



**The Parliament of the
Commonwealth of Australia**

**PARLIAMENT HOUSE
CANBERRA**

Two Stage Design Competition

Assessors' Final Report

June 1980

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June 1980

Committee of assessors

Sir John Overall (Chairman)
John Andrews
Gareth Evans
I. M. Pei
Barry Simon
Leonard Stevens

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1. Introduction

1.1 The competition for the design of the new Australian Parliament House is perhaps the most significant architectural competition to have been held anywhere in the world in recent times. The extent of the international interest which the competition has generated is indicated by the fact that 961 architects from 28 countries registered for the competition, of whom 329 then submitted entries. It has been generally recognised that the design of the new Parliament House on Capital Hill is one of the most challenging and complex design tasks to have confronted architects anywhere in recent years.

1.2 Unlike some other countries, particularly in Scandinavia, Australia has not often used the competitive process as a means of selecting design or designer for its significant buildings, public or private, although conspicuous examples in recent years have been the Sydney Opera House and the High Court and National Gallery in Canberra. But architectural design competitions have their roots in antiquity, and have in fact quite regularly been employed in the selection of schemes for national legislatures: the Houses of Parliament in Westminster and Ottawa, and the United States Capitol were all the product of competitions, and the agreement to this course by the Australian Government in 1978 to that extent followed established precedent.

1.3 All those associated with the competition, not least the Parliament House Construction Authority as promoter and we the assessors as jurors, have been acutely conscious of the variety of pitfalls which may attend projects of this kind, and especially so, given the extraordinary scale, complexity and importance of this particular project. The utmost care has been taken to avoid such traps, both in the preparation of the competition conditions—in consultation with the Royal Australian Institute of Architects and the Parliamentary Joint Committee on the New and Permanent Parliament House—and in the conduct of the competition itself. We believe, and as assessors have certainly done our best to ensure, that the competition has in fact been conducted in every way and at every stage, with scrupulous fairness.

1.4 A major element leading to what the assessors consider has been a very successful competition undoubtedly has been the quite outstanding Brief prepared by the Joint Standing Committee and its advisers from the Parliamentary Departments and the National Capital Development Commission. The Committee's continued interest and support during the competition, particularly through the Competition Steering Committee, has given the assessors confidence in their belief that the selected design is a sound basis upon which the operations of the Parliament and Government can be effectively carried out.

1.5 The task of the entrants was, in the first instance, to resolve the frequently competing demands and needs of the various users, both residents and visitors, to produce a fully functional building which was capable of internal flexibility of arrangement and external expansion. But it was also much more than that. The Capital Hill site, although providing a superb location for the Parliament, posed a number of problems in relating desirable functional arrangements to the difficult topography of the hill. The Parliamentary building has to be more than merely functional; it must be a symbol of nationhood and commitment to the democratic process of government and it must relate sensitively to its total environment. Moreover, all these problems must be resolved within the project budget, and the building must be capable of being completed and occupied in time for the 1988 Bicentenary celebrations.

1.6 The task for the assessors has been no less intimidating. The length and complexity of the assessment process when so much is at stake, when the design problems are so difficult, and when there are so many competent entrants, can readily be imagined. But we have found it possible, despite our diverse backgrounds—three architects, one engineer and two lawyer—MPs (from different Houses and parties)—to work together in an extraordinarily harmonious, complementary, mutually stimulating and above all team-like way. Not only has the Chairman never found it necessary to exercise his casting vote, but our major decisions at all stages of the competition process have invariably been by unanimous consensus.

1.7 In the event, we believe that the design we have ultimately chosen, which we identify and describe in Part 3 of this report, is an exciting and stimulating solution, which is functionally efficient, eminently buildable, extremely sympathetic to the site, and which exhibits, moreover, an outstanding empathy with Walter Burley Griffin's planning concept for the national capital.

1.8 In retrospect we have no doubt, despite the reservations which many may reasonably have felt at the outset, that the competition process here has been entirely successful in producing a design and designer for the new Australian Parliament House. We are gratified to note the commitment to the project which has clearly been expressed by the Parliament and Government, and look forward to an early commitment from them both of the resources necessary to get the first soil turned.

2. Criteria for Assessment

2.1 Early in the first stage of the assessment process, the assessors determined that the building selected to house the Australian Parliament on the Capital Hill Site would need to satisfy four general criteria, which we identified in our first report as follows:

- (1) *Environment and siting.* The building should relate in a sensitive way to its environment and at the same time reinforce Capital Hill as the focus of Griffin's plan for Canberra and his concept of siting the most significant national building at the apex of the Parliamentary Triangle.
- (2) *Symbolic and architectural identity.* The building must express in a symbolic way the unique national qualities, attributes, attitudes, aspirations and achievements of Australia. It must at the same time express an architectural identity, integrity and prominence consistent with its surroundings and the significance of the Parliament House.
- (3) *Functional efficiency.* The building must provide a physical environment which will permit all the users of Parliament to efficiently and comfortably perform their diverse duties. It should provide for all the elements in the competition documents, clearly define the pattern of internal and external circulation, and provide a rational organisation of elements.
- (4) *Engineering feasibility and cost.* The design must satisfy the assessors that it can be constructed by 1988 and within the cost constraints specified in the brief. The basic economy of design and building approach must, therefore, be clearly evident. The design must demonstrate architectural and engineering feasibility.

