

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE RECORDS OF CONGRESS
MEETING #30
NOVEMBER 30, 2005
ARCHIVIST'S BOARD ROOM, NATIONAL ARCHIVES BUILDING

MINUTES

Members of the committee in attendance: Karen Haas, Chair (Clerk, U.S. House of Representatives); Emily J. Reynolds (Secretary, U.S. Senate); Allen Weinstein (Archivist of the U.S.); Richard A. Baker (Historian, U.S. Senate); Joseph Cooper (Department of Political Science, Johns Hopkins University); Paul Gherman (University Librarian, Vanderbilt University); Timothy Johnson (Curator of Special Collections, Wilson Library, University of Minnesota); Alan C. Lowe (Executive Director, Howard H. Baker Jr. Center for Public Policy, University of Tennessee); Susan Palmer (Professor of History, Department of History, Aurora University); Guy L. Rocha (Nevada State Archivist, Nevada State Library and Archives)

The meeting opened at 10:04 a.m.

I. Chair's Opening Remarks – Karen Haas, Clerk of the House

Karen Haas opened the meeting by greeting all the members for the first time. It was her second week as Clerk of the House. She was pleased to serve on the Advisory Committee and looked forward to speaking with everyone individually. She thanked everyone for their service and continuing contributions to the committee. Haas gave a special thanks to the National Archives and in particular, to Richard Hunt and the Center for Legislative Archives for their assistance and for hosting the meeting.

Haas then turned her remarks to some recent developments in the Office of the Clerk.

The Biographical Directory of the United States Congress is currently being printed and will be available shortly. The Office is also working on the layout phase of an updated

publication, *Women in Congress*, which will be sent to the Government Printing Office in 2006. Later in the meeting, the Fourth Report of the Advisory Committee will be discussed. Members have received drafts of the report and the executive summary via email. Haas looks forward to the comments and hopes that changes are sent to the House Archivist, Robin Reeder, before the next Advisory Committee meeting in June.

II. Recognition of Co-Chair – Emily Reynolds, Secretary of the Senate

Haas recognized the Secretary of the Senate and Co-Chair of the Advisory Committee, Emily Reynolds.

Reynolds welcomed Haas aboard. When Reynolds first came to the job, she had 5-6 months before her first meeting of the committee, as opposed to two weeks, but nevertheless she was nervous. The Advisory Committee is a tremendous group. It's a group that enjoys working together and, thanks to the leadership at the National Archives, it's a committee whose work is substantive and policy-oriented. She is proud of the contributions each member makes. She seconded Haas' expression of thanks to Allen Weinstein and Richard Hunt for hosting the meeting.

Reynolds then updated the committee on the progress being made in constructing the Capitol Visitor Center (CVC). Since the group met last and had an interesting dialog on some of the exhibitry, approval was received from the Capitol Preservation Commission to proceed with the fabrication of the exhibit. The film producer, Donna Lawrence from Louisville, Kentucky, has spent the better part of a week filming in the Capitol. She obtained permission from both the Senate and the House to film in both chambers, which

will make a dramatic difference in the film. No one has yet seen the rushes from the filming, but Reynolds has been told it holds some tremendous footage. The distilling of 1,000 minutes of raw film into a 12-minute inspirational piece will be an exciting and challenging process for Lawrence.

Cortina Productions, in the Washington area, is working on the interactive piece of the exhibit. Reynolds also mentioned the Architect of the Capitol is conducting a search for an executive director for the CVC. Hopefully, that hire will be made sometime after the first of the year. In conclusion, there is real progress on the operational front with the CVC. Perhaps next year, if the meeting is moved back to the Capitol, the members could take another tour of the CVC to see the extraordinary progress in its construction.

Reynolds remarked on the recent project of the Office of the Secretary of the Senate, with assistance from the Library of Congress, which held a first-time-ever reunion of all living, former Members and their spouses as well as the spouses of deceased Members. Over a third of the living former Members of the Senate and their families attended the dinner along with half of the current Members. This exciting and enjoyable event took place at the Library of Congress. While it probably will not become an annual tradition, a reunion every 2-5 years would be worthwhile.

