SRRT By-Laws Report

The By-Laws Committee of the Round Table—Jackie Eubanks, Chairman; Helga Eason, Hugh Atkinson—has submitted its suggestions for ORGANIZATION AND PROCEDURE to the Chairman of the Organizing Committee. By the time of the annual meeting, we should have the outline of a dynamic beast of a group. Whether the Round Table remains a skeleton or becomes a handsome beast, however, depends on you. Your actions in small groups and in the large Round Table put meat on the bare bones of organization, and support the backbone of the Round Table.

In summary, the provisions of the proposed ORGANIZATION AND PROCEDURE call for two committees to coordinate activities: a Steering Committee which is responsible for annual meeting programs and for the coordination of activities of national project groups of personal members; and a Clearinghouse Committee, which is responsible for the newsletter and for reporting activities of all working groups, including affiliate members.

These two committees are elected from among volunteers solicited each year to replace a portion of the committees.

Work groups to act on specific problems can be formed by members at their own will, as well as by the Steering Committee. Some elements of game theory have been incorporated into the O&P for work groups, including the important note that a time commitment be made by all work groups that are formed, to encourage action and to prevent a plethora of status-conscious "standing committees." Since groups can be formed at will on projects, budget for these groups will be based on need rather than on a rigidly planned program of expenses. When the need of any group goes beyond the resources of the Round Table and the resourcesfulness of the members of the group, any group can ask for voluntary support from the other members of the Round Table.

The Organizing Committee will have reviewed the proposed O&P by June; it is hoped that copies will be sent to you before the Atlantic City meeting.

Jackie Eubanks

SRRT Atlantic City program

THE FAILURE OF LIBRARIES: A CALL TO ACTION will be held June 21, 8:00-10:30 p.m., Dennis Hotel, Borton Hall. Miss Kathy Weibel is preparing a multi-media exhibit in conjunction with the program. The program information send in mid-March listed Don Roberts as a tentative speaker; he will be with us.

We intend, with the assistance of the Congress for Change, to actively publicize the program meeting at Atlantic City.

The business meeting of SRRT, which will include a report from the Congress for Change, will be held June 26, 4:30-6:00 p.m. in Room 20, Convention Hall. Anyone interested, and we hope there will be many, is urged to attend.

Patricia Schuman

SRRT Clearinghouse

An SRRT Newsletter is, I believe, a must in the future. It will not only be a means to disseminate information about working groups, but more importantly, will serve as a stimulus to action. Concerned librarians now have a formal, national organization through which to express their concern. One of our first concerns should be to broaden the base of our group—we want to show all of those librarians who deplore even just one social injustice that they can do something as a librarian about it. A newsletter, which has full coverage of activities and broad circulation, can show them.

(continued on page 4)
What is happening

OHIO

Mrs. Nora Rothman, a library school student, informed the Clearinghouse of a new experimental course begun this semester in the Graduate Library School of Case Western Reserve University: The Library in the Social Revolution. The course was taught this semester by Mr. Goldwyn, but most of the library school faculty is involved in the effort to establish the methods and format of the course in the future.

There is a new State Plan now in a bill before the Ohio Legislature. Suggested are library regions—cutting across county lines if needed, but mainly embracing a number of counties—to be called Associated Library Service Organizations (ALSO's). Any type of library in the region may join an ALSO to extend service to its own clientele through cooperation with all the other associated libraries of the region. The plan is designed to help, in particular, the weaker, poorer areas, but should be of great benefit to all. Almost any service conceived of as necessary or valuable to an immediate, or to the greater, library community may be planned through an ALSO.

PENNSYLVANIA

Mr. Andrew Armitage, who is active in the "Alliance" and the "Congress for Change," reports that: "Last fall members of the library school faculty of the Graduate School of Library and Information Sciences of the University of Pittsburgh and students formed the Permanent Association for Intellectual Resources (PAIR) to combat censorship activities in Western Pennsylvania. This type of organization, working with the ACLU, can provide an effective counter-group to the CDL. Members can, and have here in Pittsburgh, taken the witness chair to testify in defense of intellectual freedom. It seems to me that some nationwide activity of this type might be of interest."

