

REPORT OF ALA-SRRT ACTION COUNCIL MEETING IN WASHINGTON, D.C., NOVEMBER 6-7, 1971:

Support of Black Employees fired by Library of Congress made the main focus of Fall

meeting: The 13 fired employees and their union, Local 1826, American Federation of Government Employees, scheduled a rally on the steps of Library of Congress for Monday, November 8th. SRRT members planned to stay on in Washington to participate. Also planned for Monday by SRRT were a press conference, an observation tour of LC, and an interview requested with the Librarian of Congress.

Minorities Recruitment got attention, as Jim Wright reported on his meeting with the ALA Executive Board. He spoke for both SRRT and the ALA Black Caucus, to secure funding of the position of Minorities Recruiter, as voted by ALA membership. With the Executive Board saying "no funds", they gave first priority to pay increases for ALA Headquarters staff, when funds are available, and 2nd priority to the hiring of a Minorities Recruiter.

Peter Doiron, present at the invitation of Action Council, presented the background and latest developments on his summary firing as editor of CHOICE. Keith Doms, invited also to send an ALA rep to this SRRT meeting, had replied that none was available. Doiron's request for a hearing on his case before the ALA Executive Board was rejected on October 28th, with a statement that the case was now closed. AC voted to direct a recommendation to ALA Council, to instruct the Executive Board: 1) to reopen the case through a special committee and hold a proper hearing; 2) to draft a new grievance procedure; and 3) to reimburse Doiron for his expenses for legal fees, travel, etc., incurred in defending himself.

D.C.'s Public Library's Problems were described by Jerome Parsons, President of

the District of Columbia Public Library Staff Association. Without a Director for the past year and a half, and a Board of Trustees that meets infrequently because it can't get a quorum, there is inaction on the Budget, personnel problems magnified for lack of a grievance procedure, little preparation for the opening of the new central building, and, now, the disbanding of the Selection Committee for a new Director, without any announcement of results. AC agreed to have Parsons present these facts at its press conference November 8th, and to write to the Mayor, urging that he utilize the Staff Association in solution of the current problems.

SRRT Archives: With an eye to history, and the accumulation of its records, Action Council decided its archives are worth preserving to guide future SRRT-ers on the lessons and mistakes of the present. An institutional depository for SRRT records, that can provide reference access when needed by SRRT members, will be sought. A library school with archival facilities and interest in social change organizations would be most appropriate.

SRRT Mailing List will now add names of persons without ALA affiliation for a \$3 donation (instead of \$2), effective January 1, 1972. Organizations will be added for a \$10 donation, as an interim measure, pending adoption of a similar provision in SRRT by-laws.

Financial Grants are to be sought to support 3 proposals:

- 1) For the support of Spanish-speaking people in the profession, as a major focus of library activity, and to prepare an institute for Las Vegas in '73;
- 2) To fund the position of Ombudsman in ALA, responsible to the membership, and helping to create new aspects to the position of Executive Secretary, showing how that official should relate to the membership in the ways SRRT has tried;

- 3) Preparation of a program package of media presentations, possibly funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, to be housed at ALA, showing ways in which libraries can effect social change.

SRRT Program at Midwinter is planned as a gathering of ideas from Chicago's community resource leaders, looking towards the June program.

A Coalition to support an alternative slate for ALA Council has been proposed to SRRT, possible participants in the coalition being the ALA Black Caucus, JMRT, SRRT, interested councillors, and other groups and individuals. Pat Schuman will serve as SRRT representative to the Steering Committee initiating the coalition. For SRRT information, she will poll all Council nominees of the ALA Nominating Committee on their reaction to specific questions, and on their own most important ALA concerns.

Task Force budgets were approved, to a total of \$2820. The Task Force on American Indians has decided to merge with the ALA Office of Service to the Disadvantaged, not from any dissatisfaction with SRRT, but rather resulting from SRRT support of that Office. AC indicated it does not indorse such merger, but leaves it to the Task Force to do as it chooses.

The Freedom To Read Foundation was criticized for its failure to include information on the Leroy Merritt Humanitarian Fund, as a separate membership option, in its current high-priced promotion campaign. Individual protests on the omission are planned by several members.

---- Miriam Crawford

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