

# Princeton University Library

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## William Cattell Trimble Papers, 1931-1976 (bulk 1954-1968): Finding Aid

### Summary Information

<b>Call number:</b>	MC027
<b>Location:</b>	Princeton University Library. Department of Rare Books and Special Collections. Seeley G. Mudd Manuscript Library. Public Policy Papers. 65 Olden Street Princeton, New Jersey 08540 USA
<b>Size:</b>	10.08 linear feet (8 archival boxes, 1 half-size archival box, 7 8x10 photo boxes, 2 11x15 oversized boxes)
<b>Language(s) of material:</b>	English. Other languages in the collection include French, German, Portuguese, and Spanish.
<b>Abstract:</b>	William C. Trimble, Princeton University Class of 1930, was a career diplomat, serving as United States ambassador to Cambodia (1959-1962) and Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs (1965-1968) as well as serving in Brazil and Germany. The collection contains correspondence, speeches, newspaper clippings, photographs, and assorted memorabilia documenting Trimble's career.

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## Biography of William Cattell Trimble

William Cattell Trimble was born May 2, 1907 in Baltimore, Maryland. A member of the Princeton University Class of 1930, he graduated cum laude with an A.B. in history. In 1931, he joined the Foreign Service and was posted to Seville, Spain. While steadily rising in the ranks of the Foreign Service he worked in legations and embassies in Argentina, Estonia, and Mexico, among other locations.

After World War II, Trimble was a member of the first class at the National War College. Upon completion of his studies, he went to Reykjavik, Iceland as Chargé d'Affaires and Second Secretary and then as First Secretary in 1948. Two years later he became Counselor of the embassy at London. The State Department transferred him in late 1951 to The Hague where he remained until spring 1954 as Counselor and Deputy Chief of Mission.

In March 1954, Trimble moved to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil as second in command of the embassy. That same year he attained the personal rank of minister, the second highest rank in the Foreign Service. While in Brazil, Trimble witnessed the end of the Vargas era that culminated with Getulio Vargas's suicide and elections for a new president in 1955. At the end of January 1956, the embassy played host to Vice President Richard Nixon during his visit to Brazil as the United States representative at the inauguration of Juscelino Kubitschek as President of Brazil.

In September 1956, Trimble returned to Europe to serve as Deputy Chief of Mission at Bonn, Germany. He served under Ambassador James Conant and then welcomed David Bruce as ambassador in 1957. Trimble served in Germany during the dissolution of the U.S. High Commission after it was abolished by the Allied High Commission. Its functions were transferred to the U.S. embassy in Bonn, and Trimble played an integral role in this process.

The culmination of Trimble's long diplomatic career came in February 1959 when he became the United States Ambassador to Cambodia. Trimble arrived in Cambodia in the midst of a political crisis over Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) involvement with Dap Chhuon, a political adversary of Prince Sihanouk, who headed a brief rebellion. This crisis was shortly followed on August 31 by the death of a palace staff member who opened a suitcase containing the card of an American engineer. The general consensus among Cambodians was that the United States was responsible for an attempt on Prince Sihanouk's life. Trimble's position was very difficult due to Sihanouk's distrust of the United States. In September 1960, Sihanouk effectively ended American hopes of gaining Cambodia as an ally against Communism by expressing Cambodian neutrality during a United Nations speech.

Upon his return to the United States in September 1962, Trimble became Director of the Office of West Coast and Malian Affairs. The Office oversaw U.S. relations with seven countries: Guinea, Nigeria, Liberia, Togo, Mali, Sierra Leone, and Ghana. Trimble visited four of these countries - Nigeria, Togo, Ghana and Liberia - to gain first-hand experience for his new post. To deal with increasingly important African affairs, the Africa Desk was reorganized as the Office of West African Affairs with seven additional countries placed under its supervision: Mauritania, Senegal, Gambia, Dahomey (now Bénin), Côte d'Ivoire, Niger, and Upper Volta (now Burkina Faso). Five more countries, Chad, the Central African Republic, Gabon, Cameroon, and Madagascar, were added in September 1964.

In May 1965, Trimble was promoted to Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs under Assistant Secretary of State G. Mennen Williams. Trimble was responsible for the Department's African Bureau.

Trimble retired from the State Department in February 1968, and lived in Maryland until his death on June 24,

1996.

<b>Description</b>
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The William C. Trimble Papers reflect Trimble's career in the Foreign Service, with more documentation from his years in Brazil, Cambodia, Germany, and from his work covering Africa. Most of the material is routine in nature, but letters detailing his views and the challenges he faced in his various postings can also be found.

