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MEETING OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
ON HISTORICAL DIPLOMATIC DOCUMENTATION
JUNE 18, 1991

Committee Members

Warren Kimball, Chairman
Betty Glad
Margaret Hermann
Bradford Perkins
Emily Rosenberg
Anne Van Camp

Bureau of Public Affairs

George Kennedy, Deputy Assistant Secretary
Susan Povenmire

William Z. Slany, The Historian
Rita Baker
Paul Claussen
Evans Gerakas
David Herschler
Edward Keefer
Gabrielle Mallon
Elaine McDevitt
James Miller
Nina Noring
Charles Sampson
William Sanford
Harriet Schwar
Sherrill Wells

Department of State, A/GIS/IPS/SRP
Change to _____
Release () Excise () Deny () Declassify
Exemptions b () () E.O. 13526 25x () ()
Declassify after _____
With concurrence of: _____
_____ obtained _____ not obt.
IPS by M. Russell Date 05/29/14

Others

Frank Machak, Director, Office of Freedom of Information,
Privacy, and Classification Review
Richard Morefield, Chief, Historical Documents Review, Office
of Information, Privacy, and Classification Review
Susan Tait, Bureau of Finance and Management Policy

The Advisory Committee on Historical Diplomatic
Documentation met in Room 6800 of the Department of State from
9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Dr. Kimball called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. He
announced that all members of the Committee with the exception
of Ron Spector had received their security clearances.
Margaret Tutwiler and Grace Moe were traveling with the
Secretary in Berlin and were unable to meet with Committee
members. Dr. Kimball had received a letter from Ms. Moe and
said he believed the atmosphere in the Bureau of Public Affairs
was good. He told the Committee that he had been in touch with
the Senate and House staffers about the legislation and had
tried to communicate the Committee's views.

The Committee decided to set aside the agenda and begin
with a discussion of the pending legislation. Dr. Kimball
stated that the House version of the legislation had been

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passed, and it was expected that the Senate would pass its own bill. The two bills will then go to conference sometime after the Fourth of July. There will be legislation; the only question is what the final legislation will be.

There was a discussion of the clause in the Senate bill which provides that the Committee should report to Congress if agencies do not cooperate in the declassification process. Dr. Kimball considered that since the Committee was a Department of State committee, it should address its reports to the Secretary of State. The Committee concluded that it would be preferable if the legislation provided that the report be sent to the Secretary, with copies to Congress, and that it should be sent periodically rather than every time there was a disagreement. Dr. Kimball felt it was important to keep Congress involved from a practical standpoint; without Congressional pressure, things would not have evolved to the present stage. Dr. Rosenberg acknowledged that she would prefer to see an annual report which would serve a variety of purposes; it could be sent to the Secretary of State and to constituent organizations. Dr. Kimball cautioned that the annual report was likely to be classified, and Dr. Perkins suggested that a classified appendix might be attached to the general report. Dr. Kimball proposed to talk with Frank Sieverts to give him a sense of the Committee's understanding of the issues.

Deputy Assistant Secretary Kennedy welcomed the Committee. He stated that the Department wanted to see the Committee continue to function effectively. He believed it was important to reach an accommodation with the Congress and the White House.

Dr. Kimball advised the members that it seemed the appropriate time to engage the constituent organizations in support of the legislation.

Dr. Glad raised the question of the selection of the Advisory Committee members under the new legislation. The House bill provides that the Committee be appointed by the Secretary, with none of the members having to be from the professional societies. The Senate bill, however, would stipulate that members be selected from slates of candidates submitted by the professional associations. Dr. Kimball was of the opinion that the resolution of the reporting requirement issue would also resolve the appointment question. On another matter, Dr. Kimball noted that the operations of the Committee, with respect to declassification questions as well as specifically pertaining to the Foreign Relations series, would depend on the quality of the information provided by the Historian and by the HO staff. Dr. Perkins noted that an earlier version of the Senate bill had restricted the mandate of the Advisory Committee to the Foreign Relations series,

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while the new bill includes oversight of records transferred to the National Archives. Dr. Kimball suggested that the earlier restriction of the Committee's mandate was due in large part to the ignorance of the drafters regarding the total body of information. Dr. Perkins raised the question of CIA documents. Dr. Kimball recalled that CIA documents are protected under the pending legislation, which would not require access, but would establish a mechanism for the Office of the Historian to report a problem to the Secretary of State and to the Congress.

