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RHODE ISLAND Library Association *Bulletin*

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March & April 1997

President's Message

SUSAN REED

Now that Spring is here it time to think about Spring cleaning. And for RILA this means its time to give some more thought to our archives. Our association needs to take better control of collecting, organizing, and remembering its past. Something I feel would improve the situation is to establish the position of RILA Archivist and to develop a plan to for dealing with our rather unwieldy collection of documents and records. We need to know what to keep and how long to keep it. We need someone who is willing to instruct new members on what to retain, collect important documents from outgoing board members, and transfer, when appropriate, material to our archives at the University of Rhode Island's library.

A committee is currently working on how to best accomplish these tasks. I hope you agree that getting RILA's archives in order is something we should be doing. If you would like to help or have ideas or suggestions please give me a call at 725-3714.

Government Information: Surviving the Electronic Transition

DANIEL P. O'MAHONY

Walk into any library today and, more times than not, one of the first things that will strike you is the growing role computer technology plays in the way we go about accessing and utilizing information. In addition to the online catalogs for our local library collections — almost a “given” these days — we now have electronic access to a growing number of union catalogs, indexing and abstracting services, locator systems, full-text databases, statistical and numeric data files, geographic and image files, and various other bits and bytes of information in electronic format. Whether they are locally available on CD-ROMs or remotely accessed via the Internet, electronic databases and computer information systems are steadily merging themselves into the everyday routines of library services we provide for the public.

Nowhere is this more evident than in the area of government information. As the world's largest publisher, the federal government also is one of the world's most prolific users of the Internet. And increasingly, government information is available only in electronic form, which serves to intensify the situation. Last year in a report to Congress, the Government Printing

Office (GPO) outlined a transition plan that would move the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) to a “more electronic” program in 5-7 years. The reality, however, is that the FDLP becomes “more” electronic each and every day. Federal Depository Libraries and others must cope with the many technical and service problems, adjustments, and complications that this transition presents. Surviving the transition — and indeed, taking advantage of the opportunities new technologies provide for enhancing public access to government information — requires a combination of preparation, patience, perseverance, and more than a little help from our friends.

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Being prepared to provide the electronic government information services now required of libraries (and increasingly demanded by users) means, at minimum: (1) having the necessary equipment in place; (2) having the necessary online connections in place; (3) having the appropriate training to enable both staff and users to utilize the hardware, software, and information services available; and (4) knowing what electronic tools are out there for identifying and finding the information resources patrons need.

These first two areas (i.e., equipment and connections) are tangible; thus, while they represent a significant investment, in many ways, they may be easiest steps to deal with. The minimum requirements for Depository Libraries now state that each library must have at least one public workstation with a graphical interface, CD-ROM capability, Internet connection, and the ability to access, download, and print files. These minimum requirements recognize that in the present (and future) electronic environment, basic depository services require libraries and their patrons to be able to access local and remote databases for government information. The actual number of such workstations will be determined by factors such as the library's equipment budget and the level of demand for electronic services, but no Depository Library can provide adequate government information services today without meeting this minimum requirement.

The next two areas in preparation (i.e., training and utilizing new electronic tools) are just as critical if we are to have any chance of surviving the electronic transition. An ongoing commitment to training and exploration is essential in order for each of us to build the necessary technical skills, software expertise, search-and- navigation proficiencies, and overall practical

and professional competencies required in the electronic environment. Depository librarians in Rhode Island had the opportunity to take advantage of training sessions on GPO Access conducted by GPO staff at the University of Rhode Island last year. These on-site sessions are so popular that GPO is already booked up for all of 1997. Similar classes and demonstrations offered by the Census Bureau and other government and commercial suppliers of government information also are available locally from time to time. In addition, numerous continuing education and training sessions are provided at statewide and regional conferences, such as the upcoming RILA Annual Conference in Newport, May 29-30. Taking the time away from daily responsibilities to attend training sessions can be problematic at times. Given the direction and pace of the electronic transition, however, ongoing training is fundamental if we hope to keep up with the new developments and services that our staff and users need to know.

