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ARCHITECTURAL RECORDS IN THE AGE OF TERRORISM

Abstract:

This paper analyzes the clash between governmental and institutional policies with respect to the management of architectural and engineering records. Such records are under increasing scrutiny as stakeholders grapple to balance access rights with potential security risks. In the aftermath of the September 11 2001 attacks, mass killings on American campuses, and highly publicized security breaches associated with technical infrastructure plans, majoritarian pressures to "do whatever it takes to make society safe" are frequently at odds with archival best practices. For managers of architectural and engineering records, this paper identifies risks and changing protocols and suggests the means of developing international guidelines.

Key words:

access, security, architectural records, engineering records, terrorism

Izvleček:

Arhitekturno gradivo v dobi terorizma

Prispevek analizira nesoglasja med vladno politiko ter politiko posameznih institucij glede upravljanja z arhitekturnimi in tehničnimi dokumenti. Tovrstno gradivo je pod naraščujočim drobnogledom, njegovi lastniki se trudijo držati ravnovesje med pravicami do dostopa do gradiva in potencialnimi varnostnimi tveganji. Kot posledica napada 11. septembra 2001, streljanj na ameriških šolah ter močno medijsko pokritih varnostnih napakah, povezanih z načrti infrastrukture, so številni pritiski v stilu " naredite vse, kar je potrebno, da bo družba varna", velikokrat v nasprotju s primeri arhivske dobre prakse. Ta prispevek opozarja tiste, ki upravljajo z arhitekturnim in tehničnim gradivom, na možna tveganja ter predlaga oblikovanje skupnih mednarodnih smernic.

Ključne besede:

dostop, varnost, arhitekturno gradivo, tehnično gradivo, terorizem

Less than one month after the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center in New York City the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in cooperation with the National Society of Professional Engineers and the United States General Services Administration (GSA; that administers over federal buildings), issued a public statement requesting that American architectural and engineering firms report any unusual requests for building plans. The 70,000-member American Institute of Architects (AIA) followed through with an alert to its membership regarding this new federal request anticipating holders of architectural and engineering plans would notify the FBI's National Infrastructure Protection Center should they receive any

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such inquiry (Dunlap, 2001). After the 28 January 2009 Mumbai terrorist attacks revealed special knowledge of hotel building plans, the U.S. State Department's Bureau of Diplomatic Security closely scrutinized the Foreign Buildings Operation (FBO)¹ architectural records currently in circulation in private and public archival repositories.

Concerns related to national security as affected by architectural and engineering records are not restricted to the United States government. In April 2005, a discarded laptop in the United Kingdom sparked security concerns when it was disclosed to hold some 70 restricted files, including maps and building plans of British military bases (Ingham, 2005). That December, *The Sunday Herald's* ability to purchase detailed maps of the Grangemouth petrochemical complex from the Scottish Land Registry similarly provoked concern from local firefighters who claimed "a terrorist explosion at the plant would wipe Grangemouth off the map" (Mackay, 2005). In the spring of 2008, detailed schematics of a new Canadian counterterrorism headquarters were found in an Ottawa curbside garbage bag, inciting fears regarding the country's national defense and its military's stewardship of sensitive information (Chase, 2008).

Such reports suggest the many ways in which terror fears have advanced in the years following 9/11. While some of former President George W. Bush's executive orders limiting access to records have been revoked under the Obama administration, there are numerous exemptions to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) that might be deemed applicable to architectural, engineering and cartographic records (EO 13292; EO 13526; FOIA). Concurrently, architectural "hardening" schemes have informed the design of American hospitals, schools, corporate offices, and airports. Post-Katrina New Orleans abounds with new federally funded construction that employs the so-called "Inman Standards," protocols developed by the U.S. government in the management and acquisition of its embassy buildings world-wide. Furthered by URS Corporation - a global engineering and construction provider -- and referred to as Standard Embassy Design (SED), these protocols include document security provisions, although they are essentially minimal in contrast to the architectural hardening schemes themselves.

In the United States, it was quite common for nationally sensitive architectural and engineering plans to enter archival repositories in the years preceding the Oklahoma City and World Trade Center attacks. Architects working for the General Services Administration (GSA) were not under the requirement to surrender all blueprints to the federal government post-construction. As Arthur Q. Davis, former partner in the New Orleans-based firm Curtis and Davis Architects -- who designed the ill-fated US embassy in Saigon -- conveyed in a telephone conversation the year before his death, he had no such restrictions. The Curtis and Davis sketches for the Saigon Embassy (picture 1), as well as its plans for the Angola, Louisiana prison, now reside in the Tulane University's Southeastern Architectural Archive (SEAA). Institutional gift agreements secured at the time of the donation required that Tulane University Libraries would make the drawings available to the public for research purposes. In 2009, the SEAA was contacted by a State Department official demanding that the archive surrender certain Mumbai (now Chennai), India chancery drawings, as well as a list of all patrons who had consulted the 58 drawings and building specifications since they entered the repository in 1979 (picture 2). Such

¹ *Now Overseas Building Operations (OBO).*

action by the SEAA would have placed the archive in conflict with national and international professional standards, as well as in legal conflict with its own donor agreement.