Dr. Hermann asked about systematic declassification. Dr. Kimball noted that the principle of a 30-year line is in both pieces of legislation, though he believed that the Senate version would be of more benefit to the Department. Mr. Machak interjected that the Department did not believe that automatic declassification at 30 years was possible. The Department, he said, favored the House version of the legislation because it would give the Department some flexibility to come up with a plan. The Senate version, it was felt, had a formula application. Mr. Machak went on to emphasize that, in his opinion, this section of the proposed legislation had not received satisfactory attention. The law requires declassification, transfer to NARA, and opening of records to the public within one year. Some categories of materials are excluded under the legislation. There is no way to apply the exclusions without looking at every document. This requirement raises a question of resources.

Dr. Kimball thought that some documents should be declassified in bulk. He believed that the Committee felt strongly that there should be something in the legislation to pressure the government to open up its documents--requiring systematic declassification at a 30-year line. Mr. Machak indicated that the Department was not as concerned about systematic declassification as it was about automatic declassification. He urged the Committee to educate their constituencies about the practical problems of implementing a 30-year line. The perception that legislation would change things overnight was erroneous. Dr. Kimball asked for suggestions from the Committee and from Mr. Machak for wording of this section of the legislation.

Dr. Slany pointed out that the Senate version would assign the Advisory Committee a direct advisory role in systematic declassification, rendering the Committee advisers to the records managers. He questioned whether this might necessitate the Committee's becoming heavily involved with records management issues, perhaps detracting from its role with the Foreign Relations series. Dr. Kimball did not regard this responsibility as a serious problem; the Committee would

concern itself only with procedures. If it became necessary to examine a random sampling of documents, this could be accomplished with the assistance of the Historian.

Ms. Van Camp recalled that at the Committee's last meeting, the Department had been opposed to any legislation. She asked for a statement of the Department's current position. Mr. Kennedy stated that the Department still thought its plan was preferable to legislation but now recognized that legislation was inevitable. Dr. Slany noted that the Administration preferred the language of the House bill to that of the Senate bill but was willing to be flexible depending on the resolution of the reporting issue.

Mr. Machak added that the NSC was concerned with protecting the President's constitutional prerogatives. If the Committee could dictate to the Executive, it was felt it should be appointed by the Executive.

The Committee then recessed for a short break.

10:45 a.m. session

Mr. Richard Morefield, Chief of the Historical Documents Review Division, distributed to each member of the Committee copies of the Department of State guidelines for transfer of official records to the National Archives. He explained that each U.S. Government agency is required to have a records management system and a records disposition schedule. The Department's Records Management Handbook contains a disposition schedule for every permanent file in the Department. Mr. Morefield indicated that the Handbook was divided into three sections, covering files of the Washington D.C. offices, overseas posts, and field offices. He then outlined a series of definitions: permanent and temporary files; central files; chron files; subject files; reference files; working files and personal papers.

Next he elaborated on the requirements for having the declassification guidelines. When the Department of State transfers records to the National Archives, it may first do a systematic review to downgrade or declassify as much material as possible, or it may give guidelines for this review to NARA. The guidelines are used in the preliminary review of files. The purpose of the guidelines is to identify topics which a knowledgeable generalist could declassify on his or her own. The Department pays a portion of the salary of the reviewers at the National Archives charged with screening Department documents for declassification. If problems arise concerning specific documents, we send a Department

declassifier to the Archives to render assistance. The National Archives has no authority to declassify materials until they have been accessioned.

Dr. Kimball then raised the question of classification of information obtained from foreign governments. He was concerned that a conversation between the Secretary of State and the British Foreign Minister would remain classified under this guideline. Mr. Morefield assured Dr. Kimball that this guideline was intended to refer to situations when information from a foreign government was given to the U.S. in confidence, for example, a position paper prepared by the United Kingdom.

