

AN INTOWN OFFICE  
BUILDING FOR THE  
INTERNATIONAL LABOUR  
ORGANISATION

submitted in partial  
fulfillment of the  
requirements for the  
degree of Bachelor in  
Architecture

Massachusetts Institute  
of Technology

May 16, 1952

**Signature redacted**

David D. Wallace

Lawrence B. Anderson  
Professor in charge of  
the department

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Letter of Submittal . . . . .	i
Acknowledgements . . . . .	ii
The International Labour Organisation . . . . .	1
The Statement of the Problem . . . . .	9
The Program . . . . .	11
Site Selection . . . . .	21
Planning Considerations . . . . .	27
Bibliography . . . . .	29

420 Memorial Drive  
Cambridge, Massachusetts  
16 May 1952

Pietro Belluschi  
Dean of Architecture  
The Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Dear Dean Belluschi:

In partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of  
Bachelor in Architecture, I herewith submit my thesis,  
"AN IN-TOWN OFFICE BUILDING FOR THE I.L.O."

Respectfully,  
**Signature redacted**

David D. Wallace

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express my appreciation to those who have been generous with their time and criticisms during the preparation of this thesis:

Mr. Snowden Herrick, Public Relations Officer at the I.L.O. Liaison Office in New York.

Miss Lee Packman, Administrative Assistant at the I.L.O. Liaison Office in New York.

Miss June A. Feuer, of the I.L.O. Liaison Office in New York.

The staff members of the Department of Architecture, M.I.T. for their patience and helpful guidance.

To Professor Lawrence B. Anderson, Head of Department of Architecture at M.I.T. sincere thanks for the help and understanding during my stay at M.I.T.

## THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANISATION

- The International Labour Organisation is one of the Specialised Agencies which are associated with the United Nations to maintain peace and further human progress.

The Organisation's purpose is to improve working and living conditions throughout the world, and thus provide the basis for universal and lasting peace.

The I.L.O. is an organization of Governments, but, in contrast to the other Specialised Agencies, representatives of unofficial organizations--those of workers and employers--share, on an equal footing, with Governments in the framing of its policies and programs.

The I.L.O. was established in 1919 by the Peace Conference as an autonomous body associated with the League of Nations. Its Constitution became operative April 11, 1919. In 1946, it became associated with the United Nations as a Specialised Agency under the terms of an agreement which recognized the responsibility of the I.L.O. in the field of labor and social conditions.

### Aims and Purposes

The Organisation's objective is to raise working and living standards throughout the world. In so doing, it seeks to eliminate the social injustices, with their consequence in unrest, which constitute a cause of war.

The purposes of the Organisation were stated in the original Constitution and reaffirmed in the Declaration adopted in 1944. This Declaration

- 
- From "The International Labour Organisation, a Reference Handbook", published by the International Labour Office, Geneva, May 1951.

sets forth a number of specific objectives. It declares that it shall be a solemn obligation of the I.L.O. to further among the nations programs to achieve the following:

- (1) Full employment and the raising of living standards.
- (2) The employment of workers in the jobs for which they are best fitted.
- (3) The provision of facilities for the training and transfer of workers.
- (4) Policies in regard to working conditions calculated to assure a just share of the fruits of progress to all.
- (5) The effective recognition of the right of collective bargaining, and the cooperation of management and labor.
- (6) The extension of social security.
- (7) The protection of the worker's life and health.
- (8) The provision of child welfare and maternity protection.
- (9) The provision of adequate nutrition, housing and facilities for recreation and culture.
- (10) The assurance of educational and vocational opportunity.

### Structure

The I.L.O. has three basic parts:

- (1) The General Conference, which normally meets once a year.
- (2) The Governing Body, which functions as an executive council.
- (3) The International Labour Office, which is the permanent secretariat.

There are, in addition, a number of supplementary committees and commissions which operate in particular fields within the Organisation's scope. The General Conference, the Governing Body and most of the other organs are composed of representatives of Governments, workers and employers.

## The General Conference

The General Conference is composed of national delegations comprising two Government delegates, one worker delegate and one employer delegate. The worker and employer delegates are chosen by the Government in agreement with the most representative worker and employer organizations of the country.

The principal function of the Conference is the formulation of international minimum standards of working and living conditions. These standards are embodied in international labor Conventions and in Recommendations. For adoption, they must be approved by two-thirds of the delegates present.

As part of their obligation as members of the Organisation, Governments are required to bring Conventions to the attention of their national authorities to be considered for ratification. After a Government ratifies a Convention, it reports annually to the I.L.O. on the measures it is taking to give effect to it, and furnishes copies of these reports to the most representative workers' and employers' organizations.

Recommendations do not have to be considered for ratification, but Governments are under obligation to consider giving effect to their provisions. Governments also report periodically on the position of their law and practice in relation to unratified Conventions and to Recommendations.

Other functions of the General Conference include the election of members of the Governing Body, the adoption of an annual budget to finance the Organisation's work, the examination of the manner in which Conventions and Recommendations are being implemented, and the formulation of policy on questions referred to it by the Governing Body or raised by the delegates.

### The Governing Body

The Governing Body, or executive council, is composed of 32 members, of which 16 are representatives of Governments, 8 of workers and 8 of employers. Eight of the Government seats are held by the eight countries which are of chief industrial importance, and the other eight are filled by election.

Among the Governing Body's functions are the general supervision of the work of the International Labour Office, the formulation of policies and programs, the supervision of the Organisation's various committees and commissions, the fixing of the agenda of the General Conference to the extent that it is not determined by the Conference itself, the drafting of proposals for the budget, and the appointment of the Director-General of the International Labour Office.

### The International Labour Office

The Office comprises the permanent staff of the Organisation. It is housed at Geneva, Switzerland, in a building erected by the Organisation in 1926. Branch offices are maintained at London, New Delhi, Ottawa, Paris, Rome, Shanghai and Washington, and there are full or part-time correspondents in a large number of other countries. There is a liaison office with the United Nations at New York.

The Office provides the secretariat for the sessions of the General Conference and the Governing Body and for other meetings and conferences. It prepares documentation for the meetings of the Organisation, publishes a variety of periodicals, studies and reports on social and economic questions, and collects and distributes information on matters within the Organisation's competence. It supplies advice and assistance, on request, to Governments, and to workers', employers' and other organizations. It conducts such special investigations as may be ordered by



the Conference or the Governing Body or requested by Governments. It provides machinery to assist in the effective application of Conventions.

It is directed by a Director-General. His responsibilities include the appointment of the staff, the framing of proposals for the consideration of the Governing Body, the drafting of proposals for the budget, and the discharge of other responsibilities assigned to him by the Conference or the Governing Body.

The officials of the Office are pledged not to seek or accept instructions from any external authority.

The staff comprises about 550 officials of 50 nationalities.

The Office is organized in a number of Divisions and Services, each of which reports to an Assistant Director-General or directly to the Director-General.

### Membership

The original members of the Organisation were the original members of the League of Nations, and membership in the League carried with it membership in the I.L.O. Between 1919 and 1945, the Organisation also admitted to membership some States, including the United States in 1934, which were not members of the League. The present Constitution declares that the members are those States which were members on November 1, 1945, and those which join the Organisation under the terms of the Constitution. These provide that a member of the United Nations may become a member of the I.L.O. by accepting the obligations of membership, and that the admission of non-members of the United Nations must be approved by the General Conference.

The membership comprises the following 65 States:

Afghanistan	El Salvador	Mexico
Albania	Ethiopia	Netherlands
Argentina	Finland	New Zealand
Australia	France	Norway
Austria	German Federal Republic	Pakistan
Belgium	Greece	Panama
Bolivia	Guatemala	Peru
Brazil	Haiti	Philippine Republic
Bulgaria	Hungary	Poland
Burma	Iceland	Portugal
Canada	India	Sweden
Ceylon	Indonesia	Switzerland
Chile	Iran	Syria
China	Iraq	Thailand
Colombia	Ireland	Turkey
Costa Rica	Israel	Union of South Africa
Cuba	Italy	United Kingdom
Czechoslovakia	Japan	United States
Denmark	Lebanon	Uruguay
Dominican Republic	Liberia	Venezuela
Ecuador	Luxembourg	Viet Nam
Egypt		Yugoslavia

#### Budget

The operations of the Organisation are financed by a budget which is voted annually by the General Conference, and which is apportioned among the member Governments according to a scale of contributions approved by the Conference. The expenditure budget for 1951 was \$5,973,789.

#### Cooperation with other International Organizations

The Charter that brought the United Nations into being on October 24, 1945 contained a provision which said that Specialised Agencies set up by inter-governmental agreement should be brought into relationship with the U.N. The I.L.O. was the first agency with which the United Nations established such a relationship.

