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Presented	27 SEP 1952
<i>John Edwards</i> CLERK OF THE SENATE	

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

R E P O R T

relating to the

R E - S U B M I S S I O N

of the proposal to erect the

NATIONAL LIBRARY AND ROOSEVELT MEMORIAL

at

CANBERRA,

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY.

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23rd September, 1952.

For Senator O'Byrne,

I bring up the Report of the
Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works,
relating to the re-submission of the following
work :-

Proposed erection of the National
Library and Roosevelt Memorial,
Canberra, A.C.T.,

and I move that the Report be printed.

Passed

23-9-52

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LIST OF WITNESSES.

	<u>Paragraph in Evidence</u>
BROWN, S.S., Director of the News & Information Bureau, Canberra	66-72
FEELY, J.A., Assistant Chief Librarian, Public Library of Victoria, Melbourne	21-31
KEY, L.C.St.A., Deputy Librarian, National Library, Canberra	85-88
METCALFE, J.W., Principal Librarian, Public Library of New South Wales, Sydney	93-103
OLIPHANT, K.H., Architect, Canberra	41-49
PHILLIPS, H.W., Director of Architecture, Department of Works, 271 Collins Street, Melbourne	1-13
SMITH, J.S., Chief Mechanical Engineer, Department of Works, 271 Collins Street, Melbourne	14-20
TAYLOR, R.M., Director of Works, Department of Works, Canberra	50-65
WATERHOUSE, B.J., Chairman of the National Capital Planning & Development Committee, Canberra	73-84
WEEDEN, W.J., Acting Director, Commonwealth Office of Education, Sydney	89-92
WHITE, H.L., Librarian, Commonwealth National Library, Canberra	32-40 and 104-107

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COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

NATIONAL LIBRARY AND ROOSEVELT MEMORIAL, CANBERRA.

R E P O R T.

1. The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, to which the House of Representatives referred for investigation and report the question of the National Library and Roosevelt Memorial, Canberra, has the honour to report as follows:-

SECTION I - HISTORICAL.

2. The Commonwealth National Library was first opened in 1902 as the Library of the Commonwealth Parliament. Although its principal function was to serve the needs of the Commonwealth Administration, it was intended from its inception that it should at the same time become a National Library in the fullest sense, a repository of Australian books and records, and a library for Australian research.

3. While the Commonwealth Parliament functioned in Melbourne a number of books was accumulated with this object in view, and it was intended when the Parliament was transferred to Canberra to establish, apart from Parliament, a building to accommodate the collection for the National Library.

4. In 1925 the Public Works Committee recommended to Parliament that the building now known as West Block should be erected in time for the transfer of Parliament to Canberra. The building was to be known as the National Library but was to be shared with a number of other Government Departments. Accordingly the accommodation allotted to the Library in the Parliament building designed for Canberra in 1925 was limited to a book capacity of 100,000, which was considered sufficient for the immediate servicing of the Parliament.

5. The Library was transferred with the Federal Parliament from Melbourne to Canberra in 1927, and the space

allocated in West Block was occupied until 1930, when the accommodation was surrendered in order that the Statistician's Branch might be brought to Canberra during the financial depression of 1929-32. From this date until 1935, when the present small block was completed as part of a National Library, the Library was without a fixed home. This block was the first section of a building which was to be developed to house ultimately one million volumes, a figure which is now being approached with the annual intake of 25,000 books, and the acquisition of certain valuable collections.

6. In 1938 the Joint Library Committee made special representations to the Government for large extensions to the National Library building, and these were receiving sympathetic consideration when the war broke out.

7. In 1947 a request was made by the then Librarian, Mr. Kenneth Binns, that the plans for the ultimate form of the National Library building should be reviewed, as the matter of accommodation was becoming a serious question. The accommodation provided was already overcrowded, and was further taxed by the decision to create a Commonwealth Archives Repository and a Central Film Library and Non-theatrical Distribution Agency for the Australian National Film Board.

8. Following upon the death of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, President of the United States of America, it was decided to erect a memorial to him, and it was eventually decided that, when the National Library was being erected, provision would be made to include The Franklin Roosevelt Library of American Literature as a memorial to President Roosevelt; as a permanent contribution to Australian-American understanding; and as a comprehensive record of the rise and development of American civilization. Substantial gifts of books have been made by American institutions towards this Memorial.

