

JUN 09 2008



*...ideas  
defining  
a free  
society*

June 6, 2008

Mr. Mark A. Green  
American Heritage Center  
University of Wyoming  
Post Office Box 3924  
Laramie, Wyoming 82071-3924

Dear Mr. Green:

Because of your role as president of the Society of American Archivists, I am writing to you regarding the society's April 22, 2008, statement on Iraqi records. That statement, I fear, was made without complete information on the nature of the deposit and without knowledge of the participation and support the Iraqi government has given the Hoover Institution, Stanford University, and the Iraq Memory Foundation (MF) throughout this project.

The administration and professionals of the Hoover Library and Archives subscribe fully to the section of the statement's introductory paragraph that states that archivists "are engaged in identifying, preserving, and making accessible the historic and governmental manuscripts ... of localities and nations." Among Hoover's goals in accepting the MF's collection are to preserve *and protect* them from deterioration and loss and to serve them to researchers at the Hoover Archives.

Given the current conditions in Iraq, one wonders if either of these goals of preservation or access could be accomplished in Iraq. The loss of these documents would be a tragedy, and limited access to them would be a major impediment to a complete analysis of the events in the region. We feel that the aims of the society are well served by having these documents housed at Hoover.

Moreover, this is a *deposit agreement*, which stipulates that the documents will be returned to Iraq when a suitable archival depository there has been identified—one that provides safety for the documents and equal access to all.

The activities of the MF and its relationship with the Hoover Institution are well known to various sectors of the Iraqi government, as documented in letters and statements dating back to August 2004. The most recent correspondence from the Iraqi Ministry of Culture (enclosed), which has authority over the Iraqi National Library and Archives, is a response to the society's April 22 statement. The ministry statement reaffirms Hoover's role in preserving the records that the MF has collected.

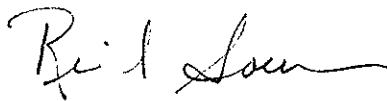
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The cost of preserving and safely storing these documents is considerable and borne by Hoover. But the Hoover Institution feels this undertaking is consistent with its objective of studying and documenting political, economic, and social change in the modern era.

I hope that you will share this information with your society's 5,100 members. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Richard Sousa".

Richard Sousa

Enclosure

c: Nancy C. Beaumont ✓

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وزارة الثقافة  
جمهورية العراق

Republic of Iraq  
Ministry of Culture

وزارة الثقافة  
جمهورية العراق



مكتب الوكيل الاقدم

No: d.m. 0/167  
Date: 27/4/2008

**Re: Society of American Archivists and Association of Canadian Archivists  
Statement**

In response to the Society of American Archivists and Association of Canadian Archivists (undated) joint release stating that "[t]he records of the government bodies and the Baath Party [in custody of the Iraq Memory Foundation] should be returned to the government of Iraq to be maintained as part of the official records in the National Library and Archives", please be advised that the steps undertaken by the Iraq Memory Foundation with regards to these documents have been reviewed and assessed by the Iraqi government: *the Iraqi government has approved the interim deposit agreement signed by the Iraq Memory Foundation and the Hoover Institution.*

Also, note that the National Library and Archives, over which this Ministry has authority, has not been deemed to be the final repository of the said documents upon their repatriation. In the Accountability and Justice Law of January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2008, the Iraqi parliament has indicated that "a permanent Iraqi archive will be created" for these documents, in light of their special nature and requirements. The structure, functions, and mandate of this institution remain to be determined.

Jaber al-Jaberi  
Senior Deputy of the Ministry of Culture

27/4/2008