The agreement recognizes the I.L.O. "as a Specialised Agency responsible for taking such action as may be appropriate under its basic instrument for the accomplishment of the purposes set forth therein". It then

goes on to set forth the ways in which the two organizations shall cooperate. The United Nations has similar agreements with other Specialised Agencies.

These understandings, together with certain machinery that has been constructed within the framework of the United Nations Economic and Social Council, provide the basis upon which the work of the U.N. and the Specialised Agencies is coordinated.

This coordination is of the closest kind. Every effort is constantly made to assure that the activities of the U.N. and the Specialised Agencies do not overlap wastefully. The machinery of coordination makes it possible to be sure that when an international job has to be done the agency which is best equipped to do it, gets the assignment. It also makes possible concentrated attacks, sometimes involving several agencies, on particular world problems.

The work of coordination is done on two interlocking levels. One of these is what can be called the "secretariat level". Here there is an Administrative Committee on Coordination, composed of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the administrative heads of the Specialised Agencies. This Committee meets frequently, and takes decisions within the area of responsibility of the chief administrative officers of the various organizations.

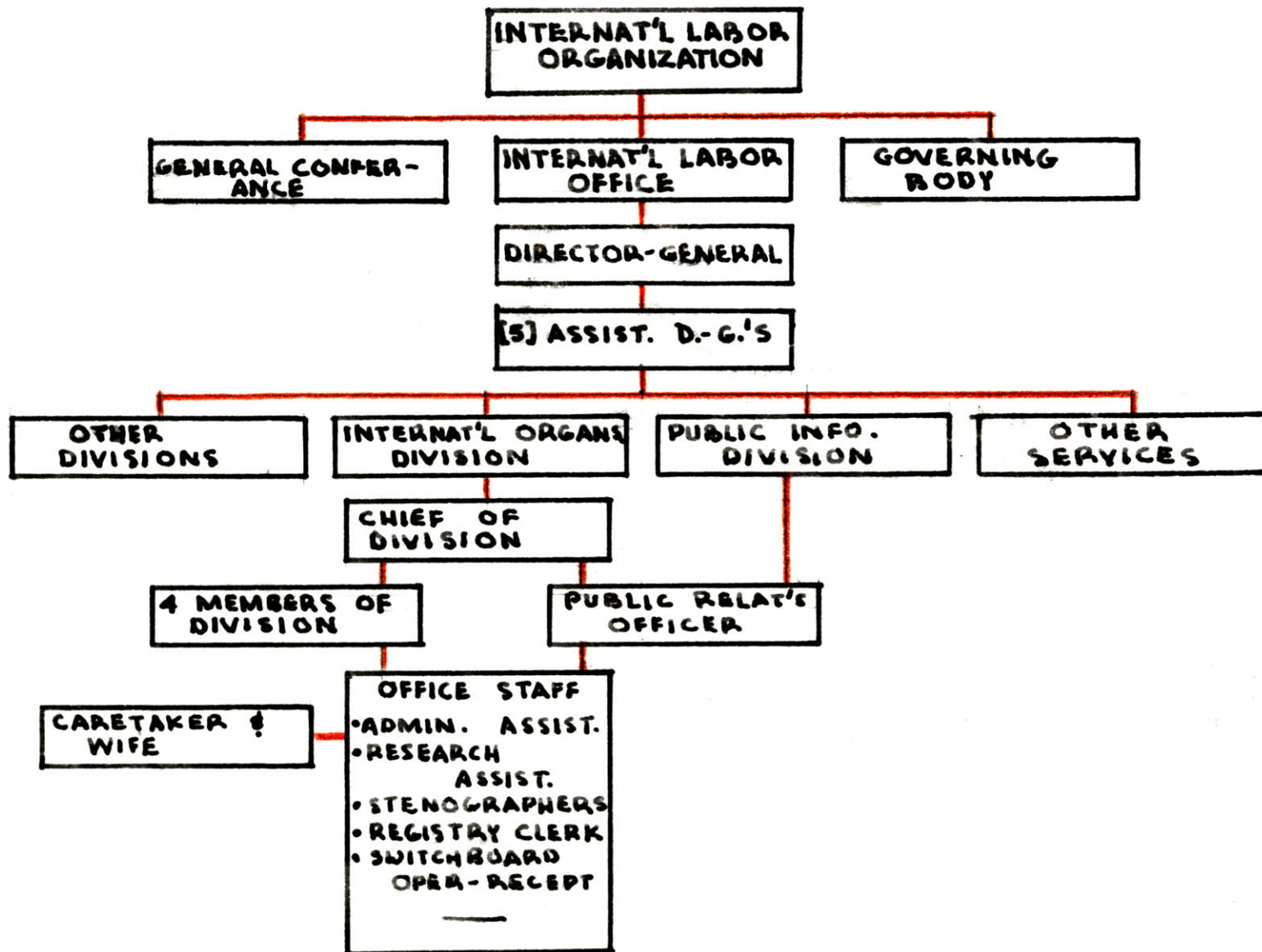
The Committee's reports go to the Economic and Social Council and to the responsible organs of the Specialised Agencies. At the same time, the Council receives regular reports from the Specialised Agencies. It is thus equipped to discharge the responsibility, given it by the United Nations Charter, of coordinating international action in the area of economic and social policy.

In addition to the agreements linking the Specialised Agencies with the United Nations, there are a number of agreements between various of the Specialised Agencies. The I.L.O. has three of these understandings--with the Food and Agriculture Organisation, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, and the World Health Organisation. They provide for cooperative activity in certain fields, and define the responsibilities of the agencies in areas where there may be danger of effort being duplicated. There is a similar agreement between the I.L.O. and the Organization of American States.

The International Organisations Division of the I.L.O. serves as the Liaison Office of the I.L.O. with the United Nations and with other Specialised Agencies. Members of this Division represent the I.L.O. at conferences held by the U.N. and the Specialised Agencies. These representatives then submit reports of the meetings to Headquarters at Geneva. All during such meetings, the Liaison Office keeps in constant touch with Geneva. The Office, is, in a sense, an embassy of the I.L.O.

The Liaison Office also serves as an office for the Director-General and the Assistant Directors-General when they are attending Administrative Committee meetings or Council meetings at the United Nations in New York.

Still another function of this office is to furnish I.L.O. documents, reports and periodicals, along with research assistance, to any U.N. organ or official requesting such material.



## THE PROBLEM

The present quarters of the Liaison Office is at North Hills, Long Island, New York. This is approximately two miles from the Sperry Gyroscope Plant, at Lake Success, which temporarily housed the U.N. Secretariat and General Assembly before their movement to the permanent site in New York City. The U.N. is now twenty miles from North Hills.

By the nature of their work, it is necessary for the Liaison Office to be in the proximity of the U.N. site. Therefore, the office has been forced to move into the city.

This thesis concerns itself with the design of an in-town office for the I.L.O. I have divided this problem into three parts: the program and determination of space needs, the selection of a site, and the design.

The programing has presented certain challenges which carry the problem beyond the contemporary small office building. Aside from knowing the office machinery and finding the most efficient way of having it function, there were certain unusual and wonderful conditions which I felt had to be met.

First, the I.L.O. office at North Hills provides an excellent environment for good office spirit. Amenities are provided there which encourage healthy relationships among personnel of all levels. (such as enjoying dinner together and relaxing afterwards). A new office not providing room for continuation of these activities might in a few years destroy this spirit.

Second, the I.L.O. has, from time to time, written reports and passed Recommendations and Conventions establishing ideal minimum working

conditions both for industry and for offices and shops. They have just recently published a report entitled "Hygiene in Shops and Offices". This booklet sets standards and suggestions which, I felt, should certainly be met in their own office.

Therefore, while some of the amenities called for in the program might seem absurd for a building of this size, they may, in twenty years, prove to be the rule rather than the exception.

## THE PROGRAM

The I.L.O. office at North Hills occupies a 24-room mansion. It is a three story building which, if the basement is included, has a floor area of nearly 20,000 sq. ft. I have estimated that 60% of this space is used efficiently for the functioning of the office. The entire second floor is put to office use, plus a living suite for the Director-General when he is in New York. Other facilities include a library, dining and kitchen spaces and a caretakers apartment. The remaining 40% consists of grand and spacious, but little used, drawing rooms, etc.

The office has many amenities which are difficult to attain in an urban area. The large amount of green area around the building provides space in which to relax during lunch hour. The time for lunch varies from one-half hour to one and one-half hours, depending upon the amount of work to be done. In general, there is usually time enough to take advantage of the location.

The Swedish couple who act as chauffeur, cook and caretakers, prepare the noon meal for the staff. This is unusual for an office of this size (12 - 15 workers). There are two reasons for it. One is because of their location. There are no suitable eating places closer than two miles from their site. The second is that the facilities for cooking were already in the building when it was purchased. I think it would be ideal to continue the practice in a new building, because eating at the same table has led to an office unity and friendship. Without this daily informal gathering, this spirit might deteriorate. There is a second informal gathering in the late afternoon when the staff has tea.



