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**National College of Art & Design**

Department of Industrial Design

**THE WRAPPING AND UNWRAPPING OF THE REICHSTAG  
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## Introduction

'Zu Dem Deutschen Volk' (to the German people), are the words inscribed on the front facade of the Reichstag building. It is an unintentional ironic statement considering the Reichstag's volatile history.

The Reichstag building is a significant part of German history. It was constructed in 1894 under the leadership of Wilhelm II to house the new German parliament for the newly united German nation.

Throughout the Reichstag's existence it has been used as a symbol that has represented democracy, ruthless dictatorship, and Cold War fears. Since 1933 the Reichstag's primary function as a parliament building was lost. In 1998, the German government will return to Berlin from Bonn and the Reichstag will once again be in use.

Throughout this thesis I will be discussing the historical events that surrounded the Reichstag over its one hundred year existence, and how the political upheaval of Germany changed what this building came to symbolise.

The architectural work on the Reichstag carried out by Paul Wallot, Bruno Tout, Karl Wach, and Baumgarten, will be discussed, and analysed to see if their input was capable of transforming the building's negative





appearance and tragic history.

The artist Christo Javacheff will be discussed in relation to his two week installation 'Wrapped Reichstag Berlin' to see what effect it had on the building and the people of Berlin.

Norman Foster, the architect presently reconstructing the Reichstag building will be analysed to see if his work is capable of changing the Reichstag's tragic history into a new symbol of hope and democracy for the newly united Germany.

Chapter One is a discussion of the historical significance of the Reichstag and how the building's architectural misfortune deemed it to become an unpopular building. Germany's changing political situation will be analysed and I will discuss how this affected the Reichstag's image. The building itself will be examined, along with the many architects who contributed to it's remodelling.

Chapter Two gives a brief insight into the political situation of Berlin since 1945. The historical incidents in Berlin's history changed the already afflicted Reichstag into a symbol of Cold War. The background to Christo's wrapped Reichstag project will be discussed and the principle reasons surrounding its refusal until it was accepted in 1993.

Chapter Three looks at Christo, and his earlier works. His wrapped





Reichstag project will be analysed as an event that was capable of raising a few questions on the symbol and status of the Reichstag.

Chapter Four discusses the present day events surrounding the Reichstag. The work of Norman Foster will be analysed along with his concept to change the Reichstag building into a modern functional parliament.



## Chapter One

### The development of the Reichstag building.

The original concept to create a parliament building for Germany came about in 1871. This was the year when Germany was finally united under the rule of Wilhelm I. This unity spurred on a movement within the newly created parliament that campaigned for a separate building to be constructed to house the members of parliament. The Reichstag was Germany's first parliament building, whose architect was the German Paul Wallot. He was the successful candidate after two competitions were held 1871 and 1882, where a number of architects were invited to submit designs. Ludwig Bohnstedt, won the first competition in 1871 but because the designated site for the building was not available, the construction of the parliament was delayed for ten years. Paul Wallot won the second competition in 1882. This competition brought with it the first artistic mishap that affected the building's architectural form. The judges of the second competition were not as knowledgeable about architecture as those in the first, and for this reason an unworthy design was chosen. This design had to comply with ideas laid down by the competition committee which eventually became a design style of its own: 'The Reich Style'.

The building is based on the neoclassic style but, in some areas neobaroque design is apparent. These conflicting styles do not complement the embodiment of power, which many Germans thought appropriate for their parliamentary building, (See Fig 1).



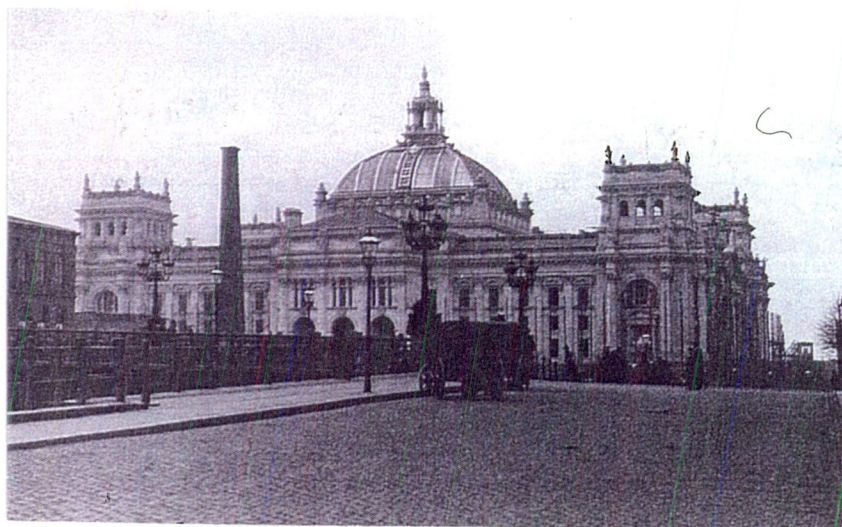


Fig 1





During the years between the two competitions Wilhelm II took power. Under his ruling, a site was chosen for the Reichstag that was thought by many to be unsuitable for a governmental institution. Situated on the out skirts of Berlin, it shared the same location as low income housing and the Berlin state circus. Because of the building's location and its outward appearance, the Reichstag was not taken seriously and was subjected to ridicule. Even the Kaiser, Wilhelm II denounced the building for two reasons. The first because he did not believe in parliamentary activities anyway and secondly, the architectural construction of the Reichstag was in competition with the buildings that were designed for Wilhelm's rule, especially the dome. That said, it was no fault of Wallot but a number of conflicting issues that hindered the development of the Reichstag.

By the time it was completed in 1894 many architectural changes had been made. The dome became smaller, the west front had been located further west and the design had taken on tinges of neobaroque. The Reichstag's structure remained in this state until the political power in Germany Changed, 1919.

Up until the year 1919 the German nation was ruled under the authority of the Monarchy and therefore the parliament did not hold much power. The Weimar Republic (1919-1934) changed this and it's democratically elected members were the first governing power to utilise





the Reichstag building under its proper function. Between the years 1927 and 1930 they wanted to change the Reichstag's appearance so that its outward structure would declare their new constitution. Already deemed unpopular they believed a restyling of the external walls might change the building's appearance. Gustav Radbruch, Minister of Justice 1920-24, gives some indication of the impression this building had with members of the parliament at the time: "I am convinced that the irritability of the representatives, unfortunately apparent in so many discussions, is a direct result of the artificiality of the Reichstag building." ( Radbruch quoted by Buddensieg, The Reichstag and Urban projects, 1993, p 17 ).

As before architects were asked to submit designs. The Weimar Republic's competition (1927), illustrated radical solutions to the problem with the Reichstag's appearance. Bruno Trout an architect who designed for the Weimar Republic, fought to change the Reichstag building by wrapping it in modern functional architecture. (This concept lies very close to that of Norman Foster, the architect presently working on the Reichstag.) Karl Wach wanted to put the building inside a large box. Both concepts highlight how the building's exterior was unacceptable. In many ways the concepts of Bruno Trout and Karl Wach are the antecedents to Christo's art installation and Foster's original concept for the Reichstag. Neither Trout's nor Wach's concepts were realised, the only significant restructuring of the Reichstag during this era was the building of Der Platz Der Republic, a large rectangular area of grass land, stemming from the



entrance of the building up to the entrance of the Tier Garter. Their intention was to reduce the Reichstag's isolation in its environment and to create a more dramatic and powerful area surrounding the building. Up until 1933 the fundamental problem lay with the Reichstag's architectural form. After this date the historical, political and symbolic image of the Reichstag also had to be changed.

1933 saw the horrific dislodgement of what the building was meant to stand for. Hitler and his National Socialist party gained power in Germany. The Reichstag's fate was one of cremation. 'The Night of the Long Knives' saw the destruction of the Reichstag in a blaze that removed all traces of democracy, everything that did not comply with Hitler's regime. If Hitler had had his way, the Reichstag along with the Brandenburger Tor, would have ended up in a museum as historical relics.

The ruling fascist regime had more of an effect on the Reichstag than merely burning its interiors. The image and symbolism of the Reichstag changed dramatically over the eleven year rule of the Nazi party. Its very outward expression became an image of fascist rule and all that that entailed. Contrary to popular belief Hitler never spoke there, but yet it still managed to possess a fascist aspect. The crimes committed by the Nazi party during World War II became embodied with the Reichstag's foundation. By the time the Nazi party had gone, the Reichstag was ripped of its identity. Although the Reichstag was never used for





governmental proceedings during Hitler's regime, it still represented fascism to the allies. It is therefore ironic to think of a building whose fundamental being was to host the symbol of democracy, which was fought for, captured and destroyed by the allies towards the end of the war, to symbolise the end of dictatorship. Indeed the Reichstag's values have changed during its one hundred year existence. Its architectural form and appearance have been used as an image that voiced the people, 1919 - 1933, dictatorship, 1933 - 1945, communist intervention and cold war fears, 1945 - 1989 and will once again voice the people of Germany in 1998.

After receiving severe bombing during the last few weeks of the war, the Reichstag lay in ruins, it became a shameful representation of democracy and power. (Fig 2). From 1945 - 1954 the Reichstag was left idle, its only use was the soil around it. Der Platz Der Republic was used by locals to cultivate vegetables. The damaged dome was dismantled in 1954 and the area surrounding the building was cleared of rubble in 1957.

In the late 1950's it was decided that Berlin would no longer be the capital city of the newly founded Federal Republic of Germany. For this reason a decision had to be made on the fate of the Reichstag building. Architects and Members of the Werkbund fought to see that the Reichstag was pulled down, but instead it was decided that the building be reconstructed. Its future function at this stage was unknown. A limited

1. The first part of the report deals with the general situation of the country and the progress of the work during the year. It is divided into two main sections: the first section deals with the general situation of the country and the progress of the work during the year, and the second section deals with the specific results of the work.

2. The second part of the report deals with the specific results of the work. It is divided into three main sections: the first section deals with the results of the work in the field of research, the second section deals with the results of the work in the field of education, and the third section deals with the results of the work in the field of administration.

3. The third part of the report deals with the conclusions and recommendations. It is divided into two main sections: the first section deals with the conclusions, and the second section deals with the recommendations. The conclusions are based on the results of the work, and the recommendations are based on the conclusions.

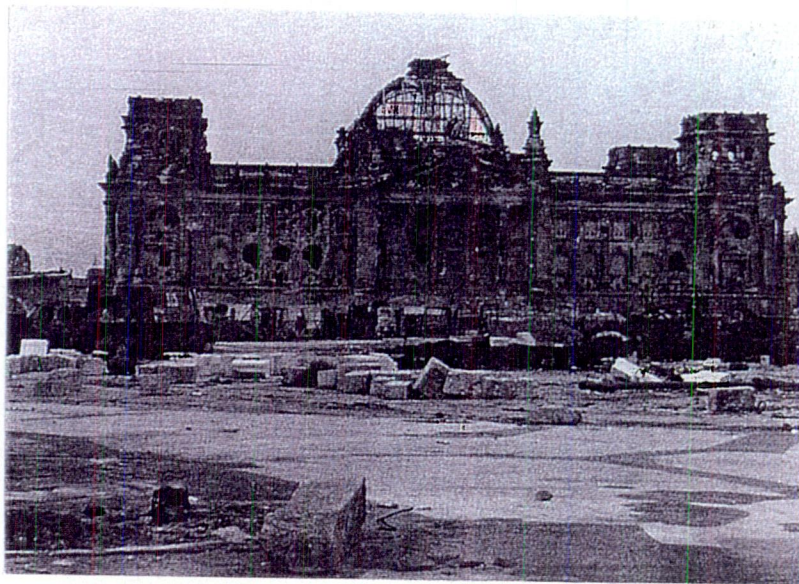


Fig 2





competition with only ten German architects involved was held to find a suitable candidate to reconstruct the Reichstag. Paul Baumgarten won in January 1961. Baumgarten had a difficult task ahead of him not only did he have to reconstruct the demolished structure, but he also had to reconstruct the Reichstag's symbol of democracy and image of hope.

