

Notes on meeting held February 22, 1945, at the Budget Bureau relative to proposed reports on transactions involving American investments abroad submitted by the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce of the Department of Commerce.

Present at the meeting were: Bureau of the Budget – Messrs. Riley and Crowder
Department of State – Mr. Lockhart
Treasury Department – Mr. Dickens
Department of Commerce – Messrs. Larey and Salmon
Sec. & Exch. Commission – Mr. Louchheim

Reference was made to the previous discussion of this subject at the meeting held December 9, 1944. Since that date representatives of Commerce and Budget have discussed the proposed questionnaire with officials of about six corporations having foreign subsidiaries. These discussions elicited some difficulty on the part of corporations particularly with the filing requirements of Form B.

The question was again raised as to the timeliness of the proposed project. Treasury representative indicated his continued questions as to the impact of this questionnaire upon the reception of the Bretton Woods proposal. The interest of this Commission was also brought forward with respect to the type of information that may eventually be determined to be desirable to make available to public investors. It was also indicated that in the coming months it may become advisable to develop much broader and more qualitative information for the administration of the International Bank and for other government agencies.

The Commission's representative referred to domestic research projects which are currently conducted cooperatively with other agencies including the Commerce Department and suggested that a broad program on foreign investment data might well be undertaken on a cooperative basis by the interested agencies after an inventory had been made of the types of information that would be required. The Budget representatives responded favorably to this suggestion but the representative of the Treasury Department expressed doubts as to its feasibility and referred to an instance in which the Commission had declined to cooperate with the Treasury Department and other agencies in the preparation of the Census of Foreign Property Form TFR-500 in response to a request early in 1942. I questioned Mr. Dickens and he advised that Treasury had requested S.E.C. participation in this survey by letter early in 1942 and had received a reply that S.E.C. was not interested in participating. I asked Mr. Dickens to provide me with copies of this correspondence. I have also had a search made of the Commission's files but have not been able to find the correspondence Mr. Dickens referred to. It is my intention to follow this up and if necessary have the matter cleared up.

The State Department indicated its continuing interest in current information such as is now provided by the Commission's reports from corporations. It was, therefore, suggested that the project be further postponed and that in the meanwhile the Treasury should be consulted as to its attitude on the proposal and that the Commerce representatives discuss with the chief of the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce the advisability of urging approval of it at this time in view of the difficulties and questions involved.