

# NEW MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS DESIGN FOR BUILDING

## Comment on Site:

No choice has been made of a site for the new building and if the central government should copy the civic government no choice will be made for some years. The need for a green spot as a gracious location for the diplomatic hub is vital, however: atmosphere is everything in diplomacy. A bold decision is required. The penchant of External Affairs and diplomats for the salubrity of Rockcliffe Park makes it logical to suggest that Rideau Hall be expropriated and the new building erected on that site. It is not the business of the External Affairs planners to suggest alternate accommodation for His Excellency the Governor General.

## Description:

In considering the problem of design for a new East Block a planner is faced by a number of difficulties which are indeed hard to overcome. Principal among these are the liking of other departments for the space occupied by the Department of External Affairs. In an endeavour to achieve the lofty level of thought which is erroneously attributed to the influence of 14' ceilings, and/or the stimulus of many square yards of green, orange and black linoleum (picked out delicately by scarlet and chromium ash-tray stands), various other departments have already made savage inroads on External Affairs space in the existing East Block. No doubt some elevation will be achieved by these departments when the existing colour scheme is revitalized by the spread of crimson felt along the hallways. However, the problem to be met in designing a new building is to prevent future invasions when the magic of the old East Block is discovered to be illusory. This has been handled in the attached by a return to the historical basis of diplomacy - the fortress - coupled with equally ancient weapons of defence. A windowless building (3) having one entrance, and only one, has been allowed; this is suitably guarded by a moat, filled with crocodiles (7), a drawbridge and a portcullis (6) of suitable viciousness, the latter two being electronically operated by a device made sensitive to the approach of acquisitive members of the Privy Council, the Prime Minister's

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