THE IMPACT OF FEDERAL LEGISLATION ON GOVERNMENTAL AND SPECIAL LIBRARIES

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It has become increasingly obvious that libraries today cannot provide adequate service under conditions of local self-sufficiency. A variety of programs are required on the national level which cannot be provided by individual libraries or combinations of libraries. Few libraries can justify or afford the massive resource development which has been a responsibility of such institutions as the Library of Congress, the National Agricultural Library and the National Library of Medicine. None can finance the very expensive and complex bibliographic services provided by these national libraries. And practically none of our non-governmental libraries are in a position to assume leadership in implementing national bibliographic programs in the years ahead. These are the general reasons why our governmental libraries and the attendant legislative authorization are so critically important to the entire scholarly community.

It is not the purpose of this paper to consider the detailed development of our governmental libraries or library legislative history. It would be accurate to say that in the past this development has taken place under uncoordinated circumstances, frequently in response to ad hoc situations. There was certainly no grand design or master plan to shape the future.

This does not imply that librarians were limited in their vision or lacked the capability for basic planning. It is more a reflection of the fact that, at the Federal level, there has not been sufficient political support to allow more than one step being taken at a time.

Halting progress was made through the years with agency libraries becoming national libraries, such as the National Library of Medicine and the National Agricultural Library. Despite repeated studies and recommendations, other governmental libraries have, until quite recently, existed with little relationship to each other or to national needs. Over the years, the Library of Congress was given additional authorization to become a de facto national library, although there are still vestigial elements in the legislative branch which consider this institution to be nothing more than a library for the Congress.

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Within the recent past this posture of bibliographic laissez faire on the Federal level has dramatically changed. There has been acknowledgement within government and without that adequate library service in the future will depend upon the creation of national information networks. These networks will have many of the characteristics of a modern public utility and it is probable that the national libraries will constitute the primary "generating stations," creating a more extensive bibliographic service which can be transmitted, refined, and utilized at the local level. As with electrical power, we can no longer afford to generate current in each basement.

Medical Library Assistance Act

The Medical Library Assistance Act of 1965 is the first example of a comprehensive national plan for library service. This program, administered by the National Library of Medicine, provides local construction, resources, training, research and development, and the establishment of a national network of regional medical libraries. The entire complex is based on bibliographic control through the Index Medicus, with access to the resources indexed being provided on a national, regional, and local level.

In supporting construction, the Act authorizes funding for medical school libraries, and libraries supporting schools of pharmacy, veterinary medicine, and optometry, as well as other health-related professions. Investigation is being conducted as to the best ways in which these facilities can be developed into learning-resource facilities or communications centers, utilizing all the modern techniques of information transfer, rather than being simply storehouses for books. A Facilities and Resources Committee of non-Federal consultants has been established to provide initial merit review of applications and make recommendations for approval to the National Medical Library Assistance Advisory Board.

The Medical Library Assistance Act authorizes the appropriation of $10 million for construction for each fiscal year from 1967 through 1970 with a Federal matching ratio of seventy-five percent. Assistance for the construction of forty to fifty libraries is planned over the next five years.

The Act authorizes grants for local resource development which includes the acquisition of books, journals, photographs, motion pictures, and other instructional materials; cataloging, binding, and other services and procedures for processing library resource materials; and the introduction of new technologies and methodologies in medical librarianship. The amount of the grants will be related to the annual operating expenses of the library and will decrease annually for a five-year period. The purpose of this approach is (1) to make a significant but relatively short-term grant to bring basic resources to a more useful level, and (2) to encourage increased

support to the library by the parent institution on a continuing basis to compensate for the decreasing Federal contribution.

It is planned in the first year of the program to provide approximately 150 medical libraries with some support for improving and expanding basic resources. Additional libraries will be added annually so that at the end of five years, approximately 1200 libraries will have experienced some assistance through this program.

The program anticipates that the initial phase of funding local resource development will provide the basis and the experience for subsequent major expenditures for the introduction of advanced technology for linkage and transmission among local library facilities. For fiscal year 1966, $2,000,000 has been appropriated for resources and $2,700,000 has been requested from the Congress for fiscal year 1967.

