



MINUTES SRRT Action Council

Saturday, June 26, 1993 - New Orleans

Stephen Stillwell, Jr. presiding

In Attendance: Theresa Tobin, FTF; Chris Dodge, MnSRRT; Mark Rosenzweig, IHRTF; Elaine Harger, PLG, LUTF; David Williams, ICPLTF; Jeff Blankford, ME Labor Bulletin; Carol Greenholz, Action Council; Dan Tsang, Liaison to FTRF; Diedre Conkling, OrSRRT; Al Kagan, Action Council; Roland Hansen, GLTF/SRRT Treasurer; Steve Murden, Action Council; Stephen Stillwell, PITF; Debra Gilchrist, SRRT Secretary; Denise Botto, Action Council; Elizabeth Morrisett, IF; Trisha Cruse, TfoE; Sarah Pedersen, WaSRRT; Becky Ray; Marge Loch-Wouters; WiSRRT; Doug Rippey, SRRT Member; Noel Peattie, Sipapu/Konocti Books; Sandy Berman, AIPTF; Donnarae McCann, CRTF; John L. Ayala, REFORMA/ALA Cultural Diversity Committee; Mary K. Chelton, ALA Member; Melissa Riley; CLAIFRT; Tom Wilding, SRRT Newsletter Editor; Steve Harris, SRRT Newsletter, Dan Hodge, SRRT Member.

Announcements:

Please check the roster for corrections, etc. and forward any changes to Debra Gilchrist

Spring election results: Diedre Conkling and Stephen J. Stillwell, Jr. were elected to Action Council.

Taskforce chairs were asked to encourage members to run for Action Council, ALA Council, or to be a SRRT Liaison.

Minutes approved with the following corrections:

Denise Botto and Stephen J. Stillwell, Jr. added to the attendance roster for the midwinter meetings.

Approval of the Intellectual Freedom Taskforce was preliminary, pending final approval in New Orleans.

The following resolutions were passed: (full text appended)

IFLA/ Havana: support for holding the next meeting in Havana. Approved unanimously. To be forwarded to membership

Domestic Partnership: Approved unanimously. To be forwarded to membership and council.

ALA Council Voting Record: Approved unanimously. To be forwarded to membership and council.

Egyptian Censorship: Approved with one abstention. To be forwarded to membership.

Israeli Censorship: Approved unanimously . To be forwarded to membership

Mother Jones: Approved unanimously .

Haiti: Approved unanimously.

New Statesman and Society: Approved unanimously. To be forwarded to membership.

Buckley: Approved with 2 abstentions. To be forwarded to membership.

Library of Congress: Approved unanimously. To be forwarded to membership and council.

California Library Schools: Approved unanimously. To be forwarded to membership

Submitted by Debra Gilchrist, Action Council Secretary

RESOLUTION TO MEMBERSHIP

IFLA Conference in Havana, Cuba

Whereas, the American Library Association has actively supported the International Federation of Library Associations for many years;

Whereas, the ALA Council is on record as supporting the 1994 IFLA Conference in Havana (CD 40, 1986 Annual),

Therefore Be It Resolved that the Social Responsibilities Round Table urges the American Library Association to reaffirm its earlier stances and cooperate fully with the International Federation of Library Associations in the planning and implementing of the 1994 conference scheduled for Havana.

PASSED BY THE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES ROUND TABLE
JUNE 26, 1993

RESOLUTION TO MEMBERSHIP

Domestic Partnership

Whereas, many local governments, corporations, colleges, and universities are recognizing the need to cover homosexual couples under benefit packages;

Whereas, the American Library Association has traditionally been in the fore on the promotion of equality for gays and lesbians, most notably with their Policy 54.3 and others;

Therefore Be It Resolved that the Social Responsibilities Round Table urges that a committee be established to review all ALA Headquarters personnel policies and employee benefits to ensure that no discrimination exists and that domestic partnership is recognized; and

Be It Further Resolved that any necessary arrangements with insurers and others to bring this into effect be implemented by 1 January, 1994.

