

**REPORT  
OF  
THE RECORD MANAGEMENT  
COMMITTEE**

**JUNE 1976**



V2:8.N7i  
L6  
167589

**NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI**

## CONTENTS

	PARAS	PAGES
<b>I. Introduction</b> ...	1.1	1
Education Minister's letter to States/ Union Territories ...	1.2	1
Composition of the Committee ...	1.3	1—2
Terms of Reference ...	1.4	2
Scope of Enquiry ...	1.5—1.6	2—3
Modus Operandi ...	1.7	3
Visits to States/Union Territories ...	1.8—1.9	4
Scheme of the report ...	1.10	4—5
Acknowledgements ...	1.11	5
<b>II. Summary of Recommendations</b> ...	2.1—2.19	6—11
<b>III. Past Practices</b> ...		12
Introductory ...	3.1—3.2	12
Destruction of Records Act, 1879 ...	3.3	12
Management by Crisis ...	3.4	13
Systematization and Preservation Problems ...	3.5	13
Weeding operations ...	3.6	13
Impact of new filing system ...	3.7	13—14
Origin and growth of record offices ...	3.8	14
Setting up of Imperial Record Department ...	3.9	14
Fillip to appraisal and weeding operations ...	3.10—3.11	14—15
Smith Report and its impact ...	3.12	15
Indian Historical Records Commission ...	3.13	15
<b>IV. The Commission's Resolutions</b> ...		16
Commission's background ...	4.1	16
Commission constituted ...	4.2—4.3	16—17
Pre-1857 records ...	4.4—4.5	17—18
Sub-Committee's recommendations ...	4.6	18—19
Weeding deferred ...	4.7	19
Judicial records ...	4.8	19—20
Post-1857 records ...	4.9—4.12	20—22
Archival Legislation ...	4.13	22—23
Effectiveness of the Commission ...	4.14—4.15	23—24
<b>V. Disposition of Records</b> ...		25
Problems of Bulk ...	5.1	25
Quantum of Central Records ...	5.2—3.5	25

## (ii)

Quantum of Union Territories/States		25—26
Records	... 5.4	
Staggering cost	... 5.5	26
Disposition defined	... 5.6	26
Outright destruction	... 5.7	26—27
Classification	... 5.8—5.9	27
Transfer to Departmental Record Rooms	5.10—5.12	27—28
Transfer to Archival Repository	... 5.13	28
Weeding of Central Records	... 5.14	29
Weeding of Records in States/Union Territories	... 5.15—5.16	29—31
Diversity of criteria	... 5.17—5.18	31—32
Interim Repositories	... 5.19	32
Retention Schedules	... 5.20—5.22	32—34
Printing of Records	... 5.23	34
Control Mechanism	... 5.24	34
Archival Buildings	... 5.25	34—35
<b>VI. Qualification of the Personnel</b>	...	<b>36</b>
Qualitative Failure	... 6.1—6.3	36—37
Archival Repositories	... 6.4	37
Archival Cadre	... 6.5—6.6	37—38
Record Rooms	... 6.7—6.8	38—39
<b>VII. Problems of Coordination</b>	...	<b>40</b>
Heterogenous Growth	... 7.1	40
Position during the British Regime	... 7.2	40
Factors influencing common practices	... 7.3	40
Historians' Forum	... 7.4	40—41
Official Attitude	... 7.5	41
Archivists Forum	... 7.6	41
Statutory basis	... 7.7—7.9	41—42
Estimate Committee's observation	... 7.10	42—43
Archival Policy Resolution	... 7.11	43
Administrator's views	... 7.12	43
Historians' opinion	... 7.13	43—44
Archivists' views	... 7.14—7.15	44
Archival Law	... 7.16	44
Archival Council	... 7.17	44—45
Composition	... 7.18	45
Functions	... 7.19—7.22	45—47

## APPENDIX I

Text of the Resolution adopted at 43rd Session of the Indian Historical Records Commission held at Lucknow, recom- mending the setting up of the Committee ...	46
--	----

## APPENDIX II

Audio-Visual Records ...	48—52
--------------------------	-------

## APPENDIX III

Private Papers ...	53—55
--------------------	-------

## APPENDIX IV

Questionnaire for collecting data in respect of management of records ...	56—62
--	-------

## APPENDIX V

Schedule of visits to States/Union Territories	63
--	----

## APPENDIX VI

Archivists, Historians and Administrators whose oral evidence was recorded ...	64—79
---	-------

## APPENDIX VII

Chronological sequence of past practices in respect of appraisal and weeding ...	80—87
---	-------

## APPENDIX VIII

Resolutions adopted from time to time by the Indian Historical Records Commission regarding appraisal, weeding and archival legislation and indicating briefly the extent of action taken thereupon as reported by the Secretariat of the Commission ...	90—100
--	--------

(iv)

**APPENDIX IX**

Patterns of classification of records prevalent at the Centre and in certain States/Union Territories ...	101—105
---	---------

**APPENDIX X**

Statement showing un-appraised records holdings of Ministries/Departments of the Government of India ...	106
--	-----

**APPENDIX XI**

Statement of records appraised in the National Archives/Ministries/Departments of the Government of India during 1970-1975 ...	107
--	-----

**APPENDIX XII**

Statement showing the weeding of records in different Union Territories States during 1970-75 ...	108—109
---	---------

**APPENDIX XIII**

Explanatory note from Thiru L. M. Vaṣagam, Commissioner of Archives and Historical Research, Tamil Nadu Archives ...	110—114
--	---------

**APPENDIX XIV**

Note by Dr. S.V. Deśika Char ...	115—122
----------------------------------	---------

## CHAPTER I

### Introduction

1.1. The Archivists and Historians who had assembled at Lucknow on 28th-29th January, 1975 for the 43rd Session of the Indian Historical Records Commission were much perturbed over the alleged large scale indiscriminate destruction of public records in several States as had been reported at the time in the press. The Commission, therefore, resolved that a sub-committee consisting of 5 members of the Commission should be constituted to investigate and report its findings to the Standing Committee within 6 months (Appendix I).

**Introductory**

1.2. Soon after the Session of the Commission the Hon'ble Minister for Education and Social Welfare, Government of India, himself an eminent historian, addressed a communication to all the Chief Ministers/Governors of the States and Union Territories requesting them to co-operate with the Committee and also to ensure that no pre-1947 records were destroyed till the Committee submits its report (Government of India, Department of Culture D.O. No. F. 8-2/75/CAI(2) dated the 22nd March 1975).

**Education Minister's letter to States/Union Territories**

1.3. In pursuance of the above resolution, the Government of India in the Department of Culture *vide* letter No. F. 8/7/75/CAI(2), dated 11th March 1975, constituted the following Committee :—

**Composition of the Committee**

- |   |                        |
|---|------------------------|
| (1) Dr. B.P. Saksena,<br>Retired Professor of History,<br>Allahabad University,<br>Allahabad  | Chairman               |
| (2) Dr. P.M. Joshi,<br>Retired Director of Archives,<br>Government of Maharashtra,<br>Bombay  | Member                 |
| (3) Thiru C. Badrinath, I.A.S.,<br>Commissioner of Tamil Nadu<br>Archives and Historical Research,<br>Madras  | Member<br>(ex-officio) |
| (4) Shri A.T. Govindarajan,<br>Deputy Secretary,<br>Department of Personnel &<br>Administrative Reforms<br>(Administrative Reforms),<br>Cabinet Secretariat,<br>New Delhi | Member<br>(ex-officio) |

- |   |                                  |
|---|----------------------------------|
| (5) Dr. S.V. Desika Char,<br>Director,<br>State Archives of Karnataka,<br>Bangalore           | Member<br>(ex officio)           |
| (6) Shri S.A.I. Tirmizi,<br>Deputy Director of Archives,<br>Government of India,<br>New Delhi | Member-Secretary<br>(ex-officio) |

On transfer of Thiru Badrinath from Tamil Nadu Archives, Thiru L.M. Vasagam, I.A.S., Commissioner of Tamil Nadu Archives and Historical Research, was appointed member of the Committee on 11th July, 1975 in his place.

**Terms of Reference**

1.4. It will be seen that the terms of reference of the Committee were as under :

- (a) the extent to which the various resolutions of Indian Historical Records Commission are being implemented ;
- (b) the period and the nature of records destroyed during the last two years ;
- (c) the qualifications and suitability of the staff engaged on appraisal of old records ; and
- (d) the steps which can be taken immediately to ensure the preservation of records of permanent value.

The Committee was asked to report its findings to the standing Committee of the Commission within a period of 6 months. In view, however, of the magnitude of the task and the time that had necessarily to be spent in visiting the States for an 'on the spot enquiry', further extension of time was sought and granted.

**Scope of Enquiry**

1.5. We held our first meeting in the National Archives of India, New Delhi, on the 7th May, 1975. The first task before us was to clarify to ourselves the precise scope of the enquiry entrusted to us. While doing so we were guided by the definition of "Public Document", as given in the Indian Evidence Act comprehending :

- (i) all documents forming the acts or the records of the acts of (a) the sovereign authority ; (b) official bodies, tribunals and (c) public officers, legislative, executive and judicial and
- (ii) all public records kept of private documents (Section 74).

We also took into consideration the definition of records as enunciated in the Archival Policy Resolution of the Govern-

ment of India which includes documents, rolls, codices, sheets, files, dossiers, microfilms, photographs, charts, plans, diagrams, maps, sound recording etc. Also, para 1 of the Resolution which confines the scope of the records to :

- (i) all Departments/Ministries
- (ii) all Committees
- (iii) U.P.S.C.
- (iv) attached and subordinate offices as may be determined from time to time, but not to the records of the Supreme Court, the Comptroller and Auditor General, the Election Commission and the Parliament or of autonomous bodies set up by the Union Government, including nationalised undertakings and enterprises.

The two definitions combined embrace a formidable range of documents including not only the records of the Government of India, the Union Territories and the State Governments and the offices and corporate bodies subordinate to them, but also those of the Central and State Legislatures, the Supreme Court, the High Court and the courts lower down. These are scattered all over the country and managed by different records creating and records keeping agencies.

1.6. In view of the bulk and variety of this wide coverage of records we decided to restrict our investigations strictly to the problems of disposition of non-current records in relation to our terms of reference. We did not feel it necessary to go into the problems of current records except to the extent that they impinged on our terms of reference as these had already been exhaustively dealt with by the Tara Chand Committee on Archival Legislation (1960). The problems of audio-visual and private records have also been incidentally touched upon (Appendices II & III) with a view to focussing attention on them.

1.7. In order to accomplish this task we thought that we should inform ourselves of the factual position by issuing a questionnaire to all those connected with, or interested in the matter of records management as well as their preservation for historical and archival purposes. We, therefore, approved at our first meeting comprehensive questionnaires (Appendix IV) which had been thoughtfully drafted by the Member-Secretary in anticipation. These questionnaires were immediately issued asking for replies to be sent to the Secretary by the 30th June 1975.

**Modus-  
operandi**



**Visit to  
States/  
Union Ter-  
ritories**

1.8. Even though we held the second meeting on the 23rd July, 1975, a full month after the expiry of the last date for the replies to the questionnaire, we found that the response thereto was far from adequate. Further, whatever information had come it was also too vague and incomplete to be really of much use in projecting a clear picture of the many facets of the problem. We, therefore, decided to undertake a tour of the various States, and Union Territories to study the problem *in-situ* and also to hold discussions with the administrators, archivists and historians interested in the varied problems of records management. Starting with the northern zone on the 22nd August, 1975 we, completed our entire programme of visits, ending with the Eastern Zone on 12th December, 1975. The visits covered in all thirteen States and three Union Territories, as listed in Appendix V. During the visits we held discussions with the representatives of the various governments, archivists and historians representing the viewpoints respectively of creators, keepers and users of records as listed in Appendix VI. We recorded the evidence of as many as 33 administrators, 18 archivists and 55 historians, the typed record of which ran into 643 pages.

1.9. The data supplied to us in response to our questionnaire were subsequently supplemented by our discussions with all those concerned with the management of records in the States and Union Territories. In some of the States we have had the benefit of meeting and holding discussions with the Governors and Chief Ministers as well as other concerned Ministers. The publicity through the radio and press that was given to our visits helped indirectly in creating a consciousness for archival problems as a backdrop to such discussions.

**Scheme of  
the report**

1.10. The conclusions we have drawn on the basis of the information collected by us through the questionnaire and the discussions we have had during our visits are now set out in the chapters that follow in the following order :

**Chapter II** gives the summary of recommendations for the benefit of those who may not find time to go into details of the report ;

**Chapter III** attempts a bird eye view of the past practices in records management during the British period ;

**Chapter IV** records the resolutions of the Indian Historical Records Commission having a direct bearing on the question of appraisal and weeding of records and archival legislation ;

**Chapter V** discusses the crucial problems relating to the disposition of records in the context of the main question posed to us, namely, the period and nature of records destroyed during the last five years ;

**Chapter VI** covers specifically the aspect of qualifications of the staff connected with records management ;

**Chapter VII** spells out the further steps considered necessary for preventing destruction of records of permanent value.

1.11. Before we conclude this introductory chapter we should like to express our thanks to all those administrators, archivists and historians, who have assisted us in the course of our enquiries and answered our questions so patiently. We are particularly grateful to the Governors, Chief Ministers and Education Ministers of the various States and Union Territories, who so generously spared their valuable time for such discussions. Our thanks are also due to the Director and other officers of the National Archives of India, to the officers of the Union Territories and the States, who responded to our queries and also extended their full co-operation to us in the course of our investigations. In particular, we wish to place on record our appreciation of the strenuous efforts put in by Shri S.A.I. Tirmizi, Member-Secretary of the Committee, who despite his heavy burden of responsibilities as Deputy Director of Archives provided us efficient secretariat assistance, and drafted this report with great assiduousness and ability within a short time.

**Acknow -  
ledge-  
ments**

## CHAPTER II

### Recommendations

2. 1. We recommend that the Indian Historical Records Commission should essentially be an academic forum with a compact membership as under :

<b>A. Ex-Officio Members</b>		
(i) Minister for Education and Social Welfare, Government of India	President	
(ii) Secretary to the Government of India, Department of culture	Member	
(iii) Director of Archives, Government of India	Secretary	
(iv) Deputy Director of Archives, Government of India, (dealing with the work of the Commission)	Joint-Secretary	
<b>B. Nominees of the Government of India</b>		10
(i) Retired eminent Historians who have a recognised status by virtue of their contribution to historical writing on the post-1600 period of Indian History		5
(ii) Retired eminent Archivists who have made solid contribution to the development of archives in the country		5
<b>C. All Directors of State Archives (at present)</b>		20
<b>D. Learned Institutions conducting research in post-1600 History of India</b>		5
<b>E. Universities ...Around</b>		25
(a) The representatives of such Universities as are supervising/ conducting research in the post-1600 period of Indian History		

or

- (b) are actively associated with the work of survey of records in collaboration with the Archivists

#### **F. Corresponding Members**

20

Those foreign scholars who are associated with the disciplines ancillary to History and Archives (para 4.15)

2.2. We recommend that the criteria laid down in para 81 of the Central Secretariat Manual of Office Procedure which are comparatively simple be generally adopted for this purpose (Appraisal) (para 5.9).

2.3. We recommend that one of the functions of the Indian Historical Records Commission at its annual sessions should be to draw up a panel of historians both for the Centre and the States to assist them in :

- (a) drawing up/reviewing the record retention schedules ;
- (b) scanning through lists of non-confidential non-current records condemned for destruction by administrators and advising the Government to hand them over, if possible, to Universities/Learned Societies willing to preserve them for purposes of research (para 5.16. d.).

2.4. We recommend that Interim Repositories be set up wherever deemed to be necessary. As far as the Centre is concerned, we understand, that the Government have made provision in the present Plan for an Annexe to house non-current records of the Government of India. We are of the view that the proposed Annexe should be spacious enough to accommodate all the appraised and unappraised records of more than twenty-five years. One wing of the Annexe should be earmarked to serve as an Interim Repository to house records awaiting appraisal prior to their final transfer to National Archives of India (Para 5.20).

2.5. We are of the view that all administrative units in the States/Union Territories should frame general retention schedules common to all the departments on the pattern of that prepared by the Department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms. They should also frame special retention schedules indicating the periods for which files, registers etc. peculiar to the nature of its activity are to be kept. The

guidelines laid down in these schedules should be as self explanatory as possible so that even a junior official can derive adequate guidance from it after a brief training for undertaking the work of appraisal of records. The retention schedules currently in force should be reviewed at an interval of five years (Para 5.22).

2.6. We recommend that retention schedule should be drawn up in consultation with the local historians in addition to the respective Director of Archives at the Centre and in the States. For this purpose the National/State Archives Councils which we have separately recommended should maintain panel of historians on the recommendation of the Indian Historical Records Commission (Para 5.23).

2.7. We recommend that after examining the pros and cons of all the feasible alternatives (xeroxing, offset duplicating, filming), the Governments at the Centre/States/Union Territories should resume the practice of printing of records of permanent value (Para 5.24).

2.8. We recommend that a chart should be required to be submitted to the Head of each Department/Secretary of the Ministry showing the progress made after each review as also of the records remaining to be appraised. The chart should also clearly indicate precisely when the next review is to be initiated by the officer incharge of the record room. The chart should be accompanied by a summary report giving a brief review of the progress made. The summary should be incorporated in the annual report of the Ministry/Department/Office concerned (Para 5.25).

2.9. We recommend that highest priority should be given to the construction of archival buildings in the Five Year Plan schemes. We further recommend that adequate accommodation be made available for the current and semi-current records in Ministries/Departments/Offices at the Centre and the States/Union Territories. As accommodation available for suitably housing the records in the High Courts is also quite inadequate to their needs, we recommend that adequate and suitable accommodation be made available for their use (Para 5.26).

2.10. We are firmly of the view that the Departmental Record Rooms should be placed under the charge of archivally trained full time personnel (Para 6.3).

2.11. (a) We recommend that a combined Archival service be created for the Centre and the Union Territories at the earliest.

(b) A similar service is recommended for the Archives in the States (Paras 6.5 & 6).

2.12. We recommend that Archives should receive their due share in the future Five Year Plans (Para 7.5).

2.13. We recommend that all the State Governments should issue promptly Archival Policy Resolution similar to that issued by the Government of India in order to ensure uniform archival development throughout the country. (Para 7.11).

2.14. We recommend that legislation should be undertaken, if possible, for a common law to cover both the Centre and the States or separate laws, because of constitutional or other reasons (Para 7.16).

2.15. We recommend that a National Archival Council be set up with a distinguished historian or an archivist, as chairman, and comprising :

- a representative each of the Department of culture, Ministries of Law and Finance and the Department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms (each in their ex-officio capacity);
- Director of Archives, National Archives of India, (ex-officio);
- Four eminent historians from among the members of the Indian Historical Records Commission ;
- Director of Archives/Officer incharge of State Archives (ex-officio);
- three archival representatives of the Union Territories to be chosen by rotation by the Council.

The Council will have an independent Secretariat under the Member-Secretary (Para 7.18).

2.16. We recommend that the Council shall :

- be charged with the duty of examining constitutional, financial, administrative and archival aspects of enactment of an archival law or laws for the Indian archives in consultation with Central Ministries of Law, Education, Finance and Department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms (Administrative Reforms), and State Governments ;
- determine the class or categories of records together with their specified periods, in public or private custody, for declaring them of national importance;

- consider and prescribe the nature and extent of authority of inspection, protection and access to records so declared ;
- co-ordinate archival activities in the country, and within the States with a view to streamlining the archival practices as far as practicable ;
- maintain a panel of names of eminent historians recommended by the Indian Historical Records Commission for being drawn upon for consultation by Central/State Governments ;
- examine the development projects of all the Central and State Archives ;
- tender technical advice to the Planning Commission on the allocation of funds ;
- lay down guidelines for the proper acquisition, arrangement, disposition and access to records for purposes of bonafide research ;
- establish an Institute for conducting Archival training and research, and the awarding degrees, diplomas on the basis of examinations to be conducted by it ;
- take note of all archival developments at the Centre and in the States and offer such advice and guidance as may be called for;
- initiate action for framing model recruitment rules for all archival posts at the Centre and in the States with a view to ensuring that suitable qualifications are laid down for the purpose ;
- examine the resolutions passed by the Indian Historical Records Commission and recommend practical course/courses of action for their implementation by the Central/State Governments, but it shall not withhold any resolution of the Commission from the Government (para 7.19).

