

MINUTES OF THE TWENTY-SIXTH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE ADVISORY
COMMITTEE ON HISTORICAL DIPLOMATIC DOCUMENTATION

November 5, 1982

UNCLASSIFIED

American Historical Association

Dr. Gary R. Hess
Department of History
Bowling Green State University
Bowling Green, Ohio 43403

Dr. John L. Gaddis
Department of History
Ohio University
Athens, Ohio 45701

Dr. Ernest R. May
John F. Kennedy School of Government
Harvard University
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138

American Political Science Association

Dr. Richard N. Rosecrance
Center for International Studies
Cornell University
Ithaca, New York 14853

Organization of American Historians

Dr. Gaddis Smith
Department of History
Yale University
New Haven, Connecticut 06520

American Society of International Law

Dr. Seymour J. Rubin
Executive Vice President &
Executive Director
The American Society of International Law
2223 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20008

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Other Persons Present

Bureau of Public Affairs (PA):

John H. Kelly, Senior Deputy Assistant Secretary

The Office of the Historian (HO):

William Z. Slany, The Historian; Neal H. Petersen, Acting Deputy Historian; John P. Glennon, Acting General Editor of the Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS); Nina J. Noring, Acting Adviser on Research; Charles S. Sampson, M. Paul Claussen, David W. Mabon, David M. Baehler, Carol A. Becker, Bret D. Bellamy, Evan M. Duncan, Suzanne E. Coffman, Evans Gerakas, Kay K. Herring, N. Stephen Kane, Edward C. Keefer, Ronald D. Landa, James E. Miller, David S. Painter, David S. Patterson, William F. Sanford, Harriet D. Schwar, Stanley Shaloff, Sherrill B. Wells

Classification/Declassification Center (A/CDC):

Ambassador John R. Burke, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Classification/Declassification; Laurence G. Pickering, Director, Office of Systematic Review.

Foreign Affairs Information Management Center (A/FAIM):

Frank M. Machak, Chief, Information Services Division; John F. Ellsworth, Chief Editing Branch; Margie R. Wilber, Chief, Documentary Editing Section; Rita M. Baker, Deputy Chief, Documentary Editing Section; Vicki L. Ettleman.

The National Archives and Records Service (NARS):

Milton O. Gustafson, Chief, Diplomatic Records Division; Edwin A. Thompson, Chief, Records Declassification Division

Others:

Arthur G. Kogan, retired; Beverly Zweiben, Bureau of International Organization Affairs, Department of State; Lisle A. Rose, Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs; Daniel Helmsteder, President, Scholarly Resources, Inc.

List of Abbreviations

A - Bureau of Administration
CDC - Classification-Declassification Center
CIA - Central Intelligence Agency
FAIM - Foreign Affairs Information Management Center
FOIA - Freedom of Information Act
FRUS - Foreign Relations of the United States
FSO - Foreign Service Officer
GPO - Government Printing Office
HO - Office of the Historian
NARS - National Archives and Records Service
PA - Bureau of Public Affairs

Morning Session

Mr. Slany called the meeting to order at 9:18 A.M. He introduced Mr. Kelly, who welcomed the Advisory Committee on behalf of John Hughes, Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs and Department Spokesman, who could not be present because he was on Capitol Hill with the Secretary of State, George Shultz, that morning.

Mr. Kelly said that the Committee played a vital role in providing advice and support to the Office of the Historian, especially for the Foreign Relations series. He stated that the Department had a commitment to the prompt and efficient publication of the series, always balancing scholarly integrity and quick disclosure against the needs of continued security. He welcomed the Committee's candid discussion and solicited their advice.

Mr. Slany distributed a revised agenda for the meeting. He regretted that time had not permitted arrangements for the attendance of records personnel from other foreign affairs agencies, but he solicited suggestions from the Committee as to who they might like to have attend next year. He noted that the morning session was open to the public, but that the afternoon session was closed so that classified information could be discussed. Mr. Slany called upon the Committee to elect a chairman. Mr. May nominated Mr. Hess, which was seconded by Mr. Smith. Mr. Rubin moved that the nominations be closed. Mr. Hess was chosen by acclamation.