The Historical Office gave every Member a new publication, titled *Faces of the Senate*, which is a pictorial directory of nearly every Member who has served in the United States Senate from 1789 to 2005. It is an example of the best of archiving practices. It was a

labor of love for Heather Moore, the photo historian of the Senate, and all the staff of the Historical Office. The publication has photographs of each Member by state. Heather used photographs in the Senate collection as well as a photo album that was given to the Senate by a longtime Washingtonian who had picked it up at an auction years ago. Mr. John T. Pappas, who gave the gift, grew up on Capitol Hill and walked to school beside Chief Justice Taft who was on his way to court. Thanks to his gift, and to Heather's efforts, and ongoing work with historical societies around the country and university collections, the Senate has managed to acquire images of all Members save 46. The last few photos that came in were given by a member of the Vermont National Guard serving in Iraq, who is something of an amateur archivist. He saw the plea over the Internet for photos of former Members, and he volunteered to help the Senate locate images. Reynolds then presented Weinstein with a copy of the book, saying that it needed to have a home at the National Archives.

Weinstein thanked Reynolds and thanked everyone who worked on the book.

Reynolds concluded by welcoming Haas again and thanking Jeff Trandahl for the treasure he has been to all of them in his service as Clerk.

III. Recognition of the Archivist of the United States – Allen Weinstein

Haas recognized Allen Weinstein as Archivist of the United States and said she looked forward to working with him on the committee. Weinstein wished Trandahl farewell and thanked Reynolds for her leadership. He told Haas she is joining an amazing team.

Weinstein began his remarks with a story about the legendary six phases of a project. First phase is enthusiasm; second phase, disillusionment; third phase, panic; fourth phase, search for the guilty; fifth phase, punishment of the innocent; and the final phase, praise and honor for the non-participants.

Weinstein said he was glad Alan Lowe was there, having entertained the nation several days ago at the ground breaking of the Howard Baker Center. Weinstein recently keynoted John Brademas' conference in New York on Members' papers, and noted that the focus on serious research on Congressional lives and careers is growing around the country. Such research is now poised to move forward in an impressive way, and the Archives wants to help through the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) and other means. NARA wants to be considered an integral part of the process.

The National Archives has found itself with various tasks this year beyond the normal ones of preservation, access, and outreach. One of these tasks was the pursuit of the records on the two recent nominees to the Supreme Court. Weinstein is very proud that his colleagues, in the space of 3-4 weeks at the Reagan Library, the Bush Library, and here in Washington, turned over 79,000 pages of material on Judge Roberts. This was to the satisfaction of both Democrats and Republicans on the Judiciary Committee and to the White House. Normally the process would have taken 4-6 months. Staff worked 24

hours a day, 7 days a week, and will continue to do so in the future with similar requests for records, including the records relating to Judge Alito.

Weinstein spoke about Hurricane Katrina and its effect on the archival community. NARA was caught by surprise as was the rest of the country initially. A number of groups from the National Archives and the state archival associations met to work together. Weinstein is encouraging every state archivist to develop a disaster plan. He suggested such plans should be collected together and submitted to the Congress and to the Administration so that a disaster does not have to occur before we know the telephone numbers and email addresses of people to contact. The irony is that neither records management, nor archives, nor any other cultural institutions are on the FEMA list, with the exception of historic houses. This has to be changed.

Weinstein concluded with a discussion of the new Advisory Committee on the Electronic Records Archive (ERA). The scientific and technological geniuses of the country are having their first meeting concurrent with this one. The ERA project is moving along, but NARA wants every bit of outside criticism and commentary it can possibly receive.

Weinstein thanked the members of the Committee and invited them to be NARA's guests on a tour of the Public Vaults exhibit and the Rotunda at the close of today's meeting.

IV. Approval of the Minutes of the Last Meeting

Haas moved to approve the minutes from the last meeting. They were approved.

V. Advisory Committee on the Records of Congress Fourth Report – Robin Reeder

Haas turned the Committee's attention to the Fourth Report of the Advisory Committee on the Records of Congress. A draft report, and executive summary, were emailed to members recently. Haas hopes to have the final report approved at the meeting in June. She then recognized Robin Reeder, the House Archivist.

