

Will Burtin, Inc.

Visual research and design

132 East 58th Street
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August 26, 1963

Mr. James A. Cassin
Illinois Commission
New York World's Fair
State of Illinois Building
160 North La Salle Street
Chicago 1, Illinois

Dear Jim:

At this stage in the development of the Illinois State Pavilion it must be quite difficult for you to keep your mind on one specific target, because many different problems demand consideration at the same time.

I found that this situation applies to a certain degree to the design area as well. To make the attached memorandum useful, I have separated - after some thinking - the direct design considerations, which are of course uppermost in my mind, from indications of story concept and deadlines. These, I feel, you are concerned with most at this point. I hope that this assumption is correct.

If we have a principal agreement on these two aspects, the subsequent step - the definition of the exhibition story, the outline on which the design itself will be based - can be tackled next. For this step, two or three meetings with you and Ralph are essential, during which we toss around all ideas and story suggestions that have emerged so far. I will appear at these meetings with ideas and data of my own as well.

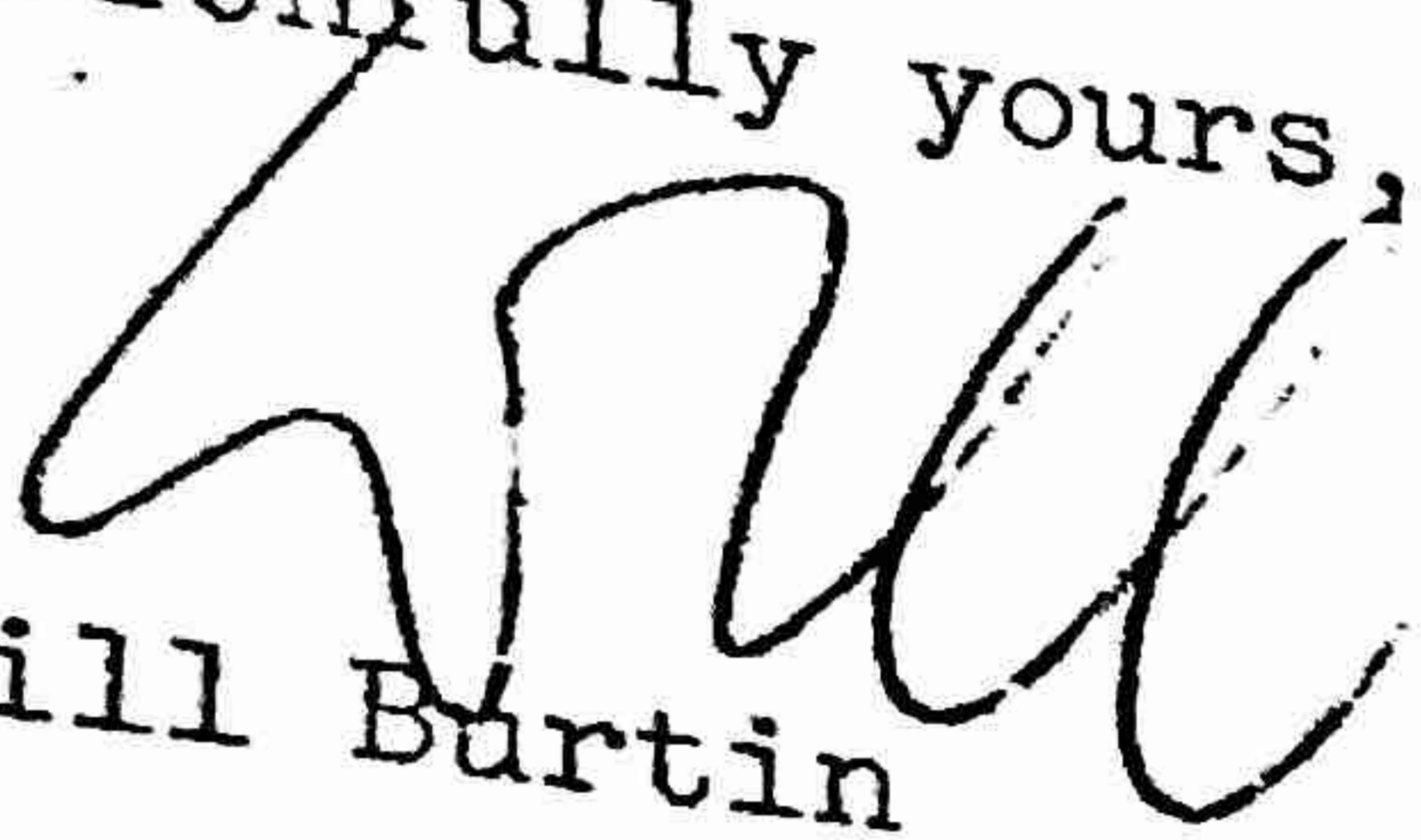
At the conclusion of these important meetings we should have such an exciting and clear organization of the principal visual contents in our hands that a simultaneous attack on design and research follows immediately. From that moment on I can work with the architects on the visual (design) part of the exhibition as a whole, and - through my visual researcher and your representative - on story documentation, selection of objects, sources of pictorial supplies, displays, in detail.

