EDITORIAL

This second issue of *Progressive Librarian* marks the end of the first year of existence of the Progressive Librarians Guild, a year of considerable achievement for our fledgling organization. The Progressive Librarians Guild was created as both a forum for “Left” librarians and an effective tool for promoting alternative viewpoints in the field. Since our founding we have attracted members from all over the continental U.S., Canada, and overseas as well. These members include all kinds of library workers.

PLG’s first major campaign, still an ongoing concern, involved raising consciousness about our profession’s responsibilities with regard to the freedom struggle in South Africa. The well-received first issue of *Progressive Librarian* was devoted to materials bearing on the question of South Africa and our high-profile activities last year in the American Library Association were largely oriented towards securing ALA commitment to the total isolation of the apartheid regime, demanding also that SAILIS, the official South African library organization, long complicit with apartheid, be shunned in favor of librarians’ organizations-in-formation affiliated with the Mass Democratic Movement. The subsequent creation of LIWO (Library and Information Workers Organization), some of whose documents we are proud to be able to present in this issue, presented us with a developing, but concrete alternative to SAILIS. We can, without reservations, ask American librarians to consider LIWO as the only library organization in South Africa at the moment with which it is completely legitimate to associate. It is the only non-racial democratic librarians group affiliated with the MDM. We trust it will, if it becomes national, attract all those librarians in South Africa really committed to constructing a new, post-apartheid society and that it will find support from all U.S. librarians truly interested in aiding the fight to eliminate apartheid and its legacy. A founding member of LIWO has contributed to this issue of *Progressive Librarian* a detailed account of censorship in South Africa in the period since Mandela’s release.

On the international front PLG in its first year has also engaged the controversial issues of the developing crisis in the Middle East, raising concerns about the role of censorship (continued on inside back cover)
in the Israeli government's violent suppression of the struggle for Palestinian rights and of the tasks of librarians in opposing the U.S. war policy in response to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. Reflecting this involvement, this issue contains two documents related to the events in the Persian Gulf—the original PLG press release denouncing U.S. war plans and a resolution on the crisis which will be presented to ALA Midwinter 1991 by our brothers and sisters from MSRRT (Minnesota Social Responsibilities Roundtable). We have also included an eye-opening bibliography on the Israeli censorship question prepared by the Palestinian Human Rights Information Center.

But PLG's concerns have not been focused exclusively on the pressing international issues of the moment. Our more basic concern is to cultivate a librarianship which can help promote cultural democracy here at home as well as internationally. We begin to address this with three essays dealing critically with the situation librarianship faces today, suggesting from different angles the necessity for a radical approach to the range of tasks which confront us. We hope these articles will provoke debate and controversy in our own ranks and beyond.

A fascinating glimpse at a predecessor organization to PLG called the Progressive Librarians Council, along with a book review and a piece on the Small Press Center in New York round out issue no. 2 of Progressive Librarian.

As we face our second year with the immediate prospect of war on the horizon and with the mainstream of librarianship all too willing, as it has been in the past, to hitch itself to the chariot of war, we hope that PLG and its journal will be able to play some little role in awakening the conscience of our profession to a new sense of purpose. We look forward to hearing from our readers.

Membership dues for the Progressive Librarians Guild are $5, $15, $20 or $ (whichever fits your income). To join, fill out this coupon and send with a check or money order (made payable to Elaine Harger) to:
Progressive Librarians Guild, c/o Empire State College, School of Labor Studies Library, 330 West 42nd Street, 4th Floor, New York, NY 10036.

Membership is open to library workers and users who agree with our Statement of Purpose.

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Do you wish to be listed in the PLG Directory? Yes No

Please send correspondence and manuscripts to the above address.
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In the summer of 1989 a young State Department intellectual suggested that, with the imminent end of the Cold War, humanity was poised at what he called, reprising Hegel, "the end of history." Francis Fukuyama's article, "The End of History?," appearing in the conservative magazine *The National Interest*, earned him considerable celebrity both here and abroad with its self-consciously provocative thesis.¹ In the intellectual wasteland "inside the Beltway" it was considered a contribution of major (if not historic) proportions. The end of history became, for a time, an intensely fashionable idea—it was even alluded to by the intensely fashionable author Tom (*Bonfire of the Vanities*) Wolfe in his predictably glib presentation to the American Library Association's 1990 Annual Conference, where its invocation, in his rant against the follies of the Left, met with knowing nods of approval. The uncritical response to the invited keynote speaker's diatribe ominously suggests that his post-historical perspective resonated with the prevailing consciousness of the library mainstream. We are thus led to ask: are libraries at the end of history?