9. In 1948 Mr. H.L. White, Librarian, successor to Mr. Binns, further stressed the urgent need for the construction

of the new building, and he furnished detailed information relating to the internal administration of a modern library, in the light of information gained from visits to large institutions overseas.

10. The old proposals for extending the present National Library building were scrapped, and sketch plans were prepared for a new library building, the proposal being submitted to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works in September, 1949. The Committee, as a result of its investigation, rejected this proposal on the grounds of economy, particularly in regard to labour and materials, and the necessity to provide a structure with attractive elevations from all angles on the island site proposed, and it was recommended that further plans should be prepared.

11. The urgent needs of the Library were at the same time recognised, and temporary accommodation was recommended to ease the accommodation difficulty while the ultimate building was being further planned and constructed. A contract has recently been entered into, and such temporary premises should be available for use within the space of a few months.

12. In 1951 the question was again raised concerning the mounting congestion in the library premises at Parliament House, occupying space which is urgently required for Parliamentary purposes.

13. While the plans were being revised, valuable assistance was obtained through the timely visit to Australia of Dr. John E. Burchard, a noted authority on the design of library buildings in the U.S.A. His co-operation while in Australia, and his subsequent advice after his return to America, materially assisted in moulding the practical essentials and modern trends with the architectural and aesthetic requirements of a major public building for the capital city of the Commonwealth. Plans for the National Library and Roosevelt Memorial building were completed, and the proposal

was resubmitted to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works on 22nd May, 1952.

SECTION II - THE PRESENT PROPOSAL.

THE BUILDING.

14. The present proposal is to provide, on a site bounded by King's Avenue, Broughton Street, and Macquarie Street, a building of modular construction, built of concrete and faced with pre-cast stone.

15. The building is to consist of a basement and three main floors supplemented with mezzanine levels between the various floors. Accommodation is to be provided for mechanical equipment, theatrette, newspaper rooms, film section and stack below ground level in the Basement and Basement Mezzanine floors.

16. The Ground Floor and its Mezzanine will provide space for exhibition, Roosevelt memorial, lending collection, general reading room, cataloguing, and stack area.

17. The First Floor and Mezzanine are to contain the administration, special collections, conference room, Australian reading room, studies, and stack area.

18. The upper floors will contain stack and working areas, library school, archives, staff rooms, and tank room, while there will be provision for lift machinery and air-conditioning plant on the roof.

ESTIMATED COST.

19. The estimated cost of the building and services was set down at £1,298,600, including the engineering and other services.

SECTION III - THE COMMITTEE'S INVESTIGATIONS.

GENERAL.

20. As the Committee had investigated the proposal to erect the National Library building in accordance with the plans submitted in 1949, and the urgent need for the building had been established to the satisfaction of the Committee then,

the evidence called in regard to this reference was comparatively restricted, and intended mainly to demonstrate any additional factors which have become effective since the Committee's report on the matter. It was also essential to consider the altered details of planning which this project brought forward.

21. The Committee studied the plans, viewed the proposed site, and visited the present National Library. An inspection was also made of the various areas at present in use for storage of books, collections, and films. Evidence was taken in Melbourne, Canberra, and Sydney, from officials concerned with the proposal, and from architects and others interested in the work of the National Library. Members of the Committee also considered the proposal to face the structure with pre-cast stone, and information was sought regarding the desirability of using such material in Canberra, where the rigorous winter weather might affect the life of any materials not specially suited to the conditions.

NECESSITY FOR THE BUILDING.

Present Urgent Position.

22. In addition to the weight of evidence supplied in 1949 and considered by the Committee in its study of the necessity for the proposal, a great deal of information was supplied to indicate that the position which was then represented as urgent, has become more serious still.

23. At the request of the Library Committee of the Parliament an opportunity was afforded for the members of that Committee to meet the Public Works Committee to discuss the question of the new National Library, and to emphasize the urgency of the project. The Senators and Members of the House of Representatives comprising the Library Committee were unanimous in pressing upon the Public Works Committee the many reasons for immediate additions to the National Library accommodation, and the information received at this meeting was of

assistance in determining the evidence required in the course of the inquiry.