### **Series 1, Correspondence, 1931-1968**

Series 1, Correspondence, 1942-1968, is arranged chronologically, and consists primarily of carbon copies of letters Trimble sent, though there are some letters that he received. As he rose in rank, the volume of correspondence increases. Each posting created a different range of correspondents and concerns. In general, Trimble's correspondence is routine in nature. Primarily in English, some correspondence is in the local language of the country in which he served, specifically Spanish, Portuguese, German and French.

The earliest period of correspondence, 1942-1954, is rather sparse. Nothing is included in these papers from Trimble's earliest postings nor from his service during World War II. The only exception is three items in Spanish dating from 1942-1943 while he was posted to Mexico. While posted to Iceland, most of the correspondence is personal in nature, much of it congratulations on promotion. Little has been preserved of his service in London. While at The Hague, most of the correspondence refers to matters such as reductions in embassy staff and Dutch aid. Correspondents include Tyler Thompson, Executive Director of the Bureau of European Affairs, and Livingston T. Merchant, Assistant Secretary of State.

Trimble's correspondence increases with his appointment as Counselor at Rio de Janeiro in 1954. Correspondence between Trimble and the consulates around Brazil detail the information exchange process. Trimble and Sterling Cottrell (Officer in Charge, Brazilian Affairs, Bureau of Inter-American Affairs) regularly corresponded on the political, military, and social aspects of Brazil. This correspondence continued with Edward Rowell, Cottrell's successor. Several memorandas to the Ambassador relating to a variety of topics, such as the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO), United States Information Service (USIS) operations, and conversations held with members of the Brazilian government are found. A charged political atmosphere is strongly evident in his correspondence to Washington and elsewhere. Surprisingly, there is little correspondence in reference to Vice President Nixon's attending the inauguration of President Kubitschek, but there is correspondence suggesting the invitation of president-elect Kubitschek to the United States.

In September 1956, Trimble transferred to Bonn, Germany serving under Ambassador James Conant and later Ambassador David Bruce. Correspondence between Trimble and both men is found in the collection. As the second in command, much of the correspondence is routine, detailing problems with staff, budget cuts, and visits by Congressmen and other high ranking governmental officials. Also found is regular correspondence with Jacques Reinstein, Director of the Office of German Affairs in the Department of State, primarily reporting on day-to-day matters, politics, and war criminals. There are again memoranda to the Ambassador on subjects such as incidents involving U.S. forces and German nationals and records of conversations with other members of the diplomatic community, but little correspondence regarding U.S.-Soviet relations in this period.

When Trimble became head of the embassy in Cambodia in 1959, he corresponded with other members of the diplomatic corps and the Cambodian government. Trimble kept a regular correspondence with J. Graham Parsons, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State in Washington, on the state of Cambodia and the needs of the embassy. Another regular correspondent was the American Ambassador to Vietnam, initially Elbridge Durbrow

and later Frederick Nolting, Jr. A series of cables to and from Washington and other posts dating from August 1960 to June 1962 are preserved. These cables are often more detailed than the correspondence of the same period. There is little direct correspondence on the Sam Sary "letter" published in 1960 alleging a conspiracy between the United States and an opponent of Prince Sihanouk. There is a large volume of correspondence from late 1960 to early 1961 on the political upheavals in Laos and Prince Sihanouk's concern on the subject. In late 1960 a large section of the Khmer-American Friendship Highway buckled, an issue Trimble raised frequently with Washington, including a detailed overview sent to newly appointed Assistant Secretary for Far Eastern Affairs, Averell Harriman.

From September 1962 to February 1968 Trimble oversaw aspects of the African Desk at the State Department. He was first appointed Director of the Office of West Coast and Malian Affairs overseeing seven countries and eventually responsible for nineteen African nations. Trimble visited Nigeria, Togo, Ghana, and Liberia in December 1962 and Kenya and Tanganyika (now Tanzania) in January 1964 to gain an understanding of these countries. Much of the correspondence is between him and the ambassadors under his supervision. Some of the issues discussed in his correspondence in this period are how to maintain good relations with Ghana, the coup in Togo in January 1963, problems faced by Peace Corps volunteers, and reactions within these countries to major political events, such as the Cuban Missile crisis. In May 1965 Trimble was promoted to Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs and placed in charge of the African Bureau. In this role, he became the person responsible for forwarding Dean Rusk's letter notifying the Congolese government that the United States was closing its embassy. Unfortunately, there is little correspondence relating to this important event. Between 1966 and Trimble's retirement in 1968, most of the correspondence is personal in nature with little reference to his work as Deputy Assistant Secretary.