The Committee then recessed to study the guidelines in more detail.

Luncheon Session

During the lunch hour, the Advisory Committee discussed the updated Foreign Relations Status and Projections Charts, in addition to a written status report and summary of volumes ahead of and behind schedule. There was a firm consensus that these reports were very useful. In particular, the summary of volumes ahead of schedule and behind schedule made it possible for the Committee to get a quick picture of the status of the series. After a brief discussion it was agreed that copies of all three reports would be updated and provided to the Advisory Committee on a quarterly basis. An appropriate time would be prior to each Advisory Committee meeting (assuming Committee meetings are to be held four times a year in accordance with the pending legislation).

Afternoon Session

Dr. Kimball reconvened the meeting at 1:50 p.m. to discuss briefly the issue raised by a letter from Gary Hess to Secretary Baker regarding closed lot files at the National Archives for the period of World War II.

Mr. Machak said that there had been an ISOO-Archives meeting on this issue on December 3, at which the State Department had not been represented. Although he had not received a copy of the Hess letter, he understood that it claimed that there was no guidance for the National Archives on this issue. Jim Hastings at NARA had told him that NARA did have guidance and had already acted on 700 of the 2600 feet of material involved. Mr. Machak planned to recruit an employee from NARA to work on lot files at the Department so that this problem would not recur. Dr. Kimball asked Dr. Rosenberg to inform Mr. Hess about the outcome.

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The Committee then passed to the next item on the agenda: review of the still- classified manuscript of selected Foreign Relations volumes.

Mr. Morefield informed the Committee that they were seeing manuscript of classified documents denied publication in the volume. The package did not include Presidential documents which the National Security Council refused to release to the Committee or documents on Japan which the Department of State's Japan desk refused to allow the Committee to see.

Dr. Kimball reminded the group that the Secretary of State had authorized the Committee to see denied Department documents. Mr. Morefield said the Secretary's authority was delegated to the Bureau, which had determined that the Committee's "need to know" was insufficient. The Bureau had had 72 hours to act, and there was no time to appeal its decision. Dr. Perkins asked about the NSC deletions--whether they were critical to the compilation. Mr. Morefield said that they included NSC minutes, memcons of the President with foreign government leaders, and national intelligence estimates.

Dr. Kimball said that the Bureau had not followed the ruling of the Secretary of State granting the Committee access to denied Department documents. He suggested sending a letter to the Secretary outlining the problem of the Committee's access. Mr. Morefield thought that the issue for the Bureau was insufficient time and was prepared to reopen the matter with the Bureau if the Committee so wished. Dr. Rosenberg suggested that the Committee postpone sending a letter of protest until its next meeting when there would be no problem of a 72-hour time limit. Ms. Van Camp and Dr. Perkins concurred.

Dr. Rosenberg asked to hear from the compilers about the relative importance of the denied documents. Dr. Slany said that 20 percent of the documents on Italy in the Western Europe volume for 1955-1957 were denied publication. Dr. Miller said that although he was not the compiler of the section of the volume on Italy, he had reviewed the volume, and he believed that the Italy compilation was unsuitable for publication. The information in the denied documents concerning U.S. views on the opening to the Italian left to participate in the government had been published elsewhere. Policy on the opening to the left, on U.S. attitudes toward Italian communism, on the relationship between Ambassador Luce and President Gronchi, as well as other critical matters, had been excised from the text.

Mr. Morefield informed the Committee that any appeal for release of denied documents must be directed to the responsible Bureau. Dr. Miller stated that he had attempted to meet with the Department's declassifier several times to discuss the matter but had been unable to do so.

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Dr. Miller pointed to a denied document before the Committee, a memorandum from Ambassador Luce to Elbridge Durbrow which discussed Roman Catholic Church views on communism. He did not believe that this document was relevant to American foreign policy and he did not understand why it had been denied.

Dr. Slany reminded the group that the purpose of the meeting was to look at what had been eliminated from the volume. The Historical Documents Review Division had not been asked to prepare a case to explain why certain documents had been denied. Ideally, a volume should be looked at in its entirety.

