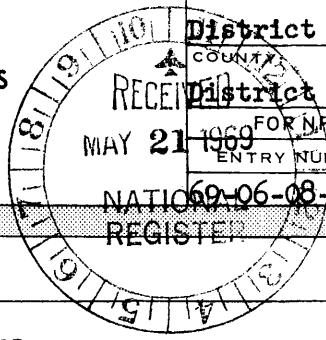


PH0011878

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)



STATE: District of Columbia
 COUNTY: District of Columbia
 FOR NPS USE ONLY
 ENTRY NUMBER: 69-06-08-0012
 DATE: 6/4/69

1. NAME

COMMON:
Pan American Union
 AND/OR HISTORIC:
International Union of the American Republics

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
17th Street between Constitution Avenue and C Street, N. W.
 CITY OR TOWN:
Washington
 STATE: District of Columbia CODE: 08 COUNTY: District of Columbia CODE: 001

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input type="checkbox"/>	Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both <input type="checkbox"/>	Public Acquisition: In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered <input type="checkbox"/>	Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress <input type="checkbox"/>
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			Yes: Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No: <input type="checkbox"/>
Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment <input type="checkbox"/>	Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum <input type="checkbox"/>	Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific <input type="checkbox"/>	Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> International Association

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNERS NAME:
Organization of American States
 STREET AND NUMBER:
Pan American Union Building, 17th St. bet. Constitution Ave. & C St., N. W.
 CITY OR TOWN: Washington STATE: District of Columbia CODE: 08

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Recorder of Deeds
 STREET AND NUMBER:
6th and D Streets, N. W.
 CITY OR TOWN: Washington STATE: District of Columbia CODE: 08
 APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 215,111 square feet

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: Proposed District of Columbia Additions to the National Register of Historic Properties recommended by Joint Committee on Landmarks
 DATE OF SURVEY: March 7, 1968 Federal State County Local
 DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
National Capital Planning Commission
 STREET AND NUMBER:
726 Jackson Place, N. W.
 CITY OR TOWN: Washington STATE: District of Columbia CODE: 08

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

18/303000/4000000

STATE: DIST. OF COL. COUNTY: DIST. OF COL. ENTRY NUMBER: 69-06-08-0012 DATE: 6/4/69 FOR NPS USE ONLY

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	Excellent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Good <input type="checkbox"/>	Fair <input type="checkbox"/>	Deteriorated <input type="checkbox"/>	Ruins <input type="checkbox"/>	Unexposed <input type="checkbox"/>
INTEGRITY	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	Altered <input type="checkbox"/>	Unaltered <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Moved <input type="checkbox"/>	Original Site <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Pan American Union is located on a five-acre tract bounded by Constitution Avenue, C Street, 17th and 18th Streets, N. W. The main building, set back 120' from the sidewalk facing 17th Street and the Ellipse, is constructed largely of marble and measures approximately 160' x 160'. Behind this building, the "Blue Aztec" garden and reflecting pool lead to a smaller (approximately 36' x 98') structure which was the residence of the Secretary General of the OAS. On the N. W. corner of the block, Latrobe's 1816 Van Ness House Stables is the only reminder of the site's distinguished 19th century tenants.

The principal 17th Street facade consists of a three-arched central portico flanked by high pylons and two-story end pavilions. A circular drive and low flight of steps lead up to the three entrance arches with their bronze gates and monumental glass and bronze doors. Between the entrance arches, Corinthian pilasters, two on each end and one in front of each arch supporting pier, are crowned by a panelled frieze which originally carried the inscription INTERNATIONAL UNION OF THE AMERICAN REPUBLICS, but now reads PAN AMERICAN UNION. Above the frieze a sloping corrugated tile roof is surmounted by a balustrade which extends around the pylons and was derived from the Chihuahua Cathedral. Against the simple masses of the flanking pylons two fountain pedestals support marble sculptural groups, each of a mother instructing a youth. The group on the north by Gutzon Borglum typifies North America; the southern group representing South America is by Isidore Konti. On the pylons above these sculptures are bas-reliefs depicting Washington's farewell to his generals (north), and the meeting of San Martin and Bolivar (south). Over these panels are a North American eagle and a South American condor sculpted by Solon Borglum. Flanking the pylons, the lower, two-story end pavilions, which contain the working offices of the building, have rusticated quoins, French doors, second floor balconies with ornamental bronze railings and a low crowning parapet derived from the fountain of the Salto del Agua in Mexico City.

