

A.L.A. - WASHINGTON OFFICE - D 12
JUL 11 1964
Testimony

Levy

AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION
OFFICIAL FILE

May 15, 1964

MEMORANDUM TO: Mr. Emerson Greenaway

FROM: Germaine Krettek
GK

VERTICAL FILE

Attached for your consideration is a draft of a possible statement for you to use at the Platform Hearings of the Republican National Committee in San Francisco in July.

GK/sms

cc: Mr. Clift ✓
Mr. Lorenz

The American Library Association, a nonprofit, professional organization, requests earnestly that the Republican National Convention Committee on Resolutions include in its 1964 platform a plank on the need for and the ways of obtaining in the national interest adequate libraries to serve the children, the youth, and adults of the United States.

In 1960, the Republican National Convention at Chicago adopted in its educational plank this sentence:

"Toward the goal of fullest educational opportunity for every American, we pledge these actions:...Support of efforts to make adequate library facilities available to all our citizens..."

We appeal now to this Resolutions Committee to insert a plank on libraries ^{as a National concern} in still stronger form than in 1960, because libraries today are of greater significance than ever before in the nation. Although the local communities and the States have the primary responsibility for support and operation of libraries, there is also a national interest which must be faced. The nation must see that its libraries fulfill their necessary roles ^{in buttressing the education, the everyday work and the culture of its citizens.}

In order that the United States may progress in this modern world, where science, technology, business, and manner of living are changing rapidly, it is essential that all citizens--adults, young people, and children--have ready access to libraries. The attainment of this goal must not be left to individual efforts, to localities, or to chance, but must be based on systematic, careful planning and joint efforts by localities, States, and the Federal Government.

Since the 1960 National Republican Convention, some progress has been made in carrying out that pledge. Local communities and the States, in part as a result of the Federal legislation, have increased greatly their appropriations to libraries and have provided their services to users. The Federal Government, ^{improved} recognizing the value of libraries, has taken some steps and has been considering

others. The public library situation is still below the standards that a great

In the Congress, Republicans supported the Library Services Act of 1956, and its extension in 1960 for ^{annual} matching grants to the States to extend and improve public library services to small towns, villages, and farming communities.

Based on the success of this initial public library legislation and on the requirements of a changing world, the Congress passed and the President signed the Library Services and Construction Act of 1964. This amendment to the original act removes the population limitation of 10,000 and extends the benefits of the law to all of our people.

An attack also was made at the national level upon the serious gaps in college and university library building. In the Higher Education Facilities Act of 1964, libraries were specifically included among the types of buildings which could receive construction funds under the legislation.

Gains in improving the critical library situation of the United States have been made but much remains to be done.

^{with a rapidly increasing population}
A great nation needs adequate library services and buildings in schools, colleges, universities, research work, government, and community public libraries. The gaps confronting this nation and hampering its progress are too many to be listed here, but a few examples might be called to your attention:

Public Schools

	Total Number	Without centralized libraries:	
		Number	Percent
Elementary public schools	75,773	52,094	68.8
All Public Schools	102,487	54,941	53.6
<u>Financing (in schools with libraries)</u>			
Annual expenditure per pupil		Actual	Recommended
Number of books per pupil		\$1.60	\$4 - \$6 (for books)
		5	10

* College Libraries

- Collections:
 - In 2-year colleges, fewer than 10% meet 20,000-volume MINIMUM standard;
 - In 4-year colleges, fewer than 25% meet MINIMUM standard of 50,000 volumes (500 students or less, 10,000 volumes - each 200 added students)

Suggest this be in tabular form to conform with preceding info on school + college libraries.

Public Libraries

The public library situation is still below the standards that a great, progressive nation should have. Some 18 million persons in this country still have no legal access to local public library services; and in addition, 110 million have only inadequate public library service. Furthermore, according to the U. S. Office of Education statistics, in 1963 nearly one-half of the public libraries serving more than 35,000 population occupied buildings constructed before 1921. Of the 350 which were built before that date, more than 50 percent were erected a decade earlier from 1901 to 1910, and another 25 percent, between 1865 and 1900. Many structures are obsolete, ill-arranged and ill-lighted, and overcrowded as regards both books and users.

Because of the facts just presented, the American Library Association offers the following statement for your consideration as the basis for a plank in the 1964 platform of the Republican National Convention:

"The modern age with its complicated problems at home and abroad requires a population that is knowledgeable, skilled, and understanding. To help insure this, the United States must have adequate library services and facilities in schools, colleges, universities, research, government, and public libraries. They must serve effectively the general public, both young and adult, the businessman, the scientist, the civic leader, and others, *the working man.*

"The primary responsibility for the maintenance of these libraries rests with the locality or local institution, but the essentiality of these libraries is so vital that the national government has a stake in participating in the attainment of these goals.

"In order to *economic, scientific and cultural* bulwark the educational *in the National interest* program of the nation, the Federal Government, with funds and consultative advice, should continue its assistance to the State, local governments and local institutions to improve all library services and facilities of the United States."