Report of the Historian

Mr. Slany made an oral report of the activities of the Office to supplement the written report on the subject that had been mailed to the Committee members earlier. He noted that several leadership positions in the Office had been filled on an acting basis pending permanent assignments which must be made under the mechanism approved by the Office of Personnel Management.

Although the Office had been given budgetary support by the Bureau of Public Affairs and the Department itself, costs in the Office had been lower than in the past because only two volumes in the FRUS series had been published in the last year. During the coming fiscal year, Mr. Slany reported that the size of the Office staff would be reduced from 35 to 29 professional and support members. The staff cuts were not unique to the Bureau. The lost positions were earmarked by Management Operations as "declassification"

positions because so much of the declassification function had been lost to the CDC several years ago. These lost positions would in no way affect the Foreign Relations series. Mr. Rubin asked if the loss would affect the declassification that the Office still engages in. Mr. Slany said that it would not. Mr. Slany then added that the Office was still able to hire selectively, having acquired two new historians in the past year, David Painter and Janet Heininger, whom he introduced.

Mr. Slany said that eight volumes of the Foreign Relations series were declassified but not yet published. Although the declassification process has operated much more smoothly in the last year, the printing process at the GPO has not. Some volumes now take longer than one year at GPO. The major problem is one of technology; fifteen to twenty FRUS volumes were prepared on lead plates for the linotype process. GPO plans to phase out its linotype operation in the next year. Some of the volumes, those that cannot possibly be declassified by the time the linotype process is no longer available, are already being converted to magnetic tape for GPO's photocomposition process. Mr. Smith asked if optical scanning might be able to convert the galleys to magnetic tape without retyping. Mr. Slany responded that the Office had tried that, but the optical scanning technology was still not able to handle the type face used in the series. In order to publish the volumes in the quickest fashion possible after declassification, the Office is now exploring the possibility of requesting a waiver from the requirement to publish through GPO, which would necessitate the approval of the Joint Committee on Printing of the U.S. Congress. Waivers such as this are difficult to obtain, he added, but they had been acquired in the past by the National Archives, the Center of Military History, and for the history of the Atomic Energy Commission. Mr. Rosecrance asked how those agencies had acquired waivers. Mr. Slany said that they had been acquired long ago, but that recent waivers had been awarded on the grounds that GPO could not meet deadlines, which was certainly applicable for our series. To Mr. Smith's question as to why reduced cost would not be a strong argument for a waiver, he replied that the State Department had never been able to get a full breakdown of GPO's costs on an item by item basis. There was reason to suspect that some of the Foreign Relations volumes "carried" less prestigious publications printed by GPO for other agencies. Mr. Slany estimated that a private publisher might be able to produce a volume for one half of the GPO cost of about \$150,000 per volume. Mr. Gaddis asked if the Office had already been in contact with a private publisher, to which Mr. Slany answered that some companies seemed interested. He added that the request for a waiver at a time when GPO was trying to modernize would be resisted strongly. With a waiver, however, a commercial or university press would be

able to produce the series faster, more economically, and with a larger press run to include a paperback edition. Mr. Rubin suggested that perhaps a good strategy would be to ask for a waiver just for the backlogged volumes still in lead galleys rather than for the whole series. Mr. Slany agreed.

Mr. Slany then pointed out because all the 1955-57 volumes in the series would be published using the photocomposition technology, it would be very likely that some of those volumes would appear before the 1952-54 volumes had all appeared. Mr. Gaddis remarked that precedents already existed for publishing FRUS volumes out of sequence. Mr. Smith asked if the lead plates themselves could be photoprinted. Mr. Slany replied that the galleys had to be altered prior to printing to account for declassification decisions, and thus photoprinting would not be possible.

Mr. Slany concluded this section of his oral report by stating that there was certainly no guarantee, given the GPO problems, that any more volumes would be published in 1983 than had been published in 1982.

The problems associated with publishing the Foreign Relations series, however, are not being allowed to interfere with the earliest access by the public to the records on which the series is based. He pointed with pride to the arrangements that had been made by the Department of State and the National Archives whereby the Department has provided a subvention which supports the work of 22 archivists at NARS who are working on applying the CDC's guidelines to the 1950-54 record bloc. Very shortly a portion of that record bloc will be opened. Mr. Pickering estimated that by the end of the next fiscal year the Department will have committed \$460,000 to this effort. Mr. Slany expected that the whole record bloc will have been opened by 1986 or sooner. The records relating to Europe are proving to be the most sensitive to declassify and will probably be the last to be released. The CDC meantime is working now on guidelines for the 1955-59 record bloc.

