

**THE ARCHIVES OF
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO**



Report by

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and

CLINTON V. BLACK

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I—Introductory

In December, 1957, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago concluded arrangements for Dr. T. R. Schellenberg, Assistant Archivist of the United States, and Mr. Clinton Black, Government Archivist of Jamaica, to visit Trinidad for the period of a month for the purpose of advising the Government on the subject of the preservation of its archives. Mr. Black arrived on the 8th January, 1958 and left on the 15th February ; Dr. Schellenberg arrived on the 19th January, 1958 and left on the 18th February. Dr. Schellenberg's visit was made possible by a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation to the Government of Trinidad and Tobago. Mr. Black came on secondment from Jamaica.

2. The requirements of the Government in this connection were described as centering around the following needs :—

- (a) A comprehensive survey to ascertain what archives exist in Trinidad and Tobago ;
- (b) Expert guidance on the manner of collection and preservation of valuable records ;
- (c) Establishment of some reliable machinery whereby the existing and future archives of the territory could be properly kept, including the enactment of special legislation ;
- (d) The education of the general public in the value of archives.

On these four heads the Government requested the advice of Dr. Schellenberg and Mr. Black.

3. By Secretariat Circular No. 24 of 13th December 1957, heads of departments were informed of the coming visit of Dr. Schellenberg and Mr. Black and were requested to extend all facilities in the event of their wishing to inspect the records held in government departments. Heads of departments were also asked to take steps to have all old records tidied and labelled and to prepare a brief memorandum describing the nature and condition of such records. The circular further stated that in view of this development the burning of old records should be stayed for the time being until both Archivists had had the opportunity to inspect them and to advise as to what should be preserved and what disposed of. This circular was followed by a circular memorandum of the 17th January, 1958, on the same subject.

4. Heads of departments responded very helpfully to these circulars for which gratitude is here recorded as well as for the invariable courtesy and assistance received throughout the course of the survey.

5. During this survey more than sixty visits were paid and numerous consultations held. The data so gathered, supplemented by the information supplied in response to the circulars already mentioned, have been used as the foundation for:—

(i) the recommendations made herein ;

(ii) the compilation of an Inventory of the records of Trinidad and Tobago.

With regard to the Inventory, this, while not pretending to be complete, supplements to a considerable degree existing information on the nature, extent, scope and location of these records, which previously was to be found mainly in the *Guide* by Arthur E. Gropp.* The purpose of this inventory is to call attention to the great body of research materials existing in Trinidad and Tobago, to facilitate the scholarly use of these materials and to point the value and need for making proper provision for their better care and administration.

II—Need of an Archival Institution

6. The term “ records ” will be used in preference to the term “ archives ” in this report. Generally speaking, archives are the records created or received by an organic body, such as a government, a business, or a church, in the course of the conduct of its activities. The records preserved in an archival institution are usually those that have research values as well as values for the business of the body that created or received them. The term “ records ” is thus broader than “ archives ”. It includes documentary materials produced in all kinds of ways, not only those produced as a result of organic activities. It thus includes private papers. Here we are concerned with the documentation from all kinds of sources—businesses, institutions, persons, as well as the government.

7. Records fall into three broad physical classes, i.e. (a) textual, which consist of printed and manuscript documents, (b) audio-visual, which consist of still pictures, motion pictures, and sound recordings, and (c) cartographic, which consist of maps and charts. Here we are concerned with all forms of documentation—textual, audio-visual, and cartographic.