24. The Librarian, Mr. H.L. White, in his evidence submitted a comprehensive summary of the requirements of the National Library and information concerning the activities being maintained by the institution, and it is noted that, although the functions of the establishment have greatly increased, and there has been very great growth of accessions and collections of pictures and films in recent years, the present space occupied by the Library is little more than that in its use before 1930. Survival has only been possible by occupying more and more temporary buildings in Canberra and Queanbeyan - at present 15 in all.

Existing Accommodation.

25. From its previous report on the matter the Committee was well aware of the urgent necessity for additional accommodation for the rapidly increasing stock of library material. The Committee observed that, since the inspection made in 1949, some of the worst accommodation had been vacated, and some of the serious industrial hazards have been reduced, while efforts have been made to use all available devices to store and protect the material. However, while this improvement reflects credit upon those responsible, the accommodation available still makes it impossible to house the material with any degree of safety; it is most inaccessible; and a good deal of it is practically unusable for its normal purposes. It was demonstrated that, so long as the present unsatisfactory accommodation has to be utilised, there is a constant danger to the many large and very valuable collections at present stored away.

26. The position in Parliament House is continuously becoming more acute, and it has been necessary to stack piles of material in the corridors on the lower floor, while there are more persistent demands for the Library to vacate space

urgently needed for Parliamentary use.

Temporary Relief.

27. The Committee was informed that the temporary accommodation recommended in the last report should soon be ready for occupation, and this will afford some welcome and useful relief to the present position. However, it was pointed out that this temporary expedient will only serve to ease the pressure for a short time, and it will be possible to vacate some of the worst accommodation, though it will still be necessary to occupy nine of the present areas. It is claimed that, unless the permanent building is well under way by 1956, the Library must face a period of real crisis in its basic service to Parliament, the Government and Government Departments, as well as in the wide variety of national services which it provides within Australia and overseas.

Accession of Material.

28. In its previous report the Committee paid considerable attention to the rate at which the collections of books and other materials were growing, in order to determine the real necessity for the space being provided, and the accuracy of the estimates for future requirements of accommodation. In considering this aspect of the question the Committee is now informed that the rate of increase estimated in 1949 is being realised, and, in fact the stock of books is now increasing by the equivalent of 25,000 bound volumes a year. In addition the National Library has rapidly growing collections of pictures, films and microfilms, while the growth of services is indicated by the fact that the staff has increased from 12 in 1927 to 113 today.

The Roosevelt Memorial.

29. It is now nearly seven years since the Government announced publicly its decision to erect a wing of the National Library as the Australian people's memorial to the late President Roosevelt. The association of the Roosevelt Collection with the National Library will provide special opportunities for the study

of Australian-American relations.

30. It is pointed out that delay in erecting the National Library building must hamper the growth of the American collections and hamper their use. This has already been emphasized by the difficulties experienced by the American post-graduate students arriving in Australia under the Fulbright and other exchange programmes during 1951. The Committee agrees that the desirability of proceeding with the provision of facilities for the Roosevelt Memorial is a factor which helps to stress the urgency of the need for the National Library building.

Service to Parliament and the Departments.

31. The service provided for members of Parliament was the original function of the Library, and constant attention has been given to this important part of the work. It is at present regarded as an essential part of the National Library function, and inquiry by the Committee elicited the information that it is the intention for it to remain so, and its operation will continue to be conducted in Parliament House. Special provision is to be made for a reading room for Members in the new building so that those desiring to pursue the study of special subjects will be able to use all the resources of the National Library.

32. Although the various departments have small and highly specialised collections of their own, increasing use is being made of the National Library facilities. This trend is noticeable in spite of the fact that the library resources are dispersed through 15 scattered buildings, all of which are overcrowded, and none of which offers reasonable facilities for research workers from the departments. Demand for the service will increase rapidly when the plan to bring central staffs to Canberra, during a period of 10 years, is fully in operation.

Archives.

33. The archives programme was a wartime development, and has been really active for only about five years. Experience during the last war convinced those in authority of the

necessity for action to preserve the essential portions of government records, and a definite programme was decided upon for the management and disposal of records. The extent of the service at present given on the records in the custody of the National Library is illustrated by the average issue of 3,372 files per month during 1952.

Theatrette and Film Unit.