I have by now a clearer image as to what the design of the exhibition should look like. Yet I feel that it would have been a premature step to have it put down in the attached memo already.

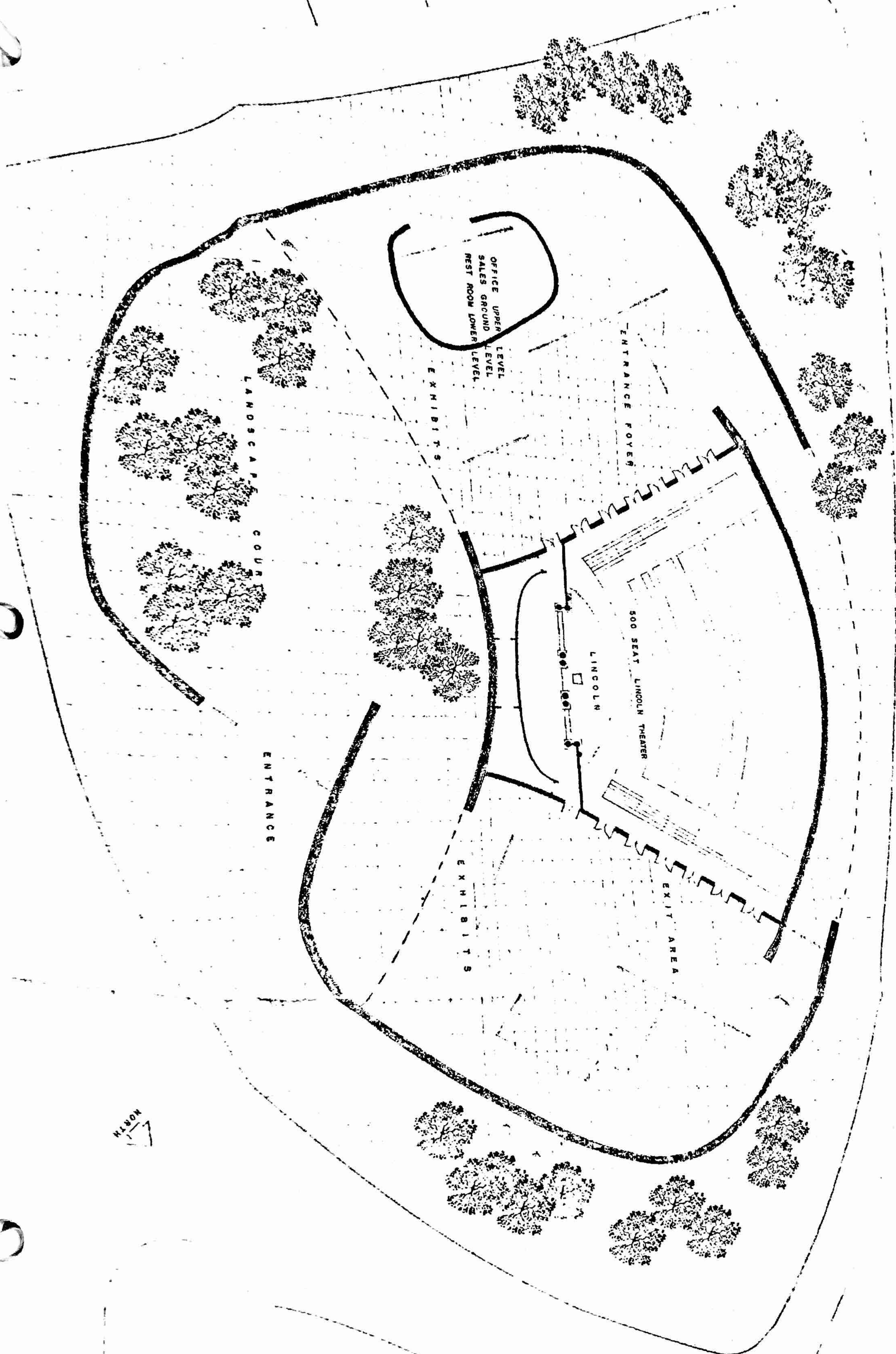
Let me just state emphatically that the Lincoln pavilion must be by its content and form the most stimulating, beautiful and memorable pavilion at the fair.

