

concern that the capacity of 1.5 million items will all be taken up before the planned three-year period is complete. Secondary storage, off-line is provided in roll microfilm cassettes. The files of Bureaux and "Offices" (the latter equivalent to our Divisions) are maintained three years current, apparently largely by the secretarial staff with some monitoring by the Central Registry. The introduction of the computers has led to a somewhat higher retrieval rate in the Central Registry from both current computer storage and the older files but at about one-hundred per day in substantive subjects (excluding also consular where many posts abroad are in direct on-line terminal contact) the utilization of the State Department system is so far only about double External Affairs retrievals from the Randtriever. Given the disparity in size this would seem to suggest that desk officers' personal filing systems in Ottawa call for more support than do the "Office" files in Washington, or conversely that access to the organized "Office" files is to some extent regarded as superior to maintaining personal working files. The State Department classifiers/indexers, located together in the Central Registry, are virtually all college graduates, as are the "disseminators" in the communications system. Both indexers and disseminators use on-line CRT terminals. The latter group has responsibility for deciding all information addressees of incoming telegrams, a function that has been most effectively eliminated in the External Affairs system by requiring originators to determine all addressees (sometimes augmented by desk officers with particular knowledge of Ottawa needs). To assist the disseminators the State Department has introduced TAGS (Traffic Analysis by Geography and Subject), requiring each communication to bear special indicators. The State Department also has the computer-based SADI system catering to the need of the Secretary and Assistant Secretaries of State and others in the upper echelon of the Department to maintain an effective control over the movement of key documents and correspondence. This appears to be an overly elaborate and expensive system, given its objectives and what it accomplishes, and seems to be putting some strain on the computer capacity.

153. The Director of the Foreign Affairs Document and Reference Centre is now considering introducing CRT's to some of the Bureaux with the idea of bringing the Central Registry closer to the "clients". He also has commented that getting competent indexers has posed difficulties. Another important point, mentioned earlier, is that the reconstitution of files from randomly stored material has proved to be disappointing, being relatively slow as well as costly.

154. The Swiss Foreign Ministry have been determined to strengthen their information system in the political and economic sectors and ran an indexing and retrieval experiment utilizing full-text computer storage. Although this had to be discontinued for budget reasons they are determined to go ahead again soon. Their experiment, conducted by foreign service "political" personnel, did demonstrate that the writing of abstracts or précis by the indexers involves far too much time and effort and that reasonably good retrievals can be obtained from key words alone. The Swiss were kind enough to provide a copy of their French language thesaurus which could be of considerable value as the basis for building a Canadian version if it is decided one is needed.

155. The European Economic Community has set up a system called ECDOC using computer indexing and retrieval for the formal reports, documents and Minutes generated within the very large bureaucracy of the Commission. The