Inside the arcaded portico the vaulted two-story white marble entrance hall, which extends across the full width of the pavilion, leads into the inner patio enclosed by loggias and surrounded with tropical plants. In the center of the tiled mosaic floor a pink and white marble fountain by Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney carries Aztec, Zapotecan and Mayan motifs. The plain white stucco walls are crowned with a polychrome frieze showing the insignia of the American countries. An overhanging wooden cornice with sloping red-tile roof is surmounted by a gabled rolling glass roof which permits the tropical vegetation to flourish at all times of the year. Other outstanding elements of the interior are the second floor Gallery of Patriots and the Hall of the Americas from either end of which an exterior stairway descends to the west garden level.

The dominant features of the "Blue Aztec" garden are the blue tile mosaic reflecting pool and a sculptural reproduction of an ancient Aztec god at the western end. The two-story white stucco residence with a hipped-tile roof is noted for its iron grilles, balconied windows, and for its garden loggia, the inner walls of which are lined with blue tile and bas-relief decorations derived from Chichen-Itza. Until recently the building served as the Secretary General's residence. It is now used by the Office of Public Information.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8 SIGNIFICANCE

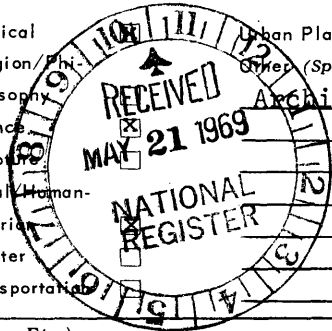
PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Pre-Columbian 16th Century 18th Century 20th Century
 15th Century 17th Century 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **1908-1910**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Aboriginal	Education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Political	Urban Planning	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prehistoric	Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/>	Religion/Philosophy	Other (Specify)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Historic	Industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Science	Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/>
Agriculture	Invention	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sculpture		<input type="checkbox"/>
Art	Landscape	<input type="checkbox"/>	Social/Humanitarian		<input type="checkbox"/>
Commerce	Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/>	Theater		<input type="checkbox"/>
Communications	Literature	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Transportation		<input type="checkbox"/>
Conservation	Military	<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>
	Music	<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>



STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Include Personages, Dates, Events, Etc.)

The Joint Committee on Landmarks has designated the Pan American Union a Category II Landmark of importance which contributes significantly to the cultural heritage and visual beauty of the District of Columbia. The Pan American Union is the Secretariat of the Organization of American States, which is the world's oldest international association uniting the 21 republics of the Western Hemisphere in a "community of nations" dedicated to the achievement of peace, security, and prosperity for all Americans. The architecture of the building, a blending of South American motifs and the classical style in vogue in the U. S., was intended to be symbolic of a common understanding of the American Republics. This distinguished building should be preserved.

When the District of Columbia was formed in 1790, the property on which the Pan American Union stands was owned by David Burnes, a Scotch farmer whose plantation encompassed much of today's downtown Washington. Although Burnes became a wealthy man after the sale of some of his land to the government, he continued to live in a rude cottage on the present Pan American grounds. Burnes' daughter Marchia married General John P. Van Ness. The Van Ness Mansion designed by Benjamin Latrobe and erected on the property in 1816, was long regarded as one of the finest homes in the country. Burnes' cottage was blown down in a windstorm in 1894. The Van Ness Mansion was demolished in 1907 to make way for the Pan American Union. Only the Van Ness stables are still standing.