Mr. Slany announced that, to supplement this effort, a joint project of the Historical Office and the CDC was underway to microfiche and then publish separately high-level files of a multi-topical and multinational nature that are not easily covered by the CDC's review guidelines. The microfiche publication would include the Department's publication Current Economic Developments, the Top Secret Daily Summaries, White House summaries, memoranda of the Secretary of State, and conference files prepared by the Executive Secretariat. The microfiche would be distributed to depository libraries around the country and the world. Mr. Sampson, who heads this project, added that the microfiche publication must make clear what portion of the

files the user is getting. When asked by Mr. Gaddis if all these files were from the 1950-54 period, Mr. Sampson replied that some of the files begin in 1945. Mr. Gaddis asked about the integrity of the files; Mr. Slany responded that this Office's concern for file integrity was another motive for the project. Mr. Sampson noted that the historians had come across many damaged files with missing documents and missing pages from documents, estimating that one percent to five percent of the files are degraded by each handling of them. Mr. May asked if these files would be sanitized or appear in full. Mr. Sampson answered that less than one-half of one percent were being withheld. Mr. Slany said that the Office would prepare essays to accompany the fiche, explaining what the documents were and what portion they represented. There would be no editing of the documents to be microfiched. Because these documents are easily declassified in that they mention very few names, their review does not interfere with the CDC's regular declassification schedule for FRUS.

Mr. Rosecrance asked when all these documents might be available to the public, noting that the British were far ahead of us in releasing their documents for the early 1950s. Mr. Slany said that the thirty-year line was certainly not possible for some records, but he commented that, based on the observations of several members of the staff who had actually visited the Public Records Office in the last year, the British were withholding many sensitive files as well. Mr. Gaddis asked if the Office plans any retrospective volumes to pick up documentation not available at the time of publication of the volumes in the series. Mr. Slany and Mr. Petersen agreed that the Office was very interested in publishing retrospective volumes, having already partially compiled one such volume made up of intelligence and national security documents declassified at the Truman Library subsequent to publication of the FRUS volumes for the time period.

The meeting then adjourned for a short break for 15 minutes.

User Survey

Mr. Slany reported that the results of the Foreign Relations User Survey, prepared by the Office and conducted in September 1982, were very encouraging. Both the size of the response and the number of people who took the time to add comments indicated considerable support for the series outside the Department.

Mr. Glennon reported on the Survey in detail. Of the 1593 questionnaires that were sent out (deliberately excluding any past and present Office employees), 766 were returned; this represented almost 50%. Both the mailing list of the Society for Historians of American Foreign

Relations (SHAFR) and that of the Bureau of Public Affairs were used to determine the mailing list for the Survey. Prior to a comprehensive statistical analysis to be conducted by a data processing firm in Baltimore. Mr. Glennon looked at a sampling of 250 returns to derive some preliminary unofficial statistics. Almost 89% of the respondents said they had used the series in the last three years. 64% preferred to wait for a more comprehensive volume than to receive a more timely but less complete one. Over 90% said the series was vital and that it would be a serious loss if it were discontinued. 41%, however, said that they were not specialists in diplomatic history, indicating a use of the series outside the obvious narrow audience. Interest was strong in possible paperback editions, but the responses were mixed concerning the addition of aids and other features such as purport lists, narrative summaries, and bibliographies.

Mr. Slany said that the Office, in conjunction with the Bureau, had been trying to circulate this Survey ever since 1977, although many of the respondents apparently thought that the timing of the Survey had some significance for the survival of the series and/or the Office. One obvious purpose of the Survey was to let managers in the Department know of the size and breadth of the FRUS constituency, but the main objective was to improve the utility of the series.