Mr. Morefield explained further that controversial matters were referred to the appropriate Bureau for a decision. The "H01" memo was a preliminary memo sent by HDR to the Office of the Historian.

Dr. Kimball asked if all denied documents were reviewed on a regular basis by the regional Bureau. Mr. Morefield replied that this practice was not followed unless the Office of the Historian appealed a decision of the Historical Documents Review Division.

Dr. Miller referred to denial of a "Dear Foster" letter from Ambassador Luce to Secretary of State Dulles. Mr. Morefield said that it looked like a low-level cut-and-paste job which might be published as an "unedited letter." Dr. Miller said that a historian should make this decision. Dr. Kimball said that the purpose at hand was not to review the volume, but to discuss clearance procedures.

Dr. Herschler drew the Committee's attention to portions of draft prefaces which contained references to deleted material. Mr. Morefield suggested that the proposed language for the preface to the Japan volume would be hard to clear.

Dr. Rosenberg said that when the preface deals with major lines of policy and indicates that a large quantity of relevant information has been denied, publication of the volume should be withheld.

Dr. Kimball suggested that the Committee was dealing with two issues: whether to have prefaces which would elucidate what material was deleted, and how to be certain that declassification decisions are made wisely.

Dr. Rosenberg remarked that in the case of a problem such as the Italian volume, for which the preface would be long, the Committee should go back and request changes in the compilation.

Mr. Morefield reminded the members that they were seeing

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the difficult cases, the volumes where there was something to point out to the reader.

At the request of Dr. Kimball, Dr. Keefer discussed the 1958-1960 Indonesia compilation.

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Also denied were NATO discussions about the sale of arms to Indonesia. Mr. Morefield pointed out that the problem was that these were NATO documents and involved multiple clearances. The Office should try to get alternative documents containing the same information.

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Dr. Glad asked what the law was on covert operations, and Mr. Morefield replied that the CIA claimed that release would endanger things, but asserted that it was their call. Dr. Glad questioned what the impact of the new guidelines on the CIA would be, and Mr. Morefield responded that it was within their competence to turn down our requests. He was asked whether CIA would clear the preface, and he replied that something along this line could be worked out.

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Dr. Hermann remarked that constituents didn't seem to focus on the fact that this was a Department of State publication, and suggested perhaps there could be a stronger statement to that effect in the preface. Dr. Hermann said she had read the newer prefaces, but that this point was still not clear to her. Dr. Keefer agreed with Dr. Hermann's point, that it was important to make clear that Department historians did not have complete access.

In response to a question from Dr. Kimball as to whether he believed that the omissions would damage the volume, Dr. Keefer replied that, although we had evidence that the Eisenhower Administration disliked Sukarno and wanted him out of the way, there was nothing in the compilation on U.S. actions. Dr. Hermann believed that readers would put two and two together. Mr. Morefield then commented that HO had identified 21 passages to be restored which did not discuss [] but that the effort to include these also had failed. Dr. Kimball

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suggested that members needed to come early to look at the volumes, talk with the compiler, and make recommendations. What the Committee needed was a review procedure. Dr. Keefer noted that this would not have to be done with every volume. Dr. Hermann suggested that the Indonesia compilation was similar to the Iran volume, and the Committee must decide whether there was a pattern that required a special preface.

Ms. Van Camp noted that we were reaching a point where the Committee could play a useful role, but also risked coming up against a problem if it decided a volume should not be published. Dr. Kimball suggested the preface might state that the Committee advised against publication because of extensive deletions. Dr. Glad said the Committee needed to look at what had been included in the Indonesia compilation to judge its value. Dr. Kimball then proposed that the Committee recommend that the compilation on Italy not be published until after members had had time to review it. In the future, the Committee would ask the Historian's Office to identify, for instance, six volumes that were troublesome; the Committee would review these volumes. While the Committee did not want to appear obstructive, its recommendation was that these compilations not be published as they were, but only after they had been reviewed by Committee members. Several members indicated a willingness to come to the Department as needed to help with this task.

Dr. Glad urged that the historians continue to try to negotiate to resolve the differences with the declassifiers.