34. In view of the recommendations of the 1949 Report that inclusion of the theatrette and the film unit should be eliminated for the present, the Committee made inquiries into the proposal to include some space for them in the present plans. The evidence shows that the Library's collection of reels of films is rapidly growing in number, and the film service is increasing in importance. Lending from the collection of 6,760 reels of films averages about 2,000 per month, and is increasing rapidly. The distribution of films made by the Film Division of the Department of the Interior is a section of the work of the National Library, but it only constitutes a small proportion of the total functions. It is claimed that the most urgent reason for permanent housing of the film activities is the need to protect the Commonwealth's asset in material, the initial cost of which is high, and which depreciates very rapidly when not given proper conditions of temperature and humidity.

35. The Committee made inquiries regarding the necessity of providing accommodation for these activities and is convinced that, as long as authority exists for the film services to be part of the work of the National Library, it is necessary to see that space is provided.

36. The previous plans provided for a large theatrette to seat 500 as well as a lecture room to seat 56, and this was thought to be too expansive a provision for the purpose. In the present plans it has been possible to fit in a small theatrette, to seat 165 persons, in a section of the basement,

where the cost of providing it will be reduced to a minimum, but where it will prove useful and convenient.

37. In view of the growing importance of the film activities, and the possibility of using a theatrette for more general use, the Committee recommends that the small theatrette now proposed in the basement, with its associated rooms, film section and stack shall be provided.

Other Library Functions.

38. The many other functions of the National Library were emphasized during the course of the Committee's investigation, and all tended to indicate the growth of the various sections detailed in the Committee's previous inquiry. The Committee has carefully studied the effect of the development taking place in the institution in all the aspects of its work, and it is not necessary in this Report to enumerate all of them - especially as many of them were discussed in detail in the previous Report.

39. It is sufficient to point out that, in the opinion of the Committee, after study of the evidence, there is an urgent and rapidly growing necessity for a new National Library building, adequate to provide for efficient working of the services being carried on, and sufficient to allow for the continuous expansion which will take place year by year.

The Library Policy.

40. The Committee does not regard it as part of its function to criticise the policy adopted by the National Library or the scope of the work determined upon as appropriate for it to conduct, except insofar as it affects the necessity to provide the building, the plans of which have been referred to the Committee to report whether it is "expedient to carry out the work". During the course of the evidence, however, the opinions of various witnesses included remarks concerning the aspects of the work which should and should not be carried out by a National Library in Canberra.

41. Evidence by the Librarian, Commonwealth National Library, contained statements of the general work and policy being adopted, and he also gave the Committee valuable suggestions by Dr. Burchard, with comparisons of the work of the Library of Congress, and the scope of a national library in many facets of its work.

42. Explanation of the policy being adopted in Victoria as well as suggestions regarding the building, were given by the Assistant Chief Librarian, Public Library of Victoria, and a very comprehensive statement was provided by the Librarian of the Public Library of New South Wales for the information of the Committee. A great deal of time and effort was used in the preparation of this evidence, and the Committee, in appreciating this advice, has made use of those portions affecting its sphere of investigation. Certain of the evidence was severely critical of the competition by the National Library against State Library representatives in purchase of Australian material. The Committee investigated the points arising from such criticism, and is informed that the instances referred to took place some years ago, before the present regime. For some time past there has been increasing activity by the National Library in securing, both in Australia and overseas, essential material relating to the States, and this has been offered to them. It has happened, in the case of New South Wales, on more than a score of occasions during the last five years. The policy agreed to by the 1949 conference apparently laid a basis for acquisition of Australian material by the Commonwealth, while material relating to a State would be acquired by the State concerned. As the evidence contains many suggestions and criticisms of the work and policy of the National Library, and suggestions as to the best course to be adopted for successful functioning in the future, the Committee recommends that a detailed study of the evidence might be most useful in fashioning the course for future development.

Interstate Co-operation.

43. One of the questions which occupied the attention of the Committee for a considerable time, and one which it considers has a vital influence on the work of the National Library, including the necessity to provide space for its activities, is the co-operation by State and Commonwealth libraries in the work of cataloguing, purchase of collections, dissemination of library material to country users, and many other sections of the work common to all the libraries.