Baumgarten's concept was similar in theory to Bruno Zevi and Karl Moser. All three architects aimed to hide the Reichstag's unpopular exterior, but Baumgarten's concept undertook the task of hiding what the Reichstag had come to symbolise, fascist rule. In spraying the interiors with asbestos, Baumgarten hid all physical traces of the events that happened there, but this cover up was unsuccessful in changing the image the Reichstag reflected. The exterior of the building was reconstructed similar to Gropius's original design except for the dome that caused so much trouble with Wilhelm II. After its completion the Reichstag's outward image still symbolised fascist rule and the fate of its interior function was still not decided.

Although Baumgarten installed new chambers, the building could not be used as a Bundestag (parliament) for two reasons. The British, whose sector the building was in, refused the German Government the use of the building as a whole and it would have been pointless having the German Federal Republic's parliament in a city that was not the capital. For these reasons the Reichstag's primary function as a

1. The first part of the report deals with the general situation of the country and the progress of the work during the year. It also mentions the results of the various expeditions and the collections made.

2. The second part of the report describes the various expeditions and the collections made. It mentions the names of the participants and the results of the work.

3. The third part of the report deals with the general situation of the country and the progress of the work during the year. It also mentions the results of the various expeditions and the collections made.

parliamentary building was reduced to that of a museum that held a permanent exhibition of German history.

What had the building come to symbolise? The Berlin Wall was erected in 1961 and because its perimeter ran behind the Reichstag, the building found itself sandwiched between the East and West zones of the city. Its east wing technically belonged to East Germany but still remained on the west side of the border. The building was situated very close to the wall and for this reason the building fell into a type of time warp, representing the divisions between East and West. (Fig 3). Also the media used the Reichstag along with the Brandenburger Tor as a visual representation of Cold War divisions and this contributed to its new found symbolism.

The Reichstag at this stage had come to represent many things. It was plagued with an unpopular appearance since Wallot's time, it had become an outward expression of fascist rule that Baumgarten failed to remedy and now it found itself becoming an image and symbol of the East and West divisions. In some ways, its destruction, as the Werkbund had suggested in the 1950's, may have been the only way to save Germans from the guilt the building inflicted them with.

For the twenty eight years that followed, the Reichstag remained a symbol of the Cold War. It was not until 1989, with the fall of the wall and

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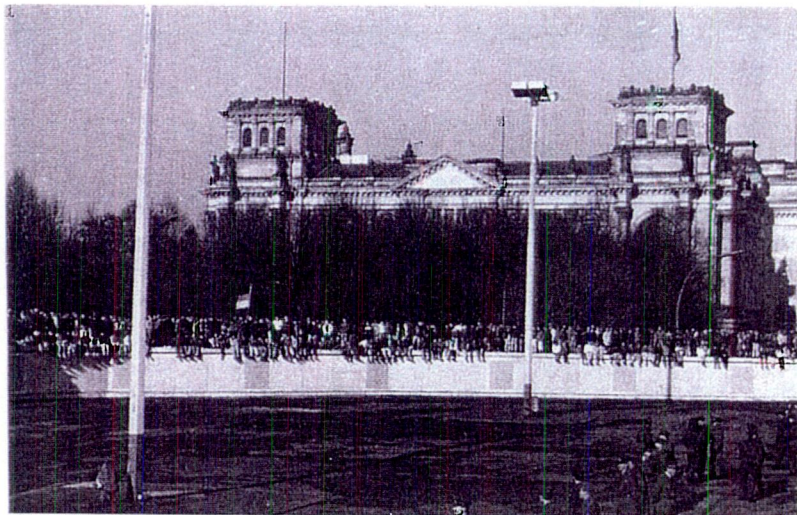


Fig 3



communist power, that the Reichstag would change. 1989 brought with it new developments in German politics. The German Democratic- Republic and The German Federal Republic were united once again under the one government. The decision to relocate the German Government and the House of Parliament back to Berlin from Bonn came in 1991. This would mean that the Reichstag as a new parliamentary building would have to rid itself of it's past image and become a symbol of democracy and hope. Unfortunately up until then, the four previous architects, Paul Wallot, Bruno Tout, Karl Wach and Paul Baumgarten had failed to come up with a feasible solution to change the Reichstag's unpopular appearance. For the German Government to take up office in the Reichstag building again, the image of the Reichstag had to change. This would hopefully be achieved with the aid of Christo's two week installation (Wrapped Reichstag, Berlin) and through Norman Foster's fresh approach in the reconstruction of the Reichstag building. What must be remembered is that the idea of changing the Reichstag's image, is not to erase the tragic events that occurred in German history but to acknowledge them and except them instead of hiding them away under a layer of asbestos as Baumgarten did.



1. The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It emphasizes that proper record-keeping is essential for the integrity of the financial system and for the ability to detect and prevent fraud.

2. The second part of the document outlines the specific procedures for recording transactions. It details the steps involved in the accounting cycle, from identifying the transaction to posting it to the appropriate ledger account.

3. The third part of the document discusses the role of the auditor in verifying the accuracy of the records. It explains how the auditor uses various techniques, such as sampling and vouching, to ensure that the financial statements are true and fair.

4. The fourth part of the document discusses the importance of internal controls in preventing errors and fraud. It describes the various types of internal controls, such as segregation of duties and authorization, and how they are implemented in the organization.

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6. The sixth part of the document discusses the importance of transparency and accountability in the financial system. It explains how transparency and accountability are essential for building trust and for ensuring that the financial system is used for the benefit of the organization.

7. The seventh part of the document discusses the role of the external auditors in providing an independent opinion on the financial statements. It explains how external auditors are appointed by the shareholders and how they provide an independent opinion on the financial statements.

8. The eighth part of the document discusses the importance of the financial system in the overall business system. It explains how the financial system provides the information needed for management to make decisions and for the organization to achieve its goals.

9. The ninth part of the document discusses the role of the financial system in the economy. It explains how the financial system provides the capital needed for businesses to grow and for the economy to develop.

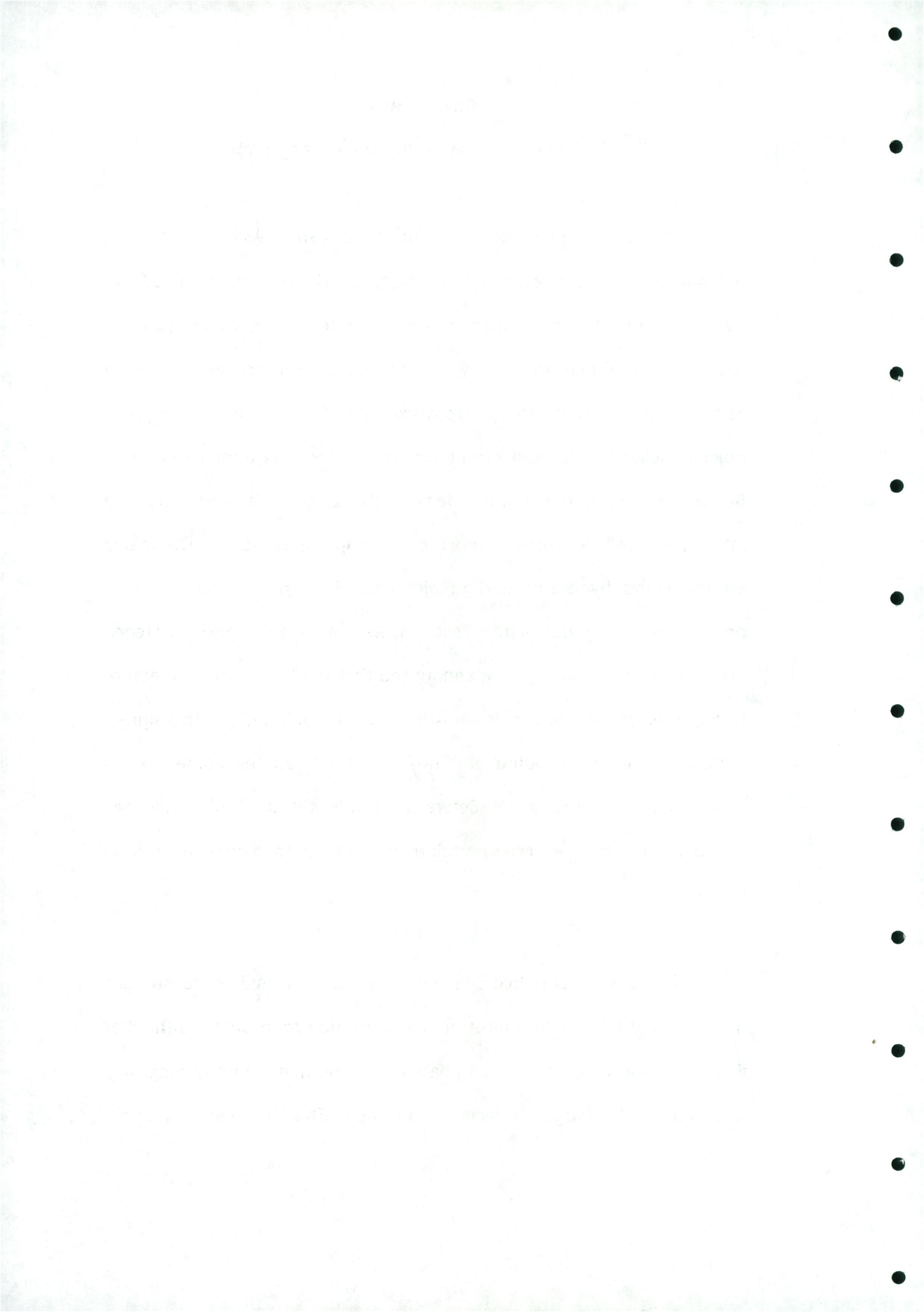
10. The tenth part of the document discusses the importance of the financial system in the future. It explains how the financial system will continue to play a vital role in the economy and how it must adapt to the changing needs of the business system.

## Chapter two

### The Background to the 'wrapped Reichstag project'.

Christo Javacheff was born on June 13th 1935 in Gabново, Bulgaria. He studied fine art at The Fine Art Academy, Sofia from 1953 to 1956. During 1957 he studied for one semester at the Vienna Fine Art Academy before making his way to Paris, France. Christo can be defined as a sculptor who wraps things. His work, from 1958, is based on wrapping objects including his most recent project in 1995, 'Wrapped Reichstag, Berlin'. His work has always dealt with concepts surrounding the interactions between people and the landscape or cityscape. The media attention and hype surrounding him and his work, is what Christo's projects partly rely on for their success. Recently Christo and his French born wife Jeanne Claude, have announced that she has become co-author to all his works. No longer is Christo's projects, publications and signed material under the heading of 'Christo' but instead the name used is 'Christo and Jeanne Claude'. Before this Jeanne Claude's public role was president of which ever corporation was set up to handle a projects finances.

