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THE WORLD BANK
Washington, D.C.

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McNamara Papers

Board actions
Misc

-1980 (Apr. - May)

Folder 46

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BOARD ACTIONS

VI. Miscellaneous
Volume 9

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O.	R80-236	8/1/80	Special Increases in Certain Subscriptions to Capital Stock under Brazil-Yugo. Precedent
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Record Removal Notice



File Title China Membership - Correspondence 03		Barcode No. 1770558		
Document Date April 29, 1980	Document Type Memorandum of the President			
Correspondents / Participants				
Subject / Title Representation of China				
Exception(s) Prerogative to Restrict				
Additional Comments		The item(s) identified above has/have been removed in accordance with The World Bank Policy on Access to Information. This Policy can be found on the World Bank Access to Information website.		
		<table border="1"><tr><td>Withdrawn by Sherrine M. Thompson</td><td>Date 25-Feb-15</td></tr></table>	Withdrawn by Sherrine M. Thompson	Date 25-Feb-15
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H

International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
International Development Association

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DECLASSIFIED

R80-105

IDA/R80-74

FEB 25 2015

FROM: The President

WBG ARCHIVES

May 2, 1980

DECLASSIFICATION OF BANK DOCUMENTS *

1. The Bank receives many requests from the public for documents relating to its activities. In recent years, these requests have increased in number. Much of this interest stems from growing public awareness of the work of international financial institutions, particularly the Bank. The Bank has responded with an increasing publications program (see paragraph 5). A few of the requests are for internal documents, including reports prepared for Board consideration. Some of these are from scholars engaged in research work; others come from banks and business firms and from representatives of the news media. Requests for this material are currently handled on an individual basis. The Bank now believes it desirable, subject to the maintenance of confidentiality when required, to make available to the public its reports and other documents that are of general interest. Reports transmitted to the Executive Directors constitute the bulk of such documents, and this memorandum suggests a standardized procedure for their declassification and release. The declassification and release of other documents would continue to be handled on an individual basis as at present.

2. The Bank's present policy is that except for documents specifically prepared for distribution to the public, most reports and other documents distributed to the Executive Directors are classified and labeled "For Official Use Only".^{1/} Some documents are classified "Confidential" and are subject to further restrictions.

^{1/} The designations "For Official Use Only" and "Confidential" include the following caveat which is affixed to the document concerned: "This document has a restricted distribution and may be used by recipients only in the performance of their official duties. Its contents may not otherwise be disclosed without World Bank authorization."

Distribution

Executive Directors and Alternates
Senior Vice President
President's Council
Vice Presidents, IFC
Directors and Department Heads, Bank and IFC

*Questions on this paper may be referred to Mr. Bloomfield (extension 72711).

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R80-105

3. Board reports classified "For Official Use Only" are currently distributed to governments at the request of Executive Directors, to international agencies with whom the Bank has reciprocal distribution arrangements and--with respect to the relevant reports--to institutions which participate in Bank loans. Board documents classified "Confidential", except for the Budget Report, are not distributed to international agencies and other institutions. Such a restricted distribution is still entirely appropriate, as indeed is the accompanying prohibition that the contents may not be disclosed without Bank authorization. Although this arrangement does not guarantee that the confidentiality of Board documents will be preserved--indeed wide distribution among government agencies often results in uncontrolled access to such documents--it has served the Bank's purposes reasonably well in the past.

4. As noted above, each request from the public for a document that is not routinely distributed to the public is now dealt with on an individual basis. Some of these requests can easily be granted or denied, but most of them presently require the clearance of senior officials dealing with the country or subject in question before a decision is made whether to release the document, and there is no uniform standard against which these requests can be judged.

5. Although the Bank is under no legal obligation to make public any of its documents,^{2/} a large number of them are routinely made available to the public, even though some of them--such as sector policy papers--were initially produced for the Bank's internal purposes. Others, such as the World Development Report, are specifically prepared to inform the public of development issues and the Bank's response to them. The annex lists examples of documents routinely made available to the public.

6. As an intergovernmental institution the Bank must be conscious of the necessity to maintain the confidentiality of its documents and it, therefore, must continue to impose restrictions on the release of confidential material. In the case of IFC, in particular, current restrictions should continue indefinitely, as some of the information in the Corporation's reports is either of a proprietary nature or sensitive in other respects. Nevertheless, there is some scope for making certain Bank documents distributed to the Executive Directors more generally available to the public when they no longer warrant restrictive treatment and I propose that the public have automatic access to these documents, after the passage of a suitable interval. My specific recommendations are as follows:

^{2/} The Articles of Agreement of the Bank, the Association and the Corporation all provide that their respective archives are inviolable.