2.2 These criteria were refined and extended in many ways during the course of the assessment, but continued to be the basic touchstones against which each of the five finalist designs were assessed. No specific weighting was adopted as between these criteria, the view being taken that the winning design had to thoroughly satisfy each one of them.

2.3 As we made clear in our first report, we have taken the view that whereas our responsibility in the first stage was to select not so much designs as *architects* who in their submissions had indicated a sensitivity to the problems and an apparent capacity to solve them, our task in the second stage was rather to select a particular *design* which could be presented to Parliament, the Government and the Australian people as the building which, subject to refinement and development, would become the new Parliament House for the Commonwealth of Australia. We emphasise that, generally satisfied as we undoubtedly are with the winning design identified and described later, this will necessarily be subject to some further refinement and development as the design process proceeds to the working drawings stage, under the supervision of the Parliament House Construction Authority and in consultation with both technical advisers and the parliamentary users.

3. The winning design

3.1 We are unanimous in choosing design number 177 as the winning entry. It is an outstandingly successful design in every respect, brilliantly blending together the requirements of architectural quality, sensitivity to location, symbolic identity, functional efficiency, building feasibility and relative economy which the new Parliament House building must satisfy.

3.2 Five designs—numbers 45, 139, 177, 201 and 234—were considered by us in the second stage assessment. The process by which these finalists were themselves selected from the 329 original competitors was described in our first report and is summarised below in Part 5 of the present report. The conduct of the second stage of the competition, during which the finalist entries were developed and, now, assessed, is described in Part 6 below.

3.3 Design 177 represents a total design accomplishment quite beyond that achieved by any other entry in the competition. The designs of the other first stage winners and the second stage finalists all had particular strengths which justified their selection, but in our unanimous opinion, design 177 was ultimately the only one to produce a fully integrated and thoroughly satisfying solution to what was an extraordinarily complex design problem.

3.4 In the sections which follow, we indicate how the winning design satisfied the various basic criteria on which the assessment proceeded.

Environment and siting

3.5 Capital Hill forms the apex of the Parliamentary Triangle and is therefore the focal point of the major radial road pattern. As a consequence, the form and shape of the new Parliament building had to be designed to take account of these natural and man-made elements. We were looking, furthermore, for a design which, in doing this, responded sensitively and imaginatively to the overall order and geometry of the Walter Burley Griffin plan for central Canberra—which not merely reinforced the apex constituted by the Hill, but which reflected within itself some of the larger themes inherent in the Griffin plan.

3.6 We believe the winning design—number 177—accommodates these concerns superbly and with a degree of success that no other entry in the competition even began to approximate. Like Griffin's plan, the winning design is a building of firm, clear geometry, not rigidly imposed on the terrain but sensitively adjusted to it. This design is not a monumental structure superimposed on the Hill. It derives its strong presence by merging built form with landform. The successful synthesis of these two essential elements has resulted in a design that is at once natural and monumental.

3.7 The land axis has been the generic ordering theme of developing Canberra, a line around which all subsequent design has evolved in circular and radial directions. This scheme not only recognises and completes the land axis but also allows it to visually extend beyond Parliament to the surrounding hills. The geometry of the plan accepts, moreover, the radiating road system and in doing so allows the Parliament to register visually from a distance as a simple element gradually revealing its complexities as one approaches. The building form visually extends these views beyond to the distant landscape, perpetuating the Griffin ideal of the domination of landform.

3.8 The winning design does nonetheless recognise the fact that the Capital Hill site has an apex, and one that demands *some* reinforcement if the design scheme is to ultimately succeed. The more or less transparent mast structure supporting the

national flag is a simple and imaginative solution to achieve the visual climax required. This marking of the apex of Capital Hill successfully fulfils the intent and purpose of the original Canberra plan.

3.9 There is one further point concerning the relationship of the new building to its site at the apex of the Parliamentary Triangle which perhaps ought to be made. The merging of built form with landform, together with understated monumentality, that the winning design achieves, will not only allow the provisional Parliament House to continue to exist without conflict, but will also clearly accept the Griffin notion of a more intense occupancy of the triangle—that is to say the establishment within it of a visually integrated series of buildings architecturally reinforcing the land axis.

Symbolic and architectural identity

3.10 We described above the symbolic and architectural identity which we believed the new Australian Parliament House should possess in the following terms: 'The building must express in a symbolic way the unique national qualities, attributes, attitudes, aspirations and achievements of Australia. It must at the same time express an architectural identity, integrity and prominence consistent with its surroundings and the significance of the Parliament House.' For any design to accomplish all, or even most, of these things is something of a tall order, but again we believe that the winning entry has come much closer to total success than any of its competitors.