GPO continues to expand the electronic tools and services available to Depository Libraries available through its FDLP Administration web site: <http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/dpos/tools.html>. This site pro-

vides not only the searchable electronic texts to Administrative Notes and the Technical Supplement, but also tools for accessing shipping lists, needs and offers lists, up-to-date depository item selection lists, and other publications and resources online. The Publications Reference File, GPO's "books in print" for government publications, is available electronically as well <http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/sale/prf.html>. GPO Pathways <http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/dpos/pathbrws.htm> provides easy subject access to a growing number of federal agency web sites. As more resources migrate to online access, it becomes increasingly important to take the time to explore new electronic sites, revisit known sites for updates and new databases, test drive new CD-ROMs and online services, and become more familiar with the use of various databases and search software through formal and informal training.

As noted earlier, surviving these new challenges requires patience and perseverance, but more importantly, it requires renewed cooperation and inter-reliance on all partners in the program. Many libraries are providing enhanced services for electronic government information, and the electronically networked environment allows all of us to benefit from the work of others. The Documents Center at the University of Michigan <<http://www.lib.umich.edu/libhome/Documents.center/polisci/html>> and the Government Information Subject Page at the University of Rhode Island web site <http://www.library.uri.edu/Web_Files/SubjectPages/Govt.html>, for example, provide excellent starting points for finding Internet sites for government information. The University of Memphis' "Uncle Sam" web site tracks government publications that have migrated from print to electronic format <[## New Editor for the Bulletin](http://www.lib.mem-</p></div><div data-bbox=)

RILA President recently named Bill Anger as the new Managing Editor of the RILA *Bulletin*. Bill is a member of the part-time reference staff of the Bryant College Library and also edits the newsletter published by the Rhode Island Chapter of the Special Libraries Association. He will take over from interim editors Frank Iacono and Wendy Knickerbocker starting with the May-June 1997 issue.

phis.edu/gpo/mig.htm>. Government publications are listed by title and Superintendent of Documents classification number, and entries provide direct hot links to the online version. Exploring services like these that other Depository Libraries provide via their web sites can be instructive, and the University of Idaho's web page makes this easy by providing links to all U.S. Depository Libraries that maintain an active web site <<http://drseuss.lib.uidaho.edu:80/govdoc/otherdep.html>. Finally, the "Resources of Use to Government Documents Librarians" at the University of California, Berkeley, <<http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/GODORT/>> provides documents librarians a central place to access a variety of professional and practical information on developments regarding the transition of the FDLP, the revision of U.S. Code Title 44, information from the American Library Association Government Documents Roundtable, GPO administrative tools, and links to other Internet resources pertaining to government information issues and administration.

All the preparation in the world, however, won't guarantee that the transition to a "more electronic" FDLP will be totally smooth and seamless. Our experiences so far show us that the road ahead is bumpy indeed. We know that the rate of change is uneven and in many ways outside of our control, that the expectations are great, and that the resources to enable us to respond to these changes are limited (if not shrinking in some cases). Thus it is more important than ever that we cooperatively address the impact of this transition on the government information services we can provide for our local constituencies and the citizens of Rhode Island in general. We must continue to share our experiences, efforts, and expertise; and we must identify new partners to assist us where possible (such as the partner-

ship with the Ocean State Free Net to serve as a gateway to the GPO Access online service). Surviving the transition will depend on our abilities to network not only computers and information, but people as well.

*Daniel P. O'Mahony is
Government Documents
Coordinator at Brown
University.*

Government Relations Update

DAVID MACKSAM, CO-CHAIR,
RILA GOVERNMENT RELATIONS
COMMITTEE

RILA's legislative effort to secure additional funding for public libraries is moving ahead with increased visibility. Building a broad base of support among House and Senate members for state funding of CLAN has been the goal of regional legislative breakfasts in Cumberland, Providence, Cranston, Peace Dale, and Newport. A multimedia presentation developed by Frances Farrell-Bergeron and Anne Toll highlighting the accomplishments of CLAN and providing a vision for the future has been the focal point of these gatherings. To get a one-page print summary of this outstanding presentation please contact me at 943-9080. As the legislative session picks up momentum it is important to keep our legislators focused on our goal of ensuring fair and equitable access to library service for all Rhode Islanders.