2.17. In order to assist the Archival Council in its day to day work we recommend that the Chaiman shall constitute an executive committee of not more than six members of the Council in addition to the Member-Secretary who will function as an administrative Secretary (Para 7.19).

#### **Funds**

2.18. The administrative expenditure of this Council shall be met by the Government of India which shall also place at its disposal plan funds earmarked for archival

development for allotment to the National and State Archives plans. Funds released by the Commission to States shall be routed through the State Archival Councils. (para 7.19).

In view of the above we recommend that the Standing Committee of the Indian Historical Records Commission and the National Committee of Archivists be dissolved (Para 7.20).

2.19. We recommend that similar State Archival Councils be set up in the States with functions broadly corresponding to those of the National Archival Council in their respective State jurisdiction (Para 7.21).

**State  
Archival  
Councils**



## CHAPTER III

### Past Practices

#### Introductory

3.1. The problems connected with what has now come to be termed as 'records management' and which have assumed enormous dimensions today had their beginnings in India towards the last quarter of the eighteenth century. Of course they did not carry this comprehensive appellation for connotating management of the 'cradle to grave' aspects of lifeless files. To help us to have a clear perspective of the connected issues posed to us, we thought it appropriate to acquaint ourselves with the manner in which the problems of appraisal and weeding of records have been attended to from those early days of the Company when some at least of the administrative concepts of the present day India were beginning to take root. The Appendix VII to this report lists the more land marks upto 1947.

3.2. A close look at what appears at first sight to be as a series of isolated events does indeed reveal the connected story of the gradual evolution of many of the records management practices taken for granted today. This also brings out that many a practice was, inevitably, borrowed from their home country by the British rulers. Also, it helps us in drawing a number of important conclusions.

#### Destruction of Records Act, 1879

3.3. The landmarks have been listed separately for judicial records, and administrative records, for facility of treatment. It does not, however, mean that the administration did not have any say over judicial records. On the contrary, the appraisal and weeding operations in the judiciary were very much subject to the overall supervision of the then Supreme Government. After the passage of the Destruction of Records Act in 1879, the High Courts had their weeding rules approved by Government, bringing about a certain amount of uniformity in their procedures. This Act also was the first attempt at making statutory provision for giving legal immunity to the judicial authorities empowered to order destruction of records, including documents deposited by private individuals, if not reclaimed in time. All this would clearly indicate that the concept of 'independent' judiciary had not acquired that degree of separatism, as was to be evidenced later by the somewhat cold attitude of the Calcutta High Court of the recommendations of the Indian Historical Records Commission. We shall have occasion to refer to this aspect in the next chapter.

3.4. Lacking, as the then administrators did, knowledge of modern methods of management, it is not surprising that management of records was generally characterised by what we would now call 'management by crisis'. Such a situation seems to have obtained till the transfer of power from the Company to the Crown. This is evident from the fact that at least till the time of such transfer the problem of records was attended to by fits and starts, the timing of such attention from superior officers being determined essentially by :

**Management by Crisis**

- the pressure on storage space built up by accumulated records becoming visible and perhaps intolerable,
- the 'accumulated confusion' represented by the heaps from which no meaningful retrieval was ever possible, and
- the ravages of climate and insects beginning to threaten the very physical existence of such records.

All this should not lead us to any hasty presumption that the subject did not receive any proper attention either during the Company's rule or under the early days of the Crown. The halting attention bestowed on the problem then as it is probably the case even today, was more often due to considerations of economy.

3.5. The initial efforts to systematise the arrangement of records so obviously necessary to overcome the 'disorder' or the 'accumulated confusion' came up for the first time in 1775, and for the second time in 1793, in regard to judicial records. The administrative records received similar attention in 1787, when they were also stated to have been 'inventoried'. Similarly, the havoc caused by climate and insects began to be taken note of leading to some preventive measures at least temporarily till 1811.

**Systematisation and preservation problems**

3.6. The problem of space caused by unrestricted accumulation gave rise to the need for getting rid of what were considered as 'unimportant' records. The first much weeding operation for judicial records took place during 1833-34, then repeated in 1845, and again during 1852-53. The realisation of the need for a more rational approach to weeding, by laying down clearly identifiable categories for the purpose seems to have dawned in 1865 in respect of judicial records.

**Weeding operations**

3.7. The take over of the administration by the Crown in 1858 was followed by the adoption of a systematic filing system in place of what were then called 'weekly consultations', and a change from 'folded files' to 'flat files' with a

**Impact of new filing system**

number of appurtenances like appendices, keep-with, d.o. etc. Viewed in today's context, when all-out efforts are on to curb the evil of excessive noting, the change over was perhaps more a retrograde step, rather than a progressive one. But the transformation did have its good points as well, in that, with systematic filing, came also systematic classification based on the nature and importance of the files. This, in turn, brought about the concept of 'retention' periods linked to the degrees of importance, the more important being preserved with markings such as A, or B, and the ephemeral papers earning the 'Deposit' stamp for being 'destroyed'.

**Origin and growth of record offices**

3.8. The need for a general record office seems to have been felt as early as 1819, initially for the purpose of preserving the digest of all information collected and transactions received by 'Putwarries and Cannongoes'. The office was set up at Calcutta in 1820, with a high-powered Committee with judicial background to assist the record office, and also to guide similar local committees set up in the moffussil districts.

More than forty years after the above general record office had been set up, there came into existence, what are now known as Departmental Record Rooms, in 1863 in the form of 'Separate offices of permanent records' for a number of departments, as a result of a suggestion of the Record Committee, set up in the sixties of the 19th century. The Committee had also helped earlier in appraising and weeding out quite a large amount of unwanted records.

**Setting up of Imperial Record Department**

3.9. About twenty years later, an Imperial Record Department to house the non-current records of the Central Government came into being. This office was set up in 1891, to grow into the today's National Archives of India. This also marks the beginning of organised coordinated effort for appraisal of records for permanent preservation as well as weeding, after getting them screened by a Record Committee, for all the Government departments. Organised weeding then covered the records of a number of departments. Simultaneous attention was also paid to provincial records, initially at Madras and later at Bombay during the sixties of the 19th century.

**Fillip to appraisal and weeding operations**

3.10. With the setting up of the Imperial Record Department to house the non-current records, and also offices of permanent records in a number of individual departments, the Home Department took the lead for weeding out systematically the 'rubbish' contained in the records, like spare copies. Other departments were likewise advised to transfer the non-

current records over 20 years to the Imperial Record Department, every 5 years. As a corollary, the need was felt for developing proper criteria and devising suitable machinery for appraisal prior to destruction or retention. The view also takes shape then that this decision should not be left entirely to the discretion of a single person, but two minds should be applied e.g. those of the Registrar, and the Officer-in-charge of records, the latter apparently representing the Archivist view. Similarly, even in respect of records in the Imperial Record Department, the views of the officers of the owning departments were also to be taken into account. But, the ultimate view, as of now was that the final decision to destroy useless papers should vest only with the Department concerned.

3.11. The year 1910 saw the transfer of the Imperial Record Department to the Education Department. A fresh set of weeding rules for adoption by other departments was issued, enumerating *inter alia* the classes of papers to be retained, and to be destroyed. This helped in the weeding out of a very large percentage of records, which had outlived their utility. These revised rules were by and large based on the English system.

3.12. The submission of the report of Llewellyn Smith Committee in 1919 brought about a further revision of classification of records, an important element of this classification was that files marked for destruction in a particular year should come up automatically for review before being weeded out. The year 1929 saw the new procedure being evolved by the Home Department, corresponding in its broad details to what obtains today. It envisaged (a) the marking of files by the dealing official in a section either for retention or destruction after a specified period according to its importance and (b) the record keeper sending the files marked for destruction during the specified year for review under the supervision of the Superintendent of the section.

3.13. Another major event of importance in the field of management of records was the emergence of the Indian Historical Records Commission in the year 1919. The circumstances in which the Commission came into being as well as an evaluation of the work it was able to do since that year forms the theme of the next chapter.

**Smith Report and its impact**

**Indian Historical Records Commission**

## CHAPTER IV

### The Commission's Resolutions

**Commission's  
back-ground**

4.1. From the resume of the preceding chapter, it would appear that although the British Government did grapple with the problems of disposition of records, it could not find a durable solution. Actuated primarily by administrative considerations, the British officers were only dead serious to reduce the bulk of voluminous records to manageable proportions. To all but a few of them, consideration of importance of records as invaluable raw materials for historical writings and also the question of making them available to scholars for research were extraneous, indeed politically dangerous. The accepted policy was to make the records available to the public only through press lists and calendars. The Madras press-lists were a model but the Madras system of abstracting was time consuming. In 1901, it was modified to the extent that the press-lists were only to indicate the date, place and nature of the record. Public access to records was not conceded.

**Commission constituted**

4.2. By the second decade of the 20th century the trend of opinion appears to have considerably changed. When invited to express his views about the best mode of handling the Indian archives, Prof. Ramsay Muir, in his letter addressed on 7th December, 1917 to Sir Edward Maclagan referred to the production in India of official documents on an unparalleled scale ever since the time of Clive and hence necessity of a treatment tailored to its growing volume. He, therefore, ruled out any systematic calendaring of the whole mass of official documents, or even of the main class of them. Setting forth these arguments forcefully, the Education Despatch of 15th April 1918 from the Government of India asked for a total reconsideration of the matter as noted above. In particular the Government of India referred to Mr. William Foster's memorandum as appended to the second report of the Royal Commission of Public Records, which declared the programme of press-listing and calendaring the documents, as time consuming, and expensive besides being hopelessly inadequate to meet the needs of historians. As an alternative, the Despatch recommended to the Secretary of State for his consideration a package of the following three processes :

- (i) calendaring of certain definite documents ;
  - (ii) preparation of a descriptive handbook to records ;
- and

(iii) the reprinting of certain specified classes of documents.

Further, acting on the suggestion of Prof. Muir who had recommended the constitution of a Historical Materials Commission, the said Despatch also sought sanction to set up the Indian Historical Records Commission to advise the Government on the treatment of archives, facilities for research, publication of documents and other cognate subjects. Such were the circumstances which gave birth to the Commission in 1919. What role the Commission played in tackling the provincial problems of disposition of the records of the Centre/Union Territories and States, germane to our inquiry, we propose to discuss in the following paragraphs. Simultaneously, we would be covering in a broad canvas the first point in our terms of reference i.e. extent to which the relevant recommendations of the aforesaid Commission have so far been implemented. The more important resolutions adopted by the Indian Historical Records Commission from time to time on the question of appraisal and weeding of records, have been specially listed along with a brief indication of the extent of the action taken on them may be seen at Appendix VIII.

4.3. A perusal of this statement would bear out that the Commission have had to express repeatedly their anxiety about the destruction of historical public records, past and present, judicial and non-judicial, and for devising measures to prevent such destruction. For facility of treatment, the extent of implementation of the Commission's resolutions is examined below under the following distinct heads :—

- Pre-1857 records
- Judicial records
- Post-1857 records
- Archival legislation

4.4. The events which led to the Indian Historical Records Commission taking a lead in tractfully halting what might have resulted in a mass weeding of historical records of the pre-1857 era make an interesting episode. In the course of his inspection of the Imperial Record Department at Calcutta, Mr. M.S.D. Butler, Education Secretary, brought to Delhi a few bundles of records including certain Public Consultations of the years 1764 and 1827 for examination by Prof. Rushbrook Williams, the then Officer on Special Duty, Home Department. On going through them, Prof. Williams felt that if the bundles were to represent "a fair

**Pre-1857  
records**

sample of the contents of the Calcutta Record Room, I trust indeed that this is not the case for, if it were, I should be led to deliberate opinion that 98 per cent of the contents of the record room might be destroyed with no less whatever to the historical scholarship or even to casual antiquarian interests". In his opinion, only half a dozen papers out of the bundle of 1764 were worthy of preservation. As this finding coincided with the Butler's own estimate of those records, he asked the Keeper of records to sort out the records at once in accordance with the instructions of Prof. Williams to classify into A, B, and C categories. Records of four years were to be reviewed possibly on a pilot basis in the first instance i.e. 2-years' records, when the Company was a mercantile concern and of another two years, when it became a Governing Body. These instructions outraged A. F. M. Abdul Ali the then Keeper of the Calcutta Record Office who asserted that the instructions went against the earlier policy as contained in Lord Morley's Despatch of February 1906 that every pre-1858 document, be calendared, whatever be its value ; a policy had been continued even after the Government had framed in 1909 weeding rules for post-1858 records. The Keeper of Records, therefore, suggested to the Butler that the new instructions be referred to the Secretary of State. A visibly irritated Butler had to pacify the Keeper of Records that his 'instructions' were for sorting and not destruction, and that after the records were sorted out, Prof. Rushbrook Williams and Prof. Jadunath Sarkar would examine the results achieved as experts and make recommendations to the Historical Records Commission. The Government would decide about their destruction only after getting the recommendations of the Commission. This would be the procedure adopted for 'gleaning the grain from the chaff'.

4.5. In the meanwhile Press reports about the above move of the Education Department on Pre-1857 records had created quite a heated controversy at a time when the Indian Historical Records Commission was about to hold its annual session at Calcutta. The Commission, therefore, advised the Government through its resolution and its annual session at Calcutta in 1923 to adopt the recommendations of the sub-committee (consisting of Hon'ble Mr. H.E.A. Cotton, Prof. Rushbrook Williams and Prof. Jadunath Sarkar) on the appraisal of pre-1857 records.

**Sub-Committee's recommendation**

4.6. The sorting of the records started earlier was, therefore, continued with the blessings of the Commission and its results examined by the sub-committee. The sub-committee made the following recommendations ;

- (i) the contents of the Record Rooms may be usefully divided into the following three classes :
  - (a) documents of historical importance including materials for social and economic history ;
  - (b) documents of personal and antiquarian interest ; and
  - (c) all other documents.
- (ii) the sifting and classification of pre-Mutiny records so as to separate class 'C' document from classes 'A' and 'B';
- (iii) creation of a local sub-committee consisting of members, all of Calcutta, to cooperate with the Keeper of Records in the work of sifting and classification.

4.7. The immediately operative part of the above recommendations, which was accepted and communicated to all the Departments of the Government of India was that classification of pre-1857 records should be deferred until a final index to the original consultations had been prepared. This recommendation was interpreted by the Education Department as an indication of the reluctance of the Imperial Record Department in Calcutta to defer the dreaded transfer of the records to Delhi. The consent of the Local sub-committee was obtained to the classification of the records as A, B, and C categories, indexing being confined to A and B. As the sub-committee's recommendation was that documents classified as C also should not be weeded out, but only transferred or handed over to local governments/universities/learned societies willing to preserve them, destruction of any record really never took place. Finally, in terms of Resolution III adopted in 1939 by the Indian Historical Records Commission even 'C' class papers came to be preserved in all the departments. Surely, this in itself should count as a major feather in the Commission's cap. Weeding  
deferred

4.8. The Indian Historical Records Commission had to concern itself repeatedly to prevent weeding out of judicial records. Thus starting from its session at Calcutta in 1923 onwards, the Commission has been striving patiently and at times not without success : Judicial  
records

- The Chief Justice of Bengal to take steps for better preservation, classification, arrangement, repairing and indexing of judicial records in its custody as well as those with other courts under his jurisdiction (Calcutta, 1923) ;



- the High Courts of Madras and Bombay to send reports on the state of their records,—which they seem to have done, readily (Calcutta, 1923);
- the Calcutta High Court to agree not to destroy any of the old records in its custody but transfer them to some government office in Bengal, or to any University in the Province (Baroda, 1940);
- to consult the Commission's expert members resident in Bengal before deciding to destroy any of its old records and also to give the Calcutta University an opportunity of preserving such papers as may be decided to be destroyed (Mysore, 1942)—a move accepted albeit in a modified form by the Calcutta High Court;
- other High Courts to adopt the Calcutta procedure by consulting experts (Udaipur, 1944)—agreed to by Madras and Patna.

This very brief summary highlights the dogged perseverance which the Commission had been pursuing this matter with the judiciary, particularly the Calcutta High Court, with a certain degree of success.

#### Post-1857 records

4.9. Apart from the historical records of the past, what has been constantly worrying the Commission most was the likely weeding without proper appraisal by the trained hands of even those records which will be created in the various public offices throughout the country during the post-1857 period. In the nature of things the Commission itself having come into being in the twenties, after seven decades of the transfer of power from the East India Company to the Crown, could do no better than to pass omnibus resolutions against weeding of records which had already acquired historical character by their sheer age.

However, in regard to the post-1900 records, such mass treatment through a single prescription would not alone have filled the bill. Hence, we find, the Commission increasingly applying its findings, as years roll by, to devising other remedies like :

- laying down general principles in the field of records management, and
- suggesting appropriate machinery for the purpose of built-in procedures for automatic appraisal programmes.

4.10. A comprehensive review of the weeding of Government records was undertaken at the 10th meeting of the

Local Records Sub-Committee of the Commission held on 2nd March, 1944. As a result, the Sub-Committee evolved a new set of weeding rules replacing old rules of 1913 which were endorsed by the Commission at its Indore Session in 1946 and forwarded to States by the Central Government. These rules *inter alia* enunciated the principles that no papers which were important for the future, however indirectly, as source of information on any aspect of history should be destroyed. It also listed by way of illustration, the classes of papers that could be destroyed or preserved, and envisaged as a further safety measure by providing for the experience of the Keeper of Records being utilised in appraisal programmes, by the departmental officers. It is our impression that, by and large, these working rules have now come to be adopted at the Centre and most of the States/Union Territories.

4.11. Significant development took place with the transfer of power in 1947, and the adoption of our Constitution in 1950. For the first time, a Central Secretariat Manual of Office Procedure was issued in 1955, which sought to deal with comprehensively the procedural aspects of records management in the secretariat upto the point of their retirement, to the National Archives, of records to be retained permanently. After taking note of the Central Manual, the Local Records Sub-Committee recommended in 1953 at the Indore Session for statutory weeding rules to be framed under the Destruction of Records Act, 1917, with an active role for the Director of Archives in evolving such rules. Our information suggests, however, that statutory weeding rules are still an exception in most of the ministries and departments.

4.12. As regards the machinery for appraisal and weeding, the general trend of the resolutions of the Commission or its Research and Publication Committee, over the years, has been in favour of :

- (i) Provincial Governments setting up Regional Survey Committees/Advisory Committees with facilities to prevent 'unwarranted' destruction of record (Trivandrum, 1942, and Aligarh, 1943, Jaipur, 1951), (we understand that such committees, some *ad hoc* in nature, have been constituted in a number of States before and after independence).
- (ii) State Governments appointing also committees of archival experts for screening more than 30 years old district records with historical value for being

transferred to State/Regional archives for preservation and research (Jadavpur, 1967). The response of the States to this suggestion has varied from formal acceptance to not finding it necessary to do so. Some steps are reported to have been taken in the latter States for keeping either the State Archives or the Regional Survey Committee in the picture.

- (iii) Central Government/States associating archival experts for selection of records for permanent preservation (Madras, 1970).
- (iv) Stopping the weeding of record by untrained personnel at various levels (Trivandrum, 1971). This has been broadly accepted in principle by the Central Government as announced in its Archival Policy Resolution, which requires the Departmental Record Rooms being placed under trained full-time responsible staff (Para 3).
- (v) States/Union Territories following the lead given by the Central Government in prescribing a time-bound appraisal programme, and in particular evolving a well articulated retirement policy by preparation of the Central Government (Panaji, 1972). (Though formal implementation *feedback* is not available in this regard, it would appear from appendix that such a retirement plan is already in vogue).

#### Archival Legisla- tion

4.13. The Destruction of Record Act, 1917 is essentially permissive rather than a preventive enactment inasmuch as it furnishes a statutory basis for the disposal of Central or State Government records. It does not, in any way, oblige the authorities concerned to discharge any constructive function in this behalf. Nor does it prevent any unwarranted destruction of public records. In view of this unsatisfactory legal position, the Commission has been anxious over the years to secure a statutory basis for the preservation of records. It has, therefore, been urging the Government to :

undertake legislation similar to that in existence in England for the preservation, destruction etc. of public documents (Patna, 1930).

amend suitably Section V of the Destruction of Records Act to provide for the prevention of unwarranted destruction of documents (Trivandrum, 1942); and

- prevent export of historical manuscripts (Jaipur, 1948).

