GUIDE TO THE MICROFILM EDITION OF


Decimal Files 711 and 611

Primary Source Media
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INTRODUCTION

Scholarly Resources has published on microfilm the U.S. Department of State Decimal Files of records relating to U.S. political relations with Latin America and the Caribbean for the years 1945-1949, 1950-1954, and 1955-1959. Through 1949 these files were designated 711; after 1950 the files were indicated by the number 611.

The materials in these Decimal Files have been microfilmed in the exact order and condition in which they are found in the holdings of the National Archives and Records Administration. Those documents that have not yet been declassified were removed prior to filming and replaced with notices identifying the item and the reason for its removal.

The documents found in these files are predominantly instructions to—and despatches from—diplomatic and consular officials and are often accompanied by enclosures. Notes between the Department of State and foreign diplomats in the United States, memoranda prepared by State Department officials, and correspondence with officials of other government departments, as well as with private businesses and persons, are also included.

Decimal Files 711 and 611 are part of the General Records of the Department of State, National Archives Record Group 59.

The Decimal Filing System

From 1910 to 1963 the State Department used a decimal filing system to organize its central files, which subsequently became known as the “Decimal Files.” This filing system is designed to permit access to the documents by using a numerical-subject organization that employs three categories: Class, Country, and Subject.

Class. Until 1950 there were 9 classes (numbered 0-8) in the decimal filing system, each of which designated a broad subject area:

Class 0: General, Miscellaneous
Class 1: Administration, U.S. Government
Class 2: Extradition
Class 3: Protection of Interests
Class 4: Claims
Class 5: International Conferences, Multilateral Treaties, Disarmament, League of Nations, and Interparliamentary Union
Class 6: Commerce, Customs Administration, and Trade Agreements
Class 7: Political Relations of States
Class 8: Internal Affairs of States
In 1950 the system was reorganized to meet the changing needs of the State Department. The classes were expanded to 10, and the subject areas were redefined:

Class 0: Miscellaneous
Class 1: Administration of the U.S. Government
Class 2: Protection of Interests (Persons and Property)
Class 3: International Conferences, Congresses, Meetings, and Organizations; United Nations, Organization of American States, Multilateral Treaties
Class 4: International Trade and Commerce, Trade Relations, Treaties, Agreements, Customs Administration
Class 5: International Informational and Educational Relations, Cultural Affairs and Programs
Class 6: International Political Relations, Other International Relations
Class 7: Internal Political and National Defense Affairs
Class 8: Internal Economic, Industrial, and Social Affairs
Class 9: Communications, Transportation, and Science

The records reproduced in this Guide are from Class 7 for the period 1945-1949 and from Class 6 for the periods 1950-1954 and 1955-1959.

Country. The decimal filing system continues by assigning a number to each country, as well as to some larger geographical areas. The United States is always represented by the number 11, which follows the class number on the documents in this Guide; for example, Bolivia is designated by the number 24, which appears on these documents following the decimal point (see page ix for a complete list of country numbers).

Subject. The two classes covering Political Relations are organized according to a subject classification system in which each subject is assigned a number. The Numerical-Subject Listing of Documents in Classes 7 and 6 begins on page 1 of this Guide.

Periodization of Files

The State Department divided its Decimal Files into arbitrary sections by years: 1910-1929, 1930-1939, 1940-1944, 1945-1949, 1950-1954, 1955-1959, and 1960-1963. Each section is treated as a separate filing unit, organized by the numerical-subject classification system. Within each section, all the documents pertaining to a particular subject are filed together. It is important to note that the Decimal Files cannot be accessed by individual years.
Document File Numbers

In the decimal filing system, each document is assigned a file number that provides four pieces of information. An example, using a document in Decimal File 711.24 is shown below:

\[ 7 \text{ } 11 \text{ } .24 \text{ } 2 \text{ } / 13 \]

(1) (2) (3) (4)

(1) **Class Number.** This document is part of Class 7 and pertains to Political Relations of states.

(2) **Country Number.** Each document includes two country numbers indicating the two countries between which the relationship exists. In this document, number 11 indicates the United States, and number 24 signifies Bolivia.