Before this perspective becomes fully incorporated into the *Weltanschauung* of American librarianship as part of the consensus on the social context of our profession, let us pause to examine this new philosophical contribution and its organic connection with our profession's other background ideas.

Fukuyama's thesis, for those who missed its debut, is that "the U.S. [has created] a truly universal consumer culture, both the symbol and the underpinning of what followers of Hegel have termed the universal homogeneous State." The essence of this ultimate State, in Fukuyama's felicitous formulation, consists in combining "liberal democracy in the political sphere with easy access to VCRs and stereos in the economic sphere." With this development History realizes its *telos* (comes to an end) in a global consensus that the American way of life is the "final form" of society.²

If this sounds to you more like Dr. Pangloss than Hegel you are not alone. The vulgarization of Hegel's philosophy of history ("a dialectical process with a beginning, a middle and an end"(!)) in-
olved in Fukuyama’s banal argument, did not, of course, go unremarked upon in the scholarly community, even though his mentor, well-known conservative philosopher Allan Bloom praised Fukuyama’s work, with partisan recklessness, as both “bold and brilliant”. If, despite Bloom, we can safely discount Fukuyama (the former deputy director of the State Department’s policy planning staff) as a Hegel scholar or as a serious political philosopher, we should not be tempted to dismiss his work as merely a media-created intellectual fad, already half forgotten, or as a bad philosophical joke. On the one hand it is important to recognize the broader significance of Fukuyama, as an “insider” of the policy establishment, in articulating and giving respectable “philosophical” form to the prevailing mentality of the Reagan/Bush administrations: in fact, if an official State philosophy were needed, the “end of history” would be perfectly consonant with President Bush’s recent declaration of a New World Order. On the other hand, we can profitably view Fukuyama’s position as the continuation of more established and academically respectable currents.

Librarians who believe, as an article of faith, that we are living in a “post-industrial, information society” should be familiar with the views to which I refer. For the significant intellectual roots of the best-of-all-possible-worlds millenialism of the “end of history” are not in Hegel’s nineteenth century at all, but in the dominant ideological trend in post-war American social theory, the trend which began with sociologist Daniel Bell’s announcement of the “end of ideology” (which, in turn, begat the notion that we are living in a post-industrial/information society that has transcended all the problems of old-fashioned capitalism about which Marxists made such a fuss). The frequent occurrence of Daniel Bell’s work on the required reading lists of the core curricula of our library schools—supplying the prevailing sense of the social setting of our professional practice—rather than, say, the work of C. Wright Mills, suggests an affinity for this particular point of view (if not downright tendentiousness) in library education.

This line of thought, then, shaped profoundly by the assumptions of a bi-polar Cold War world, began by emphasizing the allegedly chiliastic irrationality of modern revolutionary ideologies and the necessarily dire consequences of the social movements they inspire. The idea of any alternative to the present transubstantiated form of
capitalism was supposed to be discredited in advance by the failures of the "secular religion" of Soviet-style Communism, which was thought to be the only end to which alternatives could in good faith aspire.

The evolution of a post-industrial/information society brought us then to the brink of post-history, but there still remained this one obstacle to ending the messy storm-and-stress of the historical epoch. That obstacle was not an internal one, but the continued existence, despite its "failures", of Communism as a formidable opposing world power with hegemonic ambitions. History, therefore, marched on, if only in the form of the Cold War between the two contending forces, admittedly a rather dreary kind of war, made exciting mostly by the fact that the concomitant nuclear arms race threatened to result in the end, not just of History, but of life on Earth. Not least among its many peculiarities, this Cold War view of History is one in which the vast majority of the world's peoples stand "outside History," either as passive subjects or as pawns in the big game. The winner of the Great Contest, if the contestants didn't blow each other up, would naturally claim to be the embodiment of the Weltgeist and assert eternal post-historical dominion. Such was the logic of the Cold War, which came, in the hands of intellectuals from Bell to Fukuyama, to be equated more and more completely with the logic of History itself.