National and international professional organizations provide some level of guidance for dealing with these issues. In North America, the American Library Association (ALA) - Society of American Archivists (SAA) Joint Statement of Access states: "A repository should not deny access to materials to any researcher, nor grant privileged or exclusive use of materials to any researcher, nor conceal the existence of any body of material from any researcher, unless required to do so by statutory authority, institutional mandate, or donor or purchase stipulation." On the retention of patron records associated with such inquiries, the Joint Statement remains mute, although it does allow for repositories to "require acceptable identification of any individual wishing to use its materials, as well as a signature verifying the individual has read a statement defining the policies and regulations of the repository" (ALA-SAA, 1994; Rev. 2009). Similarly, the International Federation of Libraries and Archives (IFLA) Code of Ethics for Librarians and Other Information Workers stipulates that "librarians and other information workers reject the denial and restriction of access to information and ideas most particularly through censorship whether by states, governments, or religious or civil society institutions" (IFLA, 2012).

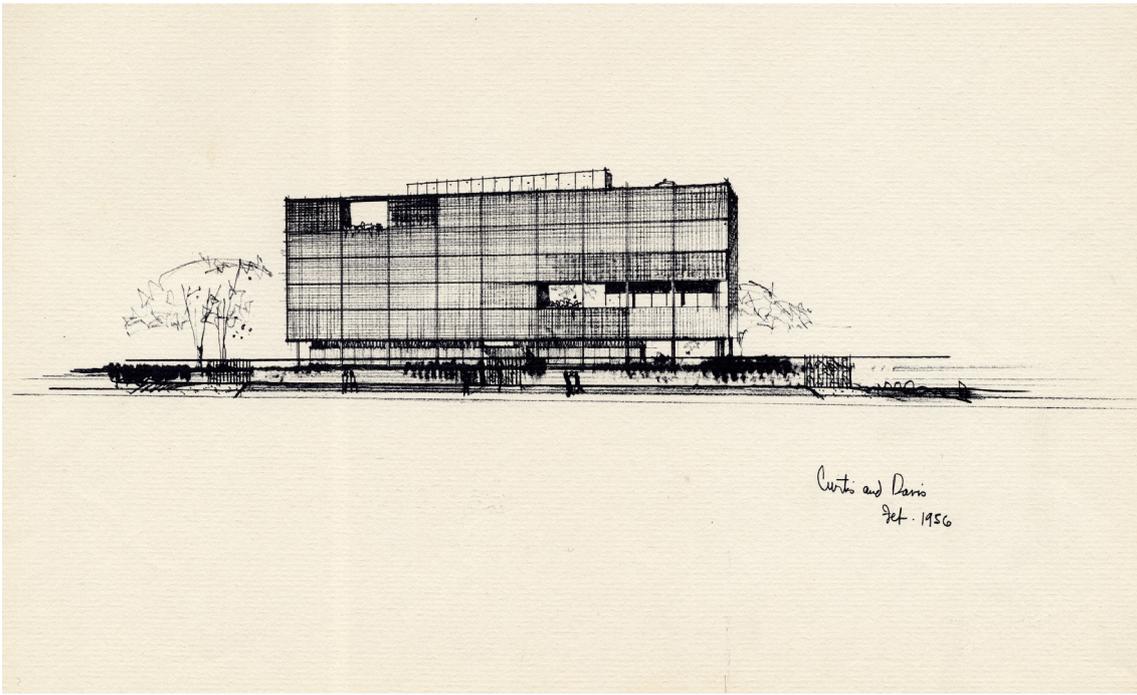
But such guidelines do not protect archival professionals from governmental and societal pressures to do whatever it takes to ensure public safety. Changes to governmental regulations may result in the reclassification of records that have long been in the public domain. Architects and engineers working as private contractors on government projects may not be fully aware of federal restrictions on their schematic drawings. Knowledge of any document security provisions is typically lost altogether once drawings pass on to an architect's estate. Changes to classification categories such as those outlined by President Obama's Executive Order 13526 complicate matters as well. In this changed climate, it is essential for archives professionals responsible for the care and management of architectural and engineering records to stay abreast of current governmental regulations, and to draft gift agreements that allow for responding to such changes quickly and effectively.