Mr. Glennon continued by saying that over 35% of the respondents wrote comments on the page provided. Microform editions and microform supplements were not enthusiastically welcomed. Mr. Smith asked if any of the respondents had noted the usefulness, as he did, of the series as an undergraduate teaching aid. Mr. Glennon said that they had. Mr. Smith added that the utility of narrative summaries and bibliographies depended on the use to which one put the series in general. He, for one, would hate to see any documents sacrificed to make room for editorial apparatus. Mr. Hess asked if the committee would be provided with copies of the summary data when it was complete. Mr. Slany assured him that they would certainly be sent copies, but not until the full analysis was complete after the first of the year.

Mr. Slany said that before turning to Mr. Glennon for the report on the status of the Foreign Relations series he wanted to tell the Committee about the suggestion put forward by the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations for an internship/fellowship program to be instituted in the Department for post-doctoral students of diplomatic history. The intention would be to assign the fellows not to the Historical Office but to other Bureaus and perhaps even embassies overseas. There might be problems in funding such a program entirely by the Department, but the idea was receiving serious attention in

the Office and the Department.

Report on the Status of the Foreign Relations Series

Mr. Glennon reported on the problems encountered in publication of FRUS. Only two of the projected eight volumes scheduled for publication in 1982 had actually appeared. Various printer errors had to be corrected in Volume III for 1951, including replacement of the title page. Volume V (The Near East and Africa) was scheduled for release by the end of the year. Six cleared volumes were in the pipeline and would probably be released by August 1983.

An average of 12 months elapsed between clearance and publication, and this figure was likely to increase to 13. China 1949 was exceptional in taking only seven months to publish after clearance. The recent Geneva Conference volume took ten months on "fast track," while Indochina 1952-54 took sixteen. Declassification was slow, but five volumes had been cleared this year and three more were in the final stage of clearance at NSC. A total of 44 volumes were in the pipeline for the years 1951 through 1958-60. Little except exploration of the Presidential Libraries was planned at this stage for the post-1960 period. While some 1958-60 material had gone to CDC for review, the emphasis was on 1951-54. Volumes V and VII for 1951 were scheduled for release by January, agreement with CDC on Volume IV was expected shortly, making publication likely in 1984. Only three out of sixteen volumes for 1952-54 had been published. Five were scheduled for 1983, three were at NSC, and five more were encountering clearance problems and were threatened by GPO's plans to phase out linotyping. The 1952-54 cycle was unlikely to be completed until 1985, with clearance being slowest on the European and Near East volumes.

The first of the 1955-57 series might be published in early 1984. Twelve volumes were complete, the CDC had returned preliminary declassification memos on two, and was expected to return memos on two more. Compilation was about half completed for the 1958-60 series, which was expected to comprise 16 volumes.

The floor was then opened to questions from the committee.

Mr. Smith, noting that Mr. Glennon's written report had said that no FRUS compiling was going on at present, wondered whether this inactivity might eventually erode compilation skills. Mr. Glennon said that compiling still continued on a very small scale, and he did not think the skills would disappear. Mr. Smith imagined that selecting and editing of documents was the most intellectually stimulating part of the Foreign Relations work, not the

declassifying and negotiating part. Mr. Slany and Mr. Glennon agreed.

Mr. Rosecrance asked about the long delays in clearing European volumes, and was told that political questions were the main reason. Mr. Hess asked how much time was spent in deletions. He was told that declassification was the longest phase of the process. Compilation began in 1974 for the 1952-54 series, while it had begun ten years ago for the 1951 series. Even the binding is taking 5 months instead of the promised 2 1/2 months. Mr. May asked about means of expediting the process, particularly contracting either printing or binding to private firms. Mr. Rubin was particularly interested in this possibility. While it might be difficult to persuade Congress to agree to a waiver, private printing would be in line with the Administration's search for means of cutting costs and its belief in the virtues of the private sector.

Mr. Glennon described possible changes in the series. CDC was reviewing proposed microfiche supplements to two of the 1955-57 volumes. These would include verbatim records, background papers, and other material that could not be conveniently included in the regular volumes. Narrative summaries also seemed worthwhile. Current planning called for summaries and purport lists to be collected and published as a separate volume after a triennial series was completed.

Mr. Glennon continued that the Office had been working with GPO in designing some format changes for the 1958-60 triennium. The purpose of the possible format changes was to make the pages of the series more readable, less crowded, and more efficiently handled in the new computerized printing technology.

