

## A. L. A. COUNCIL

Tuesday Evening, May 29, 1928

The Second Session of the Council convened at eight thirty-five o'clock, Tuesday Evening, May 29, President Roden presiding.

PRESIDENT RODEN: We have before the Council several communications and petitions. The first is a petition from the periodical round table, submitted by Mr. Severance.

SECRETARY MILAM: "We the undersigned hereby apply to the Council of the American Library Association for permission to become a section of this Association under the title of Periodical Section. This application is made in consideration of two years' existence of this group as a round table with an overflowing attendance and a paid membership in 1928 of fifty members."

Twenty-six names are attached to this petition.

MR. SEVERANCE: I move the report be referred to the Special Committee on Sections.

PRESIDENT RODEN: If there is no objection it will be so referred.

Another communication is one recommending affiliation of chapters of the Nashville Library Club, presented by Miss Laura Smith.

SECRETARY MILAM: "The Committee on Affiliation of Chapters with the A. L. A. has received from the Nashville,

Tennessee Library Club an application for affiliation with the A. L. A. We find that the application complies with the regulations of the Constitution of the A. L. A. Your Committee therefore recommends that the Nashville, Tennessee Library Club be affiliated as a chapter of the A. L. A."

This is signed by Laura Smith, Chairman.

DR. HILL: I move it be adopted.

... The motion was seconded by Mr. Severance and carried ...

PRESIDENT RODEN: Mr. Meyer, are you ready to present your communication?

MR. H. H. B. MEYER (Washington, D. C.): Mr. President and Members of the Council: I have the honor to propose the first corresponding member of the A. L. A. in the person of Dr. Tietse Pieter Sevensma, the present Librarian of the League of Nations. It is eminently fitting that our first corresponding member should be from a sort of super-nation, so that we do not make any insidious comparison by appointing someone of a distinct nationality. While Dr. Sevensma is a Hollander, we are asking him to become a corresponding member, the first, of the A. L. A. because he is the Librarian of the League of Nations. As such, perhaps a brief sketch of his career will not be out of place.

He was born at Sneek, Dutch Friesland, in 1879. He attended grammar school and studied at the University of

Amsterdam where, in 1905, he became a doctor of theology. Later he studied political sciences at the same University. For some time he lectured on Hebrew at the Rotterdam Grammar School, and his career as librarian began in 1908. From that year until 1913 he worked at the University Library of Amsterdam and also at the publishing and bookselling house of Martinus Nijhoff, where he compiled a catalog of books published in Holland covering several centuries. In 1913 he became librarian of the Commercial University of Rotterdam, and organized the library in the new building. In 1916 he was appointed librarian of the Public Library in Amsterdam, a function which he has combined since 1924 with the librarianship of the University Library of Amsterdam.

Dr. Sevensma, one of the founders of the Dutch Library Association and its first president (1912-1923), was one of the editors of the fourth edition of Winkler Prins' Encyclopedia, and is the chief editor of the new Dutch Encyclopedia Zoeklicht (Searchlight).

I think we will all agree from this brief sketch that Dr. Sevensma has certainly library experience enough to bring him into the first rank of librarians. As Librarian of the League of Nations he certainly is a most appropriate individual to be nominated as the first corresponding member of the A. L. A. I therefore place his name in nomination, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT RODEN: Under the Constitution, the Council nominates and the Association itself votes the corresponding member in at any regular meeting. Is the nomination seconded?

... The nomination was seconded by several members.

PRESIDENT RODEN: It is moved and seconded that Dr. Sevensma be nominated as a corresponding member.

... The motion was carried unanimously ...

PRESIDENT RODEN: Are there other communications?

DR. HILL: Would it be in order to introduce a matter at this moment which I think will take about a moment to dispose of?

"Whereas, The First International Congress of Bibliography and Librarianship will meet in Rome during the month of June, 1929, and

"Whereas, Succeeding Congresses will be organized to meet at intervals of three to five years thereafter, and

"Whereas, An International Exposition will be held in Chicago in the summer of 1933,

"RESOLVED, That the official representative of the American Library Association at the Congress in Rome be authorized to transmit an invitation to the International Committee on Bibliography and Librarianship to organize a congress in 1933 at Chicago during the period of the Exposition."

I move the adoption of this resolution.

... The motion was seconded and carried ...

PRESIDENT RODEN: The report of the Special Committee on the communication from Mr. John Cotton Dana will be presented by Miss Rothrock.

MISS MARY U. ROTHROCK: In the absence of Mr. Ernest J. Reece, Chairman, I have the honor to present the report of the Committee, Mr. President, and I move its adoption. (Paper No. 3)

PRESIDENT RODEN: You have mimeographed copies before you. Shall this be read?