For various reasons such as the intervention of the Second World War, and possibly other more pressing pre-occupations since Independence, no legislation was undertaken. Provincial Governments were, however, asked during the forties to get the records scrutinised by experts before destruction. The Antiquities and Art Treasures Act was enacted in 1972, regulating the export trade in antiquities and art treasures, including records and documents. In the same year, the Archival Policy Resolution was issued by the Central Government, which, taken as a whole, could be considered as the next best substitute for legislation.

4.14. The foregoing account would reveal that the Commission's record on the relevant issues has not been spectacular. Nor can it be said to be unimpressive. In evaluating its achievements we have to remember that the recommendations were purely advisory and not mandatory.

**Effective-  
ness of the  
Commis-  
sion**

(a) As was intended the Commission has acted as a forum on the national archival scene where historians and archivists aired their views which because of the publicity given to its proceedings contributed to the spread of archival awareness among the literate classes. It also acted as a corrective to the official policies and stimulated official thinking on issues which demanded urgent attention.

4.15. Judging against this back-ground we cannot subscribe to the opinion of the Committee on Archival Legislation that it is an entirely superfluous body. We, therefore, think that the Commission should be made to play a more effective role by making it a compact body, after correcting an apparent imbalance in its composition. Further, its role as an advisory body has to be recognised, and other steps taken to get its recommendations considered and implemented, for which we are making separate recommendations in the last chapter. In the light of this discussion we recommend that the Indian Historical Records Commission should essentially be an academic forum with a contact membership as under :

<b>A. Ex-officio Members</b>	<b>4</b>
(i) Minister for Education and Social Welfare, Government of India	President
(ii) Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Culture	Member
(iii) Director of Archives, Government of India	Secretary



## CHAPTER V

### Disposition of Records

5.1. In the preceding paragraphs we have tried to explain how the problems of bulk occupied the attention of administrators, archivists and historians in the past. These problems have assumed more serious proportions today when the activities of the Government have multiplied, leading to an enormous growth of records. Such growth received a further fillip with the introduction of the type-writer, duplicator and other such devices, facilitating the multiplication of documents. We should, therefore, first have some idea about the bulk of records of the Government of India and then that of the Union Territories/States. **Problems of Bulk**

5.2. As a repository of the non-current records of permanent value of the Central Government the National Archives of India is reported to have acquired so far only about 4% of the Central Ministries/Departments/Offices. Even so the holdings of the National Archives of India occupy as much as 25,000 linear metres of shelf space. **Quantum of Central Records**

5.3. Excluding the National Archives, the shelf space occupied by the records housed in the Central Ministries and other offices of the Government of India was estimated by the Tara Chand Committee to be 40 miles in space (2,10,000 linear feet). Eight years later, the Estimates Committee (1968-69) of the Fourth Lok Sabha found that the unappraised records of the Government of India occupied about 3,86,000 linear metres (3.20). Thus, in a short span of 8 years the annual accruals had taken place at rate of about 13,000 linear metres. At this rate the Government of India require a repository 18 times the size of the National Archives of India, and will need every alternate year a new repository of the same size for housing their records.

5.4. The problem of bulk in the Union Territories and States closely resembles the one at the Centre. The problems seem to have become more acute during the last decade and a half as would be evident from the table below, prepared on the basis of the data supplied to us : **Quantum of Union Territories/States Records**

<i>State/Union Territory</i>	<i>Accessions during 1970-75</i>	<i>Rate of Annual Accruals</i>
Andhra Pradesh	not available	18,000
Delhi	not available	25,000
Karnataka	3,09,786	61,957
Tamil Nadu	34,500	6,900
Uttar Pradesh	2,70,958	54,191
West Bengal	81,028	16,205

**Staggering cost**

5.5. A huge bulk of unappraised records are thus occupying valuable storage space in various public offices at the Centre as well as in the Union Territories and the States costing them millions of rupees every year. According to a cost estimate recently made by the National Archives of India, the rent of space for one file in the major cities like Delhi, Bombay and Calcutta comes to about one rupee per year. Besides the problem of cost in accommodating these holdings there is the risk for the historian of the future being verily buried under the mass of such records. When we posed this problem during our enquiry, the response it evoked was varied. The solution proposed for the management of these records strangely varied from outright destruction to indefinite retention. This by itself indicates the enormity of the problem which is much more complex than is generally realised. The solution, in our view, lies in evolving a system of scientific disposition of records which we attempt in the paragraphs that follow :

**Disposition defined**

5.6. The term 'disposition' embraces all actions as may be taken to determine the ultimate fate of records. These actions are :

- (i) consigning the records to the hell of incinerator which means outright destruction ;
- (ii) transferring them to a purgatory or an 'intermediate' Record Centre for temporary storage ;
- (iii) transferring them to the heaven of an archival repository for permanent preservation.

We shall, in the first instance, assess the efficacy of the criteria applied at each of these stages by the Centre/Union Territories/States. It shall then be our endeavour to draw some general conclusions and suggest changes wherever necessary.

**Outright destruction**

5.7. The staggering bulk of records produced in public offices must be reduced to relatively manageable proportions, if they are to subserve first the needs of administration and then those of historical research. It is in this context that

the Central Secretariat Manual of Office Procedure (1972) lays down, and rightly so, that files of a purely ephemeral nature containing papers of little reference or research value are to be destroyed after one year without being formally recorded (Para 80). More or less the same procedure has been prescribed in the Manuals followed in the Union Territories/States.

5.8. Only those files which serve outright destruction are to be recorded, and classified in terms of the 'values' attached to them. There are four such generally accepted values : (i) administrative, (ii) legal, (iii) fiscal and (iv) historical. An idea of the pattern of classification followed at the Centre and in the States/Union Territories in the application of these values, as gleaned from the information made available to us, has been tabulated (Appendix IX).

**Classifi-  
cation**

5.9. It will be seen from the table that the periods of retention and the stages of review in the States/Union Territories are at variance with those in vogue at the Centre. They also differ from State to State notwithstanding the fact that problems of appraisal are almost the same at the Centre as well as in the States/Union Territories. It is obviously desirable that uniform standards for classification and review of records should be evolved for the States/Union Territories on the pattern obtaining at the Centre. For the first stage review, the criterion should be defined in simple terms so that it could be easily interpreted, understood and applied by the comparatively junior staff who could not otherwise be expected to evaluate records from the point of view of future administrative needs or historical research. We recommend that the criteria laid down in para 81 of the Central Secretariat Manual of Office Procedure which are comparatively simple be generally adopted for this purpose.

5.10. Recorded files are expected to be transferred from the Sections to the Departmental Record Rooms after a certain period as prescribed in the Manuals. But the fact is the records linger on in the corridors of Central Ministries/Departments. According to the pilot studies carried out during 1960-69, 20% to 45% of the working space allotted to the staff was encroached upon by the mounting records awaiting appraisal. The periods for which they were retained, did not bear any relationship to their utility in many cases. The 'co-efficient' of use of space in the Record Rooms varied between 20% and 25%. The frequent reorganisations of

**Transfer  
to Depart-  
mental  
Record  
Rooms**



Ministries/Departments have added to the confusion. Many records lay untransferred, some even unclaimed.

5.11. This sorry state of affairs attracted the notice of the Estimates Committee (1968-69) which made the following observations :

“Considering the voluminous records requiring appraisal which are estimated to be in the neighbourhood of 240 linear miles, it is necessary that a phased programme for the completion of this work over a period of time should be prepared as early as possible and necessary staff deployed for the purpose. The Committee need hardly point out that appraisal of records in time is essential for proper record management as it serves a two fold purpose—it helps in the weeding of unwanted papers resulting in saving of space on the one hand, and in the proper preservation of permanent valuable records on the other. The Committee urge that no further time should be lost in drawing up a phased programme for appraisal as suggested above and implementing the same in right earnest.” (Para 3.20).

5.12. Some idea of the estimated backlog in respect of unappraised records with different Ministries including their attached and subordinate offices can be had from the statement compiled recently by the National Archives of India. (Appendix V).

**Transfer  
to Archi-  
val Repo-  
sitory**

5.13. According to the Central Secretariat Manual of Office Procedure class A & B files are to be reviewed on attaining 25th year of their life in consultation with the National Archives of India. Moreover, the Archival Policy Resolution requires the Director of Archives to co-ordinate and guide all operations connected with public records in respect of their administration, preservation and elimination with a view to ensure that records of permanent value are not destroyed and are transferred to the National Archives of India at the appropriate time. The Director of Archives is also required to submit a report to the Government every year on the management of public records, with particular reference to the actual work of record management system. (Paras 12 and 15). We understand that the Director of Archives has so far submitted to the Government of India two such reports on the implementation of this Resolution, but these were not made available to us to enable us to assess the work done by the National Archives of India in terms of that Resolution.

5.14. We were, however, informed that the National Archives of India has undertaken the task of appraising records more than 25 years old in its own custody as also in that of the Ministries/Departments. The extent of the appraisal work done from 1970-71 to 1974-75 can be seen at parts A & B of the tables (Appendix XI).

**Weeding  
of Central  
Records**

5.15. Appraisal and weeding of records in the States/ Union Territories is governed by their respective Manuals. Following the criteria laid down in these Manuals the States/ Union Territories have appraised and weeded out records during the last five years as detailed in the table (Appendix XII). From this table it is evident that more than 100 years old records have been weeded out in the National Archives of India, and more than 200 years old in the Tamil Nadu Archives during the last 5 years. We were told by the National Archives of India that the papers subjected to weeding were those acquired in a comparatively unexpurgated condition on the transfer of power from the Crown Representatives, and the defunct agencies under them, and also from the Ministry of External Affairs. We were further informed that the weeded records were sent to the owning Ministries with whom the final decision rested for their disposal.

**Weeding  
of Records  
in States/  
Union Ter-  
ritories**

5.16. Similarly, the Tamil Nadu Archives has informed us that the records were weeded out under the authority of the State Government by special staff sanctioned for this work in consultation with the Board of Revenue and the Director of Archives. We were further informed that copies of records thus weeded out are available in the printed Consultation Volumes in the Tamil Nadu Archives and that in this undertaking they followed the guidelines of late Dr. B.S. Baliga (Curator of Madras Record Office, 1935-58), which had then been duly approved by the State Government.

We have looked into the question of destruction of records in the State of Tamil Nadu and are convinced that 86,208 records, mostly originals, belonging to the Board of Revenue and pertaining to the period (1786-1828) have been weeded out. Thiru L.M. Vasagam, I.A.S., Commissioner for Tamil Nadu Archives, who happens to be a member of the Committee has furnished a note (Appendix XIII) explaining the exact circumstances, the type of records destroyed and the procedure followed. It appears that there was no malafide motivation behind this destruction, though it certainly went against the resolutions of the Indian Historical

**Records Commission and the recommendation of the Committee on Archival Legislation :**

- (i) Resolved that the attention of the Governments of Bombay and Madras be drawn to the policy of Government of India regarding the preservation of historical documents and that the destruction of all records prior to 1856 be discontinued (Poona 1925).
- (ii) Resolution of the Indian Historical Records Commission of 1939 recommending retention of even 'C' category of pre-Mutiny records.
- (iii) The Committee on Archival Legislation (1960) had recommended that no record of the date earlier than 1860 be destroyed on any account whatever (Para 42).
- (iv) Para 8 of Archival Policy Resolution (1972) of the Government of India.

Moreover at the specific request of the Department of Culture, Ministry of Education and Social Welfare, the Committee also inquired into the alleged destruction of records at Goa in the wake of the Police Action. We have come to the conclusion that some records have been destroyed. We were, however, informed that the records were weather-beaten papers, worn out or damaged and depleted, which could not be listed. The local archival authority in the Union Territory was not technically competent to order such destruction without obtaining the consent of the owning department.

Again in spite of repeated reminders, the Government of Madhya Pradesh did not furnish any information about the alleged destruction of public records in that State.

Taking into account the circumstances in which such destruction has taken place, we feel it could have been avoided if the local members of the Indian Historical Records Commission had been taken into confidence. In order to achieve this object we recommend that one of the functions of the Indian Historical Records Commission at its annual sessions should be to draw up a panel of historians both for the Centre and the States to assist them in :

- (i) drawing up/reviewing the record retention schedules :

- (ii) scanning through lists of non-confidential, non-current records condemned for destruction by administrators and advising the Government to hand them over to universities/learned societies willing to preserve them for the purposes of research.

5.17. The failure of the system in the cases discussed in the preceding para was essentially due to the inadequacy of the guidelines laid down and the lack of a uniform policy. We are struck by the diversity of the norms and criteria followed for the maintenance of non-current records. In Andhra Pradesh, the Central Record Branch and the Interim Repository are located in the Secretariat. While the former is under the control of the Assistant Secretary attached to the Department of General Administration, the latter is under the control of the Director of State Archives. The Sachivalaya (Secretariat) in Maharashtra, houses its current records in its own building and they are under the administrative control of the Director of Archives. He is the archival authority for purposes of review, classification, scrutiny and selection. Thus, there is not much difference between the functions of a Record Manager and those of the Director of Archives. In West Bengal, the Departments themselves retain records in their custody for a period of 3 years and thereafter transfer them to that branch of the State Archives which is located in the Writers Building for purposes of safe custody. The State Archives is divided into two sections viz. (i) Current Record and (ii) Historical Record. While the former is located in the Secretariat the latter is housed in another building. The Director of State Archives is the custodian of both the sections. Similarly, in Tamil Nadu, records less than 3 years old are retained at the Central Record Branch in the Secretariat, and are thereafter transferred to the State Archives. The records of the Board of Revenue in the State are, however, transferred to the State Archives after a lapse of 10 years. What is more surprising is the fact that there is no liaison between the Director of State Archives and the custodians of semi-current records except in a few States.

5.18. The Committee on Archival Legislation, which went into the question 15 years ago, noted that the semi-current records were indifferently kept. It made the following recommendations, "The records still to reach this age of maturity (intermediate records) are, as we have seen, being indifferently kept mostly in office rooms and rarely in rooms

exclusively allotted to them. It seems essential that all records in the intermediate stage should remain under the control of the creating Departments themselves and placed in properly maintained repositories conforming to scientific requirements. One possible alternative is to organise such repositories as in the United States of America on the basis of sole occupancy by the Federal Records Service. The other and more economical way could be to follow the model in the United Kingdom and set up repositories on the basis of joint-occupancy by the Departments."

**Interim  
Repositories**

5.19. These recommendations of the Committee have not been implemented, we understand, largely because of the paucity of funds. However, it is heartening to note that the Andhra Pradesh has set up an Interim Repository for the maintenance of its semi-current records. It is, therefore, recommended that Interim Repositories be set up whenever deemed to be necessary. As far as the Centre is concerned, we understand, that the Government have made provision in the present Plan for an annexe to house non-current records of the Government of India. We are of the view that the proposed annexe should be spacious enough to accommodate all the appraised and unappraised records of more than twenty five years old. One wing of the annexe should be earmarked to serve as an Interim Repository to house records awaiting appraisal prior to their final transfer to National Archives of India.

**Retention  
Schedules**

5.20. These schedules are generally of two types : (1) general schedules covering the activities which by their very nature are common to all administrative agencies ; (2) special schedules relating to functions for discharging which an administrative unit is specially created. In the former case it is obviously desirable that there should be a common retention schedule. In the latter case the schedules are bound to differ from agency to agency. From the evidence we have gathered during the course of our enquiry it is clear that the retention schedules common to all Departments have been provided for in most cases, however, inadequate they might be. Special retention schedules are an exception rather than the rule. This is broadly true of the Government of India, Union Territories and States.

5.21. The Department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms have recently brought out **Record Retention Schedule for Records Common to all Departments (1974)**. It covers

practically all important aspects of an establishment and its house keeping jobs which are common not only to the Departments but also to all the Central Government Offices. It has also been arranged according to the scheme of the functional file index that has now been adopted by all Departments in respect of establishment and house keeping jobs. Moreover The Central Secretariat Manual of Office Procedure (Para 79 d) requires each Ministry/Department of the Government of India to frame its own retention schedule in respect of its records connected with the substantive functions in consultation with the National Archives of India. The Archival Policy Resolution also lays down that retention schedules indicating the periods for which particular classes or categories of records are to be preserved, shall be drawn up by the Departmental Record Officer in consultation with the National Archives and should be approved by the Ministry/Department concerned. The schedules are also required to be revised once after every five years to ensure that adequate attention is given to the changing and expanding activities of the Department (Para 6). We are, therefore, of the view that all administrative units in the States/Union Territories should frame general retention schedules common to all the departments on the pattern of that prepared by the Department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms. They should also frame special retention schedules indicating the periods for which files, registers etc. peculiar to the nature of its activity are to be kept. The guidelines laid down in these schedules should be as self explanatory as possible so that even a junior official can derive adequate guidance from them after a brief training for undertaking the work of appraisal of records. The retention schedules currently in force should be reviewed and revised at intervals of five years.

5.22. At present the authority responsible for drawing up a general retention schedule is the Department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms at the Centre and the Department of Organisation and Method or its counter parts in the States. At the Centre, the Director of Archives is consulted at the time of framing of the general retention schedule. We are informed that similar practice prevails in States as well. We would, however, recommend that retention schedule should be drawn up in consultation with the local historians, in addition to the respective Director of Archives at the Centre and in the States. For this purpose the National/State Archives Council which we have separately

recommended should maintain a panel of historians of repute on the recommendation of the Indian Historical Records Commission.

**Printing of  
Records**

5.23. Equally important is the question of printing of public records of permanent value. This practice dates back to 1860 but was given up at the Centre as an economy measure by the Government of India in 1949. The Manual of Office Procedure provides that class A files of the Ministries/Departments should either be printed or microfilmed (Para 81(2)). The question of printing such records has assumed greater importance owing to the fact that both paper and ink used for these files is far from satisfactory. In many cases these files are showing signs of decay even during their semi-current stage. After examining the pros and cons of all feasible alternatives—xeroxing, offset duplicating, microfilming we recommend that the Governments at the Centre/States/Union Territories should resume the practice of printing of records of permanent value.

**Control  
Mechanism**

5.24. What has been suggested in the preceding paragraphs will not be of any avail until and unless constant watch is kept on all record creating agencies on the appraisal and weeding of records. To help in exercising control over this work, we recommend that a chart should be required for submission to the head of each Department/Secretary of the Ministry, showing the progress made after each review as also of the records remaining to be appraised. The chart should also clearly indicate when the next review is to be made by the officer incharge of the record room. Finally it should be accompanied with a summary report giving a brief review of the progress made. This summary should be incorporated in the annual report of the Ministry/Department/Office concerned.

**Archival  
Buildings**

5.25. None of the recommendations we have made in the preceding paragraphs can be translated into action if non-current records do not find a suitable shelter in an archival repository. We were told that the National Archives of India, in spite of its 25,000 linear meters of shelf space is bursting at its seams. Out of 9 Union Territories, only Goa has its archival building, and out of 22 States, only Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, and Rajasthan have buildings of their own for storing their non-current records. In all other cases, the non-current records are housed in the Departments/Offices least suited to serve the needs of archival repositories. The main reason for this

unsatisfactory state of affairs is the inadequacy of funds. It is, indeed, sad to note that records continue to occupy a very low place in the list of priorities, when suitable buildings specially designed with adequate storage space are the crying need. We, therefore, strongly recommend that highest priority should be given to the construction of archival buildings in the Five Year Plan schemes. Further we recommend that adequate accommodation be made available for the current and the semi-current records in the Ministries/Department/s Offices at the Centre as well as in the States/Union Territories. As accommodation available for housing records in the High Courts is far from adequate to their needs, we recommend that suitable accommodation be made available them for their use.



## CHAPTER VI

### Qualifications of the Personnel

#### Qualitative Failure

6.1. In the preceding paragraphs we have tried to trace the causes of the quantitative failure in regard to the disposition of records and have suggested certain remedies. This quantitative failure has attracted wide attention because of the volume of undisposed records; the qualitative failure has not received that much of attention though it is of a greater magnitude. The heavy backlog of records easily attracts attention whereas the casual and unsystematic way in which duties are discharged by the concerned officers continue to be unnoticed.

6.2. Since the mode of disposition of public records is largely dependent on the quality of the staff, it is but natural to go into the question of the qualifications and training of the personnel engaged in record management in the archival repositories and the departmental record rooms both at the Centre and Union Territories/States.

