

A \$58 Million Mistake

If the ways of government were not endlessly inscrutable, it would be hard to believe that the members of the House have approved an extension of the West Front of the Capitol, after experts have begged, pleaded, reasoned, and inveighed against this ill-considered plan. What these gentlemen have endorsed by a close vote is bad architecture, bad restoration, bad planning, bad policy, bad politics, and atrocious economics.

Surely it is some kind of poor joke to fund an extravagant \$58 million mistake when social programs are being cut down like weeds and economy has become the Administration's watchword. Connoisseurs of perverse humor will be able to watch subsequent appropriations as that sum inevitably goes higher for what must already be the worst bargain in space per dollar in recorded building history. And that in no way reckons the final destruction of remains of the original stones of a national landmark and Olmsted's landscaped terraces. It is up to the Senate to stop this affront against art and reason.