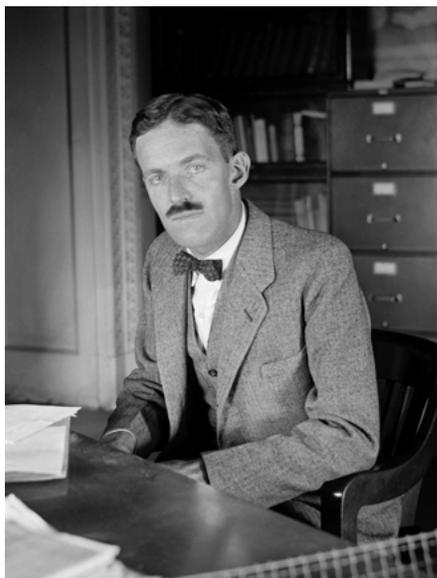


Allen Dulles on Political Reporting, 1925

David A. Langbart

Allen Dulles is known today primarily for his service in the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) during World War II and as director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) from 1953 to 1961. Dulles, however, began his government career in the Department of State in 1916. His uncle by marriage, Robert Lansing, was then Secretary of State. Dulles graduated from Princeton University in 1915, taught English in India for a year, and after examination received an appointment as a Secretary of Embassy or Legation.¹ Over the next decade he received a number of short appointments in various locales, all the while rising in the ranks.² Dulles survived the 1918–19 flu pandemic while overseas. In April 1922, he was designated as Chief of the Division of Near Eastern Affairs, serving in that position until 1926.

After leaving the Department in 1926, Dulles had a multi-faceted career in and out of government. He worked at the Sullivan & Cromwell law firm with his brother John Foster Dulles, ran (unsuccessfully) for public office, was a foreign policy intellectual during the 1930s with distinctly interventionist views, served in the OSS during World War II (mostly in Bern), served in high positions in the CIA during the Truman administration, and was named director of the CIA by President Eisenhower. Some of the notable events of his tenure as head of the CIA were the covert actions in Iran, Guatemala, and Cuba (Bay of Pigs), the development of the U-2 reconnaissance aircraft, and



Allen W. Dulles at work in 1924. Photo © Everett Collection/AlamyStockPhoto

the movement to overhead collection. He was dismissed as director after the failure of the Cuba operation. His final governmental position was on the Warren Commission examining the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. Dulles died in 1969.

In August 1925, Dulles was called on to give a series of lectures at the Foreign Service School on the subject of “political reporting.” His experience in the Department as both a producer and consumer of political reporting gave him a unique perspective on the subject and clearly influenced his presentations. Those lectures present a snapshot of Dulles’s early attitudes about the gathering of information overseas as

well as a general understanding of the uses of political reporting in the Department. Based on the arc of his governmental career, it is clear that his opinions changed over time. Indeed, given his later activities in the OSS and CIA, parts of the lectures read somewhat ironically.

A key development in the official representation of the United States overseas was the creation of a unified foreign service in 1924. This came about as the culmination of the long-standing movement to professionalize official American representation abroad that began before World War I. The complexity of issues raised during the war and the increased involvement of the United States in the international sphere after the conflict ended further called for changes. After several years of work, Congress passed

1. A secretary in the Diplomatic Service was a substantive position, not a clerical one.

2. Dulles was assigned to Vienna in August 1916, to Bern in April 1917, to the American Commission to Negotiate Peace in Paris in December 1918, to Prague in May 1919, to Berlin in October 1919, to the Department of State in August 1920, to the High Commission in Constantinople in October 1922, and back to the Department in March 1922.

The views, opinions, and findings of the author expressed in this article should not be construed as asserting or implying US government endorsement of its factual statements and interpretations or representing the official positions of any component of the United States government.

and President Calvin Coolidge signed a law commonly known as the Rogers Act, after representative John Jacob Rogers who spearheaded the legislative effort.