Reeder reported that the Fourth Report chronicles the activities of the committee for the past 6 years. The report covers records management guidance to support the preservation of official records and personal papers; advances in electronic record-keeping and archiving; establishment of the Association of Centers for the Study of Congress to promote research use of Congressional records and advance public understanding of Congress; and the 21st-century transformation of the Capitol through the construction of the Capitol Visitor Center. Reeder requested that changes to the draft report be sent to her office by May 1 in order that the final report will be ready for approval at the June meeting. The final report will be printed at the end of the 109th Congress in December 2006.

The Advisory Committee changed its cycle for reporting from a 5-year cycle to a 6-year cycle in 1995. The six-year cycle now coincides with the end of a Congress, and the responsibility to compile and publish the report will alternate between the Senate and House. In 2012, the Fifth Advisory Report will be compiled and published by the Senate. Reeder thanked Karen Paul, Marty Sewall from the CVC, and Richard Hunt and the staff

at the Center for Legislative Archives for all their assistance and contributions. She also thanked the acting chief of the Office of History and Preservation, Farar Elliott, for all her support, and Matt Wasniewski for his help proof-reading and editing the report.

Haas then opened the discussion for comments on the draft report. She asked for comments on the executive summary and recommendations first.

Guy Rocha brought up the third bullet on the third page which deals with the change in the gift tax law. After the last Advisory Committee meeting, he returned to Nevada and called the Congressional delegation to see who had made provisions for their records. Senator Reid, who appointed Rocha, has done that. The other four have not made provisions yet. Rocha approached one Member of the House and asked him what his plans were for his papers. He replied that he was going to burn them. He was serious. He felt that with the gift tax law there was some kind of liability attached to donating them to an institution. Rocha contacted Senator Richard Bryan who had spoken with this Member. The Senator had negotiated a transfer of his papers to the University of Nevada-Reno Special Collections. Rocha then turned to Karen Paul to ask why the House Member was concerned.

Paul said it was a complicated issue to explain and understand. It may be advantageous for attorneys and staff on the Joint Tax Committee to explain it to the Advisory Committee. Essentially, when Member's collections are donated, they are usually donated with restrictions on access for a period of time. They are not immediately open

to research. The IRS views this as a string attached to the gift. Therefore, personal papers with restrictions are not viewed like other charitable donations and, if the collection has a value over \$10,000, the donor is liable to pay a gift tax on the amount over \$10,000 of valuation. An independent appraiser does the valuation.

Jeff Trandahl provided some background information. Every Senator and Member owns their papers from their office. The papers are their private, personal property. Until recently, it was left to the individual to determine disposition, which is still intact, but also to have their papers appraised. Those appraisals were normally done by an outside individual and that value was then used for tax purposes as a charitable gift and claimed as a financial benefit. Some collections have items of real market value, mostly signatures and presidential papers. Subsequently, there were changes in the gift tax law which require clear documentation relative to the value of these collections.

Complicating the issue are the financial implications of stipulations or restrictions on the transfer.

Most Members and most Senators are not concerned with this issue. Trandahl surmised that the Member Rocha had spoken to was more concerned with the confidentiality aspect. Trandahl mentioned that Paul, Reeder, and National Archives staff have identified a very grey area that we need to invest some resources in so that we can give good guidance and clarity to Members as they make these agreements with universities.

Weinstein wondered if it would be helpful if NARA hosted a workshop, inviting appropriate people from around this table, and the lawyers who should be involved.

Trandahl advised that having input from tax attorneys would be helpful.

Paul believes there needs to be a good fact sheet that could be distributed to Members so they are aware of the implications of the new law.

Rocha asked when they would have the guidance ready so that he can be sure the Member does not destroy his papers. Paul stated that the Advisory Committee needs to first decide to prepare such guidance and then needs to identify those people with expertise in the matter.

Joseph Cooper said another option was to donate collections in part. Have the collection evaluated and give it in \$9,000 increments.

