



HEADQUARTERS

AUG 09 1985

LIBRARY

# ALA Washington Newsletter

AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION  
OFFICIAL PUBLICATION

## Contents:

July 31, 1985, Volume 37, Number 10

Congressional Budget . . . . .	p. 1	JCP Forum on Depository Libs. . . . .	p. 3
Appropriations, FY 1985 . . . . .	p. 1	Federal Info. Management . . . . .	p. 3
Line-Item Veto . . . . .	p. 2	Medical Libraries . . . . .	p. 4
Tax Reform - SALT-D . . . . .	p. 2	NEH Deadline . . . . .	p. 4
ACTION NEEDED . . . . .	p. 2	Office of Personnel Mgt. . . . .	p. 4

Attachments: (1) Resolution on Line-Item veto, (2) Resolution on SALT-D, (3) Resolution on OMB's Proposed Circular on Management of Federal Information Resources, (4) Less Access to Less Information By and About the U.S. Government: V

CONGRESS WILL BE ON AUGUST RECESS FROM AUGUST 3 UNTIL SEPTEMBER 4.  
CONTACT YOUR LEGISLATORS AT HOME ON ACTION ITEMS.

## Congressional Budget

On July 29, President Reagan rejected a Senate proposal to raise taxes and delay Social Security increases, casting new doubt over whether the Administration and Congress can achieve their goal of reducing federal budget deficits of over \$200 billion. In the meantime, leaders of the House and Senate negotiating teams on S.Con.Res. 32, the congressional budget resolution for FY 1986, were meeting in hopes of laying the groundwork for an agreement that could be accepted by the two houses. A Washington Post article quoted Senate Majority Leader Robert J. Dole (R-KS) as saying that if there is no House-Senate budget agreement, "there will be no tax reform this year."

## Appropriations, FY 1985

Conferees on HR 2577, the FY 1985 general supplemental funding bill, deleted the appropriation of \$5 million proposed by the Senate for the new Library Services and Construction Act title VI Library Literacy Programs (H.Rept. 99-236). Future prospects for funding are encouraging, however, since the report states: "The conferees have deleted funds for the library literacy initiative without prejudice. The conferees do recognize the serious and growing illiteracy problem in the Nation, and will give every consideration to including funds for the establishment of this program in the fiscal year 1986 Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations Bill."

### Line-Item Veto Withdrawn

S. 43, giving the President power to veto items within funding bills, was withdrawn from the Senate floor after the third vote to cut off a filibuster led by Sen. Hatfield (R-OR) which failed 58-40. Sixty votes are needed for such cloture votes. ALA's resolution opposing S. 43 was delivered to every Senator and read into the Congressional Record by Sen. Hatfield. Sen. Mattingly (R-GA), sponsor of S. 43, now threatens to offer line-item veto amendments to appropriations bills as they come up; Sen. Hatfield, Appropriations Committee chair, has vowed to fight this even if it means holding up funding bills.

### Tax Reform - SALT-D

ALA submitted testimony July 29 to the congressional tax committees opposing the Administration's proposal to repeal deductibility of state and local taxes from the federal income tax as harmful to library service nationwide and contrary to public policy. Both the House Ways and Means Committee and the Senate Finance Committee have been holding hearings on the President's tax reform proposal (see June 17 Newsletter for background). The ALA testimony included a Resolution on SALT-D passed by the ALA Council on July 10 during the ALA Annual Conference in Chicago. A copy of the resolution is attached to this Newsletter.

Many state and local officials and a number of education organizations have testified in favor of retaining SALT-D, or state and local tax deductibility. Often cited is a Congressional Research Service estimate that for every \$1.00 of revenue that would be generated by repeal of this deduction, state and local governments would be forced to cut their budgets by 47¢, because taxpayers would demand that about half the tax increase resulting from a loss of SALT-D be offset by lowering state and local taxes. Education receives 94 percent of its funding from states and localities and would bear 42 percent of the \$39 billion loss. Local and state taxes account for 87 percent of public library funding.

