

DEPARTMENT OF THE SENATE  
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*William Fisher*  
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THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE  
NEW PARLIAMENT HOUSE

REPORT RELATING TO PROPOSED WORK IN THE  
PARLIAMENTARY ZONE

PROVISIONAL PARLIAMENT HOUSE - TEMPORARY ENCLOSURE  
OF VERANDAHS

Membership of the Committee  
(Thirty-third Parliament)

Joint Chairmen

Senator the Hon. D. McClelland  
President of the Senate

Hon. Dr H.A. Jenkins, MP  
Speaker of the House of Representatives

Members

Hon. T. Uren, MP  
Minister for Territories and Local Government

Senator M.A. Colston

Senator G. Georges

Senator K.J. Martin

Senator M.E. Reid

Senator K.W. Sibraa

Senator B.C. Teague

Hon. J.D.M. Dobie, MP

Mrs R.J. Kelly, MP

Mr B. Lloyd, MP

Mrs H. Mayer, MP

Mr L.B. McLeay, MP

Mr P.M. Ruddock, MP

Secretary to the Committee

Mr D.M. Piper

PROPOSED WORK IN THE PARLIAMENTARY ZONE

Provisional Parliament House - Temporary Enclosure  
of Verandahs

Under Clause 4 of its resolution of appointment, the Joint Standing Committee on the New Parliament House is authorised to consider and report on matters coming within the terms of section 5 of the Parliament Act 1974 as may be referred to it by the Minister responsible for administering the National Capital Development Commission Act 1957, or by resolution of either House of the Parliament.

Section 5 of the Parliament Act 1974 gives Parliament control over the erection of buildings or other work within the Parliamentary Zone which is defined in the Act. Sub-section 5(1) of the Act provides as follows:

No building or other work is to be erected on land within the Parliamentary zone unless the Minister has caused a proposal for the erection of the building or work to be laid before each House of Parliament and the proposal has been approved by resolution of each House of Parliament.

On 5 June 1984, by letters addressed to the Joint Chairmen, the Minister for Territories and Local Government, as Minister responsible for administering the National Capital Development Commission Act 1957, referred to the Committee a proposal for the temporary enclosure of the verandahs at the main floor level of the provisional Parliament House on the northern facade of the building.

This proposal was tabled in the House of Representatives on 5 June 1984 and in the Senate on 6 June 1984.

The Committee has considered the proposal and reports as follows.

The National Capital Development Commission has proposed the temporary enclosure of the verandahs at the main floor level of the provisional Parliament House on the northern facade of the building. The work will provide additional office accommodation and will be removed when the Parliament vacates the building.

The National Capital Development Commission estimates the cost of the proposed work at \$90,000.

Certain aspects of this proposal gave the Committee cause for concern. These were, the need for the work and the effect on the facade of the building. In respect to the first matter the Committee regrets the need for further modifications to the provisional Parliament House but accepts that the handicaps imposed by inadequate accommodation are sufficiently severe to require action now. On the second point the Committee concluded that the short-term temporary change to the appearance of the front facade would be acceptable, provided care was taken in developing the detailed design.

The verandahs will be enclosed by glass, recessed behind existing masonry pillars in such a way that frames will not be visible from the exterior. The glass will be tinted to ensure the apparent depth of the verandah remains after the alterations and to control the sun penetration into the enclosed space. The present external glass doors and walls between the verandahs and the adjoining rooms will be kept. A false ceiling will be constructed through which airconditioning and other services will be extended to the enclosed space. The floor will be carpeted but the existing step down to the balconies will remain. Dividing walls along the enclosed spaces will be erected but only behind the masonry pillars. Below the level of the existing wrought iron balustrades which will remain, natural ventilation can be incorporated if necessary. This last matter will be further investigated during design.

Arrangements will also be made to ensure that in the layout of the enclosed spaces office furniture is kept well behind the new glass wall. It will be a condition of occupation that no poster or similar material will be displayed on the glass.

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The Committee supports this proposal and recommends that Parliament approve the proposal in the terms of the Parliament Act 1974.



(D. McCLELLAND)  
President of the Senate



(H.A. JENKINS)  
Speaker of the House of  
Representatives


Joint Chairmen

6 June 1984

#### DISSENTING REPORT

We do not support the proposal to enclose the upper verandahs at the front of the Temporary Parliament House for the following reasons:

- (1) The proposal has been hastily and inadequately prepared and no detailed breakdown of cost is available and no breakdown of materials to be used is available.
- (2) The alteration to the front of Parliament House, even if temporary, seriously compromises the aesthetics and traditional design of the building as presented to the Australian public and visitors over very many years.
- (3) The proposed glazing will face strong sunlight by day and glaring floodlights by night, leading to serious visual and heating problems and denying access to adequate fresh air.
- (4) There is no specific determination of the type of glass to be installed and there is no guarantee that a suitable glass will be found which will not offend for either its visual or heating or aesthetic effects.
- (5) It is likely but as yet unresearched whether the additional airconditioning load to serve these extensions will seriously deny adequate air conditioning to existing areas of the building.
- (6) The alternative of providing additional Ministerial space elsewhere in the building or in the proposed temporary extension approved by the Committee does not appear to have been adequately considered.

  
Senator Baden Teague

  
Senator Margaret Reid

  
Philip Ruddock, MP

6.6.84