8. The records of Trinidad and Tobago have value for the following purposes—

- (a) OFFICIAL : The official records, which constitute the main body of documentary materials with which we are concerned, are needed by the government for the conduct of its own business. They constitute the memory of the government. They contain information on every aspect of its business, and this information increases in value and extent as records are accumulated and preserved. Technical records, such as

**Guide to Libraries and Archives in Central America and the West Indies, Panama, Bermuda and British Guiana.* By Arthur E. Gropp, New Orleans, 1941.

those relating to mineral and other resources, are valuable to a government no matter how old they are. Records on economic and social matters, though quite old, may provide valuable background information to help solve current economic and social problems. And records generally are the basic administrative tools by means of which the work of a government is accomplished. They contain evidence of financial and legal commitments that must be preserved to protect the government. They embody the great fund of official experience that is needed to give consistency and continuity to a government's actions, to make policy determinations, to handle procedural problems, and to deal with various kinds of business. The great British archivist, Sir Hilary Jenkinson, former Deputy Keeper of Records in the Public Record Office, stated in his *Report on the Archives of Jamaica* ".....that when Archives cease to be of current use their proper conservation should still be regarded as an essential object of national concern ; because they, and they only, can give us that unimpeachable evidence for the history of the past which supplies so often the needed guidance for conduct in the present. The preservation of historical evidences should thus be viewed not as a luxury, nor as something merely academically desirable, but as a national necessity".

- (b) **CULTURAL** : Official records are one among many types of cultural resources, which include books and museum treasures. They are as important a resource as parks, or monuments, or buildings. Since they are produced by a government, they are peculiarly its resource. In contrast to other types of cultural resources which may be administered by private agencies, official records can be administered by no other agency than the government itself. The care of official records, therefore is a public obligation. The cultural value of official records has been ably indicated by the late Professor Charles M. Andrews, eminent American historian, who said :

The more it is realised that the true history of a State and a people lies not in episodes and surface events, but in the substantial features of its constitutional and social organization, the more will archives be valued and preserved. No people can be deemed masters of their own history until their public records, gathered, cared for, and rendered accessible to the investigator, have been systematically studied and the importance of their contents determined.....It has been well said that "the care which a nation devotes to the preservation of the monuments of its past may serve as a true measure of the degree of civilisation to which it has attained." Among such monuments, and holding first place in value and importance, are public archives, national and local.*

*Charles M. Andrews, "Archives", American Historical Association, *Annual Report*, I (1913), 264-265.

- (c) **PERSONAL** : Official records define the relations of the government to the governed. They are the immediate proof for all temporary property and financial rights that are derived from or are connected with the citizen's relations to the government, and the ultimate proof for all permanent civic rights and privileges.

9. Many valuable official records of Trinidad and Tobago will disappear in another generation if steps are not now taken to ensure their preservation for the following reasons:—

- (a) **OFFICIAL NEGLIGENCE** : In almost every country, before an archival institution is established in it, the greatest destruction of valuable official records occurs at official hands. In the course of time every government, no matter whether large or small, accumulates so many records that they get under foot of public officials, hamper the conduct of business, and occupy valuable office space. When such accumulations become particularly bothersome, public officials get rid of them, regardless of their possible future value. Public officials, concerned with day-to-day activities, are not likely to have regard for the research value of records if the records get in their way. A government seldom recognises the value of its records until after it has reached historical maturity when, ironically, many records relating to its development are likely to have disappeared. It is quite likely that as many valuable records of Trinidad have been deliberately destroyed during house cleanings or five-year burnings as have been destroyed accidentally during fires in public buildings.
- (b) **STORAGE CONDITIONS** : Many official records, moreover, are stored in damp vaults and rooms, or under conditions that will accelerate their deterioration. Certain storage places are infested with insects and rodents. Many of the storage places are not fire-proof.
- (c) **CLIMATIC AND OTHER CONDITIONS** : The climate of this area, moreover, is not conducive to the preservation of paper records. Many records, even those containing vital data on births, deaths, and marriages, are made on a paper and with an ink that has an excessively high acid content. This acidity, combined with heat and humidity, has caused many records to become very brittle, and practically unusable. During his visit to Jamaica in 1950 Sir Hilary Jenkinson referred to this condition as the "Brown Decay".

The possibility of further serious loss of valuable records is a very real one, unless steps are taken immediately to preserve them.

