

A Grand Boulevard For Washington

HUXTAB, ADA LOUISE

New York Times (1923-Current file); May 31, 1964; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The New York Times
pg. SM8



TODAY'S DISORDER—Pennsylvania Avenue (looking toward the Capitol) is, today, an indiscriminate cluster of commercial buildings on one side, huge Government structures on the other.

A Grand Boulevard For Washington

FROM the White House at No. 1600 to Capitol Hill, the pageant of American history has passed along Washington's Pennsylvania Avenue. When it was only a rough road, Thomas Jefferson rode horseback along it to his first inaugural. In March, 1865, Abraham Lincoln rode its length to plead for reconciliation, "With malice toward none, with charity for all"; a month later, it was the scene of the martyred President's funeral. In January, 1961, John F. Kennedy rolled in triumph to his inaugural to call for a new beginning. And only six months ago, the avenue echoed to the muffled drums and hoofbeats of his slow, mournful cortege.

During his inaugural parade, Mr. Kennedy was appalled by the seediness he saw along much of the great boulevard. He ordered a Presidential commission to come up with designs to re-establish Pennsylvania Avenue's grandeur. A study begun in 1962 has just been finished. "The avenue," says the study, "should do honor to its lofty destinations."

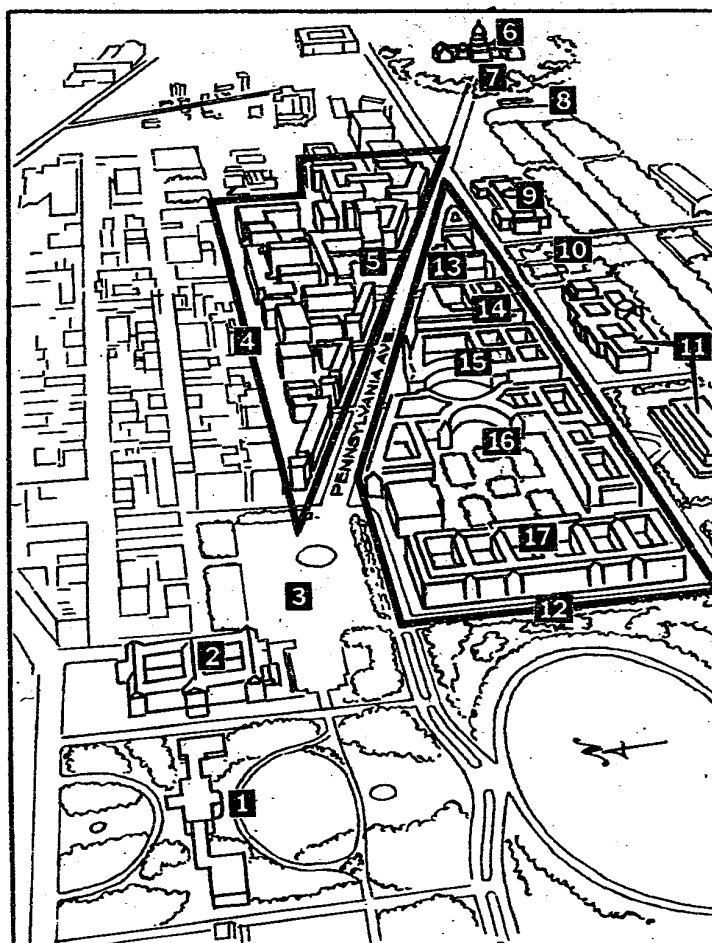
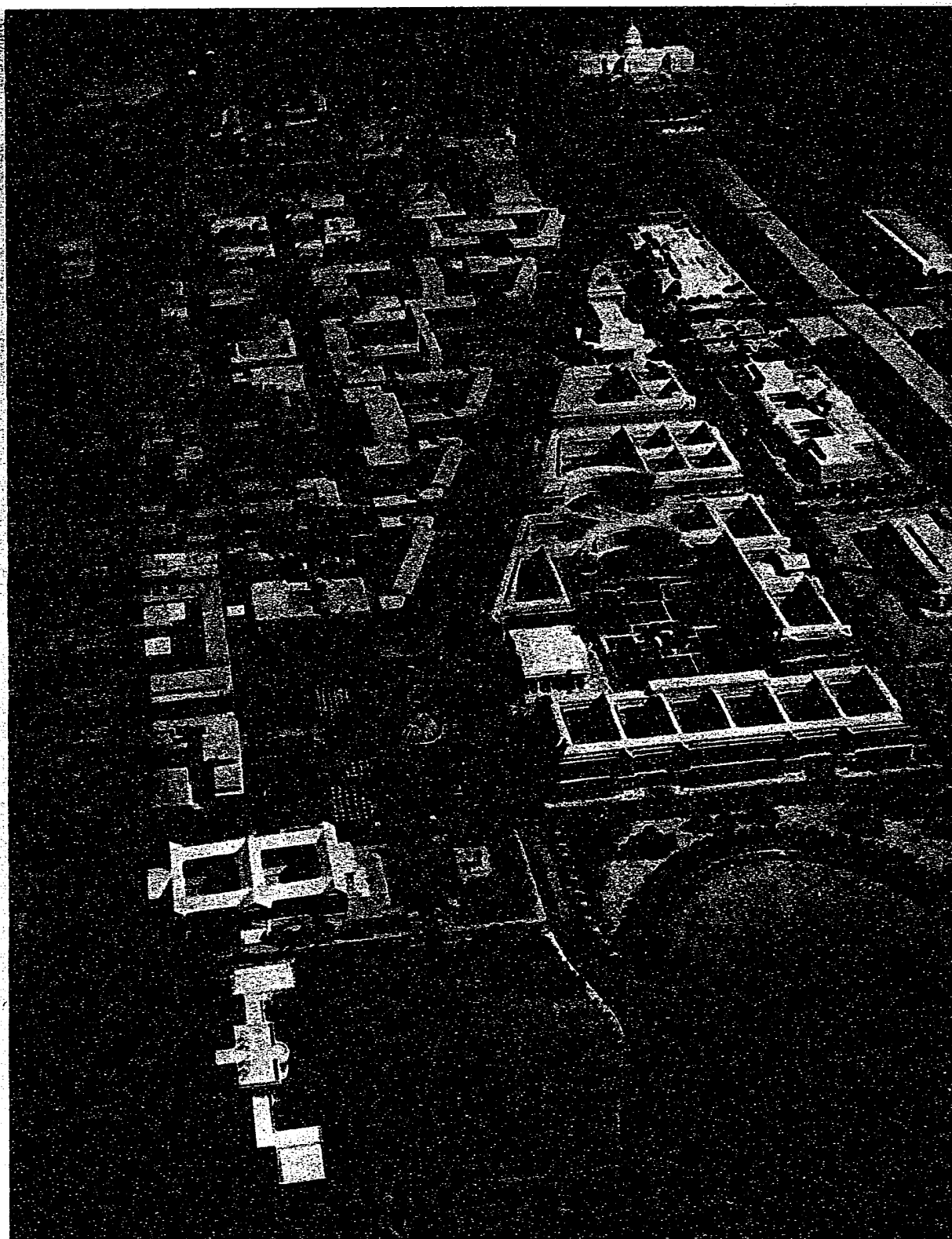
Basically, the plan divides the avenue into three sections for redevelopment. At the White House end, the commercial buildings along 15th Street will be cleared away and a huge new National Square will be constructed. The square will be a pedestrians' gathering place with shops and cafes. It will have a direct access to the White House through a ceremonial gate.

At the Capitol end, a large reflecting pool will be set into the foot of the Mall, and the circle where Pennsylvania Avenue begins will be enlarged.

The north side of the avenue, now filled with second-rate hotels and souvenir stores, will be completely redeveloped, with architecturally unified commercial and government structures and plazas. The south side of the avenue, now lined with monumental government buildings, will remain essentially unchanged.

Pennsylvania Avenue itself will be widened and its sidewalks will be lined with trees and "stepped up" into three tiers for a grandstand-like effect to permit "participating in the triumphs and tragedies of the American people."