Mr. Armitage also made a provocative suggestion: "Issues - money. With the coming ABM fight - the question of funding the insane pile of junk comes up. Funds are going to be cutback from HEW to pay for the war and for playtoy weapons such as the ABM - and part of that money will be removed from federal programs affecting library service. The Round Table cannot duck taking a political stand on this issue - not merely taking a stand - but organizing a letter campaign - the time is coming for debate and many senators and congressmen are undecided. As a 'minor profession' we should find a place to stand on such issues."

How about it! Write letters on this issue, and similar ones, identifying ourselves as librarians who are concerned enough not merely to write to a Senator, but to have joined a library organization--such as the SRRT or Congress for Change--through which to express our concern as librarians in, hopefully, other dynamic and meaningful actions.

PRINCE GEORGES COUNTY, MARYLAND

The Prince Georges County Memorial Library planned a Social Responsibilities Seminar on April 3d: Community Services as a Means of Meeting Social Responsibilities. The High John Library was to be the topic of the morning meeting; reports from three branch librarians on their activities in their communities were to be given in the afternoon.

ALBANY, NEW YORK

Mr. E. J. Josey and Miss Fay Blake are organizing a local Social Responsibilities Round Table. The first meeting will be held in Albany, May 22d.

ST. CHARLES COUNTY, MISSOURI

Ann Webb, at a meeting of librarians of St. Charles County, organized a quickie quiz on social responsibilities as a basis for discussion and with the intention of clarifying what is meant by social responsibilities. One of her questions was:"In 1966, the State of California considered a very stringent censorship law. An organization called CLEAN lobbied for the law, and newspapers took strong stands for or against the bill. The California Library Association never publicly announced its opposition to the bill. Was there any reason why the Association should NOT speak out? Was there any reason why the Association SHOULD speak out? Could the California Library Association have had any real influence on the final outcome? Can you think of other instances in which librarians should consider trying to affect legislation by working as a group?"
NEW YORK CITY

The first meeting of the New York Chapter of the newly formed ALA Social Responsibilities Round Table was held March 19, 1969. About sixty librarians attended the meeting which was held in the Jefferson Market Branch of the NYPL. Public, university, and special librarians attended. Sanford Goin chaired the meeting, the main business of which was the formation of small groups to work on topics and projects suggested from the floor. The suggestions were extremely varied and, after much discussion, six groups formed to work on specific projects. All of the groups have been active, and I have information about a few.

1. Specific telephone reference for poverty patrons. This group has since concluded that the qualification of "for poverty patrons" is artificial and have expanded their goal to providing tools which will assist any referral agency in providing the information necessary to get any New York City urban citizen with a social problem to the right agency. They are compiling, and intend to publish, a list of subject headings for use in telephone reference of this type. They are collecting, and will organize and publish a bibliography of, materials (city, state, federal, private informational pamphlets, directories, etc.) in which the needed information can be found, and they are compiling a list of agencies, organizations, which are active in the area of social problems. In the course of their activity, they have made contact with outside groups and presently have one non-librarian, from the Mayor's Telephone Reference Service, working with them.

2. Create library service for Neighborhood Colleges.

3. Community involvement in action.

4. ALA reform. An example of this group's activity is the communication—sent to all library schools and library publications in addition to other groups—on the proposed ALA constitution change which is included elsewhere in this newsletter.

5. Access to libraries study. This group had originally planned to study the proposition that persons of certain classes and races have unequal access to libraries. The drastic New York City budget cut which has affected everyone's access to libraries diverted their efforts for the present. They have participated in demonstrations protesting the library budget cuts. For one of these, in front of the New York Public on 42d St., they constructed a "beautifully horrifying dragon" in which they paraded; the dragon had "Blood budget" written on one side and "Death to culture" on the other. They participated, in an equally dramatic fashion, in a demonstration before the Main Branch of the Brooklyn Public Library on the first Sunday that that library was closed as a result of the budget cut.