10. An archival institution will preserve valuable official (and other) records and make them available for use. The functions of an archival institution are two-fold :

- (a) The first function of an archival institution is to *preserve records that have enduring values*. This does not mean that an archival institution wishes to preserve everything. Quite the contrary. It is interested in having

only those records preserved permanently that have permanent value, whether for scholarly or governmental purposes, and in having records destroyed as soon as they have no further administrative, research, or other value. The emphasis here is on discriminating retention, or conversely, on discriminating destruction. An archival institution can help preserve records in the following ways :—

(1) It can help take care of the past record accumulations of a government. It can make a discriminating review of such accumulations. It can help place a government's house in order by cleaning up the records that have been relegated to out-of-the-way places, such as vaults, basements, and attics.

(2) It can provide expert guidance to government officials in regard to the disposal of future accumulations of records. It can help develop plans for the orderly and systematic disposition of official records. It can, in a word, help keep the government's house in order.

(3) It can provide expert technical services in repairing records that are damaged, in microfilming records, and in storing records under proper physical condition.

- (b) The second function of an archival institution is to *make records that have enduring values available for use*. "Archival institutions", according to Mr. Harold L. White, National Librarian of the Commonwealth of Australia, "are in no sense cemeteries of old and forgotten records."* An Archival institution renders services on records transferred to its custody both to the public and to the government. It renders such services freely, impartially, competently, and under conditions that will protect the public interest. It does this by properly arranging records and developing finding aids to them that will make known their character and content.

III—Immediate Steps

11. In order to assure the preservation of the valuable official records now existing in the offices of the government of Trinidad and Tobago, a number of immediate steps are proposed. These are designed to accomplish the most important need, which is to preserve what now exists until more substantial measures can be taken to preserve the valuable documentary materials of this area.

12. The first and most impelling immediate step is to *issue an order forbidding the destruction of public records*.

- (a) By Secretariat Circular No. 24 of the 13th December, 1957 (referred to in paragraph 3 above), heads of departments were required to hold up the destruction of old records for the time being. This order should continue in force until developments which will be recommended have taken place. One of these developments should be the creation of an organization and

*T. R. Schellenberg, *Modern Archives : Principles and Technique* (Chicago) 1956, vii.

rules under which records which should permanently be preserved are distinguished from those which may be destroyed.

- (b) At present there is apparently no official regulation *requiring* the permanent preservation of any kind of document. The existing regulations generally observed in departments, concern themselves almost entirely with financial records and with prescribing *minimum periods* for the retention of such records. The chief of these regulations is to be found in Chapter 25 paragraph 344 of *Financial Instructions, 1954 (Revised)*, by which the minimum periods for the preservation of various classes of accounting records are laid down. These periods vary from seven years in the case of such documents as abstracts and subsidiary records to sixty years in the case of establishment and salary records which may be required for superannuation purposes. Pre-dating these regulations by 15 years were Colonial Secretary's Instructions (Circular No. 19) also concerned with the preservation, for certain periods, of financial records.
- (c) Both these sets of instructions, however, suggest a reason for preservation other than official safety precautions ; both hint at a potential long-term research value residing in the specified record classes. In the Financial Instructions it is stipulated that "any accounting records which may be regarded as necessary or of historical value shall be permanently preserved". Here, at least, is the recognition of an important criterion of evaluation historical worth—but the provision is too vague and leaves to the discretion of the officers to whom it is addressed decisions which should be made by the instructions themselves, with the result that this historical criterion has (from what could be gathered) seldom, if ever, been consciously applied.
- (d) For the time being records now found in government offices should be kept and left where they are. No attempt should be made to clean up vaults and storage places by getting rid of past accumulations. There should be no more five-year burnings, no more house cleanings, until facilities have been provided, and a machinery has been established, for the proper handling of past record accumulations. In view of their physical condition, the less the older records are handled the better.