From 8 March 2002 to 8 March 2012, the General Services Administration followed Public Building Services (PBS) Policy 3490.1 that required private sector architects engaged in work related to GSA controlled facilities would imprint onto each page of all SBU building information in any format the following: "Property of the United States Government/For Official Use Only/Do Not remove this notice/Properly destroy documents when no longer needed" and imprint on the cover page or magnetic media label: "Property of the United States Government/Copying, Dissemination, or Distribution of These Drawings, Plans or Specifications to Unauthorized Users Is Prohibited/Do not remove this notice/Properly destroy documents when no longer needed" (GSA, 2002) In June 2009, the document language was expanded, with requirements for documents deemed "sensitive" but "unclassified," that included those related to child care centers, communication systems, judge's chambers, sally ports and secure elevator locations. Details and locations of heating, ventilation, air condition (HVAC) systems, information technology (IT) systems, water sources, air intake vents, power distribution systems, building automation systems, and structural framing analyses were equally identified as sensitive (GSA, 2009). This directive, PBS 3490.1A, will be in place until June 1, 2019 unless superseded.

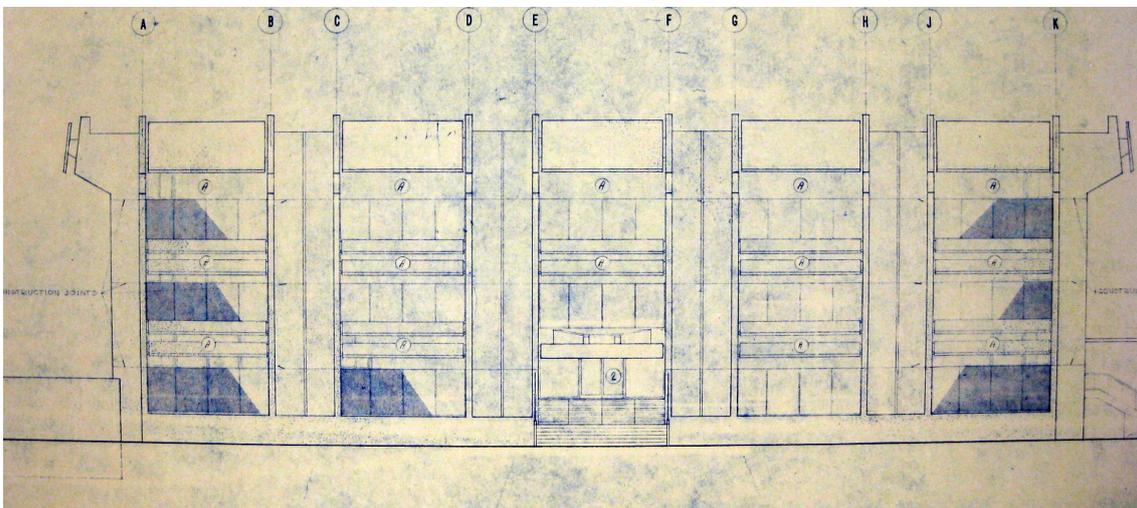
Providing both security for and access to born-digital architectural and engineering records pose even more difficulties for professional archivists. Google's recent plans to augment its Google Maps platform with user-submitted building plans - called "Google Maps Floor Plans" - has raised concerns in the tech community (Franzen, 2012). The new app, currently in beta phase, allows individuals and business owners to upload copies of their building or venue plans so that anyone can consult them using Google Maps for Android, with the premise that it will enhance business by helping customers and visitors more efficiently orient themselves. Internationally, Google has accumulated some 10,000 floor plans, and made select plans available to Android users in the United Kingdom and France. These "indoor maps" spotlight commercial enterprises, but also cultural heritage institutions such as museums and libraries, and transportations hubs such as airports and rail stations (Google, 2012a). In the United States, Google's detailed maps include universities and hospitals. Granted, these GPS-driven plans currently omit sensitive elements like mechanical, electrical and information technology systems and Google's current "Content Guidelines" prohibit uploading floor plans for non-public buildings and "any floor plans or other content associated with national defense or government security" (Google, 2012b). Nonetheless, the increasing availability of all types of electronically-delivered structural plans at the same time that government agencies are leveling higher regulatory scrutiny should alert archives professionals to the potential risks.

