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Hoover-Building 280

WASHINGTON AP - The federal government's most expensive office building—still uncompleted—is likely to be the principal tangible memorial to the late J. Edgar Hoover.

The massive building for the Federal Bureau of Investigation now juts several stories into the air along Pennsylvania Avenue, across from the FBI's present location in the Department of Justice building.

Delays and cost increases have marked its history since Congress authorized construction in 1962. It isn't expected to be completed until 1974 and the price tag will be in excess of \$120 million.

In a speech last year, Hoover complained: "I am convinced that the ancient Egyptians were able to build their pyramids in far less time than it is taking to erect our new building."

He said it was nonsense to say that he was staying on as FBI director simply to be present at the building's dedication.

"At the rate the building is going up," he said, "none of us will be around by the time it is completed."

The building is designed around a courtyard, in part to avoid placing too large a mass along the avenue that runs from the Capitol to the White House. It will be seven stories high on three sides and 11 stories high at the rear.

Its 2.5 million square feet of offices will make it second only to the Pentagon in size. Facilities will include an 800-car garage, library, auditorium, gymnasium, laboratories, firing ranges, medical center and printing plant.

Electrically powered gates, a moat along three sides, and special destruction chutes for classified documents form some of the security apparatus of the new building.

It has been assumed in Washington that the building would be named for Hoover, though the FBI officially refuses to call it even the FBI building.

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