13. The second immediate step is to *appoint an archivist*. The following points should be noted in making the appointment.

- (a) **QUALIFICATIONS :** In a new archival program, an archivist will encounter all kinds of problems, such as the placement of his institution in the governmental structure, its legal authority, and its policies that have government-wide effect. These problems will bring him in relation with officials at top governmental levels. He will also be concerned with various phases of the execution of the new program, such as the provision of space for the storage of records, the conduct of surveys to ascertain the volume, character and value of records, and the like. These problems will involve him in close relations with all offices of the government he

serves. An archivist undertaking a new archival program should therefore be a person with very considerable administrative experience, capable of planning a broad program, effective in dealing with others, and with a knowledge of the development of his country and its government.

- (b) **TRAINING** : Normally an archivist should have basic training as an historian. A training in history provides him with a knowledge of national and governmental developments that is basic to any evaluation of the research values that are to be found in official records. It provides him with a training in research methodology, which is needed in all the work he does in rationalizing official records, in arranging them in proper relation with each other, and in describing them in terms of organization and function. Historical training, however, is merely the base upon which a professional and technical knowledge should be built. Since a trained archivist is likely to be unavailable in a country that is initiating an archival program, it is perhaps desirable to appoint a person who already possesses a knowledge of governmental and national developments and after his appointment provide for his training abroad. Professional archival training is available either in the National Archives of the United States or the School of Librarianship and Archives at the University College, London. The National Archives, in co-operation with American University, Washington, D.C., offers a semester course in Archival Principles and Techniques, in which lectures are given on various practical aspects of archival work, including the appraisal of the research values of records, and the techniques of arrangement, description, and preservation. The course begins in September of each year. Technical training is also available, on a personal basis, in the National Archives. The National Archives, in co-operation with a number of other research institutions, also offers a summer institute in the Administration and Preservation of Archives, conducted during June and July of each year. The School of Librarianship and Archives at the University College, London, offers a course of instruction in archive administration on a broad basis. The Diploma Course which normally occupies one session for full-time students, consists of lecture courses in English Administrative History, Archive Administration, Mediaeval Latin, Anglo-Norman French and Palaeography. Any of the lecture courses may be taken separately, and practical training, especially in repair and binding, can be obtained. The point should be emphasized that an archivist who undertakes a new archival program should have basic training in the doctrine and the methods of his profession. He is likely to make serious mistakes if he lacks this training.
- (c) **INITIAL DUTIES** : The initial duties of a newly appointed archivist should be :—

(1) to assemble information as to the location, volume, and classes of non-current records existing in government offices which is needed to select a record centre,

(2) to assist government offices in arranging and listing their non-current records preparatory to their removal to a record centre,

(3) to make arrangements for the release of records to the centre.

14. The third immediate step is to *appoint a Government Archives Committee*. Beginnings are always difficult, and they are particularly so in the archival field. The obstacles that confront an archivist at the initiation of his program are sometimes almost insuperable. He cannot remove them alone. He should therefore have the help of an advisory body, particularly during the period before the enactment of archival legislation, to give his work official sanction and to advise him in regard to his program. Such an advisory body should be a Government Archives Committee, appointed by the Governor, which should consist of the Governor's Secretary, representatives of government offices that are concerned with the legal and fiscal values of records, and a representative of the scholarly interests. The Committee has a number of immediate, and at least one continuing function.