3.11 The initial key to the building's success is again its sensitive interaction with the geometry of Walter Burley Griffin's plan. The land axis is framed and reinforced by two curvilinear walls stepping up and down the Capital Hill, the configuration of which, in the designer's own words, 'signals an open receptive gesture towards the City and the Nation'. While the building clearly and elegantly articulates the major elements of Parliament—the two legislative chambers—it avoids, as we have previously said, the imposition of monumentality: rather, it understands that monumentality and makes it coexist with the natural landscape. The intersection of the line between the two chambers of Parliament with the land axis is marked by the transparent mast structure and is, in turn, framed by the arising curvilinear walls. Symbolically, Parliament is inevitably positioned, but does not become undemocratic with an overpowering building presence. Having expressed the bicameral system of Australian government in form and plan, it properly reserves the top of the Hill for the use and enjoyment of the people of Australia. So far from the new Parliament House glowering down, forbidding and inaccessible, people will walk and children will clamber and play all over its roof!

3.12 A further attractive feature of the winning scheme is its simple imagery, viewed from both ground level and from the air. It is capable of naive graphic representation: children will not only be able to climb on the building but draw it easily too. Accentuated (but by no means caricatured) by the obvious 'boomerang' analogy of the curvilinear walls, the general imagery of this scheme may in time become as internationally representative of Australia as the kangaroo.

3.13 A very important design constraint imposed by the Capital Hill site is the likely permanent retention of the existing provisional Parliament building. The view along the land axis looking south positions the new Parliament House directly above the existing building. It is imperative, therefore, to unify the two buildings architecturally in order to avoid the impression of one building resting on top of the other. In the opinion of the assessors, the winning design has resolved this immensely difficult contextual problem in a brilliant way.

3.14 The most important visual characteristics of the existing building are its fenestration and its whiteness. The winning design achieves the essential unity by creating a screen wall in front of the entry which is perforated so as to relate to the rhythm of the fenestration of the provisional Parliament House. No other fenestration is visible from this important vantage point as the new Parliament House merges itself with the natural landscape, thus avoiding the appearance of two distinctly different buildings in a simple way. The transparent mast structure resting on top of the entire complex completes the visual and symbolic linking of the old and the new.

3.15 The simplicity and elegance of the basic lines of the winning scheme conceals at first glance what is revealed on closer examination to be a complex collection of separate building pieces. This 'explosion of parts' is equally crucial to the architectural success of the total scheme. It provides for easy identification and understanding of the pieces and produces an understated architecture in which all users can avail themselves of views and outdoor space, at the same time admitting light to occupied spaces. On the one hand working conditions are enhanced, and on the other, casual visitors can be sure of knowing where they are at all times. An 'explosion of parts' can, moreover, accept expansion when and where necessary, without the need to reallocate space and without the danger of a change in symbolic form.

3.16 We further commend the winning design on the variety of public spaces it provides, each of which is subtly animated and modulated by external light. As these spaces are designed to be experienced in a symbolic sequence, this intended variety heightens the visitor's sense of spacial experience. Vestibule, foyer and reception hall lead to Members' hall or forum, which in turn is visually linked to the space defined by the flag mast structure above. From this central point one enters into the Senate Chamber to the west and the Members' Chamber to the east. As there are functional differences so are there spacial configurations.

3.17 Generally speaking, we are confident that the design we have chosen will not only be accepted by the Australian people, but will be one of which they will become extremely proud. The winning design will produce a building for the 21st century and beyond. It is more than simply functional; it is a building that will become, as it deserves to, a national symbol.

Functional efficiency

3.18 We believe that design number 177 admirably satisfies the criterion, spelt out above, that 'the building must provide a physical environment which will permit all the users of Parliament to efficiently and comfortably perform their diverse duties'. It provides clearly and rationally defined areas for the main building elements, delineates efficient and economical circulation systems to link them, and at the same time creates stimulating and relaxing working, recreational and public spaces for all of Parliament's multiple users.

3.19 We were supported and encouraged in this respect by the conclusion reached by the Competition Steering Committee that the functional efficiency of design 177 was 'very good', and moreover that in comparison with the other four finalists, 'this scheme stands out in functional efficiency'. This too was the view of the technical adviser who assisted us in assessing functional matters. We are in no doubt that the winning design not only stands up successfully against the functional requirements specified in the brief, but is also, by a large margin, the most functionally efficient of the finalists' entries.

3.20 The winning design takes note of the functional layout of the provisional Parliament House, which has been strenuously tested and much developed in its evolution

since 1927, and improves upon it. It features, as does the existing Parliament House, a basically horizontal three-level working layout, but one in which the key elements of the building are so well located and co-ordinated in relation to each other that the massive increase in usable space which the design embodies is not accompanied by any significant new physical burdens on the building's residents and visitors. The same cannot be said with nearly as much confidence about the other finalist entries, in particular designs 45 and 201, and, to a lesser extent, 234. Nor do any of the other entries, with the possible exception of design 139, have the basic clarity and coherence of the winning design.