44. It is essential that certain facilities of the libraries in various States must be duplicated, but there is no doubt that special steps to effect real co-ordination between the States and the Commonwealth would result in much better facilities for the public, better use of public money, and more effective use of the total space available. The evidence states that there have been conferences in the past from which certain benefits have arisen, and a further conference is pending. This and subsequent opportunities should be taken to ensure that the library potential of the Commonwealth, and the accommodation available, are completely used to the best advantage.

45. There is no doubt that, since the establishment of the National Library and during its growth in past years, there has been a certain conflict of opinions and interests, and it is not unnatural that this should be so in the early stages of development of a new institution. Now that stage has passed, and the National Library is performing an important and expanding part in the life of Australia. It is therefore necessary to make a special effort to harmonise all the varying interests in the library spheres of the Commonwealth, so that the people generally may reap maximum benefit from the expenditure being made from State and Commonwealth funds for library activities. From evidences of past experience it seems rather unlikely that complete harmony and full co-ordination of effort will be obtained unless the

matter is approached by some method differing from that adopted in the past.

46. The 1949 conference indicated endorsement by the States generally of the policy of the National Library, and agreement with that institution being the repository of Australian material. The evidence indicates that all the witnesses were unanimous in the opinion that there should be a new National Library building, and that it should be monumental in character. With these points in view, added to the present urgency of the demand for accommodation, the Committee has made its decisions recommending the erection of the proposed building. The Committee is concerned, however, that considerable differences still remain to be solved between the Commonwealth and New South Wales before harmony can be achieved in relation to competition for Australian material and the performance of library services within the State. It would have been easier to decide what accommodation is essential now if these problems had been settled before, rather than after the proposals were made to provide the building. Those in charge of the important library institutions of Australia will need to exercise all their enthusiasm in a genuine effort to mould the best course towards complete co-ordination if success is to be attained. It would appear that advancement might be materially assisted if suitable representatives of appropriate interested bodies, like the Library Committee and the Library Association of Australia, could confer and advise on matters of general policy and interstate co-operation. Such representatives, while being vitally interested in Library matters, would not be as influenced by local institutional requirements as the direct authorities of the institutions themselves, and their advice could be used in determining the development of schemes mutually beneficial to the various Commonwealth interests.

47. The Committee feels that no effort should be spared in the attempt to eliminate all difficulties and

obstacles which exist, and to effect smooth working of complete plans for the effective use of libraries and their facilities all over the country.

THE BUILDING.

Accommodation.

48. The plans provide for a building consisting of basement and three main floors supplemented with a mezzanine level between each floor. The usable nett floor area, excluding walls, corridors, stairs, lifts, ducts, toilets and rooms for mechanical engineering services, is 116,700 square feet.

49. Following standard overseas library practice today it was decided to adopt modular planning for the building. The bay selected as the cubic module for this structure is 22 ft. 6 in. square by 10 ft. 3 in. high. This allows book-stacks to be placed where required and stock partitions moved when rooms are relocated. The ground floor size of the building is five modules wide and six modules long, in addition to an exhibition section at the front, nine modules wide and two modules long. This gives a structure with overall length of 182 feet, while the width in the front is 204 ft. 6 in. and the back 114 ft. 6 in. The height from ground floor to roof level is shown on the plans as 57 feet.

50. The Basement is to house the mechanical equipment area, photo duplication, storage area, archival fumigation and bulk store, bin room, garage, cleaners' rooms, theatrette and display foyer, office, mainswitch room, listening room and service rooms.

51. The Basement Mezzanine will provide for newspaper reading room, filing and stack, bindery, film offices, stack, workshop, and equipment store, three viewing rooms, listening room and sound recording stack, cleaners' and service rooms, and the upper part of the film theatrette.

52. The Ground Floor will consist of the main entrance, exhibition foyer, general exhibition area, Roosevelt

Memorial, lending collection, general reference and reading room, bibliography, cataloguing department, card catalogue, processing departments and service rooms.

53. The Ground Floor Mezzanine will have a large stack area, intermediate air conditioning plant room and service rooms, but a considerable portion of this level will consist of the upper part of the Roosevelt Memorial, foyer and exhibition areas.

54. The First Floor will accommodate the administration offices, special collections, members' reading room, stack and working areas, Committee and conference room, Australian reading room, current problems study area, six individual studies and service rooms.