- (a) An immediate function of the Committee should be to formulate regulations governing the release of records to a record centre, and eventually to formulate regulations governing the regular transfer of records from government departments to an archival institution. Initially an archivist faces considerable indifference, if not opposition to a program affecting the records of government offices. Public officials often regard records as the exclusive property of their offices, useful only for current work and of no concern to an outsider. The Committee, therefore, should issue regulations requiring the release of non-current records to a record centre. It should also serve as a review body of cases in which records are deemed to be improperly withheld.
- (b) Another immediate function of the Committee should be to formulate regulations requiring the submission of lists and schedules of records proposed for disposal. Such lists and schedules should be submitted by government offices to the archivist. In practically all countries of the world proposals to destroy official records are reviewed by archivists. An archivist judges the value of records solely from the point of view of their research uses, that is, for uses other than the official business of the offices that created them. Government officials should be mainly responsible for judging the values of records for uses in their own business, such as administrative, legal, and fiscal uses.
- (c) A continuing function of the Committee should be to act as the body that officially authorizes the disposal of records. The Committee, in a word, should serve as an authorizing body, approving the disposal of records listed or scheduled for disposal by government offices. But its authorizations should be given only after the archivist has reviewed the records listed or scheduled, and has recommended their disposal.
- (d) An ultimate function of the Committee should be to formulate regulations governing the access to and use of records transferred to an archival institution.

15. The fourth immediate step is to *establish a record centre*, to which can be removed all non-current records (whether valuable or no), all government publications not needed for current use.

- (a) CHARACTER : A record centre is a facility that is intermediate between the government offices and an archival institution. Its establishment is a step in the direction of establishing an archival institution. The work that should be done in a centre there is essentially archival in character, and should therefore be done by professionally competent persons.

A record centre in Trinidad should be a temporary facility. After an archival institution has been established, the activities of the centre should gradually be absorbed by it. The volume of official records in Trinidad and Tobago is not so great that the permanent maintenance of a record centre is justified. The record volume, in fact can be substantially reduced by judicious appraisal of existing accumulations and by the preparation of schedules that specify when various classes of records now accumulating shall be destroyed.

- (b) PHYSICAL SPECIFICATIONS : A record centre should meet the following physical specifications:—

It should be safe from unauthorized entry, be proof against the weather and fire, and furnished with racking and tables. A warehouse or similar shed-like structure would serve the purpose of such a centre.

- (c) TRANSFERS OF RECORDS : A record centre should be used to provide temporary storage space for non-current records that are removed from government offices. The records should be carefully listed and grouped into classes by the government offices before they are removed. During their removal and their deposit in the centre, a careful record should be maintained of their identity. The records should be removed from government offices on the basis of the physical conditions under which they are now maintained. In a word, the worse the conditions of their present storage, the higher priority should be given to their removal. Records now in a bad condition of storage in the offices in Port-of-Spain should be removed first. Records maintained in good vaults, such as those of the Colonial Secretary's and the Treasury Departments, should be removed last, or, perhaps, not at all if an archival building will be constructed within the foreseeable future. After records have been removed from the government offices at Port-of-Spain, records of local offices on the island of Trinidad should be transferred to the centre. The records of Tobago should be left on the island until an archival building has been constructed in Port-of-Spain. They should then be removed to the archival building unless, meanwhile, an archival building has also been constructed in Tobago.

- (d) PROCESSING OF RECORDS : A record centre should also serve as a processing centre in which records are (1) appraised to determine which of them

should be preserved in an archival institution, and (2) properly arranged. In arranging records within the centre it is important, at all times, to keep records (except printed documents) received from various government offices as integral units, that is, to keep records of one office separate from those of another. If this principle is not observed, the work of the centre will be an obstacle to the eventual arrangement and description of the records.

- (e) **PROCESSING OF PRINTED DOCUMENTS** : The various series of printed official documents, such as the *Royal Gazettes*, the Council Minutes, the Laws, the Ordinances and so forth, should be brought into the centre from the various government offices in which they are now maintained (except sets or volumes currently in use). The volumes received from the various offices should be collated and complete sets of the various series should be accumulated for distribution at a later date among appropriate repositories. An especial effort should be made to accumulate copies of printed publications that are scarce, such as the reports of various commissions.

