

FILING SYSTEMS
and
EQUIPMENT
at the
PRESIDENCY

A Report by
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SOME SUGGESTIONS CONCERNING FILING
SYSTEMS AND EQUIPMENT AT THE
PRESIDENCY

Introduction

We have been requested to submit suggestions concerning the steps necessary to adapt the filing systems in the various offices of the Presidency to the new filing equipment made available under the Presidency Office Equipment Project. In addition, we were asked to consider the question of the feasibility of developing a single standardized filing system for use by all offices of the Presidency.

Our observations in the various offices of the Presidency pointed up the fact that each of these offices has a different mission and that the records developed in carrying out these functions are almost as different as the functions themselves. It is our considered opinion that the wide variety of records which exists in the Presidency cannot be effectively handled by a single standardized filing system. This diversity of systems does not preclude the possibility of considerable standardization in filing equipment, procedures, and techniques. Some of these techniques and procedures will be discussed at some length in this report.

Perhaps the most striking observation which was made during our survey concerned the large quantity of older records being kept in many of the offices despite the fact that work space was at a premium. The problem of storing these older records is

discussed at some length in the first part of this report and some suggestions are made for its solution.

The remainder of the report consists of two parts, one a brief description of the new equipment and the techniques for using it, and the other a series of brief summaries of the record holdings and filing systems of each of the offices visited, together with suggestions concerning improvements which might be made when the files are transferred to the new equipment.

Summary of Findings and Recommendations

For the most part, the record keeping systems of the Presidency worked quite well and were well administered. The major problem which we found was that large quantities of older records were being kept in the offices which hindered the operations of the offices to a considerable extent. We have recommended that a Records Center be set up in the Presidency where these older records can be kept in controlled, accessible, and inexpensive storage.

With very few exceptions, the remainder of our suggestions are concerned with problems arising from the changeover to new equipment. One of these exceptions is a rather detailed plan for the reorganization of the documentation files of the Press Office, but this too has its origin in the change from shelves and boxes to modern file cabinets.

At most, the offices covered by this report could use only about 70 or 80 of the 250 file cabinets available. Even this number would be reduced if the recommendation concerning the Records Center is adopted. We suggest that, in coordination with the Public Administration Division of USOM, plans be developed to put the remaining cabinets to use elsewhere in the CVN according to normal USOM procedures dealing with surplus project aid material.

Part I

The Storage of Inactive Records

The Need for a Records Storage Area

The files of the Presidency at the present time occupy a considerable amount of office space. With each passing day, their volume increases as new records are created. As the records increase, there is less and less room for the people in the offices to carry out their work. It also becomes more and more difficult for them to find the records they need in their work because the current records are buried in the mass of older records.

This encroachment upon office space will be stepped up as the new filing equipment is introduced unless something is done to take inactive records out of the offices and put them into controlled and accessible storage. The new equipment is more efficient and effective in terms of filing and finding needed material. It also makes possible more logical and helpful classifications and arrangements of record material. However, the file cabinets do occupy more office space per cubic meter of records stored than does the present equipment. In order to gain the advantages inherent in the new equipment, the older, less active records should be transferred to records storage areas to make possible the more effective use of the current and active records.

In addition to freeing office space for the installation of the new filing equipment, the records storage area would provide inexpensive storage for older files and reference service on stored

records. By using accepted and proven storage and indexing techniques, large quantities of records can be stored in less space, and less valuable space than is possible in the offices themselves. Also, records storage areas use simpler, less expensive equipment. Along with these savings in space and equipment costs, the Records Storage Area, if properly organized, can provide much faster reference service on older, inactive documents than is possible when each office keeps its own non-current records. Perhaps the greatest advantage of this system, however, lies in the fact that it frees office space for other use, permits current records to be kept more efficiently, and speeds up the process of finding needed current documents.

What is a Records Center?

Having discussed the need for establishing a Presidency Records Center, we come to the problem of describing just what a Records Center is. Briefly, it is a place for storing older inactive records where they will not occupy needed office space, yet will be available for reference purposes at any time. Records centers are usually set up in space which is not suitable for use as offices. The area must be clean, reasonably dry, well lighted, and protected from the weather, insects, and rodents. Usually they are placed on the ground floor because paper in high density storage is very heavy and the floor must be strong enough to bear these great weights. One or two large rooms are preferable

to many small ones as the larger areas can be organized more effectively and efficiently.

Records centers are usually furnished with many shelving units on which the boxes of records are stored. The shelves of these units extend in many cases almost to the ceiling in order to get the most use out of the space available. Strong, safe, but light mobile ladders are needed to enable workers to reach and work on the upper levels. In addition, a records center needs some tables or desks to hold boxes of records while they are being processed.

There is also need for an adequate supply of records storage boxes, labels, card files, forms and other office supplies to be used in keeping records of the material in storage.

It should be noted in concluding this description that the Records Center has two functions. It stores records for the other offices, but it also must provide reference service on the records that it stores. The records must be well identified before they are stored, and their locations must be well identified if the reference service is to function well.

Choosing Records for Storage

If records are to be transferred from the office to the Records Center, we must first distinguish between those to be transferred and those which for a variety of reasons must remain in the office. Each organization must, through analysis of its own records, decide how long each of its records must be kept in

the office and when, if ever, they can be sent to the Records Center or destroyed. An analysis of this sort usually reveals the following four categories of records:

Vital Papers - These are documents essential to the existence of the organization and which would be irreplaceable if lost or destroyed. Papers of this type are kept in the most secure place available in the office and are never transferred to the Records Center.

Permanent Papers - These are documents which, while they do not have the vital quality of the previous group, are the backbone of the operations of the office. They are the basic arretes, orders, and policy statements which provide the framework in which the business of the office is carried out. While not irreplaceable, they are always needed and should not, under normal circumstances, be transferred to the Records Center.

Operating Files - These are the papers which document the day to day transaction of business within the office. They are the dossiers of individual cases or affairs which, taken in total, represent the results of the operation of the office. In general, during the period that a particular affair is under active consideration and for perhaps a year or so thereafter, reference to these documents is sufficiently frequent as to warrant keeping them on file within the office itself. After this period, these records, with few exceptions, should be transferred to the Records Center.

Useful Papers - These are papers which are temporarily helpful and easily replaceable. They either supplement the Operating Files mentioned in the previous paragraph or document minor transactions which are of only temporary importance. These papers should remain in the office files for not more than a year and then transferred to the Records Center. If approval can be obtained, this type of record is often destroyed after a few years as it has no lasting value.

The first two categories mentioned above are known as permanent records and are always kept as part of the office files. The latter two categories are known as "active" or "current" records during the first year or two of their existence and then become "inactive" or "non-current" and are ready for transfer to the Records Center.

Separation of Records Prior to Transfer

The transfer of inactive records from the office to the Records Center is most easily accomplished on a definite periodic basis. Perhaps the most simple means for doing this is to maintain the active records of the office on a yearly basis. This means that the documents pertaining to the current year are kept together in normal fashion and that when the new year begins, the records for the new year are kept separately from those of the year just ended. A new set of folders must be started and kept on different shelves or in different drawers from those containing the

records of the year just finished. Documents which concern affairs of the past year are still filed with the related papers of the past year. Cases or affairs which began in the past year are continued until their conclusion using the old folders to hold the documents. Financial papers are still filed in the folders for the fiscal year with which they are concerned. However, papers concerning activities of the new fiscal year are filed in the new section of the files, and new affairs or cases which commence after the beginning of the new year are filed with the new year's records. Through the system described above, at the beginning of the third year there are three distinct sets of files in the office; one set belonging to the year just finished, one belonging to the year before that, and one which is just being started. At this point, the oldest year's records are transferred to the Records Center, leaving the space which they formerly occupied for the records of the year just starting.

