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MINUTES OF THE EIGHTEENTH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
ON
"FOREIGN RELATIONS OF THE UNITED STATES"

November 8, 1974

- Dr. Robert A. Divine* Professor of History
University of Texas
Austin, Texas 78712

- Dr. Alwyn V. Freeman*** Member, Board of Editors
The American Journal of International Law
Washington, D.C. 20008

- Dr. Walter LaFeber* Professor of History
Cornell University
Ithaca, New York 14850

- Dr. Covey T. Oliver*** Professor of Law
University of Pennsylvania
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19104

- Dr. Armin H. Rappaport* Professor of History
University of California
La Jolla, California 92037

- Dr. Richard C. Snyder**
[Not present] Director, Merston Center
Ohio State University
Columbus, Ohio 43210

- Dr. H. Bradford Westerfield** Professor of Political Science
Yale University
New Haven, Connecticut 06520

*American Historical Association.
**American Political Science Association.
***American Society of International Law.

Department of State, A/GIS/IPS/SRP

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Other Persons Present

The Bureau of Public Affairs:

Carol C. Laise, Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs

The Historical Office:

William M. Franklin, Director (Executive Secretary of the Advisory Committee); Richardson Dougall, Fredrick Aandahl, Edwin S. Costrell, Arthur G. Kogan, John P. Glennon, Ralph R. Goodwin, William Slany, John A. Bernbaum, Joan Lee Bryniarski, M. Paul Claussen, Evans Gerakas, N. Stephen Kane, Edward C. Keefer, Ronald D. Landa, David W. Mabon, Margaret G. Martin, Nina J. Noring, Neal H. Petersen, Carl N. Raether, Beverly Z. Rowsome, Charles S. Sampson, Harriet Schwarz, Louis J. Smith, David H. Stauffer.

[The meeting was not open to the public.]

Opening Session - 9:07 a.m. - 12:01 p.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 1 and 2:

OPENING REMARKS AND SELECTION OF COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

Mr. Franklin called the meeting to order and extended welcome to the Committee. Mr. Freeman nominated Mr. LaFever for Chairman of the Committee. Mr. Oliver seconded the nomination and the vote was unanimous.

Assistant Secretary Laise joined the meeting at 9:10. She stated that the Department of State was making a serious effort to speed up the publication of Foreign Relations. She emphasized that the Department, with the aid of the Historical Office, had lately been servicing requests under the Freedom of Information Act much more quickly, and that she was determined further to improve performance in this area. After her remarks the Assistant Secretary remained at the meeting until 9:40 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 3: PROGRESS ON 1948-1951 VOLUMES
AND PROBLEMS OF DECLASSIFICATION

Mr. Aandahl circulated a list detailing the progress of the volumes in preparation [Attachment 1]. He noted that declassification was still the major obstacle to publication. There had been particular difficulty and delay with 1948, Volume I, Part II, which contained high-level National Security Council papers on the formulation of cold-war policy. The question was whether to publish this volume now with summaries replacing the papers that cannot be cleared yet, or whether to delay publication for an indeterminate time. Similar problems have come up with the Far Eastern volumes for 1949 and 1950, and other cases are expected.

Mr. Westerfield said he was opposed to printing incomplete volumes containing only summaries of important documents that had not been declassified. Allowing such an omission would be an easy way out which might establish an unfortunate precedent. If the volume were delayed, on the other hand, pressure from outside might develop and encourage clearance of the documents in question.

Mr. Oliver remarked that it was of crucial importance for the series to print NSC materials and high-level materials generally, since Cold War problems were of such crucial importance to the "revisionist" debate among historians. The concern of the Committee over refusal of clearance on such documents should be expressed to policymakers.

Mr. Rappaport said that historians would still be able to get the drift of policy if the volume were published with the omissions. Mr. Divine stated that waiting would delay the whole series and access to the files in the Archives. Mr. Freeman said he was discouraged, but would rather see the omitted documents summarized than allow the series to fall farther behind.

Mr. Franklin pointed out that if the omitted documents were not declassified for Foreign Relations, they would not be available when the files were opened to scholars.