### **Series 2, Speeches and writings, 1937-1968**

Series 2, Speeches and Writings, 1937-1968, is arranged chronologically and consists primarily of speeches delivered by Trimble as part of his duties. Many of them are written in the local language, i.e. German for his time in Germany and French for his time in Cambodia. A majority of the speeches are routine in nature with such subjects as the celebration of American holidays abroad, dedication ceremonies, and speeches delivered to organizations, such as the National War College.

### **Series 3, General subject files, 1940-1976**

Series 3, General Subject Files, 1940-1968, is arranged alphabetically primarily by Trimble's service location and then by subject. The subjects covered by these files include statistical data on Africa in the mid-1960s, a personal diary from 1958 while in Germany, material relating to Vice President Nixon's visit to Brazil in 1956, notes on his time in Cambodia, and a copy of a lecture given at the National War College by George Kennan ("Structure of Internal Power in U.S.S.R."). Box 18 of the collection contains oversized items related to this series.

### **Series 4, Newspaper clippings, 1955-1967**

Series 4, Newspaper Clippings, 1955-1967, is arranged chronologically and consists of American and local newspaper clippings primarily relating to activities of Trimble. The bulk of the clippings date to Trimble's service in Cambodia, including a series from four Cambodian newspapers between October and December, 1961.

### **Series 5, Ephemera, 1950-1968**

Series 5, Ephemera, 1950-1968, is arranged chronologically. The material includes invitations, programs, identity cards, passes to conferences, and awards.

### **Series 6, Photographs, 1946-1968**

Series 6, Photographs, 1946-1968, is arranged chronologically and consists primarily of black and white photographs which depict Trimble in the course of his duties at activities such as presenting his credentials in Cambodia, dedicating a building in Germany, and accepting Salk's vaccine in Brazil. Some of the photographs have been at least partially identified by Mrs. Trimble.

### **Series 7, Oversize Items**

## **Arrangement**

Organized into the following series:

- Series 1, Correspondence, 1931-1968
- Series 2, Speeches and writings, 1937-1968
- Series 3, General subject files, 1940-1976
- Series 4, Newspaper clippings, 1955-1967
- Series 5, Ephemera, 1950-1968
- Series 6, Photographs, 1946-1968
- Series 7, Oversize Items

## **Access and Use**

### **Access**

Collection is open for research use.

### **Restrictions on Use and Copyright Information**

Single photocopies may be made for research purposes. Permission to publish materials from the collection must be requested from the Curator of the Public Policy Papers. Researchers are responsible for determining any copyright questions.

## **Acquisition and Appraisal**

### **Provenance and Acquisition**

The Trimble Papers were donated to Princeton University by his wife, Nancy Trimble in 1997.

## Processing and Other Information

### Preferred Citation

Identification of specific item; Date (if known); William C. Trimble Papers, Box and Folder Number; Public Policy Papers, Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, Princeton University Library.

### Processing Information

This collection was processed by Catherine Stearns with assistance from Patrick Shorb, 1997-1998. Updated and revised by Rachel Ban with assistance from Kathryn Grzenczyk, 2001. Finding aid written by Catherine Stearns in 1997-1998.

### Encoding

Machine-readable finding aid encoded in EAD 2002 by Techbooks and Cristela García-Spitz on October 13, 2006.

### Descriptive Rules Used

Finding aid content adheres to that prescribed by *Describing Archives: A Content Standard*.

## Subject Headings

These materials have been indexed in the [Princeton University Library online catalog](#) using the following terms. Those seeking related materials should search under these terms.