The method for arriving at a program and a quantitative statement of space requirements was an analyzation of the following data and material:

1. The observation of the present office structure and function, as well as the actual areas occupied, as affects crowding of workers, storage of records, etc.
2. Growth tendency.
3. Information from interviews of employees, relative to their activities, relations with the public, relations to the functions within the office, filing and storage problems, special facilities needed and probable future development.
4. Reference to I.L.O. office standards, etc.

The following paragraphs describe the inner workings of the office, accounting for the employees' jobs and the spaces they need for fulfilling them.

The Chief of Division is in charge of the office. The Members of Division are under his general supervision. Besides attending meetings at the U.N. and writing reports, he reviews all incoming and outgoing reports and documents. Most of his work is done either in his office or at the U.N. He only occasionally has visitors. He keeps current (one or two years back) copies of I.L.O. periodical publications, social security books and reference books in his office.

His office should contain one desk, two chairs and an easy chair, 120 linear feet of book space and two filing cabinets. The room should be isolated from other office noises.

The Members of Division conduct the actual liaison work between the I.L.O. and the United Nations and the other Specialised Agencies. They receive their instructions from Geneva, then attend the conferences at the U.N. They then prepare reports which are sent back to Geneva.

There are now three Members of Division but their number is expected to be increased to four within a few years. There are usually more conferences going on than there are Members of Division to attend them. The conferences, then, are divided into areas of interest with the Members of Division and the Chief each taking one such area.

Because of the nature of their work it is most necessary that each Member of Division has his own office. It should contain: one desk, two chairs, one easy chair, 18 linear feet of book space and two filing cabinets.

The Public Relations Officer is in charge of I.L.O. publicity in the United States. He keeps in close contact with the Public Information Division in Geneva. He has an office at the U.N. Headquarters, as well as one in the I.L.O. building.

At his U.N. office, he makes press releases and furnishes information to U.N. organs and officials. At his I.L.O. office, he writes reports and letters and meets with people who desire general information.

His office should be convenient for visitors. It should have: one desk, two chairs, two easy chairs, two filing cabinets and 18 linear feet of book space.

The Administrative Assistant manages the office and the building. She takes care of all office accounts, makes arrangements for living quarters for visiting members from Geneva and arranges transportation for them, etc. She occasionally has to interview chauffeurs and see repair and maintenance men.

In this office there is need for: one desk, two chairs, two easy chairs, work space for an adding machine, two filing cabinets, a safe (2' x 2') and 18 linear feet of book space.

Under present conditions, there are three stenographers on the staff. They handle the large number of written reports and letters. One of these stenographers operates the switchboard, and the filing of the many U.N. and I.L.O. documents and publications is divided among the other two, the registry clerk and the research assistant.

The establishment of the office in the city will call for an additional girl. A receptionist--switchboard operator should be located near the street entrance to receive and direct visitors.

This will lighten the load on the stenographers who will have more work to do now that the U.N. Secretariat and General Assembly buildings have been completed. This means that a greater number of meetings will now be held in New York City than in the past, requiring more work for the I.L.O. staff in New York. Formerly, when the meetings were held elsewhere, such as the recent General Assembly meeting in Paris, more of the Geneva staff were called upon to attend these meetings.

At North Hills the stenographers are all in one large room. This is found to be a satisfactory arrangement because the work is "pooled" and whenever a stenographer is needed for dictation, whichever one is the least busy can take it.

Their room should contain: three desks, three chairs and a supply room should be located nearby. In the supply room, space for a mimeograph machine and a dictaphone should be provided.

The Registry Clerk and the Research Assistant, it is felt, should share the same room or be located near each other because much of their work is related.

The Office receives a daily packet of dispatches and documents from Geneva and five cardboard boxes of documents from the U.N. each week.

It is the Registry Clerk's job to read all general mail and to initial to whom it should go. She attaches to this mail background material (past correspondence and pertinent information) which is kept in the registry files and in the subject files. She then distributes personal mail and gives all the general mail to the Chief of Division, who reads it and passes it along to the appropriate Member of Division. They study and work on it and then, with the help of the stenographers, write the necessary reports and letters. The finished work then goes back to the Chief for approval. The Registry Clerk picks up the work from the Chief and separates the copies for the New York and Geneva Registries and prepares them for mailing.

The Research Assistant handles all requests from the U.N., Washington and Geneva for documents and information about the I.L.O. She also obtains necessary information for the Members of Division from the files or from outside sources. It is convenient if she reads all incoming documents, since she has to be kept up to date on all subjects.

There are five filing cabinets needed for the Registry Clerk. These contain subject files of all correspondence and typewritten reports dating back several years.

Twenty-five cabinets are needed for the Research Assistant's files, which contain mimeographed documents in English, French and Spanish of the U.N. Councils and commissions, the Specialised Agencies, the U.S. State Department and the I.L.O. Governing Body and committee meetings.

In addition, there should be room in the basement for 50 filing cabinets for dead storage. In these are kept old documents of Council meetings. The dead storage documents are seldom referred to.

The Research Assistant also takes care of the library. The library exists for reference work of the I.L.O. and U.N. employees and for the public. It contains all League of Nations documents, all the publications of the I.L.O. (in English, French and Spanish, the three working languages), dictionaries, reference books (i.e. Who's Who, Yearbook of International Organizations, Diplomatic Lists, etc.) and Official Records of the U.N. Councils and of the other Specialised Agencies. In addition, there are miscellaneous publications which are concerned with the I.L.O. or the U.N.

The present library has approximately 3,000 volumes. The rate of expansion is 100 bound volumes and 50 unbound volumes and pamphlets each year. Therefore, it is considered necessary to provide room for 6,000 volumes.

Connected with the library (either vertically or horizontally), there should be a room large enough to hold 40 4-foot metal shelf sections. These are to hold a supply of I.L.O. publications for free distribution to the U.N. or to the Specialised Agencies. They currently have only 27 such shelf sections, but the number of pamphlets is expected to increase.

It is estimated that there would be from six to twelve visitors interested in using the library each week. Therefore, the Research Assistant would have to be there only at short intervals. An arrangement where the receptionist can act as a control over the library is desirable.

The Director-General of the International Labour Office spends one or two months each year at the New York Office, depending upon the length and number of conferences he has to attend.

The Director-General's suite includes his own office with one large desk, two chairs, three or four easy chairs, tables, and book space. It should not be a pretentious room. Adjacent to his office, there should be a bathroom and a bedroom, where he can stay if he so desires.

The Board Room should be located near the Director-General's office. This is a meeting room, including a conference table for ten men. A small serving area for snacks and tea is also desirable.

Space for the Director-General's secretary should be provided near his office. The secretary will need a desk, two chairs and two filing cabinets, plus storage space. From time to time the Assistant Directors-General come to New York to attend meetings. There are rarely more than two Assistant Directors-General or one Assistant and the Director-General there at one time. Therefore, the Director-General's office or the boardroom can serve as their work space, thus getting double use out of these spaces.

A lounge for the staff is considered a necessity. This space should provide a place to sit and relax and also a place for the office staff to eat their noon dinner. A kitchen large enough for the preparation of hot lunches must open off this space.

