

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

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

November 9, 1984

American Historical Association

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With concurrence of: _____
IPS by: _____ Date 4-26-12

Other Persons Present

Bureau of Public Affairs (PA):

John T. McCarthy, 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 Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS); M. Paul Claussen, David W. Mabon, Nina J. Noring, David S. Patterson, Charles S. Sampson, Larry Adamczyk, David M. Baehler, Carol A. Becker, Bret D. Bellamy, Suzanne E. Coffman, Evan M. Duncan, Evans Gerakas, Nancy L. Golden, Stuart Kennedy, Kay K. Herring, Bettye C. Johnson, Edward C. Keefer, Ronald D. Landa, James E. Miller, David S. Painter, Deborah Peabody, William F. Sanford, Harriet D. Schwar, Vera Smith, Sherrill B. Wells, James White

Classification/Declassification Center (A/CDC):

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

Foreign Affairs Information Management Center (A/FAIM):

Paul Washington, Chief, Publishing Services Division; Vicki L. Ettleman and Leo P. Masciana, Documentary Editing Section.

Others:

Milton O. Gustafson, Chief, Legislative and Diplomatic Branch, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA); Edwin A. Thompson, Project Director, Records Declassification Division, NARA; Page Miller, American Historical Association; Beverly Zweiben, Office of Human Rights Affairs, Bureau of International Organization Affairs; Stanley Shaloff, Office of Analysis for Africa, Bureau of Intelligence and Research; N. Stephen Kane, Office of Opinion Analysis and Plans.

List of Abbreviations

A - Bureau of Administration
AHA - American Historical Association
CDC - Classification/Declassification Center
CIA - Central Intelligence Agency
DOS - Department of State
FAIM - Foreign Affairs Information Management Center
FAIS - Foreign Affairs Information System
FOIA - Freedom of Information Act
FRUS - Foreign Relations of the United States
FSO - Foreign Service Officer
GPO - Government Printing Office
GSA - General Services Administration
HO - Office of the Historian
JCP - Joint Committee on Printing
LC - Library of Congress
NARA - National Archives and Records Administration
OTA - Office of Technology Assessment
PA - Bureau of Public Affairs

Mr. Slany convened the meeting at 9:15 a.m. and introduced Deputy Assistant Secretary McCarthy, who welcomed the committee members on behalf of Assistant Secretary Hughes.

Mr. McCarthy stated that Mr. Hughes was very sorry he could not be present and outlined the busy schedule of the Department Spokesman. Noting that he had majored in history as an undergraduate, Mr. McCarthy expressed his own interest in the committee's proceedings. He stated that a lot of progress has been made since last year in thinking through the process of producing the series and what can be done about the very legitimate problems and questions raised by the committee in last year's report and over the past few years.

Election of Chairman

Mr. Slany stated that the committee's first order of business was usually to elect a chairman. Ms. Gruber commented that the committee's usual practice of selecting a chairman who was serving his last year on the committee meant that the previous year's chairman was never present to follow up on the previous year's report. She noted that last year's chairman Ernest May was no longer on the committee to follow up on the 1983 committee's excellent report. She nominated Warren Kuehl, a new committee member. Mr. Gaddis and Mr. Holsti seconded the nomination, and Mr. Kuehl was elected by acclamation.

Mr. Kuehl invited Mr. Slany to present his report.

Report of the Historian

Mr. Slany said that HO has been busy with the staff study and the report to Congress. One is an attempt to find solutions to problems laid out in the other. Foreign Relations as it has evolved in the last 20 years has probably gone as far as it can in its present structure and with its present objectives. We need to reconcile what we can do in HO with what the rest of the government can do. We have allowed the emergence of a publication which is not at all like what it once was. We have two objectives: publishing the most important documents and serving as a guide to unpublished diplomatic records. Foreign Relations can't publish all the documents anyone would like to have in writing diplomatic history. We shouldn't be an obstacle to making the record available to the public. The body of documentation needs to be defined differently than it was by Secretary Kellogg in 1925.

He stated that we have several alternatives. We can serve as a guide to the records that are available, including those outside the DOS. We fulfill an important function in helping to identify significant records and ensuring their preservation

so that they can be made available eventually, even if not immediately.

He called attention to a number of problems:

The immense quantity of records from recent years. The amount of records on Vietnam alone is staggering. This necessitates setting priorities.