The third general area which will be supported by the Act concerns research in biomedical communications. What institutional components will be required for an effective national network for medical information? What should be the nature of the communications and relationships between the components of the network? What are the information needs of the various levels of medical education, including the area of continuing education and retraining? What role can the learning center play in improving the efficiency of medical education? How can the identification of medical information and access to the text be improved? How can new techniques of miniaturization, facsimile transmission, and computer application be used to improve medical information transfer? In addition to studying these questions, the National Library of Medicine is authorized to support the preparation and publication of bibliographies, handbooks, critical reviews, and other forms of essential publication.

It is obvious that no library program can succeed unless the manpower problem is adequately provided for. The Medical Library Assistance Act assumes that with the growing concept of a learning resource center in the medical complex, the library will no longer be limited to books and journals but will be responsible also for servicing new instructional media. These medical science information centers must be staffed with people who are skilled in such areas as the rapid retrieval of drug information, and provide specialized information in such areas as brain research and cardiovascular disease. The Act will provide training grants for schools of library science or other professional graduate schools to establish comprehensive interdisciplinary programs for individuals desiring advanced training at the graduate levels for careers in health science information service.

In addition, the program provides for medical library internships and for the retraining of medical librarians. With the rapid advances being made in the management and processing of biomedical information, many medical librarians find that they are not able to

take full advantage of new techniques because of deficiencies in their training and experience. In order to utilize this pool of manpower to the fullest in the future, it will be necessary to inaugurate programs for retraining librarians in new developments.

It is proposed that this program should support on the average one hundred trainees annually, although some trainees would continue for two or three years.

The National Library of Medicine has become convinced that adequate service to the national biomedical community could not be managed from one centralized facility in Bethesda. For this reason, the Medical Library Assistance Act authorizes the establishment of regional health science libraries either in existing facilities or by the creation of a new regional library where no other medical library is available to serve a given region. These new facilities will be branches of the National Library of Medicine.

The objective of the regional medical library program is to provide prompt access by any health researcher, practitioner, or student of the health sciences in the United States to library materials he may need, and to equalize opportunities for access despite accidents of geographic location.

It is anticipated that each of the regional libraries would provide a bibliographic search facility utilizing the MEDLARS tapes, as well as generating specialized bibliographic service that may be required to support health science activities in the region. Initially, two or three regional libraries will be established as test and demonstration centers. During the following five years the number may be expanded to ten regional medical libraries.

The legislative impact of the Medical Library Assistance Act is obvious. The National Library of Medicine will become the keystone in a national bibliographic network. NLM will have a depth of resources which can serve national needs when information requests cannot be met on the local or regional level. NLM will also be the focal point for bibliographic control, indexing both books and periodical articles in depth, publishing and widely distributing selective bibliographic information in Index Medicus, while making the MEDLARS tapes available for more detailed inquiry.

National Agricultural Library

The National Agricultural Library is a prototype institution containing most of the classic elements required of a national bibliographic service center. It has developed a series of complementary programs which have great significance in improving its capability to perform more effectively as the national focal point for information transfer in the area of agricultural and biological sciences, excluding medicine.

To afford bibliographic access to its retrospective collections, NAL is now publishing a book catalog which will include its acquisitions from 1862 to 1965. In an effort to assure more direct participation in national bibliographic control, NAL has recently shifted to the Library of Congress classification schedule. Studies have been completed under Project ABEL to define the configuration for automating the internal operations of the library, and continuing efforts are being made to design a national agricultural library network. As a basic element for eventual automation of its current Bibliography of Agriculture, NAL is critically examining the vocabulary that is involved in indexing and cataloging operations and has published the Agricultural-Biological Subject Category List in an effort to standardize this element of bibliographic control. Funds have been appropriated for a new building to house the National Library of Medicine with its expanding collections and additional services.

Here is another example of a national library making a great impact on local library service. First is the capability for comprehensive collecting, followed by the publication of the retrospective bibliographic record so that people anywhere in the country can identify and locate needed information. Transmission is afforded through either lending the original copy, or sending a photoduplicate. Concurrently, NAL is hard at work analyzing the basic elements required to improve its services through an intelligent application of electronic techniques, and planning an organizational network that can utilize effectively the services that will be developed.