The Committee for Education Funding, a coalition of 100 education organizations (including ALA) working on federal education budget and appropriation issues, has taken a position opposing elimination of SALT-D. A SALT-D Action Group has been formed, in which ALA is participating through its Washington Office.

The SALT-D Action Group has produced the brochure/fact sheet enclosed with this Newsletter. Bulk copies are available for library meetings or further distribution from: SALT-D Action Group, Suite 702, 1730 Rhode Island Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036 (202/659-1949). An 8-minute videotape on SALT-D is available from the same address.

**ACTION NEEDED:** Those concerned that eliminating SALT-D would harm library services should contact their legislators during the August congressional recess (8/3-9/4). It is crucial that House Ways and Means Committee and Senate Finance Committee members (see June 17 Newsletter for lists) hear from library constituents. The House committee is expected to draft its version of a tax reform bill immediately after Labor Day.

In addition, the SALT-D Action Group has designated Wednesday, September 18 as SALT-D Day, for education and library-related activities to highlight the importance of state and local tax deductibility to quality education and library services.

## JCP Forum on Depository Libraries & Electronic Publications

Approximately 175 people from depository libraries, federal agencies, universities, and the private sector attended the public forum on June 26 called by the Joint Committee on Printing to let concerned parties comment on a December 1984 report to JCP, and to solicit suggestions for possible pilot projects to provide certain government information in electronic format to depository libraries. The members of the Ad Hoc Committee established by JCP to evaluate the feasibility and desirability of providing such access received testimony from six witnesses on their agenda as well as from others attending.

Those presenting formal statements were: Russell Shank, UCLA, representing the Association of Research Libraries; Francis Buckley, Detroit Public Library on behalf of ALA; Judy Myers, University of Houston Libraries; Carol Turner, Stanford University Library, speaking for the Government Documents Round Table (GODORT); Richard Leacy, Georgia Institute of Technology; and Jeanne Isacco, OCLC, Inc. All spoke in support of the Ad Hoc Committee recommendation that pilot projects be initiated. The Ad Hoc Committee will evaluate the results of the forum and the statements submitted, and will help to develop criteria for the pilot projects. No time frame for implementing the projects has been adopted yet.

### Federal Information Management

Douglas H. Ginsburg, who was confirmed by the Senate on July 29 as an Assistant Attorney General in the Department of Justice, addressed the Legislation Committee's Information Update at the Chicago Annual Conference on July 6. As Administrator of the Office of Management and Budget Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Ginsburg explained OMB's point of view on the various issues which have been raised about their proposed circular on the management of federal information resources which was issued in the March 15, 1985 Federal Register (see May 29 and April 3 ALA Washington Newsletter). Responding to the library community's concern about strengthening the depository library program, Ginsburg announced:

We have begun discussions with GPO (the Government Printing Office) as to how we can jointly solve this problem of supplying the depository libraries with the publications they should be receiving. In its December 1984 report, the General Accounting Office suggested that GPO provide guidelines to executive agencies as to just what sorts of documents belong in the depository libraries. We have agreed to work together immediately with GPO to assist in developing these guidelines. Once they are developed, OMB will promulgate the guidelines for application to executive agencies and actively require compliance....GPO is commencing development of a long range plan for the depository libraries and they have agreed to involve OMB and executive agencies in the plan's preparation. Together with GPO's depository library program officials we hope to look at the capabilities of the depository system for handling the volume of documents received. And we look forward with interest to the results of the pilot studies proposed by the Joint Committee on Printing on the desirability of providing electronic information products to the depository library system.

Ginsburg concluded by assuring the group that "we are listening to what the library community is saying, and that we will continue the dialog we have established with librarians as we revise the circular."