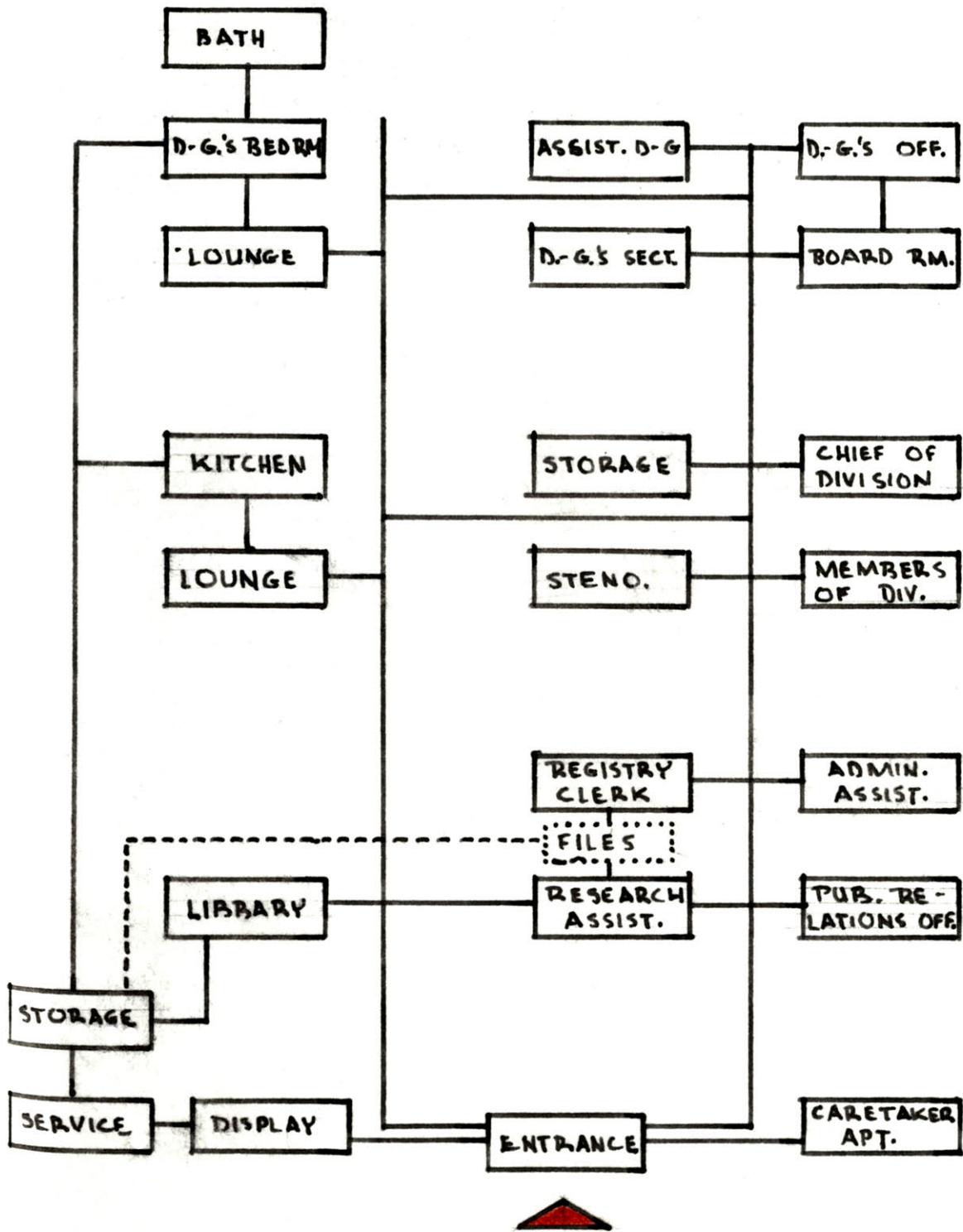
A caretaker's apartment must also be provided. The husband is the Office chauffeur and maintenance man while his wife does the cooking and helps with some of the cleaning. Their apartment should contain: a living area, food preparation space, a bedroom and a bathroom.

Display space, which would best be combined with the entrance lobby and receiving area, is very desirable. This is especially true, since, with the Office in the city for the first time, curious New Yorkers will be continuously dropping in for information. It is to the Office's advantage to get its work before the public eye.

Rest rooms and miscellaneous spaces such as slop sinks and storage closets should be provided for on each floor.

It is possible that the functions of the I.L.O. may ultimately expand; requiring more office space for an increased personnel. On a limited site, it will be difficult to meet this expansion. One way it can be met is to provide an office plan with flexibility. This means a simple framing structure so that partitions can be arranged freely inside.

The function of some of the spaces may be made to change if space demands become tight. The Director-General's bedroom or the lounge area might have its use changed to office space.



CIRCULATION DIAGRAM



## SPACE REQUIREMENTS

Room and Contents	Allotted Space
<u>(1) Chief of Division's Office</u>	
Books: 35' - 6 shelves	
Files: 1	
Desk: 1 (6x3)	
Chairs: 3	154 ¢
 <u>(4) Member of Division Offices</u>	
Books: 6' - .3 shelves	
Files: 2	
Desk 1 (3x5)	
Chair 2	110 ¢
 <u>(1) Public Relations Officer's Office</u>	
Books: 6.' - 3 shelves	
Files: 2	
Desk: 1 (3x5)	
Chairs: 4	182 ¢
 <u>(1) Administrative Assist's Office</u>	
Books: 6' - 3 shelves	
Files: 2	
Safe: 2 x 2	
Desk 1 (3x5)	
Table 1 (adding mach. etc.)	
Chair 2	142 ¢
 <u>(3) Stenographers</u>	
Desks 3	
Waiting chairs	
Storage	
Mimeograph (sound isolate)	310 ¢
 <u>(2) Research Assist. &amp; Reg. Clerk's Office</u>	
Desk: 2	
Wrapping space	
Files: 35	
Stor.	420 ¢
 <u>Dead Storage</u>	
Files: 50 (if possible)	
Stacks: 40 (4' - 6 shelves)	820 ¢

## SPACE REQUIREMENTS (Cont.)

Library

Shelf space for 6000 volumes  
 Study Tables  
 Chairs

1100 ₪

Lounge

Kitchenette

600 ₪

Director - Gen's Suite

D-G's Office  
 Desk 1 (6x3)  
 Chairs 5  
 Books 6' - shelves  
 Secretary's Office  
 Desk ( ) ( 5 x 3)  
 Books: 6' - 3 shelves  
 Files 2

860 ₪

Bedroom  
 Bathroom  
 Boardroom  
     chairs  
     table (12 people)

275 ₪

300 ₪

Toilets

Public  
 Men  
 Women

380 ₪

(2) Caretaker's Apt.

Living Area  
 Bedroom  
 Kitchen  
 Bathroom

650 ₪

(1) Display - Entrance Lobby

Receptionist  
 Switchboard  
 Desk 1  
 Display Area

700 ₪

TOTAL

15,000 ₪

## SITE SELECTION

Last year the I.L.O. bought a house on a 60'x 80' plot of land, on East 68th Street. A difficulty with the New York City Building Code prevented them from using the site. They have not bought a second site as yet.

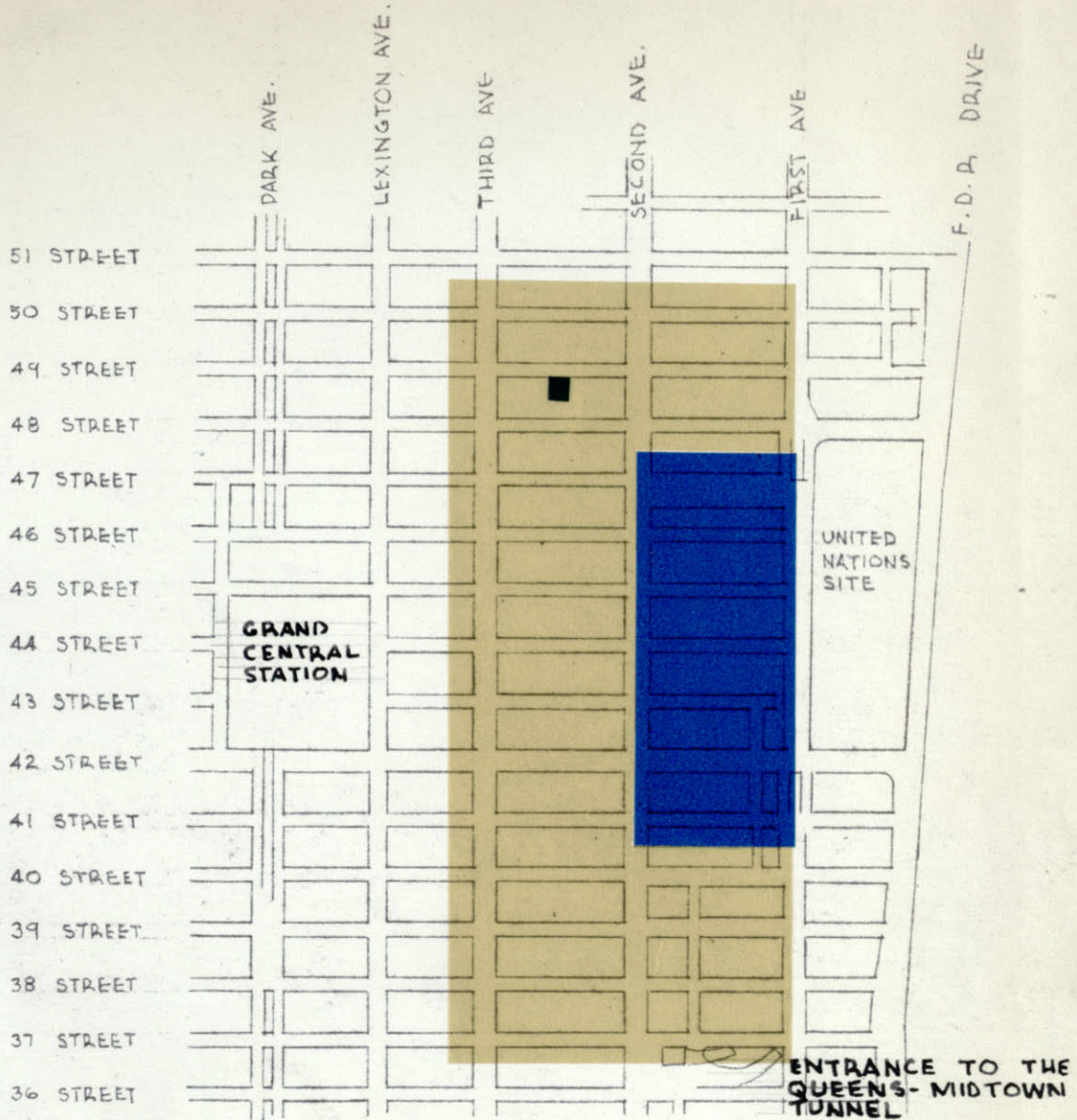
In order that I might proceed with my thesis design I elected to choose a site. In so doing, these five factors were considered:

1. The site should be in the proximity of the United Nations Site. Preferably within a five minute walk.
2. The site should be in area where zoning ordinances permit the construction of an office building. Proposed zoning resolutions should be studied.
3. The scale, of existing and future neighboring buildings, as to height is an important consideration.
4. The site chosen should be practical in relation to land costs.
5. The site should be easily reached by public transportation.