In addition to broad-based library support for research in agriculture and the biological sciences, NAL has also developed a "mission oriented" information service with the establishment of its Pesticides Documentation Center.

Public Law 480

Perhaps the first instance of direct Federal legislative action in support of libraries was the amendment to the Agricultural Trade Development and Assistance Act of 1954 (PL 83-480), commonly known as Public Law 480. This law provides for the sale of surplus agricultural products to foreign countries with payment being made in local currencies as these nations lack U. S. dollars. Thus, in a number of countries, the United States has developed considerable credits not needed for diplomatic or military expenditures.

Mortimer Graves, representing the American Council of Learned Societies, visualized a solution to the problem of acquiring library materials from these countries—most of which did not have an adequate book trade or bibliographic publications which would permit acquisitions through normal commercial channels. Following intensive efforts by ACLS and the Association of Research Libraries, Congressman John Dingell of Michigan introduced an amendment to

PL 480, to authorize the use of counterpart funds for the purchase of library materials in countries where the U. S. Treasury had declared funds to be surplus. In 1958 the amendment was incorporated into PL 480 as Section 104n, authorizing the Library of Congress, within the appropriations specified, to acquire, index, abstract, and deposit library materials from designated countries.

Following Congressional refusal to authorize funds in 1959 and 1960 an appropriation was made in 1961 which included India, Pakistan, and the United Arab Republic. U. S. currency in the amount of $36,500 and $363,500 in counterpart funds was authorized to start the program. Depository libraries were designated, each of which agreed to pay a token sum of $500 for the materials received and a self-funded centralized cataloging program was developed. In subsequent years Indonesia, Burma and Israel were added to the program and the current Congress is expected to approve the extension of PL 480 to Yugoslavia and Poland.

In 1965 approximately 1.5 million items were sent to a score of depository libraries participating in the various programs. Accessions lists prepared under the program are sent to a large number of libraries so that scholars throughout the country can know what is available.

The PL 480 program, imaginatively administered by the Library of Congress, is an example of the historical evolution of Federal support. The program was specific, and limited to countries with surplus currencies which were authorized by the Congress, but it was an important link in the continuum of national programs for resource development which started with the Farmington Plan and whose most recent chapter is Title II-C of the Higher Education Act of 1965.

Higher Education Act—Title II-C

The most recent and significant of the legislative programs concerning governmental libraries is Title II-C of the Higher Education Act of 1965. This legislation had its origin in the concern of the Association of Research Libraries with the cost of cataloging, especially the expense of having to provide original cataloging for approximately 50 percent of the titles added to research library collections each year. The Library of Congress was, of course, acquiring a higher percentage of titles but owing to lack of staff, was not able to process them with sufficient speed to make the bibliographic information available at the time it was needed.

The Higher Education Act of 1965 contained Title II, which provided $50 million in Federal funds to be used to support academic library resource development. The Association of Research Libraries' Shared Cataloging Committee, under the Chairmanship of William S. Dix, Librarian at Princeton University, testified before both houses of Congress in support of Title II. However, it was

pointed out that because of current inefficiencies in our national system of cataloging, a considerable portion of these funds would be diverted from their intended purpose. ARL proposed an amendment authorizing the Commissioner of Education to transfer to the Librarian of Congress, over the succeeding three years, $19 million for the following purposes: (1) to enable the Library of Congress, so far as possible, to become globally comprehensive in acquiring all current publications of scholarly interest; (2) to provide cataloging copy for these materials as soon after receipt as possible, i.e., within 3-4 weeks; and (3) to distribute this bibliographic information by printing catalog cards and by other means. Testimony also indicated that the amendment would make a material improvement in manpower utilization, especially with regard to scarce linguistic competence, and would serve as a base for automation of the bibliographic record. The amendment was accepted by both houses of Congress and became Part C of Title II of the Higher Education Act.