The groups listed above are all long-term project groups. One quickie group also formed. Sanford Goin organized a group of librarians—and publicized it in a local newspaper and on the radio—to march in New York City's now, unhappily, annual Peace March behind the banner: Librarians for Peace.

On May 6th an emergency meeting of all the members of the New York Librarians' Round Table on Social Responsibilities was called to prepare a statement to be presented the following day at the New York City Council budget hearings. The statement follows:

"We librarians vigorously protest any and all of the cuts in public services, welfare and medical as well as cultural. Ironically enough, the scheduled evening and weekend cuts for libraries, museums, parks, etc. discriminate against the ordinary working person who can use them only during the deleted hours, yet his tax burden is the highest in N.Y.C. history.

"While we trust that these cuts will be rescinded, if they are not we hope that the people of N.Y.C. will not allow this attack on their welfare, culture and recreation to take place. We believe they have the right to keep their institutions open, and we encourage the people to reclaim them. As librarians, we offer our assistance to those communities which demonstrate their wish to maintain their former library hours.

"In any event, we pledge our continuing efforts to enrich the services of the library, and to encourage much needed community involvement in our future course."

A NOTABLE CONTRIBUTION

Mr. Don Rein, President, Servitium Book Co., Inc., 41 Riverdale Ave., Yonkers, N. Y., has contributed $300.00 (which was sorely needed) to the Program Committee. He has also volunteered to print the New York Round Table's Newsletter.
Proposed ALA Constitution change

COMMITTEE FOR A MORE RESPONSIVE ALA
NEW YORK ROUND TABLE ON SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF LIBRARIES

To whom it may concern:

As members of the library profession we are naturally interested in the progress of ALA. We therefore note with concern the text of the following proposed amendment to Article VI of the ALA Constitution:

Any action of the Council may be set aside by a majority vote by mail in which one-fourth of the personal members of the Association have voted. Such vote by mail shall be held upon petition of two hundred members of the Association. The petition must be submitted to the Executive Director of the Association no later than ninety days after the measure has been approved by Council, otherwise the action of Council becomes binding.

At present, members may set aside any action of Council by a three-fourths vote at any meeting of the Association, or through petition procedures. We believe that the proposed amendment nullifies the opportunity for a fair balance of opinion. Ninety days is surely insufficient time to inform the membership and secure two hundred signatures. Argumentation by mail is scarcely a satisfactory or efficacious way to rescind a Council vote. This amendment, if adopted, will further discourage the participation of the general membership, negate proportional representation and undermine the professional objectives of ALA.

As concerned librarians we ask you to undertake the following appropriate actions: 1) Attend the ALA convention in Atlantic City and cast your vote against this undemocratic amendment. 2) Write to Council members and/or ALA Headquarters. (Consult the November 1968 ALA Bulletin for the roster of Council members.)

We will appreciate suggestions and opinions concerning this matter. Please forward these to: Edsel Ford McCoy, Chairman, COMMITTEE FOR A MORE RESPONSIVE ALA, 545 Glenmore Avenue, Brooklyn, New York 11207.

Carrying the message

On Wednesday March 12th a panel of three members of the New York Librarians' Round Table on Social Responsibilities of Libraries participated in a colloquium at Pratt Institute's Graduate Library School. Mr. George Hathaway, Mrs. Patricia Schuman, and Mr. John Clune told a group of about 35 students and faculty about the objectives and experiences of the pilo Round Table and how it was anticipated that this experimental group would fit into the newly recognized national Round Table. They also tackled larger questions, such as the role of the socially conscious professional both in a changing society and within ALA. The response of those who attended was extremely gratifying and is ample evidence that many graduating librarians wish to be involved and to act, as librarians, on the social issues of today. One student, for instance, asked the panel for their views on how to structure into library school curricula a core course dealing with the social responsibilities of libraries and librarians. Another student brought up the problem of the insufficient access to material in America on both sides of controversial issues such as the civil war in Biafra. These are vital issues which might easily fall within the purview of local action groups formed within the compass of a regional Round Table.

