

*The*  
*American Library*  
*Association*

AND

*National Defense*

AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, 1941

**T**HE OFFICIAL DECLARATION that a state of limited national emergency exists, the appropriation or authorization of 16 billion dollars for defense, the inauguration of Selective Service—these occurrences at home and the staggering happenings abroad have made indifference or complacency impossible—for the American Library Association as for all other agencies and individuals.

In the light of these events, the American Library Association has endeavored to make itself useful to libraries of all kinds, to the Government, to other national organizations, and, in a small way, to our colleagues abroad.

In September a special committee met for two days with the Librarian of Congress, the Chief of the Library Service Division of the Office of Education, and representatives of the Army, Navy, Office of Education, National Defense Advisory Commission, and others. Much time has been given at Council, Executive Board and committee meetings to the consideration of the responsibilities of libraries and the A.L.A. Contacts with Washington officials have been numerous and frequent.

It is worthy of note that much of the work in which the Association is now engaged because of the national emergency is work which should have been undertaken under any circumstances long before this, and although the immediate objective is to assist in the nation's total defense effort, the results will be a permanent contribution to education and scholarship. The expansion of library service in vocational schools, for example, would be worthy of the Association's best efforts at any time.

Most of the activities and publications of the Association related to the national emergency have been paid for in part from a grant voted by the Carnegie Corporation for these

purposes. The Rockefeller Foundation has provided the money which has made possible most of the work of an international character.

#### ARMY LIBRARIES

Camp libraries for the much expanded Army will be established and maintained by the War Department at government expense. Responsibility rests with the Morale Division of the Adjutant General's Office. Under Colonel Henry H. Pfeil, Chief of the Division, Captain John Wesley Ramsey has supervision of the libraries. Associated with him is Ray L. Trautman, Reserve Lieutenant, a trained and experienced librarian, called to his present post from the Enoch Pratt Free Library of Baltimore. Corps area and camp librarians are being appointed. The specifications call for both library training and library experience. It is expected that women will fill most of these positions. Library quarters in the large camps will be in the Service Club, the recreation center. Books will be purchased with public funds already appropriated. Advice on book selection will be given from Washington, but it is expected that camp and corps area librarians will make the actual selection, in line with the War Department's policy of decentralization.

Recently we asked the Morale Division what advice we should give to librarians who are being requested to participate in book campaigns for the soldiers. The following reply was received from the Adjutant General's Office:

"The American Library Association can do the War Department a service by replying to all inquiries that the War Department has not, at any time, authorized any person or group of persons to solicit reading matter for the Army. The Congress has provided funds for this purpose which are expected to meet any reasonable needs.

"On the other hand, there is no objection to patriotic citizens, so disposed, establishing contact with camp commanders and arranging to supply reading material for our soldiers. The main thing to avoid is having it appear that the War Department is sponsoring any form of solicitation of books or periodicals."

Officers of the Association, assisted by L. L. Dickerson, who was in charge of Army libraries, 1919 to 1924, by Mr. Dunbar, Chief of the Library Service Division of the Office of Education and Mr. MacLeish, Librarian of Congress, have been in touch with the Morale Division since its establishment. Conferences have been held also with many other officers, with the Director of the Selective Service System and members of advisory committees, official and otherwise. Plans, recommendations and criticisms have been solicited by representatives of the Army, and have been provided by the Association's representatives.

We believe that the present plan for library service is excellent in many ways, that it would be even better if more directly related to training, and, that if a general education program is adopted, the libraries should be closely related to that program. More adequate and suitable quarters than those now provided in a balcony room of the Service Club may be found necessary.

#### NAVY LIBRARIES

The Navy Department is maintaining its library organization much as it was in the 1920's after the World War. Library service is operated in stations, hospitals, and on naval vessels. The Navigation Bureau is responsible for the procurement, education, training, discipline and distribution of the officers and enlisted personnel of the Navy. It is charged with the supply of ships' navigational outfits and of libraries. It also supervises the recreational and welfare activities of the naval service, including the Chaplains' Corps.

