

## ROOFER MAGAZINE April 1, 1997

“Single-Ply, Commercial Roofing & The U.S. Treasury Building”

### IN SINGLE-PLY WE TRUST... REROOFING THE U.S. TREASURY BUILDING

The new 15 ton bright white tanker was carefully backed into position right between the White House and the U.S. Treasury Building. This is exactly where the plans and specs called for it to go as we were to install a Built-Up Roof. In this day and age of tight security, there couldn't be a more ominous looking container sitting so close to the White House.

Within hours frantic calls came in from the Treasury Dept., the Secret Service, the A.T.F., DC Fire Marshall, and White House Special Project's Office. The tanker was removed within hours and we were faced with the first major hurdle of the job. No BUR was going to be installed and another roofing system had to be designed. George J. Hnat, the President of CitiRoof Corp., took charge of the redesign coordination with all the various consultants and Government Agencies involved. “It went pretty smoothly considering all the factors and people involved,” say George. “What resulted was a better system that actually the Government money.” With special thanks to Dusty Rhodes and Craig Gardner of the White House Special Projects Office, and Treasury Dept., the final design was approved by all parties involved.

The redesign system included a Soprafix System 3248 by Soprema – 20 ounce lead coated copper on all of the spillways and gravel stops, and 32 ounce lead coated copper on the cornice gutter. The system also included tapered and flat insulation overlaid with a fiberglass base sheet, over 100,000 sq. ft., of roofing with 20 tons of copper and 2 tons of solder. Now the easy part was over and it came time to start the actual project. As Winston Churchill said, “This is not the beginning of the end, but the end of the beginning.”

Since the Blizzard of '96 delayed the start of the work, time was now critical throughout the project because the tower elevator and stairs that were built on the 15<sup>th</sup> Street side, called for the partial closing of this major street for many months. The job had to be finished, the towers removed and the street opened before Inauguration Day, January 20, 1997. After all, the President and the inauguration parade that was to come down that street were not going to wait for a bunch of roofers.

George decided that to best utilize our work forces and to maintain a good production schedule, we would hire an asbestos abatement contractor to handle the demolition. This turned out to be a smart move, even though CitiRoof, Corp., is a fully licensed asbestos abatement contractor. This decision allowed us to immediately expand our workforce. With the expertise and efficiency of Retro-Environmental, the asbestos abatement contractor, we were comfortably on our way.

That is until we started uncovering different kinds of decks and numerous unforeseen conditions that were not in the documents. Everything you can imagine discovering on a historic building that is 161 years old were found. All different kinds of decks and all of them in various stages of decay, old damaged masonry chimneys, walls

and cornice, plumbing pipes so deeply corroded that it required ceilings and walls to be torn out on the interior of the building and then re-plastered, mechanical units and duct work had to be replaced, flag pole platforms, and steps needed to be rebuilt, rotting windows, stucco that crumbling and peeling off the walls. Attic ventilation units were installed and wired with automatic thermostats, even the roof access room and door had to be completely re-built.

Now, of course every job has its unforeseen conditions, but when you have a deadline that absolutely cannot be extended, coupled with design factors, such as varying roof slopes up to 4 on 12, a tough job can become intense.

What can make an intense job very intense? When you have four different owners to please, The U.S. Treasury Dept., the G.S.A. White House Special Project's Office, the roof consultant – Law Engineering, and the Secret Service. When I asked George what he thought a key factor in maintaining such a critical schedule was, he said "Working hand in hand with the consultants, and not against them, to develop many more details than what were originally provided in the plans and specs. Then tightly scheduling all the different trades CitiRoof Corp., had to bring in, such as the asbestos abatement contractor, roofing crews, sheet metal crews, carpenters, plumbers, masonry contractors, electricians, mechanical contractor, painters, caulkers..., but the most important thing is keeping things in perspective and maintaining your sense of humor."

That was sound advice because at the end of June, while the project was well on schedule, disaster struck! A fire had broken out on the building that forced a two-month delay in the project. Now CitiRoof Corp., was forced into a situation where the crews would have to do twice as much work in half the time. All the schedules, plans, details arrangements and hard work were out the window. It was worse than starting over. However, over twenty-two years, CitiRoof Corp.'s vast expertise and reputation in taking on the toughest of the tough jobs, proved to shine through once again. In our entire history, we never had an attitude of "How are we going to do this?" but have approached every job with "this is how we are going to do this!" With an unbelievably intricate plan and schedule, the project was completed. The elevator towers and stairwell were removed and the street was opened just two weeks before President Clinton's Inauguration. A company like CitiRoof Corp., which recently received the Gold Circle Award for Innovation, proves the old saying, "When the going gets tough, the tough get going."