Alan Lowe inquired that if the donor is not trying to claim a tax benefit, is there any requirement for the donor to have an appraisal done under this law? A committee member replied that this was true.

Paul stated that since this 1996 decision, there have been problems. The Senate legal counsel regularly advises departing Members on the issue.

Cooper said it is well worth resolving the problem so that there is an incentive for Members to give their papers. Paul said that right now Members are being forced to put on deposit anything that cannot be opened immediately. Many institutions do not like this arrangement.

Haas asked Rocha if he would like to make a motion to make this item a priority item for the next meeting. Rocha agreed and asked that the issue be made a priority consideration and requested a study and report from the appropriate Congressional office on current gift tax law and its effect on the donation of Members' papers. The motion was approved.

Cooper expressed his interest in parts of the report that regard dissemination of records and information, not just to Congressional scholars but more generally to high school students and teachers and others. This is described on page 37 of the summary. Cooper asked Hunt to go over these bullets.

Hunt said that dissemination is discussed under the Access and Reference section that reports on the progress of some goals and objectives that have been laid down since the beginning of the Advisory Committee in 1990. The first goal was to create a dedicated space in the National Archives building where researchers would have access to the official records of Congress, and also to gain a sense of what were in Members' papers repositories around the country, and what online resources were available. A number of years ago the Center was awarded a room in a prominent place at the front of the building. All of the resources are available in this Congressional Research Room. One

of the foremost congressional scholars, Charles Stewart from MIT, says that it is his favorite place to work in Washington, DC. The Center is looking for ways to generate more customers to use the room. The Center has access to online and internet resources in staff offices and there are public terminals in the library. The next step is to acquire public access terminals in the Congressional Research Room.

Cooper stated he was particularly interested in whatever can be put on the web, not just for Congressional scholars who come to the Archives but for the general public. Hunt said the other major endeavor in that area is going to be coordinated with the Association of Centers for the Study of Congress. Where the Center has been serving as a centralized point of contact, it can now form an online association with the ACSC to put our resources together on the web so we will break through those geographical barriers separating official records and Members' papers and show how they can be used together by researchers. It is these kind of developments, as noted by Lowe in his remarks, that is beginning to drive the momentum in Congressional research.

Weinstein said that some support could come from the NHPRC to move the effort along at a more expeditious pace. Cooper said that would be helpful. We have come a long way in the past 10 years and the promise is still substantial. Hunt also mentioned that there are some exciting projects at the National Archives generally with regards to digitizing documents, and the Center will be a part of those projects as well.

Richard Baker thanked Reeder and her team for putting together the report. The only part that he thought needed more information is found in the Status of Recommendations section. Some of the recommendations make the reader want to know a little more. As an example, page 35, item 12, regards interviews with former Members of Congress at the Library of Congress. Baker said he would like to know more detail about this.

Hunt noted that Fred Beuttler, the deputy historian of the House of Representatives, had recently mentioned some progress made on this front. Hunt asked Beuttler to address Baker's question about the status of the interviews. Beuttler informed the committee that in about six months Robert Remini will publish his history of the House. He also noted that there were three programs within the office of the House Historian which fell within the scope of the Advisory Committee. He wanted to take this opportunity to inform the committee about these actions. The first of the three programs involves outreach. The Historian's Office is planning a pilot program for next summer called the Speaker's Fellows Program (now the House Fellows Program) which will bring secondary education teachers to Washington for a week to closely look at the history and practice of Congress. They have worked with Hunt who will provide an orientation for the fellows on the records of Congress and the Center's education programs. The workshop is intended to expand the use of the records of Congress by a very strategic audience of educators.

The second program directly relates to page 35, item 12 of the Status of Recommendations, which Baker brought up. Beuttler has worked with the executive

director of the Association of Former Members of Congress and that association has provided the Historian's Office with the actual records from their oral history project, which they pursued in the late 1970's and early 1980's. There are approximately 100 interviews with former Members of Congress. Beuttler's office is in the process of inventorying those records. The Association also provided them with 30-40 cassette tapes of the actual interviews. He hopes his office will have a report on the status of the project by the next Advisory Committee meeting.