As can be seen, this system has the advantage of leaving the records of the year just past in the office where they are available for further reference and where they can be made complete with the documents which are still outstanding when the year officially closed. There are always affairs which overlap from one year to another. With this system, these dossiers can be completed and closed before they are considered inactive and taken away to storage.

By the time the files are transferred to the Records Center, the oldest document in the files is at least two years old, and the youngest is, in most cases, almost one year old. In other words, the files to be transferred will be in fact as well as in name, inactive. They will also be a homogeneous group of records which can be transferred easily and with their identity well established. The details of how this transfer is accomplished and how identity is established and maintained will be discussed next.

Identification of Records and Storage Locations

As was mentioned earlier, the ability of the Records Center to provide reference service on stored records depends directly and very heavily on the precise identification of the records which it stores and equally accurate identification of the location of the records on the shelves. Since the very existence of the Records Center depends on its ability to provide quick and accurate reference service, the problem of identification becomes the key to the whole operation.

Records - Practically all records which warrant preservation at all, have some sort of group identity. When the Government does business it is usually in terms of certain standardized operations which are repeated many times. For example, the Government does not have only one or two employees; it has thousands. Each of these employees has gone through a somewhat similar process

to be hired, and similar records are kept for each. There may be slightly different papers in one personnel folder than in another, but they are sufficiently similar to be identified as a single type of record, namely Personnel Folders.

Most other Government records have this same characteristic, they belong to a group of similar records, and are usually filed in sequence with others of the same group or series. Records within the same group or series are distinguished one from another by their secondary characteristics. One or more of these characteristics, which include the name of the specific individual item or event to which the record pertains, the date on which the action documented by the record took place, and the geographical location where the recorded event took place, as well as the simple numerical sequence in which the records were prepared, are used to determine the sequence in which a particular group of records are filed. To identify a particular record we name the group or series in which it is filed and show its place in the sequence of that series.

When we are seeking to establish the identity of records which will be put into inactive storage, we must be particularly precise in order not to mislabel and lose some of the records. Because of the fact that the records are stored in boxes, it is necessary to identify not only the group or series of records we are storing, and the key to the sequence of the records, but also to note where in the sequence this particular collection starts

and where it ends. The following examples show how particular records might be identified for storage purposes.

<u>Series</u>	<u>1st key</u>	<u>2nd key</u>
Payment Orders	1957	Miscellaneous
Payment Orders	1957	Payroll
Personnel Folders--Separated Employees	1958	Anh to Giam
Personnel Folders--Separated Employees	1958	Giao to Nghiem
Revoked Automobile Registrations	NT-0001-B to NT-5780-B	----
Requisitions for Supplies	1/1/57 to 31/12/57	----

As can be seen from these examples, each group of records is identified first by general series, and then by other qualities which establish the sequence and then limit our consideration to a specific portion of that sequence to identify the records precisely. In the first two examples, the same result could be obtained by reversing the first and second identification keys. The second two examples are more easily identified if the order remains as it stands. The final two examples show numerical and chronological sequences which are self limiting and which do not need a second key to identify the records accurately. In practice there are many possible combinations, but almost all of them fall into the general pattern shown here.

Storage Locations - In the storage of inactive records, it is as essential to know where the records are stored as it is to know what records are stored. Neither piece of information is sufficient by itself. Taken together, however, they provide an almost foolproof system for storing and finding records.

The point or location to be identified here is the specific meter-long portion of a particular shelf of a particular records storage unit, within one of the rooms used for the storage of inactive records. The process itself is relatively simple and can be made easier by drawing a plan of the whole records storage area including all of the records storage units. The rooms which make up the records storage area are then lettered "A", "B", "C", etc., and the records storage units within each room are numbered consecutively. Exhibit 1 shows a plan of a hypothetical records storage area showing the identification of rooms and records storage units. From this plan it is possible to identify by a letter and a number any records storage unit in the entire area.

There remains only to locate the appropriate box of records from among the 100 or more such boxes which a single unit will hold. This is done by lettering the shelves from top to bottom or from bottom to top, making sure that we use the same system for each unit, and numbering the sections into which the vertical supports divide the unit. Exhibit 2 shows a records storage unit appropriately lettered and numbered. A simple letter-number code can now be used to identify each of the compartments in which the

record boxes are stored. The code consists of the letter designation of the shelf and the numerical designation of the vertical section. Thus, C-2 identifies the center section of the third shelf from the bottom in our example, and F-3 would identify the upper right-hand compartment. Since each compartment would hold only about six boxes, and the boxes would be labeled to show the exact contents, the identification of the required box is a simple matter.

Transferring Records to the Records Center

The preparation of inactive records for storage in a records center must be an orderly process. If records are just thrown into boxes and turned over for storage it will be almost impossible to find them again when they are needed. If, on the other hand, the files are placed in boxes in homogeneous groupings, in proper sequence, and if a record is kept of just which records are put in each box, it is a relatively simple matter for records center employees to store the records in orderly fashion and locate needed documents quickly and easily upon request.

The questions of identifying both records and storage locations have been discussed in earlier sections. To prepare records for storage it is necessary only to put them into records storage boxes, identifying the contents of each box precisely as described earlier. This information is then placed on the label of the box so that the exact contents can be known without opening the box. Each box is then numbered in sequence.

When all of the records to be sent to storage have been boxed and labeled, a listing is made on a form similar to Exhibit 3 showing the name of each series of records being stored, the sequence, and the overall limits of the group within the sequence. The numbers of the boxes which contain each type of record are also entered, and the records and two copies of the listing are sent to the records center. One copy of the listing is retained at the records center. The other is signed by the person authorized to receive the records and returned to the sending office. There it serves as a record of what materials the office has placed in storage.

Records Center Operations

Operational Records - In order to perform its reference service function, the records center must be able to locate any record at any time. It must, therefore, keep certain operational records in order to be able to supply requested records with a minimum of delay. The following records represent the minimum necessary for effective records center operation:

1. List of Records Sent to Records Center. These lists should be filed chronologically by office. They represent a complete record, by office, of the material stored in the records center.

2. Locator File. This is a card file with a separate card for each different record series which is stored. As additional records of the same series are received, they are entered on the same card together with the new location codes. Exhibit 4 shows a locator file card on which several entries have been made. The locator file is the primary reference tool of the records center personnel when they are searching for a record to fill a request.

3. Charge-Out and Follow-up Records. A records center operates in the same way as any other file room when it comes to keeping track of records which are removed from the files for use. The section of this report dealing with "Charge-out and Follow-up" describes the procedures to be used and the records to be kept.

Procedure for Receiving and Storing Records - When records are received for storage the following steps should be followed during the reception process.

1. Verify entries on "List of Records Sent to Records Center" with actual boxes to make sure that all boxes are accounted for and secondly, that all boxes are correctly labeled. When verification has been completed, one copy of the List is signed to acknowledge receipt of the records, and returned to the originating office.

2. Assign storage locations to the boxes of records, entering the location code on both the list and on the boxes themselves. The location code on the box enables it to be replaced in its correct location after it has been taken off the shelf for reference purposes.

3. Place records on shelves, making sure that the assigned location codes are followed.

4. Prepare locator file cards for each of the records on the List. Before making a card, care should be taken to see whether there is already a card in file for that particular series of records, from that particular office. If a card already exists, the new group of records should be entered on the old card to show the additional amount in storage and the location where they are kept.

5. File List in the folder for the originating office.

Procedure for Handling Reference Requests - Request for records should be handled in the manner described in the section of this report dealing with "Charge-out and Follow-up". The same procedures should be followed and the same records kept.