55. The First Floor Mezzanine will consist mainly of stack area, but will also have a large map room and six individual studies.

56. The Second Floor is to consist mainly of stack area, with the northern side occupied by the library school room and office, staff room and lockers, and service rooms.

57. The Second Floor Mezzanine, in addition to the large stack area, will provide archives reference and office rooms, first aid room, lockers and rest room, and service rooms.

58. The Reserve Stack Floor will contain another stack area, lift machinery rooms, and tank room.

59. The Roof will be used to provide lift machinery room, air-conditioning room, and a flat roof area.

60. A great deal of the evidence provided information for the Committee in connection with the necessity to provide the space planned in the various sections of the building. A great deal of time and thought has been given over the past few years to the question of the amount of accommodation essential and to the best lay-out for the floors required. In this connection the Committee is informed that

the assistance of Dr. Burchard has been invaluable, and the experience of the Librarian has enabled him to incorporate the most modern ideas gained in his visits overseas. Many suggestions have also been given during the course of the inquiry by the various witnesses, particularly by the Librarians of Victoria and New South Wales. These will not affect the structure of the building, but many of them may be of use in the final planning of the details of the building, when the Architects and the Librarian will be able to incorporate those which improve the facilities offered in the building.

61. Some very strong criticism has been levelled at the planning of the building, not so much from the point of view of the necessity for it, but rather regarding the amount of space which is essential at the present time. The Committee considered these views in detail, and weighed them along with the opinions of those witnesses, experienced in library work, whose evaluation of the space required was also available. As a result the Committee has arrived at the opinion that, although it would be physically possible to carry on for a few years with a portion of the building proposed if archives and other rarely used material remained in areas away from the building, the time would not be far distant when the structure would have to be extended. This would cause considerable disruption of the work in progress and would be more costly. In addition it would seriously affect the aesthetic appearance of the building to considerably reduce the proposed area.

62. The Committee notes the reduction in size from the plans of 1949, and is satisfied that the building now proposed will supply the needs of the National Library for a number of years, while provision is made for subsequent additions to the rear by three modules. This will no doubt be sufficient for many years to come and the Committee recommends that the proposed building be erected in accordance with the plans referred, subject to certain alterations

alterations to the elevational treatment referred to in a later section of this Report.

CONSTRUCTION.

63. The building is designed as a concrete structure, and will have the additional strength required to meet recommendations on civil defence. It is to be faced externally with cast stone, and internally with materials suitable to the various areas, with particular attention given to acoustic requirements. The floors will be of reinforced concrete, except the second floor mezzanine, where the self-supporting steel stack construction will run from second floor level to the under side of reserve stack floor, thus permitting maximum flexibility in space allocation.

64. The Committee considered the question of using pre-cast stone slabs for the facing of the building, particularly in view of the severity of the winter climate in Canberra. An inspection was made of the type of slabs used in research on the matter at the Experimental Building Station, Ryde, where results have shown that suitable facing slabs can be made to give a pleasing appearance and to withstand the severe climate satisfactorily. A wide variety of colours can be used, and the surface can be finished in ways to suit the conditions and the type of building desired. The Committee is therefore satisfied that, with careful selection of the colour and finish to suit the Canberra building, and with proper attention to the method of fixing the slabs, an economical and lasting result may be obtained.

THE SITE.

65. Following the previous Committee's recommendation, the question of the site has received special consideration in the planning of this building, and the Committee was informed that the site alongside the present National Library building is regarded as the most satisfactory. The site, bounded by King's Avenue, Broughton Street and Macquarie

Street, has an area of seven acres, and faces the "Government Triangle", being ideal for the purpose of the National Library. The parkland environment and surroundings will permit harmonious and yet individual architectural character to be planned for the building, which will be viewed to advantage from all angles.

66. It is planned to place the building across the corner of the site, a practice which has hitherto been avoided in Canberra public buildings. However, in this position it is regarded as a suitable treatment of the site, and the result should prove a very satisfactory variation of past planning.

67. The site conforms to all the requirements of the National Capital Planning and Development Committee, and, after due consideration of the points at issue, it is recommended that the building be placed on the site selected, and oriented as proposed in the plans.

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN.