Christo requires public buildings or space as a medium to produce his work, and he therefore must obtain permission from public authorities first. This procedure as one can imagine, can be quite lengthy especially with some of his bigger projects. For example, The 'Pont Neuf wrapped'

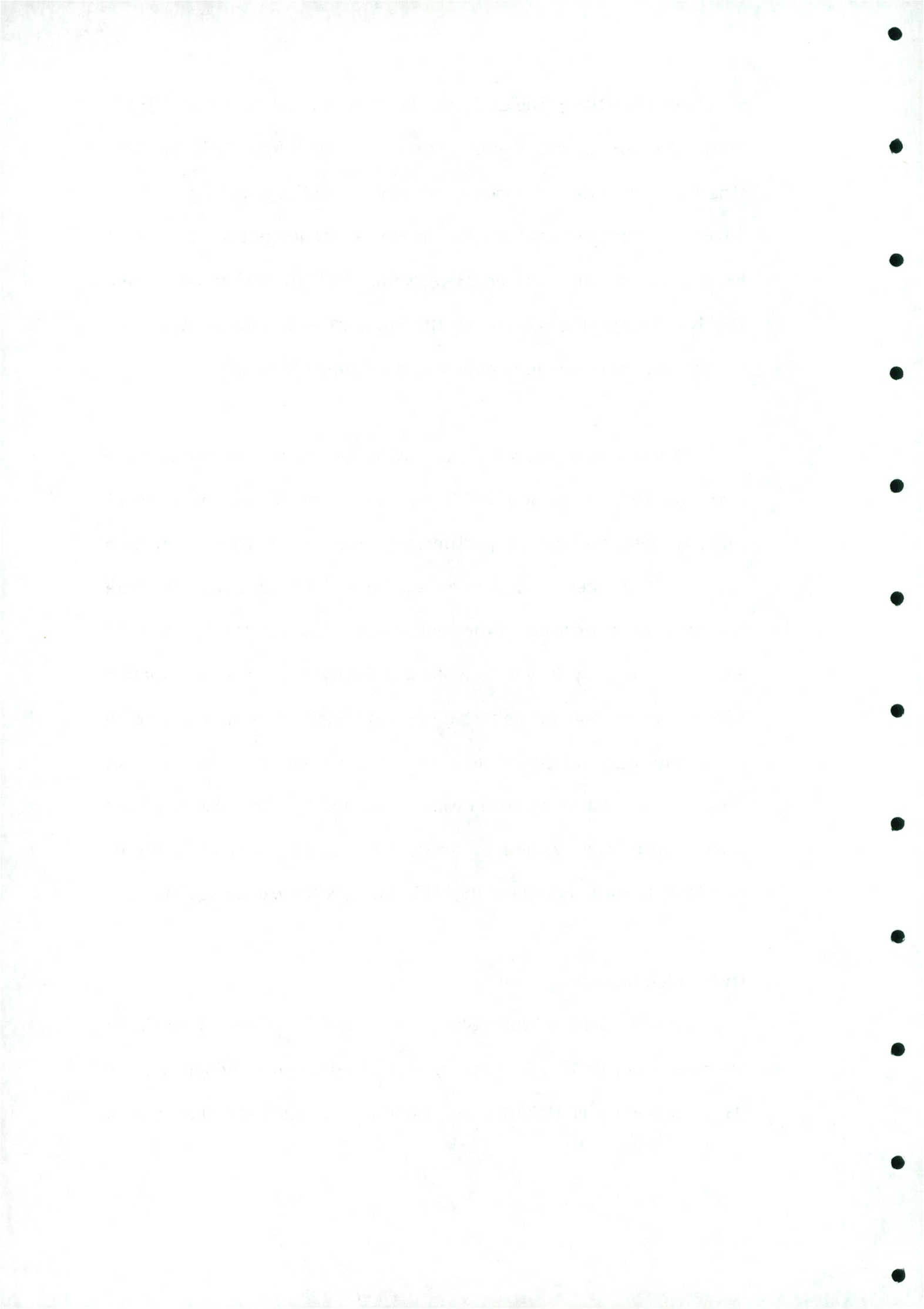


took from 1975-1985; 'The Umbrellas' in Japan and USA, took from 1984 to 1991; 'The Surrounded Islands, Biscayne Bay, took from 1980 to 1983; 'The Running Fence', in Sonoma and Marin counties took from 1972 to 1976. 'The Wrapped Reichstag, Berlin', by far the longest project Christo has ever worked on, has taken 23 years from 1971 to 1995 to be realised. This is not surprising considering the historical and political importance this building has come to symbolise to the German Nation.

Christo's 'Wrapped Reichstag Project, Berlin' has been refused three times, (in 1977, 1981 and 1987), and was eventually accepted, on 25 February 1994, after the first parliamentary vote ever to take place on such an issue, (292 votes for, 223 votes against and 137 abstentions). There are many issues surrounding the earlier refusals, not just the fact that the Reichstag building is very significant. Firstly the political situation surrounding not only the Reichstag but also the city in which the building is situated proved difficult to overcome. It is important to note that Berlin and the rest of the world were in the midst of Cold War hostilities when Christo first wanted to realise his project. This issue must be explained, to fully understand the difficulties Christo was up against.

### **The divided Berlin:**

After the Second World War Germany and Berlin the capital city at the time, were divided into zones, each allied country (Britain, France, USA and the Soviet Union) were responsible for their designated area.





Their responsibility included the reconstruction of the area, and to ensure that the German military power remained minimal. It was intended that once Germany was back on its feet, the allies would move out and Germany would have complete control. By 1948 it became obvious that the Soviet Union had no intention of doing this. They attempted to move the allied forces out of Berlin with the Berlin blockade. This attempt did not succeed and spurred on the Cold War, in which the two super powers, USA and the Soviet Union became conflicting powers in a war that was based on economics and delusion. In 1949, the Federal Republic of Germany (allied occupied zones) came about and the Democratic Republic (Soviet Zones) was set up. During the following years West Germany was developed a good economy and this encouraged many professionals and skilled workers from the East to relocate to the West. This was the underlying reason for the construction of the Berlin Wall, to curb emigration. The building of the Berlin Wall left the Reichstag marooned in a desolate area sandwiched between East and West; it became an image and symbol of a divided city one without function or political power. (Fig 4).

#### **Christo's first refusal:**

1977 brought the first refusal of Christo's 'Wrapped Reichstag' project, which was not surprising considering the political issues surrounding Berlin at the time. Because Berlin was divided into zones permission for the project had to be granted by all four powers, USA, France, Britain, and Soviet Union.







Fig 4



Permission also had to be granted by the Parliament of the German Federal Republic, the President of the Bundestag and the Chancellor. Even if all the above had agreed, the final say was with the president of the Bundestag, Karl Carson who was formally against the project.

At the 25th exhibition of Kunstlerbund in 1977, the German government voiced their opinion on Christo's project. The Federal President, Walter Schneel, described art as an area of freedom in which the government should not meddle. Schneel's opinion was just an easy way of escaping the issue. Karl Carson's (Bundestag President), opinions were at least a little more honest. Matters such as the German Nations sympathy for art and its attitude towards such a project as Christo's, were issues he discussed and naturally added to the weight of the projects refusal. Buddensieg quotes Carson as commenting at the time:

That these limits lie where a large proportion of our fellow citizens have no sympathy for an artistic project that would temporarily transform an object of 'special historical significance' to such an extent that it would spark controversy. (quoted in, Teshuva,1993, p.15)

Another issue that was to determine the fate of Christo's project, was a general fear that its acceptance might sway voters. This was one of Willy Brandt's (Chancellor,1977) concerns. Due to the fact that a General Election was imminent, public opinion was an issue most Parliamentary Members did not want to take a chance on.

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The issue is the assessment of the political implications of the artistic effect produced. Assessing how the majority of the population will react to the provocative project-a majority that could very quickly become a majority of voters. Brandt quoted in (Teshuva, 1993, p.15)

The opinions voiced during the 25th exhibition of the Kunstlerbund in 1977, were issues that determined Christo's project going ahead or not. The refusal did not lie only with the political situation in Berlin and Germany or the historical significance of the Reichstag building, but it also lay with politicians fears of what effect it may have had on the public. It is ironic to realise, that while the German Government were fighting to refuse permission for the project, the C.I.A were trying to promote it as anti - cold war propaganda. The international promotion of abstract expression in America may apply to earlier years, but similar tactics were used throughout the Cold War era. Valerie Reardon suggested this in an article she wrote on Christo.

Evidence suggests that the CIA, during the early years of the Cold War, was implicated in the international promotion of abstract expressionism because of it's propaganda value as exemplifying freedom of expression in America.

(Reardon, 1995, p.19)

### **Christo's second and third refusal:**

Christo's project was refused twice more. In 1981, Richard Stucklen (President of The Bundestag at the time), refused to allow it and in 1987, during the 750th anniversary of the city of Berlin, Philip Jenninger





(President of The Bundestag at that time) gave the third refusal. This decision came even though Roland Specker produced a statement containing 70,000 signatures in favour of the project. Christo's Reichstag project came to light once again after the fall of the Berlin Wall on the 9th November 1989. The new unity of Germany changed the political standing of Berlin and Germany, and Christo hoped the new situation would also change the standing of his 'Wrapped Reichstag project'.

On the 25th February 1994, Christo was granted permission to carry out his two week installation. He had gathered a lot of support in Germany throughout the years and the fact that Rita Sussmuth, the President of the Bundestag was in favour of the project, helped to bring about its acceptance. One must remember that dealings with foreign Governments such as the British, French, USA and East Germany had vanished and Christo only needed to gain permission from the German Parliament. Many Parliamentary Members followed Rita Sussmuth's example and voted for the Project.

Another important issue surrounding the project's acceptance, was the fact that the Reichstag was no longer a symbol of Cold War, but instead a symbol of hope for a newly united Germany. The generation of people had also changed over the twenty three years Christo had been attempting this project. There was also a new feeling among the politicians, as Peter Konrad expresses it: "it will reveal the building in a

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new and surprising light." (Konrad quoted in, Angioni, 1994, p.3).

Another reason why Christo's project was accepted, is the fact that Christo's art installations only remain on public view for two weeks, it is not permanent. Also his work also does not require tax payer's money, as Christo finances his projects through the selling of his own work. The artist also creates a lot of media interest, therefore increasing and generating tourist activity within his chosen site.

The decision to accept Christo's project did not come lightly. With 292 votes for and 223 against, it was not a clear majority. His fiercest opposition came from Chancellor Kohl's Party (C.D.U). Helmut Kohl previously stated in 1987 that the project would never be realised in his life time. How wrong he was, and so strong was his objection that he was the only Member of Parliament who did not visit the project when it was completed. Wolfgang Schauble, CDU's Parliamentary leader, voiced his fears on the topic. Angioni quotes Schauble at the time:

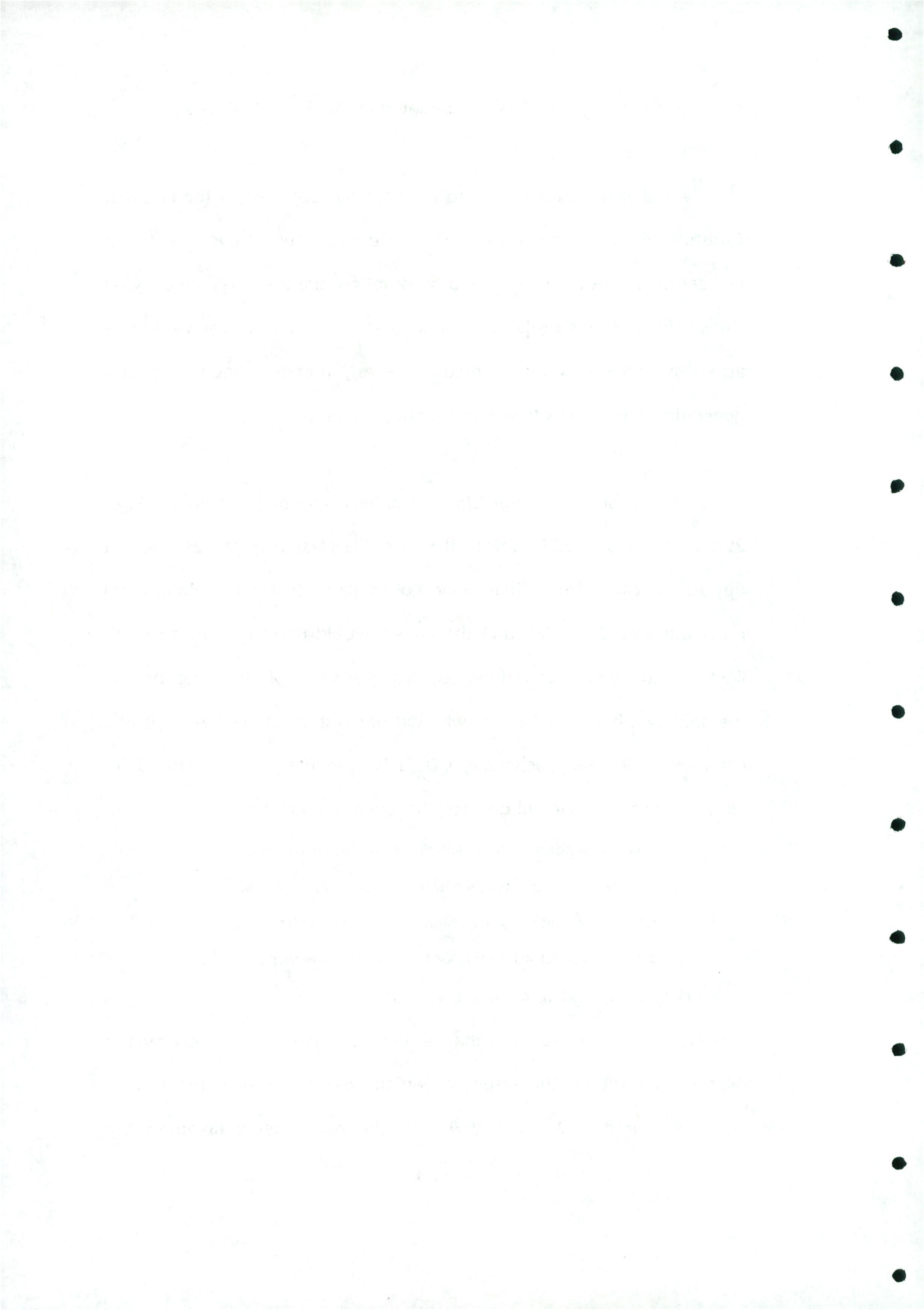
Consider the importance and centrality of the Reichstag to the history of our country and therefore it's potency as a symbol.

The state, the community are identified with this building.

It is dangerous to let it be used for this kind of experiment.

(Schauble quoted in, Angioni, 1994, p.3).

It is also interesting to note that according to an opinion poll by the Allensbach Institute, the results of which were released in the second week of March 1994, barely 9% of the respondents favoured the





Reichstag being wrapped; 38% were against it; 7% undecided; and the remaining 46% had never even heard of the project. In Berlin itself, as many as 57% were opposed and only 12% were in favour. In some ways one can understand why people felt Christo's art work could end up being an experiment. The Reichstag building means a lot to the people of Berlin and Germany. The building holds a lot of bitter memories for a Nation whose history is riddled with tragic events. In many ways the words of Rita Sussmuth comes to mind as a description of what occurred during Christo's two week installation.

Disguising a building can serve to emphasise it's most striking features. By wrapping this building the artist not only displays his own feelings, but also gives the citizen a chance to react to an edifice that is so important to their traditions and their future.

(Sussmuth quoted in, Flash Art, 1993, p.102)

If Berlin is to become the capital city and the Reichstag the House of Parliament, of the newly united Germany, then both were in need of public interest and Christo's project could not have come at a better time. Even Christo himself felt his project was being realised at a significant stage in the history of Germany. Angioni quotes Christo saying, "I have been lucky. Far from losing it's typicality, the project has become even more relevant. In the past it would have been interpreted simply in terms of the East- West divide." (Angioni, 1994, p.3.)



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### Chapter three

#### Christo, and The Wrapping of the Reichstag

Christo's earlier works have evolved from wrapping small items such as flowers and nude female models to large scale works in urban and rural settings. He is best known as a sculptor who wraps 'things' such as 'Wrapped Coast', (Little Bay, Sydney, 1969) or the 'Port Neuf', (Paris 1985). However Christo's work does not always revolve around the process of wrapping, he has created large scale works using the landscape as his canvas such as the 'Umbrellas', (Japan - USA, Fig. 5)

So what are Christo's aims with regard to his work? Eric Shanes, sums it up, (Shanes, August 1989, p. 109). He suggests that Christo has many aims including raising questions about appearances, reality, nudity, clothing, identity, mystery and definitions of form and function. Christo attempts to obscure our normal vision of things, his audience is forced to look at buildings and landscapes in a new light and therefore change their perceived idea of things. In 1969 Christo wrapped one million square feet of coast line in New South Wales, Australia in synthetic fabric in just ten days, (Fig.6). In 1985 he wrapped the Port Neuf in Paris in a fortnight, (Fig.7). During the installation time, millions of people who had normally taken this coastline and bridge for granted were forced to look at them





Fig 5







Fig 6

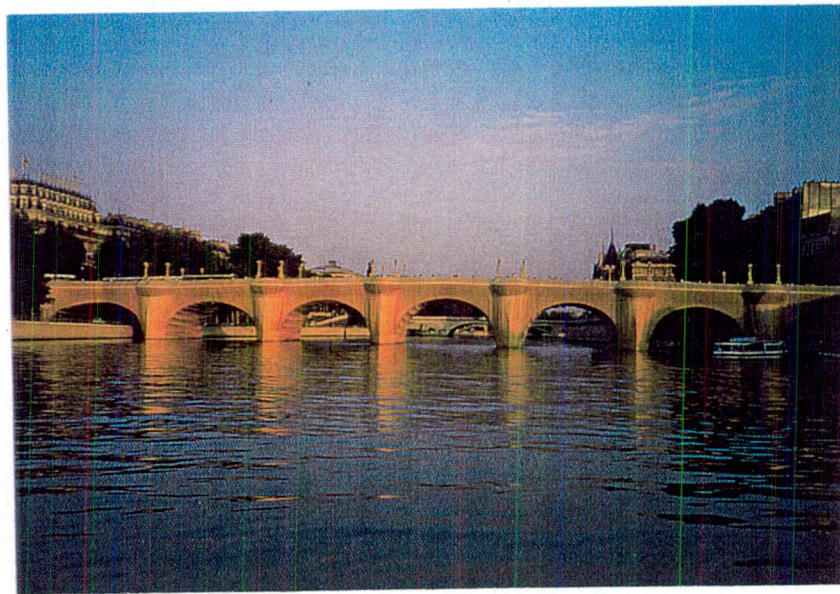


Fig 7

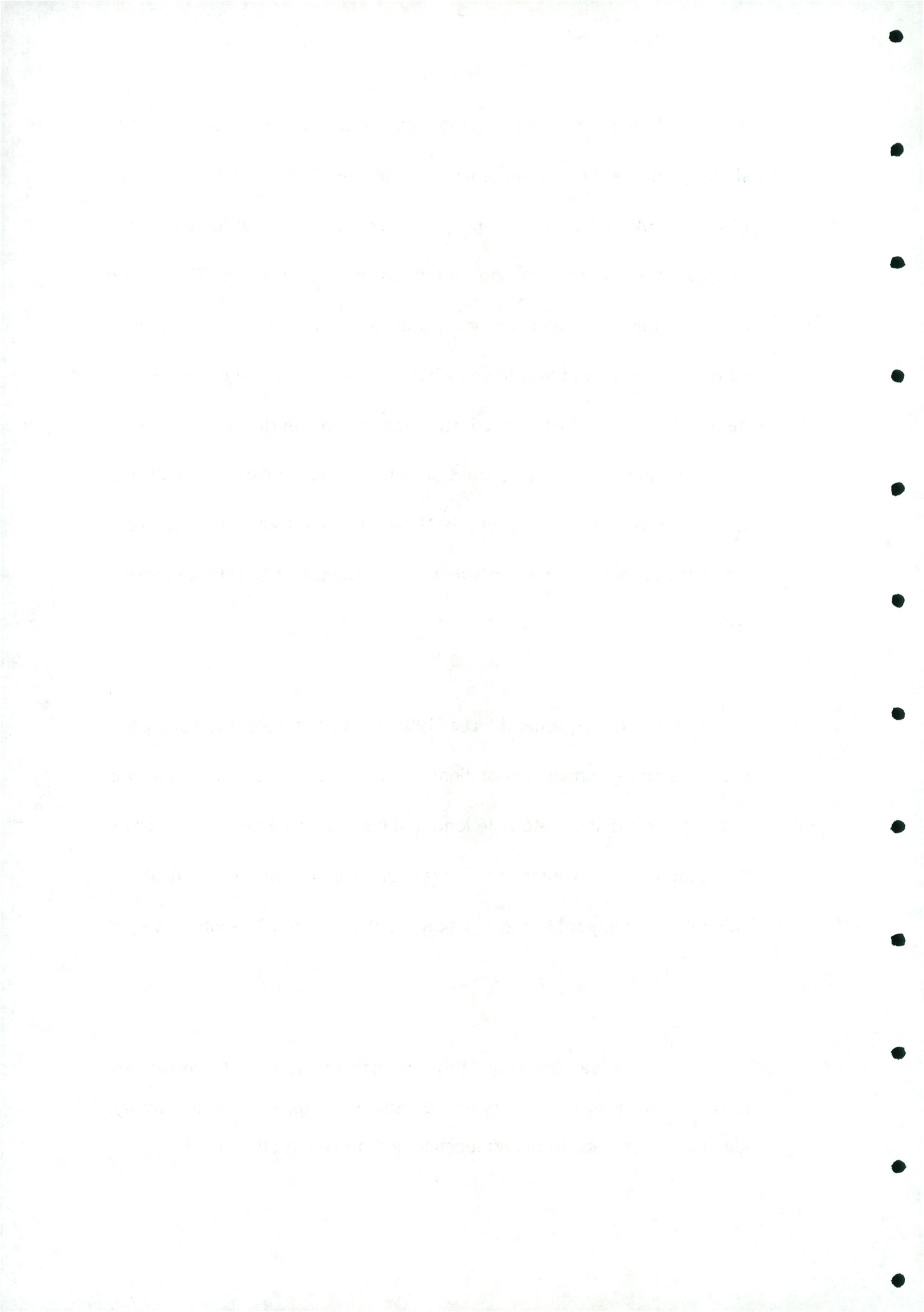




anew and therefore question their approach to reality. Similarly the slippery nature of the material used in the 'Wrapped Walk Ways', Missouri USA, (1978), altered people's views. The material forced people to adjust their normal walking pattern to remain balanced, (Fig 8). The artist also raises questions on political issues. He created, out of stacks of oil barrels the 'Wall of Iron Barrels - Iron Curtain', (1962). This was a direct demonstration against the construction of the Berlin Wall the year previous. Similarly Christo sparked off associations with the Great Wall of China with his 'Running Fence', 1976, an eighteen foot high translucent white fabric that crossed two states for a distance of twenty four miles, (Fig 9).

Christo (as explained by Lee, 1995, p.53), has never used any place without strange human connotations and associations. For this reason it is not surprising that Christo's life long ambition was to wrap the Reichstag: "a wrapping that is intended to draw upon and enhance the political, cultural and geographical associations of that building" (Shanes, August 1989, p. 112).