Part II

Filing Methods for Use with New Equipment

In order to take full advantage of the file cabinets when they are installed in the offices of the Presidency, it will be necessary to modify some of the filing methods now in use in these offices. Minor modifications in the layout of some of the offices may also be advisable. This part of the report will attempt to describe these modifications and show why they are necessary.

Modifications in Office Layout

One of the major advantages of the new file cabinets is the fact that they make records more easily accessible. It is possible to file and to find records much more quickly when they are properly installed in the new equipment. As was remarked earlier, however, the cabinets use somewhat more floor space than do the present cabinets. This is true because in addition to the space occupied by the cabinet itself, it is also necessary to allow work space in front of the cabinet so that the drawers of the cabinet can be opened to their fullest extent when someone is actually filing or finding a document. In placing the cabinets in the office, it is necessary to take this factor into consideration so that desks and work tables are not interfered with. As a minimum, a file cabinet requires free space in front of it at least equal to the size of the cabinet itself.

Modifications in Filing Techniques

Perhaps the primary difference in filing techniques will be the elimination of heavy cardboard tied folders and boxes which are now used as containers to hold the individual soft file folders. When the records are transferred to the drawers of the new file cabinets, the file drawer itself provides the enclosure which confines and protects the folders and keeps them from being lost.

Guide Cards - Another new technique will be the use of Guide Cards, or Guides as they are sometimes called, to separate groups of file folders which deal with one subject from those which deal with another subject. Under the present system, this division is accomplished by the tied folders or boxes. Guide cards are pieces of heavy cardboard about the size of a file folder with a tab sticking up above the level of the tops of the folders. When the titles of major subjects and subdivisions of subjects are placed on these tabs, and the guide cards are inserted in the file drawers at the appropriate points, the tabs act as flags or sign posts guiding the eyes to the particular file folders which are sought.

File Folders - File folders themselves are somewhat modified from those now in common use. When used in a file drawer each folder must have its own tab so that it can be readily identified. A supply of folders of this type are being provided with the

cabinets, but they can also be improvised by adding tabs to existing folders. When new folders are ordered the folder should specify the types of tabs desired. They should be readily available on the local market.

Organization of File Drawers - With so many guide and folder tabs in use, it is necessary to have some established system of organization of the file drawer if the signs are to have any meaning. While there are several sets of rules, any of which would work reasonably well if it were consistently followed, the system given here is fairly widely accepted and used and represents a good starting point. Once the principle is well established, modifications can be worked out to meet special needs. Simply stated, the rules are the following:

1. The tabs for primary subject headings should be in the first position (i.e., on the extreme left hand side of the top of the guide card).
2. The tabs for secondary subject headings or subdivisions of primary headings should be in the second or center position.
3. The tabs on individual folders should be in the third or right hand position.

Exhibit 5 shows how guides and folders appear when in use in a file drawer. It should be understood that although a subject matter file is used in the illustration, alphabetic, numeric, or geographic files can be set up in the same manner. A more detailed description of how records are organized for storage in file drawers is included in the section of this report which deals with the Documentation Section of the Press Office.

In some cases, five divisions are used in place of the three used in this example. Three divisions can be used to solve most filing problems and are easier to handle in most cases.

Charge-Out and Follow-Up

Placing materials in the files, by whatever method, is only a means to an end. The purpose of systematic filing is to make documents and papers readily available for use when they are needed. To accomplish this purpose, it is as necessary to be systematic in removing materials from the files as it is in placing them in the file.

If records or documents have been filed in accordance with the adopted system and have been adequately cross referenced, they should be easy to find when they are wanted. If they cannot, the most frequent reason is that they have been removed from the files for use by someone in the organization. Good records management, therefore, goes beyond the original filing of the documents and calls for a system of control, so that all material can be accounted for whether it is in the files or in use. Such a system should indicate what material is out, who has it, when it was borrowed, and when it will be returned.

There are three steps in this control system:

1. Handling the request calling for filed material,
2. Charging the material to the person or persons requesting it, and
3. Following up the material until it is returned to the files.

Handling Requests for Filed Material - Requests may be received in several ways: by telephone, by messenger, or by the personal appearance of the person desiring the material. It is preferable to have requests made in writing on a standard form whenever possible. When oral requests are received, it is essential that they be recorded on the standard request form as soon as possible. These request forms should be printed or duplicated in standard format and should contain spaces for entering the following information:

1. Identification of material requested
2. Name and office of the borrower
3. The date material is borrowed
4. The date material is due to be returned or follow-up begun
5. The signature of the borrower.

Exhibit 6 shows a common format for a request form.

In a situation where the records are examined in the file room and restored to the files immediately, the request form should not be filled out. However, if the material is not returned at once, and certainly before it is permitted to leave the file room, the form should be completed, because it is the basis for the next step in the control system, "Charging the material to the person requesting it" to make him responsible for returning it.

Charging the Material - When the material request is removed from the files and sent or given to the borrower, a notation should be made in the exact filing location indicating who has the material. There are two common methods of making such notations: by out cards which are used when individual papers are borrowed from a folder, and out folders which are used when an entire folder is removed.

Out Cards - "Out Cards" are made of cardboard, preferably with a relatively hard surface. They have a tab at the top labeled "OUT". Both sides of the card are lined and are ruled off into four columns headed as follows: "Document", "Date Out", "Borrower", and "Date Due". Exhibit 7 shows an "Out Card" ready for use. When a document is borrowed from a folder, and "Out Card" is prepared identifying the document and showing the name of the borrower, the date the document was removed from the folder, and the date it is expected to be returned. This "Out Card" is placed in the folder at the same time that the document is removed. When the document is returned, the "Out Card" is removed from the folder and replaced by the document. A line is drawn through the entry, and the card is ready to be used again. The next entry is made on the following line.

Out Folders - "Out Folders" are regular file folders with a tab at the top labeled "OUT". The outer surface of the folder is lined and divided into four columns with the following headings: "Name and Number of File", "Date Out", "Borrower", and "Date Due".

When a whole folder is borrowed from the file, the appropriate information is copied from the request form on to the last open line on an out folder, and the "Out Folder" is inserted in the file in the position formerly occupied by the borrowed folder. The advantage in using an "out folder" instead of an "out card" when a whole folder is borrowed is that it provides a storage place for new papers which may arrive while the original folder is out of the file. When the original folder is returned, all new material is removed from the out folder and integrated into the original folder; the out folder is removed from the file and the original folder is put back into its proper place.

A line is drawn through the entry on the "Out Folder", and it is ready to be used again.

A supply of "Out Cards" and "Out Folders" should be kept in the front or back of every file drawer so that they are available for convenient use.

Following Up Borrowed Material - The nature of the documents in a file will determine the length of time for which it may be borrowed. Highly confidential or valuable material should be returned to the files every night. A definite length of time should be set as the standard loan period for material which does not have to be back in the files every night. It is this loan period which determines the due date which is entered on the request form and the out cards and out folders. A regular check should be made daily to make sure that chargeouts are in order, and to trace

papers which have been out longer than the allowed loan period. The longer material is allowed to lie around in places other than the files, the more difficult it is to locate. Systematic follow-up will reduce the possibilities of loss.

A simple follow-up file should be used to make follow-up as simple and as systematic as possible. A small card file box is used which will hold the card forms used to request material from the files. It is fitted out with forty-three small guide cards, one for each month of the year, and the others numbered from one to thirty-one. Exhibit 8 shows how these guide cards look and how they are arranged in the follow-up box. As material is loaned from the files, the request forms are filed in the follow-up file according to due date.