Isabel DuBois, for several years director of libraries, Bureau of Navigation, is the respon-

sible head of the library system. She informs us that service is expanding with the increase of ships and personnel.

#### SURVEY OF LIBRARY RESOURCES

Brief descriptions of the holdings of several hundred libraries on subjects related to national defense will be found in a planographed publication issued December 28, 1940. The book is entitled "Guide to Library Facilities for National Defense." It is the result of the work of the Joint Committee on Library Research Facilities for National Defense, of which Robert B. Downs of New York University is chairman, and of the cooperating libraries represented in the volume. This preliminary edition has been sent free to all of the libraries asked to report their holdings, to appropriate officers of the Government, and to libraries which will soon be asked to contribute reports for the second edition. A few additional copies are available for sale.

This volume on national defense may demonstrate the need for a similar guide to library holdings for research on all subjects.

The Committee membership represents the Special Libraries Association, American Library Association, Association of American Law Libraries, Library of Congress, and Library Service Division of the Office of Education.

#### STUDIES

Four important quick studies are under way.

1. *Use of Library Materials in Vocational or Trade Training at the Lower Levels.* This study was planned following a special meeting of school librarians called by the A.L.A. Russell Munn, lent by the Cleveland Public Library, is making the study, having recently visited vocational schools in several cities. The results will take the form of an article for an appropriate educational journal, another for a library periodical, and a separate illustrated pamphlet for distribution to any person interested in vocational education or trade training.

It appears that throughout the country library service for vocational schools and classes is less adequately developed than school library service for the humanities and social sciences. It is hoped that the articles growing out of the study will help to improve this situation, and thus make a contribution to effective training for national defense and also to all vocational education.

2. *Public Library Service and Needs.* The Executive Board's Committee on National Defense Activities and Libraries, late in November, authorized a study of public library service and needs related to the national defense.

The purposes are:

a. To aid the individual library (through the data assembled) in studying its own services and resources and in justifying to local authorities adequate appropriations for maintaining or strengthening those services at a time when every expenditure will be scrutinized.

b. To enable the A.L.A. to make public definite evidence of the importance of library service in time of crisis.

The Association hopes to be able to compile the returns from the questionnaire early in 1941 and to make the facts reported and the opinions expressed available through appropriate publications.

3. *The Study of Defense Activities of College and University Libraries.* This study, which will be made by a special committee of the Association of College and Reference Libraries, a division of the A.L.A., is to determine: (1) What colleges and universities are doing to assist in new courses on democracy and on technical defense subjects; (2) How shifts in content and in methods are affecting the library; (3) New fields in which libraries can do effective work; (4) Whether present funds and sources are sufficient to meet emergency needs; (5) Whether financial or other help is being obtained from outside sources; and also (6) To obtain definite evidence of

the importance of library work in the present emergency.

4. *Study of Book Needs.* We interpret the words "book needs" to include books on defense training which need to be known about and made available, and also books which need to be written and published.

The over-all objective is to find ways of giving printed material its chance to help in the training of men for national defense, in the military services and in industry. Other objectives are to compile and distribute lists of printed materials which are being used, or could be used, in the training processes, arranged by trades, jobs, courses, or operations; to investigate the availability of these printed materials where they appear to be needed; to explore the possibility of causing needed materials which do not exist to be prepared and published.

#### LIBRARIES AND DEMOCRACY

For more than a year the officers, staff, and Adult Education Board, have endeavored to give all possible assistance to libraries in their major task, which is variously referred to as education for democracy, maintaining morale, or helping people to understand the meaning of events.

The Association adopted a policy statement in December, 1940, which was largely devoted to this subject. It has issued democracy booklists, published articles reporting and suggesting library activities, given consideration to the subject at its conferences. One of the sections of the public library study mentioned above concerns the services of libraries in this field. A new booklist was published in December, 1940; others are in preparation.