The site choice was limited to two areas. The first is in the immediate vicinity of the U.N. It is deteriorated now but is expected to be redeveloped soon. The second is the land on the periphery of the first area. It is still close to the U.N. site but probably escapes the redevelopment programs of the city's builders.

The first area is bounded by E. 40th Street, 1st Avenue, E. 47th

- 
- Plan for Rezoning New York City- Harrison, Ballard & Allen

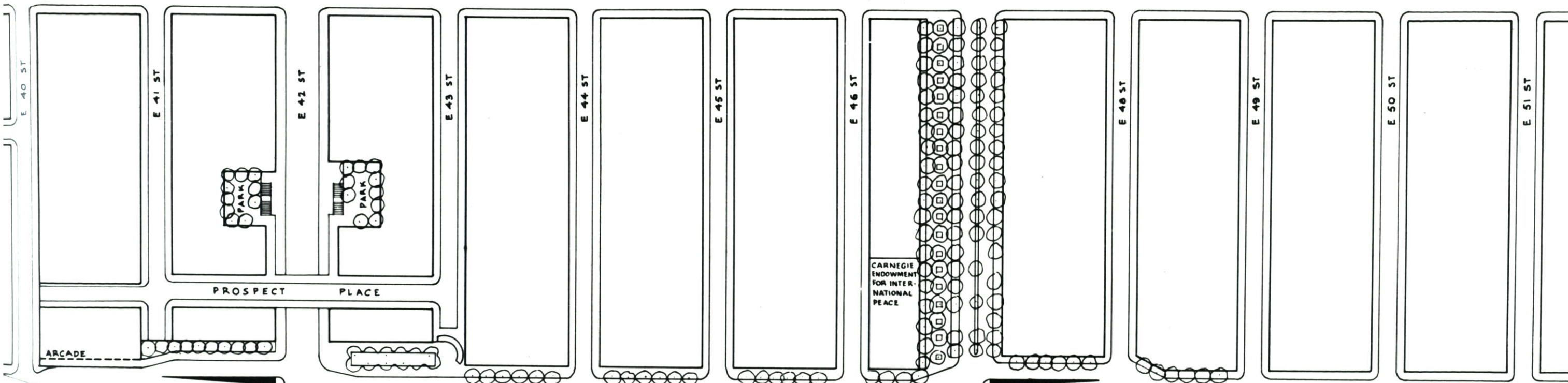


AREA'S CONSIDERED FOR SITE

- AREA # 1
- AREA # 2

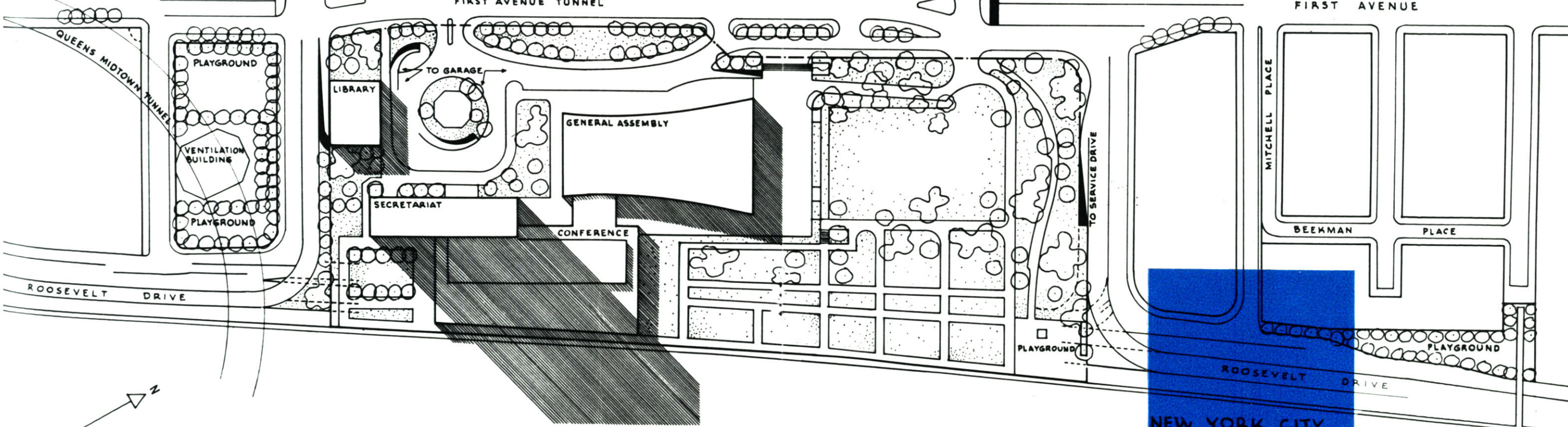
# SITE PLAN

SECOND AVENUE



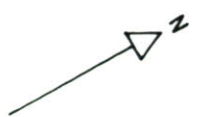
FIRST AVENUE TUNNEL

FIRST AVENUE



ROOSEVELT DRIVE

ROOSEVELT DRIVE



E A S T

R I V E R

FEET  
0 500 1000

NEW YORK CITY  
IMPROVEMENTS  
NEAR THE  
UNITED NATIONS

Street, and 2nd Avenue. The buildings in this area except for 42nd Street consist of run-down tenements, one and two story garages and several large industrial buildings.

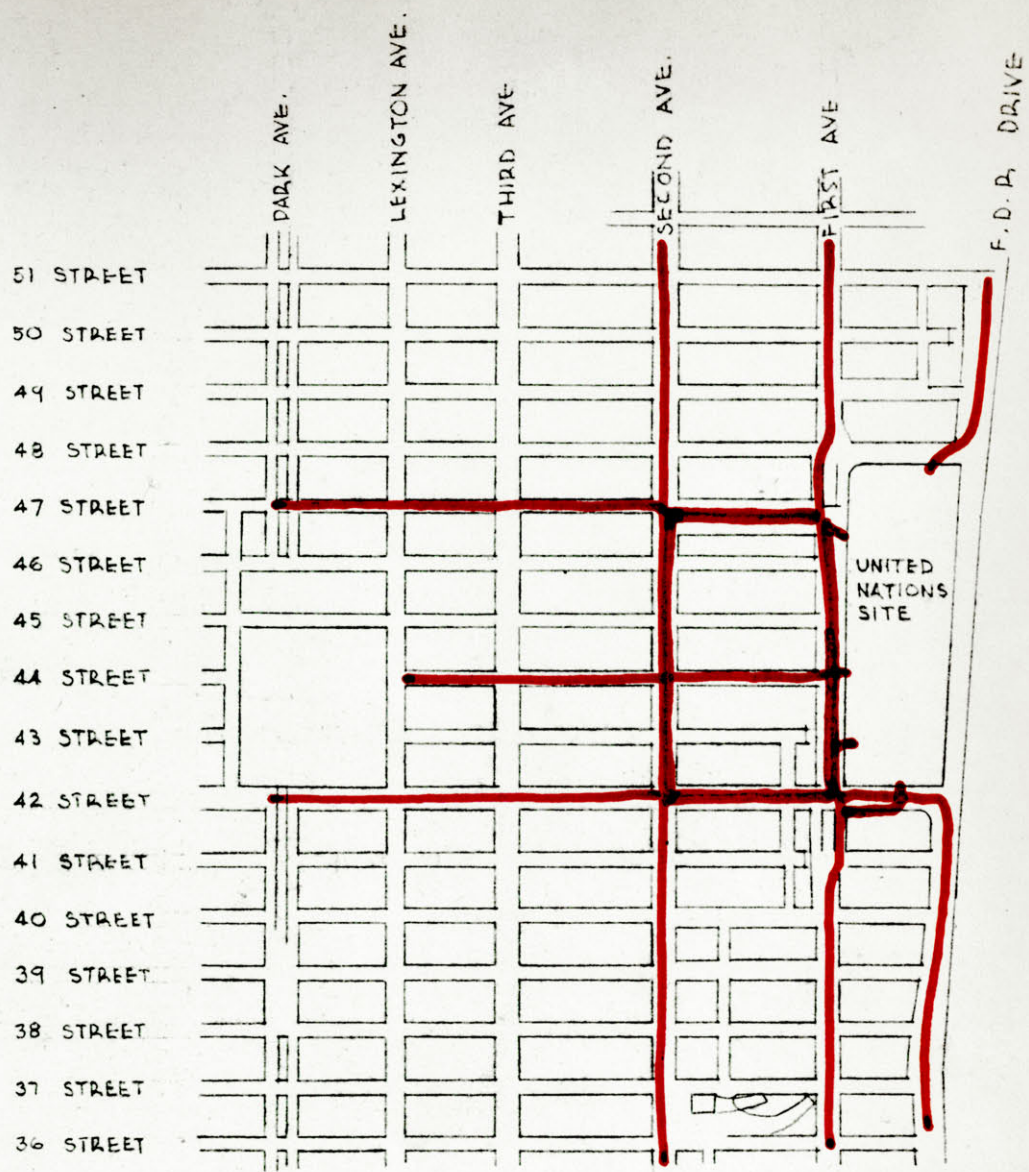
Since the development of the U.N. site, the city has made numerous small improvements in the area, such as widening 47th Street and introducing a park, on its south side, 60 feet wide running the entire length of the street between 1st and 2nd Avenues. This is to become a major approach to the U.N. They also built several small parks along 42nd Street and lined 1st Avenue with trees. The 1st Avenue tunnel for through traffic will eliminate much traffic congestion.