The reasons why Christo wished to wrap the Reichstag, are related to his earlier works, raising questions on appearance and reality, identity and mystery, form and function and obscuring our normal



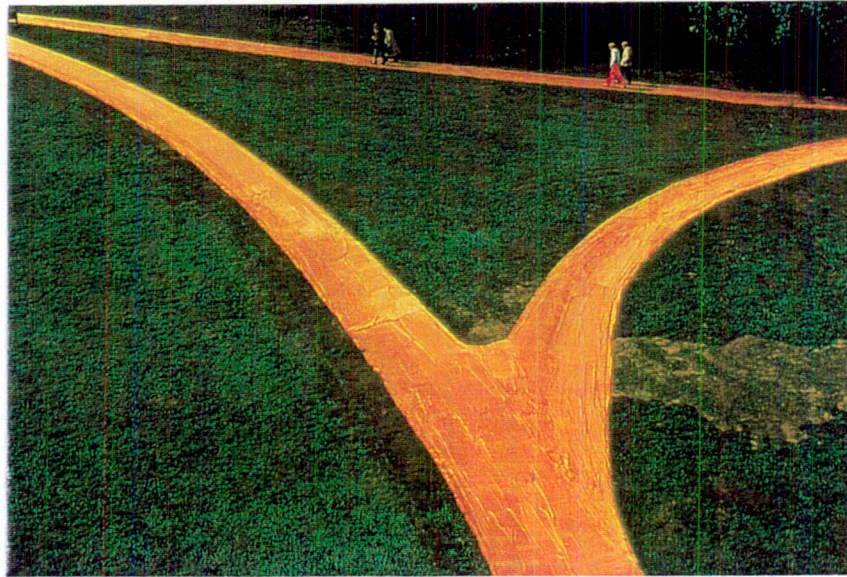


Fig 8

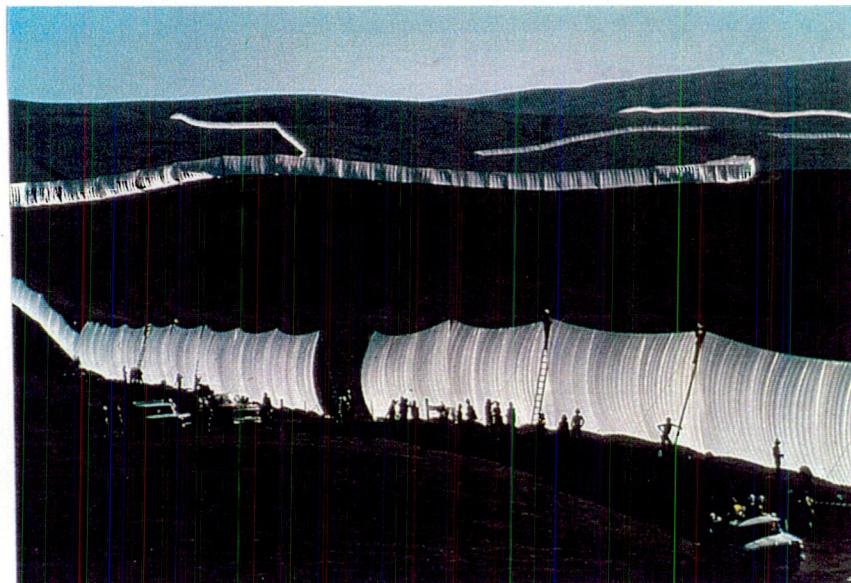


Fig 9





perception of things. However there are additional reasons. Christo also attempts to question the unmortality of art "The temporary nature of our projects is important. We want to challenge the immortality of art by making work which is temporary but which lives in the minds of those who saw it. It shows greater courage to make art temporary." ( Lee quotes, Christo, 1995, p 54 ). This I feel is questionable, as a lot of Christo's art success is based on the momentary suspension of real life, creating a momentary fairy land. Extending the duration of this would only diminish its success. Also Christo's 'Wrapped Reichstag' project was a challenge, considering the major hurdles that had to be overcome for its realisation. In a certain sense, success in gaining permission, is an element that increases the artist's ambition to see the project realised. This is understandable after working for so long to promote a project, the non-realisation of it must be devastating. Models never compare to the real thing. David Lee quotes Christo in an interview, "We do it, because we want to see it" (Lee, 1995, p.53).

Finally, and properly, the most important reason is that, Christo's project is questioning the idea of freedom:

It does not exist because president Kohl said yes -he said no actually - or because the mayor of the city or some corporate executive says yes, or because we have sponsorship from Coca Cola or American Express. The difficulty many have with our

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4. The fourth part of the report is a conclusion and a list of references.

5. The fifth part of the report is a summary of the main points.

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projects is that they are irrational and look pointless.  
Nobody can charge tickets to see them. Freedom is the enemy  
of possession and nobody can possess these works.  
( Lee quotes Christo, 1995, p.53 )

Christo's Wrapped Reichstag project was opened on June 24th 1995. The Reichstag remained wrapped for 14 days and, on July 7th, removal started. During the months of April, May and June, iron workers installed steel structures on the towers, roof, the statues and the stone vases. This ensured they were properly protected from the 61,500 kilogramme weight of the fabric that cascaded down from the roof to the ground. Interestingly the Reichstag drawings, ranging over twenty five years, document the changes in materials and process as the project has developed.

The fabric used was unlike any used before in his other projects. It was a thick polypropylene fabric which reflected the varying colours of a normal Berlin day. It was manufactured by Bremer Woll - Kammerei, Bremen, Germany, in seventy tailor made fabric panels. Christo used a vibrant blue rope, (diameter 32 mm), to tie the fabric to the building. Both the sliver of the fabric and the blue of the rope were contrasting colours that looked striking when the project was fully installed,( Fig 10).

Using the same technique as with the Pont Neuf project,

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Fig 10





ninety professional climbers were used to lower the wrappings from the roof. Each unwinding panel was lowered separately taking seven days to complete. David Galloway in an article on Christo (Lufthansa Board book, March, 1995, p.55), suggested that the use of 'verticalists' (vertical climbers) may stem from an East German tradition. In the former East Germany, where modern sky lifting equipment was nonexistent, and scaffolding rare, members of the profession were both numerous and highly experienced. If this was the case, it created a symbolic link between East and West. There again it may have been the practical option.

1,200 monitors, mostly students or simply enthusiastic young fans, worked around the clock in four six hour shifts, protecting the sculpture from harm and to help with any questions the visitors may have had.

The visual impact of the wrapped Reichstag ( Fig. 11), is in some ways similar to the atmosphere associated with Disneyland. Surrounded by urban Berlin, the Reichstag when wrapped was totally out of context. It's soaring silver structure was capable of changing the environment around it and in some ways captured visitor's emotions. Because of the material's reflective quality, the colour of the building changed as the day





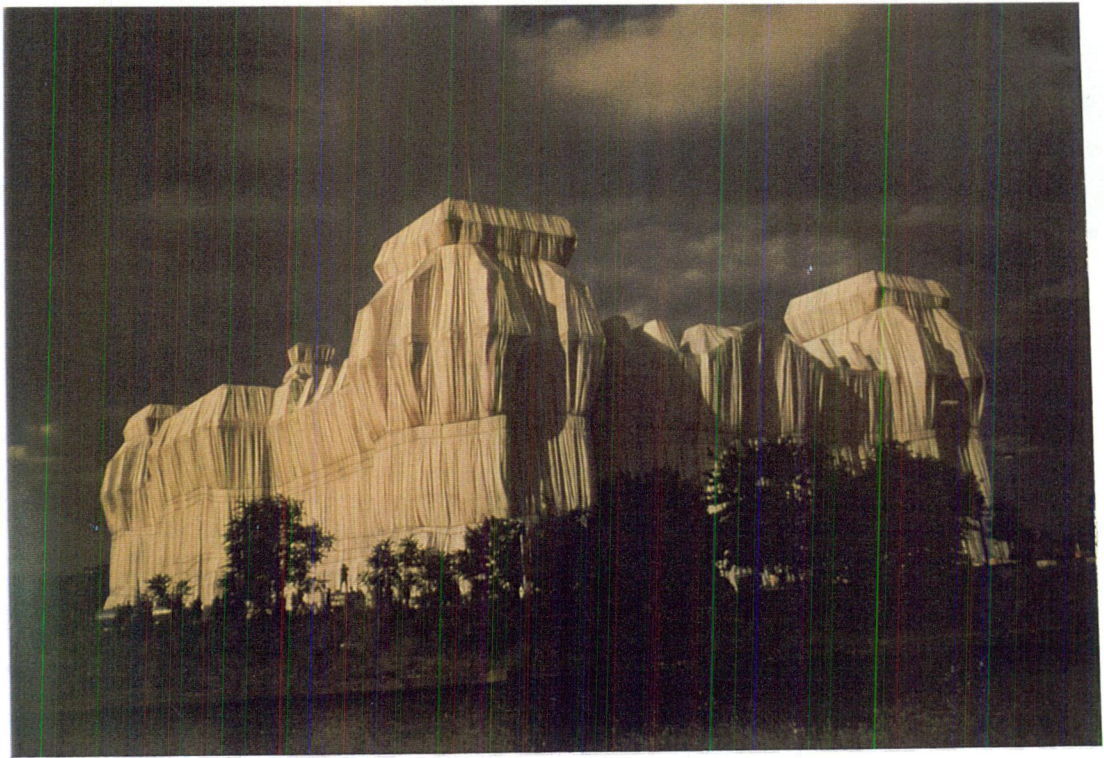


Fig 11



Fig 12





went on. It's bright silver colour changed from orange at dawn to pink at night, (Fig 12). Because of the colour it changed to at night made, one could think that the building was lit up or even alive, a characteristic that conventional buildings do not have.

Christo requires public and media interest for the success of his projects. His projects are above all created for the public. For this reason Christo's sculptures are not out of bounds, they are interactive with the audience who have the opportunity to touch the works. This creates a more personal element for the audience. It also portrays Christo as a very approachable artist. The wrapped Reichstag during its two week installation was expected to have "between five and eight million visitors," (Lee, 1995, p.53). This amount was over valued and it was calculated that over three million people visited the Reichstag. The public area surrounding the Reichstag was therefore littered with stalls selling food and souvenirs, and everything associated with a funfair was available. The area of Platz Der Republic, had families gathered together having picnics and younger people gathered to drink and dance. Over a twenty four hour period there was always a handful of people merely using it as an excuse for a party.

In Berlin Christo's wrapped Reichstag was advertised six months

1. The first part of the report deals with the general situation of the country and the progress of the work during the year.

2. The second part of the report deals with the results of the work during the year.

3. The third part of the report deals with the financial statement of the year.

4. The fourth part of the report deals with the general remarks and conclusions.

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before it took place in the tourist magazine 'Daz Magazine/The magazine' (a tourist magazine for Berlin). For this reason Berlin had plenty of time to prepare for the event. Because of this, large amounts of mass marketing and advertising campaigns happened, before, during and after the wrapping. Window displays all over Berlin had the theme of wrapping which was almost similar to Christmas. Manikins were wrapped and even some windows were completely wrapped inside and out. Fig 13 shows a framing shop displaying wrapped frames. Warstein Beer advertising also reflected on the events, an image of a wrapped crate of beer was superimposed in front of the unwrapped Reichstag. To a certain extent Berlin became Christo mad, from one extreme to the other. Some people were denouncing Christo's project by removing their clothes, and others were glorifying him by making jewellery from the fabric that was used to wrap the Reichstag. In some ways, the glorification of Christo and his work was the main function of the project, and perhaps the symbolic and historical significance of the building was lost among the celebrations.