The problem of foreign government information. The U.S. has to be sensitive to the concerns of other foreign governments. U.S. documents are riddled with information from foreign sources. If we attempt to make use of this information as if it came from American sources, we have a problem. We need to understand what the academic community thinks should be in the foreign policy record. We may need to be more self-denying. This issue has changed totally in recent years: in the past, we merely had to clear foreign government documents or texts of documents.

The problem of other-agency documents. We don't have full access to other agency documents. The Inter-agency Access Agreement doesn't apply to all documents in which diplomatic historians have an interest.

He continued: We are in a quandary. We need the advice of the academic community as to whether we should continue publishing even if the record is not complete. We face this problem constantly. It hinges on other-agency records; the Department of State is becoming more efficient at dealing with declassification, but we don't have control of other agencies. In the Department we have more or less solved the procedural problems of declassification. Scholars may have more access to records at the National Archives than in Foreign Relations. We are faced with the problem of whether to publish the incomplete record. We wonder whether or not we have the support of scholars.

Mr. Gaddis commented that the committee could not deal with these almost "cosmic" questions in one annual session. He asked Mr. Slany to elaborate on his suggestion of bringing academic historians into a closer relationship with HO.

Mr. Slany stated that Foreign Relations is the only government publication without outside editorial advice. He stated that we need to combine the staff's expertise with the thinking of outside professionals. He suggested an editorial board which would discuss general questions of organization of the volumes with the staff and would also advise the staff on questions of whether or not to proceed with publication. We are more inclined to wait for something positive to happen than to make disagreeable decisions. Rumors of problem volumes get out and produce skewed discussion.

Mr. Gaddis asked Mr. Slany what he envisioned as to the frequency of the board's meetings and the level of detail which it might address. Would the board meet 2-3 times a year or would it be more active? Mr. Slany said he thought the board would meet several times a year and have additional access to materials.

Mr. Gaddis asked Mr. Slany what relationship he envisioned between the board and the Advisory Committee. Mr. Slany replied that HO would want the committee's advice on the selection of the board.

Mr. Gaddis asked Mr. Slany what relationship he envisioned between the board and any prospective consultants. Mr. Slany replied that the consultants would advise HO during the compiling stage. The board would advise in the planning stage and in the post-compiling stage. For example, we are now planning volumes on the Kennedy years. An editorial board could advise us on this.

Mr. Kuehl stated that he could see the value of bringing in outside historians with experience in working in a particular time period in designing the volumes. He inquired about the selection process: to what extent does HO feel the academic community looking over its shoulder during this process? Mr. Slany replied that the involvement of the academic community would strengthen HO in dealing with other agencies and help us determine on which issues to fight.

Mr. Gaddis suggested that we might be proliferating advisory committees and suggested that restructuring the advisory committee with more frequent meetings might serve the same purposes. Mr. Slany referred the question of the feasibility of this to Mr. Petersen, who stated that there was no obstacle; several DOS advisory committees meet 2-3 times a year.

Mr. Gaddis raised the question of the committee's structure. Mr. Slany stated that this was a matter for the committee to consider. Mr. Gaddis stated that he thought SHAFR should be represented. Mr. Slany noted that this was a timely suggestion, since it was time to renew the committee's charter. Mr. Petersen said the charter provides that the committee shall meet annually in November but may meet more frequently. Mr. Slany raised the problem of funds. Mr. McCarthy suggested the possibility of enlarging the committee and establishing working groups. Ms. Gruber noted that this was a good time to consider the committee's structure.

Mr. Slany turned to the publishing problem. He introduced Paul Washington of PS and noted that he had been helpful in the series' transition from linotype to electronic printing. He

stated that the GPO has caused more problems than it has solved. HO has raised the question of an exemption from GPO with the Joint Committee on Printing. A private publisher might be able to make the series more widely available and keep the volumes in print longer. The volumes are often in print for less time than it takes to prepare them. They are reference tools and should be available for a decade or so. The GPO is not attuned to a unique publication like Foreign Relations. The committee might wish to consider how a university press might be more helpful. Mr. Washington stated that the Department plans to approach some university presses, but hasn't done so yet.

Mr. Holsti wondered if the cost would be greater with a private publisher. Mr. Washington stated that a small subvention might be necessary. The Department would have to make certain that a university press did not raise the price of the volumes unduly. He referred to the special printing of volumes for Congress. He stated that the current upfront costs for printing and binding were \$45,000-\$75,000 per volume. The Department would hope to obtain 2500 volumes at no greater cost than this. He thought a university press could expand sales of the volumes. In order to do this, the price should be no higher than current prices and maybe a little lower. We would need to find a university press and go to the Joint Committee. He thought there would be no problem in getting a waiver.