The history of attempts to establish an international American Union goes back to the days of Simon Bolivar, who liberated half of the South American continent from the Spaniards and is generally regarded as the father of Pan Americanism. Under the impetus of U. S. Secretary of State, James G. Blaine, the first meeting of the International Bureau of American Republics was held in Washington in 1889-90. William E. Curtis, the first director of the organization, was appointed in 1890. The second conference was held in Mexico City in 1901. The third conference convened in Rio de Janeiro in 1906. At the sixth conference held in Buenos Aires in 1910, the association's name was changed to the Pan American Union. The purpose of the Pan American Union as originally founded was to encourage cultural, commercial, and financial ties among its members and to promote friendly intercourse and peace.

In 1903 the member nations approved a plan to erect a building in Washington. Andrew Carnegie gave \$750,000 of the \$1,000,000 needed to construct the building. The various republics contributed the remaining amount. The architects of the building, Albert Kelsey and Paul P. Cret of

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Caemmerer, H. P. Washington, The National Capital, Washington, D. C.: U. S. GPO, 1932, pp. 487-492.

Washington City and Capital, Federal Writers' Project, WPA, American Guide Series, Washington, D. C.: U. S. GPO, 1937, pp. 343-348.

Barrett, John, The Pan American Union: Peace, Friendship, Commerce, Washington, D. C., 1911.

Kiser, Margaret, Organization of American States, 4th Edition, P.A.U.: Washington, D. C., 1955.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN ONE ACRE		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	38° 53' 36"	77° 02' 30"		°	'	"
NE	38° 53' 36"	77° 02' 23"		°	'	"
SE	38° 53' 32"	77° 02' 23"		°	'	"
SW	38° 53' 32"	77° 02' 30"		°	'	"

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:

Nancy C. Taylor, Landmarks Historian

ORGANIZATION

National Capital Planning Commission

DATE

April 4, 1969

STREET AND NUMBER:

726 Jackson Place

CITY OR TOWN:

Washington

STATE

District of Columbia

CODE

08

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name

[Signature]

Title Deputy Mayor-Commissioner

Date May 12, 1969

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

[Signature]
Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date

JUN 4 1969

ATTEST:

[Signature]
Keeper of the National Register

Date

JUN 4 1969

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
District of Columbia	
COUNTY	
District of Columbia	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
96-0012	6/4/69