Each day, the cards for material due that day are checked and calls made to the person who borrowed the material to request that it be returned. If, for any reason, it is decided to let the borrower retain the material for an additional loan period, the new due date should be entered on the request card. After all follow-up calls are completed for the day, the cards for materials on which the due date was advanced should be taken to the files and the changes in due date should be posted to the appropriate out cards and out folders. When this has been done, the request cards should be refiled in the follow-up file according to the new due dates. As material is returned to the files, the appropriate request card is removed from the follow-up file and destroyed after the material has actually been replaced in the file drawer.

About once every week, a check should be made of all out cards and out folders in the files to make sure that they all have current due dates. If any files are overdue, the follow-up file should be checked to see whether the request card has been misfiled or is lost, or whether a new due date has been set which was not posted to the out card or folder. Follow-up calls should be made for all material which still appears overdue after these checks have been made.

Part III

Summaries of Findings and Recommendations by Office

One of the major purposes of this survey was to learn what types of files were maintained in the various offices of the Presidency in order to anticipate the problems which might arise when the records were moved into the new equipment. In addition to the discussion of overall questions which appears in the two earlier parts of this report, it was felt advisable to provide brief summaries of the record holdings and filing systems in each of the offices visited together with such suggestions as might make the changeover to new equipment easier and more helpful.

Some of the sections dealing with specific offices are very short. Others are much longer. These differences are a result of differences in the quantity of records on hand and the complexity of the records management problems of the offices. The longest section is that dealing with the Press Office. In this case, we have attempted to work out a solution to a specific problem and at the same time illustrate some points which may be helpful to other offices when they make the transfer to the new equipment. These sections are presented in the order in which the offices concerned were visited.

PERSONNEL SERVICE

In addition to its dossiers de principe, the Personnel Bureau has just under 6 metres of Personnel folders in its possession. These folders are now filed by type of employee and then in alphabetical order according to the proper or given name of the employee. This is the logical method to use for files of this type and we would recommend that it be retained after the files are moved into metal file cabinets. Three cabinets will be needed to house all of the Personnel Bureau's records although this could probably be reduced when the Records Center is set up and old personnel folders are moved into it.

The major records management problem in the Personnel Bureau appears to be that of having information regarding employees readily available when telephone inquiries are received. Several systems of extra card files or books have been used in an attempt to solve this problem.

We feel that once the personnel folders are filed in the new metal cabinets, any folder will be within easy reach and could be located about as quickly as any card in a card file. The result will be that telephone inquiries will be answerable directly from the primary records without the need for transcribing the information on other records. The process of transcription, in addition to being time consuming, inevitably introduces a certain percentage of error which is avoided if original documents are used for reference.

The Salary Bureau has approximately five metres of records which are filed by type of employee (cadre or non cadre) and then according to the given name of the employee. Again we feel that this is the most logical filing method for this type of record. The use of steel filing cabinets will make possible quicker and more accurate access to the documents. Three cabinets should be ample to hold these records. This could be reduced to two if the older records were stored in the Records Center.

INTERIOR SERVICE

The current files of the Interior Service should fit well into a single file cabinet. The records of prior years, which are now stored in boxes on shelves should be sent on to the Presidency Records Center when such a unit is set up.

ACCOUNTING SERVICE

Bureau of Material

This Bureau has four major groups of records: (1) Records of liquidated expenditures, (2) Records of special expenditures (automobile repairs, etc.), (3) Records of inventories of equipment and (4) Records of Advance Funds.

(1) The Records of Liquidated Expenditures are filed in boxes by month and (budget) chapter. They accumulate at the rate of about 2 meters a year and are rarely referred to after one year. The current years records could be kept in one file cabinet. Those of prior years amounting to some 7 meters, should be kept on storage shelves, preferably in the Presidency Records Center. When the current year's records are put into a file cabinet, consideration should be given to the possibility of filing them chronologically by chapter. That is to say, Chapter would be the primary classification and within each chapter the sequence would be chronological with guide cards used to separate the various months, if this is found necessary.

(2) Records of Special Expenditures are kept in boxes by type of expenditure. When moved to a steel file cabinet they would occupy about 1/2 of a cabinet.

(3) Records of Inventories of Equipment are kept in books on shelves. They should remain as they are as they are not susceptible to filing in cabinets in their present form.

(4) Records of Advance Funds are filed in boxes by year, agency, name of manager and number of fund. They would fill about 1½ steel file cabinets. When they are moved into the new equipment, we suggest that they be filed by fund number, and that a card index be prepared to provide cross reference by agency and name of fund manager.

Bureau de d'Epenses Communes

The records of this Bureau consist of many small groups of files on a variety of subjects such as internal allowances, records of transportation, hospital fees, correspondence and copies of budget estimates, and requests for release of funds. The active records would fill less than one steel file cabinet and should be filed by subject and then date. The inactive records, which amount to some four meters, should be kept in the Records Center records storage area rather than in office space.

Bureau d'Ordanancement

The records of this bureau consist of (1) Borderaux d'Emmission des Mandates, (2) Reports on the situation of expenditures (3) Orders of receipt for reimbursement of over-payment and (4) Quarterly delegations of credit to sous-Ordonatents. If the older, inactive records of these types were kept in the Records Center, the active records could be kept in one steel file cabinet.

When placed in the file cabinet, the primary classification should be type of record. Within this classification, the first three types should be filed chronologically. The fourth type, quarterly delegations of credits should be filed first by province and then chronologically.

SERVICE OF PROTOCOL

The Service of Protocol has about 10 or 11 meters of subject matter files, about one-half of which is current records. The other half consists of older, inactive records which could be placed in the Records Center when such a unit becomes available. The remainder would occupy two or three steel file cabinets and should be filed in alphabetical order by subject. A card file cross index should be prepared to assist in locating needed records.

SERVICE OF POLITICAL AND SOCIAL STUDIES

This Service has two main types of records: basic case folders and very large card index. The case folders amount to almost 200 meters of records, about 60 meters of which, dating from 1955 and 1956, have already been microfilmed. The remaining 140 meters represent such a large volume of records that it would be difficult, if not impossible to file them in steel file cabinets in the present office space of the Service. Each cabinet would hold less than two meters, so that 80 or more cabinets would be needed. These cabinets would take up some 50 to 55 square meters of office space. This amount of space does not appear to be available in the present office of the Service.

We suggest that these records be housed in shelf filing units which would accommodate many more records in a much smaller area. Descriptive material on this type of filing equipment will be provided upon request.

An even greater equipment problem is posed by the large cross-index card file records of the service. The current index consists of upwards of 1,250,000 cards of three types: a name file of over 400,000 cards, a subject or incident file of more than 600,000 cards and a geographic or location file which contains in excess of 150,000 cards.

These card files are now housed in a variety of makeshift equipment, much of which is poorly suited to the purpose. Most of the cards are kept in wooden trays which are kept on shelves in large metal or wooden supply cabinets.

Effective handling of a card file of this size requires better equipment than that now in use. The less active portions could be kept in multiple drawer card file cabinets. These portions to which frequent reference is made should be housed in large rotary or revolving tray cabinets if they can be obtained. This type of equipment, however, takes up a lot more floor space than the simple card file cabinets. The offices occupied by this Service at the time of this survey did not appear to be large enough to accommodate this type of equipment. Illustrative material showing various types of card file equipment will be furnished upon request.

Periodically the older cards are removed from the cabinets, retyped on sheets of paper, and photographed. This job could be accomplished much more easily if a holder were designed to hold groups of cards together for photographing. A large amount of retyping could be avoided and the photographs would be made more quickly and more accurately. If the Service is interested in following up on this suggestion, we would be happy to assist in designing a suitable holder.