- Kennan, George Frost, 1904- -- Views on Soviet Union.
- United States. Dept. of State. Bureau of African Affairs.
- United States. Dept. of State -- Officials and employees -- 20th century -- Correspondence.
- United States. Foreign Service -- 20th century.
- Ambassadors -- United States -- 20th century -- Correspondence.
- Diplomatic and consular service, American -- United States -- 20th century.
- Africa -- Foreign Relations -- United States -- 20th century.
- Brazil -- Foreign Relations -- United States -- 20th century.
- Cambodia -- Foreign Relations -- United States -- 20th century.
- Germany -- Foreign Relations -- United States -- 20th century.
- United States -- Foreign Relations -- Brazil -- 20th century.
- United States -- Foreign Relations -- Cambodia -- 20th century.
- United States -- Foreign Relations -- Germany -- 20th century.
- Correspondence.
- Photographs.
- American history/20th century
- American politics and government
- Cold War
- Diplomacy

## Contents List

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### Series 1, Correspondence, 1942-1968

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**Series 1, Correspondence, 1942-1968 ... (Continued)**

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**Sereis Arrangement**

[arranged chronologically]

<u>TITLE</u>	<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>
Spain, 1931, circa 1937	1	1
Mexico, 1942-1943	1	2
Reykjavik, Iceland, 1947-1948	1	3
London, United Kingdom, 1949-1950	1	4
The Hague, The Netherlands, 1951-1954	1	5
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 1954-1956	1	6-9
Bonn, Germany - Personal, 1957	1	11
Bonn, Germany, 1957-1958	2	1-5
Congratulations on Career Minister Appointment, 1958	3	1

**Series 1, Correspondence, 1942-1968 ... (Continued)**

Bonn, Germany, 1958 Dec-1959 Feb	3	2
Appointment as Ambassador to Cambodia, 1959 Feb	3	3
Phnom Penh, Cambodia, 1959 Feb-1960 Sept	3	4-7
Phnom Penh, Cambodia, 1960 Oct-Dec	4	1
Phnom Penh, Cambodia, 1961 Jan-1962 Jan	4	2-4
Phnom Penh, Cambodia - Cables, 1960 Aug-Dec	4	5
Phnom Penh, Cambodia - Cables, 1961	4	6
Southeast Asian Affairs (S.E.A.), 1961	4	7
Phnom Penh, Cambodia, 1962 Feb-Jul	5	1-2
Phnom Penh, Cambodia - Cables, 1962	5	3
Phnom Penh, Cambodia - Personal, 1962	5	4
Africa Desk, 1962 Sep-1965 Jun	5	5-9
Africa Desk, 1965 Jul-Dec	6	1
Appointment to Deputy Assistant Secretary, African Affairs, 1964-1965	6	2
Personal, 1966-1968	6	3

**Series 2, Speeches and Writings, 1937-1968****Series Description**

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**Series Arrangement**

[arranged chronologically]

<u>TITLE</u>	<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>
“Status of the Estonian Market for American Goods”, 1937 Apr 30	5	4

**Series 2, Speeches and Writings, 1937-19 ... (Continued)**

Article on Iceland (The Department of State Bulletin), 1944 Jun 17	5	5
Dissertation on American Communist Party, undated (post-1945)	5	6
London - Given to American Students Visiting England, 1951 May 22	5	7
On Departure of Ambassador and Mrs. Dunn, 1956 Jul 4	5	8
Brazil - American Independence Day, Fourth of July, 1956 Jul 4	5	9
Germany, 1957-1958	5	10
Inauguration of Khmer-American Friendship Highway, 1959 Jul 22	6	11
Cambodia, 1959-1961	6	12-13
Cambodia, circa 1959-1962	7	1-2
Cambodia - Holiday Commemoration, 1959-1962	7	3
Africa Desk, 1963-1968	7	4
Retirement, 1968 Jan	7	5

**Series 3, General Subject Files, 1940-1968****Series Description**

Series 3, General Subject Files, 1940-1968, is arranged alphabetically primarily by Trimble's service location and then by subject. The subjects covered by these files include statistical data on Africa in the mid-1960s, a personal diary from 1958 while in Germany, material relating to Vice President Nixon's visit to Brazil in 1956, notes on his time in Cambodia, and a copy of a lecture given at the National War College by George Kennan ("Structure of Internal Power in U.S.S.R."). Box 18 of the collection contains oversized items related to this series.

**Series Arrangement**

[arranged alphabetically]

<u>TITLE</u>	<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>
Africa Desk: Charter of the Organization of African Unity, 1963	7	6
Africa Desk: Conference of the U.S. Ambassadors at Pennsylvania State University, 1963 Nov	7	7
Africa Desk: Miscellaneous, undated	7	8

