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February 28, 1973

STATEMENT OF
COMMISSION FOR EXTENSION OF THE UNITED STATES CAPITOL

West Central Front of the Capitol



In meeting of March 8, 1972, the Commission met and considered the restoration feasibility and cost study and report made pursuant to the provisions of Public Law 91-145, approved December 12, 1969. The Commission established to its satisfaction that all five of the conditions specified in Public Law 91-145, relating to restoration, could not be met.

Thereupon, pursuant to Public Law 91-145, the Commission directed the Architect of the Capitol to proceed with the preparation of final plans for extending the west central front in accord with Plan 2 which had already been approved by the Commission.

The Architect of the Capitol was prevented from proceeding as directed by the Commission, by the following language in the "Legislative Branch Appropriation Act, 1973, Public Law 92-342, approved July 10, 1972:

"Extension of the Capitol

"Funds available under this appropriation may be used for the preparation of preliminary plans for the extension of the west central front: Provided, however, That no funds may be used for the preparation of the final plans or initiation of construction of said project until specifically approved and appropriated therefor by the Congress."

The purpose of this language, according to its proponents, was to prevent the expenditure of planning funds already appropriated for that purpose until the Congress itself had specifically approved and appropriated funds for the Extension of the West Central Front as approved by the Commission.

The Architect estimated that the cost of planning and construction of the extension is approximately \$60 million.

The Commission has again considered the extension project and has concluded that the project should proceed without further delay, primarily because (1) the extension offers the best solution for insuring the future stability, appearance, and usefulness of the Capitol and (2) the urgent need for space in the Capitol for legislative purposes is growing daily.

In order to obtain the specific approval of funding from the Congress for the extension project, the Architect of the Capitol is hereby directed to present to the Committees on Appropriations a request for \$58 million (\$60 million less \$2 million already appropriated) for the fiscal year 1974.

Speaker of the House of Representatives,
Chairman

President of the Senate

Majority Leader of the House

Majority Leader of the Senate

Minority Leader of the House

Minority Leader of the Senate

Architect of the Capitol



MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE COMMISSION FOR EXTENSION
OF THE UNITED STATES CAPITOL

March 8, 1972

The Commission for Extension of the United States Capitol met in Room EF-100 in the Capitol at 10:00 a.m. on March 8, 1972.

The following Members of the Commission were present:

Speaker Carl Albert, Chairman
Hon. Spiro T. Agnew, President of the Senate
Hon. Mike Mansfield, Majority Leader of the Senate
Hon. Hugh Scott, Minority Leader of the Senate
Hon. Hale Boggs, Majority Leader of the House
Hon. Gerald R. Ford, Minority Leader of the House
Hon. George M. White, Architect of the Capitol



The following were also present:

Mr. Walter L. Mote, Administrative Assistant to the President of the Senate
Mr. Michael L. Reed, Legislative Assistant to the Speaker
Mr. William F. Hildenbrand, Administrative Assistant to the Minority Leader of the Senate

Mr. Mario E. Campioli, Assistant Architect of the Capitol
Mr. Philip L. Roof, Executive Assistant to the Architect of the Capitol
Mr. Charles A. Henlock, Administrative Officer, Office of the Architect of the Capitol
Mr. Frederick W. Winkelmann, General Counsel, Office of the Architect of the Capitol
Mr. William F. Raines, Jr., Assistant to the Executive Assistant to the Architect of the Capitol

Speaker Albert stated that the meeting had been called in order that the Commission might formally consider the report of Praeger-Kavanagh-Waterbury on the feasibility and cost of the restoration of the West Central Front of the Capitol. Copies of this report were given to the Commission Members in December 1970 and the Architect of the Capitol had summarized it in his March 6, 1972 memorandum to the Members of the Commission. The Architect's March 6th memorandum is attached and hereby made a part of these minutes.

Upon finding that all of the Commission Members had read the aforementioned memorandum, the Speaker asked that Mr. White make a statement highlighting the results of his study of the Praeger-Kavanagh-Waterbury report, his review of previous studies, and his personal examination of the condition of the West Front wall.

Mr. White's statement follows:

"In accordance with the provisions of Public Law 91-145, this Commission is obligated to decide whether or not the Praeger-Kavanagh-Waterbury report has established to our satisfaction that all five conditions specified for the restoration study have been met. If we agree that the conditions have been met, we must then recommend to the Congress whether the West Front should be restored or extended. If we agree that the conditions have not been met, we must then direct the preparation of final plans for extending the West Central Front in accordance with Plan 2 which the Commission has already approved.