At a July 17 hearing of the House Government Operations Subcommittee on Employment and Housing chaired by Rep. Barney Frank (D-MA) on the impact of OMB restrictions on information gathering and dissemination by federal agencies, Ginsburg left open the possibility that the agency will issue a revised draft of the circular for public comment, although no date was indicated. Several members of the subcommittee including Reps. Frank, Major R. Owens (D-NY) and Sander M. Levin (D-MI) were critical of the approach taken by OMB in the draft circular and urged OMB to narrow the scope of its proposal. Carol Turner of Stanford University, past-chair of GODORT, testified in behalf of ALA and reaffirmed the Association's view that if implemented, the proposed circular will have an absolutely chilling impact on the provision of government information to the public. The resolution which ALA Council passed on this issue at the Annual Conference is attached to this Newsletter. The latest version of the chronology, Less Access to Less Information By and About the U.S. Government, is also attached.

### Medical Libraries

The Senate, on July 19, passed a three-year extension of the Medical Library Assistance Act (MLAA) as part of the Health Research Extension Act of 1985 (S. 1309 -- S. Rept. 99-108). The bill would authorize \$12, \$13, and \$14 million for FY 1986, '87, and '88, respectively.

Following that action, the Senate took up HR 2409, a similar bill with only a one-year extension authorizing \$12 million for MLAA in FY 1986, which was passed by the House on June 17. According to the House Energy and Commerce Committee report on their bill (H.Rept. 99-158), the intent is to "ensure the continuation of a coordinated national effort to establish library and information services to improve the dissemination of health knowledge." The committee also expressed its views on the current MEDLARS pricing policies: "The present cost-sharing arrangement wherein the Federal government supports the creation of the MEDLARS system and the users in the biomedical community pay the full costs to access the system has been effective and should be continued."

The Senate amended the House-passed bill by inserting the text of S. 1309, as amended and then passed HR 2409. Now a conference team will need to reconcile the differences between the two versions of HR 2409.

### National Endowment for the Humanities Deadline

The NEH Humanities Projects in Libraries next deadlines are September 6, 1985, March 21, 1986 and September 19, 1986. Write or call: Thomas Phelps, Humanities Projects in Libraries, Room 420, 1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20506 (202/786-0438).

### Office of Personnel Management

The Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs held hearings on July 30 on the nomination of Constance Horner as Director of the Office of Personnel Management (OPM). It is anticipated that the Senate will confirm Horner, currently an OMB official.

OPM announced that the Library Technician Register (GS-1411, Grades, 5, 6, and 7) will open from August 12-August 28. Obtain registration forms from: Federal Job Information Center, 1900 E Street, N.W., Room 1416, Washington, D.C. 20006 (202/653-8468).



RESOLUTION ON SALT-D

- WHEREAS, The Administration's proposed elimination of state-local tax deductibility from federal income taxes is a matter which may well have adverse effects on the provision of local educational efforts; and
- WHEREAS, Preliminary estimates have been made showing that state and local governments would lose \$39 billion in FY 1987 if deductibility is disallowed; and
- WHEREAS, Colleges and elementary and secondary schools would bear 42 per cent of this loss; and
- WHEREAS, 87 per cent of the funds supporting community public libraries is derived entirely from state/local levels of taxation; and
- WHEREAS, The Administration's budgetary rationale for the zero funding of library programs is based on the premise that state and local governments are in a better position to assume responsibility for basic library services; and
- WHEREAS, The lack of tax deductibility from Federal Income taxes can only exacerbate the already troubled financial situation of countless American libraries; now, therefore, be it
- RESOLVED, That the American Library Association call on all members of the U.S. Congress to examine this proposed measure in light of its effect on American libraries and education.