Mr. Aandahl suggested the problem might be solved by the publication of a supplemental volume at a future date. Supplemental volumes had been published for the World War I period. Mr. Slany said that important documents often turned up after the volumes on the relevant subjects had been published, and that this constituted an additional reason for supplemental volumes.

Mr. LaFever, noting that the Committee was divided on the issue, suggested that it be discussed further in conversations among the members.

AGENDA ITEM 4: SCHEDULING OF COMPILATION FOR 1952-1954 AND 1955-1957;
THE TRIENNIAL PLAN AS A MEANS FOR REACHING THE 20-YEAR LINE

Mr. Aandahl read statistics [Attachment²] showing that the productivity of the Foreign Relations staff had almost tripled since fiscal 1971, but he noted that even with increased productivity Foreign Relations was not making sufficiently rapid progress toward the twenty-year line. Primarily for this reason the staff had adopted a triennial format for the 1952-1954 volumes.

Mr. LaFever asked whether the Committee was being informed of or asked for advice about the plan. Mr. Aandahl replied that if the Committee had overwhelming objections to the plan it could be changed. Mr. Franklin added that the main objective of the Triennial Plan was to meet the request of the Assistant Secretary to bring compilation to a twenty-year line;

more rapid publication might follow, but that would not necessarily be the case. The new format would serve to boost morale, and might put additional pressure on clearance officers.

Mr. LaFeber asked whether the new plan meant that less total paper would be printed. Mr. Aandahl replied in the affirmative. Mr. LaFeber inquired also whether clearance problems involving 1954 documents might hold up 1952 material. Mr. Aandahl answered that such might be the case, but that dividing the volumes as necessary might offer a possible solution to this problem. Mr. Slany suggested that the three-year plan aimed at more intensive planning of the series, which would allow coming to grips with major clearance problems in an early and rational manner. Mr. LaFeber commented that it seemed to him that the new plan would retard rather than expedite access to the files. Mr. Divine suggested that the conditions of access be changed to allow partial access as the volumes are printed. Mr. Franklin responded that partial access might be possible, but that getting far ahead on compilation would allow the option of annual, biennial, or triennial volumes. Mr. LaFeber pointed out that compilation was already two to three years ahead of publication.

Mr. Westerfield said he certainly had no objection to the publication of longer time spans of documentation at once.

In reply to Mr. Divine's question as to what sorts of NSC material were in State Department files, Mr. Franklin stated that for the period in question we had files of considerable depth on the NSC papers themselves, but lacked the minutes for formal NSC meetings. It was probable that such minutes had been made in ribbon copy only and given to the President. These minutes might be in the Truman and Eisenhower libraries.

AGENDA ITEM 5: QUESTIONS RAISED IN THE SELF-SURVEY
OF THE HISTORICAL OFFICE

Mr. Dougall explained that the Bureau of Public Affairs had invited the Historical Office to form two working-level committees--called "H" and "O"-- to study the Office's functions and procedures in depth and to recommend changes and improvements. Mr. Slany said Committee H, of which he was rapporteur, was considering primarily Foreign Relations. Asked to examine format alternations, it had decided tentatively after some study to recommend that the series continue to appear in a printed-page format rather than in microform. Whatever cost advantages might accrue from a microform format, the committee considered that the series in microform would not meet needs and uses of readers of Foreign Relations.

Mr. Freeman remarked that a microform format would cut the series off from the general public. Mr. Westerfield agreed. Mr. Oliver asked if microform publications received reviews. Several committee members

expressed the opinion that such reviews were rare. Mr. Rappaport commented that from the teaching viewpoint a microform Foreign Relations would be highly unsatisfactory.

Mr. Slany continued that although his committee was leaning away from microforms, it was determinedly seeking ways to lower cost and speed publication while keeping the series between covers. Advanced phototype-setting methods and the letting of commercial printing contracts were both under consideration.

A general discussion of those alternatives ensued.

[Coffee was served at 10:32 a.m. Discussion resumed at 10:58 a.m.]