3.21 Among the most significant features of design 177, from a functional viewpoint, are that:

- (a) the key user groups—Senators, Members, the Executive, the Parliamentary support staff and the media—have clearly and effectively designated working environments of their own. Each element has its own 'address', clearly identifiable not only within the building but to those approaching it from outside;
- (b) the movement of people within the building is generally very skilfully handled, with such movement made interesting by the design of the common areas and the external views which the architect has ensured are available;
- (c) visitors to the Parliament are able to penetrate into the heart of this very large building without entering restricted areas or intruding upon the private circulation areas of Members and Senators and other user groups in the building;
- (d) the scale of the individual in relation to the building is excellent in that the mass of the building does not overpower. A light, pleasant and open working atmosphere for the occupant of almost every office space in the building is admirably achieved;
- (e) security should be able to be maintained with a minimum of overt 'police presence'. It is interesting to note in this respect that the whole Executive area in design 177 could be covered by five security checkpoints whereas some other designs require up to ten or more;
- (f) the internal space of the building appears to be capable of relatively flexible adjustment as user requirements change over the years, and experience of particular elements—especially Members' and Senators' accommodation, the Executive and the Library—can readily be accomplished in a manner which will in no way alter the basic design philosophy.

3.22 We do not wish to suggest that the winning design is incapable of improvement in any respect, and careful attention will need to be given to a number of particular matters, including some circulation links, the design of the chamber galleries, and the location of some parts of the media, as the design subsequently evolves. We are clearly of the opinion, however, that any such design refinements and modifications that may prove necessary or desirable can be made relatively easily.

Engineering feasibility and cost

3.23 The preliminary designs submitted by the winner provide a satisfactory basis from which final detailed design solutions can be developed.

3.24 The building is mainly constructed of reinforced concrete, using readily available materials and well established building techniques for which there is no shortage of skilled labour. The structure should be simple, efficient and durable. The dominant

flag-supporting framework is constructed of stainless steel tubes and poses no significant problems for final design and construction. Preparation of the building platform will lead to substantial excavation on the top of Capital Hill, which is later replaced by the built form to above the existing level. Although much of this removed material is rock, no serious problems are envisaged in preparing the site for the building and later landscaping.

3.25 A total energy plan has been outlined by the winner. This includes a realistic approach to energy conservation which is in accordance with current practice. The basic source of energy is electrical with a management system designed to make optimum use of all forms of energy available within the building. Provision has been made for installation of solar augmented heating systems should these become economically viable.

3.26 The external traffic system around Capital Hill does not require to be altered significantly to accept the new Parliament House. Internal circulation is adequately provided by the proposed Parliament Road and the land bridge to the Parliamentary Triangle. Satisfactory provision is made for access to the site by the local public transport system. Parking and access for users and visitors is adequate, much of the parking being underground, but some further attention may need to be given to the access to the forecourt for both ceremonial and other occasions.

3.27 The whole complex is regarded as being readily buildable within the given time. The proposed system lends itself well to 'fast-track' design and construction which can proceed simultaneously in a number of building areas with possible advantages for the economic completion of the project.

3.28 Each of the finalists was required to submit 'a broad order of costs'. The competition conditions provide that 'the basic economy of the design will be an important consideration in the judging of all submissions'. Of the cost estimates actually submitted by the finalists, design number 177 was the one which most closely matched the target in the design brief, viz. \$151m at May 1978 prices. The gross project cost claimed for design 177 was \$156 417 000, which was lower than all (and markedly lower than most) of the comparable estimates in the other submissions.

3.29 The assessors relied not merely on the cost computations supplied by the finalists but had all estimates checked by an independent cost planner to ensure their basic credibility. In evaluating the results of this check we noted that the Brief estimate of \$151m was based in Stage 1 on a building area of 58 000 square metres together with ancillary site and approach works and associated fees, whereas the final Brief for Stage 2 upon which the finalists were required to prepare their designs in fact set a building area of 60 294 square metres.

3.30 In the result we are as satisfied as we can be at this stage that the competition winner's cost estimate is generally credible and realistic, and that there will be no really significant increases upon the Brief figure as the building proceeds. Many elements in the design 177 estimate are subject to detailed confirmation, and it may be that on further investigation and analysis, in consultation with the architect, there will prove to have been some areas of underestimation. Balanced against this it must be noted that several significant 'optional' features of the design, for example its location of most parking spaces underground, represent excellent value for money.

3.31 It is impossible to be more precise in costing at this stage of the evolution of the design of the building. It will now be necessary for the Parliament House Construction Authority to be sure that the winning architect and the Authority cost consultant confer as soon as possible on the cost elements.

