

200R
ACLS

AUG 26 1941

Modern Languages

1941

SEP 23 1941

March 9 Excerpt from JM interviews

Conference to discuss available personnel competent in
Chinese, Japanese, and Russian

Discussion of the plan for a national school of East European and Oriental languages and literature in Washington showed this group to be unanimously dubious of its possibilities. The Oriental Society has set up a committee to further the plan composed of Edgerton of Yale, Speiser of Pennsylvania, and Ware of Harvard - in the view of this group all three scholars who would ordinarily be expected to have little interest in practical training in these fields. In other words, to this group the auspices seemed anything but favorable. Furthermore, even taking into account the probable availability of emigres for teachers, the group doubted that adequate teaching personnel could be secured without drawing men off from university teaching elsewhere. In addition, there was some doubt that recent emigres could give practical courses suited to American needs. Finally, the group doubted that parttime study such as would be necessary for men in government posts in Washington could be adequate. Rather it favored the assignment of students to the various universities now offering such courses as the proposed school would offer, citing by analogy President Conant's plan for chemical research in this war in existing university laboratories as opposed to the plan followed in the last war in which there was an attempt to centralize research in Washington.