6.3. It may be noted at the outset that many aspects of this question must necessarily be decided by the sole consideration whether in the recruitment of the staff for any technical job in a record repository, is there or not an implied recognition of the fact that archives is a distinct profession and that a trained archivist is a great asset to a repository. With this as a background we propose to make a candid and detailed review of the qualifications and the method of recruitment of the staff first at the level of the archives and second at the level of the departmental record rooms. The question has assumed new directions and dimensions because of the failure on the part of the agencies both at the Centre and States in implementing the various resolutions of the different bodies. The Indian Historical Records Commission passed the first resolution as early as December 1950 to the effect that all the Ministries of the Government of India and State Governments who have to retain large bodies of current and semi-current records in their custody should employ full time record officers who should be diploma holders in Archives-science. The recommendation was later endorsed in the Archival Policy Resolution which lays down that "the Departmental Record Rooms holding semi-current records should be placed

in the charge of properly trained, suitable and responsible full time staff" (para 3). Still we note that these recommendations were not so far given effect to by the Governments at the Centre/States/Union Territories except the Ministry of External Affairs and the Cabinet Secretariat. We are informed that the archivists attached to the aforesaid Ministries have done commendable work in retrieving a large number of records of historical and administrative value. We are firmly of the view that the Departmental Record Rooms be placed under the charge of archivally trained full-time personnel

6.4. In dealing with the Archival Repositories, reference is necessary to the National Archives of India, New Delhi and the Archives of the Union Territories and States. While we note with some satisfaction that where the Archives have been organised fairly well the work of the record management is carried on quite satisfactorily. We are, however, constrained to note that such conditions are not to be found in a majority of the areas where such organised Archives do not exist. This is due not only to the poor quality of the staff engaged in running these Archives, but also on account of its alround inadequacy. It may be attributed to the lack of well-defined spheres of functions. We feel, therefore, that to ensure an efficient working record management by the Archives either at the Centre or at the States/Union Territories the various archival functions should be clearly defined and that steps should be taken to bring about, as far as possible, uniformity in archival practices in archives in the country. On this vital factor depends the successful devising of a uniform pattern of staff. Their qualifications and strength should correspond to the nature and the volume of work. The two objectives can be achieved by a Central Archival Manual which, we understand, is being compiled by the National Archives of India.

6.5. The quality of the staff in general in the various Archival Repositories barring a few is far from satisfactory. The staff engaged on record administration work is often transferred in technical work without hesitation. In some archives the atmosphere pervading is depressingly non-professional. An archivist should have a wide perspective but what he needs more is the knowledge of the Archives as well as the methods of archives administration. Unless the staff in a Repository is imbued with the strong professional spirit, the level of efficiency and the general tone of the office cannot be expected to improve. Such a spirit could

**Archival  
Reposi-  
tories**

**Archival  
Cader**

be inculcated by creating a permanent team of professionals. This can be done by the constitution of a separate cadre of Archivists. We, therefore, recommend that the combined archival service be created for the Centre and the Union Territories at the earliest. Similarly the States can constitute a separate State Archival Service. The initial recruitment of an Assistant Archivist (Class II) non-gazetted level should be through the Union Public Service Commission on the basis of a written test to be followed by an interview. The candidate competing for the job should be second class M.A. with specialisation in the post-1600 period of Indian History. After the selection, the incumbent should receive an in-service training for about a year in the National Archives of India where he should be initiated into the professional and technical skills of the service. During the period of training it shall be compulsory for the entrants to learn either Persian or French or Portuguese or any other language in which the records of the Centre and the Union Territories are found. The Assistant Archivist thus recruited shall go up by promotion to the top of the ladder (Director of Archives).

6.6. A similar pattern of service is recommended for the State Archives as under :—

The State Public Service Commission shall recruit an Assistant Archivist through competitive examination and the selected candidate shall undergo an in-service training at the State Archives for about a year.

## **Record Rooms**

6.7. The departmental record rooms belonging to the Centre, the State or Union Territories are at present being managed by their assistants in the grade of assistants, senior or junior, under the overall control of their immediate gazetted officer. The functions of these record keepers are generally restricted to the receipt, custody and disposal of records. Periodical appraisals are made by the record creating sections under their respective officers. It was strongly urged before us that the departmental record rooms should be managed by qualified and trained personnel. We, therefore, feel that the departmental record rooms should be invariably managed by archivally trained personnel as envisaged by the Archival Policy Resolution.

In view of the above considerations we recommend that the qualifications for Record Room Incharges should be as under :

**State Archives/Division level :** Second class M.A. with post-1600 period of Indian History.

**District level :** Second class Graduate with post-1600 period of Indian History as an optional subject.

**Tahsil/Taluka level :** Second class High School with Indian History as one of the optional subjects.

**Method of Recruitment :** The recruitment at the State Archives, and Division level shall be through a competitive examination conducted by the State Public Service Commission to be followed by an interview. The selected candidate shall undergo an in-service training in the State Archives for periods indicated above.

6.8. As the constitution of the archival cadres in the Centre/Union Territories and States will take some time, we recommend, as an interim measure, the institution of a short-term training course for the present incumbents of the Record Rooms of the Centre/States/Union Territories. This course shall be conducted by the National Archival Council at the Centre and by the State Archival Councils in the States.

## CHAPTER VII

### Problems of Coordination

#### **Hetero- genous Growth**

7.1. The record repositories in India today present a veritable picture of heterogenous growth, some in the main-stream of development, other struggling for sustenance in backwaters. Perhaps because of the federal structure of administration, it appears to us, they are drifting apart and thereby producing diversities if not contradictions, making it extremely difficult to evolve a national archival policy.

#### **Position during the British Regime**

7.2. Historically speaking, the record repositories at the Centre and in the provinces in British India have evolved on parallel lines. The Central Government was chiefly concerned with meeting its primary obligation in respect of its own records which in themselves were formidable in volume. Naturally, the Centre preferred to confine its interest to the affairs of the provincial Record Offices to the extent offering occasional advice. In actual practice thus control was only nominal as it could be in the existing circumstances.

#### **Factors influencing common practices**

7.3. Notwithstanding the non-interfering stance of the Centre, certain administrative factors have been at work helping in the emergence of some measure of uniformity in archival and records management practices. The set-up of the Secretariats at the Centre and in the Provinces was similar. These were manned by a well-knit higher civil service imbued with a common ethos and conforming by and large to norms evolved by a highly centralised administration. There was also the impact of the inspiration which almost all record keepers drew from the models of archival work being carried on in England. British and continental archival practices were invariably quoted whenever any innovation was under discussion in India. This process helped the early record keepers evolve archival practices which were not dissimilar even if they were not identical.

#### **Historians' Forum**

7.4. The tenuous link with State Record Offices was, however, getting eroded as the movement for devolution of powers to the Provincial Governments gained momentum. Even so, there was one saving grace. As the Government of India Act of 1919 was giving effect to such devolution, the Indian Historical Records Commission came into being to advise the Central and Provincial Governments in

regard to the preservation, disposal and public access to official records. Perhaps it was assumed that while central role in relation to the Provinces was becoming even more loose in the management of records, the growing informed public opinion would itself assert the needs of historical research and that the opinion of the scholarly world receive uniformly due attention and respect throughout the country.

7.5. In the post-Independence period in the State and Union Territories attention to the records could not keep pace with their phenomenal growth and their up-keep and management suffered immensely. We do feel that lack of funds is one of the factors responsible for our country not being able to keep pace with the advances made in the archival field in the developed countries of the west. Another contributory factor appears to be the general lack of archival consciousness in administrative circles and the absence of sustained interest among historians. The Archives have continued to remain in famished condition until the Planning Commission was persuaded by the National Archives of India to recognise the need and importance of public records and to include necessary allocations in the Fifth Five Year Plan for the development of Archives both at the Centre and in the States/Union Territories. We recommend that Archives should receive their due share in the future plans too.

**Official  
Attitude**

7.6. As the Indian Historical Records Commission could not attend to the details of the technical aspects of record management, the Government of India created in 1953 another forum in the shape of the National Committee of Archivists where the Director of Archives in the country were expected to pool their experiences and exchange ideas on common problems. As a clearing house of technical information, the National Archives of India and its journal *The Indian Archives* have also played a useful role. This, however, was confined to the technical plan; and the archivist had no voice in the policy making, either at the Centre or in the States.

**Archivists'  
Forum**

7.7. We have already drawn attention to the non-implementation of two Resolutions of the Indian Historical Records Commission, the first in 1930 and the second in 1948, which had recommended archival legislation for our country, similar to the one in England. This is despite the entry 67 in List I of the 7th Schedule of the Constitution, which empowers the Union Government to legislate on "Ancient and

**Statutory  
Basis**

Historical monuments and records and archaeological sites and remains, declared by or under law made by Parliament to be of national importance." It is worth mentioning here that England from where so many of our administrative practices have been drawn had enacted such a legislation as early in 1838, the last in the line being the Public Record Act of 1958. Under the decree of the Council of People's Commissars of the Russian Federation (1 June, 1918) the documents of pre-revolutionary Soviet institutions, organisations and enterprises were proclaimed national property and the indivisible State Archival Fund was set up. Even the developing countries like those of Malaysia, Indonesia and Ghana have passed laws. India has perhaps the largest archival holdings in Asia ; it has yet to enact an archival law.

7.8. Though the Antiquities (Export Control) Act was passed in 1947 to prevent the export of antiquities outside the country it was realised soon that the term 'Antiquity' had not been properly defined to cover records. We are glad to note that this inadequacy has now been removed by the Antiquities and Art Treasures Act, 1972. Except for the export aspect, the management of records still continues to be governed by executive orders. Moreover, there is avoidable ambiguity about the powers as well as responsibilities of different authorities in regard to records management. The chance of official arbitrariness can be minimised only by providing legal basis to all matters affecting records, their creation, appraisal, disposition, and access to research.

7.9. The need for doing so has received much attention. The Committee on Archival Legislation (1960) which went into this question recommended that as an interim measure, central and state laws should be enacted separately by the Parliament and by the respective State legislatures. As a long term measure, it recommended that the Constitution should be amended by making a suitable entry in the Concurrent List to enable a single Central law to be framed to take care of both the Union and the State Archives.

**Estimates  
Committee's  
observation**

7.10. In reply to a query from the Estimates Committee of Parliament (Fourth Lok Sabha) in 1968-69 on the delay in undertaking such legislation, the representative of the Ministry of Education expressed the view that "mere enactment without taking concurrent action to fulfil the statutory obligations would have created a more difficult situation because the Central Organisation would not be able to fulfil the

obligations of the enactment". However, the Estimates Committee expressed unhappiness at the vacillation in this matter and urged the Government to bring forward necessary archival legislation at an early date.

7.11. Finding that the increasing demand for legislation could not be fulfilled immediately and that an amendment of the Constitution was not immediately feasible, the Government of India issued an Archival Policy Resolution in December 1972 to serve as a guide for the purpose of proper maintenance and management of the records of the Union Government. Copies of this Resolution were also sent to the State Governments and Union Territories suggesting issue of a similar resolution applicable to their respective records. We are glad to note that the Delhi Administration has passed a Policy Resolution similar to that of the Central Government. The Government of Karnataka has reported that the Government Order setting up the Karnataka State Archives issued in December, 1973 covers a good number of points contained in the Archival Policy Resolution of the Government of India. Other State Governments and Union Territories have not issued such Resolution orders so far. We recommend that all the State Governments should issue policy resolution similar to the Archival Policy Resolution at an early date to ensure uniform and even archival development throughout the country.

**Archival  
Policy  
Resolution**

7.12. We discussed this rather difficult problem with the representatives of varied interests namely, administrators, historians and archivists. We found that the administrators were of the view that the Centre can play a useful role only by offering funds and advice for the development of State Archives, as records primarily belonged to the State. They also welcomed the idea of a Central Archival Council suggested by the Archival Legislation Committee, for tendering advice on technical problems on the national plans. A corollary view expressed was that if such a machinery under the Central auspices was to coordinate the activities of the States in archival matters it should be made fully representative of the States also. In brief, they were not against Central assistance and moral support, but did not generally favour Central control.

**Administrators'  
views**

7.13. The historians, on the other hand, wanted a national archival policy evolved in the manner in which the Centre could play a leading role. Many of them were not sure

**Historians,  
opinion**



if State Archivists would have the wherewithal to look after their records on scientific lines. They would not probably be even against Central control;

**Archivists' views**

7.14. As compared to the administrator and historian the archivist finds his position none too happy. The Archivists in the Union Territories are generally in favour of Central control but those in the States are divided in their views.

7.15. The view points are evidently divergent and yet areas of agreement can be located. Having observed the poor condition of records in the State Archives let alone at the taluka, district and divisional levels, we would favour some sort of unified and coordinated but not necessarily central control of public records in the country. There is no denying the fact that in the existing conditions many of these precious records will perish either through neglect or for want of expertise. Nor are we sanguine enough that the Union Government will dole out funds liberally without caring to see that they are utilised in the right way. If the Centre has to place funds at the disposal of State Governments, it would be necessary to persuade the State Governments to collaborate with the Centre in the field of archives towards evolving and following uniform policies and practices in the archival sphere.

**Archival Law**

7.16. As an essential first step, to protect the Indian Archives, whether in public or private custody, from the many risks to which they are exposed, we feel that, besides the Policy Resolution, there should also be carefully drawn up and clearly worded Archival Law to be enacted at an early date. We would emphasize the word 'carefully' for the simple reason, that it should not result in needless accumulation of records, which would neither serve the purposes of administration, nor would it be of any use to the scholar in the field of historical research. In short, utmost clarity should characterise it to prevent endless legal quibbling. Subject to what is stated above, we recommend that legislation should be undertaken, if possible, for a common law to cover both the States and the Centre, or separate laws, because of the constitutional or other reasons.

**Archival Council**

7.17. The present state of affairs with regard to the management, preservation and destruction of records has brought home to the mind of the Committee the need for setting up a body of experts, whose voice by virtue of its

compact composition and ability to balance judiciously the practical requirements of administrative needs, historical research and archival development, would carry weight with the Government. In fact, a body of this type does exist even in the present set up. But it is too submerged and lacking in distinctive individuality of its own to be able to command respect from the governments at the Centre/States/Union Territories.

7.18. We, therefore, recommend that a National Archives Council should be set up with a distinguished historian or archivist, as Chairman nominated by the Minister of Education and comprising :

- a representative each of the Ministries of Education, Law and Finance and the Department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms (each in their ex-officio capacity) ;
- Director of Archives, National Archives of India (ex-officio) ;
- four eminent historians from among the members of the Indian Historical Records Commission ;
- Director of Archives/Officer incharge of State Archives (ex-officio) ;
- three archival representatives of the Union Territories to be chosen by rotation by the Chairman.

7.19. The Council shall :

**Functions**

- be charged with the duty of examining constitutional, financial, administrative and archival aspects of enactment of an archival law or laws for the Indian archives in consultation with Central Ministries of Law, Education, Finance, and Department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms (Administrative Reforms), and State Governments ;
- determine the class or categories of records together with their specified periods, in public or private custody, for declaring them of national importance ;
- consider and prescribe the nature and extent of authority of inspection, protection and access to records so declared ;
- co-ordinate archival activities in the country, within the States with a view to streamlining the archival practices as far as practicable ;

- prepare a panel of names of eminent historians for approval by the Indian Historical Records Commissions for being drawn upon for consultation by Central/State Governments ;
- examine the development projects of all the Central and State Archives and tender technical advice to the Planning Commission on the allocation of funds ;
- lay down guidelines for the proper management, arrangement, disposition and access to records for purposes of bonafide research ,
- establish an institute for conducting archival training and research, and for awarding degree/diplomas on the basis of examinations to be conducted by it ;
- take note of all archival developments at the Centre and in the States and offer such advice and guidance as may be called for ;
- initiate action for framing model recruitment rules for all archival posts at the Centre and in the States with a view to ensuring that suitable qualifications are laid down for the purpose ;
- examine the resolutions of the Indian Historical Records Commission and recommend practical course/courses of action for their implementation by the Central/State Governments, but it shall not withhold any resolutions of the Commission from the Government.

7.20. In order to assist Archival Council in its day to day work we recommend that the Chairman should constitute an Executive Committee of not more than six members of the Council in addition to the Member-Secretary who will function as an Administrative Secretary.

7.21. The Administrative expenditure of the Council shall be met by the Government of India which shall also place at its disposal plan funds earmarked for archival development for allotment to the National and State Archives plans. Archives Funds released by it to States shall be routed through the State Archival Councils referred to in para 7.22 below :

7.22. Similar State Archival Councils shall be set up in the States with functions broadly similar to that of the National Archival Council in their respective State jurisdiction.

We have considered the report and append our signatures to it.

Sd/- S.V. Desika Char	Sd/- P.M. Joshi	
Sd/- A.T. Govindarajan	Sd/- S.A.I. Tirmizi	Secretary
Sd/- L.M. Vasagam	Sd/- B.P. Saksena	Chairman

## APPENDIX I

### **Text of the Resolution adopted at 43rd Session of the Indian Historical Records Commission held at Lucknow. recommending the setting up of the Committee**

The Commission is greatly perturbed over the reported large scale destruction of old public records in several States, notwithstanding the repeated recommendations of the Commission (*vide* Resolution No. II of 1925, Resolution No. VII of 1942, Resolution No. V of 1943, Resolution No. VI of 1951) and resolves that a sub-Committee consisting of five Members of the Commission be constituted to investigate and report to the Standing Committee, within six months, on the following :—

- (a) the extent to which the above Resolutions are being implemented ;
- (b) the period and the nature of records destroyed during the last two years ;
- (c) the qualifications and suitability of the staff engaged on appraisal of old records ; and
- (d) the steps which can be taken immediately to ensure the preservation of records of permanent value.

2. Commission also recommends to the State Governments that no pre-1947 records be destroyed till the said Committee has submitted its report.

## APPENDIX II

### Audio-Visual Records

A 2.1. According to the Archival Policy Resolution, 1972 of the Government of India, the term 'records' includes "documents, rolls, codices, sheets, files, dossiers, microfilms, photographs, charts, plans, diograms, maps, sound recording, etc." Films as such, do not find a place. Cinematographic films when produced by or on behalf of Government and required to be preserved for future use and reference, should however, be accorded the same status as public records written on paper. Under this category would fall films produced for staff for training or educational purposes, which are more akin to books than files, and important films of memorable events in the national life, produced by the Films Division of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. Many of the Government films, we understand, have been produced for purposes of exhibition as a part of information and public relation services of the Government. In some cases they have been made to provide information for more specialised audiences. Of these, quite a number may have to be preserved for future use and reference. It is for this reason that we are touching on the subject of films, as well as photographs and sound recordings.

A 2.2. Cinematograph films pose more problems than photographs and sound recording, because of the nature of its material requiring special care and processes for their preservation. Enquiries made by us reveal that the Film Division (Bombay) and the National Film Archives of India (Pune) are repositories for the preservation of films. The former was established in 1948 while the latter came into existence in 1967. The Film Division is responsible for the production and distribution of news reels, documentaries and other films required by the Government of India for public information as also for educational, cultural and instructional purposes.

**Holdings**

A. 2.3. The Film Division produced 4273 films up to December, 1975. These films have been dubbed in all the Indian languages as also in foreign languages like French, Arabic etc. The National Film Archives of India functions as a centre for the diffusion of film culture in the country and serves as a repository for the motion picture films and related material for permanent records, reference and research. It is one of such Film Archives in more than 30 countries which collaborate with the International Federation of Film Archives. The holdings of the National Film Archives include over 1300 motion-pictures, feature-films documentaries and shorts, both Indian and foreign, besides numerous still-photographs, wall-posters, scripts etc., pertaining to the cinema. These include silent films, talkies, films in black and white as also in colour. The Indian films are available in all the major languages of the country while the foreign films are in English, French, Russian, German, Spanish and numerous other languages.

**Acquisition Policy**

A 2.4. We have been informed that there is a laid down policy for the acquisition of films. According to this policy films are acquired by (i) transfer of all important documentaries, T.V. films etc., produced by the Government ; (ii) transfer of all the award-winning films as also those with the Central Board of Film Censor ; (iii) donation of prints and master copies by film producers and distributors and (iv) purchase. Foreign films are acquired either by exchange or by purchase. The films to be acquired by the National Film Archives are appraised and selected by the Curator in consultation with a Selection Committee appointed by the Government. This committee consists of film critics and persons connected with the film industry besides prominent persons in humanities, education, arts etc. Some criteria have also been prescribed for the types of films to be acquired. According to this criteria the National Film Archives of India is primarily concerned with the acquisition and preservation of Indian films. These include "any film whose loss might be registered in the future, for any reason whatsoever".