The "end of history" thesis simply carries this reasoning into the post-Cold War era, the era not just of the failure but of the collapse of so-called Communism (once, not so long ago, thought to consist of unmoveable, unassailable totalitarian societies). Fukuyama maintains that now "ideology," which he defines as any debate over (social/political/economic/cultural) "first principles", is not only rendered irrelevant for the time being by historical developments (i.e. by the collapse of Communism) but has been overcome once and for all as we emerge on the other side of History (i.e. we won the Cold War and our "first principles" are the only "first principles").

If Bell's "end of ideology" leads logically to Fukuyama's "end of history" the result, ironically, (to Bell's dismay) is the ultimate ideology, freezing the history of thought by postulating the impossibility of all further considerations of first principles. In this virtual theodicy all roads now lead to Disneyworld. As we await the inevitable universalization of American principles (as if they are so
univocal), with Ronald MacDonald and Donald Duck, I imagine, in the vanguard, we can simply rest assured that under the reign of the multinationals and the watchful eye of the U.S. military all the remaining problems of mankind will be addressed in good (post-historical) time. The End of History. The New World Order.

In case you think this sounds suspiciously Utopian (a “bad” word for neoconservatives), Fukuyama has offered a caveat. There is a “down side” to the “end of history” and embracing it heartily requires a degree of stoicism. For, in a rather pessimistic turn of thought, he admits that when the whole globe is one big consumer society and the “end of ideology” is finally fully realized in the epoch of true post-history, with the end of struggle over “first principles,” there will also be “neither art nor philosophy, just the perpetual caretaking of the museum of history.” When we have properly limited our concerns to the on-going solution of “technical” problems and the satisfaction of increasingly sophisticated consumer demands, Fukuyama fears that our greatest problem will then be enduring an eternity of spiritual boredom. But one might imagine that the “caretaking” function mentioned above may alleviate the boredom, at least for post-historians, as it will undoubtedly include the demanding task of minding the “memory hole”, the great oblivion machine so important to making sure history remains good and dead. Actually this machine is already at work. Initial attempts at reviewing history from a post-historical perspective have included the recent reassessment, on the occasion of its bicentennial, of the French Revolution which has now been “exposed” as, at best, a completely unnecessary and rather bloody affair, if not the virtual origin of all the evils which have come to fruition in twentieth century totalitarianism. Another example of the same oblivion machine at work would be the preparations for the celebration of the quincentennial of Columbus’ “discovery” of America, preparations in which the Library of Congress is playing a major part, and in which we can discern strenuous efforts to drown out the voices of Native Americans who cry genocide at the all-for-the-best history of their own extermination.

But don’t despair altogether for lack of positive ideals on the other side of history. Fukuyama has perhaps overlooked that we are already witnessing the creation of a new world religion to fill the spiritual vacuum left by “the God that failed,” a secular faith to
bolster the spirit as we meander, sovereign consumers into eternal post-history. Call it the “religion of the Market.” Librarians have already shown considerable interest in this new creed. Sermons appear regularly in the pages of *Library Journal* extolling the magic of the market, the virtue of vendors, the miracle of merchandising, the epiphany of the entrepreneur, the beatitude of the bottom line.

Librarians have not turned to this suddenly. Long ago many embraced the idea of the “end of ideology,” maintaining that libraries not only should be (which is arguable) but, in fact, are “neutral” institutions, beyond ideology, and that politics, in the classic, “ideological” sense are irrelevant to our profession. This prepared the way for leaving the “invisible hand” of the market the task of finding optimal and efficient solutions to every question. We have already mentioned that librarians, *en masse*, swallowed whole the notion that we are already living in the promised land of the “information society,” a new social formation brought into existence entirely by technological evolution, in particular by the development of modern computers and information technologies, a society which, it is claimed, is neither driven nor riven by the old contradictions of industrial society.