The sooner the "contents definition" meetings get underway the quicker can architect and builder be supplied with information. Recognizing the extreme tightness of schedules and deadlines on every level, I have already rearranged office and studio schedules in such a way that work can commence almost immediately.

Faithfully yours,



Will Bartin



OFFICE UPPER LEVEL
SALES GROUND LEVEL
REST ROOM LOWER LEVEL

EXHIBITS

ENTRANCE FOYER

500 SEAT LINCOLN THEATER

LINCOLN

EXIT AREA

EXHIBITS

LANDSCAPE COURTYARD

ENTRANCE

NORTH

Description of steps
in the design of the Illinois State Pavilion
at the New York World's Fair
1964-1965

1. Theme:

Abraham Lincoln - the greatest American - a man
from Illinois.

2. Design concept and requirements:

No other pavilion at the fair has as inspiring a message
for everyone living and for future generations, as impor-
tant a meaning especially at the present time. The
great intellectual and emotional responses which the
name Abraham Lincon evokes should be felt and
communicated through the design of the pavilion. The
building structure, its materials, the organization of
spaces, the visual and auditory presentations - all must
contribute toward this unified impact of the personality
and the State of Lincoln.

While the theater is the center hub of the building itself,
the introduction and conclusion areas have distinct
functions of their own which are in some ways more complex

than those of the theater. It is essential that these functions be analyzed so that the design solutions not only meet the requirements but also reflect the dignity and power of the occasion in a clear and unified way. It appears as a desirable aim, to have the visitor - after leaving the exhibition - feel that he merely started a journey which will bring him eventually to Illinois, to see for himself how a great heritage has been preserved and carried into the present life of the people of Illinois.

The introduction area has two functions:

- a) to demonstrate the greatness of Lincoln,
- b) to serve as a staging area for the theater.

The conclusion area has one function:

To relate the Lincoln heritage to modern Illinois.

In this area the visitor should be impressed with manifestations of contemporary life in Illinois. Just as the spirit of Lincoln lives on through the ever-growing emancipation of people around the world, Illinois has continued to grow on the Lincolnian foundations of free enterprise into a modern state. Attention should be centered on

- a) the State's positive business climate,
- b) its strong interest in cultural developments,
- c) the inventiveness of its people,

- d) the many basic research activities and achievements in education, commerce and trades,
- e) the beauty of its land,
- f) the progress of its cities.

The image of Lincoln and the image of Illinois should blend into one positive experience that should be remembered by the visitory long after he has left the exhibition.

