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OFFICE OF MILITARY GOVERNMENT FOR GERMANY (U.S.)  
 Economics Division  
 Restitution Branch  
 APO 742

ED 007 (RES/MFA&amp;A)

15 July 1946

SUBJECT: Memorandum on current status of Archives and  
 Libraries activity

TO : Maj Born

Personnel:

Mr. Paul Vanderbilt, Asst Archives and Libraries Officer.  
 (Occupied with current action papers and requests,  
 editing of central card file, and preparation of papers  
 concerning future plans)

Mr. Joseph Anthony Horne, Junior Specialist Officer.  
 (Occupied with investigations concerning central card  
 file. Just returned from field trip in Württemberg-  
 Baden. Writing cards on information obtained)

Mrs. Sander, German civilian clerk-typist.

Personnel (outside of Berlin):

Mr. Jerse Boell, Archives Officer, Land Greater Hesse  
 (Occupied with extensive survey by questionnaire and  
 administrative matters)

Mr. Harald Clem, Land Bavaria. (Now on leave in the  
 U.S. Will return. Mainly occupied with administrat-  
 ive duties of a general MFA&A nature, and no longer  
 can devote full time to Archives and Libraries.)

Capt Byrne, MFA&A officer, Berlin District. (Now on  
 leave in U.S. Only incidentally occupied with Archives  
 and Libraries matters. Responsibilities now carried  
 by Mr. Leonard, MFA&A, OMGUS).

Capt Isaac Bencowitz, Director, Offenbach Archival Depot.  
 Restitution activity progressing magnificently.

Files and Papers:

A correspondence and document file has been set up in  
 the Archives and Libraries office to collect and hold in  
 readiness all papers concerning archives and libraries. But  
 many papers are retained by central MFA&A files in room 1059;  
 there is no clear line of demarcation. Every week, current  
 carbons pass through Archives and Libraries office, and such

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as are pertinent are taken out and held for our files. There are still several files of earlier papers remaining to be sorted and classified according to the function which the papers have (e.g. current problems together; back issues together, etc.).

A central card file has been established and currently is the focus of most activity. The function of this file is to have available for reference here and elsewhere a card under the name of a unit of recorded information (archive, library, file, private collection) known to have existed, with notes on what has happened to it as a result of the war (e.g. at MCC, sent to U.S., operating in German custody, destroyed, combined with some other organization, etc.) The cards are duplicated as soon as a definitive stages is reached. There are four files here: Alphabetical, Geographical (by city), Status or Working File, and Stock file of extra cards. The project cannot be said to have gone very far, or to have reached the objective desired, largely because of difficulty until very recently, in collecting information from the field. Boell's survey in Greater Hesse is feeding in information very successfully and fully. Pomrenze completed an excellent survey of archives alone in Württemberg-Baden. Horne's recent trip supplied similar data for libraries in Württemberg-Baden. Clem operated a survey of a character unknown in Bavaria; results are said to be summarized in latest report which has not yet reached here. A further field trip to supply missing information will doubtless be necessary.

There are many uncertainties regarding the future of the recorded knowledge in which Germany was so rich, and definitive administrative planning, coordination, solution of problems with a view to eventual future analysis and availability cannot be made now -- until answers are forthcoming on German administration, financing, UNESCO, length of occupation, etc. It is hoped that whatever plan develops, such a record will be helpful in indicating the present status of the material to work with.

Neither of these projects has any official ok or paper foundation.

The Research and Analysis office maintains the file on repositories and claims deal immediately with the restitution and custody affairs of MFA&A.

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#### Other Current Projects

Immediate pending problems under investigation are:

1. Summary report on restitutions still to be made; Vanderbilt has agreed to compile as soon as all data is available.
2. Return of books of the Staatsbibliothek to Berlin. Internal Affairs and Communications, Education Section, has agreed to introduce a paper at Educational Committee, DIAC, ACA providing for return of the books from the U.S. Zone subject to Russian guarantees in the receipt that the materials will be kept in Berlin and be used for the Staatsbibliothek, available on a quadripartite basis. Vanderbilt has promised Education Section a report on current developments; waiting contact with Russian library authorities.
3. Disposition of YIWO library, taken from Poland, but wanted in U.S. Awaiting State department decision.
4. Disposition of unidentifiable residue of books, about 500,000, remaining at the Offenbach Archival Depot. Proposals now under discussion between Library of Congress Mission and General Clay.
5. Negotiation for return to Bremen of the greater part of that city's archives, now held by the Russians at Karlshorst. Probably not to be handled directly by this office but by a German Bremen official in contact with Russian authorities.
6. Completion of all British Zone interzonal transfers. Being handled by the Länder in contact with a British Mission for this purpose under Maj. Perry, now in the U.S. Zone.
7. Searches for many "lost" units of books and papers on which data is incomplete. Details vary.

#### Contacts and Potentialities

1. Coordination of information and action between the several groups concerned with archives, libraries and miscellaneous documents, by means of the central card file. Education, FIAT, G-2, Library of Congress Mission, ICD, OMGUS Library, Office of the Naval Advisor, Legal division, Patent section, Political Affairs division, Research Section of the Industry Branch, Property Control, as well as MFA&A all have

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policy decisions to make and in many cases custody of materials.

2. Presentation of plans for future of German libraries, in collaboration with Education Section and in connection with Conference of German librarians. It is neither desirable nor practical to reconstitute everything the way it was. Germans welcome guidance.

3. Assistance to Library of Congress Mission in microfilming photograph collections.

4. Assistance to Office of the Theater Historian in locating materials on history of the war.

5. Attempt to locate German specialists in each field of knowledge who will know what the most valuable resources were, and in relation to German activities which are to be encouraged, which should be reactivated first, in view of current impossibility of doing everything. This project would, also through the central card file, be of great assistance to such groups as the newly established Research organization of the Industry Branch, and to those interested in U.S. exploitation.

Paul VANDERBILT  
Asst Archives Officer