

THE SAN FRANCISCO UNCIO DOCUMENTS

AN ENTIRE forty-two foot standard box car was required to transport the 3,500 cubic feet of official archives of the United Nations Conference on International Organization from San Francisco to the deck side at New York where space in the specie room of the *Queen Elizabeth* was made available to take the records to London there to be used by the Preparatory Commission. The archives consisted of all official conference documents boxed in quantities of two hundred copies of each document in English, one hundred copies in French, and fifty copies of the documents in the other languages, Spanish, Russian, and Chinese. The notes, papers, and records from the files of the executive officers and secretaries of the conference commissions and committees along with those of the secretary general, administrative secretary, executive secretary, documents officer, and their respective staffs, each file labeled to indicate its contents along with an extensive photographic record, both prints and negatives, and the complete stencil and photolith plate files, completed the seventy-ton package that will ultimately become the archives of the United Nations organization. The story of the eleven weeks of the conference at San Francisco can be found in this mass of documents. The following account gives a summary picture of the documentation with some comments on the process of its production.

The United Nations Conference on International Organization which met at San Francisco, April 25 to June 26, 1945, was called to perfect a plan of international organization developed by the four nations participating in the Dumbarton Oaks conversations in 1944. The UNCIO, in plenary session April 29, adopted the proposal of its committee of delegation chairmen and formally organized and staffed its activities around four commissions and twelve technical committees to consider the principal items of the Dumbarton Oaks proposals. In addition, general committees essential to the basic organization and procedure of the conference were set up as follows: Steering Committee, Executive Committee, Co-ordination Committee, and Credentials Committee. The initial plans to make the small (fourteen-member) Executive Committee the principal organ of the conference ran afoul of the demands of the smaller nations to participate in all matters and as a result the Steering Committee (chairmen of all par-

ticipating delegations) became the critical center of activity. [See UNCIO Doc. 67 (English) G/20, May 5, 1945, for a chart of the organization, functions, and officerships of the conference.]

During the time occupied by the first eight plenary sessions, which allowed the delegations to put their views on the Dumbarton Oaks proposals in the record, the committee and commission organization was being perfected, chairmen and rapporteurs selected from the delegation members, secretariat officers and secretaries assigned from the International Secretariat, and the general procedures agreed upon so that the spade work of the conference could be carried on by the technical committees. Each technical committee and commission had, in addition to the chairman and rapporteur, a secretary and several assistant secretaries from the International Secretariat. The four commissions each had an executive officer and small staff to coordinate the work of the various committees and subcommittees reporting to it. All commissions and committees were serviced by the International Secretariat through the staff of the executive secretary. [UNCIO Documents No. 68 (English) G/21, May 5, 1945, and No. 578 (English) G/68, May 26, 1945, are charts of the *Organization, Functions, and Personnel of the Secretariat*, reflecting the initial and final organization of the secretariat.]

As host, the United States provided the major portion of the staff of the International Secretariat. The secretariat was under the supervision of a secretary general assisted by two principal officers, an administrative secretary and an executive secretary. Outside of the housekeeping functions of supply, space, transportation, and finance provided by the administrative secretary, the principal job of the secretariat was that of planning the work of the committees, preparing minutes and documents, providing translation and interpreters, and other technical advice necessary to the conference activities. These latter functions were performed by the staff of the executive secretary. The documentation, from debate to archives, was organized under a small supervisory staff headed by a documents officer. The subject matter of this paper concerns the functions of the documents officer whose activities the author was able to view at first hand in the capacity of deputy.

General Pattern of Conference Documents

The general plan for the documentation of the conference was simply that a separate minute or report was to be prepared for each

meeting of the committee or commission on its own distinguishing masthead paper, identified by document number and appropriate symbol. Complications arose out of the need for translations into the two working languages (English and French) or the five official languages (Chinese, Russian, and Spanish, in addition) and the fact that parts of the subject matter of the four commissions and their twelve committees overlapped and were interdependent, requiring reconsideration of various phases of the subject whenever significant changes were made. An illustration is found in the ramifications of the problem of the vote in the Security Council. The scope of the "veto" of a large power affected decisions in Committees 1, 2, and 3 of Commission II dealing with the General Assembly as well as the committees of Commission III, concerned with the Security Council, and of Committee 2 of Commission I when it considered the amending process. To get the exact nuances of meaning into each of the language versions of the documents required all the skill and patience of the translating staff—especially when one recalls the pressures of time imposed by the deadlines set by ten or twelve committees meeting daily—and the demand made by each succeeding meeting that the documents of the previous meeting be ready for reconsideration as part of its next agenda.