DR. HILL: For the sake of bringing the matter officially before the Council, I will move its adoption.

... The motion was seconded by Mr. Meyer ...

DR. HILL: This is one of the very important reports which will be made to the Council this year, and it appears to me that it ought not to be accepted or rejected without serious consideration and some discussion, perhaps. It is a remarkable report; it is an excellent report, and it is a much better report than some of us thought would be produced. For one, I sincerely congratulate the Committee.

In order to introduce the subject for discussion, I am sure that you will be glad to have me read the answer of Mr. Dana to the report of the Committee. A few days before I left home, I lunched with Mr. Dana, and we went over this

matter somewhat at length and were very much of the same mind. While we appreciated the value of the report, we did not agree with all its findings, and if you will bear with me and permit me, I will read the letter which Mr. Dana has sent, that is, such parts of it, Mr. Chairman, as I think ought to be read. I will start on the bottom of the first page:

"The Committee's report, I am glad to say, approves in effect of my suggestion that headquarters tell fully and clearly how and why it spends money and to what persons it is paid.

"The moneys spent up to July 1, 1927, by the Committees named in the first column, that is Adult Education, Board of Education, Curriculum, Library Extension, Textbooks, and Survey, amount to \$376,300. In the second column are the moneys which are being spent in this year, 1928, by the same Committees. In the third column are the totals, which do not include, as I interpret the figures, the moneys spent between July 1, 1927, and January 1, 1928. The grand total is \$376,300, which seems not to include overhead cost of selling and shipping books.

"The use of this sum as planned by the Executive Board from time to time seems never to have been presented to the body which decides all questions of policy, although the questions of whether or no the Association should spend the sums named for the purposes indicated would seem to

be questions of policy.

"The Committee's report says that any investigation of results of all that has been done in recent years at this early date would yield only premature and inconclusive judgments. It would be interesting to know at what point in the expenditure of half a million dollars, if at any point, it would be possible to arrive at anything other than premature and inconclusive judgments. Is Headquarters to continue saying, 'Let's spend another \$500,000 and see if it isn't a good thing?'

"I see no reason why the names of all persons working at Headquarters, or of persons engaged for any sort of work by the Association, should not be given, as well as the salaries paid. At least one outside expert has been paid, apparently, no small sums for several years, and no statement has appeared of the amounts paid him.

"The Committee answers my criticism of the Board of Education to the effect that it is compelling that uniformity which is the most deadly of all practices in a growing institution, by saying that it aims to establish standards rather than to standardize; to which the reply is that it is enforcing uniformity by its system of accrediting, under which an institution may be and often is penalized by being put into a lower rank if it does not conform. If Mr. Williamson's library school admitted a few students well qualified to

become librarians, but without the specified college degrees, his school would be penalized by being listed in a lower grade.

"The bad influences of standardizing agencies in education have just been clearly set forth and condemned by Dr. Kelly, Dean of Minnesota University, and his comments have been heartily approved by President Capen of the University of Buffalo. Of twenty-five standardizing agencies operating in the last twenty years, our association is shown to be the most active, and so far as its powers extend, the most injurious. All this is in print and easily obtainable."

The report by Dr. Kelly, I will say, is very interesting and very much to the point.

"The report says a few pioneers have long been familiar with methods of inducing adults to read. I refuse to admit that a few pioneers only have known that it is a library's business to promote the reading of adults. The rank and file of librarians may not resent the implications of that statement, so I will gladly do it for them.

"I pointed to the contrast between the prophecies of its value by the promoters of our survey and the demand for it as shown by its sales. It cost about \$60,000. Its volumes have thus far sold up to, say, \$10,000 (the figures to date are not given), and the overhead cost is not noted.

"Did the Council ever approve of paying six of our associates about \$10,000 for writing textbooks, and of

— paying \$13,000 to get together the material from which the six books might be written with little study by the authors, and \$3,000 to a man for occasional advice, I suppose largely on textbooks? Many members of the Association have written good books because they liked to do it. Is it the Association's purpose to discourage all volunteer work on textbooks? Does it think persons hired to write textbooks will do as good work as have those who have written them out of love for their calling?

"Was the Council ever definitely asked if it approved of having the A. L. A. make textbooks for library schools? We are doing that in spite of the fact that the sale of the textbooks for library schools would never pay their cost, especially in view of the cost of about \$26,000, as mentioned above, before they were in type.

"The report says, 'The Association would have shown weakness and lack of vision if it had shrunk from testing the ideas behind the undertakings which they are carrying out.' I should change that statement to say that the Association did show weakness and lack of vision in not refusing to spend \$500,000 to test out ideas that had not even had full and careful discussion by the Council.