68. The new building has been designed in close collaboration with the Librarian and officers of the six library divisions. It was also fortunate that Dr. Burchard, a noted authority of the design of library buildings in U.S.A., was in Australia at the time when this project was being planned. He readily gave up much of his valuable time, both in Canberra and Melbourne, to criticism and advice during the development of these plans. The proposal was also examined and discussed by the National Capital Planning and Development Committee, as suggested in the Report on the 1949 plans. At one of the meetings of the Planning Committee, Dr. Burchard was present and explained various aspects of the planning adopted in this scheme.

69. A proposal was finally completed giving effect to the functional requirements of the library work, with elevational treatment conforming largely to the type of architecture already adopted in most of the public buildings

in Canberra, and the whole proposal had the general approval of Dr. Burchard during his visit. With regard to the elevational treatment, he expressed certain views of his own, which he made with some diffidence realising his position as a visitor to the country, but which he offered in more detail when forwarding the written statement he promised to send on his return to the U.S.A. The most important point he raised was his preference for a more striking exterior, featuring an extensive use of glass on all elevations. For the use of the Committee, the departmental architects made a perspective sketch interpreting Dr. Burchard's ideas from his written explanations. A modified form of treatment, extending the use of glass beyond that originally planned, but in a definitely restrained manner to that proposed by Dr. Burchard, was also demonstrated by a perspective sketch for comparison and study.

70. The Committee gave a great deal of attention to this question, in the belief that it is of paramount importance to have this large, permanent building treated in a manner which will provide a worthy structure for the capital of Australia, particularly as it will occupy such an important position amongst the city buildings.

71. Following upon the criticism of the treatment of the building in its previous Report on the 1949 plans, the Committee views with satisfaction the happy result of collaboration between the departmental architects and Dr. Burchard. Many problems have been overcome, and due acknowledgment is made to the Architects for the achievements attained by their efforts and co-operation.

72. After discussion of the alternative perspectives and minor alterations to the front section, suggested by the Chairman of the Planning Committee, a model was made to portray the impression likely to be made when the building is actually constructed, with the amendments suggested. The Committee was able to study the model of the completed edifice, and

discuss it in the light of the plans for the building, and at this stage it was felt that the building for the purpose had been satisfactorily illustrated. The main point which remains to be developed when the detail drawings are being prepared is the accentuation of the vertical lines on the side elevations. The model, having been prepared at rather short notice, did not illustrate very well the details, shown by the plans themselves, for the proposed treatment of these sections. It is therefore pointed out that emphasis should be given to vertical lines in contrast to the horizontal floor lines, so that the rather box-like appearance indicated by the model will be transformed into a dignified structure with attractive fenestration.

SERVICES.

Electrical.

73. All modern electrical services have been planned for the building, including main switchboards for electric light and power. Provision of lifts has been reduced to a minimum, with a total of four. There will also be electric time clocks, fire alarms and a watchman's clock system. An extensive inter-communicating house telephone system will facilitate the efficient working of the various areas and reduce unnecessary movement between floors.

Mechanical.

74. Air-conditioning is regarded as essential initially for all floors from basement to first floor mezzanine, while the floors above are to be heated and mechanically ventilated, with provision for future air-conditioning if found necessary. It was pointed out that the finest particles of dust, together with daily variations of humidity and temperature, have a detrimental effect upon paper, leather, films, canvas and paint, and full air-conditioning is therefore necessary, both for preservation of the material, and for the comfort of the staff and others using the building. To fully air-condition the upper floors would cost an

additional £30,000.

75. Hot water supply is to be made available, to an estimated total of 51 points, from a calorifier located in the basement plant room.

76. Kitchenette equipment will not be extensive, as it will only be required for light meals. It will consist mainly of a pie-warmer, bread slicer, boiling water urn, refrigerated cold press, and a 12 c.f. refrigerator. The kitchenette takes the place of the former cafeteria eliminated in the earlier plans, and the Committee feels that this will be appropriate for use by the staff.

ESTIMATED COST.

77. The estimated cost of the building was stated to have been calculated as at January, 1952, but subject to variation due to changing circumstances in the building industry. The Committee was informed of improving conditions in regard to supply of materials and costs, and it is now expected that it will be possible to secure tenders for the building. The Committee regards this as an indication of more normal conditions, and it looks forward to a return of the time when experience of stable prices will make it possible to obtain accurate and reliable estimates which will prove very close to the actual expenditure made.