The third area of interest involves his office's working relationship with the House Office of Photography. There is currently underway a project to organize, inventory, and assess preservation needs for approximately 200 linear feet of photographic records, over 100,000 negatives, going back to the early 1950's, in partnership with the Office of Photography. By the next Advisory Committee meeting, his office should be in a position to report further on the status of that project. Beuttler asked the committee if his office could provide some written materials on these three projects for inclusion in the Fourth Report.

Lowe remarked on the issue of access. He has been wondering how to encourage people's use of the records of the Baker Center. They are contemplating digitizing documents. Once you have those documents online, how do you encourage their use? How do you market the website to the widest possible audience? Hunt replied that Lowe is correct in that you need marketing and targeting strategies. There are centers at George Mason University, at the University of Virginia, and others that are leaders in the field of

taking historical and political content and packaging and providing context to it. These centers could be looked to as models and partners in these endeavors.

Weinstein remarked that there are tradeoffs. The more records are available online, the less packed research rooms will be. Balancing the two is a challenge.

Lowe wondered how much do you put online? Do you put an exhibit of documents online to encourage people to come in and use your research room, or do you try to be more in depth with what you put online?

Cooper said the first problem is just getting the information out in a coherent fashion. He thinks the first step is to publicize the availability of the information. That requires a strategy from the start.

Paul Gherman said increasingly the path to information is through Google. Google is willing to invest in a significant way to provide access to the world of information.

Gherman said that Vanderbilt University has opened up its television archives to Google and they have seen traffic increase ten-fold in just the last 3-4 months. Cooper said Google should be a prime agenda item for the ACSC as well.

Susan Palmer made a suggestion on the educational publications and workshops section of the draft report. She did not see any discussion of the funding for these publications. Should this be added to the report? Palmer asked Hunt about the funding for the current

volume of the *Congress and the Shaping of American History* publication. Hunt said the Center has the minimum threshold to do a printing of 3000 copies. The goal is to increase the funding to do a national distribution. The baseline is around \$225,000 to print and increases to \$1.2 million to distribute throughout the country. Reynolds remarked that after discussing this with Hunt and Trandahl, she feels it is important to get the publication completed and out the door first. The more tangible the product the easier to sell. Trandahl said it all comes down to money. The missed opportunity for this wonderful publication to be used would be tragic. One option would be to look to the philanthropic or corporate community to provide funding. Another option is to go to Congress and get appropriated money. Trandahl hoped that with the support of the committee they would succeed with a national distribution. Weinstein commented that the publication is extraordinary and would make for more interesting, vivid reading for generations of Americans. He mentioned the possibility of pitching the publication again to the leaders on the Hill. Trandahl said that with the CVC coming up and such an enormous investment and effort made to increase public understanding of Congressional history and the legislative process, there is the opportunity for a perfect marriage with the Congress publication.

Timothy Johnson mentioned that at times the draft report seems like it was written for an inside audience. Perhaps it should be written with more explanation. Some of the discussion seems to be in an institutional shorthand that is not always explained. He thinks it is important to consider who the audience is for the report. Hunt said the goal is make the report accessible. Weinstein seconded that accessibility and readability are the

goals. Cooper asked what is the committee trying to do with this report? Most people who are not especially interested in the topic will not read a 40 page document. Perhaps the committee needs another document that would be a more readable, more popular, and shorter in length. Or the executive summary could be redone, although then you cannot accomplish some of the explanatory goals. A committee member mentioned that this report, along with the last report, will be available on the web so that needs to be taken into consideration. There is a broader audience now for the report. The member also noted that there were a lot of “ongoings” in the report and he is not sure if that is a good or bad thing. Sometimes people like to see what is completed. Perhaps there should be more benchmarking and looking at progress.

Baker turned the committee’s attention to the recommendations in the last section of the executive summary. The one item he did not see that is covered in the report and in one of the briefings to the committee is the irradiation issue. Since the goal is to preserve the records of Congress, and irradiation at high doses damages paper, should not there be a strong recommendation about encouraging the Joint Irradiation Task Force to revisit this issue?