"I wish to state that I came into the West Front controversy without any preconceived opinions. I was as completely unbiased as I consider possible. If I had been influenced in any way it was probably by the AIA position of opposition to the extension, since I was an officer and director of that organization. I mention this to indicate that I have attempted to be as objective as possible in my approach to the problem in order that I might offer this Commission my best professional advice and wisest judgment.

"As I have stated in my memorandum to you, I have reviewed everything that I could find that has previously been written and reported on this subject and I have carefully considered and weighed this mass of information.

"With regard to the Praeger report, some of the conclusions cannot be disputed. However, some of the conclusions are based on matters that are indeterminate.

"The cost of restoration will, in my opinion and that of others, certainly go beyond the \$15,000,000 specified in the law. I have been involved in the construction industry for a long time and know that seldom does a final construction cost not exceed the estimate. So, I went to the people who would be putting their money on the line in undertaking the proposed restoration -- the general contractors who might be bidding on the project. I inquired of John Healy, President of the Associated General Contractors of America; of J. Slater Davidson, President of the Chas. H. Tompkins Co., whose firm worked on the East Front extension; and of R. P. Marshall of the Turner Construction Company, a nationwide construction company. None would agree to undertake a fixed-lumpsum contract with a maximum limit of \$15,000,000 for this kind of project. They had all read the report and decided that the work involved too many unknowns. This project, if advertised for open, competitive, lumpsum bidding, would be a Christmas tree for the contractors. Extras for dealing with the many unknowns could make the final cost astronomical. I sincerely believe that we cannot say that the \$15,000,000 requirement can be met. Even the Praeger report advises that a lumpsum, fixed price construction bid is not proper for restoration work.

"In commenting on the report itself, technically it is an excellent report, prepared with a high degree of engineering skill, and well organized. Substantively, as opposed to technically, it has many qualifications. One draws opposing conclusions from different portions of the report and the final recommendations seem to be qualified and in opposition to some of the report's conclusions.



"In some instances, gratuitous opinions are offered that are not of an engineering nature. This indicates some bias to me and diminishes the credibility of the report itself. The recommendations do not entirely follow the weight of the evidence, in a purely scientific sense.

"The wall can be repaired in place. There was a prior argument that took the position that it could not, or at least should not, be done. But it can be done. At what cost, and how satisfactory the results will be in appearance and in future maintenance, are doubtful areas.

"The history of the building has been one of change and alteration from the day it was conceived. All of the changes have been a source of controversy. This is the home of the greatest deliberative body in the world and it is perhaps fitting that the building should itself be the center of deliberative discourse. The following brief description of the history in terms of change may serve to illustrate the continuous alterations and additions to which the building has been subjected.

1. Original North Wing

Begun 1793 - completed 1800
Senate occupied from 1800 - 1859
House occupied 1800 - 1801
1804 - 1807
Supreme Court occupied 1801 - 1935
Library of Congress occupied 1800 - 1824



2. 2-story Senate Chamber converted to separate stories with Supreme Court occupying lower chamber from 1810 - 1860
3. Temporary structure at location of Statuary Hall occupied by House from 1801 - 1804
4. South Wing completed in 1807
Occupied by House 1807 - 1857
5. Both North and South Wings (and 1-story wooden connecting passageway) burned in 1814 and reconstruction was completed in 1819

6. Central Section begun in 1818 and completed in 1829
Library of Congress occupied 2 stories of West Central
Front 1824 - 1897
Altered to provide office spaces after 1897
7. Present Senate and House Wings begun in 1851 and completed
in 1859
8. Old low dome replaced from 1856 - 1865
9. West Central section reconstructed following a fire in
1851
10. Terraces on North, South and West added 1884 - 1892
11. Gas explosion in old North Wing required reconstruction in
1898
12. Replacement of original wood roof over the Statuary Hall wing
and the Old Supreme Court wing with steel and concrete in 1902.
13. Complete remodeling of Senate and House Chambers, 1949 - 1951,
substantially as they appear today.
14. East Front extension constructed 1958 - 1962
15. Interior alterations and changes 1958 - 1972

"I shall illustrate the major changes by a model we have here.