Adopted by the Council of the  
American Library Association  
Chicago, Illinois  
July 10, 1985  
(Council Document #47)

Adopted by the Council of the  
American Library Association  
Chicago, Illinois  
July 10, 1985  
(Council Document #47)

RESOLUTION ON OMB'S PROPOSED CIRCULAR ON  
MANAGEMENT OF FEDERAL INFORMATION RESOURCES

- WHEREAS, Access to government information and publications is essential for an informed society; and
- WHEREAS, Government has a responsibility to make available the information collected and created by it; and
- WHEREAS, New technology in information collection and dissemination has created changes in traditional methods of access; and
- WHEREAS, The Office of Management and Budget issued a proposed circular, "Management of Federal Information Resources," in the March 15 Federal Register which prompted a large number of negative comments; and
- WHEREAS, If implemented as written, the circular will systematically deprive the American people of basic information by and about their government; and
- WHEREAS, The American Library Association believes that the proposed circular reaches beyond agency management considerations into areas which are properly the purview of Congress; and
- WHEREAS, Two subcommittees of the House Government Operations Committee are conducting hearings on the proposed circular; and
- WHEREAS, There are enough difficult issues raised, but not resolved, by the circular to warrant a complete revision; now, therefore, be it
- RESOLVED, That the ALA urge OMB to issue a revised proposed circular taking into consideration comments received; and be it
- FURTHER RESOLVED, That OMB be urged to publish the revised proposed circular in the Federal Register with adequate opportunity for comment; and, be it
- FURTHER RESOLVED, That Congress be urged to review whether the circular's basic considerations and assumptions reflect the importance, value, and role of government information to American democracy and the American society in general.

Adopted by the Council of the  
American Library Association  
Chicago, Illinois  
July 10, 1985  
(Council Document #47.3)

## LESS ACCESS TO LESS INFORMATION BY AND ABOUT THE U.S. GOVERNMENT: V

A 1985 Chronology: January - June

What was first seen as an emerging trend in April 1981 when the American Library Association Washington Office first started this chronology, has by June 1985 become a continuing pattern of the federal government to restrict government publications and information dissemination activities. A policy has emerged which is less than sympathetic to the principles of freedom of access to information as librarians advocate them. A combination of specific policy decisions, the current Administration's interpretations and implementations of the 1980 Paperwork Reduction Act (PL 96-511), implementation of the Grace Commission recommendations and agency budget cuts significantly limit access to public documents and statistics.

The accelerating tendency of federal agencies to use computer and telecommunications technologies for data collection, storage, retrieval and dissemination has major implications for public access. To identify a few: contractual arrangements with commercial firms to disseminate information collected at taxpayer expense, increased user charges for government information, the trend toward having increasing amounts of government information available in electronic format only and eliminating the printed version. While automation clearly offers promises of savings, will public access to government information be further restricted for people who cannot afford computers or cannot pay for computer time?

ALA reaffirmed its long standing conviction that open government is vital to a democracy in a resolution passed by Council in January 1984 which stated that "there should be equal and ready access to data collected, compiled, produced, and published in any format by the government of the United States." In his inaugural speech, ALA President E.J. Josey asserted: "Again, nobody would deny the utility of many of these services provided by the private sector, but [they] are not available to all of the American people; their purpose is to yield a profit, and they are designed only for those who can pay for them. Nor do they have any obligation to provide access to all or any information; only that information which the suppliers deem profitable or potentially so. Only the preservation of public services, publicly supported, can assure that each individual has equal and ready access to information, ..."

At its Midwinter Meeting in January 1985, ALA Council established an Ad Hoc Committee to Form a Coalition on Government Information. The Committee is in the process of organizing a coalition of concerned organizations which could encourage executive and legislative branch policies and activities which assure that information needs of citizens are not restricted.

With access to information a major ALA priority, members should be concerned about the following series of actions which create a climate in which government information activities are suspect. Four previous chronologies on the same topic were compiled in an ALA Washington Office publication "Less Access to Less Information By and About the U.S. Government, A 1981-1984 Chronology: April 1981 - December 1984.:

**January 1985** President Reagan issued Executive Order 12498 which could expand greatly the authority of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to control government policy-making. The order will allow it to screen other agencies' regulatory proposals before the rules are drafted formally or announced publicly. The Executive Order does

not apply to independent agencies and also exempts regulations that must face tight judicial or statutory deadlines. (Washington Post, January 5) (See January 4 Federal Register, pp. 1036-1037 for the text of the Executive Order)

January

A 32-page report "Federal Restrictions on the Free Flow of Academic Information and Ideas," prepared by John Shattuck, a vice-president at Harvard University, was reprinted in the January 9 The Chronicle of Higher Education. This report has additional examples of restrictions of access to government information.