**Storage**

A 2.5. The Film Division stores its films in air conditioned as well as non-airconditioned vaults on specially erected racks. Original picture negatives, master positives and good duplicate negatives, besides Hindi and English sound negatives are preserved for all time. The National Film Archives of India stores its films in vaults air-conditioned

fitted with slotted-angle racks. Highly inflammable nitrate based films are stored in separate vaults fitted with room air-conditioners. The film intended for permanent preservation is never projected but is only used where duplications are to be prepared. There are regular rules for weeding. Duplicate copies which show signs of decay are weeded out.

A 2.6. The Film Division is headed by Director who is **Personnel** assisted by Librarian and Library Assistants. The Staff of the National Film Archives of India consists of Curator, Film Library Officer, and Film Library Assistant. The Curator, besides being a university graduate, is required to have experience in critical analysis and review of films, knowledge of Indian cinema and administrative and organisational experience. The Film Library Officer is also required to have similar qualifications.

A 2.7. Still photographs do not pose many problems. **Photo-** They are very akin to written records and can easily be stored **graphs** under the same conditions. We have been informed that the number of photographs in the National Archives of India as also in the State Archives is not very large. These photographs, it would appear, have not received the attention they deserve. It is hoped these would also receive the attention of Government.

A 2.8. Equally important are sound recordings. These **Sound** not associated with cinematograph but are used by public **Record-** offices for purposes as dictation for subsequent transcription. **ings** Many Ministries/Departments/Offices particularly the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting have in their custody a large number of sound-recording but we are not informed about the system of their management. The importance of sound recording may arise as time goes by because it may even come to separate written paper records at least for some purposes. For this reason also it would be necessary to give adequate attention to their proper storage and preservation.

A 2.9. We have not gone in depth on the subject of audio-visual records. Our purpose in briefly touching upon this subject is merely to focus attention on this category of records also, so that the Government could consider specifically in all its aspects, the question of chalking out a well articulated policy thereon to correspond with the policy on archives. The Archival Council which we have proposed



could also be taken into confidence in evolving a broad policy frame-work for the preservation of films, and also other types of audio-visual records like photographs and sound-recordings produced in the course of transaction of official business and required to be preserved for future reference.

## APPENDIX III

### Private Papers

A 3.1. During the course of our discussions with the historians and archivists at the Centre and in the States/Union Territories it was suggested to us that we should also examine in the context of our enquiry the position of private papers as forming part of the country's archival wealth, and suggest measures for their proper upkeep and management. Although the Committee has not been given any express mandate on this subject, we felt inclined to agree with the suggestion, as the study of private papers is essential for a balanced evaluation of a given facet of nation's life. There is a greater realization today on the part of researchers of the need to examine non-official records connected with the aspects of the problem they are engaged on social problems, economic programmes and political progress—vital changes in the life of a community—are better reflected sometimes in the activities of important individuals of historical eminence. Private papers have, therefore, come to be recognized as an indispensable tool of historians. Importance

A 3.2. The Committee on Archival Legislation which studied the problem in depth 15 years ago, came to the conclusion that the present conditions in regard to private archives were entirely unsatisfactory and steps taken so far regarding their salvage and preservation were inadequate, keeping in view the urgency as well as importance of the problem (para 179). A decade later the Estimates Committee (1968-69) of the Parliament, which considered the position occupied by the private archives, expressed the fear that "in case appropriate and timely measures are not taken to stop the dispersal and destruction of private papers of historical importance and to ensure their continued preservation, these may be dismembered or lost altogether with the result that the vacuum in our history caused by this loss will be difficult to fill" (para 3.28). In this context, the enactment by the Government of India of the Antiquities and Art Treasures Act (1972), "to regulate the export trade in antiquities and art treasures, to provide for the prevention of smuggling of, and fraudulent dealings in antiquities, to provide for the compulsory acquisition of antiquities

and art treasures for preservation in public places and to provide for certain other matters connected therewith on incidental or ancillary thereto". As 'Antiquities' under this Act include "any manuscript, record or other document which is of scientific, historical, literary or aesthetic value and which has been in existence for not less than seventy-five years", this measure would at least prevent such papers going out of reach.

**Present position**     A 3.3.     Enquiries made by us reveal that at the Centre there are two main institutions which are engaged in the acquisition of private papers, viz. (1) National Archives of India and (2) Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. The National Archives of India has been acquiring since long private papers of distinguished publicmen by way of either gift, or purchase. A bulk of private papers collection in the National Archives of India has, however, been acquired through donation. Information on the availability of the requisite material is obtained through personal contacts as also through study of journals and relevant literature. For the purchase of these papers, it receives the advice and guidance of an expert body known as Historical Documents Purchase Committee consisting of non-officials and officials with the Director of Archives as Member-Secretary. During the last five years the National Archives of India is reported to have spent a sum of Rs. 31,700 in acquiring private papers and historical records pertaining to the post-1600 period of our country's history. The Nehru Memorial Museum and Library—an autonomous organisation financed by the Government of India—is also engaged in a similar pursuit with a particular emphasis on the acquisition of private papers which have a bearing on the life and personality of Nehru. Over the years, the Nehru Museum has built a sizable collection of private papers by donation.

A 3.4.     We do not know if there is sufficient enough coordination between these two agencies to avoid duplication of efforts in its eagerness to acquire a given collection, the National Archives of India might offer monetary incentives which the other institution might be simultaneously striving to get by donation from the owner. To avoid such duplication of effort it appears to our mind, that the National Archives of India should concentrate on the acquisition of private records pertaining to pre-1900 period of Indian history, leaving it to the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library to acquire papers relating to the post-1900 era.

**A 3.5. Like the National Archives of India, some of the States have also been acquiring private papers for their State Archives. Their first task appears to be location of private papers. Unfortunately, the Regional Records Survey Committees which came into being for this very purpose, have not proved their utility, for various reasons, e.g. lack of funds, non-availability of voluntary workers, indifference of the owners of the papers etc. Notwithstanding all these handicaps we have been informed that the State Archives of Andhra, Gujarat, Jammu and Kashmir, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu as also the Archives of the Union Territories of Goa and Delhi have acquired fairly good collections of private papers and manuscripts both by purchase and gift.**

**A 3.6. It is understood that in some of the States/Union Territories, private papers are purchased on the recommendations of a Committee set up for this purpose on the pattern of the National Archives. It is suggested that the work should be transferred to universities. The Indian Historical Records Commission at its 38th Session held at Jadavpur in 1967 passed a resolution urging the universities to institute archival cells to take up the management of their own records, as well as to undertake a survey, listing etc. of the records of a private nature in their respective areas. For accomplishing this task, the Heads of the Departments of History should be expected to adjust their programme of work and also enlist the cooperation of the post-graduate students of History. The University Grants Commission could also assist in this area by placing a decent grant at the disposal of the universities having or setting up such an archival cell for working on the above lines.**

## APPENDIX IV

### Questionnaire for collecting data in respect of management of records.

#### A

##### I

- 1.1 What steps have been taken to implement the resolutions of the Indian Historical Records Commission regarding weeding of records ?
- 1.2 Which of these resolutions have been implemented fully and which of them partly ?
- 1.3 Have instructions been issued by the Government from time to time for their implementation ?
- 1.4 What are the difficulties in implementing any particular resolution ?
- 1.5 Was the conspectus of action taken in this behalf ever communicated to the Secretariat of the Indian Historical Records Commission ?

Please give dates and references, if readily available ?

##### II

- 2.1 State the rules governing appraisal and weeding of records ?
- 2.2 Were these rules framed under the provisions of the Destruction of Records Act V of 1917 as finally adopted by the Government of India in 1956 ?
- 2.3 Are these rules statutory or not ? Have they been notified in the Government Gazette ? If so, when ? (Please attach a copy of such rules).
- 2.4 Do these rules apply to the records of the President's Secretariat, Prime Minister's Secretariat, Supreme Court, Cabinet Secretariat, Lok Sabha Secretariat, Rajya Sabha

Secretariat, Raj Bhawan, Chief Minister's Secretariat, High Court, State Legislature. If not, have separate rules been framed for this purpose ?

- 2.5 What appraisal and weeding rules are applied to the records of the Secretariat ? Are these rules applicable to all the Departments/Offices ? (Please attach a copy of such rules).
- 2.6 Have separate rules been framed for appraisal and weeding of records at District/Tehsil level ? If so, please supply a copy.
- 2.7 Are all these rules incorporated in the Manuals issued for this purpose ? If so, attach a copy of such Manuals.
- 2.8 Do such appraisal and weeding rules exist for the records created by statutory and corporate bodies set up from time to time ? If so, please send a copy.
- 2.9 Are their separate rules applicable to the classified records ? If so, please attach a copy.

### III

- 3.1 Which filing system do you follow ? Is it subject based or function based ? State the different components of a file ? When was this filing system introduced ?
- 3.2 Are the files indexed as soon as they are closed ? Are they classified as A. B. C. etc., for the guidance of the officers responsible for periodical appraisal of records ?
- 3.3 Have Retention Schedule for records of various categories been framed ? Who is the competent authority ? Please supply a copy of such Retention Schedules.
- 3.4 Was the Director of Archives, if any, consulted while preparing these Retention Schedules ?
- 3.5 Which series of records were appraised during the last five years (1st January 1970 to 31st December 1974) inclusive years of the series thus appraised ?
- 3.6 How many of records thus appraised were marked for destruction ? How were they destroyed ? Name the

competent authority who approved their destruction ?

- 3.7 Were these records listed before destruction ? If so, are such lists available ?
- 3.8 What was the nature and period of the records thus destroyed ?
- 3.9 Were the members of the Regional Records Survey Committee, if any, ever consulted in matters concerning appraisal and weeding of records ?
- 3.10 Is the Director of Archives consulted at any of the three stage review before records are finally transferred to the Central Repository ?

#### IV

- 4.1 Is there a well organised Archival Repository in the State/Union Territory ? If not, when is it proposed to be set up ?
- 4.2 Has the Record Office its own building designed for archival purpose ? If so, where is it located ? (Please send a photograph, if possible).
- 4.3 Which Department of Secretariat has administrative control over Archives ?
- 4.4 Is the Archives manned by a whole time Director/Keeper ? If not, what are the other duties he/she is expected to perform ? When is it proposed to relieve him/her of non-archival functions ?
- 4.5 What is the administrative structure of the Archives office ? (Please give in a tabular form designations, qualifications, duties and pay scales of the various categories of posts).
- 4.6 How many members of the staff have been formally trained in archives-keeping ? If so, give their names and years of training ?
- 4.7 How is the staff of the Archives recruited ? Is training in archives-keeping essential qualification for recruitment ? (Please send a copy of the Recruitment Rules).

- 4.8 Are Weeding Assistants appointed for appraisal/weeding of semi-current records in the Secretariat ? If so, what are the qualifications prescribed for them ?
- 4.9 What is the status of the officer authorised to recommend destruction of ephemeral records at the Secretariat/District/Taluka/Tehsil level ?
- 4.10 Is the Director of Archives authorised to finally screen the non-current records before they are transferred to the Central repository ?
- 4.11 What steps are taken for the appraisal of unappraised records, if any, in the custody of the Archives ? How are these records weeded ?
- 4.12 Is there any Record Management Unit functioning in the Archives to advise other Departments/Offices etc. in respect of appraisal and weeding of records ?

## V

- 5.1 Are there organised Record Rooms attached to the various Departments of the Secretariat/District Offices for Preservation of semi-current records ? If not, what are the difficulties in setting up such Record Rooms ?
- 5.2 Do such Departmental Record Rooms function under the charge of properly trained and full-time staff. If not, what are the difficulties ?
- 5.3 How many of the officers-in-charge of the Departmental Record Rooms have received training in archives-keeping ?
- 5.4 Do you propose to depute officers-in-charge of Departmental Record Rooms for training in archives-keeping to the National Archives of India ? If not, what are the reasons ?
- 5.5 Has any Archival Policy Resolution been adopted on the lines of the one already issued by the Government of India on 11th December, 1972, a copy of which was endorsed to all the State Governments/Union Territories ? If not, when is it proposed to be adopted ?



- 5.6 What steps in your view are absolutely essential for ensuring preservation of records of permanent value ?

**B**

**Questionnaire for collecting data in respect of film Archives ?**

**I**

- 1.1 What is the name of the organisation ?
- 1.2 State the address and telephone number ?
- 1.3 Give the name and designation of the Officer-in-charge.
- 1.4 When was the organisation established ?
- 1.5 What are its main functions ?

**II**

- 2.1 What is the size of the collection ?
- 2.2 Indicate the date of the earliest and most recent film in your collection.
- 2.3 What is the nature of these films ? Are they feature films/documentary/shorts etc ?
- 2.4 How many of them are talkies ? How many silent ?
- 2.5 Indicate the languages in which these films are couched.

**III**

- 3.1 How are these films acquired ? Are they acquired by gift/purchase/transfer etc. ?
- 3.2 Are these films appraised before acquisition ?
- 3.3 What are the criteria for appraisal ?
- 3.4 Have any rules been laid down for appraisal ? (Please enclose a copy)
- 3.5 Who is the competent authority for appraisal ? What status he/she enjoys ?

## IV

- 4.1 What arrangements do you have for the storage of these films ?
- 4.2 Do you have your own premises ?
- 4.3 Are these premises air-conditioned ?
- 4.4 Are there arrangements for preservation (fire protection, humidity control, special shelves etc.) ?
- 4.5 Do you have nitrate film in your collection ? If so, do you have any special arrangements for their storage and handling ?
- 4.6 Is there any provision for keeping a security copy of the films ? If so, where are they stored ?
- 4.7 What are the rules laid down for weeding out the films no longer required ?

## V

- 5.1 Do you have your own duplicating and processing facilities ? If so, please specify them.
- 5.2 Do you have your own auditorium for showing the films ?
- 5.3 Do you have regular premises for organising film shows ? How often such shows are held ?
- 5.4 Do you make your films available to the public/institutions for commercial purposes ? If so, do you charge any fees for these purposes ?

## VI

- 6.1 Are these films used for purposes of research ? If so, enclose a copy of rules for access.
- 6.2 How many research scholars during the last 5 years have made use of these films ?
- 6.3 Do you have any finding aid viz. synopsis, indexes, catalogue etc. ?

- 6.4 What rules do you follow for preparing indexes ? (Please enclose a copy of the rules).
- 6.5 Do you have periodic publications based on your collection ? (Please enclose a list of such publications with specimen copies, if possible).

VII

- 7.1 Do you have trained Professional Film Archivist for your repository ?
- 7.2 What are his/her qualifications ?
- 7.3 Where did he/she receive his/her training in film Archives work ?
- 7.4 Please give the administrative structure of the Film Archives with their designations, scales of pay and qualifications.

VIII

- 8.1 What is the budget allocation for the Film Archives ? Is it a Plan or Non-Plan item ?
- 8.2 What are the projects included in the Fifth Five Year Plan ? Please mention item-wise allocations.
- 8.3 Do you publish annual reports ? If so, please send copies for the last 3 years.
- 8.4 Any other suggestions you may like to make to better management of Film Archives.

## APPENDIX V

### Schedule of visits to States/Union Territories

Place	Date
Delhi	21st August 1975
Chandigarh	22nd August 1975
Patiala	23rd August 1975
Jaipur	15th September 1975
Bikaner	16th September 1975
New Delhi	17th September 1975
Lucknow	18th September 1975
Srinagar	19th-20th September 1975
Bombay	15th-16th and 20th October 1975
Panaji	17th-19th October 1975
Ahmedabad	21st—23rd October 1975
Trivandrum	10th-11th November 1975
Madras	13th-14th November 1975
Pondicherry	15th-16th November 1975
Bangalore	17th-18th November 1975
Hyderabad	20th-21st November 1975
Gauhati	5th-6th December 1975
Shillong	7th December 1975
Calcutta	9th-10th December 1975
Patna	11th-12th December 1975

**APPENDIX VI**

**Archivists, Historians and Administrators whose oral evidence was recorded**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Place</b>	<b>Historian</b>	<b>Administrator</b>	<b>Archivist</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>UNION TERRITORY OF DELHI</b>				
21-8-1975	Delhi		Shri R.K. Ahuja, Secretary, Education Department. Shri D.C. Sankalan, Secretary, Administration. Shri A. Biswas, Director, Education Department.	Shri M.L. Kachroo, Under Secretary, (Archives).
<b>PUNJAB</b>				
22-23.8.1975.	Chandigarh & Patiala	Dr. Bisheshwar Prasad	Shri Sada Nand, Joint Secretary, Education Department. Shri K.R. Nair, Deputy Secretary, Administrative Reforms.	Dr. Ganda Singh, Ex-Director of State Archives. Dr. B.S. Nijjar, Additional Director of State Archives.

---

1

2

3

4

5

---

Shri P.L. Kapoor,  
Deputy Secretary,  
Secretariat Administration.  
Shri S.K. Arora,  
Under Secretary,  
Education-I.  
Shri B.R. Maini,  
Under Secretary,  
Education-II.

65

### RAJASTHAN

14-15.9.1975	Jaipur & Bikaner	Dr. G.N. Sharma Dr. M.L. Sharma Dr. M.S. Jain	Shri Mohan Mukerjee, Chief Secretary, Government of Rajasthan  Shri M.R. Mukul, Deputy Secretary Education Department.  Shri B. Hooja, Education Commissioner.	Shri J.K. Jain, Director, State Archives.
--------------	------------------	---	---	---

V2: S.N.77  
6

1	2	4	5
		Shri R.C. Chaube, Assistant Secretary, O & M Division. Shri A.K. Chelani, O & M Officer.	
<b>NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA</b>			
17.9.1975	New Delhi		Dr. S.N. Prasad, Director, National Archives of India.
16.2.1976	New Delhi	Dr. Niharranjan Ray Dr. Bipin Chandra Dr. Bimal Prasad Dr. Mohibbul Hasan Dr. Amba Prasad	Shri M.L. Ahluwalia, Assistant Director of Archives. Shri S. Roy, Ex-Deputy Director, National Archives of India.
<b>UTTAR PRADESH</b>			
18.9.1975	Lucknow	Dr. R.N. Nagar	Dr. K. P. Srivastava, Director of State Archives.
		Dr. J. D. Shukla, Ex-Chairman, Board of Revenue.	

---

1

2

3

4

5

---

Shri Maheshwar Prasad,  
Secretary to the  
Government of Uttar Pradesh.  
Shri Shyam Sundar,  
Cultural Affairs.  
Shri B.S. Sharma,  
Deputy Land Reforms  
Commissioner,  
Lucknow.  
Shri V. P. Mathur,  
Deputy Secretary.  
Cultural Affairs.

**JAMMU & KASHMIR**

19-20.9.1975 Srinagar

Shri S. Banerjee,  
Chief Secretary.  
Sheikh Ghulam  
Mohammad,  
Revenue Secretary.  
Shri M. Shamsuddin,  
Secretary,  
General Department.

Shri F.M. Hassnain,  
Director of State Archives.  
Shri M.M. Yusuf,  
Assistant Director of  
State Archives.  
Shri B.K. Chaloo,  
Registrar,  
National Register of  
Records.



1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Shri Teja Singh,  
 Commissioner (O & M).  
 Shri Chowdhary Bharat  
 Bhushan,  
 Financial Commissioner.  
 Shri M. Yasin Androle,  
 Director Land Records.  
 Shri M. A. Hafiz,  
 Under Secretary,  
 General Department.  
 Shri Ghulam Nabi Kanth,  
 Assistant Commissioner.

Shri M.J. Alamgir,  
 Superintendent,  
 State Archives Registry.  
 Dr. R. K. Parmu,  
 Director,  
 History Unit.

३३

**MAHARASHTRA**

15-16.10.1975    Bombay  
 Dr. G.M. Moraes  
 Dr. V.G. Dighe  
 Shri S.M. Pagadi  
 Dr. D.V. Potdar  
 Shri J.M. Shelat

20.10.1975    Bombay

Shri N. H. Nanjundiah,  
 Additional Chief  
 Secretary.

