplishing the Plan 2 extension work: Provided further, that after consideration of the restoration study report, if the Commission concludes that all five of the conditions hereinbefore specified are met, the Commission shall then make recommendations to the Congress on the question of whether to extend or restore the West central front of the Capitol."

The answer of the Report is that the "Restoration" (SIC) work can be accomplished within the time projected for the Plan 2 extension work.

Analysis

If the work of "cleaning the wall, strengthening it by grouting and restoring its appearance by painting" - work of preservation, not restoration, is limited to what can be done for Fifteen Million Dollars, one cannot take issue with the fact that such work could be accomplished within the time projected for the Plan 2 extension work.

Should Congress elect to save the West Front of the Capitol without Extension, the acceptable alternate, reconstruction with permanent stone, would cost \$31,000,000.00 (according to the report). For something in the order of \$20,000,000.00 additional, we could have an extended West Front



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that would satisfy the need for additional space, service, horizontal circulation private to legislators, additional restaurant facilities for legislators and the public, and for the adequate accommodation of visitors (ten million of whom now pass through the Capitol annually) - not to mention the esthetic improvement that is evident in the model now on display, in Statuary Hall, considered by Bulfinch, suggested by Walter, endorsed by Olmstead, and obviously necessary to bring today's Capitol in scale with the wing and dome additions of the eighteen sixties - the Purist alternate would be to revert to the wooden dome of 1830, and remove the Senate and House wings.

The Extension of the West Front of the Capitol will be the seventh increment of growth of the Capitol; one which will put the West Front in scale with the remainder of the Capitol for the first time since the eighteen sixties.

Jerry, as I understand the restoration that would be possible in the "Praeger" Report, we would still have a woefully inadequate facility for the visiting public. It grieves me to note that the Rotunda is now the reception center. This is almost holy ground, if the Capitol has such, and this should be one of the principle and impressive stops on the regular tour and not a reception center where guides wait for their tour groups.

The plan envisioned with the extension of the Capitol provides for adequate reception center for visitors and where people could approach from the west using a moving elevator. The reception center, of course, should have and would have adequate rest room and wash room facilities, not now available for the public.

With the extension, I hope we could arrange for an auditorium where groups could have a brief motion picture story and/or tune in an intercom system or an intercom television system which would enable having brief visits with a Congressman who would be sitting in his office where he could greet them and answer questions for a period, or where the Congressman or Senator could actually come to meet and visit with constituents.

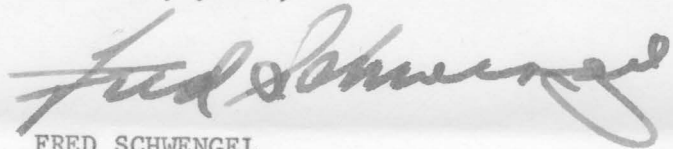
So, Jerry, I plead for the extension as originally planned, possibly with some modifications as we develop the plan, but one that I believe must go forward to serve the public interest and especially the public that comes here to

The Honorable Gerald Ford
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visit who need to and could catch something of the fire
that burns in the hearts of the many thousands who have
worked and are still working in the Capitol.

With warmest regards, I am

Sincerely yours,



FRED SCHWENGEL
Member of Congress



FS:sc

P.S. Enclosed is a list of the twelve architects and
engineers who have been most closely associated
with the extension of the Capitol project. As
you will note, they are men of high qualifications
and members of prestigious organizations.

APPENDIX

Those Twelve Architects and Engineers Most Closely Connected with the Extension of the Capitol Project

Gilmore D. Clarke, Hon. A.I.A. *

John F. Harbeson, F.A.I.A. **

Paul Thiry, F.A.I.A. ***

The Architectural Consultants to the Architect of
the Capitol for the Extension of the Capitol Project.

Miles N. Clair, P. E.

The Special Structural Consultant to the Commission
for the Extension of the Capitol Project.

Roscoe DeWitt, F.A.I.A.

A. J. Tatum, A.I.A.

Alfred Easton Poor, F.A.I.A. *****

Albert Homer Swanke, A.I.A.

Jesse M. Shelton, A.I.A.

A. Pearson Almond, A.I.A.

The Associate Architects for the Extension of the Capitol
Project (under contract to the Architect of the Capitol)

William H. Mueser, P.E. ****

Fred N. Severud, P. E. *****

The Structural Consultants to the Associate Architects
of the Architect of the Capitol for the Extension of the Capitol
Project.

* For seventeen years a member of the National Fine Arts Commission
(Chairman for thirteen years).

** Consultant for the restoration of the Senate and House Chambers.

*** Member, National Capitol Planning Commission.

**** Conducted original sub-surface report on the Capitol -- Foundation
Engineer for the Extension of the East Front.

***** Designated by the American Institute of Architects as the Structural
Engineer most qualified to evaluate the structural aspects of the West
Front -- Structural Engineer for the Extension of the East Front of the
Capitol.

***** President, The National Academy of Design.

(NOTE: All Fellows of the American Institute of Architects above-listed are
"Fellows of Design".)



MINORITY LEADER

United States
House of Representatives

To our file



Week Front

(in estucombs)

ARCHITECT OF THE CAPITOL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515

January 2, 1971

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



My dear Mr. Minority Leader:

In accordance with the terms of their contract, Praeger-Kavanagh-Waterbury, the engineers-architects engaged by contract, July 1, 1970, at the direction of the Commission for Extension of the United States Capitol to make the feasibility study with respect to restoration of the West Central Front of the United States Capitol required by Public Law 91-145, have completed their study and submitted their report to me within the required time period.

In accordance with the instructions of the Commission, I am transmitting a copy of the report to you, herewith.

I will proceed to make a study and analysis of the report and will be properly prepared to meet and discuss the report with the Commission when the 92nd Congress convenes.

With warm regards, I am

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, which appears to read 'Mario E. Campioli', is written over the typed name.

Mario E. Campioli
Acting Architect of the Capitol

January 2, 1971

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



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Sincerely yours,

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