Under the provisions of the Rogers Act, the formerly separate Diplomatic Service and Consular Service were combined into the Foreign Service of the United States. In order to provide for the systematic training of newly appointed Foreign Service Officers, the Department established the Foreign Service School on June 9, 1924, under the provisions of Departmental Order 296 which was issued pursuant to Executive Order 4022 of June 7.

Those attending the school split their time between classroom lectures and practical training in the various offices of the Department. The numerous lectures

included administrative topics such as “Documentation of Merchandise, Invoices, Customs Regulations, Etc.,” “Shipping and Seamen,” and “Allowances and Estimates” as well as substantive subjects like “The Monroe Doctrine,” “The Petroleum Situation,” “The Baltic States and Russia,” and “Relations with Japan.” The first class of 17 officers, all men, graduated on September 1, 1925.

The following is the text of the lectures given by Allen Dulles on August 10, 11, 12, and 13, 1925, as prepared for dissemination. The version for distribution included the following disclaimer: “The views expressed in these lectures give the personal opinions of the lecturer and are not to be taken as an authoritative or official statement of the Department’s views with respect to the various questions asked.”



POLITICAL REPORTING.³

I. Scope of Subject, Definition and Primary Object –

Political reporting for the purpose of these lectures will be considered to include in general all that is not covered by “commercial reporting”—such as reports on negotiations, on the protection of American interests and nationals as well as general reports on the political, or politico-economic situation in a particular country.⁴

Political reporting in its restricted sense might be defined as assembling and transmission to the Department of information and data pertaining to the political and politico-economic condition in the country in which you are stationed and its relation to other States.

Primary object of Political Reporting is to enable this Government to promote and protect its interests.

There is nothing adequate in existing Consular or Diplomatic regulations for the guidance of foreign service officers except on subject of form.

It is impossible to lay down cut and dried rules—equally impossible to become a good political reporter by following formulas alone. All that can be given are general suggestions and each officer will have to work out his own salvation with the help of his chief, colleagues and his own good sense. However, you cannot be good political reporters unless you can write clear and expressive English. Reports must be accurate in all statements of facts. The officer must possess sound judgment and a sense of proportion and of relative values. This is obtained only through experience and each officer must adopt or modify any general suggestion according to the particular problem he has to meet.

It is important to have an idea of the philosophy of your job; what you are in the Foreign Service for; why there is a Foreign Service. The theory has sometimes been advanced in the past that foreign envoys are unnecessary; that it is sufficient for sovereigns or sovereigns

3. Source: Lectures Before the Foreign Service School, 1922–27, Entry AI-423, RG 59: General Records of the Department of State, National Archives. The distribution text presented here was slightly rewritten in a more idiomatic form than the typescript notes and some major changes were made. The major changes are described in the notes. While paragraph numbering remains as in the original, line formatting has been modified to save space. The lectures were sent to the field under cover of Diplomatic Serial No. 446, November 27, 1925, file 124.0664/57a, 1910–29 Central Decimal File, RG 59: General Records of the Department of State, National Archives.

4. In the typescript, this sentence ends with “the press, personalities and movements.”

acting through the Secretary of State to write directly to sovereigns with whom they had dealings. That theory is scouted at the present time, even with the improved means of communication and travel, as negotiation requires not only a channel of communication but also adequate information for the shaping of policy.

II. Relation of political reporting to other duties of Foreign Service Officers – Some officers spend so much time at their desk writing reports that they are not able to get about to find out what is going on and others are so busy collecting information that they do not have quiet to really analyze and report. It is important to strike an average. Efficiency is not judged by length or bulk, but by accuracy, timeliness and judgement displayed.

III. Primary objects of political reporting.

- a. To furnish information and conclusion that will enable the Department to shape its policy and furnish its officers with proper instructions.
- b. To keep the Department informed of all negotiations in progress and of action taken by Foreign Service officers in the furtherance of American interests or for the protection of American nationals.

(Officers in the field often fail to keep Department informed of each step in negotiations that are being carried on.)

- c. To give Department a general idea of the political situation in a given country with particular reference to the relations of the United States toward that country.
- d. To indicate the political developments that affect peace in general, or the general economic condition.