PASSED BY SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES ROUND TABLE
JUNE 26, 1993

RESOLUTION TO MEMBERSHIP

ALA Council Voting Record

Whereas, the United States of America is a democracy dedicated to the concepts of democracy and the freedom of information;

Whereas, the American Library Association is a champion of that freedom within this country and the world;

Whereas, the members of any society need to be informed in order to make intelligent decisions at the ballot box;

Whereas, ALA Council went on record in 1982 that the voting records of its sessions should be available to the members of the Association by the easiest and cheapest means possible; and

Whereas, that means was determined to be through publication of these records in American Libraries;

Therefore Be It Resolved that the Social Responsibilities Round Table go on record against the proposal by the Committee on Program Evaluation and Support (COPES) made in Document #4.1 presented at the Midwinter Conference of 1993 to cease the publication and dissemination of these voting records to all ALA members;

Be It Further Resolved that this objection be made known at the ALA Membership Meeting and to the members of ALA Council.

PASSED BY THE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES ROUND TABLE
JUNE 26, 1993

RESOLUTION TO MEMBERSHIP

Egyptian Censorship

Whereas, ALA in its Policy #57.3 states that "Threats to the freedom of expression of any person become threats to the freedom of all; therefore ALA adopts as policy the principles of Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the United Nations' General Assembly. The association will address the grievances of foreign nationals where the infringement of their rights of free expression is clearly a matter in which all free people should show concern," and;

Whereas, Middle East Watch has documented instances of episodic censorship in Egypt, including the removal from circulation of books considered offensive by scholars at al-Azhar, an ancient Islamic religious research and educational institution;

Whereas, Alaa Hamed has been sentenced by the Egyptian courts to prison for writing a novel said to promote heresy and contempt for religion;

Whereas, Amnesty International has recently issued the report, Egypt: Grave Human Rights Abuses Amid Political Violence (May 1993);

Whereas, the American Library Association has found it appropriate to act on Policy 57.3 in the past by condemning censorship and the interference with library and archival operations in Grenada (CD 28, Midwinter '84; CD 75, Annual '89); South Africa (CD 21, Midwinter '85; CD 58, Annual '86; CD 97, Annual '90; CD 24, Midwinter '91), the United Kingdom (CD 49, Annual '85), Iraq and Kuwait (CD 18.4, Midwinter '91), Afghanistan (MD 1, Annual '91), and Israel (CD xx, Annual '92);

Whereas, the American Library Association has found it appropriate to act on Policy 57.3 in the past by championing the cases of A.B. Roginsky (CD 86, Annual '82), H. Mykhaylenko (CD 57, Annual '87), T.R. Mubudafhasi (CD 28, Midwinter '89; CD 42, Midwinter '90), S. Rushdie (CD 76, Annual '89), and O. al-Safi (CD xx, Annual '92);

Whereas, Egypt considers itself to be a democracy;

Whereas, Egypt is the recipient of the second largest amount of United States foreign aid (Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1992, Table 1326, p.792.);

Therefore Be It Resolved that the Social Responsibilities Round Table make known to all that it condemns these acts of restriction of freedom of individual expression and the right of free dissemination of knowledge;

Be It Further Resolved that SRRT urges that the ALA Council endorse this resolution;

Be It Further Resolved that ALA encourages its members to develop ways to support human rights and freedom of information and expression in Egypt, and that the International Relations Committee (IRC) be asked to develop strategies towards these ends;

Be It Further Resolved that copies of this Resolution be sent to the appropriate persons, including but not limited to the U.S. Secretary of State, the Egyptian Ambassador to the United Nations, and the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

PASSED BY SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES ROUND TABLE
JUNE 26, 1993

RESOLUTION TO MEMBERSHIP

Israeli Censorship

Whereas, ALA Membership and Council extensively debated and ultimately approved resolutions during the 1992 Annual Conference at San Francisco that

- a) called upon the Government of Israel "to end all censorship and human rights violations in the Occupied West Bank and Gaza, and in Israel itself,"
- b) encouraged Israeli and Palestinian representatives "in the quest for a peaceful and just solution of their conflict,"
- c) encouraged ALA members "to develop ways to support librarians, journalists, educators, and others working for peace, human rights, and freedom of information and expression in the Middle East," and
- d) expressly asked the International Relations Committee (IRC) to "develop strategies" towards those ends;

And Whereas, ALA Council at its sessions during the 1993 Midwinter Conference in Denver amended the original resolution by referring it to the International Relations Committee for further study and notifying all recipients of the original resolutions that such action had been taken;

Therefore Be It Resolved that ALA's Social Responsibilities Round Table now fully reaffirms the earlier actions of ALA Membership and ALA Council and urges that those two bodies do likewise, and further requests that ALA Council direct the IRC to proceed immediately with implementation of the earlier actions;

And Be It Further Resolved that copies of this resolution be sent to all parties sent either of the 1992 resolutions (Membership and Council) and the 1993 Council resolution.