4. Competition background and organisation

Origins of the competition

4.1 The history of this competition began in 1913 when an international competition was announced for the design of a permanent Parliament House in the then new national capital. This was first deferred and then cancelled due to the World War. Following the war, a decision was taken to construct a provisional building which was designed to last for fifty years. This building was completed in 1927 but has required numerous extensions to fulfil the objective of housing the Federal Parliament for fifty years.

4.2 In 1965 a Joint Select Committee of Parliament was appointed to consider the need for a new Parliament House. In its report to Parliament in 1970, the Committee recommended that the project should proceed, and to facilitate this, recommended the establishment of a 'client' committee which would liaise with the planning authorities and the parliamentary authorities. The Joint Standing Committee on the New and Permanent Parliament House was established in 1975 to represent the client in all matters concerned with the planning, design and construction of the building.

4.3 In its first report to Parliament in March 1977 the Committee recommended that the building should be completed for occupation by 1988—the Bicentenary of European settlement in Australia. Following discussions with the National Capital Development Commission and the Royal Australian Institute of Architects, the Committee reported to Parliament in May 1978 that, to achieve the target completion date of 1988, a two-stage competitive selection process should commence no later than November 1978.

4.4 On 22 November 1978, the Prime Minister, the Rt Hon. Malcolm Fraser, announced in Parliament that the project would proceed. He made, among others, the following points:

The new Parliament House which is now to be built will take its place amongst the other great buildings which symbolise our culture, learning and system of justice.

It will be the centrepiece of modern Canberra, the peak of the Parliamentary triangle, the hub of the Government of the Commonwealth of Australia, a place in which the affairs of the nation can be conducted in a more efficient way

It is fitting that both Government and Opposition should concur in their views on the construction of a House which symbolises our unity as a nation, which is an expression of our joint pride, faith and confidence in Australia.

4.5 To ensure that the project would go ahead efficiently, a new statutory body was created known as the Parliament House Construction Authority. The Authority is charged with the design and construction of the new Parliament House. Its first action was to set in train the design competition recommended by the Joint Standing Committee and approved by the Government.

Organisation of the competition

4.6 Following over two years of extensive and detailed consideration in conjunction with Parliamentary officers and officers of the National Capital Development Commission, the Joint Standing Committee on the New and Permanent Parliament House approved a comprehensive statement of client requirements to form the basis of the competition documents.

4.7 This client information, together with the competition conditions approved by the Royal Australian Institute of Architects, a description of the functioning and operations of Parliament, and information on the site, constituted the first stage competition documentation.

4.8 Early in 1979 the Parliament House Construction Authority, as promoter, acting after consultation with the Joint Standing Committee and the Royal Australian Institute of Architects, appointed a panel of six assessors to advise on the conduct of the competition, to adjudicate at the conclusion of both the first and second stages and to select the competition winner. The assessors are:

- Sir John Overall (Chairman) CBE, MC, LFRAIA, FAPI, FTPIA: Architect and Planner; Foundation Commissioner, National Capital Development Commission; Member, Parliament House Construction Authority.
- Mr John Andrews B. Arch. (Hons) (Syd.) M. Arch. (Harv.) LFRAIA, FRAIC, RIBA, FAIA (Hon); Architect; Chairman of the Architecture and Design Panel, Visual Arts Board, Australia Council.
- Senator Gareth Evans BA, LL.B (Hons) (Melb.), MA (Oxon.); Barrister; Labor Senator for Victoria.
- Mr I. M. Pei B. Arch (MIT), M. Arch. (Harv.) FAIA, RIBA, Academician AAAL; Architect, New York.
- Mr Barry Simon MP, LL.B (Melb.); Liberal MHR for McMillan.
- Professor Leonard Stevens BCE, M. Eng. Sci. (Melb.); Ph. D (Cantab.); MICE, FIEA; Dean of the Faculty of Engineering, University of Melbourne.

4.9 On 5 April 1979 the competition documents were tabled in Parliament and the Parliament House Construction Authority, as promoter, was authorised to proceed with the competition. On 7 April 1979 the promoter invited architects to participate in a two-stage competition to select the designer for the new Parliament House, to be constructed on Capital Hill, Canberra. The competition was open to any person or association of persons, any one of whom was registered as an architect in Australia or was an architect who had applied for registration under the laws of a State or Territory of the Commonwealth of Australia on or before 31 May 1979.

4.10 Mr J. D. Fowler was appointed as competition Registrar, responsible for the administration of the competition, for ensuring that anonymity and confidentiality were maintained and that the competition conditions were complied with. Mr Fowler will submit a comprehensive Registrar's report to the Parliament House Construction Authority at the conclusion of the competition.

4.11 During the preparation of the competition material and throughout the competition, the assessors were kept duly informed on administrative arrangements for this competition and received a wide range of historical and background information on other relevant competitions. During the period between February 1979 and June 1980 the assessors had eighteen formal meetings quite apart from the two assessment periods, to consider the terms of the competition brief, to monitor the administration of the competition, and to decide on the criteria and methodology for the adjudication.