Even if this latter claim is true (which it isn’t) the reality of this “information society” should be more sobering than its celebrants wish to admit. It represents, after all, the globalism of unaccountable transnational corporations; an international cultural sphere increasingly dominated by manipulative corporate interests; a value-system, with claims to universality, based on the apotheosis of consumerism; the ongoing “privatization” of all aspects of the public sphere and, at the same time, the technological invasion of the private sphere of the individual citizen; an information sector controlled more and more by fewer and fewer monopolistic firms; sharpening inequalities between information “haves” and “have nots”; the growing power of the mass media and of the corollary public relations industry, systematically creating mass civic disempowerment and public stupification while contributing to emptying the forms of political democracy of content and meaning.

Having effortlessly accepted and rationalized all this as the wave of the future, are the librarians of the “information society” ready now for the end of history? I feel that unfortunately U.S. librarianship is all to likely to adopt an essentially post-historical stance in the
coming period even as our own country (information society or not) faces industrial (and even post-industrial) stagnation; urban collapse; rural decline; a crime explosion; widespread homelessness; rampant drug addiction; cyclical economic dislocations; rising racism; widening economic inequality; industrial pollution on an ever vaster scale; a growing crisis of health care provision; escalating levels of unemployment; a deteriorating educational system; a high rate of illiteracy; the resurgence of obscurantism, fundamentalism, and the chthonic forces of fascism - despite this, or perhaps to avoid thinking of this, it is infinitely easier to imagine that in the global arena of History we have somehow been proven “right” because our Cold War opponent has been proven wrong. Our problems are not systemic, internally generated, endemic—theirs were. With this mindset, librarians can feel free to go on automatic pilot, riding the currents of technological innovation and market forces without regard to fundamental value-decisions.

We can thus expect a library culture, to the extent that it conforms to this society’s self-image, which will be increasingly complacent, distant from any sense of democratic mission and which, indeed, will allow itself to become a passive adjunct of the profit-driven information industry. Against this tendency we can only hope that individual librarians, “radicals,” will organize as best they can to demonstrate that societal alternatives have not been pre-empted or exhausted. The fall of Stalinism has after all solved nothing, not for the East and not for the West (and certainly not for the rest) but has only raised the question (finally outside the straightjacket of an either/or choice of ossified “systems”) of how a democratic polity, in the fullest sense - politically, economically and (of special concern to librarians) culturally democratic - can enjoy the prosperity and abundance we have proved capable of producing, while remaining committed to international equity, world peace, social justice and respect for the ecosphere.

For librarians this means, above all, insisting that the question of “social responsibility” is at the heart of what it means to be a library professional, rather than a special concern of a minority. Our fundamental definition as professionals, after all, is that we profess something: let us profess against those who are ready to wax post-historical, that conflict over “first principles” is not an argument that has been settled by recent developments no matter how dramatic;
that the meaning of democracy and prosperity, of the "good life" has not been predetermined by the outcome of the Cold War; that social justice can not be taken for granted as an automatic by-product of our way of life and that these concerns are of the greatest relevance to librarians in orienting our work.

In post-historical perspective libraries will increasingly come to be viewed as mere instrumentalities, facilitators of an "information economy". If, against this current, libraries are to continue to represent the dimension of human reason, emancipation possibility that they have represented historically, if the human significance of the library is not to be entirely effaced, renewed effort to create a space for radical reflection on our purposes, our vocation, our responsibility is required. This is the fundamental task of progressive librarianship.