IV. Individual preparation for political reporting.

- a. Familiarize yourself with the diplomatic, political and economic factors, and history of the country to which you are assigned.
- b. Study American diplomatic relations with the country in question. Take as text books: Foreign Relations; Moore's Digest; Hyde's International Law; Malloy's Treaties and later Supplement.

Read over all treaties, both those in effect and those denounced, with country to which assigned. Many of your problems are covered by treaty provisions.

- c. For general background, read diplomatic memoirs, published despatches, etc. Take as an example of political reporting in time of crisis the published correspondence of the 1914 crisis—the so-called Kautsky publications, Red Books, etc.

V. General outline of the subject matter of Political Reports and suggestions as to some of the material which the Department expects and needs.

a. General political developments.

1. Important to indicate the possible relation of such developments to the United States.

2. Keep in mind the relative importance to the Department at a given time of developments on which you are reporting. Take, for instance, China at the present moment (1925)—anything from China is of importance. Officers in that part of the world should be particularly active in increasing the number of their reports and send in bits of information which under ordinary circumstances might be of minor interest, but which now have significance. Try to keep in mind the center of importance of political reporting—may be one or more—certain centers always retain their importance. (British Empire questions, for example). It is important to gauge relative importance to the Department of the field in which the officer is stationed. People in field do not perhaps realize how quickly centers of importance change.

b. Political developments abroad affecting United States—our treaty relations—our foreign policy. The attitude abroad towards our foreign policy. The developments affecting the Monroe Doctrine, the Open Door. The Treaty policy of other countries in their relation to our own treaty policy.

c. Politico-economic questions —debt funding questions. At this particular time anything relating to the financial situation in France, its taxation policy, its foreign loans, etc. are of great interest. The same applies to Belgium, Italy and other debtor nations. Effect of American loans to foreign countries.

d. The foreign press—what they say and what weight to give to it. The Press often is a fair reflection of attitude of people of that country, but be on your guard against propaganda. If there is propaganda about the United States, send it in; but state that it is propaganda and give reasons for your opinion. Most diplomatic missions abroad send in every week press clippings collected as far as possible according to subjects. Such clippings are helpful to the Department, but they are more helpful still if the officer expresses his idea as to the accuracy and importance of particular items. Department furnishes cards for reporting on newspapers, which are used as

reference by the Department in ascertaining reliability of a given paper.

e. Important personalities. It is very helpful for the Department to have officers prepare a “who’s who” of important persons in different countries and of the attitude of these people towards the United States. This should be prepared by the officer as he has the opportunity and supplemented from time to time.

f. International conferences held or attended by other powers but not by the United States. Officers are often stationed in a country where conferences are held with which we are not directly concerned, but it is important for the Department to know what is going on in these conferences, the questions discussed, and the final outcome.

g. League of Nations. Attitude of different countries towards League is of importance to Department.

h. Treaty policy of other countries—particularly regarding immigration, tariff, shipping, territorial waters, arbitration, naturalization, extradition, customs immunities, etc.

i. Diplomatic correspondence of other governments as far as properly available. Officers are not expected to engage in any underhanded activities to obtain documents not available through proper channels. But through maintaining proper personal contacts officer may often get through his colleagues unpublished diplomatic correspondence, notes written to the Government or notes written to their colleagues on points which may be, of interest to this Government.

j. Diplomatic precedents—also other precedents established in the country where officer is stationed. Even if of no immediate interest to the Department, they are very valuable for future reference.

k. Legal or other decisions involving Diplomatic or Consular precedents of immunities;—claims precedents, etc. United States may not be directly involved at the moment but precedent cases established in other countries might be of use in connection with our own diplomatic correspondence if a similar question were later raised affecting the United States.

l. Documents—standard publications, etc. Foreign Office lists—Diplomatic register, etc., White Papers- Blue Books—“Who’s Who. Collections of Treaties etc. should be transmitted. Also especially accurate or valuable maps of country in which stationed.⁵

m. Parliamentary debates, calling attention to all matters of direct interest to the United States. (For example, take the French Chambre at present—anything relating to the debt of France to the United States is of interest. A short while ago the same was true in regard to the ratification of the Nine Power Treaty by France.)