PASSED BY THE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES ROUND TABLE
JUNE 26, 1993

**RESOLUTION OF THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION
SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES ROUND TABLE:**

"Mother" Jones

Whereas, Mary Harris "Mother" Jones (1830-1930), an Irish emigrant, tirelessly devoted herself to supporting the American workers and working class families, as well as opposing child labor exploitation;

Whereas, "Mother" Jones has been inducted into the Labor Hall of Fame;

Whereas, Karen Ritter has introduced a resolution into the Pennsylvania House of Representatives to designate May 1 as Mother Jones Day and asks that the U.S. Postal Service depict Mother Jones on a postage stamp; and

Whereas, the Social Responsibilities Round Table of the American Library Association is dedicated to promoting justice, equality, and respect for women and all working people;

Therefore Be It Resolved that the American Library Association Social Responsibilities Round Table strongly supports the issuance of a postage stamp honoring "Mother" Jones, a true American hero and role model;

And Be It Further Resolved that copies of this resolution be sent to the Citizens Stamp Advisory Committee, Friends of Mother Jones, the Honorable Karen Ritter, the Labor Heritage Foundation, and the library press.

PASSED BY THE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES ROUND TABLE
JUNE 26, 1993

**RESOLUTION OF THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION
SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES ROUND TABLE
REGARDING HAITI**

Whereas, Haiti and the United States have historically had an extremely close relationship;

Whereas, a military coup in 1991 overthrew the democratically elected government of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide which had promised a new era of hope and dignity for the long-oppressed and desperately poor Haitian people;

Whereas, the United States has denied refugees the right of asylum;

Whereas, the 2000-member Social Responsibilities Round Table of the American Library Association is dedicated to promoting human rights and social justice everywhere;

Therefore Be It Resolved that Social Responsibilities Round Table of the American Library Association urges the American government to immediately grant Temporary Protected Status to all Haitian refugees, including Guantanamo; and

Be It Further Resolved that copies of this Resolution be sent to President Clinton, Ambassador Lawrence Pezzullo, the Haiti Communications Project, the Quixote Center/Haiti Reborn, and the library press.

PASSED BY THE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES ROUND TABLE
JUNE 26, 1993

RESOLUTION TO MEMBERSHIP

Resolution on *New Statesman and Society* Defense

Whereas the British socialist journal *New Statesman and Society*, (*NSS*) presently celebrating its eightieth year of publication since its founding by G.B. Shaw and Sidney and Beatrice Webb and today one of the most internationally esteemed journals of Left opinion and analysis, has been sued for libel by Prime Minister John Major and Ms. Clare Latimer in an action whose settlement threatens the continued existence of the magazine and is an attack on freedom of information;

Whereas the offending article was a report in the January 29 issue on the widespread media rumor campaign concerning Mr. Major's association with a woman alleged to be his "mistress," a campaign which the *NSS*, by openly discussing the assorted allegations in some detail and "naming names," showed to be unfounded;

Whereas Major and Latimer pursued their campaign against *NSS* despite the fact that the article unambiguously states the rumors are unfounded and false, and despite the fact that the editors, through their solicitors, issued a letter of regret for any personal distress caused by the publication of the article and agreed to, if necessary, help vindicate Major's and Latimer's reputations;

Whereas the Prime Minister and Ms. Latimer, taking advantage of Britain's archaic libel laws, had the issue containing the article withdrawn from circulation and sued the printers, distributors and wholesalers of the magazine, who are indemnified against this kind of action by *NSS*, for over 150,000 pounds;

Whereas British libraries also are under apparent threat of legal action for the display of the January 29, 1993 issue, a threat under which many are acceding to censorship;

Whereas the attack on *NSS* is aimed at the radical press as a whole and is, while legal, an unconscionable assault on free access to information, opinion and argument;

Therefore Be It Resolved that the ALA condemn British Prime Minister John Major for pursuing a libel suit against the radical magazine *New Statesman and Society*, an effort which has constituted a serious attack on freedom of the press;

And Be It Further Resolved that ALA supports the *New Statesman and Society* Defence Fund set up to pay legal fees and the indemnities on damages won by Major and his co-litigant Clare Latimer, and which is fighting to change the British libel laws so that the threat of lawsuits is not used to squelch the free press and stamp out what little dissidence and diversity there is in the media;

And Be It Further Resolved that ALA opposes reported British library censorship of the January 29, 1993 issue of *New Statesman and Society* even if done in anticipation of possible legal action;

And Be It Further Resolved that ALA membership, Council, and appropriate committees endorse the above resolution express solidarity with *New Statesman and Society* on this their eightieth anniversary, in their campaign to protect the rights to free press and dissent.