— "We are now beginning to study reading, why people read, why they do not read more, why they do not read better things, this in spite of the fact that this country has

never done as much reading as it does now, and the increase of it every day and every year is tremendous. In fact, so great is the amount of reading now done in this country that the per cent of it that is furnished through public libraries is ridiculously small. I have called the attention of the Association to this very obvious fact not once, but many times, and I have again and again urged that this fact clearly marks a tremendous change in the production and the consumption of print, a change which inevitably affects the place that the library occupies in general economy, and I have urged the Association to look into this matter with the utmost care and see if there are not radical changes that can be made in library management which would lead to a greater usefulness of libraries. This was all ignored by the Committee.

"We are spending a great deal of money to promote adult education. Of the special agencies that are promoting adult education, easily the most potent and most effective are correspondence schools, but not only does the Adult Education Association refuse to allow itself to soil its hands by approaching them, but the same course is also followed by the Adult Education Committee of the American Library Association.

"I suggest now that the Council appoint a Committee to examine with great care, in fact to make a systematic study, of Headquarters and all that is there going on."

That, in substance, Mr. President, is the answer which Mr. Dana makes to the report of the Committee. With all of that which I have read, I concur. I do feel that we must have reached the point where we must take great care in the expenditure of money. We have been blessed the last five years, I think, with a large sum and we have spent it very freely on objects that are very good, seemingly, to most of us. We have reached the point where we have not concluded any one of those objects, and we have no money to go on with them unless we are fortunate enough to get it somewhere, so that it is time for us not to call a halt, but to look into our own finances and to look into our own management and see how we can carry on and how effectively we can carry out the wishes or suggestions of committees as they have been made.

PRESIDENT RODEN: Dr. Hill, do I understand that that communication is a private one to you and not addressed to the Council?

DR. HILL: Mr. President, it is neither, but it was given to me with the suggestion that I read such portions of it as I thought the Council could stand. If I turn that over to the Secretary with that understanding, that such paragraphs as have a question mark before them will be eliminated, it may be used in any way that the Secretary desires.

PRESIDENT RODEN: Is there any further

discussion?

This is on the adoption of this Committee report which was sent to the Council a month ago and of which other copies are before you now.

... The motion to adopt the report was carried ..

DR. HILL: Mr. President, may I ask if it would be in order to present for your consideration a couple of resolutions which pertain to the subject matter of that report at this time?

PRESIDENT RODEN: Yes, I think so.

DR. HILL: The first is: That the financial statements, as recommended by the Committee, be published in a specified number of the Bulletin, one which will be satisfactory to the Secretary.

PRESIDENT RODEN: Do you mean, for instance, the January number, or something of that sort?

DR. HILL: Not that far off, but whenever it is convenient to him, say September.

MR. SEVERANCE: I have just been talking to Dr. Hill, and the idea is to publish them in some specified number in which the annual statistics occur, either the January or the February number.

SECRETARY MILAM: We have just published the annual report.

DR. HILL: That is in the Committee's report on the first page at the bottom.



MR. WALTER: I think Dr. Hill means that these be published with the other financial statements of the Association.

DR. HILL: I thought we might get them before, but it is just as well to have them at that time.

MR. WALTER: I should like to offer as an amendment that they be published as part of the regular financial statement of the Association.

DR. HILL: I accept that.

PRESIDENT RODEN: The report has been adopted, carrying with it certain provisions, one of which is that there be prepared regularly a sufficient number of copies of the Executive Board minutes, including budgets, salaries, and other exhibits, with the exception of matters necessarily given in confidence, and so on. Dr. Hill's motion, as I take it, is that those figures and facts are to be published in a regular number annually, that is the same number each year. Is that the idea?

DR. HILL: No, I should say when it is most convenient for the Secretary's office, perhaps in January. I am referring to item (c) on the first page of the report.

PRESIDENT RODEN: "That there be a special printing in an early number of the Bulletin of Headquarters professional salaries, by name and position. That has already been adopted, that is the law. Now Dr. Hill's motion is that

it be the September number, if that is acceptable to the Secretary.

SECRETARY MILAM: We can publish it in any number so far as I see. I have not analyzed this to see whether there is any of it that could not be ready by a certain time. So far as I know it could be published in the next issue, but I am not prepared to say offhand that it could be done.

DR. HILL: I thought it might be possible to make that some definite time.

PRESIDENT RODEN: Dr. Hill's motion, then, is that the statistics called for in Paragraph (c) of the report be published in the September number each year.

DR. HILL: No, this year.