Trandahl discussed the history of irradiation. The process of irradiating mail was instituted fairly quickly by the U. S. Postal Service in reaction to terrorist activities. The committee has been previously briefed by some technology experts that support processes that appear to be scientifically equivalent, if not even better, than the current irradiation process and are much less harmful to paper. There seems to be a lack of

momentum within the federal government to address the issue. People may feel that the problem, from the law enforcement standpoint, has been solved so why do we need to tinker with it? There is a lack of appreciation for the archival side of the issue. The committee has been briefed on the issue but it has not yet taken a position to advocate for the change of technology or at least expanded conversation about the issue. Hunt remarked that there is no 100% solution and that the new proposed technology requires a leap of faith but the experts are confident this is a leap that should be taken.

Gherman said that upon reading the report he was not clear how large the extent of damage was or is. Reynolds replied that it was large initially but is infinitely better now. The first 6 months resulted in very brittle paper. Trandahl said that irradiation causes a dryness within the paper and the ink fades. It is not a positive thing. If different technology is available, and if it is cost effective, it would be worthwhile.

Baker said he would like the committee to go on record saying irradiation is an ongoing problem in the judgment of the committee and that the committee would like to keep the discussion of the problem on the table. Hunt asked Baker if the intent was to urge some entity or organization to take action? His recollection was that the committee took it as far as it could, and that responsibility lay with the Joint Irradiation Task Force. Cooper said he thought the committee could say that it is still concerned about the problem, and there is still the potential for damage that could be serious over a long period of time. The committee could say it endorses the continued exploration of these new devices and methods.

Trandahl felt that the experts had come to the committee after already going to the Postal Service and that they hoped to generate advocacy from the committee to at least force a larger conversation with the Postal Service. Perhaps the committee could hear from the experts again along with the Postal Service to see if a consensus could be reached.

Reynolds mentioned another key player, the Legislative Mail Task Force. Reynolds added that the committee needs to encourage the Legislative Mail Task Force to take a second look at the new technologies. They are the final decision makers and it is a safety and security issue for everyone on the Hill.

VI. Symposium on Presidential and Public Papers at the John Brademas Center for the Study of Congress – Karen Paul

Haas turned the committee's attention to the Symposium on Presidential and Public Papers at the John Brademas Center at New York University which was held last October. Haas turned to Karen Paul to report on the meeting. Paul said the conference was very interesting in that it revisited issues first posed seriously 30 years ago when events surrounding the fate of the Watergate tapes led to the passage of the Presidential Records and Materials Preservation Act of 1974. This act nullified the Nixon-Sampson agreement and resulted in the tapes being turned over to the National Archives, and also established the Public Documents Commission and resulted in the passage of the Presidential Records Act which passed in 1977.

There were three panels. The first focused on the context of 30 years ago. The events and sequences which led to the passage of the two acts were described by William Sudow, a former staff director of the House subcommittee that drafted the bills, and also Leonard Garment, a counsel to Nixon, who described his role in preventing the destruction of the tapes despite advice within the administration to do so. For Paul this was fascinating behind-the-scenes oral history with the key player of this time. Garment concluded his review by saying that the release of the tapes has not necessarily served history the best. This surprised those in attendance, but Garment commented that the tapes revealed too much of the private person, and now leaders make sure that the private person is never to be revealed in records.

Sharon Fawcett, of the National Archives' Office of Presidential Libraries, described the Archives' experience in administering the Nixon materials. The Supreme Court determined that political and private materials belonged to the President. Everything else belonged to the public. Fawcett pointed out that this has proved very difficult to sort out over the years. Many regulations have changed. Eventually this got worked out in the 1990s and the Archives is still processing the tapes. It expects to open the last of them in 2008. One of the interesting asides that Fawcett mentioned was that the materials are accessible to the public through the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) but the irony is that this has slowed access to the tapes. Fawcett estimates that NARA could process one million pages a year, but because of all of the paperwork in responding to FOIAs, processing is reduced to 250,000 pages a year.