Mr. Hargrove inquired whether the subvention would not be a matter for negotiation. Mr. Washington replied that in his experience no one did something for nothing. Mr. Slany noted that the Department would pay for the volumes sent to depository libraries.

Mr. Gaddis asked if there was any mechanism for ensuring that full sets of volumes go overseas. He had just visited a number of universities and libraries in China where only a few volumes were available. Mr. Slany replied that we had made a few volumes available on an ad hoc basis. Mr. Glennon stated that we had a distribution list of 115 and that approximately 24 of these went overseas. Mr. Gustafson of NARS noted that the AHA had asked for donations from members and that Fredrick Aandahl, a former Acting Director of HO, had donated his collection for China. Mrs. Becker noted that the LC has an exchange program.

Mr. Gaddis stated that the committee might make a recommendation on this and asked for suggestions on what could be done. Mrs. Becker stated that HO has a list of suggestions on how people can obtain earlier volumes or reprints which we send to anyone who inquires. Mr. Gaddis stated that he was interested in how the current volumes could be made more readily available.

Mr. Washington stated that we are interested in creating a larger market by advertising the volumes. He noted that direct overseas sales have been very low. For the first time, the Department is making an effort at marketing the volumes.

Mr. Gustafson suggested facetiously that one way to increase sales would be to include more controversial documents. He asked why the volumes go out of print so quickly. Mr. Washington stated that the problem was storage costs. GPO looks at the sales records and is reluctant to print more volumes. We can do so in some cases, such as the 1951 Korea volume, but only with difficulty. He noted that we have some volumes at the Department which are unavailable at GPO.

Mr. Gaddis asked if there could be a mechanism through which an individual could subscribe to the series. He asked facetiously if the Department had considered having a sale of the volumes it had on hand. Mr. Kuehl stated that a consortium of university presses might be willing to handle distribution of the volumes.

The committee adjourned for a short break.

Mr. Slany discussed further the size of Foreign Relations volumes. He pointed out that the Senate Foreign Relations committee had previously enjoined the Office not to change the size of the volumes. Now, it was a major operation to continue to publish books the same size as those of the last few years. There were several difficulties with continuing in the same mode. First of all, money was a problem. The Office could ask the Department for publishing funds incrementally as the volumes came out, but it would be difficult to request the enormous outlay that would be necessary to bring the series to the thirty-year line. There was also the problem of the capability of the Presidential Libraries. HO research teams selecting large numbers of documents to be copied would occupy an archival staff for months, displacing the needs of private scholars. Even before making a Library trip, HO needed to go to other government agencies for permission to view and copy their documents. The total effort took much time, for which more resources were required.

Mr. Slany stated that he would ask advice from the projected new editorial board on how to be more selective in choosing documents for publication. He added that it was impossible for the volumes to meet everyone's expectations. In response to Ms. Gruber's question as to whether the editorial board could deal with the size issue, Mr. Slany stated that the editorial apparatus needed to be more defined. He added that a volume's size depended largely on the significance of the events at issue. In some cases they could be treated with fewer documents and greater narrative summary. Other topics

that were more intrinsically important needed greater documentary coverage. He reiterated that the Office needed clear direction from the Advisory Committee on this issue.

Mr. Gaddis asked how the Foreign Relations volumes might alert the reader that the documentary record was not complete. He pointed out that the Archives system was to insert a pink slip to indicate that certain documents had not yet been declassified. Mr. Glennon replied that the volumes often could not specify which documents had been excluded because that information itself was classified.

Returning to the problem of volume size, Mr. Kuehl asked whether microfiche supplements could be used for large quantities of documents that could not be printed in a scaled-down series. Mr. Slany replied that the Office had made only limited headway on processing a microfiche supplement because of lack of technical skill. He also mentioned the concern of both the HO staff and the professional community that too great an emphasis on microfiche publication could lead to a diminution of the commitment to the printed series. He added that if the Advisory Committee and the academic profession wanted the staff to concentrate more efforts on microfiche, they needed to offer specific encouragement.