SRRT Clearinghouse (continued from page 1)

That is for the future. For the present, this newsletter is intended as a stimulus to action on your part. I, as the Clearinghouse Committee, have had very vague responsibilities since Mid-Winter. A few people have written me; the information they sent is included in this newsletter. I know about activities in New York since I live there, so New York activity is heavily represented. But what about the rest of the country? We need a real newsletter for wide distribution in Atlantic City—one that will stimulate attendance at our program and business meetings, and that will convince those well-meaning, but inactive, librarians that social responsibilities can and are being confronted by librarians as librarians. Please fill out the form and send it to me as soon as possible.

Joan K. Marshall
The CLEARINGHOUSE COMMITTEE of the new ALA SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES ROUND TABLE is looking for information to clear.

We want to get out a newsletter before we meet at Atlantic City.

I think that an important activity of our new Round Table will be keeping librarians across the length of the country informed of what the librarians along its breadth are doing to fulfill our social responsibilities, and how we are doing it.

The dissemination of this information is necessary to stimulate ideas, coordinate action, assist one another, and— you name it.

It has been almost two months since the Mid-Winter meeting of ALA and the formation of our Round Table. Do you have any proposals for possible activities of the national Round Table? For a Round Table in your region? If you have any "could we's?" concrete proposals, proposals with suggestions for implementation, send them to me.

Has there been any social-responsibility-conscious activity in your region since Mid-Winter. Meetings, formal or informal, discussions, etc.

Please, send me comments, ideas, information.

Sincerely,

Joan K. Marshall, Chairman
Clearinghouse Committee, ALA Social Responsibilities Round Table
Brooklyn College
Bedford Ave. & Ave. H
Brooklyn, New York 11210
WANTED: UNREASONABLE LIBRARIANS

What our free society needs at this moment in time is the likes of a Will Rogers or George Bernard Shaw, either of whom could slay socio-political dragons in a sentence or two. You remember Shaw maintained that all progress depends on the unreasonable man. Are you unreasonable? Do you see things taking place to which you strongly object? Of course you do. And do you then give public utterance to your gut-reactions? Or do you tend to reserve your remarks for the crowd you know best, hoping that somehow your views will spread and, osmotically, penetrate the skins of a wider, action-oriented audience?

Of course, there’s little risk in sounding off among the like-minded. But the feeling, deep inside, that impels one to speak out with conviction among a group of strangers - most of whom are known to entertain hostile philosophies - is the mark of Shaw’s reasonable man.

Insularity in a profession which deals with the public has to be self-defeating. Would it be socially responsible of librarians, for example, to care particularly about the problems of the Lions, or those of the Rotarians, Kiwanians, the Teamster’s Union, the Society Sanitary Engineers, the School Board, or the City Council? Librarians couldn’t spare the time, and to be frank, probably couldn’t be asked. And these organizations in turn have a pitifully meager knowledge of and interest in the library and its problems. Little chance exists that there is any inclination to share each others aches and pains in this best of all possible societies. Yet the library has a social position in the complex system of group interaction. It should be the one respected institution that can do something about the problems and aspirations and the worthwhile concerns of special interest groups. The library’s big guns, back in the stacks, are loaded with a concentration of “know-power” that makes it a genuine, if often overlooked, bastion of democracy. Yet in spite of the some resources at their command, librarians tend to view the contemporary scene from a somewhat parochial point of view. The issue of “social responsibility” has a nice ring to it, but what does it mean to you, and you, and you? If, for instance, it implies that average librarian is going to do or say the unpopular thing, parade a view in public that runs the chance of alienating the powerful, forget it. This is, at least, wishful speculation. Librarians, at this juncture are just not “unreasonable” enough. The ability to put out a socially responsible action requires a long term program of pre-conditioning that will, in time, bring about among the mass librarians the kind of positive response they are at this point, by background and inclination, in no position to give. Until they are made an action image, until they are convinced that they can speak out with conviction and with authority “social responsibility” will remain an impressive but empty term.