SECRETARY MILAM: Let's say September or earlier. It would be our intention in response to the Council's action already taken to publish it as soon as possible.

PRESIDENT RODEN: September or earlier, then, is the phraseology.

... The motion was seconded by Mr. Severance ...

MR. UTLEY: I don't see the necessity for this motion, because we have just adopted this report in which it says that shall be a special printing in an early number of the Bulletin of this information called for.

PRESIDENT RODEN: Are you ready for the question?

... The motion was put to vote, but was lost ...

DR. HILL: Everyone in the house is voting, but that shows the consensus anyway.

There is one other resolution I should like to submit: That whenever the Council is asked to approve a policy, a detailed description of that policy or what the policy entails should be presented, and report should be given of the cost of carrying out said policy; that when the Council approves, the activity be carried on until the amount of money appropriated is spent, and that any additional cost entailed should be brought up and approved before going on with it.

PRESIDENT RODEN: Brought up and approved by the Council?

DR. HILL: By the Council.

MR. WALTER: I am wondering if it would not be extremely difficult to approve the cost of a policy. Wouldn't "estimated cost" be better? I should think it would be a very difficult matter, anyway, to predict the cost of a policy. Secondly, when the money is spent you recommend that the work be discontinued until brought up and approved. That absolutely prevents any transfer, it prevents any emergency action, and I think, at least I hope, it is far beyond anything that the maker of the resolution intended. It certainly will bring things to a stand-still.

DR. HILL: I will accept the amendment to include the word "estimated." There is no reason why action

shouldn't be taken by the Council on this as well as to appropriate other moneys. There will be no holding up of activities.

MR. WALTER: Nevertheless, it would be highly desirable to understand just exactly what we are voting for in this resolution. I know that whoever made the resolution had the best interests of the Association at heart. We have been criticized very severely for lack of accuracy. The resolution states that there shall be no continuance until Council action approves. In the first place, it would mean calling a special session of the Council, which would mean the expenditure of many times the amount of money for the continuation of any policy that I know of.

MR. JOSEPH L. WHEELER (Baltimore): It seems to me the whole spirit of that resolution is erroneous. I take it that each of these activities mentioned in the report is in almost every case financed by the Carnegie Corporation. Isn't that so?

PRESIDENT RODEN: Yes.

MR. WHEELER: Am I mistaken in thinking that the Carnegie Corporation gave those various moneys for specific purposes? The donor of gifts like this, it seems to me, has a right to dictate at least in a general way the general purposes. We have in each case put the carrying out of the policies in the hands of some responsible group of our Association. If we are going to bring these projects back to be considered

financially by the Council, it seems to me there is no particular object in having an Executive Board or in having any committees in charge of these various activities. It certainly would be a very valuable thing to advise the Council of all the details before we go on with the activities, but I can't see that we are on the right road in presenting that resolution.

DR. HILL: I think the Council ought to have a little more to say and ought to be able to tell the Executive Board what it wants to have done and then have the Executive Board do it. The way the business is conducted at present, these moneys are spent by different committees, and those committees are not handled through the Executive Board or by the Secretary of the Association. They spend the money as they want for their particular project, and as the Council shaping the policy of the Association, I think we ought to have a little closer hold of the spending of the money and to know something of the organization of those committees so that, if possible, we could suggest a program which would be more economical and which would save the committees and the association and the fund much money in the end.

PRESIDENT RODEN: The question is on the motion of Dr. Hill that when the Council approves, the activity be carried on until the amount of money appropriated is spent, and that any additional cost entailed be brought up and approved

before going on with it.

MR. WALTER: By the Council? I agree with Dr. Hill in that I think the policy should be discussed by the Council, but a question of policy and the holding up of an already approved policy because of a technicality are two entirely different things. I should like to see that resolution modified in some way so that it is a general policy; it is already delegated to the Council by the Constitution.

DR. HILL: I think Mr. Walter has in mind the words that he wishes inserted; let him put them in. I do suggest that the word "estimated" be inserted.

MR. WALTER: That when the funds appropriated for the purpose are exhausted, the continuation of the project shall be brought before the Council as ---- That won't do, either; that is just as bad. You know what I mean.

Here is the point. All that I think Dr. Hill wants is that a policy shall not be held up because of a technicality which involves a transfer of money, but that if there is any considerable further appropriation necessary to continue this policy after the funds appropriated have been exhausted, then the matter shall be resubmitted to the Council to determine whether or not the continuation of that policy is advisable. That is not a motion, though; that is part of the discussion.