Ms. Larson asked whether HO had regular access to the documents of other government agencies. Mr. Slany replied that the Office had worked on this without too much progress. As time has passed, the terms of access have become more confined. Presently, HO access was not as great as it was five or ten years ago. He stated that the Department must convince agencies that the collection of documents for the Foreign Relations series needs a special arrangement apart from private or FOI efforts. He suggested that the Advisory Committee might want to deal with this problem.

In response to Mr. Holsti's question of what allies the Office could count on to gain greater access to the documents of other agencies, Mr. Slany stated that Alan Thompson of the Archives was a help to the Office. Mr. Thompson stated that he certainly wanted to think that he was an ally. He added that he hoped to be more personally active with other agencies in making their record available but was not certain how successful he would be. Mr. Gaddis interjected that the obvious answer to the issue of other agency access was the issuance of a new Presidential directive reinforcing the previous Nixon and Kennedy executive orders. He then inquired about the prospects of Secretary Shultz' approval of the Staff Study. Mr. Slany responded that the study would be approved but expressed doubt that a new directive would contain the necessary sense of urgency to make a real difference. He added that if it simply urged other agencies to be more cooperative with the State Department, it would be hard to say whether it

would have any beneficial effect. Mr. Kuehl stated that before the Advisory Committee made specific recommendations, it would have to determine whether a new Presidential order would help or hurt.

Ms. Gruber asked how much of staff time had been devoted to policy related research and whether the production of classified studies was greater than that of unclassified ones. Mr. Claussen replied that he had no up to date figures but estimated that staff participation varied from 30 to 75 percent, sometimes 95 percent in the case of a rush project. Mr. Slany stated that although some of the studies were unclassified, the Office might not necessarily have authority to release them. He pointed out by way of example that the Office-wide organizational history of the State Department had a very limited circulation. Mr. Claussen pointed out that policy related research often proved valuable for future Foreign Relations compilations.

In connection with the issue of doing current work of utility to future FRUS volumes, Mr. Slany indicated that he has contemplated proposing current computerized compilation of documents for use by the Secretary of State or leading policy makers. One advantage of instituting an ongoing, up-to-date collection program would be that the Office could secure important documents before they were lost or destroyed. To Mr. Gaddis's question of whether such a program would take more staff time than the traditional method of collecting at the time of compilation, Mr. Slany replied that the Department hierarchy would have to acknowledge that such an effort would be useful and be prepared to supply the necessary resources. He stressed, however, that more than resources, the Office mainly required for the Secretary of State to be convinced that an HO collection effort would be a good thing. Mr. Kuehl agreed that the Office needed to keep up with the contemporary record and indicated that the Advisory Committee might recommend that it embark on such a collection effort. Mr. Slany responded that such a recommendation would be welcome. He added that the Department needed advice on how best to preserve the record and warned that the computerized post-1974 record was in far greater danger of being lost than the earlier paper files. He expressed hope that the Advisory Committee report would enable the Office to reach the people who made the key decisions involving record preservation.

In response to Mr. Kuehl's question as to whether each agency had its own system of organizing its records on computers, Mr. Thompson said that common standards had not been worked out. He added that the Archives was vitally concerned about the problem. Mr. Slany stated that a committee of representatives from each agency was currently discussing the issue of organizing computerized records but could not agree on methods to get systems to relate to one another.

On a new topic Mr. Kuehl asked whether there had been any clarification on the issue of foreign originated information. Mr. Slany responded that the Classification/Declassification Center considered whether to allow the inclusion of such material on a case by case basis. He added that the Department of State took the view that a document's sensitivity rather than its origin dictated whether it had to be withheld or not. He suggested that Mr. Kuehl question Mr. Burke on the issue during the closed session later in the day.

Response by the Department to the Advisory Committee Report for 1983.

Mr. Slany stated that the Office had completed its staff study, which was undertaken after the Secretary of State had read the Committee's 1983 report and had indicated his willingness to entertain its recommendations. The staff study had been submitted to Secretary Shultz in October and had received his informal approval. Mr. Slany said that the central purpose of the study was to outline the measures needed to maintain a 30-year line. He pointed out that the National Archives was now releasing documents ahead of their publication in Foreign Relations volumes whereas in the past the documents had appeared in the volumes before they were generally available to the public.