(3) **Subject Number.** The number following the second country number refers to the subject of the document. In this example, the number 2 denotes that the topic of the document involves matters of commerce and navigation. The numerical-subject classification of Classes 7 and 6 begins on page 1 of this Guide.

(4) **Document Number.** From 1910 until 1949 the number following the slant (/) indicated the sequence number of the document in the particular file. In the example above, this would be the thirteenth document in the sequence of documents on the subject of commerce and navigation within this particular period. The documents are generally, but not always, filed in chronological order.

With the reorganization of the decimal filing system in 1950, the form of the document number changed and became a two-part number indicating the date on which the document was created. For example, a document originating on March 8, 1950, would have a document number ending /3-850; the number following the slant denotes the month, the one immediately after the hyphen shows the day, and the final two numbers signify the year.

**USING THE MICROFILM**

At the beginning of each microfilm roll the researcher will find:

- The numerical-subject classification of Class 7 or 6 records
- The roll contents of the entire section
Locating a Document by File Number

- Go the roll contents for the appropriate section, either in this Guide or at the beginning of the microfilm. The roll contents provides the file number of the first and last document on each roll. Using this information, determine the appropriate roll.

- Place this roll on the microfilm reader. Remembering that the documents are filed in numerical order, turn to the desired document.

Locating a Document by Subject

Use the following steps to examine documents addressing a particular subject:

- Refer to the Subject Index for Classes 7 and 6 (pages 5-14) in this Guide to determine the file number of the topic to be researched.

- Consult the microfilm roll contents of the appropriate section to find the roll(s) of film on which documents with this file number appear.

- Place the roll of film on the reader and turn the roll to the material to be examined.

Citation of Documents

[Sender] to [recipient], [date], Department of State, Decimal File 7ll.24, General Records, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, DC.
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### ROLL CONTENTS

Records of the U.S. Department of State relating to U.S. Political Relations with Latin America and the Caribbean, 1945-1959

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*Panama, 1945-1949 guide published separately
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| **Uruguay** | **2** 711.33/2-545—711.33/12-2749  
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| **Venezuela** | **1** 711.31/1-2246—711.31/10-2649  
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700  Political relations of states

701  Diplomatic representation (diplomatic privileges, immunities, etc.)
    .01  Right of residence, transit, etc.
    .02  Protection of person, dwelling, etc.
    .03  Freedom of communication and inviolability of correspondence
    .04  Confinement of correspondence to official channels
    .05  Exemption from judicial process
    .06  Exemption from taxation
    .07  Duty to observe police regulations
    .08  Abstention from politics
    .09  Other privileges, immunities, etc.
    **  Diplomatic service of country **
    ***  Diplomatic representation of country ** in country ††
    .00††  Diplomatic corps in country ††

702  Consular representation (consular privileges, immunities, etc.)
    .01  Right of residence, transit, etc.
    .02  Protection of person, dwelling, etc.
    .03  Freedom of communication and inviolability of correspondence
    .04  Free exercise of functions
    .05  Amenability to judicial process
    .06  Amenability to taxation
    .07  Amenability to police regulations
    .08  Abstention from politics
    .09  Other privileges, immunities, etc.
    **  Consular service of country
    ***  Consular representation of country ** in country ††
    .00††  Consular body residing in country ††

703.***  Representation of interests of United States by diplomatic and consular officers of country ** in country ††

704.***  Representation of interests of country ** by American diplomatic and consular officers in country ††

705.***  Representation in the United States of interests of country ** by diplomatic and consular officers of country ††

706.***  Representation in foreign countries of interests of country ** by diplomatic and consular officers of country ††

707.***  Relations of diplomatic and consular officers of country ** with diplomatic and consular officers of country ††
Relations of American states

International conferences of American states

710.A Washington, 1889
710.B Mexico, 1902
710.C Rio, 1906
710.D Buenos Aires, 1910
710.E Santiago, 1923
710.F Habana, 1928
710.G Montevideo, 1933
710.H Lima, 1938

Pan American Union

Relations of United States with other American states

Relations of Central American states

Central American Court of Justice at Cartago

Relations; bilateral treaties

General

International law, diplomacy

Political

War, peace, friendship, alliance, nonaggression

Neutral Neutrality

Neutral commerce (freedom of the seas, civil warfare, contraband of war, blockade, trading with the enemy)