Send actual texts and documents. Too often these are summarized or paraphrased. They are of little use to the Department in this form.

n. Text of notes sent to Foreign Office. It is important that texts be sent to the Department, even if note was sent under instruction from Department. The exact form should be on file in the Department. Also report the character of all oral or informal representations to the Government or to local authorities.

Do not try to hide mistakes from the Department. If officer is frank and open, mistakes are more likely to be forgiven than if attempt is made at concealment and later discovered.

If officer writes letters in which certain principles are laid down, copies should be sent to the Department. Precedents may be established at individual posts of interest to the Department.⁶

o. Memoranda of conversations with Foreign Office officials and other important persons. If you go to Foreign Office or have important conversations with one of your colleagues, promptly make an outline of points brought out, be exact in stating what you said and what he said. The same principle can advantageously be followed in case of all important conversations, whether with officials or with private citizens.

It is helpful to successor to leave with him a documentation of what has been said to you and what you have said on all important questions.

If important political information is given you by a colleague, make memorandum of it and make it a basis of a report.

5. The August 10 lecture ended at this point.

6. The ideas in the last two sentences of this paragraph are not reflected in the typescript.

p. Diaries. Many officers find it useful to keep diaries. It serves as a check in determining whether you have covered all important developments in your reports.

q. Hypothetical future contingencies. Foreign Service officers are not expected to be prophets but should have some idea of probable future trend of events. It is often important to know whether the Government with which the United States is negotiating is strong or weak. Don't prophesy merely for the sake of prophesying and carefully distinguish opinions, or opinions of others, as to future developments, from facts. But don't be afraid to express your views as to important future developments if you are able to give sound reasons for your opinion.

VI. Devices which may aid in selecting suitable subjects for Political Reports.

a. Department's general instruction 258, April 12, 1924 and enclosure. This instruction has been superseded because it was found to be too complicated for general application throughout the field, but the Department still considers that the list of subjects may be helpful to officer in the field as guide in political and other reporting.

b. Keep on file in your office your own list of important questions in your own field of work and supplement this list from time to time. Do not make the list too long- keep only important subjects. Do not give undue weight to one subject to the neglect of others.

c. Follow American press to see what problems are being presented to American people. If American public is being interested in certain subjects which are within your field of reporting, the Department wishes to know all about that subject. Also follow comment of local press about this country.

d. Follow Congressional Record, read it or have some one in the office read it and bring to your attention all references to foreign affairs, particularly to country in which you are stationed. This gives a clue to profitable subjects for reporting.

e. Many missions are now receiving reports of the Secretary's conferences with the press. This gives an idea of what our press is following. If there are any inquiries in

regard to the country in which you are stationed, it will be an interesting clue to follow in the preparation of reports on the subject of the inquiry.

f. The Department's instructions often refer to continuing problem. Do not consider them answered by one reply if they relate to a continuing problem. If the Department has shown interest in a particular problem put it on list and when anything new comes up send a supplementary report. Very often it takes three or four reports or telegrams to answer one instruction from the Department.

VII. Collecting information for reports—Sources.

a. Your colleagues, Government officials and important personalities are essential sources of information. Successful personal contacts depend upon mutual confidence and personal liking, confidence of the other man that if he tells you a thing it will be treated with discretion, will be used in way not to get him into trouble—confidence that if he asks that source be not betrayed, you will not betray it.

b. Contacts with American and foreign press representatives often help in giving clues for political reports and for valuable information.^{7 7}

c. Valuable information sometimes secured through contacts with opposition leaders or persons out of power or sympathy with authorities in Power. This sometimes raises a very delicate question, but the Department wishes to know both sides of the story. There are certain countries where from social point of view people on the "outs" are more attractive socially than those in power, but that does not mean that they are better sources of information. Quite the opposite is generally the case.