Notes
It has been noted for some time that significant, even epochal, shifts are occurring in the socio-economic structures of the United States. Debate has centered on whether we are approaching, or have already entered, an entirely new historical era — post-industrial, post-modern, even post-capitalist — or whether corporate capitalism is simply evolving toward the next phase of its development. However one interprets the technological and economic developments of recent years it is clear that central to these changes is the increasing economic importance of knowledge and information. As Daniel Bell, one of the early and most influential theorists of post-industrialism, put it: "Broadly speaking, if industrial society is based on machine technology, post-industrial society is shaped by an intellectual technology. And if capital and labor are the major structural features of industrial society, information and knowledge are those of post-industrial society." ¹

The emergence of information as a vital economic resource can be traced to the period after World War II which saw an explosion in the generation of scientific and technical information accompanied by the development of computers capable of processing this new flood of data. This same period witnessed the growth of private corporations into enormous transnational entities which became increasingly dependent on the rapid organization and flow of information for their global operations. Given these developments it is not surprising that a private information industry quickly emerged to capitalize on the commercial potential in the processing and distribution of data. ²

The extent to which informational activity has transformed the American economy has been striking. By 1956 white-collar workers in service/information professions outnumbered blue-collar industrial workers for the first time and the service sector eventually superceded manufacturing and agriculture as the central economic sector. By the late 1960's informational activities were responsible for 46 percent of the national income and with the widespread
computerization of the 1970's those in the "primary" information sector (computer manufacturing, telecommunications, mass media, advertising, publishing, accounting, education, research and development etc.) alone accounted for 30 percent of the national economy. While some have maintained that these developments represent a transition to a post-industrial, post-modern epoch which transcends the capitalist era, I would argue that the fundamental features of capitalism (commodity production for profit, wage labor, elite control of economic surplus, market relations etc.) have remained firmly in place and will continue so for the foreseeable future. The production, organization, and dissemination of information has taken on an unprecedented socio-economic importance, but it has done so within the paradigm of corporate capitalism and under the imperatives of private profit and corporate hegemony.

However, information and the technology used for its processing have had a profound enough economic and cultural impact to justify the view that a new configuration of advanced capitalism is developing. Among the characteristics of this new phase of capitalist development is an increasing commercialization and control of areas of life which had previously been relatively free from market relations or in which pockets of relative autonomy had been preserved. Herbert Schiller, Ben Bagdikian and others have documented how transnational corporations have infiltrated education, the arts, entertainment and the news media resulting in cultural homogenization and conformity. Most of the world's important newspapers, magazines, books, movies, recordings, and broadcast stations have come under the control of a handful of huge corporations with the result that profitability and ideological conformity are becoming the sole criteria for cultural production.

Until recently the public library was one of the few remaining cultural-informational spheres which existed largely outside of the all-encompassing web of market relations. While never adequately fulfilled, the traditional library mission of collecting a wide range of the world's knowledge and making it freely and equally accessible to all who seek it has been a model of democratic values in action. However, the growing economic prominence of information and the dependence on costly new information technology has generated forces which threaten to undermine the ideal of knowledge as a public good. In the approving words of a senior information technol-
ogy scientist at AT&T Bell Laboratories, "information has progressed from intrinsic knowledge to a commodity that is actively produced, marketed, and sold.... Marketplace forces, rather than individual needs drive the development and introduction of new information products."

As transnational corporations have increasingly come to rely on vast banks of data for their global operations and a sophisticated new technology has been developed to more efficiently manipulate that data, private companies have positioned themselves to profit from these trends. By 1989 the revenues of the electronic information industry had reached $7.5 billion and are expected to exceed $19 billion by 1994. Not surprisingly these information companies have been aggressively promoting the idea that information is a commodity that can be bought and sold for a profit. This idea runs directly counter to long-cherished library principles and has grave social and political implications.

As the private information industry has grown in wealth and influence it has had a significant impact on public policy. The Reagan years resulted in a series of legislative acts and executive orders which converted the profit-seeking objectives of the private information sector into national policy. The first and perhaps most far-reaching of these legislative actions has been the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1980 which authorized the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to set federal information policy. The OMB has used this authority to dramatically restrict and privatize government information. In 1985 the Office provided a general policy framework in the form of Circular A-130 which urged federal agencies to place "maximum feasible reliance" on the private sector for the dissemination of information. The thrust of federal policy during the last decade has been to allow the information industry to appropriate large portions of the huge and valuable national stock of information (which the public has paid to have produced) so it can be repackaged and sold at a profit.