February

The 1985 edition of The Car Book rates cars based on crash test performance, fuel economy, preventative maintenance, repair, and insurance costs. Originally published in 1980 by the Department of Transportation, it quickly became the government's most popular publication with 2 million copies requested. But the Reagan Administration discontinued the book. It is now available from its private publisher for \$8.95. (Washington Post, February 4)

February

For the fourth year in a row, the Administration's budget proposed to eliminate funding for the Library Services and Construction Act and the Higher Education Act title II library grant programs. The National Commission on Libraries and Information Science was once again at zero. The proposed budget would also eliminate all postal revenue forgone appropriations. If enacted, this would mean that as of October 1, 1985, those eligible for free mail for the blind would have to pay the full cost of this mail; and major increases would take effect in all subsidized rate categories including nonprofit bulk mail, classroom publications, and the fourth class book and library rates. A 2-pound book package sent library rate would be 94¢, a 74 percent increase from the current 54¢. This would be on top of a 15 percent increase February 17, when the 2-pound book package went from 47¢ to 54¢ as part of a general rate hike.

Budget documents indicated that at a later date the Administration would propose legislation to permit USPS to increase the rates of full ratepayers so that some subsidy could continue for some but not all current preferred-rate mailers. No details of this proposal were provided. (OMB, Budget of the United States Government, Fiscal Year 1986, Appendix)

February

The Reagan Administration's efforts to stem the flow of unclassified information to the Soviet Union may soon turn to a new area: the government literature made available to the public through the Commerce Department's National Technical Information Service (NTIS). A February memorandum by Commerce Secretary Malcolm Baldrige suggests that "new legislation, new Executive Orders, and coordinated government-wide regulations" may be required to stem what he calls the "hemorrhage" of information through NTIS. Private corporations make extensive use of NTIS materials as did scholarly researchers. Baldrige wants much tighter screening of what goes into NTIS, in essence requiring that documents containing potentially sensitive information be withheld from NTIS even though they are declassified or unclassified. (Science, March 8)

March

The Merit Systems Protection Board announced that it will no longer publish the full text of its decisions in bound volumes, but referred users to private sector sources for MSPB decisions. The March 4 Federal Register notice (pp. 8684-8685) listed several private publishers which offer the MSPB decisions in various formats, not all of which include the complete decisions, at prices ranging from \$250 to \$498 per year. The bound volumes in the past have been provided at no charge to 472 depository libraries, including 37 federal libraries. In addition, 500 to 1000 copies of the volumes have been sold by the Government Printing Office at a cost of approximately \$55 per year. Discontinuation of government publication removes the item from the Depository Library Program, the GPO sales program, and inhibits public access to the decisions. The cost to the government itself for one copy of the MSPB decisions for each of the federal libraries which are currently depository recipients could be over \$18,000. (Statement of Francis J. Buckley, Jr. before the House Government Operations Subcommittee on Government Information, Justice and Agriculture, April 29)

March

At a speech at the National Press Club, Attorney General Edwin Meese 3rd rejected the suggestion that the Administration had restricted access to information and said it had instead reduced the amount of information that was classified. "We have far too much classified information in the Federal Government." He pledged an "open administration" in his tenure as Attorney General. "Sometimes there is a temptation in Government to close up sources of information," adding that he would seek "to avoid this temptation" and try instead "to work cooperatively." (New York Times, March 21) [However, the Information Security Oversight Office says classification has increased. See May item.]