Did Christo's project manage to enhance the political, cultural and geographical associations of the Reichstag? At most I think Christo only

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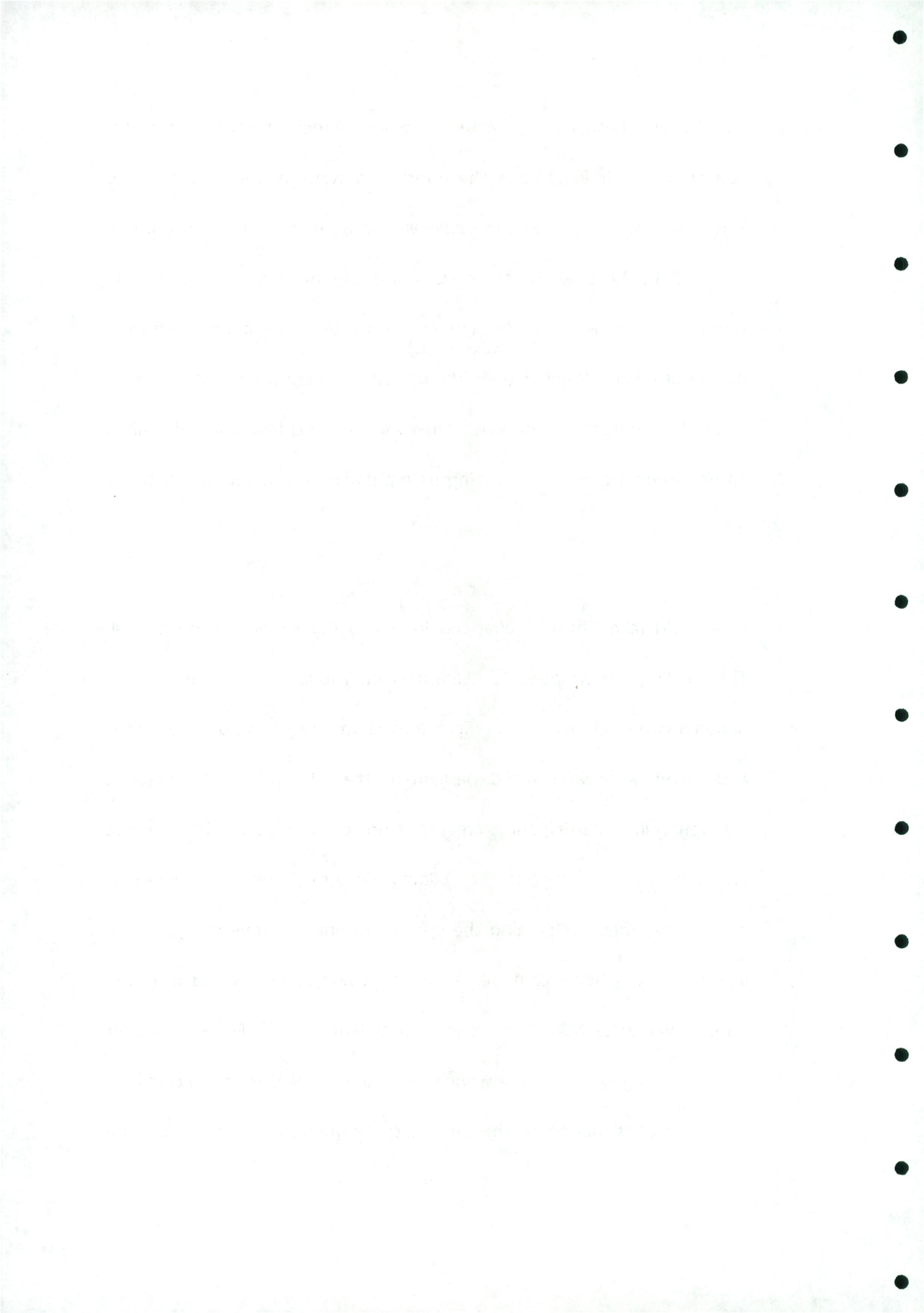
Fig 13





raised a few questions and created a few ideas among the German people concerning their Reichstag. The entire two week period in which the Reichstag was wrapped and in public view was an event in Berlin's history that will be hard to match, considering the turnout of visitors. The wrapping of the Reichstag became the centre of conversation among the people of Berlin. Whether their idle discussions were positive or negative makes little difference, the Reichstag was still being talked about. This is an important element of restoring its reputation and accepting its tragic history.

One could take Christo's Wrapped Reichstag Project on a surface level. The building was wrapped up like a present. The artist gave the German nation a two week period, to reflect, forgive and forget the building's past and unveil a new cleansed parliament that the people themselves, through public participation created. Christo's wrapped Reichstag was only a temporary change to the building. Only existing for two weeks it was not capable of changing the symbolism and negative image of the building. It did however manage to raise a few questions and heighten public awareness about the Reichstag building itself. For this reason Christo managed to create a wonderful means which Foster could follow. Foster's reconstruction of the Reichstag commenced straight after the



wrapping was removed when the Christo hype was still very present in the city of Berlin.



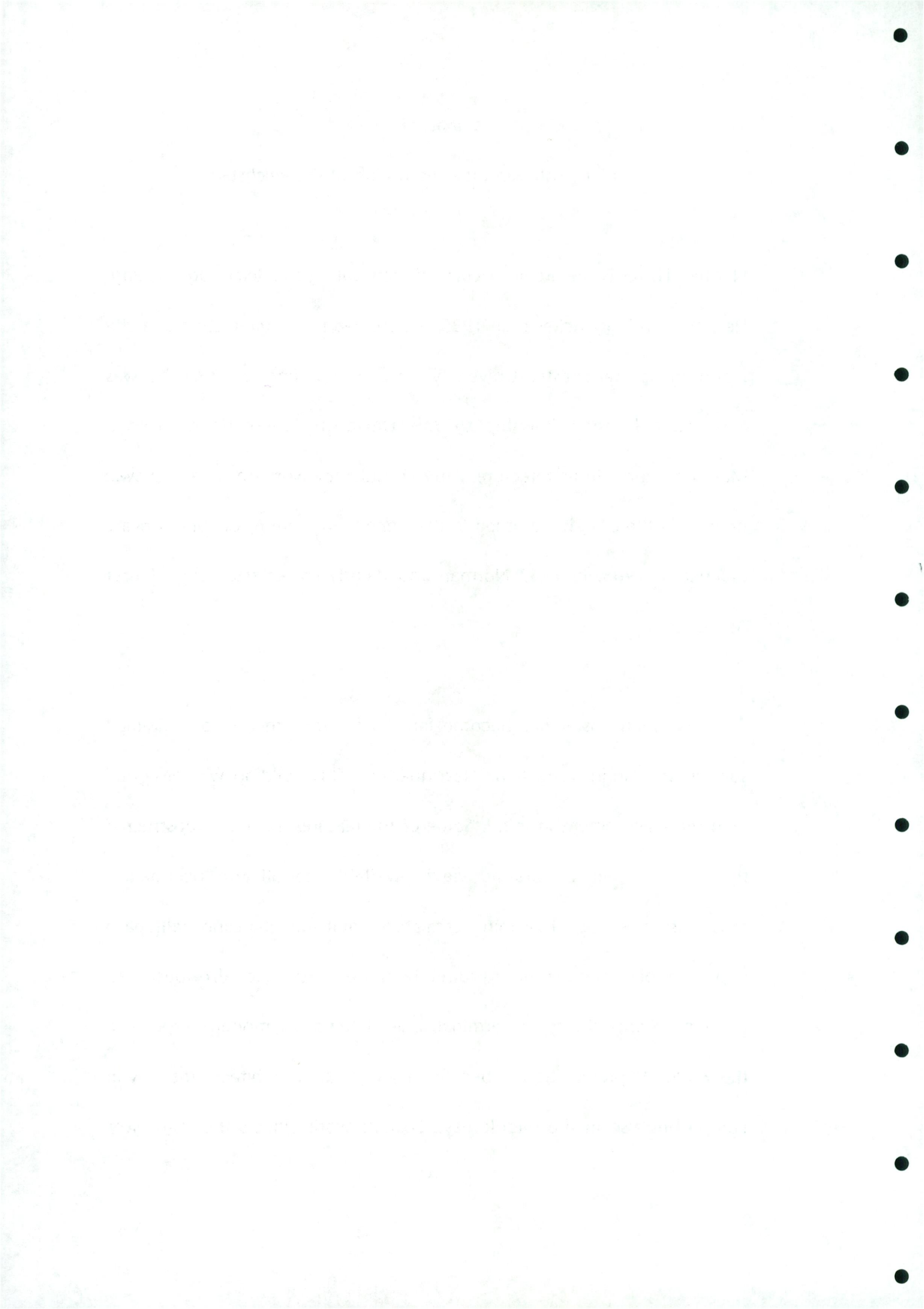


## Chapter four

### Norman Foster and the renovating of the Reichstag.

Norman Foster is the architect currently renovating the Reichstag building. He was born in Manchester in 1935 and studied both architecture and city planning at Manchester University. After graduating in 1961 he was awarded a Henry Fellowship to Yale University where he received a Master's Degree in architecture. After consultancy work on urban renewal projects in the USA, he returned to the United Kingdom to establish private practice in 1963. In 1967 Norman and Wendy Foster established Foster Associates.

Norman Foster has become famous for the creation of buildings such as the Hong Kong Bank Headquarters. This building was designed with the environment in mind. Some of the features include unobstructed floors with their panoramic views available to all the occupants, regardless of status, cascading escalators, multistory banking hall space and a public plaza running directly underneath. He also designed London's Stansted Airport Terminal, one of the most modern airports in the world. At present he has become a sought after architect, not only in Europe but also in the middle east. Foster's work reflects the themes of



modernism, stripping the building to the core. This is contradictory to the work of Christo, who aims to hide or conceal buildings. Many of Foster's buildings resemble frame work construction, where the supports of the building and levels are exposed. His extensive use of glass creates natural light and increases the feeling of space. The internal layout is often open plan, where a group of people share office space, reducing isolation and increasing team work. Nothing is hidden, all elements and components that make up the structure, including the occupant, are revealed in all their purity. All of Foster's work to date has dealt with creating a new building from scratch, The Reichstag building is the first project Foster has undertaken that involves renovation. For this reason it will be interesting to see the final result and how well Foster coped with changing the building's negative image.

The reunification of Berlin has generated a world wide interest in the city's future development. Areas such as Postdammer Platz, which was originally no mans land, has been bought up by companies such as Mercedes Benz for redevelopment. This has generated a lot of interest with architects who wish to be involved. Similarly with the German Government relocating to the Reichstag a lot of architects wished to be involved in the regeneration of the building. For this reason a competition





was set up to choose an architect suitable for the job. The completion came in two stages, one in 1992 where three winners were selected and the second stage came in 1993 where the final winner was chosen.

The winners of stage one were architects, Sir Norman Foster and partners, Santiago Calatrava and Pi de Bruijn. The concepts provided by all three did not involve the restoration of the late nineteenth century building but involved radical alterations. Throughout the history of the Reichstag it has become apparent that architects involved with the reconstruction of the Reichstag have always based their concepts around a dramatic change to the building's frontal appearance. Even Christo during his two week installation used this concept but naturally it had a different meaning.

Foster's original concept, stage one of the design competition, consisted of redesigning the Reichstag building to a one - room deep screen wall, with extra accommodation created within a two - story deep podium, which would surround the building. A circular debating chamber would be placed in a public court and all would be united by a roof which is higher than the Reichstag itself. This concept (Fig 14) is very typical of



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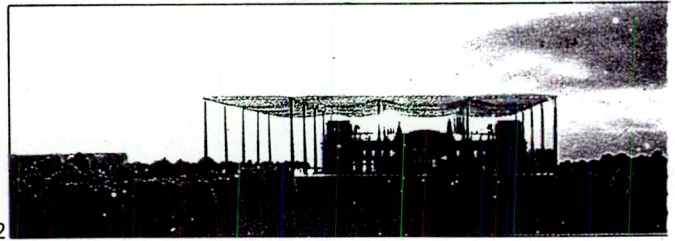
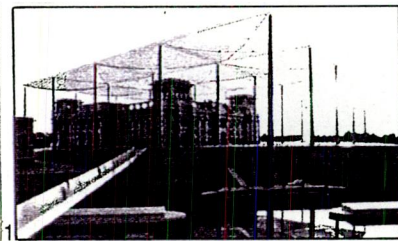
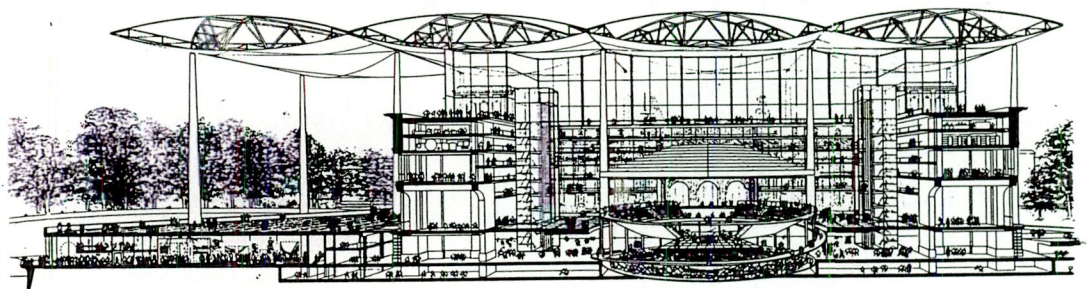


Fig 14



Foster's style. It gives an outward image of complete organisation. The areas where work is conducted is situated under ground where it is hidden away from on-lookers. This would naturally give an outward appearance that all is well with governmental proceedings.