"The proposal for extending the West Front as a means of buttressing the wall would mean a change to the terraces and an addition of space. Many architects feel that the proposed design would be an architectural improvement and I have heard no architectural criticism of the design. There is a feeling that the dome will be enhanced by its new relationship to the West Front.

"The question is really one of sentiment on the part of those who oppose any change to the west wall and want it saved at any cost. I submit that the life and history of the building has been one of growth and change as the Nation has grown and the needs of the Congress have increased.



"As I said before, the cost of restoration is indeterminate but would probably be at least \$20,000,000. The cost of the extension may run from \$50,000,000 to \$60,000,000. Thus, the expenditure of an additional approximate amount of \$40,000,000 will give us space that is sorely needed. The Speaker recently asked me to make a space utilization study on the House side of the Capitol and in the House Office Buildings. I made that study and found that there were tremendous space needs on the House side. Senator Jordan has now authorized me to make an investigation of space needs on the Senate side of the Capitol and in the Senate Office Buildings. Space needs will continue to increase with the growth of Senate-House activities.

"After a great deal of soul-searching, I concluded that rather than think in terms of "preservation" or "extension", I should think in terms of what would best serve the people of this Nation. The building has tremendous meaning for the people because they regard it as a symbol of democracy and a Temple of Liberty. The great mass of the people who view this building see it as a beautiful scene and are unconcerned with the theoretical priorities of importance of various exterior features. Their money, it seems to me, would be best spent by proceeding with the extension rather than trying to save the one remaining original exposed wall of the building. The fact that it is the last visible part of the wall is an indication of what the building is. It is not a museum. It is a living, working building in which the elected representatives of the people must conduct the affairs of the legislative branch of the government.



"In my opinion, two and perhaps three of the five requirements cannot be met. In accordance with the law then, and for the broader reasons that I have indicated, it is my opinion that we should proceed with the extension."

Speaker Albert asked what action was now required of the Commission.

Mr. White replied that a decision is required regarding whether the Praeger report shows to the satisfaction of the Commission that the five conditions specified by law have been met. If the Commission decides that the five conditions have been met, the Commission would then make recommendations

to the Congress on whether to extend or restore the West Front. If the Commission decides that the five conditions have not been met, the Architect of the Capitol would then be directed to proceed with the preparation of final contract drawings and specifications for the extension of the West Central Front. \$2,000,000 has already been appropriated by the Congress for this purpose.

Vice President Agnew asked if the Architect's estimate that the extension will cost approximately \$60,000,000 could be considered a firm estimate or if it would be as indefinite as the estimated cost of restoration appeared to be. Mr. White stated that the two estimates had been made on entirely different bases. The estimate for restoration is not as credible because there are so many unknowns involved. In the case of the extension, the estimates have been based on specifics because all conditions are known, except, of course, that of future price escalation.

The Vice President asked how many square feet of floor space would be gained if the West Central Front were to be extended and what the cost per square foot would be. Mr. Campioli stated that there would be a gross increase of 270,000 square feet, 165,000 of which would be usable space, and that the cost per square foot would be around \$200, taking into account price escalation into 1976. Mr. White mentioned that a monumental building such as the Capitol would ordinarily cost more to alter than would simpler structures.



Congressman Boggs asked if thought had been given to amending the extension plans to eliminate the proposals that have met with opposition. Mr. White said one point of contention had been the proposed visitor center in the West Front extension and that he considered the complaint a valid one. He felt that all space gained should be used primarily for the purposes of the Congress.

Vice President Agnew asked if there would be a possibility of an extension of less ambitious size. Mr. White stated that several possibilities had been studied but that no alternative had been found that would appreciably change the order of magnitude.

Congressman Boggs inquired about the reaction of the architectural profession to the extension. Mr. White said that there were many architects in favor of the extension. The American Institute of Architects had appointed a Task Force of six men to investigate the feasibility of a restoration. The Task Force, upon completion of its study, had recommended to the Board of Directors that the Institute take a position of opposition to an extension. That recommendation, made by a small group of people, had thereby become the AIA official position. However, he said, many of his fellow architects, including some of the most prominent ones, do not agree with the idea of preserving the walls of the Capitol as an end in itself. As an example, Bob Durham, past President of the AIA and a leader in the battle against



extending the East Front of the Capitol, had recently said to him, "I looked at the extended East Front and said to myself, 'What was all the argument about? I think we architects are often too sentimental.'"