Shri V. G. Khobrekar,  
 Director,  
 State Archives.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Shri P.D. Kasbekar,  
Secretary,  
General Administration.

**UNION TERRITORY OF GOA, DAMAN AND DIU**

17-18.10.1975 Panaji (Goa)

Shri Gadkari  
Shri B.D. Satoskar  
Dr. B.K. Apte

Shri T. Kipgen,  
Chief Secretary.

Dr. V. T. Gune,  
Director of State Archives.

**GUJARAT**

21-22.10.1975 Ahmedabad

Shri Niru Bhai Desai  
Dr. P.C. Parikh  
Dr. R.N. Mehta  
Dr. Dwijendra Tripathi  
Shri K.K. Shastri  
Dr. R.K. Dhariya

Shri L. R. Dalal,  
Chief Secretary.  
Shri H.M. Joshi,  
Secretary,  
Education Department.  
Shri I. H. Parekh,  
Deputy Secretary,  
General Administration.  
Shri H. R. Pandit,  
Under Secretary,  
General Administration.

Dr. G. D. Patel,  
Director of State Archives.

---

**1**

---

**2****3****4****5**

---

**KERALA****10-11.11.1975 Trivandrum**

**Dr. K. Raghavan Pillai**  
**Dr. V.K. Sukumaran**  
**Dr. R.V. Podwal**  
**Shri A.S. Menon**  
**Shri S.K. Pillai**  
**Shri M.J. Korby**

**Shri M. K. Krishnan,**  
**Joint Secretary.**  
**Shri V. Venkatanarayan,**  
**Special Secretary,**  
**Education Department.**  
**Shri N. Krishnan Nair,**  
**Secretary,**  
**Board of Revenue.**  
**Shri P. Mohan Das,**  
**Deputy Secretary,**  
**Revenue Department.**  
**Shri V. U. K. Nambissan,**  
**Joint Director (O & M).**  
**Shri M.R. Vasudevan Pillai,**  
**Under Secretary,**  
**Higher Education.**  
**Shri M. Muhammad,**  
**Manager,**  
**Office of the I. G. of Police.**  
**Shri Thomas Cherian,**  
**Under Secretary (Record).**

**Shri M. Abdul Majeed,**  
**Assistant Director,**  
**State Archives.**

---

**1****2****3****4****5**

---

**TAMIL NADU****12-13.11.1975 Madras****Dr. C.E. Ramachandran  
Dr. K.R. Hanumanthan  
Dr. C.J. Nirmal  
Thiru M. Mudaliar  
Thiru K.K. Pillay****Thiru C.G: Rangabashyam,  
Secretary,  
Education Department.  
Thiru N. Krishnamurthy,  
Joint Secretary,  
Education Department.  
Thiru I. M. Shriff,  
Additional Secretary,  
Law Department.  
Thiru F. V. Arul,  
Inspector General of Police.  
Thiru K.S. Narasimhan,  
Commissioner of Hindu  
Religious and Charitable  
Endowments Departments.  
Thiru G.M. White,  
Director of Survey of  
Settlement and E.O.S. Bd\_(SE).  
Thiru T.P. Arthasarathy,  
Director of Treasuries and  
Accounts.****Thiru L.M. Vasagam, IAS,  
Commissioner of Archives  
and Historical Research.  
Thiru S. Singarajan,  
Director of State  
Archives.**

---

1

2

3

4

5

---

Thiru S. Jaya Raman,  
First Assistant Registrar  
(OS) High Court.

Thiru A.S. Ahluwalia,  
Inspector General of  
Registration.

Thiru P.A. Mohanrajan,  
Madras University Librarian.

Thiru Thambiah Fernando,  
Personal Assistant to the  
Inspector of Municipalities.

Thiru B.V. Jagannathan,  
Joint Director of Town  
Planning.

Thiru C.V.S. Mani,  
Revenue Secretary.

**UNION TERRITORY OF PONDICHERRY**

15.11.1976 Pondicherry

Shri R. Clement Ilango,  
Secretary, Education Department.

Shri C.D. Dayal,  
Special Officer (O & M),  
Chief Secretariat.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Miss S.K. Shanthakumari,  
Deputy Director of Education  
& Under Secretary  
(Education).

Shri S. Aroul,  
Director of Education  
and Deputy Secretary,  
Education Department.

Miss Annie T. Sundaram,  
Librarian & Curator.

#### KARNATAKA

17-18.11.1975

Bangalore

Dr. M.H. Gopal  
Dr. Sheik Ali  
Dr. K.N.V. Sastri  
Dr. Narasiah

Shri B.S. Srikantiah,  
Commissioner for  
Education and  
Secretary,  
Education Department.  
Shri A. Varghese,  
D.I.G. of Police.  
Shri Syed Basheer Ahmed,  
Additional Secretary,  
Education Department.  
Shri Mohammad Bashir,  
Secretary,  
K.R.A.T.

Mrs. Achala Moulik, IAS,  
Director,  
State Archives.

---

1

2

3

4

5

---

Shri A. L. Salgaonkar,  
Director of Treasuries.  
Shri R. C. Castibno,  
Joint Registrar,  
High Court.  
Shri M. Sankaranarayanan,  
Additional Secretary,  
General Administration.  
Shri L. Revannasiddaiah,  
Superintendent of Police (CID).  
Shri V.A. Gumash,  
Deputy Secretary GAD(ER).

74

**ANDHRA PRADESH**

20-21.11.1975 Hyderabad

Prof. D.V. Subba Reddy  
Prof. H.K. Sherwani  
Prof. K. Sajanlal

Shri C.S. Sastri,  
Secretary Education.  
Shri V.V. Manikyala Rao,  
Deputy Secretary,  
General Administration.  
Shri G.V.S.R. Somayajulu,  
Assistant Director,  
Central Survey Office.

Shri S. Venkataramiah, IAS.  
Director,  
State Archives.  
Dr. Sarojini Regani,  
Ex- Director,  
State Archives.  
Dr. V.K. Bawa,  
Ex-Director,  
State Archives.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Shri P. S. Kallu Rao,  
 Assistant I.G. of  
 Registration and Stamps.  
 Shri B. Ramachandran,  
 Deputy Secretary,  
 Education Department.  
 Shri M. S. Reddy,  
 Assistant Secretary (B & R).  
 Shri P. K. Reddy,  
 Joint Director of Survey.  
 Shri B.H. Padmaja Rao,  
 Assistant Secretary General,  
 Administration Department  
 Shri U. Prushow,  
 Assistant Secretary,  
 Revenue Department.  
 Shri B.V.S. Murthy,  
 Assistant Secretary,  
 Revenue Department.  
 Shri M. Arunachalam,  
 Director of Treasuries.



---

**1****2****3****4****5**

---

**ASSAM****5-8.12.1975 Shillong****Dr. S.K. Barpujari  
Shri S.C. Kaker  
Shri Lakshmidhar  
Barua  
Shri Jatin Hazarika****Shri B.K. Bhuyan,  
Chief Secretary.  
Shri B.B. Hazarika,  
Director,  
Historical and Antiquarian  
Studies.  
Shri K. R. Deb,  
A.I.G.P.(A).  
Shri S. K. Chakrabarti,  
D.I.G. of Police  
(Administration).  
Shri V. Sorowal,  
Deputy Secretary (Appointment).  
Shri M. Gurumoorthy,  
Joint Registrar,  
High Court. Gauhati  
Shri P.C. Das,  
Member, Board of  
Revenue,  
Shri G.N. Bhuyan,  
Director,  
Department of Archaeology  
& Museum.****Shri P.C. Sarma,  
Ex-Keeper of Records.  
Shri A.H. Chaudhry,  
Keeper of Records,  
Assam Secretariat (Civil)**

---

1

2

3

4

5

---

**WEST BENGAL**

**9-10.12.1975 Calcutta**

**Dr. Madan Mohan  
Dr. P.K. Saraswati  
Shri N.R. Ray  
Dr. S.P. Sen  
Dr. P.C. Gupta  
Dr. A. Tripathi**

**Shri D.K. Guha,  
Education Commissioner.  
Shri B C. Mazumdar,  
Additional I.G. of Police.  
Shri A.C. Banerjee,  
Deputy Secretary,  
Finance Department.  
Shri S B. Mazumdar,  
Joint Secretary,  
Home Department.  
Shri S.K. Mitra.  
Registrar,  
Original Side,  
Calcutta High Court.  
Shri H.N. Choudhry,  
I.G.R. Incharge.  
Shri R. Dey,  
Deputy Secretary,  
Board of Revenue.**

**Shri T.K. Mukherjee,  
Director of State  
Archives.**

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

**BIHAR**

11.12.1975	Patna	Dr. K.K. Datta	<p>Shri Sharan Singh, Chief Secretary. Shri F. Ahmad, Additional Chief Secretary. Shri U. N. Ray, Special Secretary. Shri Bhaskar Banerjee, Special Secretary, Education Department. Shri A. K. Varma, Joint Secretary, Cabinet Secretariat and Co-ordination Department. Shri A. K. Bose, Joint Secretary, Home Department. Shri K.S. Singh, SC ADA Commissioner. Shri K. Deo, Deputy Secretary Law</p>	<p>Shri Tara Sharan Singh, Director of State Archives.</p>
------------	-------	----------------	--	--

---

1

2

3

4

5

---

Department.

Shri D.N. Pradhan,  
Deputy R.L.R. Law

Department.

Shri Mohinder Singh,  
Secretary Revenue

Department.

Shri Brij Kishore,  
P.P.R.O.-Cum-Registrar.

Shri Shrideo Mishra,  
Deputy Registrar,  
Patna High Court.

## APPENDIX VII

### Chronological sequence of past practices in respect of appraisal and weeding

#### Land marks relating to appraisal and weeding of records (During the British period)

The following chronological events in Records Management are broadly divided into two groups according to the nature of records:

A—Judicial Records.

B—Administrative Records.

#### A—Judicial Records

1775 Richard Mcveagh entrusted with the charge of the records of the Supreme Court, brings about some order in the records which were "in great disorder and in danger of being destroyed".

1793 Obligations placed on supreme executive of "preserving complete records of the civil and criminal judicatures"; and the removal, dispersal or disposal of the records banned except with the approval of the competent authority.

1794 Records placed under the charge of Thomas Scott, for methodical arrangement of records lying in a state of 'accumulated confusion'; all the records arranged and listed.

#### 1794-1833—Judicial records languish.

1833 The Supreme Government's permission obtained by Sadar Adalat for destroying all records of all cases decided upto 1820 in the moffussil courts.

1834 Destruction ordered of records of the Zilla and City Courts, barring some decrees in original suits and appeals.

1845 Orders of 1833 and 1834 further extended,

- 1852-53 Orders issued laying down general rules for the destruction of 'useless' records.
- 1865 Earlier orders of the Adalat in respect of weeding of records adopted by the Calcutta High Court. Division of records of suits and miscellaneous cases into two categories, *Trial Nuthee* and *Process Nuthee*, laying down specific periods of destruction, after separating certain classes of papers for preservation, and destroying certain others.
- 1879 Destruction of Records Act passed to bring about some degree of uniformity in weeding of records by High Courts, and to provide legal immunity to judicial authorities empowered to order destruction of records, including documents deposited by private individuals, if not reclaimed in time. The weeding rules of the High Courts and Chief Courts required to be approved by the Government.
- 1882-83 High Courts get their respective weeding rules and specific retention periods approved by the Government.
- 1915 Question of destruction of documents deposited with the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies under the provisions of the various enactments raised by the Punjab Government.
- 1917 The Destruction of Records Act, 1917 passed providing for delegation of rule making powers to various Government agencies to cover areas not already provided for in the earlier enactment.
- 1922 Weeding Rules framed by High Courts for guidance of their Record Departments.

#### **B—Administrative Records**

- 1787 Alarming condition of records of Public Department (later Home Department) high lighted in a letter to Lord Cornwallis by Edward Hay, Secretary to the Board at Fort William, regarding the disorganised condition of the records accumulating in the Council House, and requiring to be properly arranged and inventoried. The above work entrusted to William Dolby for completion by 1st January 1788.

- 1797-1811 The problem posed for the preservation of these papers from insects and adverse effects of climate indicating the damage already done to many of the proceedings dilated upon in the Public Despatch of 30th April. Registrar, Revenue and Judicial Departments, Mr. Seymour, made the Record Keeper for setting matters right. Post abolished in 1811 as an economy measure.
- 1819 Government asked by the Court of Directors to establish a general record office at the Presidency for preserving the digest of all information collected and transactions recorded by "Putwarries and Cannongoes".
- 1820 Record office established by Supreme Government along with a Presidency Committee of Records consisting of a judge of Sadar Diwani Adalat, Secretary to the Government in the Judicial and Territorial Departments and Legal Remembrancer, to supervise not only the Calcutta Record Office but to guide moffussil committees created all over Bengal.
- 1829 Above Committee dissolved and records languish.
- 1843 Some relief in storage space obtained by transfer to Bengal Government of certain series of records.
- 1852 Government adopted 'fee fund' for searching and supplying copies of documents for the upkeep of the record room.
- 1858 Indian Administration taken over by the Crown, heralding a new era of a large turnover of records in the wake of developmental programmes undertaken by the Government. The old system of weekly consultations replaced by a more systematic filing of papers for members of the Governor General in Council to record their opinion introduced under Canning Administration—Classification of files into 'A' and 'B' and 'Deposit' categories commenced—'A'—files were to be printed, 'B'—discretion is to be exercised for printing some of them, and 'Deposit' files are to be destroyed in due course.
- 1860 Civil Finance Commission addressed by the Civil Auditor suggesting the destruction of useless records in the Calcutta offices.

A Record Committee created by the Government with Rev. J. Long as member-secretary for screening records of each Department in collaboration with its Head and to submit its suggestions, on the establishment of a general record office at Calcutta for housing non-current records. Records relating to the Company's commercial transactions during 1789-1824 in Java, Ambyona and Bengal, examined. Records of the Finance and Military Departments, High Court, Marine office and some accounts offices appraised by the Record Committee and destruction of a large number of volumes and bundles recommended.

- 1861 Madras Government bring out a report on their records compiled by J. Talboys Wheeler.
- 1863 Creation of a separate office of Permanent Records recommended by the President of the Committee, for each of the Foreign, Home, Military, Medical and Public Works Departments, office of the Marine Affairs and the Board of Revenue.  
The proposal accepted.
- 1863 J. Talboys Wheeler, the then member-secretary, brings out memoranda on records of Foreign and Home Departments.
- 1864 A report on the Bombay Government Records compiled by Thomas Candy brought out.
- 1870 The work of the Committee reviewed by Home Department and adversely commented upon as shown by its failure to prevent decaying of records.

Hume suggests that let each Department print its old records *in extenso* without annotating them.

W.W. Hunter invited to comment on the advisability of establishing a Central Record Office and publication of documents *in extenso*, prefers departmental maintenance of records to the creation of a Central office for records.

- 1870-1882 The system of folded files in vogue with limited noting, brief business like notes of only high officials like Secretary, Members of the Council, or Viceroy, being



required to be printed.

- Post-1882 era**      The structure and contents of the file changes with numerous constituents like demi-official communications, keep-withs, linked files, precis, paraphrases and dockets.
- 1889**      An Imperial Records Office for the Central Government proposed by George Forrest, reputed for his organising successfully the Bombay Government records.
- 1891**      Imperial Records Department set up, with George Forrest as Officer-in-charge of Records.
- 1891**      Records of 1752-1879 transferred by Home Department to Imperial Record Department.

Records of Medical Board (1845-59), Military Board (1776-1859), Public Works (1850-71), Foreign Department (1754-1829) and Military Department (1756-1893), also transferred and arranged chronologically.

- 1891**      View expressed by Sir Phillip Hutchins that "an infinite deal of rubbish could be destroyed."
- 1891**      Lead taken by Home Department in laying down orders, for the Officer-in-charge to weed out certain classes of printed records e.g. spare copies.
- 1899**      Revised rules issued for destruction of superfluous papers and records of Home Department not transferred to the Officer-in-charge of Records, providing for destruction of useless papers.

Departments advised to transfer non-current records over 20 years old quinquennially to the Imperial Record Department.

Criteria for appraisal still to develop in Home Department; envisages the Registrar using his judgement for determining papers to be kept, and those to be destroyed, and marking them P and D respectively; doubtful cases being referred to Under Secretary/Deputy Secretary.

Forrest records opinion that destruction should not be left to the discretion of a single person, and suggests that :

i) A list of papers to be destroyed be drawn up every 3 months by the Registrar, and submitted to the Deputy Secretary for obtaining the opinion of Officer-in-charge of Records.

ii) Officer incharge of Records also to submit a list of papers in his custody with recommendation for destruction to the Deputy Secretary for submission to the Secretary.

Above procedure modelled on the London pattern, both accommodate and balance the administrative and historical needs.

View expressed by Forrest's successor Mr. S.C. Hill that the Department concerned be proper authority to give final orders for destruction of useless papers.

1899 Office order issued detailing instructions for destruction of superfluous papers covering various categories and providing for guidelines for separate lists of B proceedings to be prepared according as they are to be destroyed after 1, 5 and 10 years.

1899 Curzon's famous memorandum on the unnecessary noting at too many levels in the Departments of the Government of India. Bengal Government asked not to destroy pre-1854 papers. Decision by the Government of India to keep pre-1858 records.

1910 Lead given by Home Department for relieving shelf space in record rooms.

Mr. C. W. Caston, Registrar, Home Department, entrusted with the weeding work. Large number of files, manuscripts and printed copies separated for destruction.

1910 Imperial Record Department taken over by Education Department.

**1912-13** Weeding rules drafted by Education Department placed before Registrars of all the Departments for adaption. New rules adopted or adapted, enumerating classes of papers to be dealt with, and prohibiting destruction of manuscripts of which no printed copies existed. 66% of the proceedings volumes and registers and 77% of files weeded out.

Revised rules for weeding, based on the English system requiring consultation with Departments, proposed by Scholfield.

**1916-17** Guidance from the Officer in-charge of the Imperial Record Department to other Departments in their weeding operation discontinued, leaving weeding to each Department.

**1919** Report of the Llewellyn Smith Committee submitted. Earlier classification of records into classes A, B & C abolished. Weeding rules applicable to records common to all Departments appended to Revised Secretariat Instructions under which files of special importance only to be preserved and examined triennially.

**1919** Indian Historical Records Commission set up by the Government.

**1920-21** A general sketch of a new scheme presented to Finance Department by the Education Secretary, Sir Henry Sharp, and elaborated by Mr. Nixon, Deputy Secretary, Finance Department, requiring record creating agencies to review and weed out immediately after the closure of the record.

Division suggested of B category files units B-I and B-II, according to importance, providing a maximum period of 12 years after which a paper could be destroyed, the minimum period being one year. A rational system of classification of files emerged according to their importance and providing for files marked for destruction coming up automatically.

Weeding office abolished, without appraisal of all the records of the Secretariat being completed.

- 1929     A new procedure evolved by the Home Department, by and large, corresponding to the practice currently in vogue, providing for marking a file by the dealing officials in the section whether it is to be kept or destroyed after a specific period and the Record Keeper sending files marked for destruction during a year to the sections concerned for review under the supervision of the superintendents for either further retention or destruction, and providing for destruction of spare copies.
- 1937     Destruction of Records Act 1917, adopted in the light of introduction of Federal structure.
- 1944     Revised Weeding Rules issued by the Local Records sub-Committee.

## APPENDIX VIII

**Resolutions adopted from time to time by the Indian Historical Records Commission regarding appraisal, weeding and archival legislation and indicating briefly the extent of action taken thereupon as reported by the secretariat of the Commissions.**

Resolutions	Action taken
<p><b>1. Resolution I, 5th Session, 1923, Calcutta :</b></p>	<p>The Government of India accepted the recommendations of the Sub-Committee and appointed a permanent Standing Local Sub-Committee to advise the Keeper of Records on matters relating to weeding of pre-Mutiny records.</p>
<p><b>2. Resolution II, 7th Session, 1925, Poona:</b></p>	<p><b>Maharashtra Government :</b> The records previous to 1856 comprise (i) pre-1820 Diaries, Consultations, Minute Books etc. and (ii) those between 1820 &amp; 1911-12, in bound volumes. The question of their destruction does not arise.</p>
<p>That the attention of the Governments of Bombay and Madras be drawn to the policy of the Government of India regarding the preservation of historical documents, and that the destruction of all records previous to 1856 be discontinued and that the said records be classified.</p>	<p><b>Government of Tamil Nadu :</b> The then Curator, Madras Record Office, submitted a report to the State Government which had already decided as early as 1912 (vide G.O. No. 1422, Public dated 21st November, 1912) that no records prior to 1857 should be destroyed.</p>

**Resolutions****Action taken**

The classification of records suggested in the Resolution was difficult to implement because the extracts from the Minutes of Consultations of the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries contain many matters, some of which may be of historical, administrative or local interest. These records are in the shape of volumes and arranged in a chronological order, Department-wise and as such cannot be dismembered for a subject-wise classification.