78. Details of the estimate of cost are as follow:-

Building			£919,800
Engineering services -			
(a) Air conditioning and mechanical ventilation	£150,000		
(b) Lifts -		£	
(1) Passenger	9,500		
(2) Staff/goods	10,100		
(3) Stack	8,000		
(4) Book lift	2,000		
	29,600		
Contingency	3,400	£33,000	£183,000
Paving, landscaping and car park			£8,000
Steel book stacks			<u>£70,000</u>
			£1,180,800
	10% Contingency		<u>£118,000</u>
	Total		<u>£1,298,800</u>

TIME OF COMPLETION.

79. The Committee was informed that, if a decision were made to proceed with the work now, it would be anything up to two years before tenders could be invited. Some concern was felt at the time stated as necessary to complete the planning, in view of the necessity for space to be provided with as little delay as possible, and the opinions of other witnesses were sought on the matter. Information was obtained indicating that, if a firm of private architects were asked to do the work it would be possible to prepare specifications in six months, provided that there were no alterations. Another witness quoted the time necessary as twelve months for the preparation of plans and specifications of quantities. The Committee therefore suggests that, if departmental architects are still very pressed with preparation of plans for works of an urgent nature, and private architects are beginning to experience periods of lesser pressure, a great deal would be gained by calling in a firm of private architects to ensure that the work was pushed forward without delay.

URGENCY OF THE WORK.

80. The evidence taken by the Committee in this investigation, in addition to that taken in the 1949 inquiry, points to the urgent necessity for the new building. The Committee recognised this in 1949 and recommended measures for temporary relief. This relief is in sight, but will not be in use for some months yet. The position in the meantime is constantly becoming more pressing, and it is stated that the temporary accommodation being erected will not be sufficient to afford relief beyond 1956, when conditions will become critical, while risks to irreplaceable library material is constantly growing. According to the estimates of the Architects it will be approximately 7 years before the complete building would be ready for occupation, and it will therefore be necessary to push forward the commencement of the work to the earliest date possible if the library services

are to be maintained as desired. The Committee therefore recommends that all measures possible may be taken to speed up the completion of plans and the date of completion of the building.

SECTION IV - THE COMMITTEE'S DECISIONS.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS.

81. The following is a summary of the recommendations made by the Committee:-

1. There is an urgent necessity for a new National Library building. (paragraph 39)
2. The building should be erected in accordance with the referred plans, subject to elevational treatment suggested during the inquiry. (paragraph 62)
3. Emphasis should be given to vertical lines, particularly in the side elevations. (paragraph 72)
4. Provision of the kitchenette is appropriate for this building. (paragraph 73)
5. A small theatrette should be provided in the basement as planned. (paragraph 37)
6. Space is necessary for the growing film section. (paragraph 35)
7. Pre-cast stone slabs should be suitable for facing the building. (paragraph 64)
8. The site is suitable, and the orientation should enhance the appearance of the building. (paragraph 67)
- * 9. Credit is due to the Architects for their success in resolving the difficulties involved in the change from the old plans to the new conception of the building. (paragraph 71)
10. The Roosevelt Memorial should be available for use as soon as possible. (paragraph 30)
11. Owing to the many factors pointing to the urgent

- necessity for accommodation all measures should be taken to speed up the work. (paragraph 80)
12. If necessary the assistance of private architects should be enlisted to avoid delay in the final planning stage. (paragraph 79)
 13. Special study of the evidence is recommended in view of the number of valuable suggestions advanced by witnesses, particularly in regard to policy and development. (paragraph 42)
 14. Conferences of State and Commonwealth library officials should be continued. (paragraph 44)
 15. Decision regarding the amount of accommodation essential at the present time would have been easier if existing differences had been resolved before the plans were referred to the Committee. (paragraph 46)
 16. No efforts should be spared in an endeavour to achieve complete co-ordination of library facilities in Australia. (paragraph 47)
 17. Those responsible for co-ordination of the policies of the various Australian libraries might obtain valuable advice from discussions by suitable representatives of bodies not directly in charge of local library administration. (paragraph 46)

D. WATKINS

Vice-Chairman.

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