This entire area therefore has become the logical place for commercial and business building in the near future. Several buildings have already been begun. The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace is building on 1st Avenue between the new park and 46th Street.

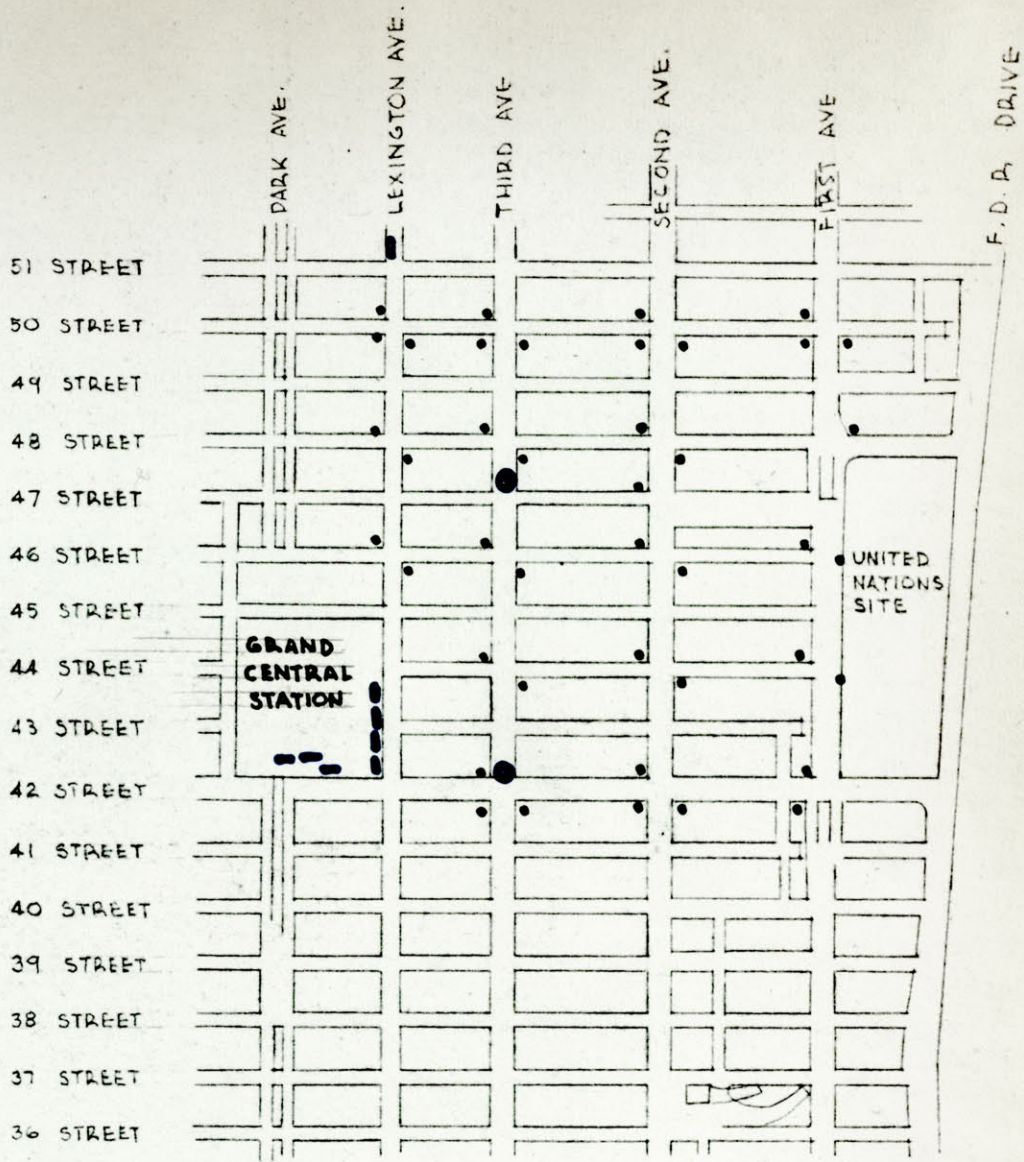
The placing of the I.L.O. either on 46th or 47th Street would provide an excellent environment. The new park would be a wonderful outlook. The traffic, though it would be heavy, would consist mostly of U.N. delegates and workers. The walk to the U.N. would take only a few minutes. Public transportation is very adequate because of the proximity of bus, subway, and elevated train stations. The accompanying maps show automobile traffic to the U.N. site and Public Transportation Stations.

There are difficulties to be encountered in building in this area:

1. Since the building of the U.N., the assessed value of the land has increased 130%. Because of the expected development and the



**AUTOMOBILE TRAFFIC  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**



**PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION STATIONS**

- SUBWAY STATIONS
- o BUS STOPS
- ELEVATED STATIONS



improvements made by the city, land values will continue to rise and taxes will increase. The city expects to recoup its expenditures in aiding the United Nations in a comparatively few years.

- The tentative land value per front-foot for 47th Street in 1945 was \$560 to \$600. This value increased each block towards 42nd Street whose land value was \$2420 per front foot. While 47th Street won't develop into the important street 42nd Street is, land values may very well triple over their 1945 rating.

2. The land in this area is, at present zoned as a Manufacturing District, Restricted Retail District, or Business District. The height restrictions require the first set back at a building height 1 1/2 times the width of the street. This means buildings of wide range of uses, and of 8 or 9 stories in height (before the 1st set back) can be built here.

The Harrison, Ballard and Allen proposal for this area and the whole U.N. approach along 47th Street, is zoned CA2, for commercial use. This permits a floor-area ratio of 10 and requires a rear yard of 30 ft. Buildings will then get to be 12 to 14 stories high.

3. As a result of #2 the I.L.O. building, which could not logically be higher than five stories, would soon be out of scale with its neighbor buildings.

The second area for site consideration can be divided into 3 parts. They are the area south of 40th Street, the area west of 2nd Avenue, and the area north of 47th Street.

- 
- From the Annual Maps published by the Dept. of Taxation, N.Y.C.

Possible sites to the south of 40th Street were not considered because of existing buildings, distance from the U.N. site and traffic congestion caused by the entrance to the Queens-Midtown Tunnel at 36th Street. All sites to the west were eliminated because of high land values, congestion, and distance from the U.N. The area directly north of 47th Street seemed like a logical location for the I.L.O. The blocks between 1st and 2nd Avenues consist of five and six story tenements in bad repair and so don't provide an adequate environment. However, the blocks between 2nd and 3rd Avenues on 48th, 49th, 50th, and 51st Streets are all lined with pleasant and well-kept "brownstones". 48th Street is zoned only for residential use and was therefore eliminated. 49th Street, then, seemed to be the best of the remaining choices because it is nearest to the U.N.

49th Street is a one way street going west. Traffic is relatively light. Most of the buildings are used as residences but in the past 15 years there has been a slow infiltration of decorating and architectural firms. There is also one small office building. All of the new buildings have respected the existing building heights.

The area is, at present, zoned for Business Use. The first set back must occur at a building height  $1 \frac{1}{2}$  times the width of the street. If the Harrison, Ballard, and Allen Plan were adapted it would be zoned for business RB6. This permits a floor-area ratio of 5, which would result in 7 or 8 story buildings.

