IFRT REPORT

From the Chairperson, Jean-Anne South

1975 Midwinter Meeting

The 1975 Midwinter Meeting of the ALA will be held in Chicago, January 19-25, at the Palmer House Hotel. To help you wend your way in the Windy City, we've compiled a schedule of the meetings of units devoted to intellectual freedom. All meetings listed are open to visitors.

Freedom to Read Foundation, Board of Trustees

Saturday, January 18
9:00-12:00 Noon
2:00-6:00 p.m.
Private Dining Room 9

ALTA Intellectual Freedom Committee

Sunday, January 19
2:00-4:00 p.m.
Room 733-34

CSD Intellectual Freedom Committee

Sunday, January 19
2:00-6:00 p.m.
8:30-10:00 p.m.
Room 701

ALA Intellectual Freedom Committee

Monday, January 20
8:00-12:00 Noon
2:00-6:00 p.m.
Private Dining Room 16

Wednesday, January 22
8:00-12:00 Noon

Thursday, January 23
8:00-12:00 Noon
Private Dining Room 14

AASL Intellectual Freedom Representation and Information Committee

Monday, January 20
2:00-6:00 p.m.
Room 741

IFRT Executive Committee

Tuesday, January 21
2:00-4:00 p.m.
Private Dining Room 4

Thursday, January 23
4:30-6:00 p.m.
Room 731
Agenda Items

ALA/IFC: On the IFC's agenda is a proposed revision of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS, submitted by Gerald Shields (see LIBRARY JOURNAL, November 15, p. 2945). Also expected is a preliminary report on the textbook controversy in Kanawha County, West Virginia. A fact-finding panel established by the National Education Association plans to submit its report in January. ALA was represented on the panel by Judith F. Krug, director of OIF. FTRF: The Foundation Board of Trustees will review recent developments in Moore v. Younger, the FTRF suit challenging the constitutionality of California's "harmful matter" law. In addition to considering new avenues of litigation, the trustees will again take up the relationship of the Foundation to the LeRoy C. Merritt Humanitarian Fund. IFRT: The IFRT Executive Committee will look into the possibility of censorship in the series of events that culminated in the resignation of three AMERICAN LIBRARIES staffers. Another item on the IFRT agenda is a campaign to promote membership in the Merritt Humanitarian Fund.

Suggestions for the IFRT Executive Committee's Midwinter agenda should be sent to the IFRT staff liaison at ALA headquarters.

CCRC Fall Meeting

The ALA/RTSD Catalog Code Revision Committee met November 16-17 in Washington, DC. The three major items of business were the establishment of subcommittees to study all sections of the AACR, the acceptance of a new rule 43, and the consideration of a draft of a new chapter 12.

Rule 43, which previously specified that names varying in fullness be entered in the fullest possible form, has been changed to reflect use of the most common form of the author's name. This makes the rule more consistent with rule 40 and should make the catalog more accessible to users. One vestige of the old rule remains in that when there is no predominant or commonly used form available the fullest form is to be used. This revision was approved by the Committee and will now be directed to the Joint Steering Committee for final consideration.

Chapter 12, formerly dealing with only motion pictures and filmstrips, has been revised and enlarged to cover a greater variety of materials. The committee reported its reactions and reservations to Benny Tucker of LC who will prepare a new draft.

C. Summer Spalding of LC announced that desuperimposition of entries will begin in 1975 for serials and 1976 for monographs. In other words, LC will be following the AACR in determining form of entry in all cases.
It was announced that an open meeting will be held at the 1975 Midwinter Meeting to discuss possible mandatory title main entry for serials. This would be a major shift from the concept of main entry under the person or organization intellectually responsible for the existence of the work as enunciated in the Paris Principles and should be a point of no small controversy. Two speakers for the change and two against will present papers and field written questions from the audience on Sunday, January 19th beginning at 8:30 p.m.

Another open meeting, this one to be held Tuesday, January 21 from 4:30-6:00 p.m., will be for the purpose of receiving all other suggestions for changes in the code. If you have any complaints, ideas, proposed changes or cosmic revelations about the rules plan to come to this meeting or write me as soon as possible. I am on the subcommittee studying Headings for persons (Rules 40-53), Entry: Authorship of mixed character (7-16) and Geographic names (72-74) and can forward your recommendations regarding other parts of the AACR to the appropriate group. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or ideas.

Respectfully submitted,

James R. Dwyer
IFRT representative to CCRC
(11/19/74)

ALA to Assess Round Tables

At its fall meeting in Chicago, the ALA Executive Board voted--on recommendation of the Committee on Program Evaluation and Support--that each ALA round table be assessed ten percent of its expenditures in the 1975-76 budget year. The assessment is for "ALA staff assistance currently being provided at no cost." The Executive Board also authorized the study of a manner of assessment that would "reflect more appropriately round table costs to ALA."

