

Council on Library Resources, Inc.

The following press releases on the establishment of the Council on Library Resources, Inc., by the Ford Foundation, are published in full because the Editors of CRL consider the action of such momentous importance that readers should have available the complete proposal and the supplementary background material.

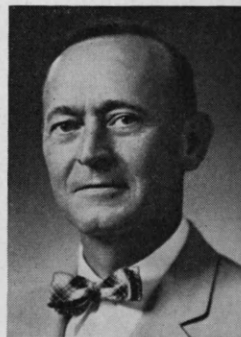
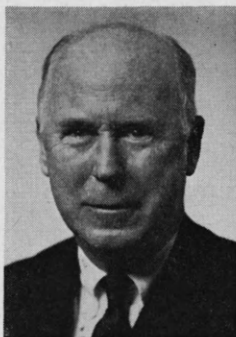
September 18, 1956

THE FORMATION of the Council on Library Resources, Inc., an organization whose purpose is to assist in solving the problems of libraries generally and of research libraries in particular, was announced today, following its initial meeting at the Ambassador Hotel, New York, at which it elected officers and voted to accept a \$5,000,000 grant of funds from the Ford Foundation to support its initial activities over a five-year period.

Elected as president and executive head of the council is Verner W. Clapp, who today resigned his position as Chief Assistant Librarian of the Library of Congress to accept this post. He has had a long experience with the problems of research libraries and with efforts to solve such problems through interlibrary cooperation and the application of labor-aiding devices.

The chairman of the board of directors of the council is Gilbert W. Chapman, president and director of Yale and Towne Manufacturing Company, chairman of the National Book Committee, a trustee of the New York Public Library, fellow of the Morgan Library, a director of the *Saturday Review* magazine, co-chairman of the advisory council of the College English Association Institute for Industry-Liberal Arts Exchange, and a director of Franklin Publications.

The vice-chairman of the board of directors is Dr. Louis B. Wright, director of the Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington, D.C. The other members of the board of directors of the council are:



Gilbert W. Chapman, chairman of the board of directors, and Verner W. Clapp, president and executive head of the newly established Council on Library Resources.

Douglas M. Black, president of Doubleday and Company, publishers, and of its subsidiaries; Lyman H. Butterfield, editor-in-chief of the Adams Papers project of the Massachusetts Historical Society; Dr. Frederick Hard, president of Scripps College; Dr. Barnaby C. Keeney, president of Brown University; Dr. Joseph C. Morris, vice-president of Tulane University, and a director of the National Science Foundation; John M. Schiff, partner of Kuhn, Loeb and Company, New York, investment bankers; Dr. Frederick H. Wagman, librarian of the University of Michigan; Dr. Warren Weaver, vice-president of the Rockefeller Foundation for the Natural and Medical Sciences; and Dr. Herman B Wells, President of Indiana University.

Purpose of the Council

The Council on Library Resources, Inc., a wholly independent non-profit educational research organization, has been

incorporated under the laws of the District of Columbia, and has its national offices in Washington, at 1025 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.

The council's purpose is to assist in the solution of the problems of libraries generally, but more especially of the problems of research libraries, by conducting or supporting research, demonstrating new techniques and methods, and disseminating the results, through grants for these purposes to institutions or individuals or in other ways, by coordinating efforts to improve the resources and services of libraries, and by improving relations between American and foreign libraries and archives.

Background of the Council's Establishment

The situation which led to the formation of the council may be simply described as one in which libraries, as channels of communication, are threatened with being glutted to the point of ineffectiveness by the quantity of the very information which they should transmit. Many examples of the rapid increase of publications and other informational materials could be given, and of the obstacles which this plethora of publication puts in the way of all research. For instance, a recent study of the relationship of legal research to legal literature has concluded that "one can find anything if one knows where to look and applies oneself long enough. The trouble is that, as things now stand, a lifetime is scarcely long enough."

Fremont Rider's prediction may also be recalled: He discovered that research libraries have a way of doubling in size every 16 years, and he calculated that, in consequence, by the year 2040 the Yale University Library would contain 200,000,000 volumes on 6,000 miles of shelves, and that its catalog alone would occupy 8 acres of space and that it would require a staff of 3,000 catalogers to record its in-

take. Quite apart from the validity of the prediction, users of research libraries complain that, on the one hand, there is an excess of informational materials, and, on the other, that individual collections are insufficiently comprehensive; that information is not available at the points needed; that subject-analysis and indexing are inadequate, subject to excessive delays, and unmanageable in any case.