March

OMB proposed "a sharp reduction in the Government's efforts to gather and distribute statistics about all aspects of American life." Under the proposal, a draft circular on the management of federal information resources, OMB would have authority over all information-gathering efforts by federal agencies. "The agencies would have to show that the data were essential to their mission, that they were not likely to be gathered by the private sector and that their benefits outweighed the collection costs." (New York Times, March 31) [For the text of the proposed circular see the March 15 Federal Register, pp. 10734-47, with corrections on March 21, p. 11471.]

March

Some omissions from the OMB proposed circular on management of federal information resources are sure to spark controversy. "For instance, while the proposal warns bureaucrats to be wary of the possibility of price-gouging as the result of a contractor's monopoly over a government data base, it doesn't offer specific safeguards....Agencies are not required to grant sole-source contracts to provide data bases to the public, but the SEC (Securities and Exchange Commission) and others have an incentive to do so if in return they get an internal system from the contractor at no cost." (Business Week, March 25)

March

Using its authority under the Paperwork Reduction Act, OMB rejected all or parts of several forms proposed by the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Veterans Administration to collect racial and ethnic data on beneficiaries of federal programs. The information is collected in an attempt to detect and prevent discrimination. (New York Times, March 25) [In June, OMB reversed its decision to bar HUD and VA from collecting information about the race, sex and ethnic background of applicants for home mortgage insurance. In a May letter, five Republican and seven Democratic senators urged President Reagan to overrule OMB, Washington Post, June 26.]

March

The Consumer Information Center (CIC), part of the General Services Administration, has raised fees for some of its publications, and is now charging for other publications it formerly distributed free of charge. A March 30 Washington Post story about these changes stated: "about 70 percent of the publications listed in the 1981 catalog were free, compared to 50 percent today," and "in 1981, the most expensive publication in the catalog cost \$2; today, the top price is \$7." As a result, the CIC's distribution of publications over the last four years has plummeted by about 77 percent.

April

The Defense Department told the Society of Photo-Optical Instrumentation Engineers, sponsors of an April technical symposium in Washington, that it must cancel the presentation of about a dozen unclassified research papers because the information might help the enemies of the U.S. In addition, DOD ordered the Society to restrict the audience that attends the presentation of two dozen other technical papers that are also not classified. The Pentagon contended it has the authority to limit distribution of information under the Export Control Act, which bars export of sensitive technology without a license. When speeches and papers are involved, DOD maintains that the presence of foreign scientists in the audience could lead to unauthorized export of information. Leading universities and professional associations have objected to the restrictions, and have been working with the Pentagon to try to resolve the conflict. (New York Times, April 8)

April

According to an April 18 Washington Post article, the Reagan Administration is drafting guidelines to classify all national security-related information throughout the federal government -- including civilian agencies -- as part of an effort to increase computer and telecommunications security. Much of the information now in government computers is not protected and is widely available. A special national security committee will decide how much of that information needs protection and how to protect it. As the federal government relies on computer networks and ordinary telephone conversations to conduct even the most sensitive business, traditional methods of classification for paper files and documents are seen as no longer adequate. The fact that computer and telecommunications technologies can be breached by electronic intercept and entry has prompted the decision to launch a set of security countermeasures in both classification and technology. One result could be that sensitive information now stored in civilian agency computers would fall under a new national security classification.

**April** The Department of Energy issued final regulations in the April 22 Federal Register (pp. 15818-29) to prohibit the unauthorized dissemination of certain information identified as Unclassified Controlled Nuclear Information. These regulations describe how government information is determined to be UCNI, establish minimum protection standards, specify who may have access to UCNI, and establish procedures for the imposition of penalties for violation of these regulations.

