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Library Report

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY EAST LANSING

COLLEGE OF BUSINESS AND PUBLIC SERVICE

OFFICE OF THE DEAN

March 3, 1960

To: Ruben V. Austin
From: James B. Hendry
Subject: Library Report

Just before you left you asked that I check into the library situation to determine its origins and how it has developed. What follows is the result of my efforts in this respect.

The idea for a library began early in 1958 with a recommendation from Dr. Stanley Gabis to the Coordinator, a copy of which is attached hereto. As suggested at that time, the library was to be for the convenience of participants, to provide a single, localized source of materials provided by both the Vietnam Project and Institute of Research on Overseas Programs (IROP), and it was also to be available for use by faculty who are interested in comparative public administration and/or Vietnam.

There are essentially three kinds of materials currently collected by the Project library set up after discussion of Gabis' proposal by University officials, MSUG members in Saigon, and the Coordinator's Office. Those include:

1. Articles and publications received in exchange for publications of the Vietnam Project,
2. Free articles received directly by the Vietnam Project or the IROP, and publications which belong to the IROP but are placed in the Project library for convenient reference,
3. Items purchased by the Vietnam Project. Mr. Grider informs me that all publications purchased by the Vietnam Project are ultimately the property of the Vietnamese Government, although they may be used for purposes of the Project here on campus (with due regard to their care and maintenance) during the duration of the Project. All publications in the Project library in this category now bear ICA stickers which indicates that their eventual end use will be by the Vietnamese Government. The relevant contract provisions which permit this are Appendix A, XIX-B, XXI-A-2, XXI-C. Mr. Grider indicated that he felt there was no reason to doubt the relevancy of expenses of the library under these provisions as long as the materials collected can be related to the needs of participants on campus and the needs of faculty

doing research on Vietnam. The salary of a librarian to keep these materials in order is part of the supporting expenses for the Coordinator's Office. The MSU Main Library has not made any contributions for the purchase of books or other materials, and furniture and shelving are all provided from other departments or divisions in the University.

At the close of the Project, therefore, it appears that under existing arrangements the IROP will take physical possession of all materials belonging to it while all of the other materials, both free and purchased with Vietnam Project funds, are destined for return to the Vietnamese Government. However, since the free materials did not involve any expenditures of the Project funds there seems to be no objection to turning it over to the MSU Main Library, provided they have a desire to keep it and will accept it. There is also the possibility that some material, such as copies of Vietnamese newspapers, would be of no great interest to the Vietnamese Government, and some means might be found by which these would be retained at the MSU Main Library. Thus, the Vietnam Project Library cannot be considered as available for subsequent incorporation within the MSU Main Library because the Main Library has made no contribution toward Vietnam Project acquisitions. If the University is interested in developing a collection of Vietnamese materials, this will have to be done separately from the collections now being put together in the Project library. The librarian for the Project library, who is probably more familiar with Vietnamese materials than any one on the Main Library staff, could assist in recommending items for acquisition by the Main Library. This, in my opinion, would be a major contribution. I also think it would be worthwhile for the Main Library to take advantage of the experience in Vietnamese affairs, which the Vietnam Project has provided the University, to develop an outstanding collection of Vietnamese materials here in the United States. This, of course, raises questions of funds for such an undertaking, concerning which I have nothing positive to offer except the obvious one of possible Foundation interest.

Mr. Gilder has raised one point of concern relating to the development of a Vietnam Project Library. This is that the Project library may acquire material which duplicates holdings of the Main Library. Since the University charges ICA for library use by participants as part of overhead expenses, ICA might question the justification for this portion of the overhead charge if the Project library duplicates Main Library facilities. My general impression is that the Vietnam Project library, as it has developed to this point, does not constitute a duplication of facilities available in the Main Library. Rather, it remains quite specialized in the field of public administration in Southeast Asia and Vietnam, and is made up largely of materials, obtained on a free or exchange basis, which the Main Library makes no effort to accumulate because of the difficulty in keeping current with publications of this kind. As such, the Project library makes a very useful supplement to the Main Library. There is a problem concerned with use by participants, in that the number of participants on campus who are studying in the field of public administration seems to vary widely from time to time. Further, in the phasing down period which lies ahead, there is no assurance that there will be public administration participants on campus at all times. Offsetting this is the possibility that things such as the proposed seminar

in development administration will come up from time to time, and that the Project library will be a very important addition to the facilities available on campus for this kind of activity.

With reference to the proposed microfilming of documents in the archives at Hue, I do not see how this can be justified as far as the Project library here in East Lansing is concerned. The most logical place for this expense to be made is through the NIA Library funds in Saigon, since such documents would be of interest to future students of public administration in Vietnam, and the NIA Library would be the obvious place for this type of research to be carried on. If the microfilming were financed through the Project library here, the microfilms would eventually wind up in Vietnam anyway, as will all such materials. For MSU to get permanent possession of microfilms of this kind would require special fund arrangements outside of the Vietnam Project, and would again be tied to the question of whether the University is willing to undertake a major acquisition effort in the area of Vietnamese materials.

In view of the above, it is my opinion that the Project library is quite clearly justified both within the provisions of the contract and on grounds of its usefulness, present and potential, to participants and faculty members. The expenses involved in maintaining the library should be minimal, particularly if care is exercised to prevent duplication of materials available in the main library. Finally, if the University is interested in developing a collection of Vietnamese material, the experience of the Project librarian will be extremely helpful as a source of advice.

JBH/ap

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