Santiago Calatrava's concept, stage one of the design competition, consisted of a scheme that shows more respect for the old building. The dome has been replaced over the central debating area. Although it is a completely different shape to the old dome, It does install some of the traditions and character of the old building, (Fig 15).

De Bruijn's concept, stage one of the design competition, consisted of a scheme that took a different direction than the others. The offices are put inside the Reichstag while the new debating chambers are located outside the building. The chambers will be placed within a raised podium in the front of the west facade, (Fig 16).

After the first stage was completed, the organisers, who included Berlin city architect Hans Stimmann and Richard Rogers, failed to reach a decision and stage two of the competition began. Norman Foster and Partners won this stage in 1993, the new design had to be





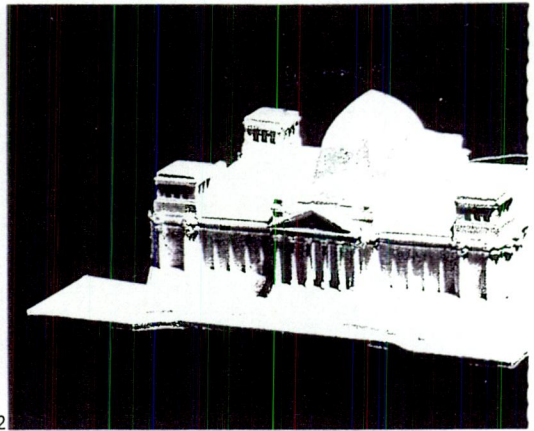
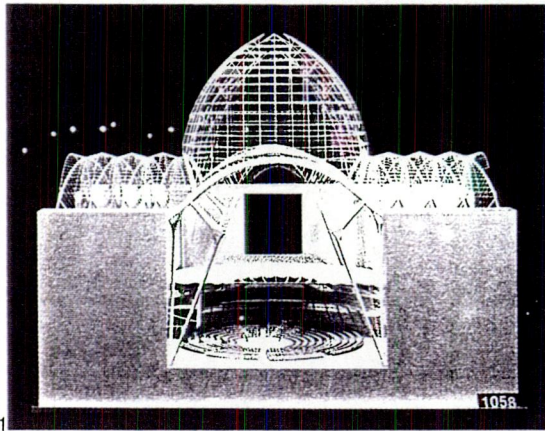


Fig 15

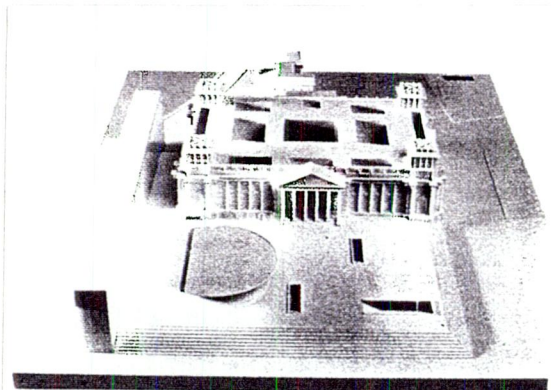
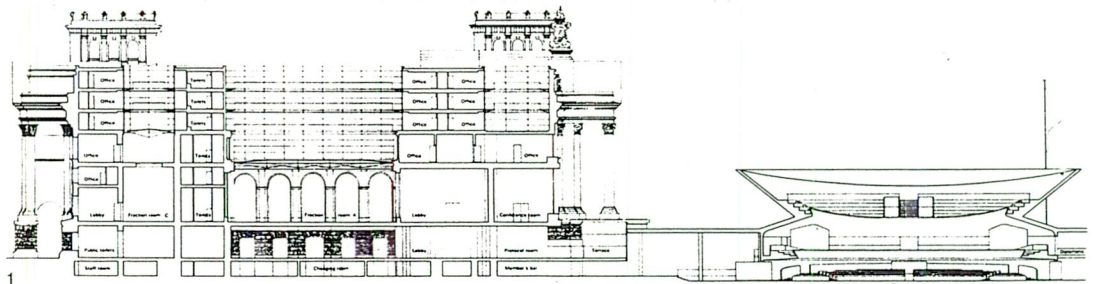


Fig16



based on, restoring the old building and utilising it's structure. Before Foster's design is discussed, it is important to analyse the traditions Germany has had with their parliamentary buildings and see if there is a structural link between them.

The parliamentary house has changed very little in shape and form from the First National Assembly in 1848 to the first specially designed parliamentary building, the Reichstag 1894, (Wallot) to the Bundestag building of Bonn 1949 (Schwippert). But judging from the new Bundestag building built in Bonn 1993 (Behnisch), the parliamentary building now aims to make the legislation process open and approachable. Although the building will not be used as a parliament for very long (the seat of government for the united Germany will move back to Berlin), Behnisch, the architect who created this glass house, has set new standards for democratic architecture. In some way his design has probably influenced Foster and his approach to the reconstruct of the Reichstag.

The First German National Assembly was held in Frankfurt after the German revolution 1848. This took place in the PaulusKirche, a Baroque Protestant church adapted for the purpose. It was oval in plane with a superimposed semicircle for the seating. This seating arrangement has been carried on through German parliamentary buildings from the

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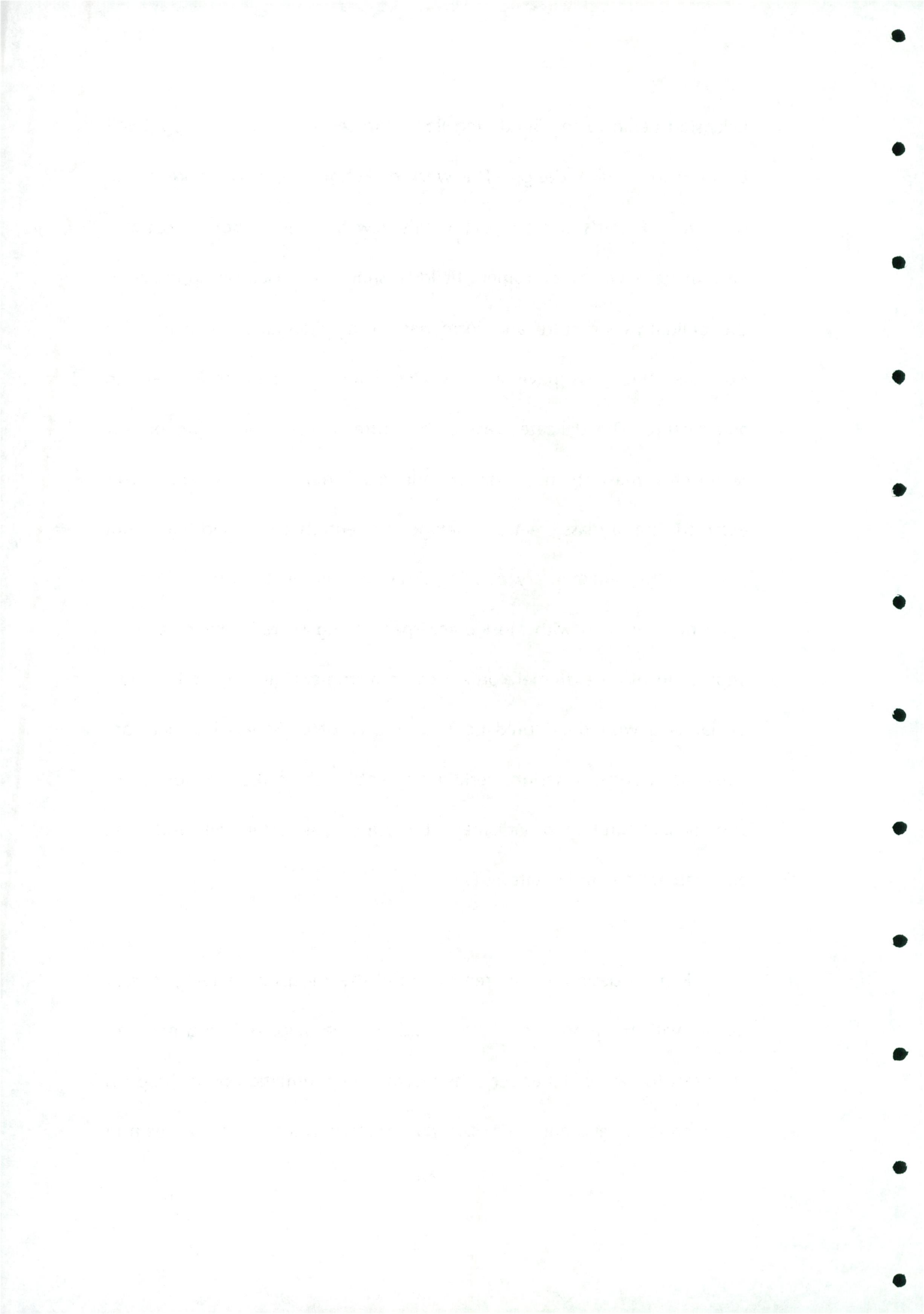
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Reichstag Berlin to the Bundestag Bonn and the same internal layout will be used in Foster's design. The work of Behnisch is very important in relation to Foster's concept. Behnisch's new building in Bonn, creates a new image of what a parliament building should look like. His approach to the building's structure and form has strong German precedents. For example, the glass pavilion is a very common element in German architecture. The delicate glass architecture of Egon Eiermann, one of Behnisch's masters, has indeed influenced him and his work. This extensive use of glass creates an image of openness something that is not typical with parliamentary buildings. The internal layout is very modern, open plane is used with most office space being shared. This creates an impression of an extremely organised government, an impression most parliaments wish they could boast about. A lot of Behnisch's ideas are reflected in Foster's design, certain elements such as the creation of an approachable and open parliament, the use of glass extensively and open planning are common features.