Mr. Slany in continuing his presentation said Committee H was considering the possibility of a microform supplement to the series consisting of unedited documents--perhaps entire key files. He mentioned that Ambassador Laise was interested in maximizing the amount of material made available to the public. Committee H was also considering means of speeding declassification. They included (a) requesting a letter from the Secretary of State which would endorse the series and urge faster clearance and (b) asking the Secretary in his capacity as Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs to allow simultaneous clearance by NSC and other agencies of NSC papers. Mr. Slany also stressed the advantage of having NSC declassify documents in manuscript rather than in galley--NSC tended to move very slowly on clearance.

Both Mr. Westerfield and Mr. Rappaport expressed their great surprise at the present procedure whereby NSC insists that it review papers only after all agencies whose heads are members of NSC have already done so. Mr. Franklin pointed out that since NSC has its own staff, as a practical matter NSC clearance represents an additional "layer" of clearance.

Mr. Slany described two more clearance proposals. State's Freedom of Information machinery might be enlisted in the clearance of Foreign Relations within the Department. Responsibility for clearing certain types of material might be obtained for the Historical Office, thus reducing the burden on desk officers.

Mr. Slany pointed out that the Department has no full-fledged archivist and described the deleterious effect of this lack on the condition of the Department's files. Committee H would propose a study group of representatives of the Department and of the National Archives to look into this problem. Mr. LaFaber asked if a Departmental archivist, once appointed, would be expected to assist outside historians in their research in those declassified files which remained temporarily in State's custody, and Mr. Slany replied that this was one of the functions contemplated for an archivist.

Ms. Rowsome reported on the work of Committee O, which was concentrating primarily on the work of the Historical Studies Division. The Division's primary role was within the Department but the committee was considering several possibilities which would expand the Division's role with regard to the public. One was a proposal for a seminar, sponsored by the Office, perhaps twice a year for 15-20 members of the academic community. This seminar would include discussions with members of the Office about its work and about the files, and tours of the files and the Operations Center. Another suggestion was that the Current Documents series be revived, perhaps appearing several times a year in an expanded Department of State Bulletin. Committee O was also considering publication of unclassified studies such as one on Law of the Sea.

A narrative history of the 1945-1950 period was under very tentative consideration. Mr. Westerfield stated his emphatic opposition to this proposal. Mr. Costrell also spoke against this idea.

Ms. Rowsome concluded by mentioning a proposal for documentary collections on key crises, to be published in advance of Foreign Relations. Mr. Franklin pointed out that such a collection on Lebanon had been prepared two years ago but had been killed because of opposition from the concerned geographical bureau of the Department.

Mr. LaFeber asked if it was proper for the Advisory Committee to make recommendations concerning these proposals, which were still under internal discussion. It was suggested that these matters could perhaps be discussed at lunch with Ambassador Laise and Acting Secretary Maw, rather than taken up in the Committee's written report. Mr. LaFeber commented that he himself believed that it would be proper to recommend certain things, such as an archivist for the State Department and the revival of Current Documents.

Mr. Franklin said he thought that at lunch the Committee should concentrate on bringing the problem of declassification of Foreign Relations to the attention of the Acting Secretary of State and that the Committee's report should be brief and should concentrate on the main issues. He said he would try to bring the written report to the attention of the Secretary of State. He suggested that the Committee write to Assistant Secretary Laise about secondary issues.

Mr. Oliver spoke against the revival of Current Documents on the ground that so much of its contents of interest to international lawyers had already appeared elsewhere.

Concerning the seminar proposal, Ms. Noring pointed out that the academic community was not aware of the computerization of the Department's filing system. The seminars would acquaint scholars with this and other changes. Mr. Franklin said that bringing scholars to Washington would be difficult to finance. Mr. Rappaport reported that the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations would be meeting in Washington during

his presidency next year and that it planned to meet here every two years thereafter. Mr. Westerfield recalled that the American Political Science Association meets in Washington every three years or so. Mr. Lands outlined the idea more fully. He said that the seminars would be held to coincide with professional meetings and during the summer, when so many scholars did research in Washington. Mr. Oliver stated that it seemed the financial problem was no obstacle and that the seminars, should they materialize, ought to be widely publicized in order to avoid any appearance of exclusivity.

[At 12:01 p.m. the Committee adjourned for lunch with Ambassador Laise and Acting Secretary Maw. The Committee reconvened at 2:28 p.m.]