The full panel of assessors, including Mr I. M. Pei, who flew to Australia from the United States for this purpose, sat almost continuously for seven days between 1 October and 8 October 1979 to assess the final stage of the competition, and for six days between 18 June and 25 June to conclude the second stage assessment.

5. Conduct of the first stage

5.1 The task in the first stage of the competition was to select from the original entrants ten prizewinners and, from these, five finalists who would proceed to the second stage.

5.2 A total of 961 architects from twenty-eight countries registered for the competition before the closing date of 31 May 1980. Registrants were sent a comprehensive package of competition information including:

- competition documents in two volumes;
- plans of the site at various scales;
- aerial photograph of the site;
- coloured slides of views to and from the site; and
- administrative documentation.

5.3 The first stage submission period closed on 31 August 1979, and 329 entries were received. The entries were displayed for assessment in a venue with access restricted to the assessors and the competition Registrar. The assessors are satisfied that the recording and display of entries was done in a manner which ensured that full security and anonymity were maintained at all times while at the same time providing each competitor with a fair and reasonable opportunity to be selected as a prizewinner.

5.4 On 26 September 1979, the assessors met for two days to familiarise themselves with the material which had been submitted. Formal assessment commenced on 1 October 1979 and there followed an intensive period of assessment which concluded on 8 October 1979 with the selection of ten prizewinners, and from these, five finalists to proceed to the second stage.

5.5 The quality of the first stage submissions was mixed, ranging from exciting and stimulating designs through to some of considerably lesser quality. The ten entries selected as prizewinners covered a wide range of design solutions, for which the architectural profession can be justly proud. The five prizewinners chosen to proceed as finalists were those who, in the opinion of the assessors, had not only demonstrated the quality identified as essential to the ultimately successful design, but whose designs showed the greatest potential for development in the second stage. We made a deliberate decision to choose, as finalists, five quite different kinds of design solutions rather than two or more variations on any one solution in the hope that we would be presented, when the time for final decision came, with the greatest possible diversity of developed solutions from which to choose.

5.6 The assessors provided the Registrar with the competition numbers of the ten prizewinners and finalists and asked him to open the sealed envelopes associated with each selected entry. In the presence of a Justice of the Peace, the Registrar opened the sealed envelopes and revealed the names of the authors of the selected entries. The Registrar then examined the competition declaration and undertaking forms, announced to the assessors the names of the prizewinners/finalists and declared that they were each eligible to receive a prize of \$20 000. Only the Registrar knew, and will know until the conclusion of the competition, the relationship between the names of the prizewinners/finalists and the entries which they submitted.

5.7 The names of the finalists and other prizewinners were announced on 8 October 1979, and reported to Parliament on the following day. They were as follows:

A. Finalists

Nominated architect	Firm name and address
Bickerdike, John	Bickerdike Allen Simovic Flat 2, 16 New End London, United Kingdom
Denton, John	Denton Corker Marshall Pty Ltd 31 Niagara Lane Melbourne, Australia
Madigan, Colin Frederick	Edwards Madigan Torzillo Briggs Inter- national Pty Ltd 201 Pacific Highway North Sydney, Australia
Thorp, Richard G.	Mitchell Giurgola Thorp 170 West 97th Street New York, U.S.A.
Waite, Christopher Harding	Parsons & Waite Bowen Island, Von Igo British Columbia, Canada

B. Other prizewinners

Carroll, Jerry Wayne	Venturi Rauch Brown & Carroll 40 Brisbane Street Bondi Junction, New South Wales, Australia
Daltas, Spero Paul	Brown Daltas & Associates Inc. 1033 Massachusetts Avenue Cambridge, Massachusetts U.S.A.
Jackson, Daryl	Daryl Jackson Architects Pty Ltd 4 Brunswick Place Fitzroy, Melbourne, Australia
Leech, Denis John	Denis Leech in Association with Stephenson & Turner 6 The Avenue, Newport Beach Sydney, New South Wales, Australia
Seidler, Harry	Harry Seidler & Associates Pty Ltd 2 Glen Street, Milsons Point Sydney, Australia

5.8 The assessors provided each finalist with a confidential report explaining the criteria upon which judging had proceeded and would be carried out in the second stage. Some reference was also made to common design problems which clearly emerged in the first stage.

5.9 Following the selection of the prizewinners, the first stage designs remained confidential and were dismounted, packaged and stored in a high security area by the Australian National Archives until the conclusion of the competition.

6. Conduct of the second stage

6.1 The task in the second stage of the competition was to select from the five first stage finalists a competition winner, and to notify the competition promoter (the Parliament House Construction Authority) accordingly.

Documentation and briefing

6.2 Three additional volumes of briefing material, comprising in total some 980 pages of documentation, was supplied to the five finalists at the commencement of the second stage.