Representative Ford asked if he could read the five conditions specified in the law to be met by restoration in order that Mr. White could make a statement on each of them individually. He then read the following condition:

"(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;"

Mr. White stated that the wall can be made relatively safe and sound. However, he said, there is grave doubt that it can be made durable and beautiful except with continued and substantial maintenance.

Representative Ford then read the next condition:

"(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;"

Mr. White said that this was a true statement.

Representative Ford then read the following conditions:

"(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;"

Mr. White stated that conditions 3 and 4, taken together, cannot, in his opinion, be said to be capable of attainment.



Representative Ford then read the final condition:

"(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 here-inbefore 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."

Mr. White stated that this condition can be met.

Representative Ford then asked the Architect of the Capitol the following question: "If this were your building, and you had full jurisdiction, what would be your recommendation?" Mr. White replied, "I would extend the west central front."

Speaker Albert stated that he was prepared to go along with recommending the extension project. He said that the Commission must decide whether the Capitol should be extended to make it the most usable type of building for the Congress or if, in spite of its many changes, it should be considered a shrine more important to preserve in its present state than to extend to meet the requirements of the Senate and the House. The Speaker said the piece of wall is not the shrine, but the building itself is the shrine.

Senator Mansfield stated that he was in favor of the extension.

Representative Boggs stated that he was in favor of the extension.

Vice President Agnew said that he had one reservation about voting for the extension. Although he did not consider it sensible to cling to the attitude that there is something sacrosanct about the west wall, in view of the history



of the building, he questioned justifying the extension on the basis of space needs. However, he admitted that he was not familiar enough with the needs of the Congress for space in the Capitol to pass judgment and said he would defer to the Members of the Senate and House who daily use the building. Speaker Albert said that space needs in the Capitol are presently one of his most serious problems and that the problem is becoming more severe as the congressional districts grow and Members are authorized to have more staff members, as congressional services to the people increase, and as new committees are formed. Senator Mansfield stated that the need for space is much greater on the House side of the Capitol but that the Senate also has need for additional space in the building. Vice President Agnew then said that, upon the assurances of the leaders of Congress that additional space is a pressing need, he was in favor of extending the West Front.

Cost Estimate

Vice President Agnew then asked if the cost estimate for the extension was based on the premise that escalation will be held at the present freeze levels. If so, he felt it would be more realistic to be less optimistic in predicting the final cost figure for the extension. He said that the people resent the fact that all government construction costs are estimated too optimistically and the higher final construction costs that result because of this cause some breach in credibility. Since the Commission is talking about



work on the Capitol, he felt that an estimate of \$100,000,000 would not be a formidable estimate for work that will serve the Congress and the country for years.

Speaker Albert asked if the bidding would be affected if the estimated cost were to be raised to between \$70 and \$90 million. Mr. White stated that although bidding would be restricted to the companies that would be able to get bonding in that amount, that announcements of an estimated cost are common in the industry and would not affect the final bid amount.

Mr. White suggested that the matter of the estimate be deferred until the completion of the final plans. At that time, a more realistic estimate can be made. Mr. Reed stated that, under the terms of the law, the Commission's only responsibility at this time relates to the recommendations of the Praeger report and that the estimated cost of the project would be brought up when funds for construction are requested of the Appropriations Committees.

Decision on Praeger Report

Representative Boggs made the following motion:

"Whereas, the Commission has established to its satisfaction that all five of the conditions specified in Public Law 91-145, relating to restoration, cannot be met, the Commission directs the Architect of the Capitol to proceed with the preparation of final plans for extending the west central front in accord with Plan 2 heretofore approved by the Commission."

The motion was put to vote and was unanimously agreed to.



Formal Resolution

It was agreed that a formal resolution would be prepared by Mr. Reed and Mr. Roof and that it would be taken to each Member of the Commission for signature before release to the press later in the day. The approved resolution is attached and hereby made a part of these minutes.

Associate Architects

Mr. White stated that the Commission would have to make a determination about the architects to be engaged for the preparation of final working drawings and specifications for the extension project. He said that the architects who had prepared the preliminary plans might be the best ones for the project but that he would like permission to investigate the availability of other architectural firms that might be qualified for the work. His findings would then be reported to the Commission for guidance in selecting the Associate Architects for the development of the final plans. Vice President Agnew stated that he was in agreement with Mr. White's proposal, feeling that the work was of such magnitude that another architect or architects might be needed in addition to those engaged for the preparation of the preliminary plans. There was no objection to Mr. White's proposal from the other Commission Members.