In order to handle the volume of work that it was seen would be required, an assembly-line procedure was set up under the direction of the documents officer for the preparation, processing, reproduction, and distribution of conference documents. Two or more secretaries and assistant secretaries, assisted by verbatim reporters and typists, were assigned the responsibility for the preparation of the minute or summary report of each meeting. This manuscript, properly checked and approved by the chairman of the committee was submitted to the documents officer for processing. It was decided in the pre-conference planning in Washington to routinize and control this process by adapting the standard printer's job jacket technique to the operations to be performed. Accordingly an envelope, or job jacket, was designed which showed each of the possible steps through which the manuscript might flow before it emerged as a final document. Sufficient copies of the manuscript were requested (though most often not obtained) to allow simultaneous treatment in the various languages required. The job jacket and its contents passed from the documents officer, to the editors, translators, typing pool

(where stencils were cut or photo copy prepared), then to the duplicating staff (or print shop), each recording on the job jacket his receipt and completion of his part of the job. The original manuscript (for the archives) along with the required number of duplicated copies was sent to the distribution office where the delegations, secretariat, archives, and files received their copies. All these sections of the document officer's staff were operated on a three shift, twenty-four hour basis, seven days a week during their twelve weeks of operation. This use of the job jacket proved to be a farsighted decision as 5,550 jobs were processed in preparing the 1,550 conference documents in each of the five languages requested. This figure includes some three hundred papers of the working documents series, a large portion of which did not emerge as official conference documents for general distribution.

The General, Journal, Plenary, and Précis Series

The papers of general interest to all conference personnel were divided among these four series: *General* (with symbol G), *Journal* (a four to eight-page document printed daily), *Plenary* (with symbol P), and *Précis* (a summary digest of committee and commission activities issued for general distribution). In the *General* series are found such basic documents as the Dumbarton Oaks proposal (Doc. 1. G/1); the amendments proposed by the participating nations (Doc. 2. G/7 [a through w]; G/25, G/26 [a through f]; G/28; G/29); the organization plans of the conference (Doc. 68. G/21); the Order of the Day, a listing of meeting time and place for all official sessions; the list of documents issued, showing title, document number, symbol, and date; and the final draft of the charter submitted to the conference in plenary session, January 26, 1945 (Doc. 1191, G/128). The *Journal* issued each morning contained all special conference announcements by the president or secretary general, a listing of the scheduled meetings, the documents issued the previous day, and other information on activities of interest to all delegations and the secretariat. Each issue of the printed *Journal* was identified by a consecutive volume number.

The *Plenary* series contained all documents pertaining to the plenary sessions, *i.e.*, agenda, verbatim minutes, corrigenda and addenda to the minutes. In preparing these documents the verbatim reporter's transcript was checked against a sound recording of the

proceedings. The corrections often reflected an after-thought of the delegation upon seeing the delegate's speech in print.

Pre-conference plans provided for a "record" to be published each day containing summaries of the proceedings of the committees during the previous day. This was to be a full official summary of each meeting prefaced by a very brief "contents-précis." By the time the technical committees were ready to meet, the document load in the two to five languages demanded was found to be so heavy that facilities were not available to print the "record." Moreover, the committees demanded their documents several hours in advance of each daily meeting and it was possible to meet this demand on time only by using the mimeograph process. Thus the "record" would have been a printed duplication of the mimeographed or multilithed documents distributed to the conference membership in as much as the documents reporting committee meetings were summaries rather than verbatim reports. As a result a series carrying the masthead, *Précis*, was issued containing a very brief (usually a single paragraph) summary of each meeting beginning with *Précis* No. 1, May 5, 1945, Document No. 89.

Document and Symbol Numbers

At this point, before continuing with a description of the committee and commission documents, it might be well to explain the numbering system and its use for control of the documents issued.

The numbering system was devised prior to the conference, although relatively little study was made either of the needs for documentation control or of alternative numbering systems. So little definitive knowledge about the documents the conference would produce was available prior to its actual operations that it was deemed advisable to spend planning time on other subjects. The system adopted and used throughout the conference with relatively minor modifications involved:

(1) A document number for each separate document issued. Documents were numbered consecutively as they were received and registered by the documents officer.

(2) A symbol classification and paper number indicating the organ of the conference from which the document originated and that particular paper's relation to previous documents issued by that organ.

All official papers of the conference carried document numbers.

The working draft series should be considered an exception to this rule. These were considered as draft papers, some of which later became conference documents, others, like those of the Co-ordination Committee charter drafts were officially designated as restricted and unavailable for public release.