DATES

May 29 - 30: RILA Annual Conference, Salve Regina University, Newport, RI

June 26 - July 3: American Library Association Annual Conference, San Francisco

Supreme Court Hears CDA Challenge; ALA Attorney Argues Case

THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION ISSUED THE FOLLOWING PRESS RELEASE ON MARCH 20TH:

Washington, D.C. — In a rare action reflecting the significance and complexity of the issue being heard, the Supreme Court allowed attorneys arguing the constitutionality of the Communications Decency Act (CDA) an additional ten minutes to present their cases.

Elizabeth Martinez, executive director of the American Library Association (ALA) and Judith Krug, director of the ALA Office for Intellectual Freedom, said they were impressed by the number of questions asked by the justices, many of which focused on the liability of parents for their children, and whether teenagers and adults who engage in online conversations of a sexual nature would be subject to prosecution.

Martinez noted that Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, in particular, asked about the impact on public access to online catalogs and other information provided by libraries and the legal implications for libraries. "I'm optimistic the justices will act to uphold freedom of speech in cyberspace," Martinez said.

Krug described the hearing as "awesome" and added, "It's not over yet. This case will set the standard against which other cases will be measured for the foreseeable future."

Bruce Ennis, attorney for the American Library Association and Freedom to Read Foundation, represented the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and a coalition of

organizations challenging the law at the hearing held March 19. Ennis said he felt the case got a thorough and thoughtful hearing. "The Court seems to understand that the Internet is a unique medium and cannot be subject to the restrictions on speech which apply in mass media such as radio and television," Ennis said.

In his arguments, Ennis focused on four points. He said the law, passed by Congress last year as part of the Telecommunications Act, violates the First Amendment right of free speech for adults by outlawing any material on the Internet that could be considered "indecent" or "patently offensive by community standards" for minors. He argued that the law would not effectively protect children since some 40 percent of indecent material originates in other countries and that there are less restrictive means of protecting children, including parental supervision and use of filtering devices. Ennis also charged that the vagueness of the law's wording, coupled with severe penalties, would undoubtedly have a chilling speech on speech that is not considered indecent under the law.

Seth Waxman, a Justice Department attorney, argued that the law is necessary to protect children from inappropriate material available on some 8,000 sites. He claimed the Internet provides children "a free pass into the equivalent of every adult bookstore and every adult video store in the country."

Under the Act, passed last year as part of the Telecommunications Act, any person who knowingly sends or displays "indecent" materials over the Internet to minors could be imprisoned for up to two years and fined up to \$250,000.

The Supreme Court case, titled *Reno v. ACLU*, combines suits filed by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and the Citizens Internet

Empowerment Coalition, which includes the American Library Association as lead plaintiff and its sister organization, the Freedom To Read Foundation. Two federal district courts upheld the challenges and issued injunctions against its enforcement. The rulings were appealed by the U. S. Department of Justice.

The Supreme Court is expected to issue a decision before its summer recess at the end of June. A transcript of the hearing is at <www.aclu.org/issues/cyber/trial/sctran.html>.

Champlin Grants: Public Libraries

Rhode Island's Champlin Foundations, which make direct grants for the capital needs of tax-exempt organizations, awarded public libraries in the state over \$2.1 million in 1996. Some of the libraries that received funds in December 1996 have shared their plans with the *Bulletin*.

The Robert H. Champlin Public Library in West Warwick will use its grant of \$40,000 to buy computers to replace terminals, to purchase an additional Telxon and new laser scanners for the circulation desk and to add new computers to their LAN, according to assistant director Rick Payette. They also plan to buy furniture for their new Reader's Advisor area and add some books to their collection.

At the Coventry Public Library, director Debbie Barchi said that their award of \$28,395 will be used for receipt printers at the circulation desk, and a personal computer and a film strip projector for the children's room. Additional shelving throughout the library will be purchased as well as some print and non-print reference materials.

At the Jamestown Philomenian Library, Judy Bell, director, said that

the \$10,000 they received has been used to add two workstations and nine OnNet licenses in order to expand their LAN. Any remaining funds will be used to purchase CD-ROMs for a circulation collection.