United States list of contraband and trading with the enemy list

Enemy property

United States property in enemy countries

Prisoners of war

United States prisoners of war

Civil prisoners, enemy noncombatants

Illegal and inhumane warfare (prohibited acts, bombardment of unfortified areas)

Hospital ships

Military observers, civilian observers

Termination of war (mediation, armistice)

Arbitration, Conciliation, Kellogg Antiwar Pact

Limitation of armaments

Cession of territory, disputed sovereignty over noncontiguous territory

Boundary questions, composition of differences

Delimitation of boundary

Demarcation, boundary commission (proceedings, journals)

Appropriations, their disbursement

Supplies, facilities

Boundary waters (pollution)

Navigation (ferries)

Improvement of navigation (bridges, removal of obstructions)

Boundary fences

Diversion of boundary waters

Neutral rights and duties

Commerce and navigation

Consular functions

Workmen’s compensation

Regulation of corporations

Aerial navigation

Canal
NUMERICAL-SUBJECT LISTING OF DOCUMENTS
IN CLASS 6 RECORDS
Post-1949

(Smaller country symbol always precedes the decimal point unless specifically stated otherwise.)

600  International relations (general)

601  Diplomatic representation; diplomatic privileges, immunities, transit, taxation, judicial process, etc.
   **  Diplomatic service of country **
   ***## Diplomatic representation of country ** in country ##
   .00##  Diplomatic corps in country ##

602  Consular representation; consular privileges, immunities, transit, taxation, judicial process, etc.
   **  Consular service of country **
   ***## Consular representation of country ** in country ##
   .00##  Consular body residing in country ##

603. ***##  Representation of interests of United States by diplomatic and consular officers of country ** in country ##

604. ***##  Representation of interests of country ** by American diplomatic and consular officers in country ##

605. ***##  Representation in the United States of interests of country ** by diplomatic and consular officers of country ##

606. ***##  Representation in foreign countries of interests of country ** by diplomatic and consular officers of country ##

607. ***##  Relations of diplomatic and consular officers of country ** with diplomatic and consular officers of country ## (Use smaller number of country for **.)

6***##  Political relations between country ** and country ##
   .##01  International law

   .##1  Peace, friendship, alliance, nonaggression
   .##11  Arbitration, conciliation
   .##12  Limitation of arms (including atomic weapons, poison gas, bacteriological warfare, etc.)
   .##13  Transfer of territory, disputed sovereignty over noncontiguous territory

   .##2  War, hostilities
   .##21  Neutrality, declarations of neutrality, internment of military personnel
   .##22  Neutral commerce, blockade
   .##221  Arming, armed guards, convoy, attacks on neutral merchant ships and planes
   .##222  Proclaimed lists, blacklists, trading with the enemy by neutrals
Political relations between country ** and country ##—cont.

- Enemy property
  - Funds, credits, stocks, bonds, “freezing” regulations, blocked funds, safe haven
- Real property, real estate
- Patents, trademarks, copyrights
- Prisoners of war (enemy prisoners)
  - U.S. military and naval personnel taken prisoner by the enemy
- Civil prisoners, enemy aliens
- U.S. civilians interned by the enemy
- Illegal and inhumane warfare, war crimes
- Hospital ships
- Military and naval observers
- Armistice, mediation, termination of war

- Boundary questions
  - Land boundary, markers, fences
  - Boundary commission, composition, membership, expenses, supplies
  - Water boundary
    - Navigation on international boundary waters
      - Obstructions, bridges, dams, power lines, gas mains, cables, tunnels
    - Diversion of international waters, water pollution
    - Improvement of international waterways
  - Air boundary
  - Air pollution
  - Public health problems

- Treaties of commerce and navigation
  - Consular functions

- Naturalization and immigration

- Fisheries
  - Fisheries commission, composition, membership, expenses, supplies

- Fur seals

- Whaling

- Other relations, other bilateral treaties
  - Extradition treaties
  - Financial treaties and agreements
  - Double taxation (income and other taxation)
  - Postal treaties and conventions
  - Air navigation treaties
  - Literary, artistic, and industrial property
  - Military service treaties
  - Peaceful uses of atomic energy
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