

“SEC. 864. Every person deposing as provided in the preceding section [R.S. §863] shall be cautioned and sworn to testify the whole truth, and carefully examined.

“His testimony shall be reduced to writing or typewriting by the officer taking the deposition, or by some person under his personal supervision, or by the deponent himself in the officer's presence, and by no other person, and shall, after it has been reduced to writing or typewriting, be subscribed by the deponent. [As amended May 23, 1900, ch. 541, 31 Stat. 182.]

“SEC. 865. Every deposition taken under the two preceding sections [R.S. §§863, 864] shall be retained by the magistrate taking it, until he delivers it with his own hand into the court for which it is taken; or it shall, together with a certificate of the reasons as aforesaid of taking it and of the notice, if any, given to the adverse party, be by him sealed up and directed to such court, and remain under his seal until opened in court. But unless it appears to the satisfaction of the court that the witness is then dead, or gone out of the United States, or to a greater distance than one hundred miles from the place where the court is sitting, or that, by reason of age, sickness, bodily infirmity, or imprisonment, he is unable to travel and appear at court, such deposition shall not be used in the cause.”

R.S. §§863 to 865, as amended, quoted above, were applicable to admiralty proceedings only. Proceedings in bankruptcy and copyright are governed by rule 26 et seq. of Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. See also Rules of Bankruptcy Procedure set out in the Appendix to Title 11, Bankruptcy.

§ 1781. Transmittal of letter rogatory or request

(a) The Department of State has power, directly, or through suitable channels—

(1) to receive a letter rogatory issued, or request made, by a foreign or international tribunal, to transmit it to the tribunal, officer, or agency in the United States to whom it is addressed, and to receive and return it after execution; and

(2) to receive a letter rogatory issued, or request made, by a tribunal in the United States, to transmit it to the foreign or international tribunal, officer, or agency to whom it is addressed, and to receive and return it after execution.

(b) This section does not preclude—

(1) the transmittal of a letter rogatory or request directly from a foreign or international tribunal to the tribunal, officer, or agency in the United States to whom it is addressed and its return in the same manner; or

(2) the transmittal of a letter rogatory or request directly from a tribunal in the United States to the foreign or international tribunal, officer, or agency to whom it is addressed and its return in the same manner.

(June 25, 1948, ch. 646, 62 Stat. 948; Pub. L. 88-619, §8(a), Oct. 3, 1964, 78 Stat. 996.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Based on title 28, U.S.C., 1940 ed., §653 (R.S. §875; Feb. 27, 1877, ch. 69, §1, 19 Stat. 241; Mar. 3, 1911, ch. 231, §291, 36 Stat. 1167).

Word “officer” was substituted for “commissioner” to obviate uncertainty as to the person to whom the letters or commissions may be issued.

The third sentence of section 653 of title 28, U.S.C., 1940 ed., providing for admission of testimony “so taken and returned” without objection as to the method of return, was omitted as unnecessary. Obviously, if the method designated by Congress is followed, it cannot be objected to.

The last sentence of section 653 of title 26, U.S.C., 1940 ed., relating to letters rogatory from courts of foreign countries, is incorporated in section 1782 of this title.

The revised section extends the provisions of section 653 of title 28, U.S.C., 1940 ed., which applied only to cases wherein the United States was a party or was interested, so as to insure a uniform method of taking foreign depositions in all cases.

Words “courts of the United States” were inserted to make certain that the section is addressed to the Federal rather than the State courts as obviously intended by Congress.

Changes were made in phraseology.

Editorial Notes

AMENDMENTS

1964—Pub. L. 88-619 substituted provisions authorizing the Department of State to transmit a letter rogatory or request by a foreign or international tribunal, or by a tribunal in the United States, to the tribunal, officer or agency in the United States or its foreign or international counterpart, to whom addressed, and to return it after execution, and providing that this section does not preclude direct transmission of letters rogatory or requests between interested tribunals, officers or agencies of foreign, international and of United States origin, for provisions authorizing United States ministers or consuls, whenever a United States court issues letters rogatory or a commission to take a deposition, to receive the executed letters or commissions from foreign courts or officers, endorse them with the place and date of receipt and any change in the deposition, and transmit it to the clerk of the issuing court in the same manner as his official dispatches, in text and “Transmittal of letter rogatory or request” for “Foreign witnesses” in section catchline.

§ 1782. Assistance to foreign and international tribunals and to litigants before such tribunals

(a) The district court of the district in which a person resides or is found may order him to give his testimony or statement or to produce a document or other thing for use in a proceeding in a foreign or international tribunal, including criminal investigations conducted before formal accusation. The order may be made pursuant to a letter rogatory issued, or request made, by a foreign or international tribunal or upon the application of any interested person and may direct that the testimony or statement be given, or the document or other thing be produced, before a person appointed by the court. By virtue of his appointment, the person appointed has power to administer any necessary oath and take the testimony or statement. The order may prescribe the practice and procedure, which may be in whole or part the practice and procedure of the foreign country or the international tribunal, for taking the testimony or statement or producing the document or other thing. To the extent that the order does not prescribe otherwise, the testimony or statement shall be taken, and the document or other thing produced, in accordance with the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure.

A person may not be compelled to give his testimony or statement or to produce a document or other thing in violation of any legally applicable privilege.

(b) This chapter does not preclude a person within the United States from voluntarily giving his testimony or statement, or producing a