Anna Nelson, a member of the Public Documents Commission, recalled some of the working difficulties of the Commission that finally produced a report that the Chair did not endorse. She explained that the Commission looked at FOIA access and ownership and that we are still arguing about these things today. However, Nelson does believe that many of the ideas of the report have been implemented over time and that largely the effects of Watergate and the Presidential Records Act and the Public Documents Commission led people to seeing their history on a larger scale and valuing it more. Another interesting aside, one clue as to why Congress did not follow the recommendation of the Commission report and make the papers of its Members public records was revealed in a comment by Sudow. He mentioned that Senators Bayh, Ervin, and Ribicoff strenuously opposed even the creation of a Public Documents Commission at the time. They felt that Congress should address the issue of Members' papers itself. Their objections were overcome and the Commission was created but its recommendations regarding ownership of Congressional papers have never been implemented.

The second panel focused on current issues. Bruce Montgomery commented on the changing nature of executive privilege and how this impacts access to records. While President Nixon claimed absolute executive privilege, the Supreme Court rejected it. However, the court did recognize that it exists but fades over time. Ever since, Presidents have tried to reclaim it. Bruce Craig commented on the inevitable cycle of access to documents where the initial urge for secrecy leads to conspiracy theories, to mistrust, to weakened credibility, and finally the only resort is to open the documents in self defense.

Robert Remini spoke about the difficulty in finding documents that answer historic questions and the unexpected places these answers can often appear. Nancy Young commented that the history of Congress is so difficult to study because the presidential libraries are so good. She strongly advocates the study of Congress because there is relatively so little done that it might change what we think we know about it.

Paul felt that the best panel was the last. The participants addressed the question: can we create a policy for the papers of public officials? John Constance of the National Archives commented that Members would not pass a law to standardize access, that cost is prohibitive, and all collections are not equally good. He proposed a competitive approach of funding through NHPRC grants. Raymond Smock spoke about the hope of Congressional centers being developed and thinks that this might be one way to find a solution that will preserve the collections, centralize locations, and thereby facilitate research as the presidential libraries do.

Paul held out a little hope for creating a public policy for ownership. It seemed to her that a review of all of the discussions and recommendations of the Public Documents Commission shows that many of the initially perceived problems have been mitigated and that certain of the goals have been accomplished, namely in the area of standards for collections and definitions of what constitutes a collection and what constitutes committee records and what elements of those are valuable. Even a standardization of access to collections has occurred and evolved over time as archivists have shared one

another's deeds of gift across the country and many of them follow access rules adopted by the House and Senate for committee records. The big hurdles have been overcome. Paul does not predict that a policy will ever be created; however, the chances for a bill passing now might be better than they were 30 years ago if a bill was carefully structured and if there was enough interest. Paul hopes that the ACSC will continue to look at and discuss this issue.

VII. Activities Report of the Center for Legislative Archives – Richard Hunt

Hunt gave a brief update of the activities of the Center for Legislative Archives at the National Archives, noting that the committee members had read the one-year and five-year updates in the report. He discussed three things. The Center continues to grow in physical attributes in the sense that 20,000 cubic feet of records have been added to the Center's holdings in the last 5 years, over 800 loans of records back to committees have occurred so that committees can conduct their current business, and over 20,000 reference inquiries have been answered by the reference staff. Hunt feels the Center has come out of hiding within the National Archives, and that the Center will become the place to do research on Congress in the future.

On the loan front, Hunt underscored how important the implementation of the Metro Courier service, which is provided by the Washington National Records Center, is to the Center. The Center never had a back-up for loans which caused problems when, for example, the House or Senate Judiciary Committee called the Center with an urgent request for its records and the NARA truck was already occupied and not available. The Center can now go to a different service and it is working well.

On the educational front, the most recent activity is the December issue of *Social Education*, which concerns teaching civics with primary documents. This issue contains an article by Christine Blackerby, the educational specialist on the Center's staff, featuring House and Senate records. Hunt said he would share copies with members. It shows how the records of Congress can be used in the classroom. *Social Education* is read by 20,000 or so school teachers.