**3. Resolution IX, 10th Session, 1927, Rangoon :**

The Commission recommends that the paper should be destroyed and that the Secretary should place similar useless documents before the future meetings of the Commission.

Instructions noted by the Secretariat. The paper referred to was torn and illegible. Public Consultation, dated 17 August 1778, No. 40.

**4. Resolution VIII, 13th Session, 1930, Patna:**

That in the opinion of the Commission legislation similar to that in existence in England should be introduced at an early date, both by the Government of India and the Provincial Governments, for the preservation, destruction etc. of public documents.

Not implemented till date. But a comprehensive Archival Policy Resolution has been passed and notified by the Government of India in the Gazette of India.

**Resolution****Action****5. Resolution V, 17th  
Session, 1940, Baroda :**

Resolved that this Commission requests the Calcutta High Court not to destroy any of the old records in its custody, but to transfer them to some record office in Bengal or to any University in the province.

It has been reported that no records were transferred elsewhere.

**6. Resolution X, 18th  
Session, 1942, Mysore:**

This Commission requests the High Court of Calcutta to consult such members of the Commission as ordinarily reside in Bengal before it decides to destroy any of its old records, and the Commission further suggests that the Calcutta University may be given an opportunity of preserving such records as may be finally condemned for destruction.

The Calcutta High Court agreed in principle to allow a local member of the Commission deputed by the Calcutta University to see such documents as have been scheduled for destruction under the Court rules.

**7. Resolution VII, 19th  
Session, 1942, Trivandrum:**

This Commission recommends to the Government of India that Section 5 of Act III of 1879, Government of India Act to authorise the destruction of useless records be so amended that all rules made

The Government of India thought it inopportune to introduce preventive legislation at the moment but addressed Provincial and State Governments suggesting their proper care before the records were weeded out. Madras followed a procedure which, according to Madras Government, pre-

**Resolution**

under this Act shall be published in the Gazettes etc. after being confirmed by the local Government or Governments and sanctioned by the Governor-General in Council after obtaining the views of the Indian Historical Records Commission.

**8. Resolution III, 20th  
Session, 1943, Aligarh :**

The Commission recommends that (i) the opinion of the Solicitor to the Government of India may be awaited and that (ii) the names of Mr. D.N. Banerjee, Dacca University and Dr. N.K. Sinha, Calcutta University may be forwarded to the Registrar, Calcutta High Court, as local experts whose services the Hon'ble Chief Justice may be pleased to utilise in determining historical importance of records marked out for weeding.

**9. Resolution IV, 20th  
Session, 1943, Aligarh :**

This Commission recommends that the Secretary be authorised to enquire about the procedure followed by High Courts other than that of Calcutta in weeding out their old records.

**Action taken**

vented destruction of important records. Bombay was not intending to destroy any record for the time being. Orissa, Surguja and Puddukottai Princely States were taking care that no important records were destroyed.

Same as reported against item No. 6.

The High Courts of Allahabad, Bombay, Madras and Nagpur, Judicial Commissioner's Court, Peshawar and Chief Court of Oudh, Lucknow, explained the procedures followed in weeding. (Some forwarded their weeding rules)



**Resolution****Action taken**

**10. Resolution V, 20th  
Session, 1943, Aligarh :**

This Commission recommends that the Provincial Governments having no organised record offices should be requested to take such steps as may prevent the weeding out of historical records in their divisional and district offices without previous scrutiny by the local members of the Commission.

The Government of India had already addressed the authorities concerned on the subject.

**11. Resolution II, 21st  
Session, 1944, Udaipur :**

This Commission notes with satisfaction that the Calcutta High Court has agreed to utilise the services of experts nominated by the Indian Historical Records Commission for advice in regard to the weeding of old records and it recommends that similar procedure may be observed by other High Courts and Chief Courts in India with regard to their records.

The High Court of Madras would consult the Curator, Madras Record office, in the first instance and the other members, if necessary. Patna also agreed to utilise the advice of a local expert nominated by the Indian Historical Records Commission. On an enquiry from Lahore High Court it was informed that no expenditure would be involved if local members were consulted.

**12. Resolution VII, 23rd  
Session, 1946, Indore:**

(a) This Commission has carefully examined the rules framed by the Local Records Sub-Committee and approved by the Government of India for weeding their records and

The Government of India forwarded the resolutions to the Provincial Governments and States for necessary action.

**Resolution****Action taken**

are of opinion that the addenda to rules suggested in the Agenda should be embodied in the set of rules and be adopted by the Central Government. His Excellency the Crown Representatives (in Centre and Residencies), Provincial Governments and Indian States.

(b) The Commission further recommends that the present time is inopportune for weeding of records in the Government and State agencies and, therefore, strongly urges upon the authorities concerned that no weeding of any records should be undertaken until a definite legislation is passed on the future constitution of this country.

**13. Resolution VIII, 23rd  
Session, 1946, Indore :**

This Commission recommends in continuation of Resolution II of the 21st Session that all the High and Chief Courts avail the Services of the local members (Ordinary, Associate, or Corresponding) for advice in regard to weeding and in that case the question of paying travelling allowance or any other expenditure will not arise.

It is not known to the secretariat of the Commission as to what extent these recommendations were actually followed by the concerned departments.

Resolution forwarded to all Provincial Governments and the Registrar, High Court of Judicature, Calcutta, for necessary action.

**Resolution****Action taken****14. Resolution IX, 24th  
Session, 1948, Jaipur :**

Resolved that the Commission reiterates its request to the Government of India to undertake suitable legislation, by amendment of Act III of 1879 or otherwise for preventing export or transfer outside of records, historical documents and manuscripts from Indian Union, and unwarranted destruction therefore.

**15. Resolution VI, 28th  
Session, 1951, Jaipur :**

The Commission resolves that all the State Governments should treat the Regional Record Committees in their respective areas as competent bodies to advise them on all the matters relating to records and that where there are no such Committees, Advisory Committees should be appointed.

The Antiquities and Art Treasures Act passed in 1972 regulates the export trade in antiquities and art treasures including manuscripts, records or other documents which are of scientific, historical, literary or aesthetic value and which have been in existence for not less than 75 years.

Andhra Pradesh : The State Government accepted the Resolution.

Bihar : The Director of Archives is associated with the Regional Records Survey Committee and thus there is a close co-ordination between the two organisations.

Bilaspur : In the absence of a central record office in the State, it will not be necessary to set up the committee.

Karnataka : State Government accepted the Resolution and the instructions were issued.

Maharashtra : The State Board for Historical Records and Ancient Monuments is doing the work on a wider scale. The Board is kept

**Resolution****Action taken**

informed of the work done in the various Records Offices. Punjab: A permanent Regional Records Survey Committee has been set up since 1948.

Tamil Nadu : The Survey Committee functioned till 1971 and its reconstitution is under consideration.

West Bengal : The Regional Records survey Committee worked as an advisory body on matters relating to the appraisal, preservation etc. of records.

**Union Territories**

Andaman and Nicobar : Not possible to set up a Regional Records Survey Committee at this stage.

**16. Resolution VII, 38th Session, 1967, Jadavpur (Calcutta) :**

**State Governments**

The Commission resolves that the State Governments be requested (i) to appoint Committees of archival experts in their respective States to select from among administrative papers more than 30 years old at district headquarters, without prejudic to the present day administration, papers of historical value.

Andhra Pradesh : Instructions have been issued that all collectorate records which are more than 30 years old should be scrutinised by the Director of Archives. The constitution of an advisory committee on weeding is under consideration.

Bihar : Though no formal committee has been set up records of permanent value which are more than 30 years old are transferred to the State Archives for permanent preservation.

**Resolution****State Governments**

**Karnataka :** Accepted the Resolution in principle.

**Kerala :** Since the appraisal work is being attended to by the responsible and experienced officers of the State Archives Department, the appointment of such a committee has not been contemplated.

**Maharashtra :** The Maharashtra State Board for Archives and Archaeology had representation of archival experts on it.

**Rajasthan :** The Government laid down a clear cut procedure for the appraisal of District records. District authorities have been directed to weed out records in consultation with the Director of Archives.

**Tamil Nadu :** The implementation of the Resolution should wait till the entire records are centralised in the State Archives and the Government may provide more funds for the development of Archives.

**Uttar Pradesh :** The Resolution is accepted in principle and the question of appointment of a committee is under consideration.

**West Bengal :** The appraisal of District records has been taken up with the assistance of the Regional Records Survey

**Resolution****17. Resolution IV, 40th  
Session, 1970, Madras :**

.....The Commission requests the Government of India and the State Governments to associate scholars in framing of policies concerning selection of records of permanent preservation.

**State Governments**

Committee and constitution of any other committee is not considered worthwhile.

**Central Government**

According to the Archival Policy Resolution the Director of National Archives is required to coordinate and guide all operations connected with public records in respect of their administration, preservation and elimination, with a view to ensuring that the records of permanent value are not destroyed.

**State Governments**

**Kerala :** The State Archives has been advised to associate scholars in selection of records for preservation.

**Maharashtra :** Since the Director is associated with the weeding of records associating scholars are not considered either feasible or practicable.

**Orissa :** Orders have been issued that all 'B' and 'C' class records of different offices are not to be destroyed without consulting the Superintendent, State Archives.

**Tamil Nadu :** The Government is of the view that the record creating agencies should decide the period for which the records are

**Resolution****State Governments**

to be retained in accordance with the instructions of the departmental manuals.

Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Jammu & Kashmir : The Resolution is under the consideration of the State Governments.

**Union Territory**

Delhi : The recommendation has been noted and would be considered as and when the question of framing such policies arises.

Only one State replied.

**18. Resolution IV, 41st Session, Trivandrum, 1971.**

Resolved that in the interest of completeness of official records of historical value, weeding of records at the various levels by untrained persons be stopped.

**19. Resolution XII, 41st Session, 1971, Trivandrum :**

Keeping in view the enormous problems created by the evergrowing bulk of records, the Commission appreciates the lead presently given by the National Archives of India and the Department of Administrative Reforms, Government of India, in the sphere of management of the records of the Union Government and their time bound appraisal. It also

Haryana : Necessary instructions in this respect have already been issued to all Heads of the Departments by the State Government.

Punjab : The matter is under the consideration of the Government.

Himachal Pradesh : There is no Department of Archives in this State at present. The Resolution will, however, be kept in view.

Gujarat : The State Directorate of Archives has been

**Resolution**

notes with satisfaction the steps taken by some State Governments for weeding of their non-essential records. The Commission urges all those State Governments and Union Territories which have not yet initiated such a programme on a regular basis to do so urgently with a view to economising in the long run on the upkeep and preservation of their permanent records. The concerned governments may consult, if necessary, the National Archives of India for this purpose.

**20. Resolution V, 42nd Session, 1972, Goa (Panaji) :**

Resolved that all necessary and feasible steps be taken to save from destruction the balance sheets and other connected papers which were submitted by Indian business firms to the Registrars of Companies in various States.

**State Governments**

created recently. Appraisal of non-essential records will have to be done by trained staff involving additional financial burden to the State Government. Implementation of the Resolution will, therefore, be considered during the next financial year, 1975-76.

The Resolution was forwarded to the Ministry of Law, Justice and Company Affairs (Department of Company Affairs). The National Archives of India, had also undertaken the study of the various types of record preserved under the custody of the Registrar of Companies, Delhi. A preliminary report was also prepared. The destruction of ephemeral records of the offices of the Registrars of Companies is governed by the rules framed under Act V of 1971.



**21. Resolution XI, 42nd  
Session, 1972, Goa,  
(Panaji) :**

Resolved that all State Governments should evolve as early as possible a well articulated retirement policy for their records and prepare retention schedules for records at all levels in line with the rules of the Central Government.

Maharashtra, West Bengal, Karnataka, Bihar : The matter is under consideration.

Andhra Pradesh : Action will be taken on receipt of the retention schedule of the Central Government.

Tamil Nadu : Action taken on the Resolution will be intimated on receipt of a report from the Commissioner, Tamil Nadu Archives and Historical Research.

Rajasthan : The State Government is collecting necessary data for implementing the Resolution.

Orissa : The State Government has accepted the Resolution in principle and priority has been given for its early implementation.

Uttar Pradesh : A well articulated retirement policy for records has been prepared and it is said to be under the consideration of the Government.

Delhi : Administration has issued an archival policy resolution.

## APPENDIX IX

### Patterns of classification of records prevalent at the Centre and in certain States/Union Territories.

Serial No.	No. of categories	Description of category	Remarks
<b>CENTRE</b>			
1.	3	A — To be retained and printed or micro-filmed because of administrative and historical importance. B — To be merely kept without being printed or microfilmed because of administrative and historical importance. C — Retention periods varying upto 10 years after which they are to be destroyed because of their reference value for a limited period.	Retained in sections after 3 years, then transferred to Departmental Record Room for review.  (i) in consultation with National Archives of India in respect of A & B categories at the end of 25 years. (ii) to be reviewed and retained for further period or weeded out as required.
<b>UNION TERRITORIES</b>			
2.		(a) Delhi } (b) Goa } Same as for the Centre. (c) Pondicherry	
		(i) Secretariat Department	
4		A — To be retained permanently B — To be retained for 10 years C — To be retained for 5 years D — To be destroyed after 1 year	
		(ii) Non-Secretariat,	

Sl. No. of No. categories	Description of category.	Remarks
5	R — Disposal — To be retained permanently D — Disposal — To be destroyed after 10 years K — Disposal — To be destroyed after 3 years L — Disposal — To be destroyed after 1 year *N — Disposal — Records sent out in original	*The exact meaning to be ascertained
STATES		
3.	Andhra Pradesh	
4	L, D, R & N Disposal	According to importance
4.	Assam	
3	A } B } Description not known C }	
5.	Bihar	
4	A — To be preserved permanently B — To be destroyed after 12 years C — To be kept for not more than 2 years D — To be disposed of as per specified rules	
6.	Gujarat	
5	A — To be retained permanently B — To be destroyed after 30 years B (J)—To be destroyed after 15 years C — To be destroyed after 5 years D — To be destroyed after 1 year	
7.	Himachal Pradesh	
5	Class I to be retained for 1 year " II -do- 3 years " III -do- 8 years " IV -do- 15 years " V -do- permanently	

Serial No.	No. of categories	Description of category	Remarks
8.		Jammu & Kashmir	
	3	Details not available. Retention periods vary according to importance.	
9.		Karnataka	
	4	A — To be retained permanently and printed B — To be kept permanently but not printed C — To be retained for 5 years D — To be destroyed after one year	
10.		Kerala	
		(i) Secretariat— L D R & N Disposal :According to importance	
		(ii) Non-Secretariat do do	
11.		Maharashtra	
	4	A — Transferred to Secretariat record office 5 years after their closure B — To be destroyed by the Registry on expiry of the stipulated period. C — To be weeded out in the Registry immediately after 5 years. D — To be destroyed by the Branch itself.	
	8	High Court Records	
		(a) Original side	
	6	A — To be preserved for 60 years B — -do- 30 years C — -do- 12 years D — -do- 6 years E — -do- 3 years F — -do- 1 year	Maharashtra Government Gazettee, November 25, 1963.
		(b) Appellate side	
	4	A — To be preserved permanently B — -do- for 30 years	Maharashtra Government

Sl. No.	State No. of Categories	Description of Category	Remarks
		C — To be preserved permanently for 12 years D — -do- for 6 years	Gazettee, December 19, 1963.
12.	Orissa		
	3	A — To be preserved permanently B — To be retained for 12 years C — To be destroyed after 3 years	
13.	Punjab		
	3	A — To be kept permanently B — To be destroyed after 5 years C — To be weeded out after 2 or 3 years	
14.	Rajasthan		
	5	Class I files to be retained for 1 year Class II „ -do- 5 years „ III „ -do- 3 years „ IV „ -do- 10 years „ V To be retained permanently	
15.	Tamil Nadu		
	4/5	L Disposal — To be destroyed after 1 year K Disposal — To be destroyed after 3 years D Disposal — To be destroyed after 10 years R Disposal — To be retained permanently *N Disposal — Records sent out in original	*Exact meaning to be ascertained.
		High Court Records (Original Side)	
	3	Part I To be retained permanently Part II To be retained for 12 years Part III To be retained for 6 years	Rules of the High Court of Judicature at Madras, 1956.

Sl. No.	No. of Categories	Description of Category	Remarks
16.		Uttar Pradesh	
3	A —	To be preserved indefinitely	
	B —	To be retained for 12 years	
	C —	To be preserved for 5 years	
17.		West Bengal	
3	A —	To be preserved indefinitely	
	B —	To be retained for 12 years	
	C —	To be preserved for 5 years	
		High Court Records (Appellate side)	
4	A-I	To be preserved for 60 years	Record Department Manual, 1937.
	B	-do- 12 years	
	C	-do- 3 years	
	D	-do- 1 year	

## APPENDIX X

### Statement showing unappraised record holdings of Ministries/ Departments of the Government of India.

Serial No.	Ministry/Department	No. of files over 25 year
1.	Ministry of Agriculture	3,371
2.	Department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms, Cabinet Secretariat	—
3.	Ministry of Communication	1,91,852
4.	Ministry of Defence	4,37,850
5.	Ministry of Education and Social Welfare	65,286
6.	Department of Customs and Central Excise	35,749
7.	Ministry of External Affairs	40,000
8.	Ministry of Finance	10,000
9.	Ministry of Home Affairs	2,113
10.	Ministry of Health and Family Planning	2,681
11.	Ministry of Irrigation and Power	—
12.	Ministry of Information and Broadcasting	274
13.	Ministry of Industrial Development and Internal Trade	150
14.	Ministry of Law, Justice and Company Affairs	2,100
15.	Ministry of Labour, Employment and Rehabilitation	2,310
16.	Planning Commission	—
17.	Department of Parliamentary Affairs	—
18.	Ministry of Petroleum and Chemicals	120
19.	Ministry of Railways	4,000
20.	Ministry of Shipping and Transport	15,364
21.	Ministry of Steel and Mines	—
22.	Ministry of Works and Housing	1,05,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>9,18,218</b>

## APPENDIX XI

### A Statement of records appraised in the National Archives/Ministries/Departments of the Government of India during 1970-1975

Year	Files appraised	Files marked for retention	Files recommended for weeding	Period covered by records
1970-71	45,187	14,032	31,155	1923-1946
1971-72	41,101	23,501	17,600	1925-1946
1972-73	33,552	11,352	22,200	1882-1947
1973-74	47,719	20,651	27,068	1882-1951
1974-75	92,050	37,304	54,746	1871-1948
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,59,609</b>	<b>1,06,840</b>	<b>1,52,769</b>	<b>58.8% files weeded out</b>

### B. Appraisal of records in the Ministries/Departments.

Year	Files appraised	Files marked for retention	Files weeded out	Period covered by records
1970-71	3,972	1,850	2,122	1885-1946
1971-72	110	55	55	1946-1954
1972-73	18,717	13,099	5,618	1929-1957
1973-74	10,748	2,766	7,982	1914-1948
1974-75	10,817	6,902	3,915	N. A.*
<b>Total</b>	<b>44,364</b>	<b>24,672</b>	<b>19,692</b>	<b>44.3% files weeded out</b>



## APPENDIX XII

### Statement showing the weeding of records in Union Territories/States during 1970-75

Serial No.	Union Territory/State	Year/Years in which weeding was done	Quantum of files weeded out	Period covered by records
1.	2.	3.	4.	5
1.	Union Territory of Delhi	1968 1969 1970 1971 1972	3,538 1,059 211 149 1,2946	N. A. *
			Total	
			17,903	
2.	Union Territory of Pondicherry	1970-74	7,000	N. A.
3.	Andhra Pradesh	1970-74	Several lakhs of files pertaining to erstwhile Hyderabad Government, 285 Electoral Rolls	N. A. 1960-62
4.	Assam	1970-74	18,351	1947-49
5.	Bihar	N. A.	9,000	N. A.
6.	Karnataka	1972-74	68,500	N. A.
7.	Kerala	1970-74	10,00,000	Upto 1967
8.	Maharashtra	1970 1971 1972 1973 1974	23,311 30,198 9,279 3 231	N. A.
			Total	
			63,022	