**Series 3, General Subject Files, 1940-19 ... (Continued)**

Africa Desk: Personnel Listing, 1967 Dec	7	9
Africa Desk: Statistics, 1965-1968	7	10
Africa Desk: Trip to Africa, 1962 Dec	7	11
Brazil: Coffee Prices Interview by Ambassador Kemper, 1954 Oct	7	12
Brazil: Description of Vargas' Suicide by Trimble, 1954 Aug 24-25	7	13
Brazil: Diplomatic Directories, 1956	7	14
Brazil: Miscellaneous, 1954-1956	7	15
Brazil: Nixon's Trip for Inauguration of Kubitschek, Clippings, 1956 Jan	7	16
Brazil: Nixon's Trip for Inauguration of Kubitschek, Handbook, 1956 Jan	7	17
Brazil: Nixon's Trip for Inauguration of Kubitschek, Programs, 1956 Jan-Feb	7	18
Cambodia: Background Material, 1959	8	1
Cambodia: Diary, 1959-1960	8	2
Cambodia: Miscellaneous, 1959-1962	8	3
Cambodia: Presentation of Credentials, 1959 Apr	8	4
Cambodia: Prince Sihanouk speeches, undated	8	5
Cambodia: Trimble's Notes, 1959-1962	8	6
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France: Economy, 1940-1941	8	8
Germany: Diary, 1958	8	9
Germany: Diplomatic Directories, 1958	8	10
Germany: Guest Lists, 1956-1958	8	11
Germany: Miscellaneous, 1956-1959	8	12
Germany: Trip, 1949 Apr	8	13
Germany: U.S. Policy Toward, circa 1957	8	14
National War College: Course Notes, undated	8	15

**Series 3, General Subject Files, 1940-19 ... (Continued)**

National War College: Lecture by George F. Kennan and Notes on Lecture, 1946 Oct 10	8	16
National War College: Reunion, 1976	8	17
Trimble, Mrs. Nancy: Correspondence, Speeches, Guest Lists, 1956-1962	8	18

**Series 4, Newspaper Clippings, 1955-1967****Series Description**

Series 4, Newspaper Clippings, 1955-1967, is arranged chronologically and consists of American and local newspaper clippings primarily relating to activities of Trimble. The bulk of the clippings date to Trimble's service in Cambodia, including a series from four Cambodian newspapers between October and December, 1961.

**Series Arrangement**

[arranged chronologically]

<u>TITLE</u>	<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>
Brazil: Salk Vaccine Formula, 1955 May	8	19
Brazil: Trimble, 1955-1956	8	20
Germany: Trimble, 1956-1958	8	21
Cambodia, 1959-1962	8	22
Cambodia: Trimble, 1959-1962	8	23
Cambodia: Sam Sary, 1960	8	24
Cambodia: Miscellaneous, 1960	8	25
Cambodia: from <i>La Depeche du Cambodge</i> (French), 1961 Oct-Nov	8	26
Cambodia: from <i>La Verite</i> (French), 1961 Oct-Nov	9	1
Cambodia: from <i>Meatophum</i> (Cambodian), 1961 Oct-Nov	9	2
Cambodia: from <i>Réalités Cambodgiennes</i> (French), 1961 Oct-Nov	9	3
Africa Desk: Trimble, 1964-1967	9	4

**Series 5, Ephemera, 1950-1968 ... (Continued)**

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**Series 5, Ephemera, 1950-1968**

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**Series Description**

Series 5, Ephemera, 1950-1968, is arranged chronologically. The material includes invitations, programs, identity cards, passes to conferences, and awards.

**Series Arrangement**

[arranged chronologically]

<u>TITLE</u>	<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>
Intergovernmental Study Group on Germany, 1950 Jul, 1951 Jan	9	5
Brazil, 1954-1956	9	6
Germany, 1956-1959	9	7
Cambodia, 1959-1962	9	8
Africa Desk, 1962-1968	9	9

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**Series 6, Photographs, 1946-1968**

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**Series Description**

Series 6, Photographs, 1946-1968, is arranged chronologically and consists primarily of black and white photographs which depict Trimble in the course of his duties at activities such as presenting his credentials in Cambodia, dedicating a building in Germany, and accepting Salk's vaccine in Brazil. Some of the photographs have been at least partially identified by Mrs. Trimble.

**Series Arrangement**

[arranged chronologically]

<u>TITLE</u>	<u>BOX</u>
Photographs, 1946-1968	10-17

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**Series 7, Oversize Items**

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<u>TITLE</u>	<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>
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**Series 7, Oversize Items ... (Continued)**

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National War College: Class Photo, 1946	18	1
Brazil: <i>Rio Magazine</i> , 1954	18	2
Germany: <i>Festschrift der Stadt Stuttgart</i> , 1958	18	3