**April** "According to a UPI report of April 8, Senator William Proxmire has threatened to try to cut funds for a newly-created White House News Service if it shows signs of expansion into the nation's 'first government operated and controlled news service' or of being replicated in other government agencies." (Library Hotline, April 29)

**April** OMB is imposing administrative budget cuts on agencies which are forcing reductions in publication programs without adequate consideration of the utility of the information in meeting the agency's mission and in serving the public interest. For example, the Bureau of Labor Statistics is being forced, among other cuts, to reduce the Monthly Labor Review to a quarterly publication and to eliminate the following items: How the Government Measures Unemployment, Questions and Answers on Male and Female Earnings, A Profile on Black Workers, Historical Supplement to Employment and Earnings, Family Employment Characteristics Data Book, Handbook of Labor Statistics, and Productivity and Manufacturing. (Statement of Francis J. Buckley, Jr. before the House Government Operations Subcommittee on Government Information, Justice and Agriculture, April 29)

**April** The former U.S. Court of Claims published its Cases Decided through the Government Printing Office. As a result, copies were distributed to 557 depository libraries and about 300 copies were sold by the Superintendent of Documents for about \$82 in 1982, the last year they were published. The reports of the U.S. Claims Court are being published commercially for \$219 for six volumes to bring the set up to date, plus an estimated \$102 per year for future issuances. The new Court Judges and Clerk are provided free copies by the commercial publisher, but the Court purchases copies for its own library as must all other government agencies, libraries, and the public. (Statement of Francis J. Buckley, Jr., before the House Government Operations Subcommittee on Government Information, Justice and Agriculture, April 29)

**April** "A decision by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) to reduce public access to meetings and reduce the availability of transcripts from closed meetings is causing a stir in Congress. In late April the NRC voted 3-2 to immediately implement these rule changes proposed by chairman Nunzio Palladino, without first holding public hearings on the matter." (Science, May 10)

May OMB issued, May 2, Circular No. A-3 (Revised), "Government Publications," which prescribes the policies and procedures for approving funding for government periodicals, and for reporting periodicals and non-recurring publications. This revision institutes an annual review of federal periodicals and establishes guidelines and procedures for a coordinated and uniform method of agency reporting and OMB approval. A new policy section states: "Expenditure of funds shall be approved only for periodicals that provide information, the dissemination of which is necessary in the transaction of the public business required by law of the agencies. The OMB-approved control system shall continue to be implemented and used to monitor periodicals and non-recurring publications. Periodicals and non-recurring publications will be prepared and disseminated in the most cost-effective manner possible." The control system referred to was set up in 1981 through OMB Bulletin 81-16 and supplement No. 1, which "initiated a program to cut waste in Government spending on periodicals, pamphlets, and audiovisual products."

May On May 2, OMB issued OMB Bulletin No. 85-14 providing instructions and materials to the heads of executive departments for the submission of the Annual Report on Government Publications. "In the Annual Report on Publications, due June 30, 1985, agencies shall request approval for all periodicals, both those proposed and those already being published, from the Director of OMB." This bulletin implements Title 44 of the U.S. Code, section 1108, and OMB's revised Circular A-3.

May The Reagan Administration, under a 1982 executive order (E.O. 12356) that spelled out new rules for defining government secrets, has been classifying more documents and declassifying far fewer. According to the annual report of the Information Security Oversight Office, the total number of "classification decisions" in fiscal 1984 was 19,607,736, an increase of 9 percent over the year before. The systematic declassification of old records has flagged under the Reagan order, but proceeded faster in 1984 than in 1983. (Washington Post, May 8)

May Responses were overwhelmingly negative to the OMB proposed circular on Management of Federal Information Resources published in the March 15 Federal Register. While there were a few defenders among the 309 comments filed for public review in the OMB library, most were highly critical of the proposal. Of the comments received as of May 31, 1985, 169 were from the library and university community, 88 from other members of the public, and 52 from federal agencies. Many of the comments contended that the proposed policy would make government information less accessible and more costly.