In a study undertaken by the ALA controller and reviewed by Peat, Marwick, Mitchell and Company, indirect round table expenses currently borne by ALA were calculated to be twenty-six percent of actual round table expenditures for 1973-74, or $10,800. Expenditures for all round tables in 1973-74 were $40,700.

Contributions, PLEASE

One of the goals of the Intellectual Freedom Round Table is to increase communications on matters of intellectual freedom. Do you have suggestions for IFRT projects, or are there programs, plans, censorship incidents, etc., in your area that other IFRT members should know about? Send your report to: IFRT REPORT, Intellectual Freedom Round Table, 50 East Huron Street, Chicago, Illinois 60611.

From the OIF MEMO

The following items have been excerpted from the OIF MEMORANDUM, which the ALA Office for Intellectual Freedom sends monthly to members of the intellectual
freedom committees of all state library associations.

Confidentiality . . .

It appears that the FBI is again investigating library records in attempts to identify the whereabouts and reading habits of "subversives." Latest report comes from the Mesa Public Library in Los Alamos, New Mexico, where in early October FBI agents requested access to the library's circulation records. Librarian Elizabeth Cooper steadfastly refused and explained that a court order would have to be secured before the records could be examined. Kudos to Miss Cooper!

Censorship Survey

A nationwide survey of more than 8500 high school students conducted by the Purdue Opinion Panel has found that students opposed to book censorship generally receive higher grades than the pro-censorship minority. Among the survey's other findings were that 1) those opposed to censorship read more books outside of school; 2) three out of four of the students questioned believe book censorship violates basic American principles of free expression and the freedom to read.

Further, 20% said if books contained objectionable materials, those portions should be removed from editions used in high school classes. Only 5% said they would approve of burning objectionable books.

Acronym Activities: News from the State IFCs

ASLA. During the Arizona State Library Association's fall meeting, the IFC sponsored an "Intellectual Free For All!" IFC Chairman Jeanne Bagby reports that the program was "designed to touch all three bases of the censor's triangle—sex, politics and religion." They obviously did so, for the featured speakers included a state representative, an ACLU attorney, and a minister.

CLA. The Colorado IFC has been active in organizing a media coalition network within the state to see that elected officials are made aware of the full consequences of trying to regulate "obscenity." Prior to November 5 one of their projects was to poll the candidates for the state legislature to determine their attitudes toward censorship and freedom of information. Results of the poll were published in the Colorado Civil Liberties Union NEWSLETTER and distributed at the CLA annual conference.

FLA. The Florida IFC Chairman, Ada Bowen, reports that her committee is sponsoring a regular column in FLORIDA LIBRARIES. Under the catch title "Freedom Corner" they'll report on intellectual freedom news statewide and nationwide. Mrs. Bowen wrote that Freedom Corner "grew as a result of returned evaluations of workshop participants at the Intellectual Freedom Workshop during the FLA convention last spring." It's good to know that the state workshops are bearing fruit!

FTR, III. Freedom to Read Series III is a program of institutes and workshops presented by the Michigan Department of Education, State Library Services, to better inform materials selectors in public and school libraries of their responsibilities as upholders of intellectual freedom.
At this fall workshop, the main speaker was Alan Suits, president of a Michigan news service who spoke on how censorship affects the book dealer; the afternoon discussion session focused on a number of controversial titles. As the "3" in the title implies, this is the third intellectual freedom workshop series sponsored by the Michigan Department of Education. Hats off!

ILA. In Illinois, the IFC presented its third regional intellectual freedom workshop on September 27 in Mt. Vernon, Illinois. Speakers included Mrs. Paul Simon, attorney, library trustee, library advocate and the wife of the former Illinois Lt. Governor, as well as our own Pat Harris. Discussion sessions in the afternoon were free-form and covered the gamut of intellectual freedom related issues, from the confidentiality of library records to the rights of minors. As always, the participants had a lot to share on their library's intellectual freedom practices - one librarian reported that her library circulates THE JOY OF SEX in a plain brown paperbag! No comment!

ILA. The Indiana Library Association, meeting in late October, went on record opposing censorship and any form of obscenity legislation. The very "gutsy" resolution that was passed spells out that if there must be obscenity laws then safeguards for libraries (exemption, pre-emption and prior civil proceedings) must be included.

MARL. The Maine Academic and Research Libraries devoted their fall meeting to the question of library service and intellectual freedom. Marjorie Duval, Maine IFC chairman, was the principal speaker. At the conclusion of the meeting, the group unanimously adopted a resolution stating their opposition to any and all censorship laws which would forbid "access to adults of any materials printed or depicted or which inhibits free artistic expression," and reaffirmed their support of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS. The program also featured a special display on censorship entitled "Free is a Four-Letter Word."

NYLA. Last minute reports from friends in the field tell us that the New York IFC's "Censor-tivity Session" at the NYLA fall conference was a big success!