Mr. Gaddis asked whether there was any assurance that a 30-year line was indeed feasible. He noted Mr. Slany's remarks about the need for greater selectivity and restraint in compiling the volumes in order to speed publication but wondered whether the Department was disposed to grant the Office additional resources to meet its goals. Mr. Slany replied that the Office needed to identify the resources required to meet its targets in the forthcoming budget. He added that there was no imminent problem of resources for HO because of the number of volumes still in the pipeline. In fact he had held back on further compiling pending decisions on the shape of future volumes. On the issue of whether, by endorsing the 30-year line, the Secretary of State would commit himself to adding the necessary resources, Mr. Slany stated that it was not clear what additional discussion on the issue would be necessary. He emphasized that the Office must be prudent and should not ask for more than it could efficiently use.

Ms. Gruber asked about the likelihood of future cooperation with the other government agencies. Mr. Slany stated that such cooperation was rational and in the interest of other agencies. He believed that they would prefer to have HO compile a record of value than to allow it to dribble out in bits and pieces. The key was to convince them that HO could produce it efficiently. Ms. Gruber then asked how disclosure

would serve NSC's interest. Mr. Slany responded that the NSC released information through the Freedom of Information Act. HO needed to persuade NSC officials that their FOI declassification effort would be facilitated by the regular publication of Foreign Relations volumes.

Mr. Kuehl asked whether, in light of what had been said, the 30-year was a meaningful publication goal. Mr. Slany stressed that the immediate problem was to publish the backlog of volumes now in the pipeline. The longer range problem was that the other agencies would not have adequate resources to declassify documents as the volumes grew in size. He stated that if the backlog could not be eliminated, the prospect of a 40-year line was great, since the sense of urgency that other agencies might have to cooperate declassifying the volumes would diminish.

Mr. Kuehl asked whether the Office might consider publishing (he used figure of 98%) readily clearable material now and then publishing the remaining documents on microfiche later when they became available. Mr. Slany replied that this raised the need to examine the volumes on a case by case basis. If the Office could decide that 35 out of 40 volumes could be published now with the understanding that other documents would be added later, that would speed the publishing process. However, other agency clearances might still be a bottleneck. Academicians' views were also important and there might be suspicions in the historical profession that the Office had been remiss in not insisting strongly enough that certain documents be included in the volumes. Mr. Gaddis suggested that the Office publish supplementary volumes periodically containing previously withheld documents. Mr. Slany explained that the Office had planned to publish a volume on intelligence activities covering an extended period, so far without much success. He also noted that a variety of papers had come into the Office's possession, some declassified, after the appropriate volume has already been released. He concluded that even after 30 years the possibility of producing a definitive record was remote. Mr. Gaddis expressed the belief that HO's concern about the profession's reaction to an incomplete volume could be alleviated if the omitted documents (2 percent) could be included later. Mr. Slany responded that HO historians generally feel that those documents were often the most important part of the volume and added that the staff naturally had a proprietary interest in publishing as complete a volume as possible.

Mr. Kuehl asked how the reader would know whether specific documents had been omitted from a volume because of clearance problems. Mr. Glennon replied that in the case of the 1952-1954 Guatemala compilation, HO indicated where the records could be found. However, it was impossible to tell the reader that we wanted to print certain specific documents but could

not because declassification was refused. In the preface to the 1955-1957 volume on Vietnam, the Office had attempted to clarify the ellipses occurring in the text, explaining that material had been omitted for a variety of reasons including its failure to be declassified. He continued that the sticking point for the series was in its attempt to be comprehensive. Our inclusion of other agency documents in the volumes required their declassification before publication. NSC has proved to be the greatest bottleneck. He explained that of the 15 volumes on which CDC had completed its review, 6 had been reviewed by the Department of Defense and only 2 by the NSC. Then after volumes are finally cleared by all interested agencies, they must wait another year or more for GPO to publish them. Mr. Gaddis inquired why omitted documents could not be identified to readers who at some later date could submit FOI requests. He noted that the pink slip in Archival collections provided this information to researchers, but that FRUS did not do the same for its readers. Mr. Glennon responded that the Office was not always permitted to inform the reader of the documents which had not been cleared.

