

DEBEVOISE, PLIMPTON & McLEAN

*Skee*

MEMORANDUM

To: Mr. McLean

January 13, 1949

From: Mr. Patch

Digest of Interview with Mrs. Mary Gillis Skee  
at 1507 Wisconsin Avenue, Wash. 7, D. C.  
Tel. Michigan 2964, January 12, 1949  
at 1:00 P.M.

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I was employed during May, 1938, by the Carnegie Endowment Fund to work with Dr. William Ray Manning of the Latin-American Affairs Division and later during that year of the Treaty Division in the State Department. At first, my place of work was in a basement room, in the Department. I obtained access to this room by entering from 17th Street through an open gateway at which there were no policemen or watchmen, and then, turning right, by walking up a few steps through a doorway into a corridor on the right side of which, a few doors down, was a small basement office. There were no personnel in this corridor or in the office to receive or account for visitors. This office contained files of the accounts of the State Department and in some cases these accounts referred, I believe, to material that could have been extremely useful to an outsider. I was not interested in the subject matter of these files but rather assisted Dr. Manning in obtaining from and returning to the cabinets certain documents with which he was concerned in his work (which

was the preparation of a four-volume source book on historical developments in the Department of State). It would have been entirely possible for anyone who knew what he was looking for to walk in from the street and "borrow" any papers from these files.

In the autumn of 1938 I was moved to the Winden Building on 17th and F Streets, to an office next to that of Dr. Manning. Some months later, inasmuch as the Department needed that space, I was moved to the Treaty Division Library. I was provided there with desk space on which to do my editing but did not make use of the material contained in this Library. This material consisted in large part of treaties and documents relating to treaty negotiations. This material was scattered all over the room in haphazard fashion, with dusty files lying on window sills and tables. I never looked at any of these documents because I never had occasion to do so, but, at a glance, I could see that they consisted of printed materials, typewritten materials with covering letters, and other miscellaneous papers. I often saw people come into the Library and pick up some of these papers and walk out with them. In one instance I remember two people from the Treaty Division -- I believe Edith Miller was one of these -- coming in and grabbing up a sheaf of papers with the loud comment "these unilateral treaties are a nuisance, I hate to come down here because things are in such a mess", and then dashing out. Again, I believe that anyone could

have walked in there and selected any papers desired in order to "borrow" the same. In no instance do I recall the Department's ever having used a register -- that is, a paper accounting for the distribution and disposal of documents.

In 1940 I was moved to the Hill Building on 17th Street, where I had no opportunity to observe anything of concern to this problem. In December, 1941, our entire operations were moved to the Endowment building, and in November, 1942, my employment with the Endowment was terminated.

On two separate occasions I have been approached recently by FBI agents, who have inquired whether or not I knew anything about the "Woodstock typewriter". I know nothing about any such typewriter, but it is my belief that if Mr. Hiss were guilty, the typewriter could be found only at the bottom of the Potomac.

It is my recollection that there was a great deal of jealousy, backbiting and personal rancor among several of the personnel in the Treaty Division and in the Latin-American Affairs Division; particularly, I recall that Dr. Manning was transferred from the Latin-American Division as a result of the ambition of another man who wanted his job.

Because of my desire to see justice done, I will be glad to help in any way I can and, if necessary, to testify in court.