OLA. And in Ohio, the IFC presented a resolution recommending that Wednesday of National Library Week 1975 be proclaimed Intellectual Freedom Day. The OLA approved the resolution and OLA President Robert Donahugh will present it to the Ohio governor.

OLA. The Oregon Library Association made its final pre-election day push against Senate Bill 708. As you may know, S.B. 708 was passed by the state legislature last spring and signed into law in July. However, the pro-freedom to read forces obtained enough signatures to have the measure placed on the November ballot. The bill would add the Miller definition of obscenity, but it fails to provide a definition of sexual conduct and doesn't require prior civil proceedings.

The IFC took the lead, working actively throughout the state and, in the process, interested a number of civic groups - including the City Club of Portland and the League of Women Voters - in opposing S.B. 708. Although we had hoped to report good news after November 5, the vote didn't swing in our favor. Kathleen Wiederholt, Oregon IFC chairman, however, reports that over 700,000 ballots
were cast on the measure and that the final tally showed a victory margin of only 53% for and 47% against. OLA's next step will be to amend S.B. 708 to include the necessary protections for libraries and librarians and to ensure the right to read.

WVLA. In response to recent events in Kanawha County the West Virginia Library Association IFC met in special session in early October to draft a resolution concerning materials selection. The brief statement reads: "The West Virginia Library Association, at its 59th Annual Meeting, affirms the freedom of every American to choose his books and the right of every parent to guide his children's choice."

"But, it deplores censorship, whether by government or mob, and whether in the name of religion or law and order. It deplores violent protest; but affirms peaceful protest." The resolution will be presented to the WVLA membership for ratification during the Association's Annual Conference November 6-8.

National Ad Hoc Committee Against Censorship

The Supreme Court decisions of June 21, 1973 - and those that followed one year later - left us little to cheer about. In fact, the formation of the National Ad Hoc Committee Against Censorship was about the only positive development to emerge from the mess! Organized in early 1974, the NACAC is composed of various nonprofit associations (see below) whose primary purpose is to educate the collective membership to the importance of the freedom to read, to see, to hear, and to communicate in general. While NACAC does not speak for its constituent members, it nevertheless has developed a general statement of concern as an umbrella (see below).

At this point, the NACAC is operating on two fronts. On the national level, the Committee, through a central office in New York City, is developing programs and publications that can be used by the Committee members.

On the state level, the National Committee is on its way to establishing a network of state and local affiliates which will function as an educational channel. It's hoped that these local groups sharing similar beliefs on censorship will work together in presenting programs to their memberships and debating the issues of censorship and the freedom to read. A logical outgrowth of this commitment is a willingness to speak up for the freedom to read if and when a piece of repressive legislation is introduced in the state legislature or on the local level.

The ALA Office for Intellectual Freedom and state intellectual freedom committees will have a very important place in the success of this network because we will serve as the main contact point for communication with the state and local chapters.

Frankly, we view our cooperation with the NACAC as a tremendous challenge and opportunity for all the IFCs. This is going to be your chance to work with other professional and civic groups in your area and to spread the
word on the importance of libraries and the freedom to read. If at first this "educational" approach seems limited, we can guarantee that those groups you begin to communicate with now can be important friends if a legislative battle occurs.


Statement of concern of the Ad Hoc Committee Against Censorship: "Freedom of communication is the indispensable condition of a healthy democracy. In a pluralistic society, it is impossible that all people at all times could agree on the value of all ideas; it would be fatal to moral, artistic and intellectual growth if they did. We therefore reject all barriers abridging access to any material, however controversial or even abhorrent to some, as long as every individual's right of choice is respected. Government has a legitimate concern in setting reasonable limits to our conduct. It has no right to dictate our thoughts or invade our minds or impose upon us the arrogant assumption of the censor that he knows better than we do what is good for us to see or hear or read."

ALA to Participate in Kanawha County Inquiry

The ALA will be represented on a recently established National Education Association fact-finding team to analyze the origins and development of the textbook controversy in Kanawha County, West Virginia with the intent of clarifying and bringing into rational perspective the proper role of parents, students, educators, and concerned community groups in the shaping of decisions that set the course of educational programming in the public schools.

In conducting the study, the team will focus on the following issues, which appear as central to the Kanawha County conflict and which are, in fact, educational issues of national concern.

1. What are the rights of parental and community involvement in the selection of public school curricular and supplementary materials? What are the obligations of public school professionals and boards of education to provide for such involvement, and, at the same time, maintain responsible control of the schools?

2. Where is the line drawn between legitimate public concern for and criticism of public school curricula and criticism that is illegitimate and intolerably censorial?
It is the hope of the National Education Association that the findings and recommendations of this inquiry will be of assistance, not only to the educators, students, and concerned community groups in Kanawha County, but also to other school systems and teacher organizations in preparing for, preventing, and defending against similarly destructive—and educationally disruptive—attacks.

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