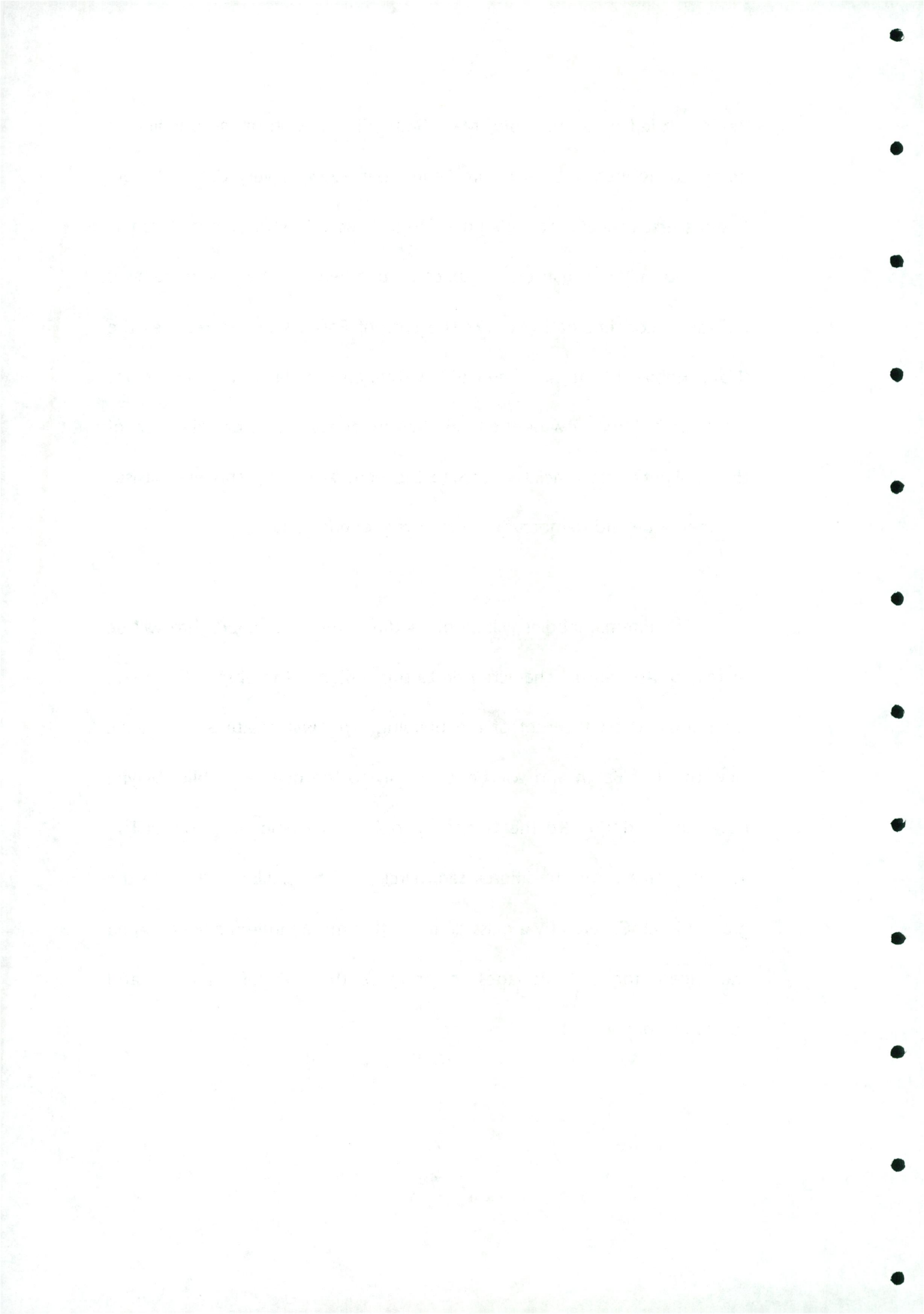
Foster's design for the renovating of the Reichstag building tries to remain with traditions, while also creating something fresh and modern. The work to date is still under construction and information on its progress is limited to reviews and articles. To date Foster has a twenty man team in





Berlin headed by 33 year old, Marc Braun. The design of the building as compiled by architectural record, September 1993, is very different from Foster's first concept. Foster's final design is based more on the potential of the old building than on the space requirements of the government, as his earlier concept had (Fig 17). The core of Foster's design restores the 'Piano nobile' to the prominence it had when the classical structure was first built. This will now be the level of entry for everyone from members of the parliament, to official visitors to the general public. This emphasises the theory behind democracy, where every one is equal.

The internal lobbies will be opened and the inner court yard will be recreated. An unusual characteristic to this design is the observation platform situated on the roof of the building. This will create a panoramic view of all of Berlin and will be accessible to the general public. Maybe now the inscription 'to the German people ' may hold some worth. The assembly area in the traditional semi circle, will be sinking in tiers to the ground level. Covered by a glass dome, with a more modern pillow shaped translucent form, it manages to promote the idea of an open and accessible parliament.



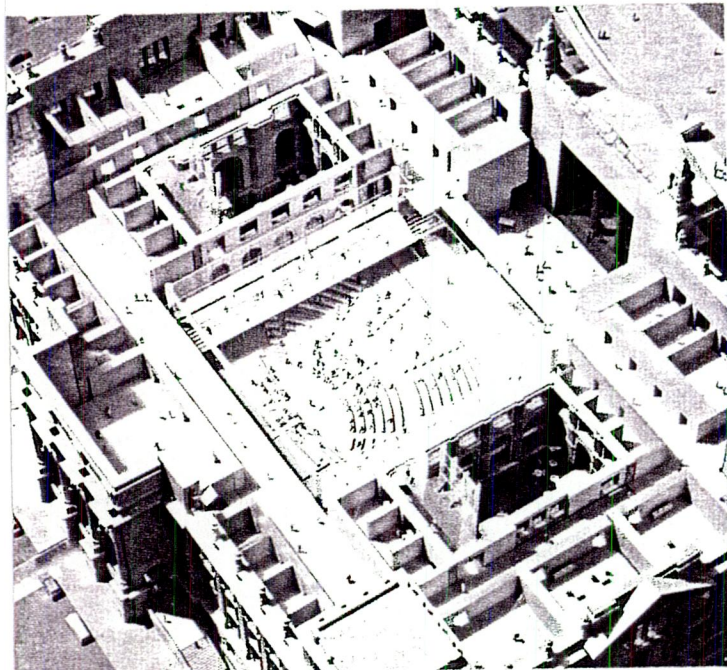
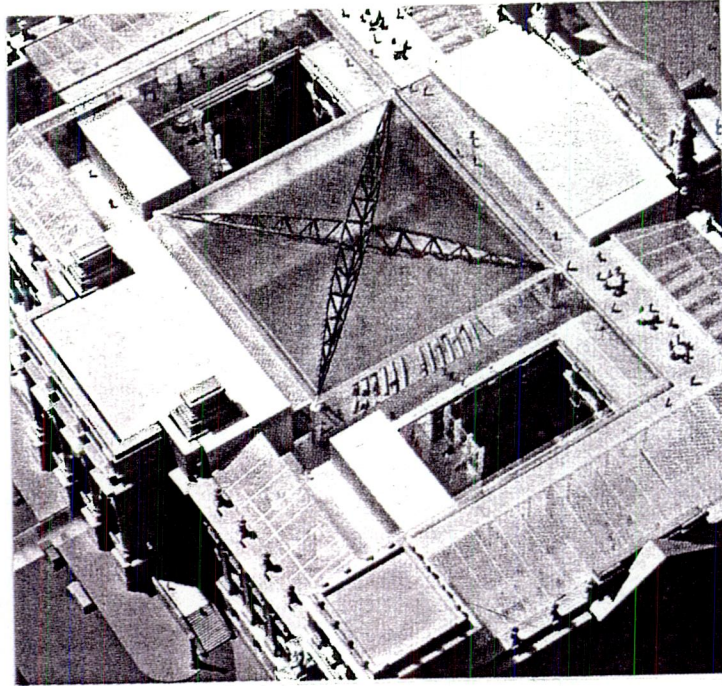


Fig 17





In analysing Foster's design, many of the features and details incorporated into it, will be hopefully capable of changing what this building has come to stand for. The bare structure of the new Reichstag is interesting. It remains with traditions while also creating a feeling of something fresh. By incorporating a glass roof into the design, the entire workings of the building are visible. The memories of fascist rule and Cold War conflicts that were hidden amongst the dark interiors are lifted with the light that now enters the building. The incorporation of an observation platform reunites the general public with the building that is primarily theirs in the first place. The open plan interior lay out, enforces team work and spirit within an office environment which, in turn, creates an outward image of organisation.

Foster's design is quite unlike any other architects before him. His design does not attempt to change the external appearance of the building. This is a very important as it could indicate that at last the German Nation has excepted the Reichstag's appearance whether good or bad. The work being carried out at the moment, is of major importance to the final design and also in recreating the symbol of the building. The sprayed asbestos of Baumgarten's time is being slowly removed and decorative detail has been uncovered which no one expected. Cyrillic

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REPORT OF RESEARCH

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inscriptions left behind by the Russian troops are also among the discoveries (Fig 18). Foster's idea is to keep these inscriptions and use them as features within the interior layout. Although Foster has the design of the new Reichstag finished, these discoveries were not planned and therefore the interior design seems to be changing by the day. Keeping these relics is important as it is maintaining the Reichstag's heritage. It also is a way of changing the Reichstag's symbol, their presence in the interior of the building will highlight the Reichstag's tragic history and therefore make it acceptable.

For the Reichstag to succeed as the new Parliament building for the unified Germany, it's outward appearance and it's inward tragic past must be exposed and accepted. The approach Foster is taking, lifting the roof and allowing light to enter the building, creating a single entrance for all in comers, incorporating an observation platform for the general public, clearing away the original offices to create an open plan layout and retaining the hidden inscription left by the Russian troops at the end of the war, are design elements that will indeed succeed in creating a new parliament for Germany. Although Foster's design uses the existing building, the feeling, image and symbolism will hopefully have changed creating a building that can stand and represent the newly united Germany's democratic constitution.





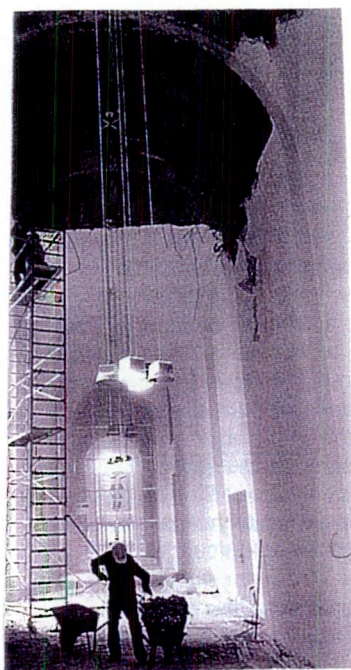


Fig 18





## Conclusion

The Reichstag has come to represent many things throughout its one hundred year existence. After the building's completion it was plagued with its unpopular appearance. It became an outward expression of Fascist rule and during the Cold War years it became a symbol of East and West divisions. It is apparent that none of the previous architects such as Wallot, Trout, Wach or Baumgarten were capable of coming up with a feasible solution to change the Reichstag's symbolism. The reason for this may lie in their approach to the building. They were more concerned with the structural appearance than the symbol the building stood for. Their solutions were to hide the tragic events that surrounded the Reichstag rather than expose them.

The idea in changing the Reichstag's symbol and image is not to erase the tragic events that occurred in German history but to acknowledge and except these tragic events. This is the approach both Christo and Foster took. By covering the Reichstag Christo hoped to change people's perceived ideas of the building, but Christo's two week installation was unable to have a prolonged effect in changing the Reichstag's symbol. The artist still managed to raise a few questions and heighten public awareness about the Reichstag. For this reason the publicity Christo attracted created a wonderful mean which Foster could follow.



Foster's Reichstag remains with tradition as opposed to creating a new parliamentary building for the newly united Germany. He is capturing the last one hundred years of German history within the Reichstag. This will create a building that reflects the country's achievements and failures, unlike the previous parliament in Bonn that only reflected a Germany since 1948. This I feel is an important factor as the Reichstag building is memorable to both East and West Germany and should reflect the shared history they once had together. Foster has also created a parliament building that may lead Germany into the next century. The idea of an open and approachable parliament building has been reflected throughout his designs. Foster has managed to change the symbol and image of the Reichstag, and has created a building for the German people. At long last, the inscribed words "Zu dem Deutschen Volk", (To the German People) may come true.





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3. The third part is a report from the Secretary of the Treasury on the state of the public debt.

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