Pam Laurenzo, director of the Clark Memorial Library in Richmond, reported that Clark will buy reference materials for the adult and the children's department, some juvenile and young adult books and a router. Clark received \$28,730.

At the Hope Library Association, director Leslie McDonough said that their grant of \$28,517 will be spent on upgrading their CLAN equipment; this will include KidsCat and Internet access for the public.

Lynn Thompson, director of the Langworthy Public Library in Hope Valley, said that their grant of \$11,800 will purchase two computers, books and magazines, and shelving for videos and books.

The Cranston Public Library was awarded \$72,643. John Fox Cory, assistant director, said that the major part of this amount will pay for router technology at the central library and at two of its branches. Fifteen thousand dollars will be spent on new lighting, ceilings and carpeting for the Knightsville branch, with the residual funds being used for stripped-down PCs for Internet access at the central library.

The Warwick Public Library received \$357,687. Deputy director Carol Drought said that of this sum, \$300,000 will be applied to the cost of the upcoming expansion and renovation project. The remainder of the grant will be used to upgrade the telecommunications connection between the Central Library and the three branch libraries as well as providing Internet access at the branches.

HERE COMES THE INFORMATION SUPERHIGHWAY.

COULD LIBRARIES BE LEFT IN THE DUST?

YES. As the emerging superhighway sweeps the nation with electronic information, libraries could be pushed aside.

But you can help to prevent it. Whether you're a librarian, student, teacher or library patron, you can help now by joining the American Library Association.

ALA is 57,000 members strong. It's been a leader for 120 years, guarding the interests of libraries and the public's right to free and open information.

Now ALA is launching **GOAL 2000:** an ambitious five-year initiative to retain the library as the central institution of a free society and position it as a gateway to the information superhighway.

GOAL 2000 WILL MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD

in the major dialogues shaping the information environment of the 21st century. Your participation will help ALA transform itself into a force that embraces new technologies while ensuring equality of access, freedom of expression, and respect for diverse perspectives.

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- Scholarship, grant and award possibilities.
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BULLETIN BOARD

The Office of Library and Information Services (OLIS) is seeking input from the Rhode Island Library community as it prepares a new federally-mandated long-range plan. OLIS has set up a web page devoted to the planning process which includes directions on how to communicate comments, ideas, suggestions etc. regarding future directions the Office should take. Look for "Towards a New Five-Year Plan" on the OLIS web site which is found at <www.doa.state.ri.us/dsls/>. More traditional correspondents can send all comments to Dorothy Frechette at OLIS, 1 Capitol Hill, Providence, RI 02908.

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The Champlin Foundations have a new location. Their new address is The Summit South, 300 Centerville Road, Suite 3005, Warwick, RI 02886-0203. Phone and fax numbers are 736-0370 and 736-7248 respectively.

• • •

Greenville Public Library recently announced that Sunday hours (1-4 PM) were established in January and will continue until May 25. In addition the library now has a WWW homepage located at <www.ultranet.com/~greenvil/>.

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Lincoln Public Library is now situated on the World Wide Web. Their address is <www.ultranet.com/~linpub/>.

• • •

The Massachusetts Library Association recently launched a new web site. It can be found at <www.ultranet.com/~eifert/mla.htm>.

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PEOPLE

Nadine Baer, a cataloger at the University of Rhode Island for over 40 years, recently retired. Nadine also was very active in RILA during her career and served as RILA's ALA Councilor from 1976 to 1980. In recognition of her career, the URI GSLIS will award Nadine an honorary degree at the school's Annual Gathering on April 25.

Ray Hetherington was appointed technology Coordinator/Reference Assistant at the Greenville Public Library. He is also a student at the URI GSLIS.

Derryl Johnson, Director of the Marian J. Mohr Memorial Library in Johnston, was recently appointed RILA's new Secretary, replacing Jim Barrett whose new job necessitated his resignation from the RILA Executive Board. Welcome aboard, Derryl.

Wanda Moskwa recently retired from the Pawtucket Public Library after thirty years of service. Besides her contributions to the library as part of the periodicals, regional services, and reference departments, Wanda also developed the library's outstanding Polish Collection.

