# History buffs rout Hoyer in Tiffany tiff

Annapolis (AP)—The history buffs won a battle with the politicians Friday when the Senate president, Steny H. Hoyer, gave up on his plan to replace the skylight in the Maryland Senate chamber.

Senator Hoyer said a check of old vouchers showed that the skylight had been bought from Tiffany's and that "as a result, it has an intrinsic value in itself."

"The project is no more," he said.

The present skylight is largely colorless, transluscent glass with pale pastel highlights.

Mr. Hoyer has had a dream for some time of replacing it with a much more vivid version featuring the state seal.

He secured the backing of the Senate leadership and got approval from the State House Trust and the Board of Public Works. The board even approved a $25,000 contract for a new skylight featuring the seal.

But then Mr. Hoyer's troubles began.

As word of his plans got out, opposition quickly swelled.

The Senate president was denounced by preservationists who said the skylight should remain because it was part of the original Senate chamber design.

He was denounced by other preservationists who said the skylight was probably of Tiffany design and therefore historically valuable.

And he was denounced by penny pinchers who said the skylight was perfectly good and that it was a waste of the taxpayers' dollars, which are in short supply, to replace it.

Republicans even began to get into the act. Senator Edward J. Mason (R., Western Maryland), the minority leader, took the Senate floor Wednesday to complain of the plan to spend $25,000 for a new skylight.

"It's a small item, but it demonstrates an attitude," he said.

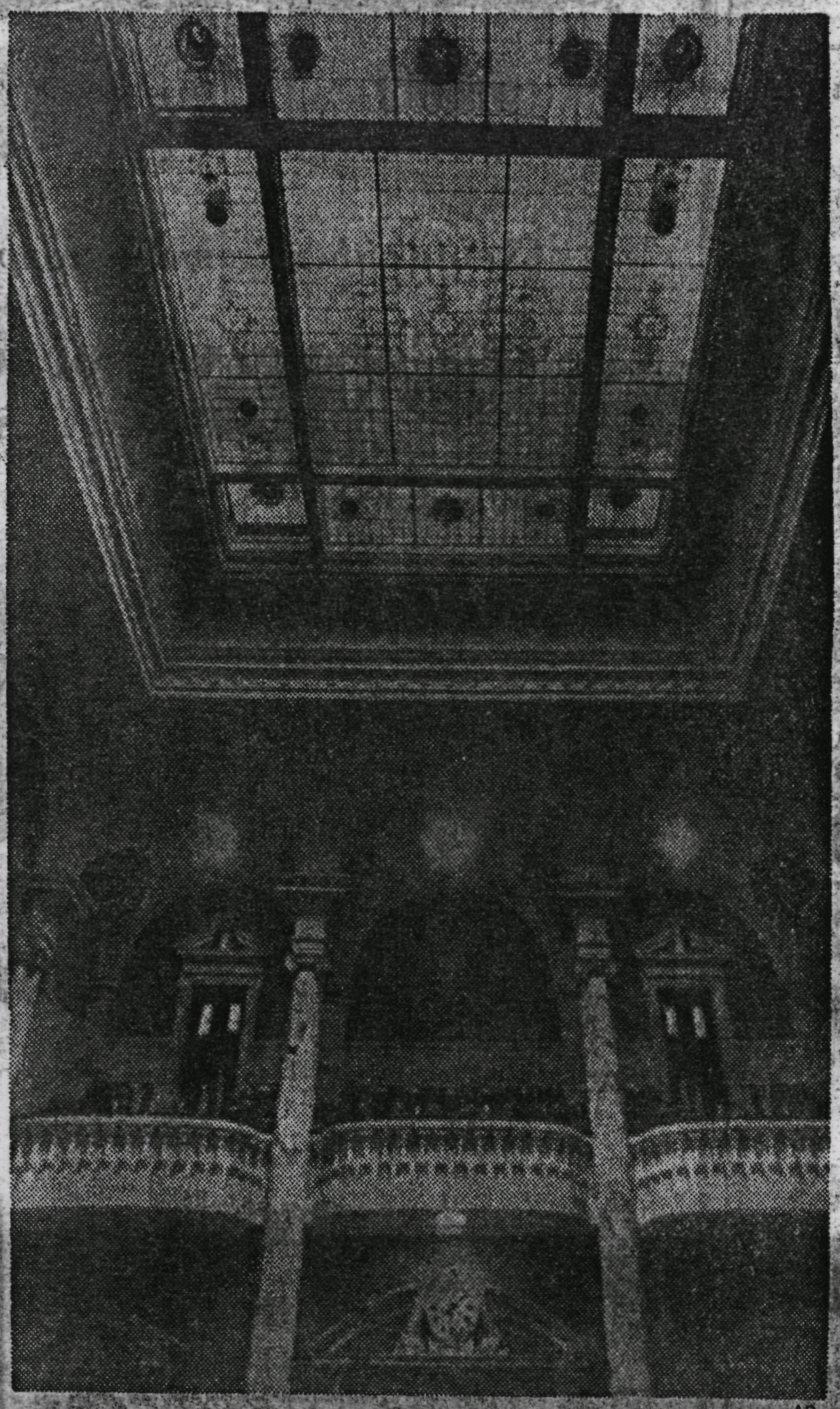
Senator Hoyer said when he first got the idea for a new skylight, he was told that the glass had no particular merit or value.

He said he found it to be dull and colorless and thought a new skylight would make the chamber more appealing esthetically.

But because of all the opposition, he asked Dr. Edward Papenfuse, the state archivist, to try to determine if the skylight was purchased from Tiffany's and if it was valuable.

Senator Hoyer said the search took some time because purchase vouchers from that period were not indexed, but that an extensive search through boxes of records turned up the payment record for the skylight.

Indeed, it was from Tiffany's, and Mr. Hoyer, perhaps with a quiet sigh of relief, gave up the battle.



AP

Steny H. Hoyer believes this Tiffany stained-glass window is "colorless."

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