\*N.A. Signify Not Available

1	2	3	4	5
9.	Punjab	1971-72	1,505	N. A.*
		1972-73	1,301	
		1973-74	3,205	
		1974-75	3,890	
			3,000	
		Total	12,903	
10.	Rajasthan	1970-71	11,800	
		1971-72	11,341	
		1972-73	12,626	
		1973-74	8,813	
		1974-75	11,281	
		Total	55,861	
11.	Tamil Nadu	1970-74	86,208	Files of Board of Revenue- 1786-1828
12.	Uttar Pradesh	1970	34,869	N. A.
		1971	41,129	
		1972	47,913	
		1973	41,721	
		1974	69,097	
		1975	38,175	
		Total	2,72,904	
13.	West Bengal	1970	3,563	1937-1939
		1971	3,767	
		1972	8,930	
		1973	4,173	
		1974	3,250	
		Total	23,683	

\*N.A. Signify Not Available

## APPENDIX XIII

**Explanatory note from Thiru L. M. Vasagam, I. A. S.,  
Commissioner of Archives Historical Research,  
Tamil Nadu Archives**

**Whether the records of the Board of Revenue destroyed were originals or copies ?**

The records of the Board of Revenue appraised during 1970-74 comprised of bundles as well as volumes into which the papers in the bundles were copied and attested by the officials responsible for the transactions, viz. the Members of the Board of Revenue. The 86,000 and odd papers in the bundles destroyed and about 17,000 papers retained were compared with the volumes, an abstract of each paper as well as the pages of the volumes into which each paper was copied were prepared in a proforma specially designed for examining the administrative as well as historical value of the papers. The administrative value was assessed by the staff appointed by the Board of Revenue and the historical criterion was applied by the Assistant Director of Archives after going through each paper. The papers in the bundles which were eliminated cannot all be considered as originals as some of them are only copies of some letters not at all authenticated, as they do not contain the signature of any one, either the sender or the receiver. For example, from the records yet to be appraised, I quote just one instance in support of this. One paper in the bundle Back No. 76 dated 15th June, 1829 is a letter addressed by the Board of Revenue to the Collector of Vizagapatam. The paper in the bundle does not contain the signature of any one, but it is described as "signed" "Elliot", Secretary, Board of Revenue, but the letter has been fully copied in the volume along with other papers received on 15th June, 1829 and attested at the end by all the three Members of Board of Revenue on page 5,722 of the Board of Revenue Volume No. 1191. Though the Board's records for this period have not been destroyed in the Archives they were examined with a view to elimination of ephemeral and duplicate papers, when the work was abruptly stopped. This particular paper, the subject of which was summarised in the proforma as: "The

Collector of Vizagapatam was requested to report how far his endeavours to introduce the cultivation of bourbon cotton was successful" was recommended to be destroyed by the Board's special staff as of no administrative value, but ordered to be retained by the Assistant Director of Archives as can be seen from the order on the proforma. A copy of the proforma is enclosed.

It cannot be said that all the papers in the bundles are originals, but, it can be said that all entries in the volumes are authentic. The papers destroyed can, therefore, be originals mostly, and partly copies.

2. The circumstances under which originals, if any, were destroyed.

The original papers in the bundles as have been copied and authenticated by the officers responsible for the transaction in neat volumes were destroyed after assessing the volume under order of the Government as recommended by the Board of Revenue. It was felt by Dr. B. S. Baliga, who submitted the original proposals for appraisal, that there was no point in keeping two sets of records of the same matter, if the space for keeping records is to be made available, as has been stated in our reply to questions 3-6 of the Questionnaire of the Record Management Committee that this policy on weeding was settled years ago, when Dr. B. S. Baliga, an eminent archivist and Member, Indian Historical Records Commission, who was the Curator (Director of Archives, 1935-58) wrote to the Government in 1936 which was approved in G. O. Ms. No. 2289, Education, dated 1st October, 1937. The criteria to be followed for appraisal were also given by him in that report. To quote briefly : "Board's records consists of volumes as well as bundles, the papers in the former were copied from the latter. But the bundles sometimes include valuable enclosures which are not included in the volumes. Though the bundles are originals some papers in them may now be missing or damaged, and the volumes are unquestionably in a better condition of preservation." The condition of loose papers in the bundles has not improved since then. On the other hand many of them are in a condition not fit to be handled. Whereas the bundles are not complete, as some of the papers are missing, the volumes are complete and in a better shape.

3. Before destruction whether prior permission of the Board of Revenue was obtained ?

The prior permission of not only Board of Revenue, but also the Government was obtained for undertaking this work. The papers were examined from the administrative point of view by the staff of the Board of Revenue who finally put up to the Assistant Director for his orders as has already been stated.

4. Whether the Tamil Nadu Archives is following the instructions in the Secretariat Office Manual for purposes of weeding?

The instructions in the S. O. M. containing the retention schedules are followed by C. R. B. of the Secretariat before the records are transferred to this Archives for permanent retention. No such record is re-appraised in this Archives. The records which were taken up in the past for appraisal were those which were not appraised by the C. R. B. or other agencies but were transferred wholesale to the Archives at the time of the formation of this Archives or thereafter in consequence of the creation of the Archives Department. The only destruction which has been in practice here was to eliminate one set where there were two.

5. Is it correct to say that originals are found only in bundles and their copies in volumes ? Whether the signatures of the officers responsible for the transactions are found in the volumes ?

This question is answered against question 1.

6. According to the Antiquities and Art Treasure Act of 1972 records prior to 1900 are not to be destroyed. Is this being followed ?

The Antiquities and Art Treasure Act of 1972 does not seem to prohibit the appraisal and elimination of duplicates from the records prior to 1900. At any rate this prescription or the date from which this Act was made applicable to Tamil Nadu is not immediately known. A reading of the Act also does not show that it applies to records in the custody of Government. However, this is a matter to be examined in detail before a correct answer can be found. However, it may be safely asserted that this Act or the requirement that the pre-1900 papers should not be destroyed, was not known to this Archives, while the work of appraisal was in progress.

7. What specific orders were obtained for the destruction of records prior to 1970 ?

It is not clear from the question whether the intention is to know whether lists of records were sent to the Board of Revenue or Government for their approval. If so, this was not considered necessary as the Board's staff were examining the papers from the administrative angle and the Archives from the historical angle and in any case when the volumes were here no purpose of history of administration is likely to suffer by eliminating some papers from the bundle.

8. What was the necessity to re-appraise the records of Board of Revenue when they were already appraised twice in 1896 and 1910 ?

It is not correct to say that all the records of the Board of Revenue were re-appraised in 1896 and 1910. It was only some of the series of records which were appraised by the Board of Revenue in 1896 and 1910. Dr. B. S. Baliga had made it clear in his report "what remains to be done was to compare the papers in the bundles with the volumes with a view to eliminate the papers in the bundles."

**Board of Revenue (L.R.)  
Weeding Section**

**Proforma for Scrutiny of Records**

1. **Board's Consultation**  
No. and Date                      76                      15-6-1829
2. **Subject**      **Cotton—Cultivation of Bourbon Cotton in Vizag-Report called for.**
3. **Summary**      **The Collector of Vizagapatam was requested to report how far his endeavours to introduce the cultivation of Bourbon Cotton were successful.**

**Fair copy pages**              **From : 5722**                      **To : 5722**  
**Volume No.**                      **1191**                      **Gl. No. : 15397**

4. **Administrative value**      **Nil**                      **May be destroyed**  
**(Sd.)/ K. Narayanan 27-2-74**

5. **Orders of the Assistant Director**

**RAO**  
**(Sd.) C.K.G.**

**True Copy**

## APPENDIX XIV

### Note by Dr. S. V. Desika Char

I am in general agreement with the Committee's proposals. I would, however, like to record my individual opinion on a few matters which I consider to be of great importance.

#### **Ban on Destruction of 100 Year-Old Records**

2. The Archival Policy Resolution of the Government of India, 1972, provides : "No records more than hundred years old should be destroyed." This is on the same lines as the Resolution of the Indian Historical Records Commission of 1939 and the recommendation of the Tara Chand Committee (1960) that no pre-Mutiny records should be destroyed, and of the much earlier view going to the Company's days that no pre-1800 records should be destroyed.

3. As general guidelines, these have been in the right direction. As a mandatory directive, to be literally taken and enforced, the Policy Resolution of 1972 may prove obnoxious and lead to money being wasted on upkeep of records, utterly useless, merely on the ground of their antiquity. That this is no meaningless fear is seen from the controversies of the thirties, when Prof. Rushbrooke Williams, after examining a few bundles of records of 1764 and 1827, observed that "he could get only a handful of grain.....by winnowing this large heap of chaff." The Resolution of the Indian Historical Records Commission of 1939 that no pre-Mutiny papers should be destroyed was adopted, in my opinion, primarily because of the difficulties experienced in separating the grain from the chaff, arising out of the filing systems in force at the time the records were created. Besides, the pre-Mutiny records that had survived in the Record Rooms were small in volume, and they posed no insuperable problems regarding their upkeep and management.

4. The provision requiring non-destruction of records more than 100 years old in the Archival Policy Resolution of the Government of India, 1972, however, requires reconsideration. It should be noted that this is flexible, continuing ban. It refers



to Secretariat records and non-Secretariat records with Departments and also to records of high-level Field Offices and that at the lowest level it refers to record groups which have been appraised and also to those which have not been appraised at any time; it would apply to really ephemeral records kept on over long periods of statutory provisions to safeguard personal and individual interests and not because of their historical value. If the Policy Resolution is literally interpreted and enforced, the country would be saddled with mountain loads of rubbish of no value whatsoever, and the Historian would be as much the sufferer as the Administrator, let alone the high cost of their maintenance. The Policy Directive goes clearly against the well-accepted rule that only records of permanent value should be preserved permanently.

5. In the present stage of our archival development the blanket ban on destruction of records serves a very useful purpose, as it places a strong restraining hand on those indulging in summary, thoughtless disposal. For the ban to be effective and useful, a proviso should be added. All public offices, high and low, should be required to report, once in five years, what pre-1900 records they are holding to the Head of the Department and the Director of the State Archives, and state whether they want them to be preserved for a further period or permanently for any specific reason. On receiving such a report, it should be the duty of the Head of the Department and the Director of Archives to see if the records have been appraised earlier, and if they may be categorised permanent and preserved permanently. In case it is decided that any of these records are ephemeral, the fact should be reported to the Regional Records Survey Committee on which historians are represented, and the records should be weeded out only after obtaining its concurrence.

### **Destruction of Original Records**

6. Destruction of original records, even though copies, printed or otherwise, are available, is against archival principles and tradition, and this refers only to records adjudged to be of permanent value after proper appraisal. The question is whether there are no circumstances under which an Archivist or an Administrator feels justified in destroying the originals. This question has come up prominently in connection with the reported destruction of records at Madras and Goa. In his Report to the Government of Madras in 1936, Dr. Baliga, the Curator of the Madras Record Office, and an eminent Archivist and Historian, proposed

the weeding out of the originals of certain record groups for which copies existed and stated the circumstances under which he was impelled to make the move. With the precedent he has provided, one need not feel hesitant to raise the issue.

7. I would envisage the following circumstances wherein an Archivist or an Administrator may feel it proper to think of destroying original records of permanent value, whether copies existed or not.

- (a) Records so far damaged that their reclamation even partially is out of question.
- (b) Fast-deteriorating records which cannot be archivally repaired and properly preserved in the foreseeable future, for which copies exist or microfilm can be taken.
- (c) Records of secondary historical value which could be weeded out after taking microfilm copies in order to save on storage space, cost of archival repair and preservation, and general maintenance.

I expect the major part of our records in future would fall under category (c). With the poor quality paper and ink we are using in our public offices, a sizable proportion of records may also belong to category (b).

8. Destruction of original records of permanent value is no doubt a matter of great moment. There should be safeguards to prevent summary or thoughtless action. I would suggest a procedure similar to that I have recommended in para 5 above in respect of destruction of records more than 100 years old. Besides the safeguard proposed being required to save records of great historical value, it is necessary to protect the Archivist and the Administrator from calumny and unjustified criticism.

#### **Private Papers**

9. Despite the ravages of time, the quantum of pre-1900 papers of possible historical value in private hands is still very large, and the drive to survey and collect them has been weak and ill organised throughout the country so far. Their systematic acquisition after a thorough survey is likely to revolutionise our understanding of the late Medieval and Modern Indian History,

since our study has so far been based, by and large, on official and semi-official sources only. This aspect of archival work should receive the highest possible priority in the interest of conserving our cultural heritage.

10. In the present situation, while there need be no bar on the Universities and Learned Societies acquiring papers, the only institutions that can deliver the goods are the National Archives of India and the State Archives. The responsibility should be squarely placed on them.

11. Past effort to survey and acquire the papers, quite often significant, have been frustrated by the unwillingness of the owners to part with them, mostly owing to sentimental reasons. A policy decision to microfilm all the papers that are considered valuable and cannot be acquired is most essential for the success of the scheme, and microfilm should be done soon after the papers are surveyed.

12. We cannot make such headway, (particularly in this field because these are non-Government Records) without substantial Central aid in one form or the other. With their limited resources, the State Governments are always prone to go on postponing the work or their outlays would not be commensurate to requirements. The expenditure incurred would be under the following heads :

- (a) Initial capital outlay on setting up a Microfilming Unit.
- (b) Recurring expenditure on raw microfilm and processing materials.
- (c) The operational staff of the Microfilming Unit.
- (d) Archival staff to undertake surveys and process the records for microfilming and compile the basic reference media.

The distribution of Private papers is far from uniform and it is possible that States like Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh may have to spend more than the others. Having this aspect in mind among other things I recommend that the whole of the expenditure under (a) and (b) and half of the expenditure under (c) and (d) should be met by the Centre, and the balance to be met by

the States. The work should be done by the State Archives as a part of its normal activities. The position should be reviewed after two Plan periods. If the work is carried out in earnest, it should be possible to salvage a major portion of the pre-1900 records by then.

13. In case Central aid is given to the States for archival development in general, I recommend that there should be a clear directive requiring that a reasonable sum is earmarked for this work.

### **Printing of "A" Category Records**

14. The Printing "A" category records, soon after recording, has been given up by the Government of India and the State Governments quite sometime back. It would be good if the printing is resumed, since the Administrator during their semi-current stage and the Historian when they become non-current would have more than one copy to consult, and there would also be stand by copies.

15. Without reference to the question of printing, micro-filming them soon after recording should be a must, and this should be made mandatory in respect of the Secretariat records at least to begin with. This would provide a second line of defence in case the original is lost. Besides, it is possible to take out photo-copies directly from the microfilm rolls and supply copies of files required by the Departments. This would be most convenient when it is felt that the original file should not be tossed about, lest it should get lost, and also under other circumstances. Incidentally, this would make largely redundant the proposal relating to the use of archival quality paper and ink, repeatedly stressed by the Indian Historical Records Commission, but not so far accepted or implemented for financial, administrative and technical reasons.

### **Archival Legislation**

16. The subject, whether it concerns All-India, Central or State, is riddled with innumerable difficulties. In view of the slow progress in archival development hitherto, the Archivist and the Historian naturally see in it a panacea for all their troubles; without mandatory directives from the highest authority in the land the administration would not come out of its sloth. On the other

hand, the Administrator sees in it a thorn which would be prick-  
ing him constantly, something which in actual working is most  
difficult to implement without detriment to administration. Apart  
from these two opposite standpoints, I am certain that any law  
framed would be riddled with provisos to safeguard the Executive  
and the Administration, reasonable but taking away the cream of  
the main provisions. This cannot be helped because of the  
nature of the subject matter. At its best, Archival Legislation  
would be an expression of the Legislature's desire that archival  
development should receive due attention rather than a measure  
which ensures such development by imposing penalties for non-  
fulfilment. The Tara Chand Committee gave a wrong lead in  
pressing for it. Save for this, the Archival Policy Resolution of  
the Government of India (1972) could have been issued much  
earlier. All that we expect to gain through legislation has been  
actually achieved by the Resolution. What is required is the will  
to implement it. I agree with the Committee that all the State  
Governments should issue similar Resolutions and implement them  
in their true spirit.

17. Much more effective than the proposed Archival  
Legislation would be a directive that the Annual Report of the  
Director of Archives, both at the Centre and in the States, should  
be placed before the Legislature and discussed. Now that we  
have proposed to set up an All India Archival Council, it may be  
required to submit an Annual Report on archival developments  
throughout the country and the same may be placed before Par-  
liament and all the State Legislatures. This would focus atten-  
tion on the implementation aspect continually.

#### **The Indian Historical Records Commission**

18. I endorse the recommendation made in the Report  
regarding the continuance of the Commission and also the com-  
position proposed with only one modification. I would include  
all the Universities supervising research or conducting research in  
post-1600 Modern Indian History. The criterion for eligibility  
should be that the University should have on its rolls, during the  
five years preceding the reconstitution of the Commission, at least  
five scholars registered for a Research Degree based primarily on  
archival sources and/or at least one who has been awarded such a  
Degree. This would keep down the number of Universities on  
the Commission without being unduly restrictive. The object-

the Committee has in view that the Commission should not be too unwieldy, is substantially met.

### **All India Archival Council**

19. I endorse the Committee's proposal that a National or an All India Archival Council should be set up as recommended by the Tara Chand Committee. The latter proposed that the Council should comprise 25 members and there should also be a Standing Committee of 7 members. This should be viewed in the background of its further recommendation that the Indian Historical Records Commission should be abolished. Since we are retaining the Commission on which we have representatives from all the States and all the Universities actively engaged in research, I would prefer the Council to be a small compact body of 12 members, comprising 4 Historians, 4 Archivists and 4 Administrators having experience in administrative reform and connected problems, all nominated by the Government of India. At least 6 of the members, including the Chairman and the Member-Secretary of the Council, should be members of the Indian Historical Records Commission, so that the two bodies are closely linked up. The Chairman should be a Historian of note and the Member-Secretary a professional Archivist. The Administrators selected may be from the Government of India or the State Governments, and the Archivist may be a retired Archivist on the Commission. The nominations should be made without any reference to regional representation; the sole criterion should be the competence of the persons to shoulder the responsibility. The Council should have the same tenure as the Commission, and it should meet normally once in three months.

20. With the setting up of an All-India Archival Council, there is no case for continuing the Standing Committee of the Indian Historical Records Commission. The Archival Council, though not elected by the Commission but appointed by the Government of India, should consider itself the spearhead of the Commission and carry out the broad policies outlined by it.

21. Much of the success of the Council would depend upon the appointment of the right person as Member-Secretary. He should have plenty of initiative, dynamism and vision. He should keep in close touch with archival developments throughout the country and play the part of a senior counsellor to Archivists and Administrators.

### **State Archival Councils**

22. The All India Archival Council can only attend to matters of broad policy ; it would not be in a position to attend to the minute concerning individual States. Its composition is also such that it cannot attend to local matters efficiently or take sustained interest in them. As such there is a strong case for State Archival Councils. There are, however, already Regional Records Survey Committees constituted in most of the States. While these have been set up primarily to guide the survey and acquisition of Private Papers, the Commission has recommended that they should be consulted on other archival matters also. Provided we take care that all the three elements—the Archivist, the Administrator and the Historian—are properly represented on these Committees, there is no need to set up separate Archival Council.

23. All matters relating to the Central Government records and the National Archives of India may be attended to by the All India Archival Council, and there is no necessity for a separate body. This may be provided as one of its main functions.

### **The National Committee of Archivists**

24. This Committee may be retained as at present constituted, with its present functions. It should meet normally only once a year along with the Commission. The Government order under which it is now set up, however, should be revised to give the body a better status. Now that an All India Archival Council is proposed to be constituted, the recommendations of this Committee may also go before the All India Archival Council, just as the Resolutions of the Indian Historical Records Commission. It should be one of the objectives of Council to ensure that these recommendations receive due attention at the hands of Government and others.

Sd/ S. V. Desika Char

**Printed at Akashdeep Printers, 20, Daryaganj, New Delhi—110002**