A new policy statement, entitled "The Library-1941," which is largely devoted to the library's opportunity to promote the ideals of democracy was adopted in December.

The responsibility of all libraries to promote the reading of socially significant books, to serve as centers of information on current

problems, and to help make democracy work, is accepted without question throughout North America.

#### FEDERAL AID

We are glad to report that schools which are participating in the federally supported program of training for national defense are now permitted, under certain conditions, to use some of the federal money for the purchase of books; and that engineering colleges and universities which are offering short courses in engineering specialties related to national defense may also purchase needed books with federal funds. We are under great obligation to Ralph M. Dunbar, Chief of the Library Service Division of the Office of Education, to Commissioner John W. Studebaker, Dr. Frederick J. Kelly, and to others of the Office of Education for their sympathetic understanding and appreciation of the importance of library participation. The Association has kept school and college librarians informed of the progress of negotiations and of interpretations issued.

As yet the interpretations do not appear to permit the purchase of books by public libraries for workers, though it may be possible in some cases to house in public libraries the books purchased by schools for persons enrolled in the classes. It is understood, however, that unofficial proposals which have been made by librarians (for the use of federal funds for the purchase by public libraries of books needed for workers as well as trainees in the national defense program) are under consideration.

Representatives of the Association have kept in touch with the W.P.A., the National Defense Advisory Commission, and with others who are concerned with the development or extension of community services for the ghost towns now being revived and the mushroom communities which are growing up around industries and camps. We shall do what we can to make certain that library needs are not overlooked.

The Federal Relations Committee, with the approval of the A.L.A. Council, is urging federal aid for the defense workers' book needs through public libraries.

#### CANADA

We regret to report that the A.L.A. has found few opportunities to assist our Canadian members in their special war-time services. Recently a special committee of Canadian librarians was appointed by the Executive Board to advise officers, committees, and staff of the A.L.A. on all Canadian library interests.

The International Relations Committee has offered some of the Books for Europe funds for the purchase of United States books for Canada. Charles R. Sanderson, Librarian of the Toronto Public Library, chairman of the committee mentioned above, is now canvassing with his committee and with military officers the purposes to which such funds may best be put.

#### INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

This subject is included in this statement because the same world events which have made necessary the national defense program are also directly affecting the activities of libraries and of the Association in international relations.

*American Library in Paris.* This is an autonomous institution, but the A.L.A. cannot fail to be interested in it. Latest reports indicate that the library is open and circulating books. Dorothy Reeder, Director, three members of her staff, and the Comtesse de Chambrun, vice-president, are still in Paris. A meeting of the Board of Trustees was held recently in New York. Arrangements were made for all conceivable contingencies. Payments by the A.L.A. to the American Library in Paris of funds previously received for the purpose from the Carnegie Corporation will be continued if transfer of credits is possible. It is understood that the Rockefeller Foundation is also continuing its grants. A quiet solici-

itation of funds in this country is in progress.

*Books for Europe.* In spite of difficulties, this project continues. Books have been recently shipped to England (for Army libraries and the Seafarer's Education Service), Finland, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, Holland, Portugal, Greenland, South Africa and one municipal library in unoccupied France. At the request of the International Relations Committee the Rockefeller Foundation has generously permitted a considerable liberalization of terms. The money is used for American books, selected by the receiving library, purchased in and shipped from this country.

*Importations.* A committee headed by Harry M. Lydenberg of the New York Public Library is giving special attention to the problems involved in the acquisition of foreign books and journals under present conditions.

*Latin America.* The Association maintains an office in Washington to promote Latin American relations. Several reports of studies will soon be published. Also ready for early publication by the A.L.A. in Spanish are two books on library work in North America. One is a comparatively small pamphlet for the general reader, the other is a small book for the librarian.

Through its officers and staff the Association has kept in close touch with the State Department's Division of Cultural Relations, and with the "Coordinator of commercial and cultural relations between the American republics" of the Council of National Defense, commonly referred to as the Nelson Rockefeller group.