In implementing the program, the Library of Congress has been exceedingly imaginative. A test of the descriptive cataloging information contained in the major European national bibliographies revealed that this element was of sufficient quality to be used as it appeared for LC cataloging operations. The Library of Congress has met with the directors of European bibliographic centers to obtain their cooperation in accelerating the speed and comprehensiveness for conveying this information to LC. The availability of accelerated cataloging copy, plus the fact that all foreign acquisitions are to be sent by air, is intended to give the Library of Congress sufficient lead time to have copy available by the time current publications are processed by libraries in this country. It should be noted that this program to improve the availability of cataloging copy for LC will also result in the improvement of bibliographic service from each of the national bibliographies in their own countries.

At the present time arrangements have been made with a number of countries, and expediting offices have been established. The current Federal budgetary problem has resulted in limited funding for the Shared Cataloging Program but, with the future availability of increased appropriations, LC will be in a position to extend its operations to other countries.

While the basic orientation of Title II-C was to improve the cataloging situation, it has considerable implications in the development of resource availability. Under the program, the Library of Congress will approximately double its present rate of accessions, and this increase will take place primarily in foreign language publications, many of which will be obtained from the so-called developing countries. With centralized cataloging at the Library of Congress, the element of identification and location of books will satisfy one condition for bibliographic improvement. However, national needs

require more than one copy of these publications at the Library of Congress, and this desideratum leads to the next phase in national planning for resource availability.

Just as Public Law 480 receipts are now received and serviced by ten to twelve depositories, it is reasonable to assume that the titles obtained under II-C, especially from developing countries which lack an adequate book trade, should also be deposited in a number of research collections in this country. At present an ARL committee is working with the Library of Congress to formulate such a program.

It is obvious that a program as significant as that authorized by Title II-C of the Higher Education Act will have a considerable impact on the Library of Congress as the implementing agency, as well as on the entire library community.

The essential fact is that for the first time in modern history, we will have an institution with the capability of becoming the world center for bibliographic control. Comprehensiveness of acquisition and speed in providing cataloging information will place the Library of Congress in a position of international leadership.

While the present authorization under Title II-C is restricted to cataloging, there are good reasons to consider its eventual extension to indexing and abstracting. The Library of Congress now creates the most comprehensive index to Russian publications, the Monthly Index of Russian Accessions. The scholarly community also requires adequate indexes of African, Latin American, and Oriental periodicals.

National Commission on Libraries

From the papers presented at this conference, it is obvious that the Federal Government is becoming increasingly involved in library programs at all levels. It is equally obvious that there is some danger that these programs are not sufficiently coordinated. Federal programs are seldom comprehensive, but tend to be responses to specific legislative objectives and are subject to continual amendment and extension. We have had no comprehensive review of the national needs for library service and lack information on the strengths and weaknesses of present programs.

Recognizing this problem, on September 2, 1966, the President established a Committee on Libraries and a National Advisory Commission on Libraries. In establishing these groups, the President noted that the Federal Government will spend next year more than $600 million in supporting libraries and said: "But money alone cannot do the job. We need intelligent planning and advice to see that our millions are spent well. We need to ask serious questions about the future of our libraries."[1] The following major questions were cited:

"What part can libraries play in the development of our communications and information exchange networks?"

"Are our Federal efforts to assist libraries intelligently administered or are they too fragmented among separate programs and agencies?"

"Are we getting the most benefit for the taxpayer's dollar spent?"

The President's Committee on Libraries is composed of the Secretary of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, who will serve as Chairman; the Secretary of Agriculture; the Director of the Office of Science and Technology; the Director of the National Science Foundation; and the Librarian of Congress. The responsibilities of the Committee will be:

(1) To appraise the role of libraries as resources for scholarly pursuits, as centers for the dissemination of knowledge, and as components of the nation's rapidly evolving communications and information-exchange network;

(2) To evaluate policies, programs, and practices of public agencies and private institutions and organizations with reference to maximum effective and efficient use of the nation's library resources; and

(3) To develop recommendations for action by government or by private institutions and organizations designed to ensure an effective and efficient library system for the nation.

The National Advisory Commission on Libraries is composed of Douglas Knight, Chairman; Verner Clapp; Herman Fussler; Carl Overhage; Theodore Waller; Wilbur Schramm; Launor Carter; Caryl Haskins; William Hubbard; Alvin Eurich; Stephen Wright; Harry Rasom; Carl Elliott; and Estelle Brodman.