State Representative David Panciera recently accepted the job of Head Librarian at the Ashaway Free Library in Hopkinton.

Lorna Rodio recently was appointed Reference Assistant at the Greenville Public Library. She is also working on her library degree at Simmons.

Michele Venditelli is the new Manager of the Bindery in the Rockefeller Library at Brown University.

Fay Zipkowitz, Professor at the URI GSLIS, retired in December. Her many contributions to the school included a term as the school's Acting Director.

continued from back page

noted by ALA's legal counsel the fact that the court has decided to take the case in no way implies that the allegations have substance in fact.

Search Committee Progress:

Camila Alire, Search Committee Chair, reported that the search process for ALA Executive Director which began last summer is progressing and that the list of candidates has been pared down to 34 names, 14 of which have library degrees. The fact that some candidates are not librarians caused some consternation among some councilors but the Chair asserted that it was felt that the Association could only benefit from having the widest pool of potential candidates possible and a motion by a member of council to essentially restart the whole process and consider only librarians or those with an extensive library background was soundly defeated. Finalists for the position will be interviewed in May and the name of the new ED should be announced in June. Also it should be noted here that the advertised base salary of \$150,000 was considered to be quite low by the search firm enlisted by ALA.

Diversity: Elizabeth Martinez announced the preliminary details of the Spectrum Initiative, which follows through on ALA's commitment to attract minorities to the library profession. The three-year Spectrum Initiative entails enlisting five library schools to select 50 minority students for the master's degree program each year; those selected would receive ALA-funded scholarships of \$5,000. A diversity fund was established for this purpose last year per direction of Council and the Executive Board.

The Treasury: Bruce Daniels, in a lengthy report, noted that ALA is on firm financial footing with total assets of \$11,314 million. Cost containment measures enacted last fiscal year

resulted in net revenue of \$183,000. The New York conference realized a profit of \$810,000 and membership dues were up by \$367,000 from the previous year. Bruce noted, however, that there was volatility in the ALA budget and that this could characterize future budgets. Additional sources of revenue need to be developed as ALA continues to rely heavily on income from publishing, dues, and conferences but these are becoming smaller percentages of the overall ALA budget. This needs to be addressed.

Fund For America's Libraries: The first year goal was to raise \$4 million. The actual amount raised was \$8.4 million, almost all of which is supporting programs in libraries throughout the country. Former Senator Paul Simon is now President of the Fund's Board of Directors.

Intellectual Freedom: The Freedom to Read Foundation (FTRF) and ALA await the Supreme Court's landmark decision on the Internet and the parameters of free speech. The FTRF joined ALA in a lawsuit seeking a preliminary injunction against a NY statute making it a crime to disseminate materials "harmful to minors" via electronic communications. The law makes no distinction between what might be considered harmful to young children versus teenagers and essentially seeks to reduce information for adults to a level fit for six-year-olds. Meanwhile the Intellectual Freedom committee announced that it is committed to developing a statement on filtering, that it plans to draft the Association's own "Freedom to View Statement," that it is working on the final draft of "Questions and Answers About Access to Electronic Resources," that there is now a Spanish version of the Library Bill of Rights available for the Office of Intellectual Freedom, and that a new program called "Lawyers for Libraries" is about to be put in motion. This program entails training lawyers in "the applica-

tion of First Amendment law to library principles, policies, and procedures." Hopefully, 100 lawyers (two from each state) will be trained the first year.

ALA Strategic Plan: The draft version of "ALA Goal 2000 and Beyond: A Strategic Path to 2001" was unveiled (ask me for copies). Council endorsed the five key action areas and FY98 budget initiatives included in the plan, which are: Diversity; 21st Century Literacy; Intellectual Freedom; Equity of Access; and Education and Continuous Learning.

Student Membership: Council passed a resolution calling for a more inclusive student member category. Now individuals who are enrolled in a program for certification as well as those pursuing a degree in library and information studies will be eligible for student membership.