The whole story is seldom heard in one place or at one time. Officers should learn to be quick and accurate in deduction. Very often it is valuable for the Department to get isolated bit of information on an important point, as the Department may have here the link to complete the chain.

d. The Press and Publications. It is important to analyze the press. If you know who is writing a particular article, this may give clue to the reason for

7. In the typescript, this paragraph reads: "American and foreign press representatives most helpful with regard to giving clues for political reports and for valuable information. Be sure to know to whom you are talking but great majority of press men are men of discretion and ability and patriotic."

sentiment expressed. It is important to the Department to have press clippings with proper analysis by officer. Be sure to indicate sources. If important articles appear in foreign press they should be sent forward with analysis.⁸

e. It is important to have various sources to check up information you obtain. Do not allow yourself to become biased by propaganda, flattery or special attention so that you give only the point of view of the country where you are stationed. On the other hand, do not become prejudiced against a country.

f. Travel. Improve all opportunities to see the country where you are stationed. Travel regulations are unfortunately rigorous, but the Department appreciates the need of an officer seeing more of the city where he is posted and will do what it can to authorize travel.⁹ Situations should be judged and reports based on a thorough knowledge of the country as a whole.¹⁰

g. In order to be in a position to secure information from foreign colleagues, foreign government officials, and other sources it is naturally necessary to give information in return. This does not mean that confidential information regarding your government's negotiations should ever be disclosed. There is, however, much information that can quite properly be given and while sound discretion must be used as to what is and what is not proper to discuss it rarely serves any useful purpose to make an undue mystery out of what you are doing. Within proper limits a frank, candid policy is generally best, and in return you are likely to establish contacts with your colleagues

which will result in making it possible for you to secure useful information from them.¹¹

h. It is also most important to cultivate cordial relations not only with your colleagues of the Foreign Service but also with the American military, naval, commercial and other attaches assigned to the country where you are stationed. Avoid secrecy among your own associates of the service or of other departments of the government. If you secure military, naval or commercial information or learn of sources of information that can better be handled by someone else on the staff be sure that the information or the sources are made available to the proper person.¹²

VIII. Mail and Cable Reports: When should cable rather than mail reports be sent.

The amount of your appropriation for cables will influence the question as to how much information you will be able to telegraph in a given period of time.¹³ In general it may be stated that the following are proper subjects for cable reports:¹⁴

a. Information relating to safety and welfare of American citizens —the Department is deluged with inquiries by those interested in an American citizen in difficulty abroad.

b. Important facts relating to pending American negotiations.

c. Crises affecting American lives and property.

8. In the typescript, this sentence reads: "If important articles appear in foreign press they should be sent in toto with analysis."

9. In this sentence, the word "city" most probably should be "country."

10. The August 11 lecture ended at this point.

11. In the typescript, this paragraph reads: "In order to get information from foreign colleagues, one of the most valuable sources of information, it is often necessary to give them information—which raises rather a delicate point. Discretion must be used as to what is proper information to give them. Do not make undue mystery out of what you are doing. Frank candid policy generally the best and in return you are likely to get valuable information."

12. In the typescript, this paragraph reads: "In connection with securing information important to cultivate cordial relations with military, naval and commercial attaches. Avoid secrecy as far as possible among your own associates of the service or of other Departments of this Government. If you get military, naval or commercial information or sources that can better be handled by some one else on the staff, turn it over to him."

13. At the time of these lectures, the United States Government did not have its own overseas communications system. Rather, it relied upon the facilities of commercial telegraph companies, which could be expensive.

14. In the typescript, this section reads: "The amount of your appropriation for cables may settle question as to whether to send information by mail or telegraph. It is important to know what should be telegraphed and what can wait to go by mail. In general telegraph—"

d. Political developments of real importance.¹⁵

Before telegraphing ask yourself whether the time a certain item of news or a note reaches Department will seriously affect its usefulness.