Ms. Larson pointed out the danger of relying on a supplementary volume to include withheld documents from previously published volumes. She expressed concern that general knowledge that such a volume would follow could possibly remove pressure from other agencies to clear material for the regular volumes. She believed that difficult clearance decisions would be routinely postponed until the preparation of the supplementary volume, reducing even further the value and comprehensiveness of the regular volumes. Mr. Kuehl pointed out that if the uncleared documents could be identified in the regular volumes, then interested scholars could apply pressure for their eventual release. Mr. Holsti asked whether the 2 percent figure so far used to approximate the percentage of documents omitted from the average Foreign Relations volume was a scientific estimate or just pulled out of the air. Mr. Glennon replied that the highest figure on an FRUS manuscript was about 18 percent, levied on the prospective 1952-1954 volume on Eastern Europe. The Office was still withholding the volume in an attempt to reduce the number of deletions, but he confessed that it was a continuing dilemma to decide how long to struggle to include presently sensitive material. He added that the highest percentage of withheld material for any volume which HO has approved for publication was 10 percent, namely the China section of the 1951 volume on Korea and China. Mr. Slany added that HO compilers do not perform any screening function. In fact they would probably subvert CDC's responsibility if they did, because unless CDC is aware of potentially sensitive material, it would not be able to write declassification guidelines for it.

Chairman Kuehl adjourned the meeting at noon, to reconvene in closed session at 2 p.m., following the Committee's luncheon with Ambassador Ronald I. Spiers, Under Secretary for Management.

AFTERNOON SESSION (CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC)

Status of Declassification

Ambassador Burke stated that CDC has had good working relations with the Historical Office. Although differences have arisen over documents or individual volumes, controversies have been resolved amicably and he looked forward to continuing this relationship in the future.

Burke said that the situation in his Center has remained stable for the last two or three years. Systematic Review has declassified 56,000 pages this year which represents over 92 % of the pages examined and is close to the percentage of release of the last few years. That figure does not involve FRUS, microfiche, or material from the Archives. The volume of material released has also remained approximately at the level of the last few years.

The one new development in FOIA has been the increase in the requests from the media. In 1982 such requests represented 8% of the total, whereas in 1983 they rose to 20% and in 1984 to 25%. The pattern has been that these requests come largely from a few people and that one journalist has currently over 300 requests in the Department. The key problem for FOIA will be how to handle this increased number of requests and what priority, if any, to give them. He said that there have been recent legislative attempts to amend the FOIA but that none has yet passed. He stated that one new set of amendments to be introduced early in the year by Congressman English will establish a "fast track" for media and other professionals or organizations which have time sensitive needs. He argued that this amendment would present real problems and put strains on CDC's resources and would be equally difficult for other Agencies. Ambassador Burke urged the Advisory Committee to follow the progress of these proposed amendments and perhaps testify before Congress urging the need to make the FOIA process equal and fair. He also stated that a bill passed in the last Congress had exempted CIA operational files from FOIA. While the Department had not played a role in the bill's passage, Sam Gammon of the AHA, had lobbied against it. He said he hoped this legislation would not adversely affect HO's ability to get access to CIA files.

Ambassador Burke stated that the last Congress had also passed legislation removing the National Archives from GSA control. The Department still cooperates with NARA and

supplies 2/3 of the budgetary support for the team that is declassifying DOS documents.

Ambassador Burke wished to call the Committee's attention to the problem of preserving future files. As we move into the high tech era, there is a need to focus on the problem of long term preservation of the permanent files of the Department. If the current trend continues, what exactly is it that we will turn over to the National Archives. Wang's President, An Wang, with whom Ambassador Burke recently talked, had no answer to this problem. Wang's floppy disks deteriorate in time and documents on them may become unreadable. Ambassador Burke noted that the Office of Technology Assessment is doing a staff study of records keeping in the government and they are meeting with other agencies, as they had with the Department to gather information on this problem. He fears that the report, which is due to come out late next summer, may only state that the problem exists without offering solutions. He stated that the Library of Congress is doing the best research so far on this problem and has been focusing on optical disks that can survive for 100 years and hold about 1 million documents. He wished to commend them for their work in this area.

Ambassador Burke also drew the Committee's attention to the report of the Congressional Conference Committee which had worked on the bill granting autonomy to the National Archives. The report stressed that the Conferees were "sensitive to the preservation of documents produced by electrical impulse," which had increased the agencies' ability to produce documents, but impeded their ability to preserve and store these records. The report stated they wished to "insure the new technology preserves the documents."

