



Smithsonian Institution

Smithsonian Institution Archives

Proceedings of the Board of Regents Meeting held on May 6, 1985

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seeking authorization for a matching \$11.5 million from Federal appropriations.

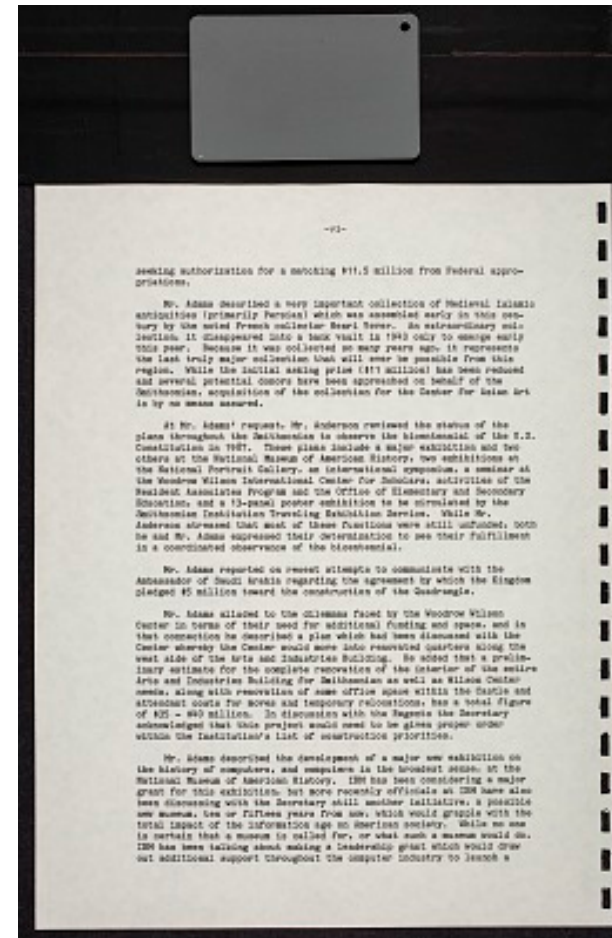
Mr. Adams described a very important collection of Medieval Islamic antiquities (primarily Persian) which was assembled early in this century by the noted French collector Henri Vever. An extraordinary collection, it disappeared into a bank vault in 1943 only to emerge early this year. Because it was collected so many years ago, it represents the last truly major collection that will ever be possible from this region. While the initial asking price (\$11 million) has been reduced and several potential donors have been approached on behalf of the Smithsonian, acquisition of the collection for the Center for Asian Art is by no means assured.

At Mr. Adams' request, Mr. Anderson reviewed the status of the plans throughout the Smithsonian to observe the bicentennial of the U.S. Constitution in 1987. These plans include a major exhibition and two others at the National Museum of American History, two exhibitions at the National Portrait Gallery, an international symposium, a seminar at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, activities of the Resident Associates Program and the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, and a 13-panel poster exhibition to be circulated by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service. While Mr. Anderson stressed that most of these functions were still unfunded, both he and Mr. Adams expressed their determination to see their fulfillment in a coordinated observance of the bicentennial.

Mr. Adams reported on recent attempts to communicate with the Ambassador of Saudi Arabia regarding the agreement by which the Kingdom pledged \$5 million toward the construction of the Quadrangle.

Mr. Adams alluded to the dilemmas faced by the Woodrow Wilson Center in terms of their need for additional funding and space, and in that connection he described a plan which had been discussed with the Center whereby the Center would move into renovated quarters along the west side of the Arts and Industries Building. He added that a preliminary estimate for the complete renovation of the interior of the entire Arts and Industries Building for Smithsonian as well as Wilson Center needs, along with renovation of some office space within the Castle and attendant costs for moves and temporary relocations, has a total figure of \$35 - \$40 million. In discussion with the Regents the Secretary acknowledged that this project would need to be given proper order within the Institution's list of construction priorities.

Mr. Adams described the development of a major new exhibition on the history of computers, and computers in the broadest sense, at the National Museum of American History. IBM has been considering a major grant for this exhibition, but more recently officials at IBM have also been discussing with the Secretary still another initiative, a possible new museum, ten or fifteen years from now, which would grapple with the total impact of the information age on American society. While no one is certain that a museum is called for, or what such a museum would do, IBM has been talking about making a leadership grant which would draw out additional support throughout the computer industry to launch a



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The mission of the Smithsonian is the increase and diffusion of knowledge - shaping the future by preserving our heritage, discovering new knowledge, and sharing our resources with the world. Founded in 1846, the Smithsonian is the world's largest museum and research complex, consisting of 19 museums and galleries, the National Zoological Park, and nine research facilities. Become an active part of our mission through the Transcription Center. Together, we are discovering secrets hidden deep inside our collections that illuminate our history and our world.

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