

## **Draft**

Social Responsibilities Round Table Action Council I Minutes  
American Library Association's Midwinter Conference  
January 10, 2004  
San Diego, California

**Attendance:** Rory Litwin, Coordinator, SRRT Action Council; Michael Santangelo, SRRT Secretary and Hunger, Homelessness, and Poverty Task Force Chair; Fran Ware, Coretta Scott King Task Force Chair; Barbara Jones Clark, Coretta Scott King Task Force member; Caarole J. McCoullough, SRRT Action Council member; Elaine Harger, International Responsibilities co-chair and Progressive Librarians Guild representative; Aureole M. Johnstone, SRRT Action Council Treasurer; Jennifer Baltes, Feminist Task Force, chair; Marie Hones, Alternatives in Publication, chair; Mark Hudson, Action Council member; Larry Romans, ALA Councilor; Sharyn Ladner, FTF member; Samuel Trosow, SRRT member; Susan Dillinger; Al Kagan, SRRT Councilor; Mark Rosenzweig, SRRT Action Council member; Peter McDonald, SRRT member; Ginny Moore, SRRT member; Mary Biblo, MLKTF member.

### **Introductions**

#### **Michael Gorman, ALA Presidential Candidate, spoke to SRRT members.**

Highlights:

- Would not be promoting a theme—prefers to build on pre-existing strengths of ALA
- Wishes to concentrate on ALA-APA
- Work to stronger opposition to USA Patriot Act
- Combat the recent trend of librarians to break off into separate communities (based on types of libraries or types of librarian work) that do not communicate and do not work together
- Statement of Core Values

At this point, SRRT members asked Michael Gorman questions.

#### **SRRT Action Council Minutes from ALA Annual 2003 Toronto**

Minutes from SRRT Annual were passed out. Al moved to accept the minutes and Marie Jones seconded the motion. Elaine Harger questioned why the attendance was not at the top of the minutes. Michael Santangelo, SRRT secretary, said he had forgotten to include the minutes. Peter McDonald suggested there be a section in the minutes where actions needed to be taken by next Annual would be listed. The minutes were accepted unanimously with the provision that the attendance be included.

## **Resolutions**

### **Cultural Democracy**

Mark Rosenzweig passed out a resolution on Cultural Democracy as a core value. It was co-sponsored by SRRT Action Council member Susan Dillinger. Mark addressed the need for the resolution and said he was concerned that ideas of cultural democracy were not being properly recognized.

### **Barbara Stripling, ALA Presidential Candidate, spoke to SRRT members.**

At this point, discussion of Mark's resolution was tabled so the other ALA Presidential candidate, Barbara Stripling, could address the Action Council. Barbara Stripling spoke about her focus in her campaign:

- Building community
- 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills Development
- Strong support for ALA-APA
- Greater use of electronic communication by ALA

At this point, SRRT members asked Barbara Stripling questions.

### **Resolutions Continued**

After Barbara Stripling's departure, SRRT Action Council resumed the discussion of Mark Rosenzweig's resolution on Cultural Democracy. Mark said he wanted to see the notion of cultural democracy go beyond the words social responsibility. He wanted to see a movement to re-democratize cultural institutions, schools, libraries, etc. During further comments, Mark spoke to the need to point out the continued existence of serious issues of racism, classism and sexism. He said that it was necessary to not just affirm abstract values, but also to set up the means for people to express themselves. He introduced the need for equality as well as equity. Mark said equity is the means and equality is the goal.

Elaine Harger suggested that Mark needed to put in a definition of cultural democracy, and that something specific would help people to latch on to the idea. Aureole Johnstone suggested introducing the definition in the beginning of the resolution. Al Kagan concurred and offered the idea of one page explanation with concrete examples to go with the resolution. Ginnie Moore agreed with Al and said concrete examples were necessary. Larry Romans suggested the resolution should say ALA instead of SRRT. Mark answered that he was not necessarily bringing this to ALA Council. Mark said it would have been more helpful if he could have printed out some additional documentation he meant to go along with the resolution and that he had sent this documentation along with the resolution to the Core Values Task Force of ALA Council. Al said it could be voted on without documentation. Mark said he would like SRRT Action Council to vote on it now so he could go forward, and requested an endorsement in principle.

Aureole Johnstone made a motion to endorse Mark's resolution in principle with an explication of what cultural democracy means. Al Kagan seconded the motion. During Discussion, Larry Romans asked about including the definition in the resolution and

Elaine said it was necessary to see Mark's explication of cultural democracy. Rory said we could endorse the resolution in principle and endorse in principle an attached explication of cultural democracy. Mark said he just wanted the Action Council to endorse in principle. Aureole modified her motion to say endorse in principle without further instructions. Al seconded the motion. During discussion for the modified motion, Elaine asked whether "in principle" could mean that Mark will bring the definition to Action Council II. At this point, Mark read four points from his explanation of cultural democracy. Elaine asked if these four points could be included in the beginning of the resolution, and Jenny Baltes suggested placing it in a whereas clause in the resolution. Mark answered that he was retrying to make the resolution more concise and Aureole reiterated her motion to endorse in principle. Motion Passed unanimously. Sam Trosow, in a point of information, said he thought this resolution should be at the "information commons" meeting later that day. Aureole suggested Mark consider modifying or creating another resolution for ALA Council. Rory said Al was the SRRT Councilor to ALA Council, and that Al ought to present a SRRT resolution to Council. Aureole said that Mark should help Al to present the resolution to Council. Al suggested Action Council let Mark work on the resolution and bring it back to us. He said Mark should have conversations whether to bring the resolution straight to ALA Council or to take it to the Core Values Task Force.