Mr. Gaddis asked if name lists now appeared in every volume. Mr. Glennon said that from now on, with few exceptions, each newly published volume would contain a name list.

Mr. Slany observed that not enough volumes had been released as yet in the new triennial format to make a judgment on it. The Office was not rigidly committed to the triennial format. Mr. Pickering pointed out that the triennial style gave added problems to the declassification process because such a long period of time was involved.

Mr. Glennon noted that FRUS received considerable publicity when the Indochina volume was released in August 1982. Extensive coverage was provided in UPI and the Washington Post.

Mr. Slany stated that 18 to 20 journals regularly got

review copies of new volumes. Mr. Glennon noted that private publication might yield more extensive publicity. In the near future, the Foreign Press Center would receive press releases and summaries when new volumes appear. Mr. Smith commented that often he did not receive notice of a volume's availability until the supply had already been exhausted. Mr. Glennon responded that a commercial publisher would undoubtedly devote more effort to marketing the series.

Mr. Gaddis asked how drafters of documents would be identified. Mr. Glennon said that such details would be indicated in footnotes of future volumes. Mr. Gaddis and Mr. Glennon then discussed the problem of how to judge whether a document reflected the views of its drafter, or those of his superiors.

Mr. Slany commented that the Office was experimenting with microfiche in other contexts before trying to add such supplements to FRUS. To interrelate the fiche and the volume line by line with accurate and useful cross-references involved much work and human resources. Long runs of documents, such as verbatim minutes of conferences and negotiations or large bodies of briefing papers seemed more suitable for FRUS microfiche supplements until techniques and technology were considerably refined and developed.

Mr. Hess noted that the scholarship required to compile a comprehensive collection of important documents of an era on a subject had become increasingly more complex. The important documents were not limited to the Department of State's files. Presidential libraries and the Freedom of Information offices throughout the foreign affairs community also declassified documents; to keep control of what was available was becoming very complex.

Mr. Slany said that the Office has begun inventories of those papers available outside the Department official files worth preserving which might not routinely be preserved at the National Archives under current regulations and procedures. Mr. Glennon added that trips to Presidential libraries, begun in 1975, have shown that more and more documents are available there on a declassified basis as the years go by. Mr. Slany observed that FAIM has started to put onto fiche long series of documents frequently requested through Freedom of Information. The Historical Office would inventory such collections and help in their preparation and preservation where necessary.

The meeting adjourned at noon, to be resumed at 2 P.M. for the closed session.

Afternoon Session (Closed to the Public)

[Here follow a presentation on foreign government information and related subjects by Ambassador John R. Burke, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Classification/Declassification, and discussion with the Committee. This portion of the minutes is retained in the Office of the Historian as a classified document.]

Policy-Related Research

Mr. Slany reported that the policy-related research program in the Office had taken the largest segment of the Office's resources for the last 12 months. The Office had paused in the compilation of FRUS volumes and had concentrated on contributing historical background to the policy-making process in the Department of State. Moreover, the Office felt a political need to demonstrate to the Department our utility in these times of fiscal austerity. He asked Ms. Noring to distribute a classified list of research projects done by the Office in the past year.

Although the historians in the Office had many areas of expertise, he went on, in some instances the Office has not been or might not be able to respond to a Department request on particular topics or those with a short time fuse. We solicited Committee opinion on the idea of contracting out some research work for the Department to the academic community. Mr. May asked what exactly did he have in mind. Mr. Slany responded that he envisioned making use of the insight and knowledge of the larger community of scholars for the good of the Department on an as-needed basis when Office resources were unavailable or not suitable for the topic. Mr. Smith asked if clearances would be necessary, to which Mr. Slany responded that they could be arranged. Mr. Rubin said that the Department already makes use of scholars in the international economic field. Mr. Slany added that what he suggests is reaching out, much as the British and French do, to professional expertise outside the government. Mr. Gaddis said the idea is admirable, but real problems arise with clearances and the subsequent restrictions a scholar must place on himself later on. Mr. Rubin said, that from his own experience doing this type of contract work, most of the material is unclassified. Mr. Rosecrance said that an interesting area for outside input might be a comparison of the 1930s with the 1980s on the subject of international economic policy. Even graduate students might be usefully employed on that type of research. Mr. Rubin and Mr. Rosecrance both said that the Department could probably get a lot of research done free.