A Books for Latin America Project, prepared by our committee, awaits funds. A project for assisting United States Cultural Institutes in Latin America with books and periodicals and in other ways, now under consideration, will probably be administered by the A.L.A. Other plans, in which the A.L.A. may or may not be directly involved, have to do with the translation of United States books into Spanish and Portuguese, and of Latin

American books into English. Several Latin American librarians are now in this country, studying in our library schools or visiting libraries.

*Refugees.* The A.L.A. Committee on Refugee Librarians, headed by Jennie Flexner of the New York Public Library, has assisted many persons in many ways. Recently Mr. Lydenberg has accepted appointment as A.L.A. representative on the Emergency Committee in Aid of Displaced Foreign Scholars, of which Dr. Stephen Duggan of the Institute of International Education is chairman.

### BOOK LISTS

The Association has chosen as its field in the publication of lists that of broad general interest. The following have been issued, are under way, or are in prospect:

*Industrial Training for National Defense*, by Charles M. Mohrhardt. August, 1940.

*Latin America, Books for North American Readers*, by Betty Adler. October, 1940.

*Aeronautic Training for National Defense*, by Paul Howard. November, 1940.

*Engineering Defense Training*, by Harrison W. Craver and Harrison A. von Urff. November, 1940.

*Dangers to Democracy*, a compilation of titles submitted by 15 cooperating libraries. December, 1940.

*Canada, a Reading Guide*, by Elizabeth W. Loosley and Ethelwyn Wickson. February, 1941.

*A New World Order*, by Fern Long. February, 1941.

*Military Manuals*, by Florence S. Hellman. In preparation.

*The Shop's Library, Material Useful for Elementary Training*, by Iva Winterfield. March, 1941.

*Canada, a Children's List*. In preparation.

*Latin America, A Children's List*. In preparation.

*Civil Liberties and Democracy*, by Margaret Fulmer. In preparation.

Economic Democracy. In prospect.

Socially Constructive Fiction. In prospect.

Two or three lists for children and young people about democracy and its problems, and about living and working together democratically, are under consideration.

Of the lists already published, several have been issued as supplements to the semi-monthly *Booklist*, and have thus gone free to nearly 8,000 libraries. Several hundred copies of each list have been sent free to key people other than librarians, a special mailing list having been prepared for each list. Additional copies are for sale at quantity prices. Plans have been tentatively made for publication of supplements to these lists in the *Booklist* from time to time.

#### BOOK CAMPAIGN

Appeals for books and for money with which to purchase books, for war prisoners, camps of refugees and internees, for Dutch sailors, and for devastated libraries, have been received within recent weeks from the Y.M.C.A.; the International Bureau of Education, Geneva; the Friends Service Committee; For Finland, Inc.; Netherlands Relief Fund; and Refugee Economic Corporation. It has been suggested that libraries and periodical publishers be requested to set aside books and periodicals for use in replenishing or re-establishing libraries destroyed or injured during the war, both in Europe and in Asia. The Association has proffered help also to the British Library Association's war service.

Recognizing the inadvisability of repeated efforts to collect books first for one purpose, then for another, officers of the Association are considering, with officers of the American Red Cross, the feasibility of one national book drive for all purposes, including possible domestic needs, which might be sponsored by the American Red Cross and the A.L.A. Conversations were begun early in December. There are many difficulties and many questions. No conclusions have been reached.

A special committee has been appointed to consider the problems of aid to devastated libraries in the war areas.

#### NORMAL LIBRARY ACTIVITIES

We believe that "all out" assistance in the national defense effort is now the first duty of every American library. We think it not inconsistent to add that we believe, and that British libraries appear to have demonstrated, that every well established library service should be continued, not only because it will be useful later on, but because it can contribute measurably to the maintenance of morale. The longtime objectives of the Association must not be forgotten. The regular activities of libraries and of the Association must still go on.

(Signed) ESSAE M. CULVER,  
President

CARL H. MILAM,  
Executive Secretary

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