Then, there is the all-important matter of conditioning the public for the action-oriented posture we would adopt. Does the public and accept the library in this kind of role? You know the answer to that if you’ve ever been under the censor’s lash. As long as the public pay the rent and the salaries they alone will decide - for better or worse - what the library’s position will be. On the big issue of library function only be effective in the activist role to the extent that they have sold the idea and earned understanding acceptance as an action force by the community.

his, obviously, is an educational and public relations job - and it will be a long and tough one. Sometime, somehow, libraries are going to have to take a leaf from the public relations book of top-flight firms who engage in a national business. No successful corporation ever overlooks the fact it is a composite of many parts - all accountable, in the final analysis, to the public; that, above all, profits from these parts pay the stockholder dividends.

In the library context the top administration, starting first at the national level, would do well to plan procedures that will reach to local taxpayers, consistently, pointedly and convincingly in a major program aimed at creating a climate favorable to the widespread acceptance of the library’s importance and value in an activist capacity. An activist role is, at the outset, therefore, recognized at the national level, to create a unification of objectives and to avoid fragmentation of effort in the adoption of diverse interpretations of what constitutes social responsibility. This means there must be a continuing vigilance in the field, library brush fires wherever they flare up. Where a single library faces the guns of the censorship group the whole structure stands on trial. Here we could do worse than adopt the philosophy that has contributed to unionism’s success over years: support the locals and the national image will take care of itself.

Sional advertising, publicity and public relations constitute the primary forces which must be called into action to work, over the re in creating the “umbrella” under which local promotional follow-through can capitalize, at the grass roots. Operating on the premise that, at least, an awareness and general accord with library aspirations has been created, all libraries will be positioned tactically to accomplish a “reaching out” into the community which would not be possible otherwise.
Libraries require marketing which is basically the same kind of marketing that moves automobiles, candy-bars and television sets. But its likely to be tougher. After all, libraries are not the new brand on the market. They will be in a position of asking the public to forget the old familiar package and buy a repackaged product. Changing the identity raises problems the new product doesn’t have to face.

A concurrent and basic ingredient in the success of establishing a new library philosophy is so obvious it isn’t even talked about much. This, of course, is the necessity for libraries generally, by attitude and example, to be prepared to accept an activist role when the time comes. If librarians as a whole can come to feel that this role truly represents the striving for a new plateau of service and identity that will bring a revitalization of strength, vigor and dominance to the library structure, the battle will be half won.

But, if Shaw was right we’d better get used to being unreasonable because that’s what it will take to get the job done.

by

Roy Schumacher

Public Information Specialist

MISSOURI STATE LIBRARY
JEFFERSON CITY, MISSOURI
Enclosed is the first newsletter from the Round Table Clearinghouse Committee. Our thanks go to Joan Marshall, Chairman, for seeing this project through. Please use the enclosed form and send information for the newsletter or just for chatting with Joan about what is needed through the Clearinghouse Committee. Let us know what you are doing and thinking and what information you need.

To bring you up to date on the committees mentioned in the March communication from the Round Table: The Program Committee has things set up for Atlantic City and it promises to be an exciting time. It will be up to all of us to carry through with ideas and proposals generated by this special program. (see Newsletter) The By-Laws Committee has submitted a very exciting report and the Organization Committee is reviewing it at the present time. It probably will not be ready for mailing before ALA but we hope to have it available to hand out at the Program meeting on Tuesday for discussion at the Business meeting on Thursday. We are trying to keep it simple.