Mr. Holsti asked whether the proposed FOIA amendment proposed any other restrictions on FOIA inquiries. Ambassador Burke replied that the amendment draft he had seen did not. He said that the present FOIA allowed anyone in the world to request any information on any subject except CIA operational matters. Ms. Gruber asked if the amendment would jeopardize the academic community. Ambassador Burke replied that as the proposed amendment now reads, any journalist or representative of a journal or newspaper could request priority treatment. When Ms. Gruber asked about how resources would be allocated to handle the fast track, Ambassador Burke replied it would be up to CDC to establish procedures depending on the form of the amendment as passed. Some have suggested three tracks be established. When Mr. Kuehl asked if journalists were better lobbyists than scholars, Ambassador Burke replied that scholars should lobby to protect their interests. He added that a new development in the question of priorities was the problem of dealing with documents requested under discovery in cases such as the current lawsuit where a former Israeli Government

official, Ariel Sharon, was suing Time Magazine. In such cases documents must be produced under a deadline set by the judge.

Ms. Larson asked about the sensitivity of the documents contained in FRUS 1952-1954 volume VII on Central Europe and when it would be released. Mr. Bardach said that this volume covered a period of the emerging normalization of relations between the U.S. and Germany and included important communications between the U.S. and the USSR as well as between the U.S. and Adenauer. It was also a time when the Four Power Austrian Treaty was being discussed. The NSC has had some reservations about releasing the volume because of the sensitivity of some of the documents contained therein. However, the Department believes that these concerns can be resolved, and that there is much interest in moving Volume VII along since, among other things, 1985 is the 40th anniversary of VE day, as well as the 30th anniversary of U.S. resumption of diplomatic relations with Germany. He said there would be great interest in the volume in Europe as well. When Ms. Larson asked if any additional material would be cut out, Mr. Bardach replied that he believed it might well be published as it was, since it had already been cleared by the Department of State and several documents contained in the volume had been cleared with the FRG.

Mr. Gaddis inquired concerning FRUS 1952-1954 volume X on Iran. Mr. Glennon said he is currently going through it. When Mr. Gaddis asked if it would go the way of the Guatemalan volume, Mr. Glennon replied one would find more in it than in the Guatemalan volume but not everything a historian would want. He is planning to draft a response to CDC and ask for reconsideration of some documents. The volume should be ready for the NSC in early 1985.

Mr. Gaddis asked what would be the role of the Editorial Board at this stage of the declassification process. Mr. Slany said we "crave some sort of judgment" and perhaps the Editorial Board could help us make the best possible decision at this juncture. He said the deletions in this volume were made largely because of information obtained from Great Britain.

Mr. Kuehl suggested that the Committee could make broad recommendations. Ambassador Burke replied that the Committee could make recommendations on changes in organization of the volumes and subjects treated. The CDC would like more resources devoted to the production of volumes and possibly outside publication of the volumes. He said we need to persuade the seventh floor of the importance of FRUS which he believes is the single most important government publication of its kind. When Mr. Kuehl asked if HO needed more resources, Ambassador Burke replied he was talking about the Systematic Review Staff of A/CDC which reviews the FRUS volumes as a

primary responsibility, but which occasionally must be diverted to help with FOIA work.

Mr. Kuehl interjected that it seemed scholarly organizations should do more lobbying.

Mr. Gaddis asked if the staff study was signed and accepted, and if it resulted in a Presidential order, what could the Committee do to insure that follow-up occurred? Ambassador Burke replied that the statement should have teeth and be issued with some fanfare. It should be delivered to the agencies with an implementing directive in order to make maximum impact, since government studies usually have a half-life of a few years. When Mr. Kuehl asked what kind of teeth could they put in it, Ambassador Burke replied that the statement should be drafted along the lines of the Nixon directive -- a strong, clear statement from the President to the heads of all departments and agencies with an involvement in the topics covered in the FRUS series.

Mr. Gaddis asked what was the reason for optimism since the administration had a reputation for not favoring openness? Ambassador Burke said that, despite inside media comment to the contrary, the current administration had had no inhibiting effect on the Department's declassification efforts under mandatory or systematic review and he cited the declassification and release of former Secretary Haig's memoirs to support his statement. He said the new executive order also had not had an inhibiting effect. Mr. Slany stated that his feeling of optimism was related to the reception given the FRUS volumes by this Administration. He said the volumes have the qualities of being orderly and rich in information and, because they are historical, this way of releasing information may be more attractive to the White House than other ways.

Mr. Slany said there was a perception that there was a small group of people obstructing the publication of the volumes. This is not the case. Its just hard to bring all the declassification groups together since there is no umbrella organization covering all the other agencies. Ambassador Burke added that the problem of dealing with the other agencies is that none of them have an equivalent of CDC. If we could get a directive to underline the importance of the series, it might help.