IV—Final Steps

16. A final step to be taken in establishing an archival program in Trinidad and Tobago is to *enact legislation to govern the maintenance and disposition of the Government's records*. No attempt will be made here to discuss any but the most essential features of such legislation. It should obviously be drafted to meet the local situation. To assist in the enactment of such legislation, the following copies of acts of other countries are appended to this report : Copies of the Public Archives Acts of Jamaica (based on the British Public Records Act), South Africa and Canada ; a copy of the United States " Federal Records Act of 1950 " ; a copy of the Illinois (United States) " State Records Act " ; a copy of a report of the Society of American Archivists on a " Proposed Uniform State Public Records Act " ; and ' Draft Notes for Archives' Legislation ' by L. F. E. Goldie.

The most essential features of archival legislation in Trinidad and Tobago should relate to the following:—

- (a) **A DEFINITION OF THE TERM " RECORDS "**. The definition should specify what physical classes are encompassed in the term. It should make clear that official records are recognised to be public property, and that the title to them is held exclusively by the Government that created or received them and that it is held in perpetuity.
- (b) **THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ARCHIVAL INSTITUTION**. The place legally assigned to an archival institution in a government structure will partly determine its effectiveness. The organizational placement of the institution should therefore be studied carefully. Preferably it should be attached to a governmental body that has central functions, i.e., jurisdiction over all governmental offices in regard to certain matters.

Probably the Colonial Secretary's office is an appropriate office under which the archival institution should be placed. The place assigned to the institution should also be sufficiently high in the government structure to enable it to deal effectively, as deal it must, with other government offices.

- (c) **THE LEGAL STATUS OF THE GOVERNMENT ARCHIVES COMMITTEE.** The legislation should recognize, *ex post facto*, the status and functions of the Government Archives Committee discussed above under paragraph 14.
- (d) **THE MACHINERY FOR THE DESTRUCTION OF OFFICIAL RECORDS.** The legislation should provide legal procedures for the destruction of public records, which should be exclusive, i.e., no other procedures than those specified in the legislation for the destruction of records should be recognized as valid. The legislation should also provide for an archival review of records proposed for destruction by government agencies.

17. Another final step to be taken is to *construct an archive repository*. This is an inescapable necessity, regardless of the temporary arrangements it might be possible to make for the storage of the archives to be centrally conserved. Such a building requires careful planning because of the specialized nature of the work which will be done in it ; for this reason it would be necessary for the archivist to work in close collaboration at all stages. The main features of such a building are that it should be weather, fire and burglar proof. It should also be expected to provide security against direct sunlight, dust and gases, humidity and extremes of temperature all of which could perhaps best be secured by means of air conditioning. Although the building's main functions will be the storage of records it must be something more than a storehouse. It should afford space for an office, for the reception and use of the archives, as well as for binding, repair, exhibition, and possibly photographic facilities. Ideally, it should be sufficiently far from neighbouring structures as to ensure that fires in the neighbourhood will not spread to it, and so built as to permit of expansion without doing violence to the original design.

18. The final step, after the construction of an archival building, is to *carry out an archival program*. This program involves the performance of a number of functions as follows:—

- (a) **ACCESSIONING :** The archival institution of Trinidad and Tobago should be a place of deposit for all permanently valuable research materials found on the islands.

(1) The archival institution should first attempt to accumulate the valuable official records of Trinidad and Tobago. It should receive, first, the records adjudged to be permanently valuable that were transferred to the record centre, and secondly, regular transfers from government departments in accordance with regulations formulated by the Government Archives Committee. The archival institution should be the sole place of deposit for valuable official records. Government offices should not be permitted to develop caches of valuable records. The institution, accordingly, should receive the manuscript volumes of

the Minutes of the Council, when these are sufficiently non-current. These are now deposited with the Governor's Secretary. It should also receive a complete set of the authenticated copies of the Laws of Trinidad and Tobago. These are now produced in five sets, one of which is sent to the Supreme Court, two to the Secretary of State, and two to the Colonial Secretary. A complete set cannot now be found at any of the points in Trinidad. The institution should also receive manuscript copies of any reports of Commissions or Minutes of the Council now found in the library of the Legislative Council.