PRESIDENCY PRESS OFFICE

Office of Secretary to the Director

The two major files in this office are the Hanoi and Peking radio files and files of films and photographs of the activities of the President. The radio files are kept in binders and occupy about two meters of shelf space. Shelf filing would appear to be the most appropriate method for keeping these records and therefore no change is recommended. There is, however, a problem of indexing these files for ready reference. This problem can be handled in several ways. Perhaps the simplest, as well as one of the more effective ways of doing this is to index each day's reports as they are written up. The significant items in the reports are entered on subject matter cards as one or two line summaries which include the date of the report in which the item appeared. Succeeding items on the same subject should be entered on the same card. Subject headings will inevitably require some modification as the system is extended to cover more reports. Some subjects will be dropped, others added, and some changed slightly to make them more clear. This is not an easy job, but it is a necessary one if the radio files are to be of value. The index cards should be kept in card file boxes or drawers as the volume demands. Indexing should start with current reports preferably with each day's reports being indexed the day they are received. As time permits, older reports should also be indexed. The index must be posted at at least twice a week if it is to function at all.

Administrative Section

The files of this section are not very large and can be contained in one steel file cabinet. The present classification system should be adequate for keeping these records.

Liaison with Correspondent Section

The files of this section can be kept in a single steel file cabinet in folders; one folder per correspondent with additional folders used when the volume of paper in a folder gets too large.

Communist Press Review Section

The newspapers, periodicals and pamphlets which constitute the records of this section are best kept in the type of cabinet now in use in the Section.

(Press Office Continued)

Documentation Section

The subject matter files of the Documentation Section of the Press Office represent one of the more difficult filing problems which we found during our study. There were, at the time of the survey, approximately 20 meters of files kept in boxes, on shelves, and in cabinets which are not at all suited to this purpose. The filing and finding of needed documents is seriously impeded by this poor equipment. Fifteen of the new steel cabinets would house these records properly and allow for some growth of the documentation files. This new equipment would speed up reference to the files, make filing easier, and, more important, make possible a reorganization of the files and permit the introduction of more efficient and effective procedures for maintaining the files. With the cabinets, effective reorganization of the records is possible. Using the present equipment, it is next to impossible.

Once the cabinets are available for use, the following steps should be followed in reorganizing the records.

1. Prepare list of subject headings. A listing should be made of all subject headings and folder titles now in use. This listing should be prepared in outline form with drawer, box, or major subject headings on the left, secondary or large folder titles indented in a second column, and individual soft folder titles in a third column as in the following example.

NATIONAL DAY CELEBRATIONMajor Subject Heading

1957.....Secondary Subject Classification

1958

Parade

Addresses by Government Officials

Foreign Comment

} Individual folder titles

1959 FOREIGN VISITORS.....Major Subject Heading

President Prasad

President Rhee

} Secondary Subject Classification

President Garcia

Reception

Speeches

Tours

Departure

Foreign Press Comment

} Individual Folder title

Cardinal Agajanian

LAND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

2. Analyze listing. The resulting listing should then be examined and analyzed to:

- (a) Develop a logical sequence of major subject headings, with new headings not now in use being added where they appear appropriate.

- (b) Rearrange sub-headings into the most logical sequence under the major subject headings. This may well involve moving sub-headings from one major subject to another. New sub-headings may suggest themselves during this process. If so, they should be integrated into the system. This process may also suggest new major subject classifications which should be used.
- (c) Prepare a master listing from this analysis and re-organization which shows all major subjects, sub-headings and folder titles in logical sequence.

3. Add numerical designations. At this point, it is necessary to add numerical designations to the subject matter outline. The value of these numbers lies in the fact that they facilitate the coding of material to be filed and greatly reduce the time required for sorting and filing. The advantages of using numerical designations will be discussed more fully in the section dealing with the proposed procedure for filing operations.

Exhibit 9 shows a portion of a file outline with the numerical designations added. As can be seen, the primary headings are first numbered consecutively. The secondary headings are then numbered consecutively within the limits of the primary heading under which they are located. With each new primary heading, the numbering of secondary headings starts again with "1". The secondary number is always preceded by the number of the primary

heading and a hyphen. Individual folder titles are numbered consecutively within the secondary headings under which they are located. The folder number is preceded by the primary and secondary numbers and a hyphen.

4. Prepare guide cards. A guide card should now be prepared for each of the primary and secondary subject headings.

Exhibit 5 shows the sample portion of the file outline as it would appear on guide cards and folders in a file drawer.

5. Transfer files to cabinets. At this point in the reorganization, and not before, the actual folders should be removed from their present resting places and moved into the new cabinets. This should be done according to the new listing, one subject at a time, with appropriate guides inserted to separate the various subjects, until all records are in the new cabinets in the new sequence.

When records are filed in file cabinet drawers, the individual subject folders (usually soft folders) are the only ones normally retained. Heavy tied folders are eliminated, as are all boxes and other similar containers. This is possible because the file drawer itself now provides the enclosure which confines the folders and keeps them from being lost. It is practical because these containers no longer perform a useful function. They would consume a considerable amount of valuable

space in the file drawer and impede the filing process. The subject matter separations, formerly provided by the boxes or tied folders are now accomplished through the use of guide cards.

6. Prepare master chart. Once the file outline has been developed, revised, and numbered, and is in relatively final order (it will never be final or perfect because it will have to be changed from time to time to add new subjects or delete obsolete ones), a Master Chart of the outline should be prepared and hung on the wall where it can be seen by all who work on the files. In addition, mimeographed copies should be made available to each employee who uses or works on the file. With this filing and finding aid always available for ready reference, the speed of the clerks will improve rapidly, and within a short time they will have learned and memorized more of the new system than they ever knew of the old one. The primary teaching and learning aid will be the outline.

If the outline is very long, it may be advisable to include only primary and secondary headings and numbers in the Master Chart which is hung on the wall. The mimeographed outlines for the individual employees should be complete and include folder titles. These outlines should set up so that pen and ink corrections can be made when new folders are set up. They should be issued in loose-leaf form so that revised pages can be issued from time to time without the necessity of reprinting the whole outline.

7. Review contents of folders. Once the new system is set up and running well, it would be advisable to review and evaluate the contents of each folder to determine whether:

- (a) The contents of the folder are in agreement with its title on sub-heading.
- (b) The title on sub-heading should be changed to agree with the contents or to clarify reference to the contents.
- (c) Some of the documents in the folder belong more logically in a different folder.
- (d) The folder contains too much material and should be sub-divided into two or more subjects or into a greater number of folders of the same title. For this purpose a ready measure of whether a folder contains too much material is the rule that if it is over 2 cm in thickness, it is too large and should be split up. The question of whether to use different subject headings for the resultant folders, or to use the same headings followed by a number, is one which should be decided by an analysis of contents of the folder. Folders should be reviewed and divided when they exceed 2 cm in thickness whether or not all folders are reviewed as suggested here. Too large a folder causes difficulties in locating the desired document within the folder.

8. Add new material systematically. After the files have been reorganized and the numbered file outline is available, the problem of integrating new material into the file will be greatly reduced. The new material which is developed each day should be reviewed by a person who knows the activities and work of the office well. As he reviews each piece of material he should, through reference to the file outline, mark it with the number of the folder in which it is to be filed. When he comes across material which does not logically belong in an existing folder, he should decide upon a new folder title and upon the primary and secondary headings under which the new material should most logically fall, and write the new folder title and number on a slip of paper. The slip of paper should then be attached to the material to be filed in the new folder.

When all of the day's new material has been reviewed and coded in this manner, it should be turned over to the file clerks for sorting and filing. The file clerks, after arranging the material in numerical order, would file each item in the appropriate folder. When material requiring a new folder is found, the clerks should set up the new folder, insert the material, and file the folder in its proper place in the cabinet. The slips showing the title and number of new folders should be gathered together after the day's filing has been accomplished, and used to make pen and ink changes in all of the mimeographed file outlines. This can most easily be done by pinning them all

to a routing slip and circulating it to all of the people in the office who have file outlines. If a more formal procedure is desired, a list of new folder numbers and titles can be typed and carbon copies sent to each holder of an outline. Periodically, pages of the outline which have many pen and ink changes should be re-stenciled and re-issued as replacement pages.