Lastly, Hunt noted that the renovation of the National Archives building is nearly complete. The "Treasure Vault" will be turned over to the Center in 2006. The fire suppression system and the alarm system are installed. Shelving and map cases will be installed in the future. The conservators will be going into the vault to set up air monitoring equipment. In the future Hunt will ask permission from the Secretary and the Clerk for the return of the legislative "Treasures" to Archives I, and he will invite the committee members down to enjoy the new vault.

Weinstein complimented Hunt and his staff for their extraordinary work. He asked if the return of the "Treasures" could be turned into a ceremony that would also focus attention on the issues discussed today. He inquired if that would be the occasion to interest the leadership and others on the Hill in taking some firm, substantive steps to help resolve those issues.

Trandahl mentioned that some of the committee members might not be familiar with the term “Legislative Treasures.” It refers to those records identified by the National Archives, with the input of the Clerk of the House and Secretary of the Senate, as the most significant historical documents of Congress. These documents have been kept separate from the major part of the collection in a more secure area. The old vault was nothing more than basically a walk-in closet with an extra lock on it. The new vault is a state-of-the-art facility.

Weinstein suggested the National Archives host a morning ceremony to showcase the new “Treasures Vault” to Members of Congress. The Clerk of the House and Secretary of the Senate’s offices could provide NARA with the invitation list. Perhaps it could be an early breakfast followed by an hour’s worth of looking at the “Treasures.” Weinstein sees the return of the “Treasures” as an important occasion of interest to House and Senate leaders.

Weinstein turned the Committee’s attention back to the Brademas conference. He asked John Constance and Bruce Craig, who were in the audience, for any comments they might have on the symposium. Craig said that Paul did a fine job of explaining the panels. Constance agreed and said the goal was to see a reasonable policy established for Congressional papers. He does not hold out much hope that these papers will ever become public papers. The standardization of policy that Paul and others have led has brought us closer to a rational policy across the board for such papers.

After Haas asked if there was any new business that members wished to raise, Cooper moved that the committee thank Jeff Trandahl for the exemplary work he has done for the House of Representatives and for the Advisory Committee. Cooper moved that the committee express its highest regard for him and wish him the best of good fortune in the future. Hunt followed by thanking Trandahl on behalf of himself, the committee, and the Archivist, and expressed his admiration and appreciation for the leadership Trandahl exercised as chair and co-chair of the committee for many years.

On a personal note, Hunt tells first time visitors to the Center that he has a unique position in the federal government. He reports to the head officials of three separate institutions in two branches of government. His success depends on his relationship to those individuals who are in those chairs. For himself and the Center, there has been no more steadfast friend and supporter than Jeff Trandahl over the years. As a small token of appreciation from the Archivist and from the Advisory Committee, Hunt presented some facsimile documents that symbolize Trandahl's understanding of the enduring value of records and his new responsibilities as steward of the nation's wildlife resources. The framed facsimiles were the charter law that created the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, which was signed by Speaker Tip O'Neill, Strom Thurmond, and President Ronald Reagan, and photographs by former civil servant Ansel Adams of western vistas for Trandahl's enjoyment.

Weinstein then presented Trandahl with an Archives constitution tie.

Trandahl thanked everyone for the gifts. He said he was leaving an institution he dearly loves. He spent a lot of his life on the Hill working his way up to a position he never thought he would have in his life, the position of Clerk of the House. He did not know what to expect when he assumed the position and found that he loved the job and it was with great heartbreak that he made the decision to leave and go off to pursue something completely different, but something that is a passion of his, which is environmental conservation and wildlife work. When the Fish and Wildlife Foundation job opened up, it occurred at a moment when Trandahl had surpassed his years needed for retirement on Capitol Hill. He was ready for a second career. He has every confidence Karen Haas is going to be incredibly successful in the job. She brings with her a passion and a new and exciting vision. He hopes the committee supports her the way it supported him through the years.

Haas added that she loved working with Trandahl and she is realizing the amazing work he did as Clerk of the House and specifically the work he did as regarding the records of the House. She thanked Trandahl and said the committee looks forward to his new work.

The meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.