Safety of means of communication often a factor — code often safer than mail. Pouch service not entirely adequate as it does not reach all diplomatic missions and relatively few consular offices. Where we have no pouch service safety of lines of communication not always certain. If important information of a highly confidential character reaches you, you would be safer in telegraphing than in sending it by mail. Avoid unnecessarily putting into telegrams or despatches anything so confidential that it would seriously embarrass you or your Government if it fell into other hands.¹⁶

Instances have occurred where use of old codes has been of serious consequences- (Zimmerman and Luxburg telegrams).

In use of codes make messages as fool proof as possible. Repeat figures where accuracy of vital importance, also sums of money. Often well to repeat “not.” It is often possible to avoid use of negative by employing another word. Example, instead of “do not grant visa” use “refuse” visa.

IX. Organization of Department for the handling of political reports.

Reports coming in to Department from field are generally sent first to Index Bureau, where files are searched to see if there may be other correspondence on same subject, indexed, and sent to division handling country

or subject in question. There it goes to officer in Division handling that particular country, or subject, who goes over it and makes notations of his views and sends along to Chief of Division, who in turn goes over it, together with notations or recommendations. If no reply or action is necessary it is sent to files.

The Department has made provision for marking certain material of a highly confidential or extremely important character “Confidential for the Secretary or Under Secretary.”¹⁷ This notation should only be used in exceptional cases, as it is the practice of the chiefs of the divisions and bureaus to bring to the attention of the executive officers of the Department reports that they have received which are of real importance.¹⁸

The volume of material coming into the Department from the foreign service is so great that it is physically impossible to acknowledge or to comment upon individual reports except in rare instances. This means that even in the case of good reports the officer preparing the report does not always receive formal notification of the excellence of his work. However, the general rating of an officer is very greatly affected by the character of his political reporting work and in a great many instances excellent reports are sent to the Personnel Board for notation on the efficiency record of the officer in question.¹⁹

It is inevitable that the officer who knows how to write an interesting report and to secure the attention of the officers in the Department by the manner and form of presentation will have more attention paid to his report than the officer who may have equally good material to

15. In the typescript, this sentence ended with “—revolutions, etc.”

16. At this point, the typescript included the following paragraph which has been deleted in its entirety: “Sometimes you may desire your communication to be read by officials of Government to which accredited but this is a rare and often dangerous expedient. Telegrams sometimes sent clear for this purpose.”

17. At the time, the Under Secretary of State was the second ranking official in the Department.

18. This paragraph does not appear in the typescript.

19. In the typescript, at this point are the following paragraphs:

“In case of consular reports, before coming to Chief of Division it would be rated. Not the case with diplomatic officers for reasons that political reports usually signed by Chief of Mission. Department gives very careful consideration to political reporting work as a whole and individual officer preparing political reports receives credit therefore through his chief, foreign service inspectors and otherwise.

“In case officer in field writes or telegraphs for instructions - reply would be drafted by officer in political or other Division handling that country or subject, then it would come to the Chief of Division, then in case it should be of interest to Chief of any other Division, it would be sent to him for initialing, then to CR, then to signing officer. In case signing officer does not approve it is returned to officer preparing for amendment. “Great mass of material coming into Department and officers should not be discouraged if he does not receive answer or acknowledgment even in case of reports to which he has devoted great attention.”

submit but who fails to make a clear, logical or interesting presentation of his subject.²⁰

X. Dissemination of political reports:²¹

Many political reports received by the Department are of interest to other branches of the Government or to other diplomatic or consular missions. To meet the situation the Department has set up the following machinery for the adequate dissemination of such reports:

a. In the Department of State. Political reports received in the Department are carefully studied with a view to determining whether they would be helpful to another branch of the Government. Example: the Treasury Department in the case of a report on the financial situation of a given country; to the Department of Commerce in the event that a politico-economic situation were being treated; to the Military Intelligence Division or the Office of Naval Intelligence (in the case of the War and Navy departments) in the event of any military matter being considered.