9. Requests for Filed Material. Requests to borrow material from the documentation files should be handled in accordance with the procedure outlined in the section on "Charge-out and Follow-up" in Part II of this report.

THE GENERAL SECRETARIAT

The General Secretariat has about 50 meters of records, most of which are kept in boxes or on shelves. Of these, about 10 meters are recent, more or less active files, which could be housed in 5 or 6 of the new cabinets. The remainder are stored in a file room which is, in effect, a records center. In addition, each of the employees who actually handles the cases which come to the Secretariat has a file cabinet of one sort or another in which he keeps the records of the cases on which he is actively working. Once a case has been settled, it goes to the file room where it is given a number and filed in sequence with the other settled cases. A card file is maintained which indexes cases by subject, name of person or persons involved, and location.

The file room system here works very well. It is well organized, well run, and provides good, quick reference service on older files. Also, the equipment, forms and procedures in use here are excellent. Some of them might well be taken over and used in the operation of the Presidency Records Center. The storage shelves, in particular, are of good design and might well be adapted to Records Center use.

There are only two, relatively minor, suggestions which we can make for improving this operation. First, as each new case is received in the office and assigned to a specific employee for handling, it should receive the file number which it will

have all through its existence. The file room should then insert a card bearing this number in the current files to record to whom the case was assigned, and the case folder's movements as it changes hands or is set out of the office. In this way, there would be a constant control over each case, and its whereabouts would always be known. The cross index cards should also be made up at the time the case card is prepared. Then the case is completed and the dossier is sent to the file room, the card would be removed and the file folder put in its place.

Our second suggestion is to reduce the number of cards in the index file by combining references to the same person or location on the same card or cards. For example, under the present system, if the same person is involved in several cases, there is a name card for him for each case. His entire history is spread over several cards and there is no indication on any of these cards that he is involved in other cases. The file would be more useful if this information were combined and the single card for a specific individual showed the numbers of all of the cases in which he was involved. By this method, not only would needed information be found more quickly, but, in addition, the index file would compile additional information which would not otherwise be readily available.

THE SPECIAL CABINET

The records of the Special Cabinet amount to some 25 meters of files plus a large card index. Approximately 13 file cabinets will be needed to house these records. If some of the older records are sent to the Presidency Records Center when it is established, this number could be reduced somewhat.

The files of this office are of a highly confidential nature and were not examined in very much detail. They appear to be concerned with incidents or cases and people with the individual folders filed alphabetically, by the name of the person or case. Within each drawer, the arrangement appeared to be alphabetical although the sequence did not appear to continue from drawer to drawer. This was done purposely to make the file more secure from prying eyes. The key to the entire file rested in the card index which contained both subject and name cards, indicating the drawer in which the folder was filed and an indication of its place in the drawer.

The filing system in this office would be a lot easier to operate if the individual file folders were numbered in sequence, and filed according to this number. The index cards should refer to this number, which would identify the location of each folder accurately yet would not, from the labeling on the outside of the file drawers, draw unwarranted attention to the specific subject matter of the files in the drawer. In this way, a more effective system of filing would result without compromising the confidential nature of the files.

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF CABINET

At the time of our survey, the files of the Office of the Director of Cabinet amounted to approximately 25 meters of records, plus a card file index. This material, if transferred directly to file cabinets, would fill between 12 and 14 cabinets. There is not enough space in the office to hold this much equipment and still have room to carry on the work of the office. Therefore, the first step to be taken in modernizing the files of the office should be to reduce the volume of records by moving the older, inactive files to the Presidency Records Center as soon as it is in operation.

The remaining files would be of the following four general types:

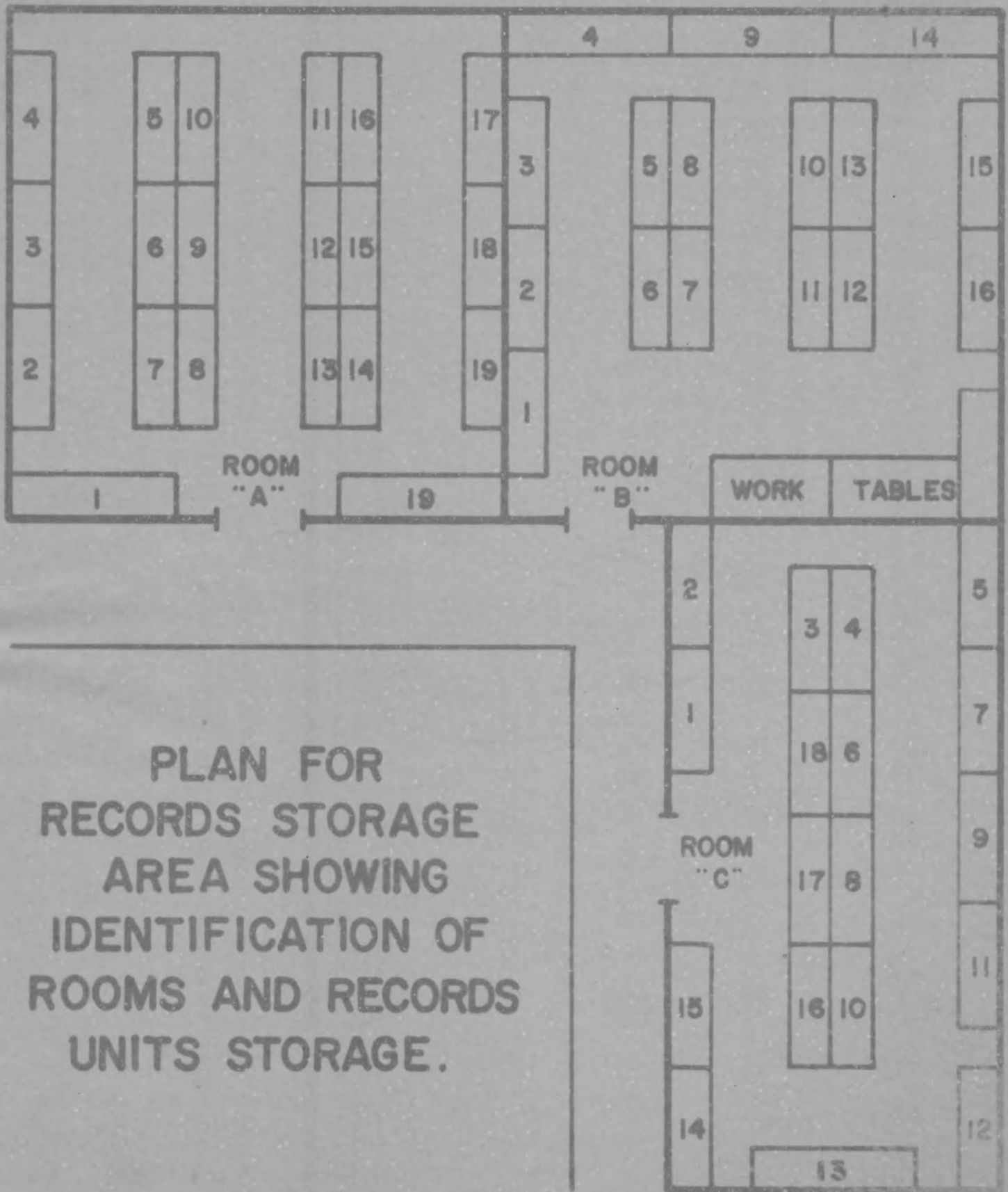
- Non-Confidential Affairs - These are filed by agency and by subject. The same sequence should be followed when they are moved into the new cabinets.
- Administrative Affairs (Pending) - These records are now filed by subject and should be filed in the same order in the cabinets.
- Ordinary Affairs (Completed) - It is these records which will be most reduced in quantity when older records are transferred to the Records Center. When the remainder are put into cabinets, the present organization of the files should be continued.
- Confidential Affairs - These records are in reality a subject matter file even though they are filed numerically. The numbering system now in use works well under present conditions. However, with the change to modern file cabinets, some modification of the system would appear to be desirable. These modifications are discussed in detail in the following paragraphs.