The land costs on this street are high though somewhat lower than those on 47th Street. \$1200 per front-foot is the assessed value.

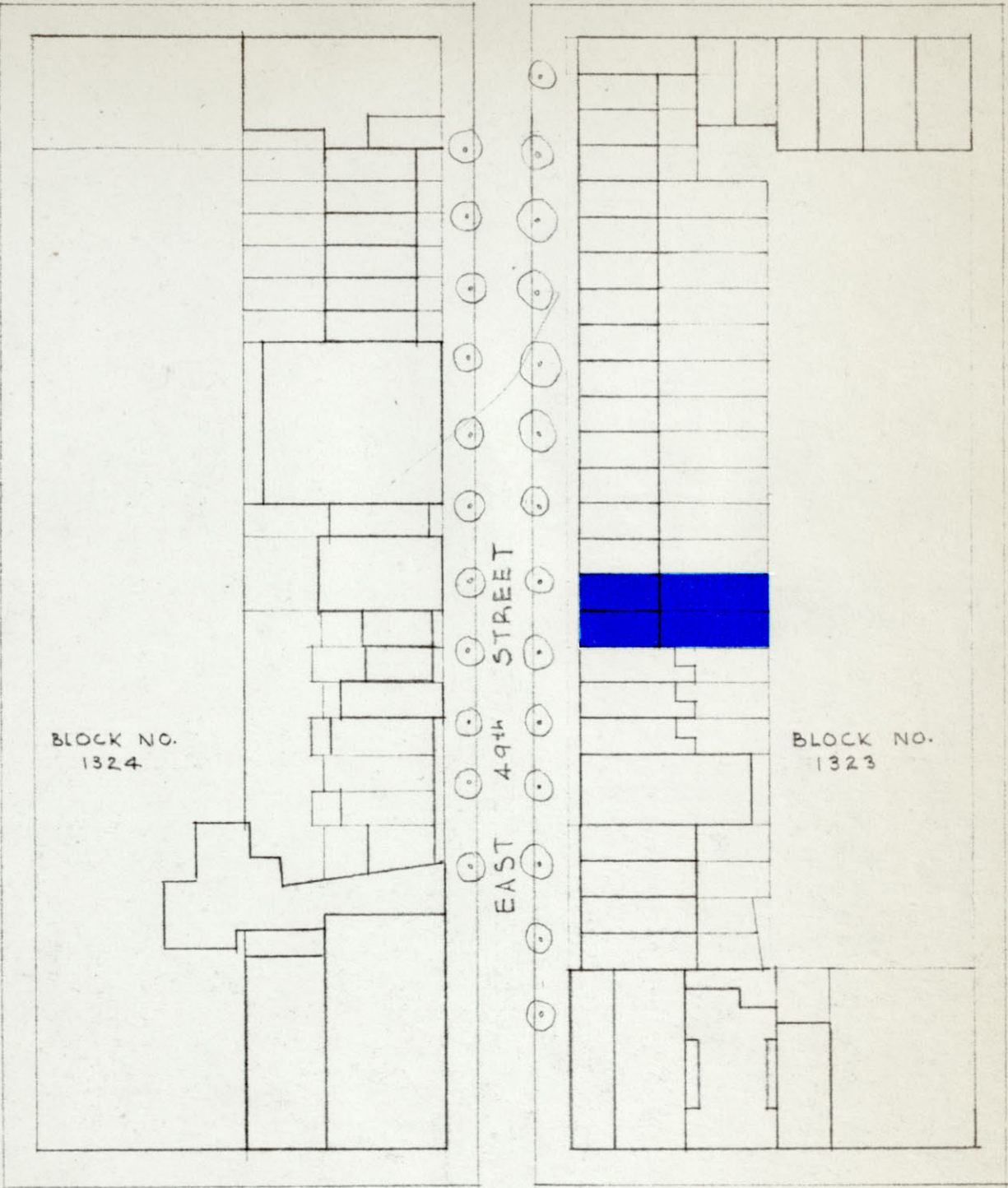


An apartment house, a convent, and a new office building on the south side of 49th Street.



Decorators' offices renovated from residences.

SECOND AVENUE



BLOCK NO.  
1324

BLOCK NO.  
1323

EAST 49th STREET

THIRD AVENUE

**THE SITE**

The land improvements here amount to approximately 120% of the land costs.

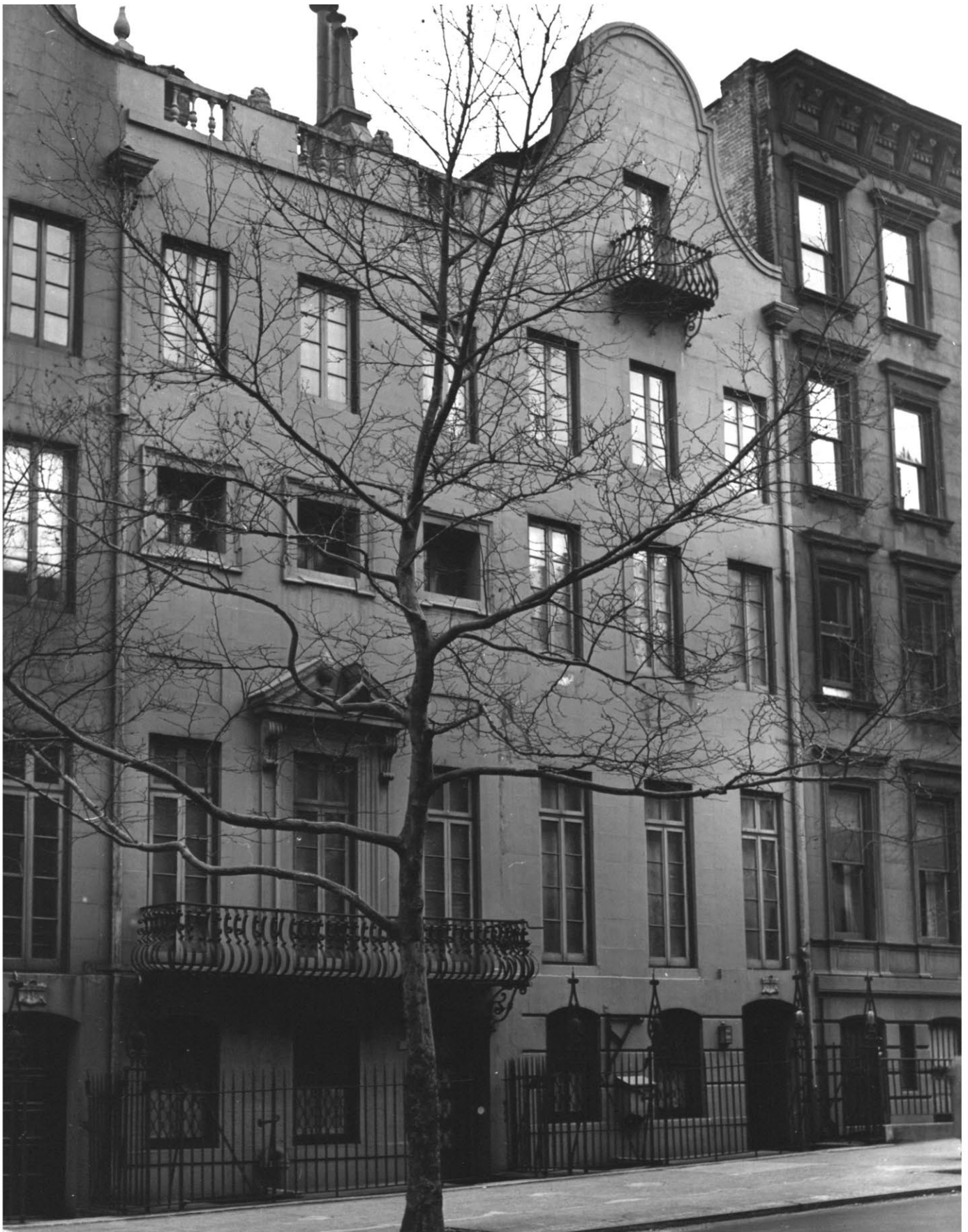
Public transportation is good. The 49th Street location is a little better than the 47th because it is nearer the stations of main North-South routes, namely the Lexington Avenue Subway, and the 3rd Ave. "El". The walk from a station point, in no case, exceeds 3 blocks. The corner of 49th Street and 2nd Avenue is also the terminus of cross town bus routes

49th Street would make a good location for the I.L.O. It is a five minute walk from the U.N. It is a quiet and well kept street, consisting of <sup>building's</sup> size and nature similar to the I.L.O. It escapes, I hope, Mr. Zeckendorf's redevelopment program.