Since the raison d'etre of the information industry, as of its corporate clientele, is the relentless pursuit of profit its attempts to privatize public information should come as no surprise. Neither should the government's acquiescence in these areas given the ideological orientation of the Reagan and Bush administrations. What is dismaying is that this has happened with so little public
discussion and that librarians, with some exceptions, have been so docile in the face of this trampling on their principles. In fact an entrepreneurial mentality has been allowed to seep into the profession and prominent library spokespersons have been trumpeting the need for fees for services and other market mechanisms which threaten to erode fundamental library values.

In our eagerness to embrace costly new developments in information technology librarians are allowing corporate interests to redefine information as a commodity while we occupy ourselves with matters of technical efficiency. We are in danger of succumbing to a purely instrumental mentality whereby the means of technique and efficiency override the ends which they should properly be serving, namely free and equal public access to a wide range of information and knowledge. We have failed to recognize the extent to which technological innovations carry with them new types of social relations. Libraries have uncritically hooked into database search technology, for instance, without appreciating the impact this would have on their traditional social role. The reliance of libraries on private database vendors (whose profit-driven motives and conception of information are obviously very different from that of libraries) and the imposition of user fees to cover the costs of the new technology express contradictions which cut to the core of the profession’s commitment to information and knowledge as a public good.

Many of librarianship’s leading representatives, instead of reinforcing that commitment and exploring strategies for its defense, instead lament the fact that our public service traditions “inhibit us from making the kind of innovation that is needed to compete [in the] marketplace” and advocate the implementation of “new entrepreneurially oriented management structures.” Where we might expect our professional journals to provide critical commentary and debate, instead we are served elaborate rationalizations for librarianship’s accommodation to market imperatives. It is clear that the profession is in dire need of analysis and critique from a perspective that regards the library’s vital social role as worthy of defense. The commercialization of information is the overriding issue in librarianship today and one which the progressive elements in the profession should devote ourselves to with all the powers of analysis and activism we can muster. We must develop a critical discourse of
librarianship adequate for the demystification and explication of the issues involving the infiltration of market imperatives into our profession. Such a discourse would provide us with a language and analytical framework with which to critique the promotion, both within and without the library profession, of information as a commodity. It would enable us to cut through the rhetoric which rationalizes the introduction of market mechanisms as the only way for libraries to compete in an entrepreneurial society by making plain the anti-democratic and inegalitarian implications of such ideas. We must also penetrate the ostensible value-neutrality of attempts to reduce library issues requiring political debate and activism to matters of technological innovation, efficiency and expertise.

Ultimately, a truly radical and thoroughgoing critical analysis requires placing information issues in a broad social context by demonstrating how the commodification of information is part of the corporate colonization of increasingly large portions of cultural and social life and thus establishing the theoretical basis for coalitions with progressive forces in education, media, and the arts. We must find ways to resist corporate domination of the cultural-information sphere and devise strategies to directly intervene in the development of an “information society” in ways which would further democratic empowerment and social solidarity rather than private wealth and privilege.

Increasingly in this country the rich and diverse sphere of images, ideas, and information necessary for a healthy democratic culture is being reduced to a flat uni-dimensional plane dominated by commercial values and ideological conformity. With the growing economic prominence of information has come the encroachment of corporate capitalism into the public information realm and a concommitant distortion of information issues and policies to serve private interests. Libraries are in the vortex of these developments and their response—whether acquiescence, accommodation, or resistance—will have an impact not only on the future of the profession, but on the future of democracy as well.
Notes

7. Schiller, Culture, Inc., pp.82-85.
8. To its credit the library community reacted with appropriate outrage to OMB's recently proposed amendment to Circular A-130 which would have privileged the private sector in the electronic dissemination of federal information. The protests of librarians and public interest groups forced OMB to retract its proposal. However, librarians have not been sufficiently organized or mobilized to prevent currently pending information policy legislation from reflecting the interests of the private information industry. For an objective and up-to-date overview of the current issues surrounding the politics of government information see Federal Information in the Electronic Age: Policy Issues for the 1990's, (Washington D.C.: Bureau of National Affairs, 1990. Toby McIntosh, principal author.)
THE GLOBAL COMMERCIALIZATION OF CULTURE

by Herbert I. Schiller

The development of the communication satellite in the early 1960’s, and the rapid global expansion of the corporate business system some years earlier established the material conditions for what initially was hailed as the arrival of the “global village.” This happy view of affairs revelled in the transcendence of time and space barriers. The achievement, in the McLuhanite perspective, would lead to the emergence of a world community. “Villagers” would be busily interacting with each other. Everyone would benefit, and previously unimaginable new forms of creative expression would flow across the earth.