File folders in the Confidential Affairs file and now identified by a two-part number consisting of the number of the large, heavy-covered folder in which it is filed, followed by a slash (/) and the number which indicates the individual folder's position in the sequence within the large folder. For example, 21/17 would identify folder number 17 within large folder number 21. This system, while it is satisfactory for use with present equipment, should be modified when the files are moved to the new steel cabinets.

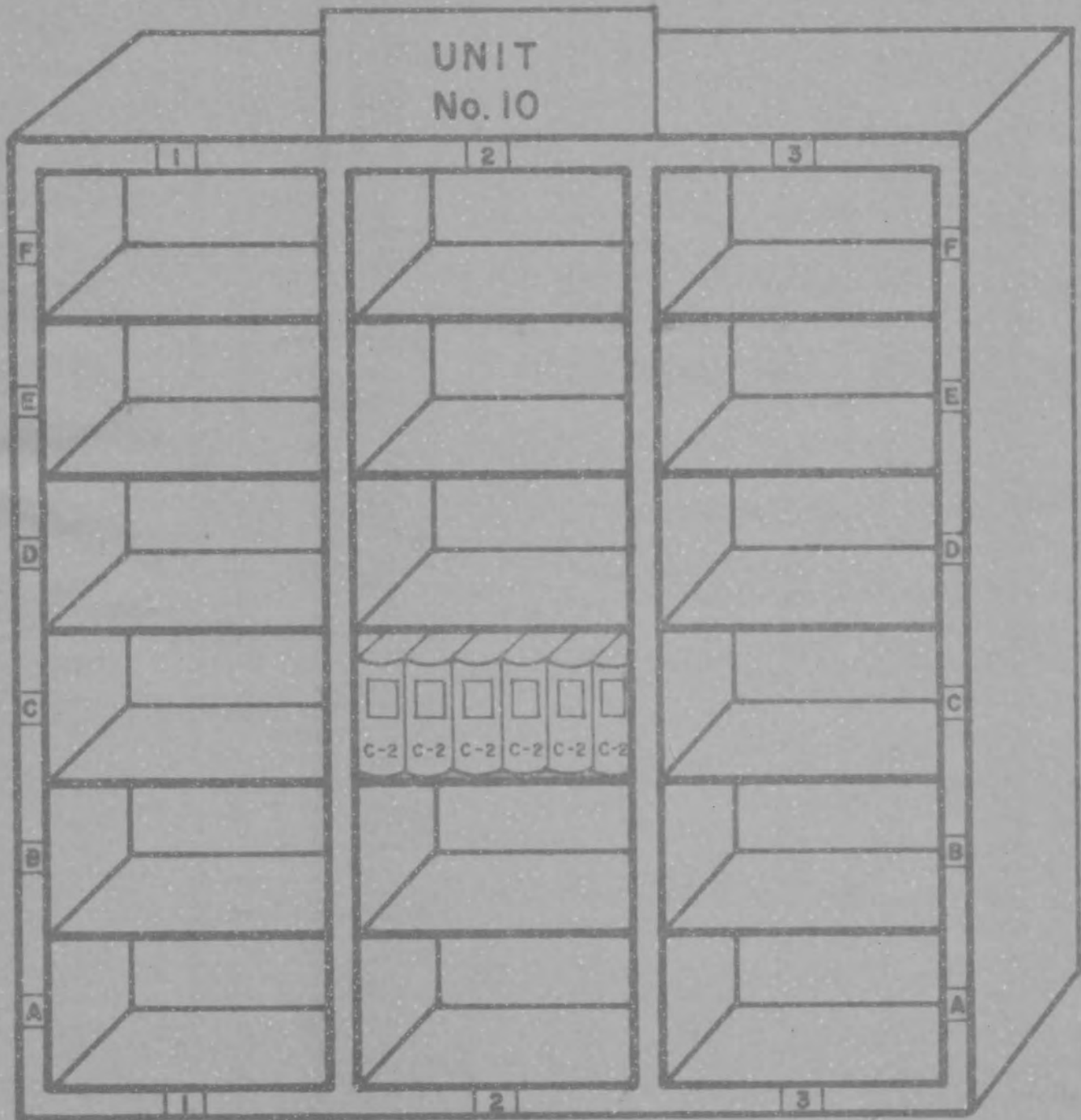
This is a subject matter file, and in principle it should be maintained as a subject matter file such as the one outlined in some detail in the section dealing with the Documentation Section of the Press Office. However, in view of the confidential nature of the material and the fact that it has up to this time been kept as a numeric file, it is probably better to retain its numeric organization, but with the following minor modifications:

1. When the current files are moved into the cabinets, they should retain their present two-part numbers. The heavy folders should of course be removed, but their place as identifying media will be taken by guide cards. The main reason for not changing the numbers of existing files is that it would be an almost impossible job to make the necessary changes in the card index file.
2. As new files are developed they should be numbered consecutively without regard for such things as large folder number, or drawer number. It is much easier to file and find things in a continuing numerical sequence than it is in a broken sequence such as that now in use. In addition, it is much easier to discover where folders are out of the files or misfiled if the sequence is continuous.