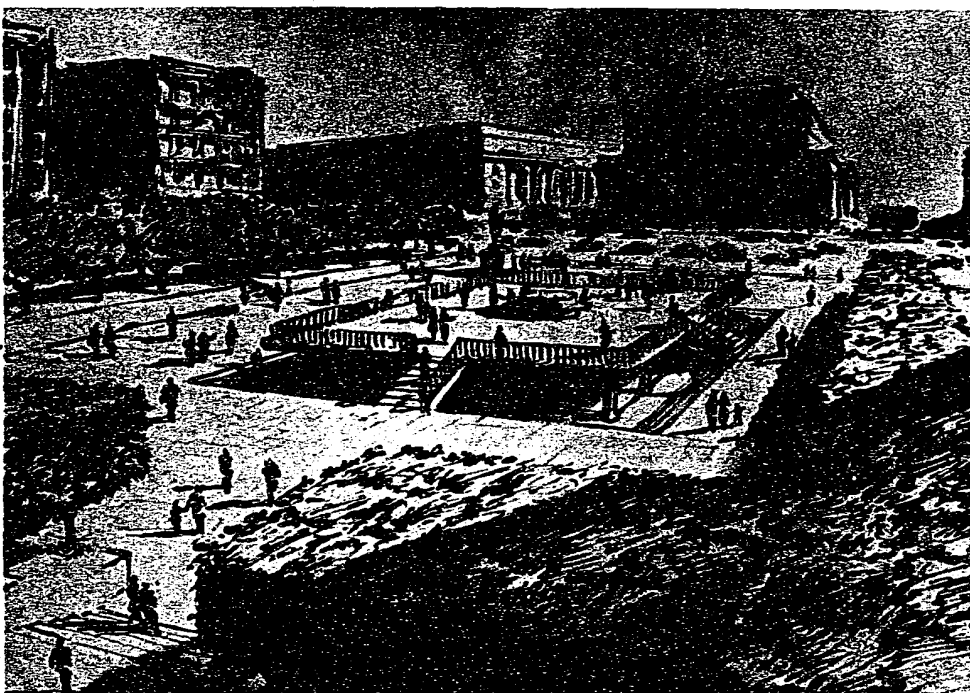
This immensely ambitious project will take 40 years and \$500 million to complete, assuming that Congress sets up the administrative authority and appropriates the funds. It would complete Pierre Charles L'Enfant's vision of a monumental city of formal elegance. —ADA LOUISE HUXTABLE.



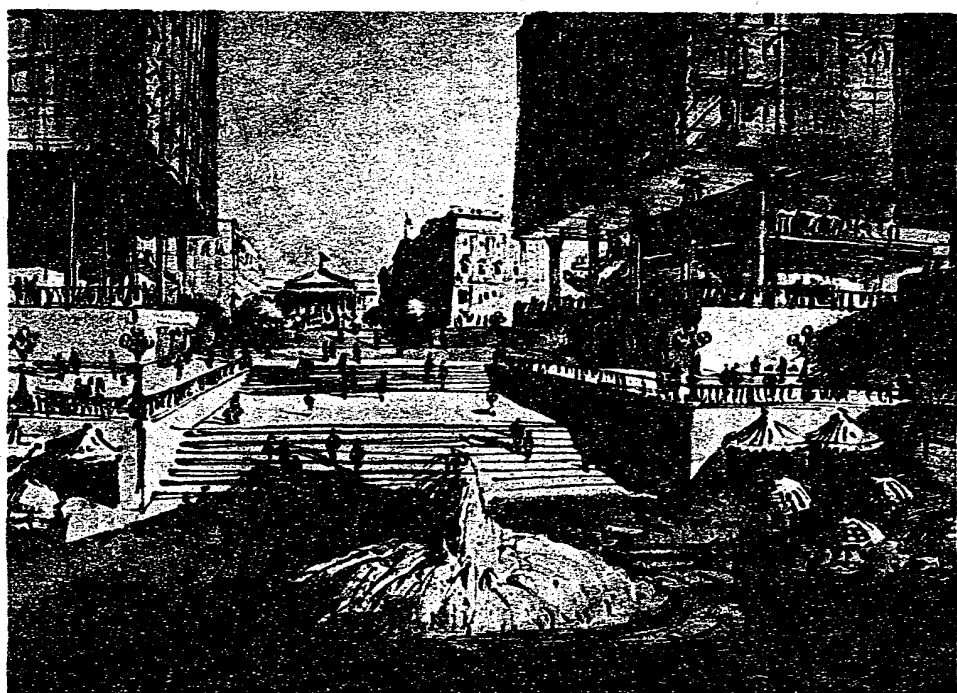
TODAY AND TOMORROW—The model, above, of the Pennsylvania Avenue area shows present and projected landmarks: (1) The White House and grounds; (2) Treasury Department Building; (3) the new National Square, with a large fountain and outdoor cafes; (4) the new Northern Triangle with modern government, office and commercial structures and, within this reconstructed triangle, (5) a large new Market Square; (6) the Capitol; (7) the Capitol Mall; (8) a new Reflecting Pool at the juncture of Pennsylvania Avenue and the Mall; (9) the National Gallery; (10) a new Sculpture Garden for the National Gallery; (11) the Smithsonian Institution; (12) the Federal Triangle containing (13) the Archives Building, (14) the Department of Justice Building, (15) Internal Revenue Service, (16) the Post Office and the Department of Labor, and (17) the Department of Commerce.



