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Congressional Action Imminent on Number of Bills

Both House and Senate Committees appear to be working out legislative strategy to set off a barrage of action on pending bills right after the Memorial Day weekend. A number of measures have been tentatively approved in committee, but formal reports have not been issued to date.

Higher Education (S.600 and H.R. 3220)

The Senate Education Subcommittee, at a hearing on the Higher Education Act of 1965 (S.600) on May 19, was gratifyingly receptive to library witnesses. Edmon Low and Morris A. Gelfand represented the American Library Association; William Gillard, Catholic Library Association; William S. Dix and Julian Levi, Association of Research Libraries; with L. Quincy Mumford, Librarian of Congress, acting as moderator of the panel.

Following up a proposal suggested by the ARL witnesses to include a centralized cataloging program in the Library of Congress under Title II, Senator Morse and a number of other Senators sponsored an amendment to add Part C, "Cataloging of Library Materials." This would authorize an additional \$5 million for fiscal 1966.

The House Special Education Subcommittee, while considering the House version of the bill (H.R. 3220) in closed sessions, made a great many changes in the measure according to preliminary reports. It is understood, however, that relatively few changes have been made in Title II except that a new section has been included which authorizes an additional \$5 million for the purpose of establishing a centralized cataloging service in the Library of Congress similar to the Morse amendment to S.600.

A major change is a new title which would authorize an additional \$290 million for fiscal 1966 under the Higher Education Facilities Act of 1963 (P.L. 88-204).

Status of Pending Legislation Including Library Provisions

HEW Appropriations (H.R. 7765) -- House passed May 4 (see Newsletter for May 7, P. 1). No announcement of public hearings has been made by the Senate Appropriations Committee.

Arts and Humanities (H.R. 6050 and S. 1483) -- Both the House and Senate bills to establish a National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities have been approved for reporting by their respective committees, but the formal reports have not been issued to date. As stated in the March 18 Newsletter, P. 4, the revised bill will include a section to strengthen school courses in the arts and humanities similar to Title III of the National Defense Education Act.

Aid to the Aging (H.R. 3708) -- The Older Americans Act, passed by the House on March 31 (April 15 Newsletter, P. 3), was reported May 25 (S.Rept. 247) and passed by a voice vote May 27.

Medical Library Assistance Act (H.R. 3142 and S.597) -- On May 25, ALA filed a statement with the Senate Labor and Public Welfare Subcommittee on Health, supporting this legislation as essential in the national interest to insure the welfare and health of the United States. The Association pointed out in its statement that it considered the proposed medical legislation as an important supplement to the Higher Education Act of 1965 (S.600), which is basic and of first priority in helping to solve fundamental higher education problems, including the essential training for sorely needed professional librarians.

Surplus Property -- Senate and House Committees have been holding hearings in order to evaluate the accomplishments and administrative procedures of the Federal surplus personal property program. Public libraries have been eligible since 1962 to receive personal property under the provisions of Sec. 203(j)(3) of the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949, as amended. The American Library Association plans to file a statement.

In addition, Senator Ralph Yarborough (D.-Tex.) on May 12 introduced S. 1947, which would amend Sec. 203(e) of this same Act. It would require the Government Services Administration to regularly notify local governments of available surplus personal property and then wait 30 days before offering such property for general sale to private as well as public buyers.

The proposed legislation is intended to correct the situation whereby private dealers purchase these surplus materials before local governments have an opportunity to do so, and then resell them to the public agencies at a much higher price.

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