#### **Al Kagan's Resolution to Endorse Michael Gorman**

Al Kagan made a motion to have SRRT Action Council endorse Michael Gorman's candidacy for ALA President. Elaine Harger seconded the motion. Carole McCollough said she did not feel ready to vote on this motion at this time, and questioned what SRRT would be saying by endorsing Michael Gorman. Jenny Baltes commented that SRRT Action Council members seemed to ask Barbara Stripling more questions than Michael Gorman. Elaine stated that there was a Presidential Forum on Sunday, and SRRT Action Council could wait until Action Council II meeting to vote on this. Rory agreed with Elaine's suggestion and said it means more to wait. Larry Romans countered that in order for an endorsement to be effective, it needs to happen earlier in the conference so people will know where SRRT stands. Al inserted that there was no comparison between the two candidates. The motion carried with 6 members for and 3 members abstaining.

#### **Repealing the USA Patriot Act**

Next, Al spoke to a resolution coming to the ALA Council; this resolution concerned a call to repeal the USA Patriot Act. Al spoke about a meeting between the President of IFLA and IFLA's USA Caucus in Berlin, in which the IFLA President thanked the Caucus on its work against the USA Patriot Act, and how this inspired to be stronger in condemning the USA Patriot Act. Al said he was asking for SRRT's support on this resolution to repeal. Susan Dillinger moved for SRRT to support Al's position in Council to call for a resolution urging the repeal of the USA Patriot Act. Mark Hudson seconded the motion. During Discussion, Larry Romans offered that Al should include the word amend as well as repeal in his resolution. This would still get the notion of repealing in the resolution. Rory said it would be okay if SRRT Action Council endorsed in principle and allowed Larry to work with Al to craft something to bring to Council.

Mark Hudson added that the resolution might pass more easily with the word amend as well as repeal, and then asked if ALA had not already passed a resolution with the word amend or repeal. Aureole commented that the IFLA resolution was more inclusive and specified that the resolution should emphasize repealing or amending the act in order to protect certain human rights. Elaine said we ought to just use the word repeal, for the word amend is weak, especially as other countries are being inspired to pass their own USA Patriot Acts, and the concept of using just repeal may deter other countries from establishing their own USA Patriot Acts. Mark R. said he thought the resolution should use stronger words. Al wants SRRT Action Council to endorse the resolution where it stands. Al said he was hoping not to submit as an individual in ALA Council, but through IFC or another Council committee. Mark Rosenzweig commented that this version is already in committees, so we ought to endorse as is. Rory ended discussion at this point. The motion carried unanimously.

### **Coretta Scott King Task Force leaving SRRT**

Next, Fran Ware, head of the Coretta Scott King Award Task Force, spoke about the CSK Task Force's proposed departure from SRRT. She said the task force made the decision to move to EMIERT, another round table of ALA. Carole McCullough wanted to make sure that this departure was not seen as what SRRT is not, but what CSK has become. CSK has grown and public demand for CSK has grown. She said the move would not be complete until some sort of agreement could be made with EMIERT about funding and SRRT. Rory mentioned the complexity of the budget cycle, which was every two years. Carole said this was a concern as CSK wanted to know how to leave without leaving SRRT in a financial bind. Aureole said she understands the move, but still sees it as a sad loss. Marie Jones said she was said to see CSK go, and hoped that CSK members would remain part of SRRT. Elaine Harger added that she was very saddened by this news and that SRRT has a social conscience and that is why CSK was a part of SRRT. Elaine said that, putting the funding issues aside, as EMIERT is not political like SRRT, it is a safe place to have an award, as there are no liabilities that come with being a part of EMIERT. On the other hand, Elaine said she felt some sense of solidarity was being broken. Rory added that there has been a long line of groups coming out of SRRT, and even EMIERT itself was originally part of SRRT and he wished CSK well. Mary Biblo spoke about some of the historical reasons why CSK became a part of SRRT and wished CSK well in their new home. Mark Rosenzweig was also saddened, yet he said he saw how EMIERT was a good fit. Mark said he felt it was more like an amputation than having a child leave. He also shared some concerns how this might be misinterpreted in wider circles as CSK leaving for bad reasons. Mark expressed a need for something to be formally announced in SRRT newsletter and in other ALA publications. Carole said she had thought about Mark's point, and reminded the Action Council that she was the first chair of CSK to be on Action Council. Carole reiterated that right now what the Coretta Scott King Award Task Force needed was a home for their focus.

### **News**

Larry Romans asked for a change in the agenda, and asked to make his announcement before the Treasurer's Report. Rory said first there needed to be a motion to extend the

meeting. Al Kagan made a motion to extend the meeting 15 minutes. Aureole Johnstone seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. Larry then proceeded to report on the Committee on Membership Meetings and how they were looking at two topics for the membership meeting forum at next annual. Larry said the two issues were 1) ALA, is it too active or is it not active enough and 2) USA Patriot Act. Elaine said she thought the first topic was appropriate for Florida being that activism saved the Florida State Library from closing. Rory said members should send recommendations about the forums to Larry or Al.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Next on the agenda was the Treasurer's Report and Aureole asked if there were any questions about the report. Aureole said she knew that some members were having trouble reading the report, so she would bring a more clarifying report to Action Council II on Monday. Marie Jones asked if it was possible in the future to send the information to the Task Force chairs before Midwinter.

At this point, Rory suggested holding discussion of the Treasurer's report and discussion of the bylaws revision and the new SRRT newsletter editor until Action Council II. After this, the meeting was adjourned.