Mr. Kuehl wondered how the Advisory Committee Reports were viewed by the other agencies. Burke replied that only one report -- the one that preceded his arrival at CDC -- was considered hostile. All the others had been viewed favorably and Ernest May's report of last year had gotten a lot of attention on the seventh floor.

Preparing the Vietnam Record

Mr. Gaddis asked about the merits of the two options HO was considering in their publication of the Vietnam volumes: publishing shorter volumes faster or larger volumes more slowly. Mr. Slany stated that HO was proceeding on the assumption that we should get the documents to the public as soon as possible, while debate was still going on in the scholarly community. First, if the HO contribution is delayed, its impact will be lessened. Second, CDC has offered us faster clearance now. Third, the capacity of the National Archives and Presidential Libraries to work with us would be short-circuited by too extensive coverage. We want to match their facilities available now with our plans. He said he could envisage an arrangement whereby we would be allowed to have access to certain additional portions of the Presidential Library holdings.

Mr. Kuehl asked if consultants could help with the Vietnam volumes. He said the Committee suffered from a lack of information. Mr. Slany said we needed consultants to advise us.

Mr. Gaddis said he wished to counter HO's desire to publish shorter volumes faster by arguing first, that the users survey favored the delay and publication of more complete FRUS volumes; second, that Vietnam is neither an unknown or an undocumented issue; and third, that there is a question about how much new information HO volumes would add to the story. Mr. Glennon replied that the user survey statistics were 64% to 36%. He said there would be five volumes for the period 1955-1963. The real problem for the 1965 volumes is that the presidential libraries haven't processed the documents as yet and the Nixon library does not yet exist. The problem of gaining access to presidential materials after 1965 is the same for all post-1965 volumes, including those on Vietnam.

Mr. Gaddis asked whether HO would publish supplements to accelerated volumes. Mr. Glennon replied we might use the model of the First World War supplement. He added that the 1961-1963 volumes on Vietnam are completed and in CDC.

Mr. Gaddis wished to know if the Vietnam volumes included material only on Vietnam or did they also include material on Laos and Cambodia. Mr. Glennon replied that the volumes included only materials on Vietnam because it was the only way to keep them a reasonable size and because of the question of clearance. Cambodia and Laos would pose problems in clearance whereas most of the Vietnam documents would not. There were differing views, however, and some people in CDC had urged the greater Southeast Asia approach. Cambodia and Laos would be in the regular FRUS volumes. When Mr. Holsti asked how much delay there would be if HO waited to include Laos and Cambodia, Mr. Glennon replied there would be a major delay. Mr. Slany said

HO had its best and most experienced historians working on the Vietnam volumes. There were problems that would have to be met whichever approach was taken.

Mr. Kuehl asked if HO was locked into the print format. Could some supplemental documents be issued later as microfiche? Mr. Slany stated HO was not locked into any format, but the scale of the project, not how it was produced, was the factor since all documents had to be cleared by CDC which gave them special, accelerated treatment. HO's goal was to try to get all documents into the public domain whether on microfiche or in printed FRUS volumes.

Other Topics

Mr. Gaddis asked about plans for other special volumes. Mr. Slany said that EUR was not enthusiastic about the idea of special volumes on U.S. relations with the Soviet Union. Mr. Claussen said HO was trying to produce a series of unclassified documents on Central America. Mr. Slany said HO's problem was to decide what we could and should do.

Ms. Gruber asked about the utility of the oral history program. Had the interviews complemented or contradicted the written records? Mr. Mabon replied that the interviews his group had conducted were of substantial value in a few instances but that memories varied greatly. He replied affirmatively when Ms. Gruber asked if they checked memories against the written record. In response to her query, Mr. Mabon replied that oral histories were cleared and handled the same way that other documents were. He hoped that CDC would declassify these interviews and make them available to the public. He added that in some instances the person may want confidentiality preserved for a number of years.

Mr. Kuehl asked Mr. Slany to comment on his optimistic statement in his report about the exchange fellowship program. Mr. Slany said the concept was widely supported in the Department and he hoped soon to be able to bring scholars into the Department soon as well as to expand the program eventually to send them overseas.

Committee's Private Meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 3:45 p.m. The Committee met privately to undertake the preparation of its report.