The cost of literature-searching today is enormous. In the United States alone it has been estimated to cost \$300,000,000 a year.

In addition, it is rapidly becoming less and less possible to conduct research profitably away from the largest collections of material; while at the same time the university libraries tend to become research libraries for the faculty and to lose their effectiveness in undergraduate education. (*See also the Supplementary Background Statement at the end of the article.*)

Support of the Ford Foundation

The council owes its inception to the recommendations resulting from two meetings held in January and March, 1955, in Washington, D.C., under the auspices of a committee chaired by Dr. Louis B. Wright, director of the Folger Shakespeare Library, and of which the other members were L. Quincy Mumford, Librarian of Congress, and Dr. Leonard Carmichael, secretary of the Smithsonian Institution. These meetings brought together a distinguished group of scientists, research scholars in the humanities, university administrators and librarians. This group proposed to the Ford Foundation the creation of a national library council or planning group.

After more than a year's extensive study of library problems, the foundation concluded that their size and complexity, as well as the amount of work that has already been performed on them, indicated that no quick or easy solutions existed but that there was great need for the kind

of planning and research the group recommended.

Following the completion of the preliminary steps toward the establishment of the council, the Ford Foundation trustees once more reviewed the proposal, and then approved a grant of funds of \$5,000,000 to the council for a five-year period. This grant, which was tendered to Gilbert W. Chapman, as the chairman of the board of the council, by H. Rowan Gaither, Jr., chairman of the board of the Ford Foundation, was today formally accepted by the council. In making the grant to the council, Mr. Gaither stated:

As part of its broad program for assistance in the development and improvement of formal education, the Ford Foundation sought means by which to aid in the solution of the problems of libraries generally, and of research libraries in particular. In view of the magnitude of the need, the foundation desired that a means be found to provide for a long-range undertaking, and accordingly it sought the advice of many distinguished scholars, librarians and other persons over the past two years. The conclusion of the foundation was that the most effective attack upon the problems of libraries upon the broadest possible basis required the establishment of an independent corporation entirely devoted to this purpose.

Application of Initial Grant of Funds

The council plans to concentrate initially upon seeking solutions to the problems of research libraries through the following:

1. *Development of applications* of scientific techniques and mechanisms to library procedures, with a view to improving the utilization of available library resources, expediting and otherwise improving service, providing more effective use of space and staff, and reducing costs.

2. *Extension of interlibrary cooperation* in selectivity, specialization, sharing responsibilities, contributing to common resources, etc.

3. *Promotion of developments* to en-

able libraries of educational institutions to give better attention to the needs both of research and undergraduate education.

4. *Promotion of liaison and cooperation with foreign libraries and archives* to the end of assisting scholarship through the free international availability of library resources, and of contributing to the improvement of library services and the reduction of library costs (e.g., through international standardization of library procedures).

Chief Categories of Expenditure

Five chief categories of expenditure will be as follows:

1. *Planning*, including normal program planning, evaluation of procedures and techniques developed in other fields which have application for library problems, re-evaluation of library procedures and methods for improvement. Activity in this area will include both grant-making and direct operations.

2. *Development*, including projects designed to obtain particular devices and procedures which have been identified through planning, as required to multiply and improve library resources and facilities; filling identifiable gaps; extending the capabilities and specific applications of existing instruments and procedures. Activity in this area will be largely grant-making.

3. *Demonstration*, including projects designed to test new devices, methods and procedures and to insure their currency and maximum use in the library world. Activities in this category will be largely grant-making.

4. *Coordination*, including leadership and integration of the movement to improve library resources and services, elimination of duplication in research and demonstration, joint dissemination of information and results, promotion of liaison and cooperation with foreign libraries and archives. Activities in this category will include both grant-making and direct operations.

5. *Administrative* and professional functions, including both normal operating expenditures, salaries of professional staff members, the use of consultants, etc.

In the identification of the problems of libraries with a view to making a concerted attack upon them, the council proposes to institute certain investigations, whether with its own staff or under grant or contract, and to call, in addition, upon the advice of advisory committees of librarians, reinforced by specialists in scientific and other applications who may be able to suggest fruitful avenues of research toward the solution of particular problems.

