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Office of the White House Press Secretary
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NOTICE TO THE PRESS

The architectural plans for the Great Hall of the People were started in September 1958. Actual construction of the Hall was begun October 1958 and the building was completed in August of 1959.

The Great Hall of the People is situated on the western side of Tien an Men Square with a total floor space of 171,800,000 square metres. The Hall is 336 metres long, 206 metres wide, and 46.5 metres high. The building has 132 porch columns.

The Great Hall of the People is divided into three parts:

1. The Grand Auditorium capable of seating 10,000.
2. The Banquet Hall able to seat 5,000.
3. The Auditorium of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress.

All together there are more than 300 meeting rooms and lounges all named after various provinces and towns of the People's Republic of China. The rooms, lounges and halls of the Great Hall were furnished by the works of artists all over China.

The Banquet Hall is approached from the northern entrance of the Great Hall. A large vestibule and lobby lead to the white marble grand staircase which is 8 metres wide and has 62 steps. The Lobby has 4,500 square metres and is surrounded with columns and pilasters of peach colored marble.

The Banquet Hall is 102 metres long and 76 metres wide with a total floor space of more than 7,000 square metres. Along the side, gilded columns adorn the hall. The ceiling is of multicolored designs with great crystal lamps and angular curves.

The Banquet Hall and the Great Hall is air conditioned.

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