

ORGANIZACIÓN SANITARIA PANAMERICANA  
PAN AMERICAN SANITARY ORGANIZATION

Washington, D. C.  
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THIRD MEETING OF THE DIRECTING COUNCIL  
- REGIONAL COMMITTEE, WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION -

LIMA, PERU  
October 6-12, 1949

TOPIC IV. PAN AMERICAN SANITARY BUREAU - BUILDING IN  
WASHINGTON

BACKGROUND

The Executive Committee of the Pan American Sanitary Organization, at its Seventh Meeting held in Washington, May 23-30, 1949, resolved:

"1. To accept the recommendation of the Director and, concurring in the opinion that the payment of additional contributions by the Member Countries should be avoided as far as possible, it recommends that studies be made and that steps be taken to accomplish the building project and to obtain the necessary funds from different sources.

2. To recommend to the Director of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau that he make the preliminary studies and submit them to the Directing Council at its next Meeting."

PROPOSALS

The following proposals have been considered for financing a headquarters building for the Pan American Sanitary Bureau:

1. Special assessment of Member States to a building fund. Rejected as unsuitable because of the present exchange situation.

2. Holding of special sweepstakes in connection with national lotteries. Rejected as not in accord with national policy of certain Member States.

3. Issuance of Special Postage Stamps by each of the Member Countries in 1952 to commemorate the first 50 years of the Bureau's existence. Rejected as a solution of the needs of the Bureau which are urgent and immediate.

4. Loan from Commercial Bank. The interest on such a loan (never under 4%) would constitute a heavy burden against future budgets which would also have to repay the loan. Under consideration as possible solution.

5. Loan without interest from U. S. Government to be repaid by small annual payments during 20 to 30 years. Preliminary discussions of an informal nature have not been too promising although the method is under consideration for provision of Headquarters in Washington for the Food and Agricultural Organization. Requires special act of U. S. Congress.

6. Loan from the Reconstruction Finance Corporation. Rejected since under the legislation creating the R. F. C., it cannot legally lend money to international organizations.

7. Long term lease of building to be built by private concerns in accord with the Bureau's needs. Considered unsatisfactory since Bureau would never own its home though it would eventually repay the full cost plus interest charges.

SITE FOR CONSTRUCTION OF FUTURE HEADQUARTERS BUILDING

Preliminary data needed for estimating costs follows:

Land in various parts of the City ranges as follows:

Business area \$40.00 - \$100.00 a square foot; Commercial area removed from the center \$20.00 - \$30.00 a square foot; Embassy area \$2.00 - \$6.00 a square foot; outlying area at the city limits \$1.00 a square foot.

The nature of the Bureau's work is such as to make it not only unnecessary, but actually undesirable to be in the center of commercial activity. The choice lies between the Embassy area and the outlying district.

While the Embassy area is closer to the center, Washington is a compact city, with good transportation facilities to all points.

Independently of the Bureau's problems, it has been suggested that the U. S. Government set aside a tract of land in an attractive part of Washington as the site for the headquarters of various international organizations. This is only a suggestion and one cannot use it as the basis of solution of the Bureau's problems.

It is estimated that 50,000 square feet would be adequate as a site for the building, parking space for fifty cars and enough open area around the building to ensure proper lighting on all sides. At \$1.00 a square foot, the cost of such a piece of land would be approximately \$50,000.00. Consideration should also be

given to the fact that later on additional construction may be necessary and therefore the site must be large enough to take care of any expansion.

### CONSTRUCTION OF BUILDING

#### A. Type

While detailed plans have not been drawn, it is anticipated that a three-storied building planned functionally, simple in design, composed largely of frames and windows would be satisfactory. Plans should be of the simple, sectional type so that construction could be increased as needed. The dimensions chosen should utilize standard sizes of building materials to cut the cost of construction. It should be air-conditioned. Plans for an auditorium which, if money could not be procured for inclusion immediately, could be added later, should be made before construction starts.

Provision should be made for a Conference Room, Committee Rooms for international conferences, and small offices for visiting Directors, Government and Public Health Officials from Member States visiting Washington. The library should have adequate space so that it can be used to full advantage. There should also be a Museum and display room where both permanent and current materials could be exhibited. These extra facilities will raise the cost but not to a prohibitive degree and the returns in facility of operation and carrying out the important functions of the

Organization should more than compensate.

B. Estimated Cost

At the present time it is estimated that a building with 100,000 square feet of floor space will cost approximately \$1,200,000.00. If it is possible to raise \$1,500,000.00, provision may be made for additional office space which will take care of any possible contingency not now foreseen, but which may arise.

SELECTION OF ARCHITECTS TO DRAW UP PLANS

As soon as the site for the future Headquarters Building is determined, it is proposed that architects be selected to draw up the plans for the structure. As a result of their acquaintance with local building materials and conditions, Washington or United States architects would seem preferable for this work.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to solve the immediate problem which is serious, every effort has been made to find suitable space to rent, but it has been impossible to find adequate space anywhere in Washington or immediate vicinity. The only immediate solution is to take one or several buildings besides the one now occupied, which for obvious reasons does not make for efficient work.

It is therefore proposed to the Directing Council of the Pan American Sanitary Organization, that the Director be authorized,

after consultation with and approval by the Executive Committee, to proceed with whatever plan may meet the needs, consistent with the financial ability of the Bureau. It sometimes occurs that an unusual opportunity presents itself to acquire property, which is lost because the necessary authorization has not been given in anticipation of such a contingency.

The Director will prepare and submit a report to the Directing Council at its next meeting regarding this matter.