At San Francisco, 1,216 conference documents were issued. This does not comprise the whole of the documentation as several of the minutes of the concluding meetings of the Co-ordination Committee were not written up before the secretariat staff was disbanded. These documents were later prepared and issued by the U. S. Department of State in Washington. In addition what has been called Document 2, *Comments and Amendments to the Dumbarton Oaks Proposals* is in reality seventy-two separate documents. Their separate identity is maintained through the use of the symbol classification.

Neither the document number nor the date it was issued bears any necessary strict relationship to its chronological place in the conference documentation. Document numbers were assigned as the manuscripts were presented to the documents officer's staff for registry. All language versions of that document received the same document number and symbol. The date of the document was the documents officer's best estimate of when that document would actually appear in finished form ready for distribution. Usually the stenographic pool and mimeograph services had at least a twenty-four to thirty-six hour capacity load in prospect, the printers could seldom be given less than a twenty-four hour deadline, consequently many documents emerged two and at times three or four days after the secretary had finished the manuscript. Moreover, as the work load of the conference piled up few secretaries lived up to the requirement that manuscripts be ready prior to 11:00 P.M. of the day the meeting took place. All too often manuscripts received at 2 or 3 A.M. were processed for 8:30 A.M. meetings. Some types of papers had to be given absolute priority through the shop, *i.e.*, agenda, summary reports, and subcommittee reports. These, with their required French, and usually Russian, translations might take all the normal capacity of the document officer's staffs if ten or twelve committees were meeting daily. Accordingly, some documents registered early had to be shunted aside until staff time was available to complete them. This was very likely to be the case if the document was a long report.

It is by means of the symbol numbers that documents can be put together in their proper subject matter classifications. Just as

Doc. 10 (English)

P/1

April 26, 1945

was the first paper issued in English pertaining to the plenary sessions (in this case, its agenda) so also was

Doc. 70 (French)

I/1/1

May 4, 1945

the French text of the "Agenda for the First Meeting of Committee I/1." The part of the symbol I/1 indicates that the first committee of Commission I issued the report. The entire symbol indicates it was the first paper of the first committee of Commission I. Correspondingly the symbol I/2/9 indicates the ninth paper of Committee 2 of Commission I. Corregenda to reports or minutes were issued using the document number and symbol of the original report and adding a "(1)." If the document was reissued with material added to the original this fact was noted by adding to the symbol thus: (a).

The *Journal* provided a daily listing of documents distributed the previous day showing the symbol and the language or languages in which they were prepared. A "Cumulative List of Documents Issued" was prepared approximately every other week in order that delegates and others might keep abreast of what proved to be an overwhelming stream of paper.

Commission and Committee Reports

The documentation of the commissions and technical committees was broken down into sixteen series in accordance with the following list of commission and committee titles showing their corresponding symbols. These separate series can be readily assembled into four volumes of commission reports which represent the major aspects of the international organization created in the charter.

	<i>Symbol</i>	<i>Title</i>
<i>Commission I</i>	I	<i>General Provisions</i>
Committee 1	I/1	Preamble Purposes and Principles
Committee 2	I/2	Membership, Amendment and Secretariat

<i>Commission II</i>	II	<i>General Assembly</i>
Committee 1	II/1	Structure and Procedures
Committee 2	II/2	Political and Security Functions
Committee 3	II/3	Economic and Social Co-operation
Committee 4	II/4	Trusteeship System
<i>Commission III</i>	III	<i>Security Council</i>
Committee 1	III/1	Structure and Procedures
Committee 2	III/2	Peaceful Settlement
Committee 3	III/3	Enforcement Arrangements
Committee 4	III/4	Regional Arrangements
<i>Commission IV</i>	IV	<i>Judicial Organization</i>
Committee 1	IV/1	International Court of Justice
Committee 2	IV/2	Legal Problems

Executive, Steering, and Co-ordination Committee Papers

The other committees of the conference each issued short series of reports. The papers of the Executive Committee (symbol EX) and the Steering Committee (symbol ST) contain some of the flavor of the political maneuvering that took place outside of the more formal proceedings of the technical committees.

The few reports of the Credentials Committee were merged with those of the Steering Committee and are distinguished by the symbol "ST/C."