6.3 To further brief the finalists on the functional aspects of the brief, and subsequently to advise the assessors on the functional efficiency of the designs finally submitted, a Competition Steering Committee was appointed in accordance with the Competition Conditions. It comprised:

Joint Chairmen—

Senator the Hon. Sir Condor Laucke, KCMG, President of the Senate
Rt Hon. Sir Billy Snedden, KCMG, QC, MP Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Members—

Sir Bernard Callinan, CBE, DSO, MC, Chairman, Parliament House Construction Authority

Senator the Hon. F. M. Chaney, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs

Mr L. K. Johnson, MP

Mr N. M. Macphillamy, Member, Parliament House Construction Authority

Hon. R. I. Viner, MP, Minister for Employment and Youth Affairs

Senator H. W. Young

In performing its task, the Committee was assisted by functional advisers from the Parliamentary Departments, the Prime Minister's Department, representatives of the media and officers of the National Capital Development Commission.

6.4 The finalists were brought to Canberra for two weeks in November 1979 and were briefed by the Construction Authority, Competition Steering Committee and National Capital Development Commission. The role performed by each of these bodies was as follows:

- (a) *The Parliament House Construction Authority* described in as much detail as possible the conditions and terms of engagement that would apply to the competition winner upon appointment as the designer for the Parliament House building.
- (b) *The National Capital Development Commission* described the planning proposals and policies for Canberra with particular emphasis on the national area.
- (c) *The Competition Steering Committee* clarified functional aspects of the Parliament building with the finalists as a group and then with each finalist separately.

During their visit, the finalists were given tours of Canberra, the site for the new building and the provisional Parliament House, and given opportunities to discuss the accommodation requirements with senior officers of the Parliament.

Second stage assessment

6.5 The submission period for the second stage of the competition closed on 23 May 1980. To provide each finalist with an equal amount of time in which to prepare his entry, each was able to lodge the entry at any location authorised by the Registrar. Submissions were lodged, in all cases on time, with Australian Government officials in Canberra, Melbourne, Sydney, London and New York.

6.6 In order to enable the Competition Steering Committee to advise the assessors on the functional efficiency of the submitted designs, submission material as specified in the competition conditions was mounted in a secure location in Parliament House for viewing by the Committee. Before the material was viewed by the Committee, the assessors assured themselves that only the functional aspects of the building were displayed. The Competition Steering Committee and its advisers then conducted a detailed assessment of the functional efficiency of each design and prepared a report for consideration by the assessors. The report was confined to functional considerations and did not in any way reduce the assessors' responsibility to select the competition winner.

6.7 The second stage assessment commenced on 18 June 1980 and was conducted in a secure location in the Academy of Science, Canberra, where the drawings, models and reports of each finalist were displayed for assessment by the assessors. During the assessment period, which concluded on the morning of 26 June 1980, when this report was conveyed to the promoter, complete security and confidentiality was maintained under the direction of the competition Registrar. Security guards were on duty 24 hours per day and no one was admitted except on the express authorisation of the Registrar. Complete anonymity was also maintained in that each design continued to be identified simply by number, and the assessors remained unaware of the identity of the particular architect or firm submitting it.

6.8 In the course of this assessment, the assessors were assisted by a total of nineteen technical and construction advisers covering the following specialist areas:

Technical advisers

- functional design
- town planning
- civic design
- landscaping
- transport engineering
- mechanical engineering
- electrical engineering
- structural engineering
- security

Construction advisers

- construction management
- cost planner
- project planner

Each of these advisers signed an undertaking that they would not disclose any competition material and would not discuss the matter among themselves except with the express permission of the assessors.

6.9 Following an introductory meeting on 9 June 1980, the assessors met with the technical advisers and construction advisers in separate groups on 19 June 1980, where

they were given selected material on various submissions. The advisers were asked to consider the designs to confirm compliance with the brief and to identify any problem areas. The advisers individually reported to the assessors on 23 June 1980.

6.10 The assessment process carried out by the assessors over the eight-day judging period involved intensive analysis and discussion of the plans, models, photographs and reports submitted by each finalist, and of the reports made in writing by the Competition Steering Committee and orally by the technical and construction advisers. Each entry was measured against the assessment criteria previously established, and in particular by reference to a series of such specific matters as function, security, integration with the Canberra central plan and landscape, engineering aspects, traffic, cost analysis and buildability within the time frame limitations imposed by the competition conditions and the 1988 completion date.

6.11 Following an exhaustive (and exhausting) review of all factors, the winning designer was selected. As stated in Part 3 above, the assessors are unanimously of the view that one submission, number 177, best satisfies the stated criteria and, therefore, recommends that the architect of that design be declared the competition winner.