RESOLUTION TO MEMBERSHIP

United States Military Surveillance Information

Whereas, the American Library Association has a policy supporting access to information,

Whereas, coding for restricted access to information on the part of the United States governmental agencies has continued,

Whereas, the United States military establishment is expanding the database of secret satellite information with a forty million dollar budget expenditure building up the Buckley Air Force Base, Colorado system,

Whereas in a time of stringent economic times, there has been limited access to weather and other information by the civilian offices of our government;

Therefore Be It Resolved, that the

American Library Association
requests the Defense Department to share all factual information from the Buckley system and other military satellites including but not limited to climate, weather, environment, navigation, and agricultural resources in order to help our civilian agencies to better serve our country.

PASSED BY THE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES ROUND TABLE
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Elizabeth Morrisett
STEPHEN STILLWELL

RESOLUTION TO MEMBERSHIP

Library of Congress

Whereas, the effectiveness of the Library of Congress as a center for scholarly research has been diminished by the recent restrictions on stack access, closing of the Manuscript Reading Room on Saturdays, and reduced hours for use of all research facilities;

Whereas, the Library of Congress has served as the storehouse for over a century of this country's knowledge and contains unique items that cannot be found elsewhere;

Whereas, the Librarian of Congress made a unilateral decision to close the stacks following unfavorable publicity in the press and refused to consider implementing an improved security system that might protect collections from theft and damage but still allow screened researchers access to their sources;

Whereas, there is conclusive evidence that the Library of Congress failed during the last ten years to enforce even rudimentary security measures;

Whereas, there has been no evidence in reported thefts implicating any researcher engaged in a bona fide scholarly historical research project;

Whereas, stack access make it possible for researchers to pursue their work rigorously and efficiently and at a level of detail that is not easily achieved through standard finding aids;

Whereas, members of the Library of Congress staff have been restricted from the stacks, an act which inhibits staff members' professional development and serious morale problems throughout the Library of Congress;

Whereas, Saturday closings of the Manuscript Reading Room place a hardship on both out-of-town scholars and Washington residents, for whom Saturdays are often their only opportunity to use the manuscript collection;

Therefore Be It Resolved that the Social Responsibilities Round Table urges the Librarian of Congress to recognize that closed stacks, Saturday closings of the Manuscript Reading Room, and reduced hours for use of other research rooms severely imperil the research of some scholars and hinders the day-to-day work of

the Library of Congress staff, and urge the Librarian of Congress to reopen the Manuscript Reading Room on Saturday, to reopen the Library on Tuesday and Friday evenings, and to seek a middle ground on access to the stacks that would reflect the needs of security concerns, scholars, and Library of Congress staff.

PASSED BY THE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES ROUND TABLE
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RESOLUTION TO MEMBERSHIP

Closure of California Library Schools

WHEREAS, in February, 1993, the University of California-Berkeley announced the suspension of admissions to its School of Library and Information Studies;

Whereas, in June, 1993, the University of California-Los Angeles proposed the imminent closure of its Graduate School of Library and Information Science;

Whereas, the American Library Association, in a 1990 resolution, affirmed its support and respect for professional library education in American research universities;

Whereas libraries and librarians are essential to democracy, to education, and to the quality of life;

Whereas libraries, now and as they evolve, require professional librarians to help fulfill the public's right to know;

Whereas the actions taken against library schools at Berkeley and Los Angeles jeopardize the future of libraries, library service and the public interest in California and in the western United States;

Therefore Be It Resolved that the Social Responsibilities Round Table (SRRT) of the American Library Association supports the continued existence of degree programs in library and information studies at U.C. Berkeley and U.C.L.A.;

And Be It Further Resolved that, within these ongoing programs of library and information studies, SRRT encourages a strong commitment to educating library professionals in the public interest and the public's right to know, and that copies of this resolution be sent to the governor and state legislators of California, to U.C. officials, to the U.C. Regents, and to the California and library press.

PASSED BY THE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES ROUND TABLE
JUNE 26, 1993