I should be a little bit inclined to amend by striking out that last clause and trusting to the Constitution to bring up before the Council the matter of policy, because if we say nothing about it, it certainly can't continue without funds. I have faith in Headquarters that they will not run very long without funds, and the Constitution requires us to bring it up as a matter of policy. Why say anything about it? Why not leave it as it is? We may be perfectly sure that no costly policy will be long continued if there are no funds, may we not?

SECRETARY MILAM: I am not sure tonight what might happen.

PRESIDENT RODEN: Are you ready for the question?

MR. WALTER: I propose an amendment by eliminating the last part of that motion because I think it is unnecessary.

PRESIDENT RODEN: What is the last part? It seems to be all in one piece.

MR. WALTER: The part about spending the money.

PRESIDENT RODEN: "Until the amount of money appropriated is spent?"

MR. WALTER: I move the elimination as unnecessary of that part of the resolution.

PRESIDENT RODEN: Then the part that remains is: "And that any additional cost entailed be brought up and

approved before going on with it."

MR. WALTER: I can't see that that is a matter of policy. Eliminate that and you have what Dr. Hill wants.

DR. HILL: I accept that, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT RODEN: The motion as amended is that when Council approves the activity be carried on until the amount of money appropriated is spent.

MR. WALTER: No, go back a little farther.

PRESIDENT RODEN: Suppose we appoint Dr. Hill and Mr. Walter a special committee to draft a resolution, and pass on to the next business.

MR. WALTER: Frankly, I want Dr. Hill to get what he wants, but I don't want us to get into a mess over a technicality as I am doing.

With the concurrence of Dr. Hill, this is the amended resolution I would suggest: Whenever Council is asked to approve a policy, a report should be given of the estimated cost of carrying out said policy and a detailed description of what that policy entails should be presented. That is the amended motion.

The last part, which has caused us all this trouble --

DR. HILL: Don't read it!

SECRETARY MILAM: The motion is that whenever Council is asked to approve a policy, a report should be given

of the estimated cost of carrying out said policy and a detailed description of what that policy entails should be presented.

... The motion was seconded ...

MR. WALTER: May I ask the Secretary to state whether that would be different from the present policy?

PRESIDENT RODEN: Not the slightest.

SECRETARY MILAM: I beg to differ, Mr. President. There is no requirement in the Constitution that an estimated cost of a policy shall be made to the Council, and I confess that I do not know how the cost of a policy can be estimated.

PRESIDENT RODEN: All in favor of the adoption of this motion will please say "aye," opposed "no." The motion is lost.

Next is a communication from Mr. Vitz regarding the establishment of a section for the foreign-born.

... Mr. Carl Vitz, of Toledo, read the report of the special committee to consider a petition to the A. L. A. for the establishment of a section on work with the foreign-born ... (Paper No. 4)

MR. VITZ: I move that be adopted.

PRESIDENT RODEN: Under the rules this petition is referred to a special committee for later action.

Next is the report of the Committee of Five concerning the election and term of office of the presiding

officer of the Council and the question of extending the term of office of the President from one to two years, also the matter of biennial meetings.

MR. SEVERANCE: The make-up of this Committee is:

Miss Theresa Hitchler, Brooklyn  
 Miss Alice Tyler, Western Reserve, Cleveland  
 Matthew Dudgeon, Milwaukee  
 Chalmers Hadley, Cincinnati

and myself. Our Committee has had a meeting since we came here. We couldn't very well meet before. There were three members present and there was one vote by mail, which makes four which were unanimous in the report that I shall give. We could not get a report from Miss Tyler; consequently, while she is on the Committee I cannot say for her whether she approves this report or not.

... Mr. Severance read the resolution adopted at the Toronto meeting June 24, 1927 authorizing the appointment of the Committee ...

MR. SEVERANCE: You will note that from the resolution this Committee has nothing to say as to whether we should have an officer of the Council who is not the President of the Association and the Committee must confine itself to the question of amendment of the Constitution and By-laws to make this possible.

... Mr. Severance read the Committee's report.  
 (Paper No. 5) ...

PRESIDENT RODEN: Under the rules amendments to the Constitution must be adopted by a three-fourths vote of those present and voting at two successive regular meetings of the Association. They will therefore be reported to the regular meeting at this Conference and then will go over until the next regular meeting, which I suppose is the Mid-Winter Meeting, if that is considered a regular meeting. If not, then until a year from now.

SECRETARY MILAM: Amendments to the Constitution cannot be considered by the Association under the Constitution unless announced one month in advance.

PRESIDENT RODEN: Is there discussion of these amendments?

Is there any further business before the Council? If not, a motion to adjourn is in order.

... Upon motion, the meeting adjourned at nine thirty-five o'clock ...

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