In a May 14 letter to OMB, ALA stated that the proposed circular, if implemented as written, will systematically deprive the American people of information by and about their government. ALA said the proposal still requires major amplification and revision, and another draft should be issued for public comment. In addition, it should be submitted to Congress for policy review because

its provisions reach far beyond mere management considerations. ALA's ten-page response is available by sending a self-addressed mailing label to the ALA Washington Office, 110 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002. (ALA Washington Newsletter, May 29 and June 17)

May

In a May 24 editorial, "Statistical Error," the Washington Post called the OMB proposed circular on the management of federal information resources "an innocuous-sounding proposal that would destroy important and useful government services." The editorial concluded:

The government and the public need more and better, not less and more expensive, statistical information. The amounts that can be saved by OMB's proposals are nickels and dimes. The things that could be destroyed are gold. We put to the side a thought that has crossed some people's minds: that the administration is trying to suppress statistics and information that could be politically inconvenient. Let's just say that what they're doing is wrongheaded, and should be stopped.

May

Bechtel North American Power Corp. has been awarded a contract to record SEC filings onto microfilm and disseminate them. Starting Oct. 1, Bechtel is to provide an estimated 250,000 microfiche a year to the SEC's public reference rooms. Bechtel is expected to earn between \$4 million and \$6 million a year from sales of the information, depending on the number of filings. (Washington Post, May 29)

May

The Department of Agriculture announced that time-sensitive information currently available both electronically and in print form from several USDA agencies will be available July 1 from a single electronic source: Martin Marietta Data Systems. Users of the service, which are expected to be organizations that further distribute USDA information, will pay a minimum fee of \$150 a month, plus costs of special hardware and software, to access the system. USDA and land-grant universities will pay the usual computer time-share fees, but not a monthly minimum. With the proper equipment, such as high speed modems, farmers and other individuals could also access the new service for a fee. The new service will disseminate daily and weekly market reports from the Agricultural Marketing Service; crop and livestock reports from the Statistical Reporting Service; outlook and situation reports from the Economic Research Service, foreign agricultural situation reports, export sales reports, and foreign trade leads from the Foreign Agricultural Service; news releases from the Office of Information, and other perishable information. (Agricultural Libraries Information Notes, May)

American Library Association  
Washington Office  
20547-4400  
June 1982

USDA elicited a commitment from Martin Marietta to charge no more than the standard timesharing charges to information vendors purchasing the bulk data on the Martin Marietta system. However, USDA does not plan to exercise control over the fees information vendors charge the public to access the data on the vendor's systems. In addition, USDA hopes that disseminating the data on the Martin Marietta system will eliminate the need to disseminate the data in paper copy.

OMB regards the USDA program as a prototype for electronic dissemination of information, and EPA and several other agencies have expressed an interest in participating in the USDA system. (Government Documents Round Table, ALA, Documents to the People June 1985, p. 59)

June The June 12 edition of the Bureau of National Affairs Daily Report for Executives has a 7-page article which gives a good summary of the issues relating to the proposed OMB circular on Management of Federal Information Resources (March 15 Federal Register). The article has numerous quotes from the more than 300 comments OMB received about their proposal. (BNA Daily Report for Executives, Regulatory and Legal Analysis, pp. C-1 to C-7)

June The Department of Education's Publication and Audiovisual Advisory Council barred 17 federally supported education laboratories from issuing 98 of 438 publications related to research contracted for by the department. The move marks the first time that the department has applied a 1981 order intended to curb wasteful federal publishing to projects it has sponsored at the regional laboratories through the National Institute of Education. (Education Week, June 19)

June In the wake of alleged spying by former and current military personnel, the House of Representatives approved, 333 to 71, an amendment to the Defense Department authorization bill, which would give the Pentagon broad power to subject to lie detector tests more than 4 million military civilian employees with access to classified information and would require polygraphs before granting the highest level clearances. The Senate has already passed a defense authorization bill that provides for a much more limited polygraph program. The two bills will have to be reconciled in a conference committee. (Washington Post, June 27)

American Library Association  
Washington Office  
202/547-4440  
June 1985