(2) The archival institution should also receive newspapers and publications received by the Registrar General's Department in accordance with Section 14 (1) of the Newspapers Ordinance, Ch. 39, No. 8, and by the Colonial Secretariat. The Colonial Secretariat's files have been deposited with the West India Section of the Trinidad Public Library. These materials should be absorbed by the archival institution.

(3) The archival institution should also serve as a place of deposit for valuable ecclesiastical, institutional, or personal papers. The archivist should methodically accumulate information regarding the whereabouts, nature, and extent of collections of private papers. After substantial progress has been made in arranging and describing official records, he should actively engage in soliciting contributions of private papers. Eventually, also, he should plan a program of microfilming European archives especially English, French, and Spanish, that relate to Trinidad and Tobago. Such a program might be co-ordinated with a more general program of preserving the cultural resources of the West Indies.

- (b) **PRESERVATION** : One of the first functions of the archival institution in Trinidad and Tobago will be to repair records transferred to its custody. Many records are now in an unusable condition and should be repaired and rebound before they are made available for use. The work to be done in repairing and rehabilitating records is prodigious and requires specialized knowledge. Consideration should also be given to the use of suitable cardboard containers of an approved type and quality as a substitute, in appropriate cases, for rebinding, as well as for the storage of loose papers. In regard to certain classes of records, microfilming should be considered as an alternative to repairing. The technique of microfilming should be used judiciously, however, for microfilming is not an archivist's panacea. Newspaper files should also be microfilmed but before any file is filmed, the archivist should be sure that he has the most legible copy of the file extant. In a word, he should first collate various files of newspapers before undertaking to film any one of them.
- (c) **ARRANGEMENT** : The archival institution should arrange the records it receives into groups, and within groups into classes. A number of separate groups should be established on the basis of the provenance,

or origins, of the records. There should thus be separate groups for each of the government departments. Similar groups should be established for local governmental units. Each record or archive group should be treated as an integral unit, and should be kept separate from other groups. Within groups, classes should be established on the basis of physical type of records. Thus, minutes of the Council are a physical type, and separate class. Minute Papers, similarly, are a physical type, and a separate class. Often a physical type may consist of a single volume. This should also be regarded as a separate class. In establishing group classes, the archivist should analyse how the records came into being. He should study the organization and functions of the offices that created them. And on the basis of his knowledge of organizational and functional developments, he should establish his groupings; large groups, intermediate groups, and classes. Archival materials should never be grouped, or arranged, on a subjective basis, i.e., in relation to subjects.

(d) DESCRIPTION : The archivist should develop a descriptive program that will result in the production of a number of "finding aids" or "means and reference" that will facilitate the use of records. The finding aids should include guides, preliminary inventories, lists, indexes, &c. In general, records should be described in accordance with the following principles and practices:—

(1) They should be described immediately in provisional finding aids.

(2) They should be described in progressively greater detail. An archivist should plan the production of a series of finding aids in which the sequence is from the general to the particular, the descriptions becoming progressively more detailed as the descriptive work proceeds.

(3) They should be described collectively as well as singly. The technique of collective description means that records are described collectively by units of various sizes. Normally such units are either entire groups or classes within groups. An archivist should first describe records collectively by groups and classes, and thereafter, only if their character and value justify individual treatment, by single documents.

In the foregoing we have tried to point the need for the establishment of archival machinery for the preservation and administration of the records of Trinidad and Tobago, of all categories, ancient and accruing. We have also offered proposals for the establishment of such machinery, for the formulation of a system and an overall policy peculiarly suitable to the case. We are convinced of the need for the measures we urge and impressed by the fact that the present offers an opportunity for implementing these measures which, if missed, might not recur, or if it did could come too late.

(Sgd.) T. R. SCHELLENBERG

Port-of-Spain, Trinidad.

(Sgd.) CLINTON V. BLACK

14th February, 1958.