One of the interesting anomalies in the documentation developed around the first meetings of secretaries general of all delegations. The organization plans for the conference provided for a Steering Committee composed of the chairmen of all delegations. The executive officer of this committee insisted, over the objections of the documents officer, that the papers and minutes of these early pre-organization meetings could not be run under the Steering Committee masthead but should be separate, restricted, and unofficial documents apart from the Steering Committee series. His thesis was based on the strict legal viewpoint that a Steering Committee could not exist until the conference had formally organized and designated such a

committee. The compromise finally reached involved the creation of a separate series of reports of the "Meetings of Chairmen of Delegations" carrying document numbers and identified by the symbol "DC." Because the compromise decision was reached several weeks after the meetings had taken place the stencils were carefully rearranged, the reports properly numbered, and the series reissued to become part of the official documents. One of the sidelights of the problem was the fact that the U. S. delegation, as host, had assumed that established procedure in international conferences would be followed and had laid plans accordingly for the organization of the conference. This assumption would have made the chairman of the U. S. delegation chairman of the conference and also would have approved all the other provisional officers provided by the host nation. Banking on this assumption, the executive officer of the committee had prepared and issued a complete set of detailed recommendations for the committee's approval, hoping thus to expedite its operations. When the Russian delegation upset the apple-cart by proposing four co-equal chairmen all the nicely prepared plans had to be abandoned. The documents officer was able to keep most of these documents as part of the conference record by establishing this separate "DC" series.

The Co-ordination Committee reports (symbol CO) enjoy the dubious distinction of being the only group of documents that were not released to the public when the matter was voted upon by the conference. The various explanations advanced for maintaining these documents in the restricted classification usually hinge around the belief that the deliberations of the Co-ordination Committee will reflect the differences of viewpoint among the "Big Five" as well as the differences between the "Big Five" and the "Little Forty-five." Much of the validity of this argument is lost, however, because a careful perusal of several of the technical committee series will reveal the various delegation viewpoints.

Executive Secretary and Secretariat Papers

Two sets of papers comprise the record of the housekeeping procedures of the conference. One is part of the official documentation, the executive secretary series (symbol EX-SEC), the other did not carry document numbers but is a series restricted to the International Secretariat, the secretariat papers (symbol SEC). The executive sec-

retary papers carried official announcements for the conference, organization plans, proposed procedures or procedures determined by the Executive or Steering Committees. The secretariat papers carried announcements pertinent to the staffs of the administrative secretary or the executive secretary, instructions regarding the preparation and processing of documents, entertainment and recreational programs available to the secretariat in San Francisco.

Although no index has yet been published an exhaustively complete one was maintained by the index officer at San Francisco for use by the delegations and the secretariat. This unpublished index is now on three-by-five cards in the files of the U. S. State Department. It will be a real aid to those who plan research in this field. Present plans call for the completion of the index as soon as the remaining Co-ordination Committee documents are finished and for the publication of the entire index.

Document Distribution and the Permanent File

The process of distributing this constant stream of documents to the fifty delegations, and the approximately sixty separate officers or offices of the secretariat, press, official observers, and libraries offered almost as many problems as did the preparation of the documents. In order to fulfill the usual pattern of requests for a document, 5,000 copies in English were provided (1,500 in French, 500 each in Chinese, Spanish, or Russian) if the report was to receive unrestricted distribution. Such distribution was always given to the *Journal*, and *Plenary* series. Certain other reports, particularly those final rapporteur's reports to the commissions were given similar distribution. Documents that had a restricted distribution were prepared in quantities of approximately 3,000 copies (English), 750 (French), and 200-300 in the other languages. Such "restricted" distribution meant only that official delegation members and the members of the secretary general and executive secretary's staffs dealing with commission and committee work received copies. The press and non-official observers were denied.

In every case it was the responsibility of the distribution officer to (1) transmit the original manuscript and four copies of the document to the archivist, (2) maintain two hundred copies at all times as permanent file copies for the UNO file, (3) distribute the requested number of copies to the delegation and secretariat messengers

when they identified themselves and asked for their documents. This latter task meant a tremendous clerical job as each official requested a different number of copies in the various languages. The delegations' requests varied from a maximum of three hundred copies (U. S. and Chinese) to two or five copies. Each delegation requested a different number depending upon the language in which the document was written. From seventy-five to one hundred separate sorting operations had to be made for each document issued and for each of the languages in which it was prepared.

The permanent file copies were packed in specially prepared paper board document boxes measuring 9 by 11 inches and 36 inches long. As a standard 8 by 10½ paper was used each box would hold about 3,500 sheets. The documents were stacked in the boxes and separated by a divider sheet on which was indicated the document number, symbol, language, and number of copies of each document. The purpose of this arrangement was to permit the use of these document boxes as temporary stacks while the documents are in Church House, Deans Yard, London, being used by the Preparatory Commission of the United Nations prior to their being sent to archives at the permanent seat of the United Nations Organization.

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U. S. Bureau of the Budget (on detail to the State
Department for the San Francisco Conference)