The duties of the Commission will be to:

(1) Make a comprehensive study and appraisal of the role of libraries as resources for scholarly pursuits, as centers for the dissemination of knowledge, and as components of the evolving national information systems;

(2) Appraise the policies, programs, and practices of public agencies and private institutions and organizations, together with other factors, which have a bearing on the role and effective utilization of libraries;

(3) Appraise library funding, including Federal support of libraries, to determine how funds available for the construction and support of libraries and library services can be more effectively utilized; and

(4) Develop recommendations for action by government or private institutions and organizations designed to ensure an effective and efficient library system for the nation.[1]

The Commission must submit its final report and recommendations one year after its first meeting. These recommendations will be of great significance to governmental as well as all other libraries in this country. This is especially true as we are increasing our dependence on the national libraries for resource and bibliographic services which they can provide most effectively.

COSATI

In addition to specific legislation and its effect on Federal libraries, it would be appropriate to speculate on the impact of Federal planning groups on governmental and special libraries. The most conspicuous of these is the Committee on Scientific and Technical Information (COSATI), which reports to the Federal Council for Science and Technology. Since Sputnik, several reports have been issued from high echelons of government in an effort to devise better ways to control the increasing flood of scientific and technical information. This problem has resulted largely from Federal support of scientific research and development, on which vast sums of money have been spent in the last decade.

The Baker Panel (1958), the Crawford Task Force (1962), and the Weinberg Panel (1963) all addressed themselves to the complex problem of scientific and technical information transfer. In the late fall, 1964, Dr. Donald F. Hornig, the President's Science Advisor and Chairman of the Federal Council for Science and Technology, established a special task group from COSATI, and charged it with the responsibility of designing a national information transfer system or systems which would provide more effective access to information for the scientific and technological community.

Following a comprehensive study of the problem by Systems Development Corporation, the published report, Recommendations for National Documents Handling Systems in Science and Technology, (November, 1965)[2] was used as the basis for task force recommendations. The specific items noted in the COSATI report are intentionally general. It was acknowledged that it would be premature to attempt at this time to design a national information handling system; however, immediate steps should be taken to plan in general terms and to begin the evolution of the present "system" into a more effective network.

It is highly probable that the eventual operating recommendations from COSATI will have a great impact on governmental libraries, as these are of critical importance to our present and future information activities.

Additional Programs

There are, of course, many additional instances of legislative impact on governmental libraries. Consider the implications of the State Technical Services Act of 1965, the computer-based abstracting and indexing services managed by the Atomic Energy Commission and the National Aeronautical and Space Administration; the National Standard Data Reference Center and the National Bureau of Standards; the Science Information Exchange at the Smithsonian and the Science Referral Center at the Library of Congress. These all have great significance for government libraries, as well as research libraries outside government.

The Clearinghouse for Federal Scientific and Technical Information is a good example of a special governmental library which is a prototype switching or repackaging center in information transfer. Each year some sixty to eighty thousand technical reports are issued by government agencies. These reports represent the information by-product of billions of dollars of research and development grants and contracts. If duplicate research is to be avoided and if the non-governmental scientific and technical community is to utilize the results of this work, the information must be easily accessible. This is the task to which the Clearinghouse addresses itself.

Created by the Department of Commerce, the Clearinghouse serves as a bridge between the Federal agencies which generate information and the non-federal community which has need for it. Thus, this agency has become the control center in an information network. The "raw product" is supplied through the technical reports of NASA, AEC, DOD, and other government agencies. These reports are evaluated, with the indexing and abstracting information being refined for the non-governmental user. Special bibliographies are prepared for dissemination on both a general and a selective basis so that, for example, the small fabricator of electronics parts can benefit from the most sophisticated research programs sponsored by the Federal government. In addition, the Clearinghouse has the capability to supply the text of these reports in either original format, electrostatic prints, or microfiche in response to any request.

Conclusion

This has been a very general review of the impact of federal legislation on governmental and special libraries. As said before, there has been no ordered or rational development. This is the task for the present generation.

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