Afternoon Session - 2:28 p.m. - 3:36 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 7: PROBLEMS OF BUDGET AND TECHNICAL EDITING

Mr. Franklin said that lack of money had not caused major delay in the Foreign Relations series. Printing funds had been adequate, and the delays had come from clearance difficulties. Mr. Aandahl added that the severest pinch was felt in the small editorial staff of the Publishing and Reproduction Division, which was efficient but perennially understaffed.

Mr. Rappaport asked if the series was being delayed, and its resources stretched thin, because the Office was forced to deal with the GPO. Mr. Franklin answered that the Office had several times suggested alternatives to the GPO, but going elsewhere might require authorization by the Congress. Mr. Aandahl pointed out that adoption of the linotron process might speed printing and cut costs even if Foreign Relations stayed at GPO. Members of the Office then outlined the linotron process to the Committee. Mr. Kane cautioned that the use of linotron for Foreign Relations presented some as yet unresolved technical problems.

Mr. Aandahl, in discussing the current revision of the Foreign Relations style manual, pointed out that revision is intended to speed compilation, make the volumes more readable, and systematize identification of lot files. Mr. Franklin remarked that a number of lot files had been destroyed since being cited in Foreign Relations and that this was damaging to credibility. Mr. Slany added that the Office was actively trying to convince the National Archives appraisers to retain a larger proportion of lot files.

Mr. Aandahl stated that part of the discussion at luncheon should be placed on record, whereupon Mr. LaFerber remarked that at lunch representatives of the Office and of the Committee had informed Mr. Maw that clearance by NSC of certain key documents had on occasion necessitated personal review by the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs. Mr. Maw had also been informed of the Committee's dissatisfaction with the performance of the Interagency Classification Review Committee.

Mr. Rappaport stated that he had learned at lunch of Ambassador Laise's great interest in oral history.

Chairman LaFeber asked if there were any more comments to be made on Item 7. Mr. Franklin stated in summary that there was no immediate fiscal problem, although the Office might face some stringency in FY 1976.

AGENDA ITEM 8: DECLASSIFICATION AHEAD OF
FOREIGN RELATIONS PUBLICATION

Mr. Kogan distributed a survey entitled "Public Availability of Diplomatic Archives" [Attachment 3]. He noted that the United States was still declassifying foreign-policy materials well in advance of other governments.

Mr. Rappaport commented that the survey deserved a wide distribution, and Mr. Dougall suggested that a note on its availability could be included in the Newsletter of the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations.

Mr. Dougall reviewed developments under Executive Order 11652. Currently the Office was resubmitting for declassification under the 30-year rule material which had not been cleared for 1944 Foreign Relations volumes and which consequently had been withheld from researchers when the 1944 files had been opened early. All but about a half-dozen of such documents would probably be declassified this year.

Mr. Dougall reported also that the charge per page for copies of documents declassified under Freedom of Information procedures had been reduced from 60¢ to 10¢ a page although the search charge had gone up to \$5 from \$3.50 an hour. No charge is now made for the time of reviewing officers. The latest cumulative report shows that 45,000 pages had been requested of the Department under FOI provisions. The Department had released 35,000 pages and refused clearance on 1,000; the other 9,000 pages were pending at the date the report was compiled.

There was a general discussion of how documents released under the FOI Act might be better publicized. Mr. Franklin said that although he did want better publicity for the declassified items and had tried to get a list of them inserted in the Department of State Bulletin, the Office generally did not wish, through involvement in Freedom of Information work, to lose man hours better devoted to Foreign Relations. Mr. Keefer said the Office hoped the Bureau of Public Affairs would augment the Freedom of Information staff.

Mr. Franklin then briefly described the special problems encountered in the declassification of foreign-government documents in our files. He noted that the British are applying their own 30-year rule to such papers in their files.

AGENDA ITEM 9: OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Slay asked Chairman LaFerber to send to the Office copies of any correspondence with Assistant Secretary Laise. Mr. LaFerber replied that she had requested the Committee to direct its letters to Mr. Franklin with copies to her.

[The Committee rose at 3:36 p.m.]

Approved: _____
Walter LaFerber, Chairman