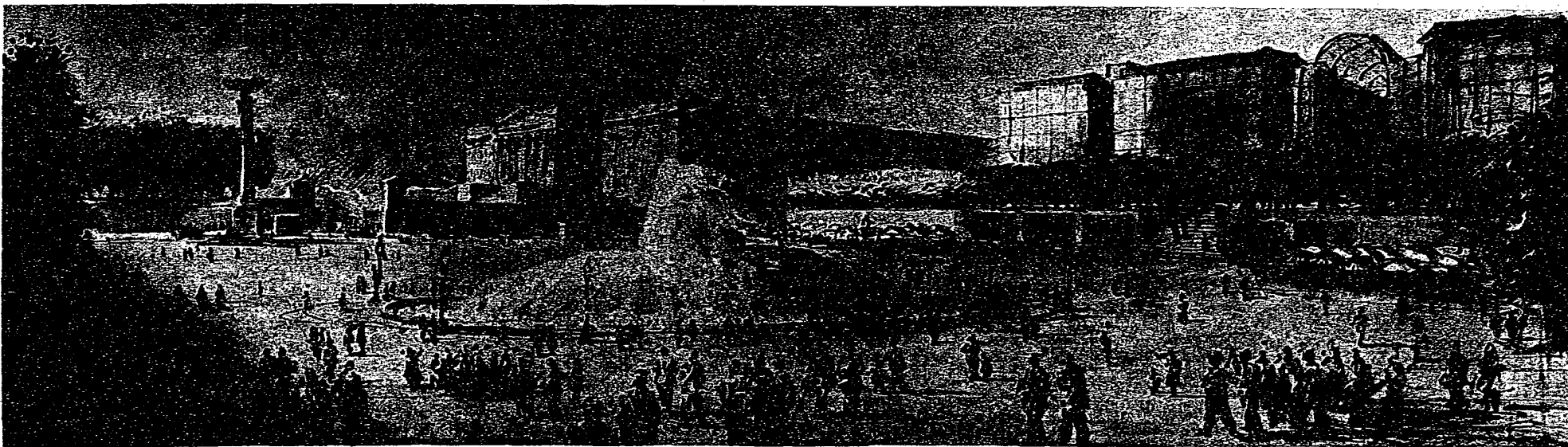
CAPITOL VISTA—As the artist's rendering shows, the Capitol dome will be mirrored in a new reflecting pool, to be installed where the Capitol Mall and Pennsylvania Avenue meet.



CENTRAL VISTA—The new Market Square (left), across Pennsylvania Avenue from the Archives Building, will become a major focal point on the north side of the avenue. It will contain an outdoor exhibition area underneath the raised central plaza to display historic



documents. To the north of Market Square (right), a promenade set with fountains will lead between new commercial buildings, replete with arcades, shops and cafes, to the National Portrait Gallery, currently being remodeled from the old U.S. Patent Office.



WHITE HOUSE VISTA—The huge National Square would be almost as large as the Place de la Concorde. The artist's conception looks toward the Treasury Building; the White House is out

of sight beyond, reached through a ceremonial gate in the long wall. At right are commercial buildings with shopping gallery. The paved plaza has cafes and a fountain.