Considering the strongly competitive environment of the coming fair, the jazzy and sometimes unprincipled uses of colors, building shapes, sounds, motion devices and other forms of persuasion, the success of the Illinois State Pavilion depends on a unified organization of all conceptual and visual data. This is the best way to assure a memorable impact, especially if one considers these factors:

- a) The Illinois State Pavilion is relatively small, surrounded by a number of large and ambitious exhibition projects,
- b) the message is big and important,
- c) the budget is small,
- d) the time left for design and construction is extremely short. The need for a crash program exists now already.

These factors imply strongly the necessity for creative

short-cuts which is a problem of design and of efficient, enterprising, organization.

As to design, all parties involved, should recognize the principle of strict design control of all parts and aspects of what is visible throughout and around the pavilion. Such control is the joint function of the architect-designer team and it must result in a powerful and beautiful pavilion that could be the sensation of the entire fair.

The organizational problems need careful consideration in terms of establishing a "decision center", once the final project authorization has been procured.

3. Research

is the first important step toward design. Not only the knowledge and enthusiasm of our Lincoln scholars but the visual resources of the state, its institutions and industries, must be mobilized and caught in the net of the initial research effort. Due to the late start of the project, short-cuts must be taken through steady consultations with the appointed project officials, to procure, analyze, document and complete a "table of contents" for the pavilion, which becomes the portfolio on which design is based.

Present estimates envision the following schedule:

- a) the research protfolio must be completed by

September 30,

b) interior and exterior exhibits must be designed and available in the form of a scale model by November 15.

Specific research procedures will be spelled out in conferences and in memo form within a fortnight, after the designer has been authorized to proceed.

4. Design of exterior and structure

should commence normally after the initial research phase

(3) has resulted in specific recommendations. However, due to the time pressure it is necessary to start phase

3 and 4 simultaneously. The risks inherent in this emergency-dictated procedure can be taken only because

of a generally excellent understanding between S.O.M. architects and the design staff of W.B.I. It is assumed

that the presentation of the exhibition model, on November 15, will be preceded by architectural drawings

and/or a scale model of the building which reflects main trends, ideas and space requirements that will be found

detailed in the exhibition model.

5. Manufacturing cost control

is based on thorough estimates by exhibit manufacturers.

They should be selected by the designer and requested to

submit bids on the basis of their established competence

and excellent work. Two Chicago (or Illinois) manufacturers

and one New York manufacturer should estimate in detail

the cost of the entire job, including not only construction in the shop but assembly on site as well, plus assurance of faultless operation of devices after the opening.

Drawings for such estimating purposes are to be made by the W.B.I. staff between November 1 and 15, to be ready together with the scale model.

Decisions as to which manufacturer should be selected should be made jointly by W.B.I. and the authorized State official.

Contracts for phase 5 must be let by December 15, so that final manufacturing can commence on January 1, 1964.

6. Supervision and assembly

Throughout manufacture, strict design and quality supervision is essential. A project manager will be selected from the W.B.I. staff, whose responsibility is quality control of all visual communication aspects of the project (except for the theater). He will coordinate his schedule with the project architect's requirements.

Assembly of exhibits must commence on March 2, to be completed by April 3. It is estimated that a certain part of this time interval is available for manufacturing as well.

The time span between April 3 and the opening date of the fair is to be used for dry runs, possible repairs, on-site training of personnel, etc.

7. The Text

for the visual and auditory parts of the exhibition should consist - wherever possible - of Lincoln quotes. However, it appears reasonable that there will be instances where this may not be appropriate. Selection of quotes as well as writing of additional texts should be guided by a distinguished authority from the state of Illinois.

The main body of the text must be available by January 20, 1964, at the W.B.I. office. The remaining text must be completed by February 3, 1964.