Dr. Rosenberg wondered whether since the volume on Western Europe was already in the page proofs, it was still possible to delay publication. Dr. Slany replied that this was possible. Dr. Kimball suggested that the Committee not recommend against publication but advise declassifiers that the Committee was not satisfied.

Dr. Kimball voiced concern about the omission of any reference to an "opening to the left" in the volume on Western Europe which included a section on Italy and what he termed a "gross distortion of foreign policy." He asked Dr. Slany whether he wanted a formal document stating that the volume is unacceptable. Dr. Rosenberg expressed her concern that this approach to the volume could leave an impression that the Advisory Committee would be withholding every volume. Perhaps the Committee could link this protest of the Western Europe volume to a more general statement regarding the success of other volumes, so as not to be confrontational.

While Dr. Kimball admitted this could be a problem, he strongly believed that for the present, publication would be unwise. Dr. Perkins asked how this could hurt foreign policy.

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Mr. Morefield replied that there would be a problem of physical security for U.S. companies in Italy if their actions became known. Dr. Rosenberg suggested omitting the names of the companies, and asked about the status of the volume on Indonesia. Mr. Morefield replied that it was still being reviewed at the other agencies. Dr. Glad then proposed having a Committee member come in early to look at the Indonesia volume.

Dr. Perkins asked what would be done about the Japan 1958-1960 volume. Could it ever be published? Mr. Morefield indicated that the Japan desk was concerned about mentioning the topics of nuclear weapons and status of forces. Dr. Perkins replied that this type of information had been legitimately withheld and would never be released. Dr. Slany said it was a balancing test, the right of the people to know versus security concerns. The criteria for withholding documents from the Japan volume was that they could damage current relations. Periodically, there would be documents of importance that could legitimately be withheld, but the omission of these would alter the record. Mr. Morefield stated that the Department would not be able to print this volume for the foreseeable future. Dr. Glad declared that the Committee did want to see the denied materials next time.

Dr. Slany stated that he hoped the Advisory Committee would not put itself in the position of vetoing a volume every time a staff member complained. Dr. Glad replied that she didn't think it would come to that, but emphasized that she was concerned about the national security standards. Dr. Slany then stated that the issue was history versus secrecy. Would the withholding of information lead to a faulty volume? Mr. Morefield emphasized that declassification standards should remain constant over time. The same justification should be given today as was given 20 years ago. Dr. Perkins then questioned the omission of the information on U.S.-Italian relations, and Mr. Morefield's reply was that, although we intervened in the internal politics there, this was not something we should comment on, even though it was in Clare Boothe Luce's memoir.

Dr. Sampson pointed out that with regard to the compilation on France 1955-1957, he believed that the documents which were omitted from the volume did not affect the overall presentation of the policy to the degree that the volume should be withheld. How far one went back to show the roots of something that later turned out to be important became a tactical maneuver. Dr. Glad stated that on the basis of the preliminary data, she believed the European volume should be withheld.

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Dr. Sampson indicated that certain European discussions of nuclear questions had been denied to us since 1951. The Canada problem was similar to Japan but was not as serious, and there was a disclaimer in the volume. Dr. Kimball felt that it was not a distortion of the record to withhold details of where weapons were stored. He asked whether Foreign Relations volumes currently contained surveys of memoir literature as had been done for the World War II conferences in World War II volumes. Dr. Slany indicated that this was not being done now. Dr. Sampson pointed out that it was difficult to get an understanding of the nuclear question from Macmillan's memoirs. Dr. Rosenberg then asked about British financial problems, which the draft preface identified as an area for deletions.

Finally, Dr. Kimball raised the issue of procedures the Committee should follow with regard to certain issues, such as whether HO should make an effort to publish a supplement to the Iran volume. He mentioned that Dr. Slany had said that there were signs that the CIA might be willing to release certain documents which previously had been denied. The Committee agreed that it should include in its report to the Department a recommendation to pursue with the other agencies concerned the documents that were omitted from the Iran volume with a view to publishing them.

The Committee adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

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Drafted: PA/HO-EMMcDevitt 7/1/91
PC Doc. MINUTES, ACMI, ADVCOMTE

Clearances: PA/HO-WZSlany *ds*
 - RMBaker *WZ*
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