The council also plans to make grants for research into particular problems and toward the development of techniques and procedures offering promise for the improvement of library resources and services. Grants for pilot projects for the demonstration of such procedures or techniques also come within the council's scope. In addition, the council may undertake certain activities of a purely coordinative nature with a view to the improvement of resources or services or of relations with foreign libraries through the dissemination of information and the development of procedures to assure avoidance of unnecessary duplication of effort.

In announcing the organization of the

council its board chairman, Gilbert W. Chapman, said:

The users of libraries, including not only the educational and scientific users but also those from industry and commerce, will be grateful to the trustees of the Ford Foundation who are making possible the formation of the Council on Library Resources, Inc. The resources and services of libraries are so linked to education and research and industry that it can almost be said that nothing assists libraries unless it thereby assists all segments of our society.

Verner W. Clapp, president of the council, made the following statement after the organizational meeting:

Libraries did not create the problems which have resulted from a plethora of publication, but both libraries and their users suffer from the situation which the glut of publications has brought about. It has been said that libraries assisted in bringing in the age of mechanization and automation, but have themselves gained less than any institutional organizations from it.

The aim of the Ford Foundation's grant to the council, and the council in its turn, is to attempt, without losing any of the values which libraries now contribute to our civilization, to make these values more accessible and more effective. Though there are few problems of libraries which money could not solve even with present procedures, it is quite unlikely that they will all be solved that way. The aim of the council is to bring concerted intelligence, as well as money, to these solutions.

SUPPLEMENTARY BACKGROUND STATEMENT

The basic problem which libraries face is a very old one: It is the increase of publications at a rate beyond their technical abilities or manpower with which to cope. But especially in recent years it has become obvious that publications and sources of information are increasing at an ever-accelerating rate, while the reader-demands upon these data are also multiplying rapidly with the increasing intensity, variety and urgency of research, and with expanding interest in the United

States in the affairs of other parts of the world.

For example, for the 114-year period 1800-1914 the Royal Society of London listed only 1,555 scientific periodicals in its *Catalogue of Scientific Papers*, while for the much shorter period 1900-1950 the *World List of Scientific Periodicals* lists approximately 50,000 periodicals.

Similarly, in 1910 *Chemical Abstracts* listed less than 15,000 articles in chemistry, while

in 1955 it listed more than 70,000; there was an increase of 275 per cent in the number of articles in the decade 1945-1955 alone.

Again, in 1880 there were approximately 860 medical journals producing approximately 20,000 articles a year; now there are approximately 7,000 medical periodicals producing approximately 175,000 articles a year.

In 1940 the "unpublished scientific report" was practically unknown; today these important research documents appear at a rate of approximately 1,000,000 a year.

Faced with enormous supplies of source materials on the one hand, and insistent reader-demands on the other, libraries attempt to bring the two together through their techniques of selection and acquisition, cataloging, storage and service. But the users complain that these techniques are insufficient in any case and all the more inadequate as applied with present power.

For more than a century, libraries in this country have attempted to meet these increasingly developing problems by cooperative effort, by the use of mechanical devices, and in other ways. Over a century ago—in 1850—the librarian of the Smithsonian Institution, Charles C. Jewett, proposed a method of cooperative cataloging which would have saved the libraries of that day a great deal of manpower, but after an initial brilliantly successful demonstration his pilot project foundered on the rock of the imperfect technology of the printing industry of the time.

Despite this first failure, cooperative or central cataloging became a principal objective of the American Library Association when it was founded in 1876, and was finally achieved in 1901 with the Library of Congress as the central source of catalog cards. Similarly, the ALA adopted in 1876 as its first project the cooperative development of an index to periodicals. So impressed at the time was the manager of the Adams Express Company with the cooperative nature of this project that he claimed the right to participate by providing free transportation of the indexing slips. This project was a principal step in a development from which the United States now possesses outstandingly excellent indexes to periodical literature.

Such cooperative enterprises between libraries are now very numerous and affect almost every branch of library work. They cover

such activities as book purchasing, cataloging, warehousing, lending, indexing, microfilming of deteriorating files as a protection against destruction, microfilming of unique manuscript materials in inaccessible depositories to make them more accessible for research everywhere, the maintenance of bibliographical centers, the compilation and publication of union catalogs, etc.