Structure Revision Task Force Report: The SRTF met throughout the year to study such things as the possible reconfiguration of Council, the length of terms for those elected to Council, those on the Executive Board, and that of the Treasurer. There was Council consensus that all three should be reduced from four years to three years and this recommendation now becomes a matter for ALA's Constitution and Bylaws Committee to Work on. The SRTF developed six different scenarios for the configuration of Council (including keeping the current one) and offered these for discussion only. Many councilors, including myself, at this point feel that no major revision is necessary with the exception that there probably should be some kind of provision for round table representation on Council.

Exhibit Fees: Early in the Council session there was concern expressed re the recent imposition of a \$10 fee for a one-day exhibit pass. The Exhibitors Round Table position is that the fee is justified because free admission allows those without any interest in libraries or

library services into the Exhibit Hall. Those in favor of free passes argue that the fee penalizes students, retired librarians, and friends of libraries. A sound proposal to resolve this issue calls for exhibitors, who are always allotted a generous number of free passes to give to their customers and others they wish to invite, to send surplus passes to library schools in their region and/or return to each conference's local arrangements committee. The committee would then issue free passes based on need and/or interest.

Hawaii: Council voted not to get involved in the Hawaii outsourcing debate for now, concluding that opinion far outweighed fact and that the true effect of the outsourcing of book selection by the Hawaii State Public Library System under the direction of Hawaii State Librarian Bart Kane remains to be seen. There did seem to be support in Council for the drafting and adoption of an official ALA statement on outsourcing in general.

Packard-Bell Commercial: Elizabeth Martinez was pleased to announce that Packard-Bell has removed its television ad depicting libraries as depressing places in an equally depressing and desolate futuristic world (the "Blade-runner" motif for you film buffs). Letters from her, President Somerville, and librarians throughout the country definitely had their desired effect.

And lastly, check out ALA's homepage (www.ala.org) for all the latest information regarding the National Library Week "Kid's Connect" Contest, Oprah's Book Club, the availability of the soon to be released "Kids Can't Wait ... Kids Need Libraries" brochure that will be distributed to Congress and other policy makers, and many other items of interest about your national association. And, as always, call with any questions or comments you have about ALA or this report — all contributions are welcome.

DC Dispatch: ALA Midwinter '97

FRANK IACONO, ALA COUNCILOR

It was especially nice to return home after a almost a week in the seedy section of our nation's capital that unfortunately was the location of the Convention Center and my hotel. I'm not sure but I think the American Panhandlers Association was also convening in town based on the number of requests for financial support I received. And that coterie of young women doing poor Irma LaDouce impersonations on a nearby street corner every night — definitely some local color I could have done without. But your intrepid reporter persevered and offers this report on a rather interesting though not too eventful conference:

Executive Director's Compensation: The fact that Executive Director (ED) received a \$50K bonus via negotiation with the ALA Executive Board to stay on until August of this year as you know has caused some measure of controversy with various members of our Association, mostly because this information was not immediately forthcoming from ALA. The fact that an over hour Council's first session was consumed by six to eight Councilors who questioned the amount and asked for a complete dissection of the Executive Director's salary and compensation (amply provided via charts and graphs by Treasurer Bruce Daniels) caused a great deal of discomfort for the rest of us councilors. ALA President Mary Somerville assured Council that all salary/compensation information re the ED, traditionally not made available by ALA, will now be made so. Bruce Daniels emphasized that the ED's total salary/compensation package (\$230,000) is totally in line with EDs of similar size associations and once again provided charts to support this. He pointed out that ALA is as much a corporation as it is an association and Elizabeth's salary/compensation reflects this fact. Myself and many other councilors I talked to found this hour-plus episode unsavory bordering on embarrassing, considering that this took place in front of Ms. Martinez and that a begrudging tone seemed to underlie the comments of some of the speakers. Someone near me summed it up nicely for many of us by saying "they should give her a \$50K aggravation bonus for putting up with all she has had to put up with from some of us."

Baker & Taylor: Council was addressed by a B&T executive who detailed the firm's stance re the whistleblower complaint filed in federal court charging that B&T has been overcharging for book shipments for many years. ALA will not take any position of this case since there as no facts as such to indicate if the suit has merit. As was *continued on page 6*

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