The officers in the field should, as far as the pouch service or mail facilities permit, send directly to neighboring missions political reports of interest to such missions. If this is done the copy of the report sent to the Department should clearly indicate the action taken. If there is no such notation the Department will take it for granted that no distribution has been made by the officer preparing the report and will then send to the field to all interested missions copies of the report in question.

b. The Department has arranged for the centralized dissemination of political reports received from European diplomatic missions through an office established in the Embassy in Paris called the European Information Center (E.I.C.). The Department realizes that much time is wasted in sending reports from Europe to the Department and back again to other interested missions and has therefore arranged for centralized distribution from Paris, a copy of each political report being sent to E.I.C. at the same time as the report itself is dispatched to Washington.

Section X as it appeared in the typescript

“(a) By Department -

1. To other branches of the Government.
2. To missions abroad.

—officer sending in report to Department may send copy to other interested missions abroad, in which case notation made on report. Otherwise Department sends copy. Every incoming report examined to see whether it might interest any other mission in the field and if a copy not already sent to that mission it is sent by Department.

(b) Directly or through E.I.C.-

Appreciating that much time is wasted in sending reports from Europe and back again there is now in Paris Embassy a Division called European Information Center in charge of diplomatic officer, to which copies of all political reports prepared in European missions are sent at the same time as the reports are sent to the Department. Copies sent out from E.I.C. to interested missions.

Original coming to Washington bears stamp to effect that copy has been sent to E.I.C.

(c) Deal as frankly and openly as possible with your own colleagues. If at consular post, consul at neighboring post may be interested in your report. Send him a copy. It adds to good feeling and effectiveness of service to have full cooperation, particularly along line of political reporting.

“(d) The Monthly Bulletin - contains monthly information on pending negotiations of this Government and of status of our international relations which cannot yet be given out to public. Sent to diplomatic missions where it is possible to send them safely.

In addition to Monthly Political Report publication covering particular subjects of negotiations and Diplomatic Correspondence are issued and circulated from time to time.

(e) To the press. Important for Department to have idea of what reporting officer considers as confidential both as regards other Departments and the Press - Fact should be clearly stated by officer sending in report.”

c. From time to time the Department gives out to the Press important information received from its officials abroad, particularly telegraphic reports. This is done through the Office of Current Information in the Department of State. In the event that an officer in the field

20. In the typescript, this paragraph reads: “More attention given in Department to reports which arouse interest of officer handling them in first two or three paragraphs.”

21. This section had been completely rewritten. The typescript version can be seen in the text box above.

reports on a matter which would be of interest to the Press but does not desire any part of this particular report to be given to the Press because of the source through which it is received or for any other reason, he should mark his telegram or report "confidential" or "Strictly Confidential" as the case may be so that the Department may be on its guard and not give out information which would embarrass the officer making the report.

XI. Relation of Foreign Service Officers to their Chiefs in connection with Political Reporting.

Do not be discouraged if in the first few years of your work you do not get your name attached to all the work you do. This is particularly true in the diplomatic service. All political reports from diplomatic missions are signed by the Chief of Mission, who must assume responsibility for diagnosis of the political situation of the country where he is stationed. You may disagree with him at times but remember that he is responsible. In the long run an individual officer's work in political reporting becomes well known to the Department.

XII. Relations between Diplomatic and Consular Officers in Political Reporting.

Diplomatic officers stationed in capita—consular officers very often stationed in outlying districts—they may view situation from different angles. Diplomatic officers try to give picture as whole in any given country. When consular officers make political reports copies should be sent to diplomatic mission.²²

If it is just as expeditious to send consular political reports through Diplomatic Mission, it should be done in that way. That would give the Embassy or Legation, as centralizing office, opportunity to express judgment on political reports and give the Department a coordinated view of the situation. The Department desires to know if there is just ground for differences of opinion. But it is proper in some instances to send consular political reports direct to Washington and this would be justifiable in important cases if any serious delay would result from sending them through the Diplomatic Mission.

The time has gone by when diplomatic officer did all the political reporting and consular officer all the commercial reporting, now a fair division of work depending upon the special facilities and opportunities of each officer, but at the same time the Diplomatic Mission is responsible for the political side of the work except in countries, dependent colonies, etc. where there is no Diplomatic Mission.²³

XIII. Periodic Reports—General Reports.

In the case of certain diplomatic missions, particularly the larger ones in Europe, the Department has sent instructions that there should be periodic reports sent in—perhaps once each week—perhaps fortnightly—perhaps monthly. Officer must be largely responsible for deciding when political reports necessary.

But all important subjects should be treated in separate reports.

If more than one subject treated in one report it is difficult to file or to have easily available later for reference. For practical reasons where there is one distinct political movement, event, etc., make that the subject of a separate report. It may be supplemented by general political reports covering a definite period of time.

XIV. Writing for Publication by Foreign Service Officers.

Department on February 26, 1925, sent an instruction to diplomatic and consular officers in which it was pointed out that the Department would be glad to have officers in the field write for publication, under certain safeguards and avoiding anything that might be embarrassing to country in which stationed. Articles must first be sent to the Department to be passed upon as to whether it contains anything that should not be published. The Department may also make helpful suggestions as to what magazine would be interested.

XV. General suggestions.

Whenever possible, put human interest into your reports—Deal with personalities and their policies.

22. At this point, the following paragraph appears in the typescript: "No adequate instructions as to political reporting by consular officers. Circular of July, 1917, sent out largely to stimulate consular reporting on political questions."

23. The August 12 lecture ended at this point. In the typescript, this paragraph reads: "Time gone by when diplomatic officer did all the political reporting and consular officer all commercial reporting, now a fair division of work depending upon the special facilities and opportunities of each officer."

Indicate at beginning of the report, if possible, what it is about and try to arouse interest of Department from very first paragraph.

If you wish instructions on a given point and are writing to get instructions, make it clear what you want.

Do not submit hypothetical questions to the Department unnecessarily. The Department does not generally answer such questions. In case you know of a serious contingency that may arise which you would be embarrassed in not knowing how to meet, the Department may give a reply to your request for instructions but must be convinced of importance of situation.²⁴

Be fair with your sources of information. Do not betray identity by name in cases where that would be embarrassing but wherever possible names and sources should be given, but with a word of caution to the Department to guard the source.

Diplomatic or consular officer may jeopardize usefulness for other duties by attempting to engage in secret political intelligence. Secret reports not necessarily of great value to the Department, which is rarely able to judge whether the report is accurate. Secret documents are being fabricated all the time in certain parts of the world.

Be careful to distinguish fact from fancy. Be very candid in advising the Department if you think the report is based on information that may be inaccurate.²⁵

Accuracy in reporting probably most essential point, as a chain of reasoning is no stronger than its weakest link.

If an inaccurate report is sent in and it is found out, it is not soon forgotten - may lead to serious embarrassment.

Telegrams from Foreign Service Officers are not supposed to take place of newspapers or daily press. If you know certain information of general political interest is being well reported through newspapers or Associated Press for example, you would probably be justified in merely calling Department's attention to Press reports. But where a real American interest is involved the Department looks to its officers for a report even though the Press has already carried the story.²⁶

It is of vital importance to keep one's balance. Do not become unduly prejudiced for or against country to which you are accredited—often difficult—we are all influenced by flattery, attention and propaganda, but try to prevent factors of that sort from biasing your views.

Political reporting really can only be understood by actual practice. It forms one of the most interesting and important phases of an officer's work. Prepare for it by learning how to write English, and to analyze clearly and discriminatingly.



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24. In the typescript, this paragraph reads: "Do not create hypothetical questions - Department does not answer such questions. In case you know of a contingency that may probably arise within a month or so that you would be embarrassed in not knowing how to meet properly, Department may give reply to request for instructions but must be convinced of importance of situation."

25. In the typescript, this paragraph reads: "Be careful to distinguish fact from fancy. Be very candid if you think report based on information that may be fabricated."

26. The last sentence of this paragraph is not included in the typescript.