Now certainly it does not require a terrorist to bomb a building by consulting detailed systems plans for buildings and infrastructures, nor does it require terrorists acquire the same in the procurement of human captives, but certainly having such schematics may improve the organization's ability to extol heavy damages or to gain more expedient entry into and exit out of a structure. For buildings that have been extensively remodeled under Inman or comparable standards, duct work and other mechanical systems most likely have remained fairly constant, and despite enhanced set-backs and reduced fenestration, conduits through the structure may have been minimally altered. Despite the new document security protocols for the recently created architectural records associated with Inman hardening schemes, blueprints from the structure's conception may reveal critical information that would enhance a terror group's ability to do harm.

National security matters increasingly have become global security matters. It is important for our professional organizations to work collaboratively to draft best practices protocols that aid archivists in handling "sensitive" records. As professionals we have privileged democratic societal principles that allow free and open access to information, to intellectual freedom. In 2003, the IFLA Free Access to Information and Freedom of Information (FAIFE) committee organized sessions at the World Library and Information Congress in Berlin - to address concerns that western democracies were restricting access to information "in the name of the war against terror" (Seidelin, 2003). It is time for us to revisit this topic, and to consider developing guidelines for library and archives professionals. Our community increasingly stands on the front lines.



Picture 1: Curtis & Davis, Architects. Saigon Embassy, Vietnam. Conceptual Sketch. February 1956. Southeastern Architectural Archive.



Picture 2: Burk, Lebreton and Lamantia, Architects, Inc. Consulate General Building, Mumbai, India. Elevation. July 1964. Southeastern Architectural Archive.

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POVZETEK**ARHITEKTURNO GRADIVO V DOBI TERORIZMA**

Prispevek analizira nesoglasja med vladno politiko ter politiko posameznih institucij glede upravljanja z arhitekturnimi in tehničnimi dokumenti. Tovrstno gradivo je pod naraščujočim drobnogledom, njegovi lastniki se trudijo držati ravnovesje med pravicami do dostopa do gradiva in potencialnimi varnostnimi tveganji. Kot posledica napada 11. septembra 2001, streljanj na ameriških šolah ter močno medijsko pokritih varnostnih napakah, povezanih z načrti infrastrukture, so številni pritiski v stilu "*naredite vse, kar je potrebno, da bo družba varna*", velikokrat v nasprotju s primeri arhivske dobre prakse. Ta prispevek opozarja tiste, ki upravljajo z arhitekturnim in tehničnim gradivom, na možna tveganja ter predlaga oblikovanje skupnih mednarodnih smernic.

Naše strokovne organizacije nudijo določen nivo smernic za spopadanje s takšnimi temami. Združenje ameriških knjižničarjev (ALA) - Društvo ameriških arhivistov (SAA) v svoji skupni izjavi glede dostopa pravita: "*Hranitelj raziskovalcem ne sme odrekati dostopa, jim omogočiti privilegirane ali ekskluzivne uporabe niti prikriti obstoj kateregakoli dokumenta, razen če jim tega ne zapovedo nosilci zakonskih pooblastil, institucijski mandat ali določba donatorja/prodajalca.*" Podobno Mednarodna federacija knjižnic in arhivov (IFLA) v Etičnem kodeksu za knjižničarje in ostale informacijske delavce poudarja, da "*knjižničarji in ostali informacijski delavci zavračajo možnost odrekanja ali omejitve dostopa do informacij in idej, še posebej preko cenzure držav, vlad ali verskih in družbenih institucij*".

Takšne smernice pa vseeno ne ščitijo arhivskih strokovnjakov pred vladnimi in družbenimi pritiski, da je potrebno storiti vse za zagotovitev družbene varnosti. Spremembe vladnih predpisov lahko vplivajo na ponovno klasifikacijo dokumentov, ki so dolgo bili v javni domeni. Arhitekti in inženirji, ki delajo kot zasebni pogodbeniki na vladnih projektih, se ne zavedajo popolnoma vladnih omejitev za njihove shematske skice. Poznavanje varnostnih določb nekega dokumenta je ponavadi izgubljeno, ko risbe preidejo v arhitektovo last. Zadeve so zapletle tudi zakonske spremembe, ki so rezultat terorističnih napadov. V tej spremenjeni klimi je za arhivske strokovnjake, ki so odgovorni za arhitekturne in tehnične dokumente, pomembno, da ostanejo v stiku s trenutnimi vladnimi predpisi in pripravijo darilne sporazume tako, da dovoljujejo hitre in učinkovite rešitve za takšne spremembe. Ko državne varnostne zadeve postajajo vedno bolj globalne, je pomembno, da naše strokovne organizacije sodelujejo pri snovanju najboljših praks, ki pomagajo arhivistom pri delu z "občutljivimi" dokumenti.