The so-called Farmington Plan is, for example, a cooperative arrangement by which American research libraries attempt to assure the acquisition and availability of important foreign books without unnecessary duplication. As another example, the Midwest Inter-Library Center in Chicago is a cooperative storage library where a number of midwest libraries deposit less-used books to be held for common use. The National Union Catalog at the Library of Congress in Washington is a register of copies of the millions of different books held by principal research libraries throughout the United States and Canada.

American libraries have also attempted to make use of technological developments to improve service without comparable increase in cost. Jewett's pioneering project of 1850 was such an attempt.

The 3" by 5" card index is a notable technological development of American libraries, which also early put to use the pneumatic tube, the book conveyor, microfilm, photo-charging, etc. Punched card systems both of the manual and machine-sorted types have found numerous applications in a number of libraries, though not yet generally used, and tele-facsimile as applied to the long-distance servicing of library materials is still in the experimental stage.

But neither cooperative arrangements nor technological applications have been sufficient to make it possible for the research libraries to keep abreast of the rising flood of publications and the increasingly intensive demands of users. Meanwhile, however, there is a strong feeling on the part of many users of research libraries and many observers of the situation that a concerted attack upon the problems, making use of the full resources of modern science—including the techniques of micro-facsimile and tele-communication, the "giant brains" of the modern computer

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vision, rather than in so marking the volume that it can be identified after theft.⁴

In the separate housing of rare books under close supervision, and in the restricted loan regulations applying to them, they may be considered in a special class, like microfilm, microcards, and microprint. Unless unusual loan practices or other conditions warrant the use of an ownership mark, it would seem unnecessary to mark these materials. Depending on the local loan regulations and other conditions, phonorecords, scores, maps, plates, and other unbound materials might also best be left unmarked. The two criteria to be applied in regard to

⁴ The Library of Congress has recently decided (*Information Bulletin*, XV (1956), 243-44) to stamp its manuscripts "with a small Library of Congress seal imprinted in a pale red ink." This decision was the consequence of a theft of certain valuable manuscripts, which were recovered after a bookdealer in Philadelphia had reported the offer of some manuscripts under unusual circumstances. Another measure following the theft was the addition of a guard in the Manuscripts Reading Room, besides the guards regularly stationed at the library exits. The decision to stamp all manuscripts was made only after a careful study of available inks, in order to find one that would be both permanent and transparent. The use of the ink stamp seems to me to be an extreme measure, and one of doubtful efficacy. The recently stolen manuscripts were recovered even though they were not stamped. It would be an unimaginative thief, or at least an unambitious one, who could not remove any ink stamp which did not touch the text. The superior protection of valuable documents would seem to be the careful issuing and checking of documents before and after each use.

each of these special classes of material lie in two questions: Does an ownership mark serve in any way to reduce possible loss of the material? Is the time involved in applying marks of ownership, and other disadvantages, in any way commensurate with the amount by which loss may be reduced? Unless the material is available for use outside the library, or is of sufficient value to encourage theft, the application of ownership marks probably cannot be justified.

The elimination of unnecessary ownership marks is undertaken as much in the interest of economy of operation as in the protection of books from mutilation. A program based on numerous rules and requiring a separate decision for the processing of each volume would defeat its own purpose. The program should be streamlined in its operation as well as in its use of different marks of ownership. A normal routine of processing books and serials should be adopted, involving the fewest rules consistent with adequate protection. Exceptions to this routine should be held to a minimum, and these should be readily identifiable by those engaged in the processing operations.

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systems, modern developments in printing and duplication, mechanical translation, and various devices for mechanizing the processes of information storage and retrieval—might produce very rewarding results for both libraries and their users.

Importance of Libraries

Libraries constitute in a very real sense the communal memory of mankind. They are charged with maintaining the organized record of human experience. Having access to this record, mankind can progress; lacking it, each generation would be condemned to end-

less repetition of the experiments of its ancestors.

This is true even for the laboratory sciences. Although the individual laboratory scientist may not himself make much use of the great libraries, yet the critical tables, the compendia, the abstracting services and the literature surveys which make his laboratory research profitable have all been made possible by libraries. Meanwhile, for the non-laboratory sciences—history, law, and the other humanities and social sciences—the library serves to a large extent as the "laboratory," where books replace test-tubes and formaldehyded frogs.