During ALA, it will be difficult to meet with everyone interested in the Round Table before the Program. Since Jerry Shields, in the May ALA Bulletin, has mentioned the Submarine Bar, Traymore Hotel for the place to meet and discuss whatever anyone wants, we will plan to meet there on Monday night after the meetings, one of which is the JMRT Exhibits dinner meeting with Richard Moses, formerly of High John, speaking. See you at the Traymore Hotel afterwards and we can all get to know each other and discuss the Congress for Change (see below) and what we may do during the week and at the Membership meeting on Wednesday, June 25.

There will be buttons available during ALA from the Round Table Program Committee. They read: Libraries to the People. Look for people wearing them at the beginning of the conference, introduce yourself, and get a button.

The Round Table membership will not be "official" until after the 1970 dues applications are sent out. However, this will not stop us from unofficially passing our by-laws on Thursday at the Business Meeting and getting down to business. Much of this will depend on what has happened during meetings the first four days of the conference. We also have some ideas on areas that need looking into, such as library education; ALA reorganization; actual short and long range goals for ALA; recruitment; public relations and many more. Bring your ideas along on what needs to be looked into and how effectively we can go about it.

N. B. We will receive a report from the recently convened "Congress for Change" which is being held just prior to ALA in Washington, D. C. On March 29, 1969, in response to an open letter sent to the president or chairman of graduate student organizations in fourteen accredited library schools, thirty student delegates gathered at the College Park campus of the University of Maryland to discuss and plan a course of action for holding a national conference of library schools students. This conference is being held as the Conference for Change. The letter sent to the library schools read in part:

"The students of the School of Library & Information Services feel that a critical need exists for activist and change-oriented students in library service to identify themselves and their ideas to each other. This is a necessary step in order for us to pool our combined strengths and knowledge for the purpose of exerting pressure and introducing change in an otherwise static-prone profession....By holding an intensive two-day session (March 29th & 30th) with a core group of 'activist-oriented' student representatives, we hope to locate and identify the common areas of interest that ought to be covered; to discuss and 'iron out' difficulties directly related to the formation of a national student association, and to plan an effective publicity program for a meeting in June."
This Congress for Change will meet June 20 through June 22. The Manger Annapolis Hotel at 12th & H St., N.W. will be holding blocks of rooms available for delegates. Group rates of four to a room will keep the cost to about $4.25 a person. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE IS AVAILABLE TO ATTEND THE CONFERENCE. The conference will be kept flexible for maximum discussion of various problems and solutions. The make-up of the conference will include library science students, faculty members, and practicing librarians. Challenge papers will be read and discussed and a consensus will hopefully be reached. This is another meeting which should not be missed. If you wish to attend, get a telegram or letter off to Jim Welbourne, School of Library and Information Services, University of Maryland, McKeldin Library, College Park, Maryland 20742. His office phone in evenings is area code 301-454-3030; home phone 422-8099. Mary Lee Burdy at the Library School may also be contacted for information. At this late date, call if you want to attend. There will be an informal social Thursday evening June 10 at 8 p.m. at the Manger Hotel. Conference starts at 8 a.m. Friday and officially ends Sunday at noon. Recruiters will be on hand to recruit for work in ghettos, etc. Over 150 already signed up--so call Jim or Mary Lee immediately if you want to attend. Resolutions will be taken to ALA so this should be a week and a half no one will want to miss!!

The Social Responsibilities Round Table will only be what we want it to be. We have already been written off as useless because we have formed under ALA. However, this should be taken as a challenge to show what can be done from within an organization. One of the first questions that need to be asked is "What is ALA?" "What do we want from ALA?" Answers to these questions will help us formulate where we want to go with this Round Table.

Come to the Congress for Change and to the Round Table meetings and participate in the most daring and exciting time in librarianship!

Bill DeJohn, Chairman
Organization Committee
ALA Roundtable on Social Responsibilities of Libraries

June 5, 1969