6.12 In compliance with the competition conditions and agreements, the Chairman of the assessors will provide the Chairman of the Authority, at the press conference on 26 June 1980, with a sealed envelope containing the number of the selected design. The Registrar will have five sealed envelopes with the number of one finalist printed on the outside of each and the name of that finalist sealed inside. The Registrar will provide the Chairman of the Authority with the appropriate envelope when the number of the selected design is revealed. The Chairman of the Authority will announce the name of the winning designer and that will be the first time that anyone, with the exception of the Registrar, will know that designer's identity.

7. Acknowledgments

7.1 The assessors wish to record their appreciation to:

- (a) the Parliament House Construction Authority responsible both for our appointment and for the conduct of the competition as promoter on behalf of the Australian Government;
- (b) the Parliamentary Joint Committee on the New and Permanent Parliament House, under the joint chairmanship of Senator the Hon. Sir Condor Laucke, President of the Senate, and the Rt Hon. Sir Billy Snedden, KCMG, QC, MP, Speaker of the House of Representatives; and officers from the National Capital Development Commission and from the Parliament who assisted the Joint Committee in the preparation of a most comprehensive and detailed brief for the competition;
- (c) the Competition Steering Committee set up to advise the assessors on the functional content of the second stage designs of the five finalists—together with their various advisers from the Executive, Parliament, media and elsewhere—for a most comprehensive and informative report on the functional capabilities of each of the finalists' designs;
- (d) the technical advisers from various sources including the Commonwealth Department of Housing and Construction, the National Capital Development Commission and private practice, who provided specialist advice on a wide range of issues including security, traffic, planning matters, engineering aspects, cost and buildability, and whose advice was a significant element in the assessment process.

7.2 The assessors also wish to specially thank and commend the competition Registrar, Mr J. D. Fowler, for his splendid organisation and administration of the competition in the interests of the promoter, the architectural profession and the general public. We are also indebted to Mr Fowler's staff who worked long hours in support of the assessors.

7.3 We acknowledge further the valuable co-operation of Mr D. Bailey, the Director of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects, the Institute's Competition Committee and successive presidents of the RAI A, particularly Mr J. Davidson and Mr G. Lumsdaine, in the preparation of the competition conditions and the conduct of the competition.

7.4 Finally, but by no means least, the assessors wish to place on record their indebtedness for the immense time and effort devoted to the preparation of entries, not only by the five finalists in their second stage designs, but also—and even more particularly—by the 329 members of the architectural profession and their associated professional advisers in preparing their entries for the first stage of the competition.

They have contributed, as always in competitions of this kind, a storehouse of ideas which future generations of architects will ponder with pleasure.

Sir John Overall (Chairman)

John Andrews

Senator Gareth Evans

I. M. Pei

Barry Simon, MP

Professor Leonard Stevens

25 June 1980

APPENDIX A

Certification by Registrar

I, JOHN DUNBAR FOWLER, Competition Registrar appointed by the Parliament House Construction Authority as the Promoter for and on behalf of the Commonwealth Government, hereby certify as follows:

1. The Assessors appointed to advise the Promoter on the conduct of the Competition for the Parliament House to be constructed on Capital Hill, Canberra have at all times acted pursuant to and in accordance with the conditions and instructions approved by the Promoter for the conduct of the competition.
2. The Conditions as to anonymity of competition competitors set out in the Competition Code of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects have been respected and strictly adhered to by the Assessors at all material times during the conduct of the competition.
3. In all respects the Competition has at all times and in all circumstances been conducted in confidence, with impartiality and with equity to all competitors.

DATED this 26th day of June 1980.

JOHN DUNBAR FOWLER
REGISTRAR

Identification of finalists

On Thursday 26 June 1980 at 10.40 a.m. the Chairman of the panel of assessors, Sir John Overall, advised the competition Registrar that the assessors had unanimously selected design number 177 as the winner of the Parliament House competition.

The Chairman of assessors thereupon handed to the Chairman of the Parliament House Construction Authority, Sir Bernard Callinan, an envelope identified only as number 177 containing all relevant particulars relating to the nominated architect and the firm of architects with whom he is associated.

It was announced that the nominated architect in competition entry No. 177 was Richard Thorp and the firm is Mitchell Giurgola Thorp, Architects.

The competition Registrar then opened the remaining four envelopes, identified only as Nos 45, 139, 201 and 234. The relevant particulars announced by Sir Bernard Callinan were as follows:

Design No. 45: Nominated architect: John Bickerdike
Firm: Bickerdike Allen Simovic

Design No. 139: Nominated architect: John Denton
Firm: Denton Corker Marshall Pty Ltd

Design No. 201: Nominated architect: Chris Waite
Firm: Parsons and Waite, Architects

Design No. 234: Nominated architect: Col Madigan
Firm: Edwards Madigan Torzillo Briggs International Pty Ltd

All of the proceedings here described were conducted in the Becker Theatre at the Royal Academy of Science in Canberra, A.C.T. before members of the Parliament House Construction Authority, the assessors, members of the Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, the President of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects, members of the media and other invited members of the public.

26 June 1980