After deciding on 49th Street for the location of the site, I had to choose a particular lot with which to work. A 40' x 100' lot was the smallest that the I.L.O. people had been considering so I used this as my standard dimensions. I thought an inside lot would be more realistic and in keeping with their plans, as the I.L.O. people said they had been considering only inside lots. It is certainly a more typical problem than a corner site. All the lots on the north side of the street were too small. The east end and particularly the west end of the street have already been commercially developed. This limited the choice of lots to the middle of the block. I made my final choice of lot numbers 226 and 228 because they were owned by the same company.

The assessed valuation of this 40' x 103' site is \$110,000 (\$50,000 for land and \$60,000 for buildings).

I realize the final choice of site has been rather arbitrary but because of lack of any authority to act on the part of the I.L.O., through a realtor, this was the only basis by which I could reach a decision.

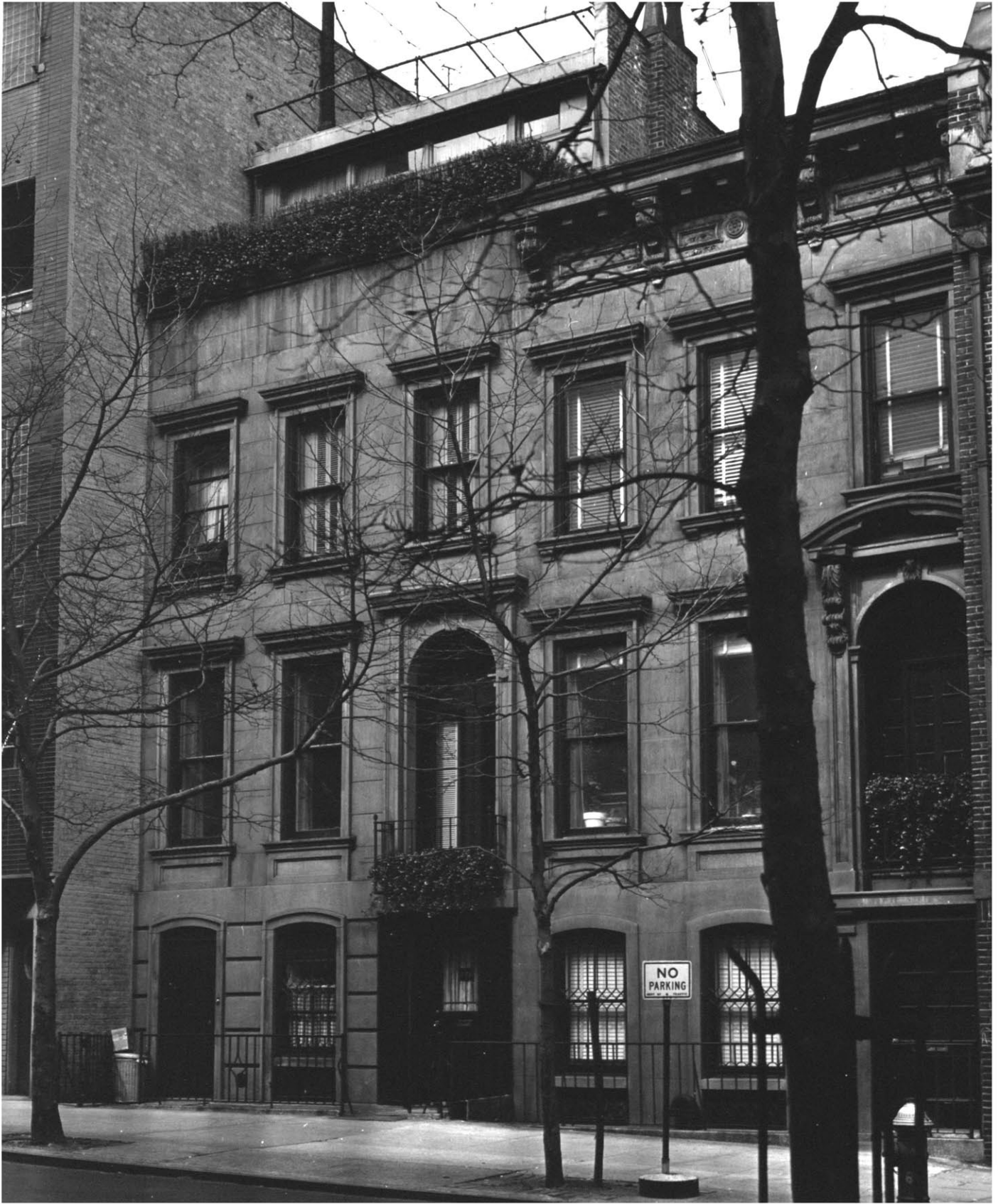


The existing buildings at 226 and 228 East 49th Street. These are private residences now.





A view down the south side of 49th Street.



Houses opposite the I.L.O. site.

## DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

Ordinarily on long narrow sites such as this 40' x 103' lot, only those rooms having an outside wall, on the front or back can rely on natural lighting. If wells occur within the building they are primarily for ventilation. They receive very little light. Most new buildings on sites such as this rely on artificial lighting and air conditioning so that all of the space is usable.

The light-well at the center of the building serves as the light source for the interior parts of the building. In a building, for special use such as this building has, I felt justifies in using the space for this well, especially since I feel it give s the building a stronger character.

The light-well divides the building into two sections. The section on the street side contains all of the main office functions. These are clustered around the elevator shaft. The rear section holds the secondary functions: the library, lounge, and the Director-General's bedroom. These two sections are connected by a narrow bridge, kept close to the wall so as to intrude as little as possible on the light well.

The vertical organization of the plan keeps the public on the first and second floors. The general public on the first floor; the visiting public on the second floor. The third floor is the main office floor where most of the liaison work is done. The fourth floor is the executive floor where the Director-General and his assistants are located.

Because of possible future expansion I felt justified in locating the kitchen-lounge on the rear third floor and the Director-General's

bedroom on the rear fourth floor. Both of these functions could be eliminated and their space developed into office space, if there is an increased need for office room.

The zoning ordinance required a 10 foot rear yard. This limited the lot to 93 feet in length. The lot length was further decreased because the existing houses on 49th Street are built to three feet short of the building line on the street side. I thought it necessary to conform with the present buildings so as not to intrude on the flat plane of building facades.

The heating and ventilation for this building presents a greater problem than for a more conventional design. The large amount of glass area in the roof requires special treatment to counteract heat due to radiation from the sun in the summer and heat loss in the winter.

The skylight will have three devices to control the heat due to the summer sun. A stream of water will be kept flowing over the top of the glass on warm days. This reflects much of the heat and also aids in reducing the heat load by evaporation. The water will be recirculated. Double glazing will be used and will thereby lower the U value. Thirdly, heat absorbing glass will be used to form the outside glass surface.

In the winter all glass areas will be reinforced by radiating surfaces. The building will be completely air conditioned. This is almost a necessity for city office buildings , especially this building, because of the glass area.

The heating will be provided by a split system, warm air and convectors. The duct runs have been split into two sections, one feeding the rear portion of the building and the other the front portion.

Maximum probable heating demand is approximately 600,000 B.T.U. per hour. This calls for ducts delivering 1000 cfm. to the spaces.

The maximum cooling load is nearly 300,000 B.T.U. per hour, calling for 2 1/2 tons of refrigeration per hour. The ducts will then be delivering about 1000 cfm. The duct size will run about 6 sq. ft. in the rear section and 8 sq.ft. in the front section.

It is hard to predict the circulation of air in the light well. Professor Hesselschwerdt believes that the court is large enough so that no difficulty from drafts will be met.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Anderson, Beckwith, & Kelly, Survey for a Proposed Town Office Building for the Town of Brookline, Mass., Brookline Board of Selectmen, 1948.

Harrison, Ballard, & Allen, Plan for Rezoning the City of New York, New York City Planning Commission, 1950.

Hygiene in Shops and Offices, Advisory Committee on Salaried Employees and Professional Workers, International Labour Office, Geneva, 1951.

The International Labour Organisation, a Reference Handbook, International Labour Office, Geneva, May 1951.

Lasting Peace the I.L.O. Way, International Labour Office, Geneva, May 1951.

New York City Building Code, 4 Volumes, 1946.

The Permanent Headquarters of the United Nations, Report to the General Assembly of the United Nations by the Secretary-General, United Nations, Lake Success, New York, 1947.

Royal Institute of British Architects, London Business Building Committee, H.M. Stationery Office, 1944.

The United Nations and the City of New York, Report to Mayor Impellitteri and the Board of Estimate, November, 1951.

Zoning Resolution of the City of New York, As Amended to October 30, 1950, City Planning Commission, Department of City Planning.

"Owens-Corning Fiber Glass", Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill, Arch. Forum, June 1948, pp. 88-91.

"Reference Study on Design and Plan of Office Buildings", Arch. Record, October 1947, pp. 119-146; January 1949, pp. 97-116.

"Town House", Lescaze, Arch. Forum, March 1945, pp. 140-142.