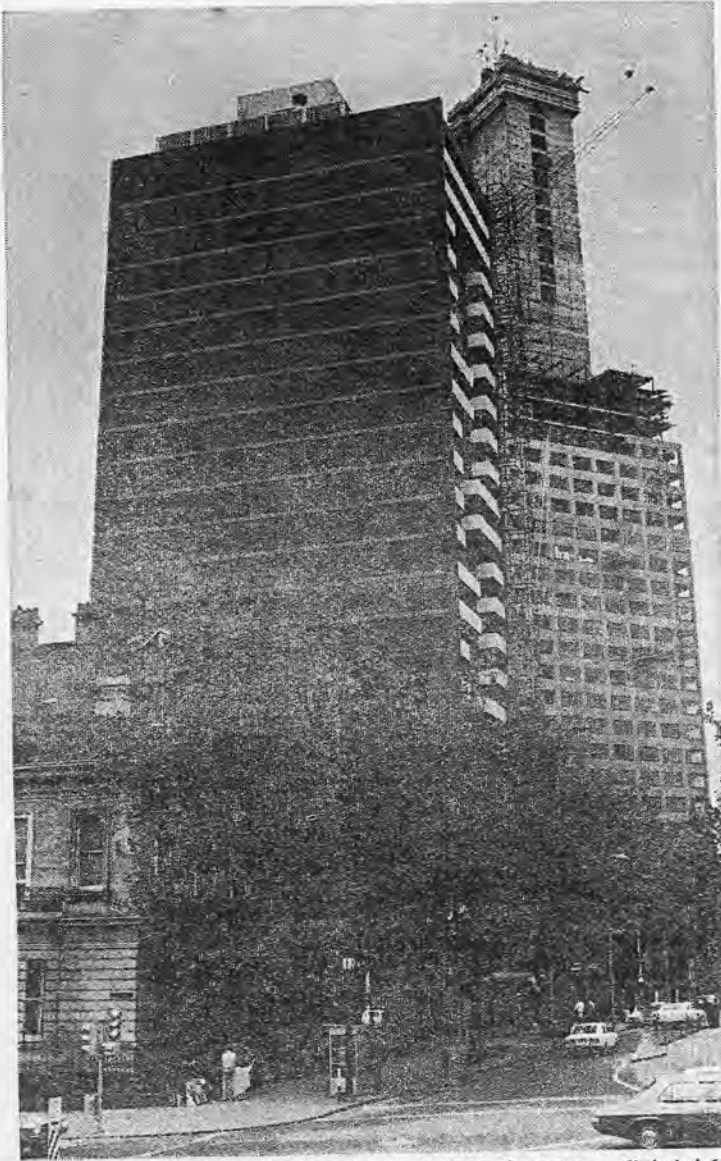


THE Ogg shop, left, when Collins St. was a quiet and pleasant place. Today, right, the shop stands empty, waiting for the bulldozers.

# HOW THEY KILLED COLLINS STREET



ALREADY, above, the huge boxes dominate the scene . . . little is left, top, of the charming sidewalk atmosphere for which this street was so famous.

YOU probably haven't noticed, but they have just carted away another piece of the "Paris End" of Collins St.

By **ROGER SANDERS**

The priceless interior and fittings of Ogg and Co. Pharmacy have been carefully dismantled.

Unlike other "Paris End" buildings which have simply disappeared, Ogg's will be re-created in the Science Museum, Swanton St.

Any day bulldozers will move on Ogg's building, which had been a city landmark since 1872.

This latest gap in the Collins St. facade will be filled by the forecourt of the city's newest and tallest Building, Nauru House, towering 176 metres (578 ft.) over the corner of Exhibition and Collins Sts.

Architects say there was nothing particularly interesting or rare about Ogg's as a building.

But, like others that went before it, Ogg & Co. was part of a period streetscape that has all but disappeared.



This is the tragedy of the "Paris End" of Collins St.

Individually, buildings did not warrant preservation or classification by the National Trust. Whole sections of the street did, but it has not happened.

Trust chairman, Mr Rodney Davidson, says the trust's hands were tied.

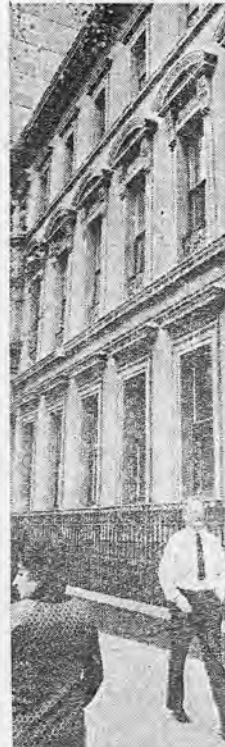
"The trust was silent because many of the buildings went before we were in the area of preservation," he said.

"There is no particular building that I am sad about losing.

"It is the whole run of buildings and particularly the scale, which was one that people could relate to, unlike today's tall office towers."

At the weekend Mr Davidson appealed to the State Government to save what remained of the "Paris End" from developers and planning authorities.

"It is a disgrace that



THE Melbourne Club . . . a National Trust classification.

the Board of Works — can't preserve Collins St., and there isn't much of it left now, then the State Government should step in and take over.

"If the government needs convincing that the majority of people in Victoria want the charm of Collins St. saved, then I would welcome a referendum.

"I have no doubt it would be an overwhelming 'yes,'" he said.

The end of the "Paris End" can be dated from the demolition of the old Melbourne Mansions to make way for the CRA Building in 1953.

Across the road, the Occidental Hotel on the corner of Collins and Exhibition Sts. (Melba stayed there) toppled for the Reserve Bank Building, in the same year.



A 21-storey box the bank angered Collins St. watchers because it was built right up to the footpath. At least CRA provided a landscaped forecourt.

The Coates Building at 18 Collins St. and Farrer House next door were also built hard against the building line.

The ruin of the "Paris End" was complete when the old Röss Oriental Hotel and the rest of the buildings down to Exhibition St. went in 1972.

The historic building at 61 Spring St., which abuts Collins St., and was the first offices of the Federal Government, probably will be saved.

Other buildings of merit remain, including the Melbourne Club, which has a National Trust classification.

But the charm of the "Paris End" with its old buildings, trees, sidewalk cafes and flagstones is dead.

planning is destroying one of Melbourne's great assets instead of protecting the Collins St. streetscape and encouraging development behind it," he said.

"I am aware of at least five major redevelopment proposals for the street.

"If the present planning authorities — the Melbourne City Council and