RECOMMENDATIONS

7. I recommend:

(i) As to the following documents of the Bank or the Association, (but not of the Corporation) all of which are labeled "For Official Use Only":

- President's Report and Recommendation on an approved loan or credit.
- Appraisal Report on an approved loan or credit.
- Country Economic Report.
- Country Sector Report.
- Project Performance Audit Report.

(a) That they be automatically made available to the public on request ten years after their submission to the Executive Directors.

(b) That requests before the end of the ten-year period be evaluated, on a case-by-case basis, by the appropriate Vice President, who would take into account, among other relevant considerations, the age of the document, the sensitivity of its contents, and the use to which the document is likely to be put, as well as the expected impact of release on the Bank's relationship with the member country or countries concerned. These documents would be released in the absence of substantial reasons to the contrary.

(ii) Documents, other than those mentioned in (i) above, which are prepared for the Executive Directors would be made available to the public only on approval of the appropriate Vice President who would take into account the considerations listed in (i)(b) above. However there would be no presumption in favor of releasing any material in this category.^{3/}

^{3/} Recommendation (ii) simply codifies the present practice as to all Board documents not specifically authorized for public release, and is intended to ensure that there will be no automatic release—or presumption in favor of release—of an IFC Appraisal Report, for example, no matter what its age.

RECOMMENDATIONS

8. In the absence of objection, which should be communicated to the Vice President and Secretary or the Deputy Secretary by close of business on May 20, 1980, the above recommendations will be deemed approved to be so recorded in the minutes of a subsequent meeting.

- President's Report and Recommendation on an approved loan or credit.

- Appraisal Report on an approved loan or credit.

Robert S. McNamara
President

- Country Sector Report.

- Country Sector Report.

by Ernest Stern

(a) That they be automatically made available to the public on request ten years after their submission to the Executive Directors.

(b) That requests before the end of the ten-year period be evaluated, on a case-by-case basis, by the appropriate Vice President, who would take into account, among other relevant considerations, the age of the document, the sensitivity of its contents, and the use to which the document is likely to be put, as well as the expected impact of release on the Bank's relationship with the member country or countries concerned. These documents would be released in the absence of substantial reasons to the contrary.

(1) Documents, other than those mentioned in (1) above, which are prepared for the Executive Directors would be made available to the public only on approval of the appropriate Vice President who would take into account the considerations listed in (1)(b) above. However there would be no presumption in favor of releasing any material in this category.

3/ Recommendation (1) study codifies the present practice as to all Board documents not specifically authorized for public release, and is intended to ensure that there will be no automatic release--or presumption in favor of release--of an IPC Appraisal Report, for example, no matter what its age.

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ANNEX

Articles of Agreement of IBRD, IDA and IFC
By-laws of IBRD, IDA and IFC
Organization Charts of Bank and IFC

Annual Reports of Bank, IFC, and ICSID
Summary Proceedings of the Annual Meetings of the Board of Governors
Addresses of the President
Financial Statements of IBRD, IDA and IFC (quarterly)
Monthly Operational Summary

Loan Agreements
Development Credit Agreements
Guarantee Agreements
Project Agreements

Guidelines for Withdrawal of Proceeds of World Bank Loans and IDA Credits
Guidelines for Procurement under World Bank Loans and IDA Credits
Uses of Consultants by the World Bank and its Borrowers
General Conditions Applicable to Loan and Guarantee Agreements
General Conditions Applicable to Development Credit Agreements

World Development Report (annual)
World Debt Tables (annual, with supplements)
Commodity Trade and Price Trends (annual)
World Economic Indicators (monthly)
Borrowing in International Capital Markets (quarterly)
World Bank Atlas (annual)

World Bank Research Program - Abstracts of Current Studies (annual)
Sector Policy Papers
Seminar Papers of the Economic Development Institute

Staff Working Papers. Some recent examples:
A Perspective on the Foodgrain Situation in the Poorest Countries
Economic & Social Evaluation of Projects: A Case Study of Ivory Coast
Multi-Level Programming & Development Policy
Meeting Basic Needs in Malaysia: A Summary of Findings
Industrial Policy and Development in Korea
Basic Education and Income Inequality in Brazil: The Long-Term View

Selected Reprints and Bibliographies