8. Budget

estimates have been very tentative so far. Building and operational cost, while round figures have been discussed, are not yet based on concrete data which can be established only when the plan for a building structure exists. It is hereby suggested that

- a) the total budget be recognized by all parties as binding,
- b) avenues of additional revenue be analyzed and pursued immediately - both, in terms of their contents relationship to the pavilion's exhibit design and in terms of the amounts that may be available,
- c) that design fee for architecture and exhibition be

established two weeks after - by letter of intent - architect and designer have been authorized to proceed.

Payments

- a) one-third of the estimated total design fee at the signing of the design contract (September 15, 1963)
- b) one-third on January 15, 1964
- c) one-third on April 15, 1964

General comment

Due to the location of the fair there are definite advantages to working on the exhibition, and supervising its completion, at a New York office especially where time is short and the budget is limited.

The qualifications of the design office of Will Burtin in the international and American exhibition field are well established. A short biographical statement and some American publications reporting on Will Burtin's work are attached.

If charged with the trust and honor of designing an exhibition commensurate with the theme, it will be a challenge to meet the requirements inherent in such an endeavor, with the utmost devotion to high quality and to team work.

New York, August 26, 1963

Biography

Will Burtin studied under Richard Riemerschried, architect and director of the "Kölner Werkschulen", in Germany, where he also designed exhibitions, industrial products, typographical and graphic projects for industry and government.

In the United States, Will Burtin continued this work with outstanding success. Many American companies, like The Upjohn Company, Time, Inc., I.B.M., The Union Carbide Corporation, The Mead Corporation, and the United States Government, are among his clients.

From 1943 to 1945 Will Burtin served in the United States Air Force and in the office of Strategic Services, Washington, D.C. He designed visual presentations and teaching devices on technical, economic, scientific and political subjects. From 1945 to 1949 he was art director of Fortune Magazine.

In 1948, Will Burtin re-opened his design office. His work has gained international acclaim for its visual power and its pioneering in all major architectural, design and general publications throughout the world and some of his exhibitions have been featured on television programs in this country, in England, Italy and Germany.

Some outstanding designs of Will Burtin are "The Cell", "The Brain" and "Metabolism" (Upjohn), "The Atom in Action" and (Union Carbide), "Kalamazoo" (United States Government) and more recently "The Kodak Magic Carpet" (Eastman, New York World's Fair pavilion). Recently, Will Burtin's work was shown in a special exhibition at the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam (Holland) and it will be shown again in October of this year in London, England, where it is sponsored by The Royal College of Art, The Royal Society of Science and the United States Embassy.

Will Burtin's graphic work has earned medals and merit awards from many professional organizations in the United States and abroad. It is represented in the collections of The Museum of Modern Art, The Museum of Art in San Paulo, The Museum of Contemporary Art in Kassel, and others.

Will Burtin is now active in industrial and graphic design, exhibition and motion pictures. His work will be featured in a special insert in "Design", the magazine of the British Council of Industrial Arts in October. He is American President of the "Alliance Graphique Internationale" and on the Board of Directors of the American Institute of Graphic Arts.

SAID ABRAHAM LINCOLN:

Copy given to Berlin
Quote for walls of Bldg.
"OUR DEFENSE IS IN THE PRESERVATION OF THE SPIRIT WHICH PRIZES
LIBERTY AS THE HERITAGE OF ALL MEN, IN ALL LANDS, EVERYWHERE."

(Edwardsville 11 September 1858)

"LET REVERENCE FOR THE LAWS . . . BECOME THE POLITICAL RELIGION
OF THE NATION."

(Springfield 27 January 1838)

"IN TIMES LIKE THE PRESENT, MEN SHOULD UTTER NOTHING FOR WHICH
THEY WOULD NOT WILLINGLY BE RESPONSIBLE THROUGH TIME AND IN
ETERNITY."

(Message to Congress 1 December 1862)

"LET US HAVE FAITH THAT RIGHT MAKES MIGHT, AND IN THAT FAITH,
LET US TO THE END, DARE TO DO OUR DUTY AS WE UNDERSTAND IT."

(Cooper Union 27 February 1860)