Other Items on the Agenda

Time did not permit consideration of the following items on the agenda:

1. (b) Use of the old sandstone removed from the East Front Extension.
2. Testimony of the Honorable Gilbert Gude of Maryland and the Honorable Michael J. Harrington of Massachusetts in favor of beautification of the East Capitol Plaza by constructing garage and other facilities underground.
3. Consideration of the request of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority for construction of their tunnel along D Street, S. E., and construction of a portion of one of their terminals in the United States Capitol Grounds (Square 692, Congressional Hotel site) at First and D Streets, S. E.

In this respect, Public Law 91-143, approved December 9, 1969 (83 Stat. 322), provides in Section 5(a):

"No portion of the Adopted Regional System shall be constructed within the United States Capitol Grounds except upon approval of the Commission for Extension of the United States Capitol."

It was decided that another meeting of the Commission will be held in the near future, at which time these three items will be considered.

The meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

Recorded by Mildred H. Hall
Adm. Asst. to the Architect

COMMISSION FOR EXTENSION OF THE UNITED STATES CAPITOL

March 8, 1972

Whereas Public Law 91-145, approved December 12, 1969, provides:



EXTENSION OF THE CAPITOL

For an additional amount for "Extension of the Capitol", \$2,275,000, to be expended under the direction of the Commission for Extension of the United States Capitol as authorized by law: *Provided*, That such portion of the foregoing appropriation as may be necessary shall be used for emergency shoring and repairs of, and related work on, the west central front of the Capitol: *Provided further*, That not to exceed \$250,000 of the foregoing appropriation shall be used for the employment of independent nongovernmental engineering and other necessary services for studying and reporting (within six months after the date of the employment contract) on the feasibility and cost of restoring such west central front under such terms and conditions as the Commission may determine: *Provided, however*, That pending the completion and consideration of such study and report, no further work toward extension of such west central front shall be carried on: *Provided further*, 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.

Whereas, the restoration feasibility and cost study and report of Praeger-Kavanagh-Waterbury, Consulting Engineers-Architects, made pursuant to Public Law 91-145, was considered by the Commission at its meeting of March 8, 1972, in Room EF-100 of the Capitol; and

Whereas, the Commission established to its satisfaction that all five of the conditions specified in Public Law 91-145, relating to restoration, cannot be met: Now, therefore, be it resolved,

That the Architect of the Capitol is hereby directed to proceed with the preparation of final plans for extending the west central front in accord with Plan 2 heretofore approved by the Commission.



Carl Albert

Speaker of the House of Representatives,
Chairman

Orin J. Roberts
President of the Senate

Carl Albert

Majority Leader of the House

Mike Mansfield

Majority Leader of the Senate

Gerald R. Ford

Minority Leader of the House

Hugh Scott

Minority Leader of the Senate

Gray M. White
Architect of the Capitol



Washington, D.C. 20515

March 6, 1972

MEMORANDUM TO THE MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION FOR
EXTENSION OF THE UNITED STATES CAPITOL:



The primary purpose of this meeting is the consideration by the Commission of the January, 1971 report of the firm of Praeger-Kavanagh-Waterbury, Consulting Engineers and Architects, relating to the feasibility and cost of the restoration of the West Central Front of the Capitol, as proposed in such report.

Under the prevailing statute providing for this report, the Commission is charged with the responsibility of establishing to its satisfaction whether the five conditions specified in the law are met.

If the Commission determines that the five conditions are not met, then the law provides that the Commission shall direct the preparation of final plans for extending the West Central Front in accord with Plan 2 which the Commission has heretofore approved.

If the Commission concludes that the five conditions are met, then the law provides that the Commission shall make recommendations to the Congress on the question of whether to extend or restore the front.

Law Relating to These Determinations:

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 your consideration 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, on July 1, 1970.

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.

Statement of the Architect of the Capitol Relating to his Study of the West Front Problem:

Early last 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.

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 now approved my proceeding with that study.



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.

Professional Judgments of the Architect:

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.

Summary:

Summarizing, then, I submit the following judgments: (a) although it is relatively stable, the west wall needs repair and strengthening;



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

Additional information will be available at the meeting of the Commission.

George M. White
Architect of the Capitol

