

Memorandum of Committee Meeting held in New York, Thursday, April 11th, on the San Francisco State Building controversy and other subjects, and certain action by members of the Commission on May 2nd and 3rd relating to the San Francisco State Building.

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1. SAN FRANCISCO STATE BUILDING: At the meeting of the Commission on March 1st last, the Secretary read a letter from Mr. G. B. McDougall, State Architect for California, in which he briefly covered the main points of the controversy and on behalf of the State Commission asked whether the Commission of Fine Arts would be willing to make an examination of the drawings of the San Francisco State building, and drawings and photographs of the existing buildings; and on the basis of such an examination, state if in the judgment of the Commission the design of the principle facade of the proposed building would conflict or be out of harmony with the existing buildings. The Commission advised the State Architect by letter that they desired to be of assistance to the California State Commission but that it was felt that the latter's request should be endorsed by the California senators. (See minutes of March 1, 1918).

On March 21, 1918, Senators Pheland and Johnson officially requested the Commission to assist. Mr. McDougall was promptly advised of the Senators' action and requested to forward complete exhibits for the Commission's inspection. A letter from Mr. McDougall, dated April 4th, together with a complete set of exhibits were received on the morning of April 11th.

A Committee meeting for the afternoon of April 12th had already been called at the Century Club in New York City for the consideration of the draft of the Annual Report and several minor subjects.

The correspondence and other exhibits in the San Francisco State Building controversy were taken to the meeting in order that the members might acquaint them selves with the details and facts before giving a formal decision.

Mr. Moore, Mr. Platt, Mr. Kendall, Mr. Adams, and Mr. Weir, as well as Mr. Cammerer, assistant to the secretary, were present. Mr. Pope and Mr. Olmsted were absent. After an inspection of the exhibits, however, the members present felt that a formal reply could be drafted since the problem seemed capable of only one solution. The proposed reply was therefore drafted and approved with the understanding that the opinions of Mr. Pope and Mr. Olmsted were to be secured later.

At a meeting between Mr. Pope and Mr. Platt held on the afternoon of May 2nd, the exhibits were gone over by them and the wording of the draft reviewed. Certain changes were made in the draft to simplify and clarify it, and this then met with their approval. On the afternoon of May 3rd Mr. Olmsted reviewed the exhibits in the office of the Commission in Washington and concurred in the opinion as expressed in the last above-mentioned draft. The formal reply of the Commission as forwarded to San Francisco therefore is as follows:

May 4, 1918.

Dear Sir:

I am requested by the members of the National Commission of Fine Arts to inform you that, in accordance with the request contained in your letter of February 11, 1918, they have examined the exhibits relating to the San Francisco State Building controversy forwarded by you and have reached the unanimous opinion that

the mandatory provision of the programme as contained in paragraph 5 has been substantially complied with; that the State Building as designed is not inharmonious with existing buildings, and that it is calculated to add an interesting and satisfactory element to the Civic Center. They have reached this conclusion after considering the largeness of the square, the distance between buildings, the dominance of the mighty dome of the City Hall, and the variations in design of the existing structures.

Respectfully, yours,

(Signed) C. S. Ridley,

Colonel, U. S. Army,

Secretary and Executive Officer.

George B. McDougall, Esq.,
State Architect of California,
Department of Engineering,
Sacramento, California.

ABC:MG.

2. ANNUAL REPORT: Mr. Moore read to the members what he considered the most important portions of the forthcoming report of the Commission for the period from June 30, 1916 to January 1, 1918. A number of helpful suggestions were made, and the draft approved for printing.

3. RESOLUTION IN RE MR. CASS GILBERT: Mr. Cass Gilbert of New York City, former member of the Commission, expects to visit England, France and Italy shortly and in connection with his visit to make a study of the public parks and grounds in those countries and their relation to Washington problems, and to report the results of such studies to the Commission of Fine Arts. The understanding is that the Commission of Fine Arts is to be put to no expense in connec-

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tion with such studies. The following resolution was therefore unanimously adopted:

RESOLVED BY THE NATIONAL COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS,
That Mr. Cass Gilbert, formerly a member of this Commission, be and he is hereby authorized and requested to make studies of the parks and public gardens in France and Italy and their relation to Washington problems, and to report the results of such studies.
RESOLVED FURTHER, That this Commission shall be at no expense in connection with such studies.

Approved: _____
Chairman.

Colonel, U. S. Army,
Secretary and Executive Officer.