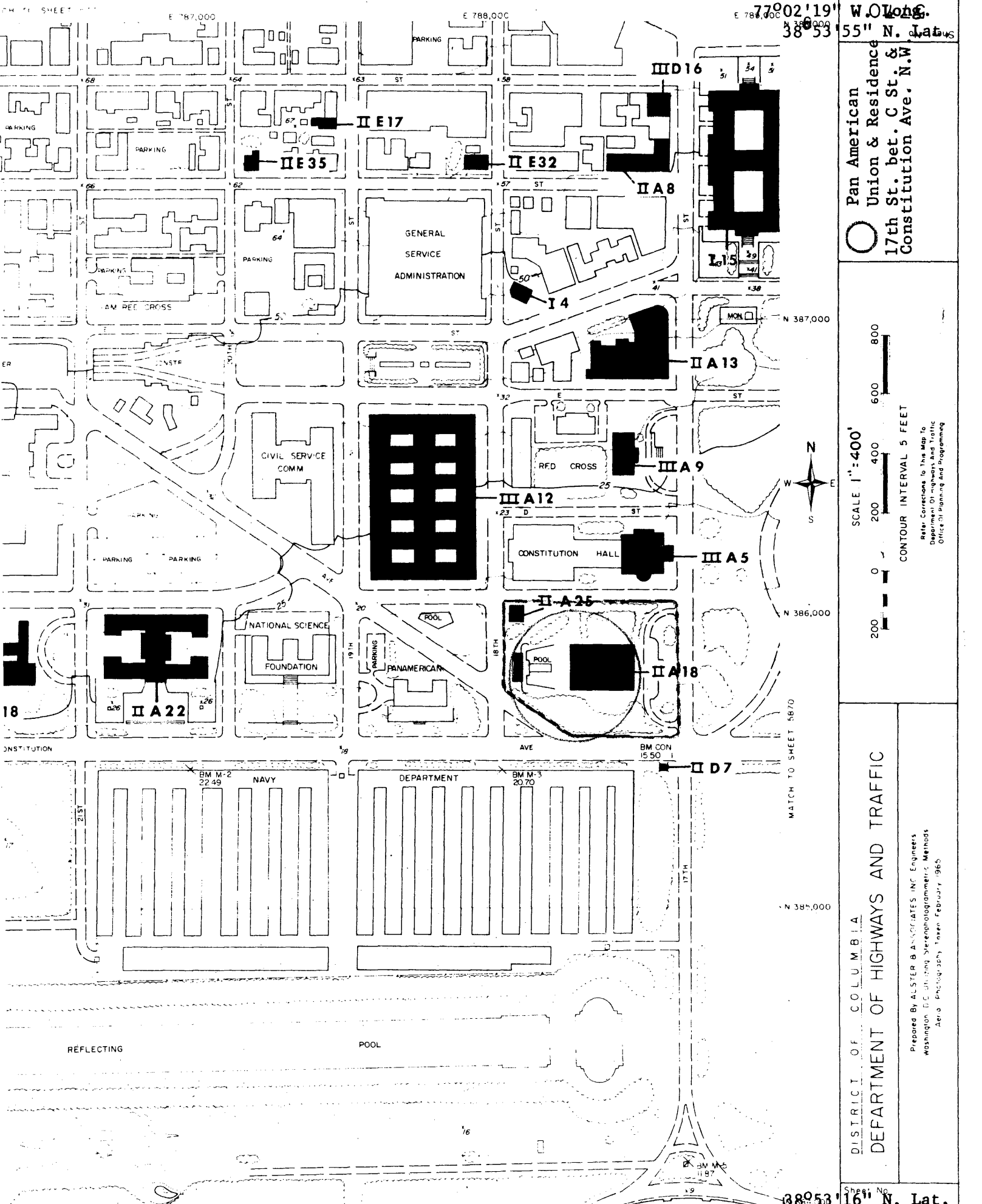
RECEIVED
MAY 21 1969
NATIONAL REGISTER

(Number all entries)

8. Significance--Pan American Union

Philadelphia, were selected by a jury after a national competition in which 75 prominent architects and builders submitted designs. The cornerstone was laid on May 11, 1908. President Taft and the entire Washington Diplomatic Corps attended the dedication ceremony on April 26, 1910. Andrew Carnegie donated another \$100,000 for the development of the annex and gardens which were completed in 1912. From the beginning, the Pan American Union has served as a focal point for cultural activity in Washington, with frequent concerts and art exhibits, as well as diplomatic receptions.

Over the years, the duties of the Union were gradually expanded by the member nations. In 1948 the 9th International Conference of American States at Bogota, Columbia, reorganized the inter-American system into the Organization of American States with the Pan American Union as its permanent Secretariat. As such, the Pan American Union now works under the direction of the Secretary General "to promote economic, social, juridical, and cultural relations among all the member states." It also renders such technical and informational services to private groups and individuals as will further the aims of the OAS.



77°02'19" W. Long. 38°00'53" N. Lat.

Pan American Union & Residence
 17th St. bet. C St. & Constitution Ave., N.W.

SCALE 1" = 400'
 Refer Corrections to This Map to Department of Highways and Traffic Office of Planning and Programming
 CONTOUR INTERVAL 5 FEET

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAYS AND TRAFFIC

Sheet No. 38953
 16" N. Lat. 5770

Prepared By ALSTER & ASSOCIATES, INC. Engineers
 Washington, D.C. utilizing Stereophotogrammetric Methods
 Aerial Photography Taken February 1965