Mr. Gaddis returned to the issue of clearance, citing the problems that have arisen on restrictions in the CIA Scholar in Residence Program. Mr. Slany said that a line might be drawn on the necessity for clearances, or that limited access might be arranged ad hoc.

Mr. Hess wondered how the Office selected the projects that were on the list--were they self-initiated, solicited, or did they come through normal channels? Mr. Slany answered that it was a mixture of all three. The Office responds the best it can, and is now engaged in prioritizing a list of suggested projects that we could do, which it will then circulate for Department reaction. Mr. Smith asked if the Office worked on the research alone. Mr. Slany said that, other than going back to the requester for redefinition or arranging access or providing feedback the Office does the work without collaboration.

Mr. Smith queried whether historical research is produced in other bureaus. Mr. Slany replied that INR, the Department Library, the National Archives, the Office of the Legal Adviser, and the Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs all prepare research papers; the Historical Office prepares only a small percentage of the Department's research. We must make the Department aware of our skills, he added. Mr. Rubin felt that perhaps the Department did not know of the existence of the Office at all. Mr. Slany said that the Department was most aware of the Office in its role as an advocate for the release of documents and that this reputation worked against the Office in most other contexts.

Mr. Gaddis, returning to the idea of contract historians, asked if Mr. Slany was thinking of individual academic historians or groups of academic historians. Mr. Slany said he was thinking of both. Mr. Gaddis suggested trying out the idea on an unclassified basis. Mr. Smith said that small research projects might be done on a volunteer basis. Mr. May reminded the Committee that when you set up a board of consultants to whom you grant special access, others without that access become extremely sensitive. Mr. Smith said that access to classified material often helps a researcher to ask the right questions even if he eventually makes no direct use of the classified information. Mr. Gaddis reiterated his support for the idea that thus a broad range of previously untapped expertise can be plugged into.

American Foreign Policy: Current Documents

Mr. Slany reported that, despite promises made to the Committee last year, neither Current Documents 1981 or Basic

Documents 1977-80 had yet been published. The reasons are twofold: the microfiche supplement to the 1981 volume created technical problems far beyond our expectations, and the private publisher we contracted with has unexpectedly delayed the process. Mr. Claussen was asked to report in more detail.

Mr. Claussen said that HO has received the page proofs for Basic Documents 1977-1980 and that 75% of Current Documents 1981 has been set. He offered to leave these items and some prototype samples with the Committee. Mr. Claussen described Current Documents as a "learning experience," stating that this is the first time HO has used a large team of editors to compile a volume as well as a smaller team of senior editors to review it.

Mr. Claussen discussed the new technology being explored with Current Documents: computerized typesetting and microform supplements. The former does not involve a waiver from GPO, but still eases the most labor-intensive part of the publication process. It takes 9 to 10 months to set up, at which point the camera-ready copy goes to GPO. GPO signs the project over to a contractor, but HO will have control of the camera-ready copy. Once the bugs are worked out of the system, a 10-day turn-around time should be possible.

HO has built a methodology for preparing microform supplements and has identified its pitfalls. The Supplement to Current Documents will have an index and eye-visible document numbers. The printed volume will have cross-references to the Supplement. The volume is intended to stand by itself.

Mr. Rosecrance asked how it was possible to publish volumes in the manner Mr. Claussen described without getting a waiver from GPO. Mr. Slany replied that we are allowed to present GPO with camera-ready copy. GPO is still the printer. This method may or may not have saved the taxpayers money. He continued that the first part of the Supplement will contain the full texts of documents extracted in the printed volume and texts of additional documents arranged by subject, while a second microfiche supplement containing the Department's noon press briefings, materials from the White House Press Office, and Department of Defense briefings will be published later. Mr. Claussen stated that we intend to ask GPO to prepare a paperback version of Current Documents to sell at a lesser price. Mr. Gaddis asked if the lessons learned from Current Documents will be applied to Foreign Relations. Mr. Slany said they would.

The meeting adjourned at 3:21 p.m. so that the Committee could hold its private meeting.