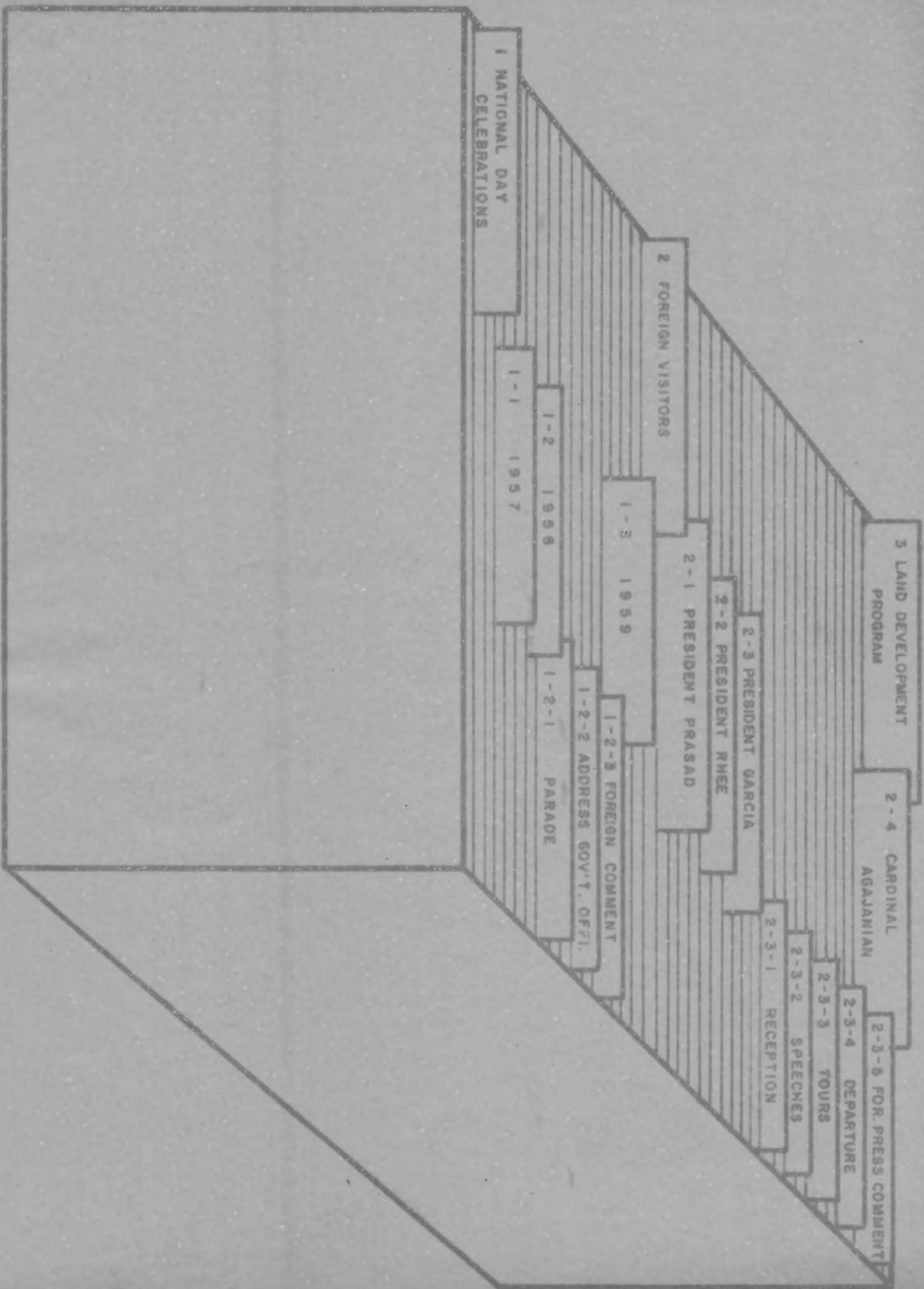
3. The same card index file should be continued. The difference in type of number used to identify folders should not affect its operation at all.
4. The starting number of the new sequence of file numbers should be that of the next box number which would have been used under the old system, but with two zeros added. For example, if the last file number under the old system was 32/15, the beginning number for the new sequence would be 3300. In the old part of the file, guide cards would be used for every change in large folder number. In the new part a guide card for every 20 or 25 folders should be sufficient.



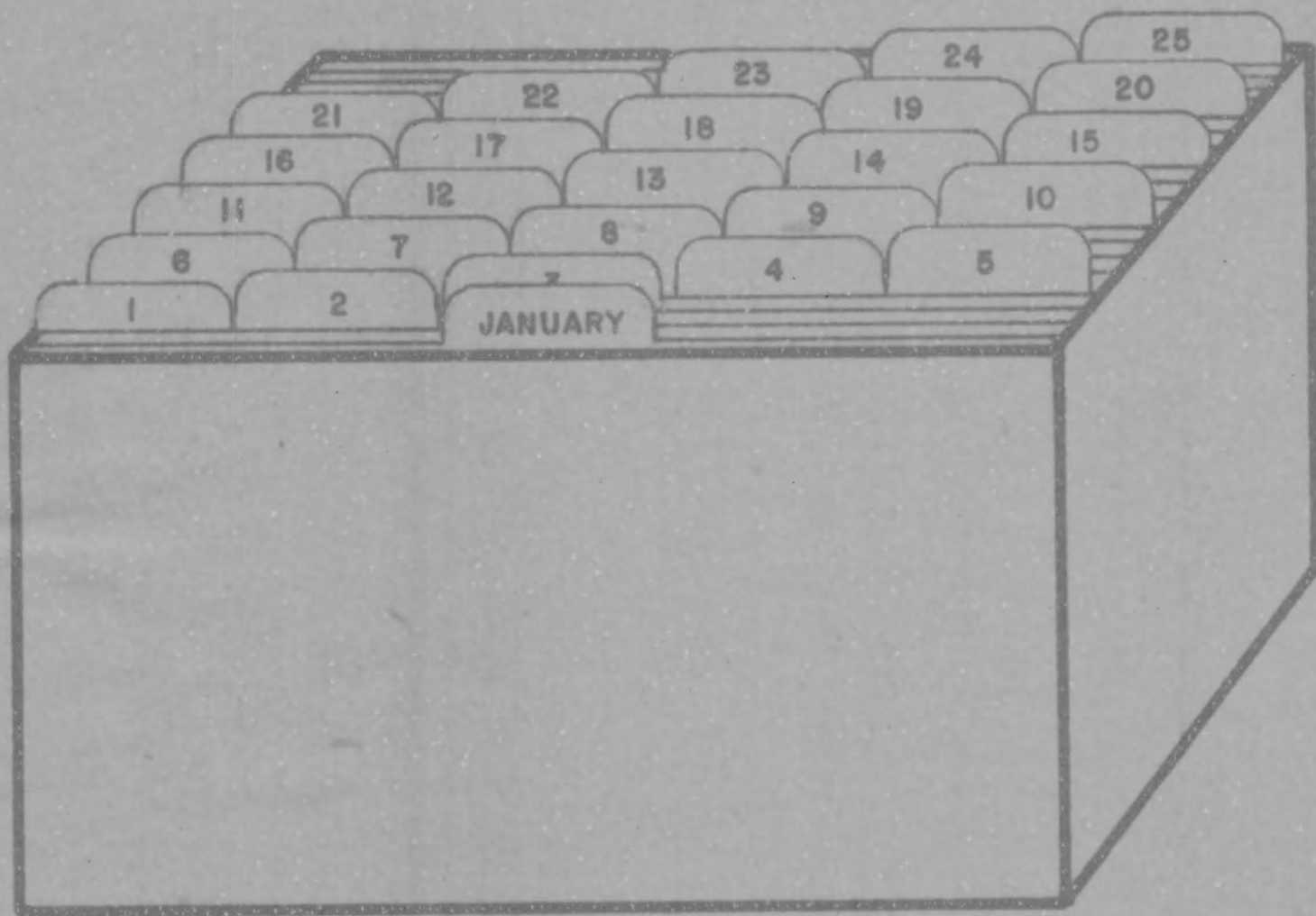
**REPRESENTATION OF RECORDS
STORAGE UNIT
SHOWING NUMBERING SYSTEM
FOR COMPARTMENTS**



PERSONNEL FOLDERS - SEPARATED EMPLOYEES				
(Name of Record)				
PERSONNEL OFFICE				
(Responsible Office)				
DATES		IDENTIFICATION OTHER	LOCATION CODE	DATE RECEIVED
FROM	TO			
1/57	12/57	Anh to Gia	B7/C2	10/6/58
1/57	12/57	Giao to Ninh	B7/C3	10/6/58
1/58	12/58	Ky to Truong	B7/F3	12/6/59



	<u>DATE DUE</u>
<u>FILE NAME AND NUMBER</u>	
<u>BORROWER</u>	<u>DATE OUT</u>
<u>SIGNATURE</u>	<u>OFFICE</u>



1. NATIONAL DAY CELEBRATION

- 1-1 1957
- 1-2 1958
 - 1-2-1 Parade
 - 1-2-2 Addresses by Government Officials
 - 1-2-3- Foreign Comment
- 1-3 1959

2. FOREIGN VISITORS

- 2-1 President Prasad
- 2-2 President Rhee
- 2-3 President Garcia
 - 2-3-1 Reception
 - 2-3-2 Speeches
 - 2-3-3 Tours
 - 2-3-4 Departure
 - 2-3-5 Foreign Press Comment
- 2-4 Cardinal Agajanian

3. LAND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM