

arguments advanced in the Rankin report and, like that report, emphasize the need for independent judicial review where an appeal is made against a ministerial decision denying access. Although the idea of "an information commissioner with the power to order release of information" is introduced as one of "the only meaningful options," nothing more is said about it.

In its recommendations, the Bar Association outlines the principles upon which legislation should be drafted. Given a choice between American and Australian legislation on access, the Association would prefer the latter as being more specific in defining exemptions. The exempted categories presented are more closely defined than are those proposed by the Green Paper. "National defence" for example replaces the much broader category of "national security" proposed by the Green Paper.

It is to be hoped that the brief will get the attention it deserves, and that the Bar Association is able to make a further contribution to the discussion by preparing their intended model bill.

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Access to the Papers of Recent Public Figures: The New Harmony Conference.

Edited by ALONZO L. HAMBY and EDWARD WELDON. Bloomington, Ind.: Organization of American Historians for the AHA-OAM-SAA Committee on Historians and Archivists, 1977. 107 p. \$4.00 (Available from the Executive Secretary, Organization of American Historians, 112 N. Bryan, Bloomington, Ind. 47401.)

A first glance at the contributors and topics represented in this volume raises great expectations. The issues are current and controversial, the contributors are associated with the writing of contemporary history, but the length of most pieces was limited for conference presentation to a maximum of five pages. The American Historical Association—Organization of American Historians—Society of American Archivists Committee on Historians and Archivists sponsored a short conference in October 1976 on research access to the papers of elected and appointed public figures. The final resolutions were submitted to the National Study Commission on Records and Documents of Federal Officials. The coy title of the conference refers not to a consensus but to the geographical location of the meeting in New Harmony, Indiana.

The conference endorsed previous statements on access, including public control of the records of Presidents, and recommended that Presidential papers be opened ten years after the conclusion of the official's public life, that all historical records of federal executive agencies be transferred to the National Archives within a period of thirty years, and that all classified material more than twenty years old be systematically reviewed for declassification by the National Archives. One half of the participants were historians writing primarily on the post-World War II period; the remainder were archivists with only a few linked to federal institutions. The introduction to the resolutions refers to a conflict of interest "between students of recent or contemporary history and students of more remote periods. . . [with] the existing system. . . biased in favor of the latter. Restrictions are often justified on the grounds that they are required to guarantee that historians in later years will have papers of the quantity and quality that they will need."

Several articles are of particular interest. A.L. Hamby, in an overview of the historian's dilemma, identifies photoduplication limitations as a major deterrent to

research. J.E. O'Neill, Deputy Archivist of the United States, provides a useful six-page summary of American access legislation and regulations at the federal level. An historian who has sued for access to public papers, Allen Weinstein, acknowledges some anxiety about the potential misuse of previously confidential personal records. D.J. Reed, Director of the Office of Presidential Librarian, describes the application of access restrictions in those institutions. Professors B.W. Cooke and B.J. Bernstein, despite substantial revision of their papers after the conference, demonstrate the difficulty of writing about archival management without a mastery of the subject.

This volume does not provide a benchmark on the archival continuum between preservation and access, but it does serve as a report on the status of American archives, archivists and historians. The 1970 *Report of the Joint AHA-OAH Committee to Investigate Charges Against the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library* demonstrated a lack of communication between curators and users. Not all differences of opinion have been resolved since that report, but historians and archivists are discussing these subjects in a better atmosphere. Access to archival materials and preservation of the historical record are major news items before the American public. The emergence of the Society of American Archivists as a lobby with a full-time Executive Director has had some effect, but the key player has been a former President reluctant to make adequate provision for his papers.

A major theme of the conference was the evolution of the Presidential libraries, whose success in meeting the limited objectives of an earlier era are acknowledged. However, the extension of those objectives and the proliferation of libraries has led many to conclude that a more effective approach to the preservation of the nation's most important papers can be found. The National Archives has implemented many modifications to the operations of the libraries, particularly in the application of access restrictions, since the Roosevelt Library case eight years ago.

The *Final Report of the National Study Commission on Records and Documents of Federal Officials* is now available to compare with the original resolutions of the New Harmony conference. The Commission recommended that all records accumulated in the course of their duties by federal officials, including the President, be recognized to be the property of the United States and placed in the National Archives immediately upon the conclusion of the term of office. It also recommended that normal access restrictions to Presidential papers should not exceed fifteen years and that all classified material be reviewed for declassification after twenty or twenty-five years. If action is taken soon on these recommendations, the divergence between documentation accessible in Washington and Ottawa on the same issue will become even greater.

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A History of Higher Education in Canada, 1663-1960, ROBIN S. HARRIS.
Toronto: University of Toronto Press, ©1976, 1977 printing. xxiv, 715 p. ISBN 0 8020 3336 9 \$37.50.

With no single name is the history of higher education in Canada more closely associated than that of Robin S. Harris. A simple glance at the opening of the bibliography of his latest contribution to this field, *A History of Higher Education in Canada, 1663-1960*, attests to this fact. In 1960 appeared Harris' *Bibliography of Higher Education in Canada* (compiled with A. Tremblay); this was followed by book-length supplements in 1965 and 1971, as well as a series of updatings in successive