Included also in this essentially technocratic vision was the expectation that the new instrumentation would enable modernization to overcome traditionalism in many parts of the world. Peoples and nations would step out smartly onto the path of economic development. Actually, the development that has occurred in the last thirty years has, with some exceptions, been uneven, unequal and generally disappointing. And, instead of global interaction, there have been mostly one-directional cultural and informational flows.

In the late 1980’s, therefore, the one-world prospect has of necessity been revised and refurbished. The outlook is as confident as ever, but the focus has been shifted away from economic improvement — modernization — to cultural and political progress in human rights, freedom and democracy. This new emphasis has been assisted greatly by the collapse or removal of physical and administrative barriers, especially in central and Eastern Europe. Also contributing to the new thinking is a global circulation of uniform images and messages and even language.

And so, if international economic improvement, notably in the poor world, has remained problematic, the cultural situation at least is seen to be promising. The prospect of a global culture, rich and diversified, is believed to be on its way to materialization. Optimism radiates from some of the more active agents in the worldwide expansion of cultural and informational activity.
A new U.S.-financed communications venture, for example, to wire Poland for cable and supply it with Western programming is explained by the company's owner: "What we're trying to do is export a bit of democracy and way of life to Poland." Similarly, the appearance of the Hungarian edition of Playboy magazine in December 1989 is announced in a full-page newspaper advertisement in the United States: "Exporting the American Dream: On November 29th, Hungarians came one step closer to something they've been fighting since 1956 — freedom. Not just political freedom but freedom of the press... Playboy... reaches 15,000,000 readers worldwide... So here's to freedom."2

The outlook for the '90's, according to some influential Western voices, is for freedom and democracy. Yet the idea of a looming universalistic culture of unbounded promise can be entertained only by a willful refusal to acknowledge the structural underpinnings of the system now being constructed. This system's foundation, already established in a great part of the world, fuses culture, popular and elite, with marketing. The fusion goes well beyond an instrumental use of culture for business ends, i.e., appropriating completed cultural works and symbols to promote commercial objectives. Of this, to be sure, there is no lack.

But far more is involved. The cultural process itself, and the creativity that is its essence, are increasingly being shaped by marketing considerations. To offer one example: the locational sites and the narrative of a film may be determined today by a commercial objective. Some British films are made intentionally with specific neighborhood backgrounds that are immediately recognizable to American audiences who have been, or may be, tourists.3 This, it is expected, will make the movie more saleable in the U.S. market and boost tourism in the bargain.

Another instance is the manufacture of toys and games which reproduce television and film characters. It is often unclear which step precedes the other — whether the toy or the movie comes first. In any case, this has become a sizable industry.4 Or again, the recently developed field of music video (MTV), in which "pace and structure is [ever more] closely related to advertising."5 MTV's style, which highlights a frenzied staccato tempo — to attract and hold viewers — has been adopted over a wide range of general television program-making.
In comic books, the commercial dynamic has quite literally taken over the genre. Comics have been incorporating the sponsor of a product into the book's storyline. A Japanese toy-maker, Kyosho, for one, paid a fat fee to Archie Comic Publications for Kyosho remote-controlled cars to be featured in the comic book series: "... the entire storyline revolves around Kyosho remote-controlled toys. Archie and the gang wear Kyosho shirts and jackets... Kyosho marketing executives actually are drawn into the strips, appearing as part of the plot."\(^6\)

The most venerable museums, no less, hold "blockbuster" shows to attract crowds, and (not so incidentally) appreciate the value of holdings that may one day wind up in the international art auction houses.

Whichever the medium, the message's content and form increasingly are shaped by commercial imperatives. These developments are especially striking in the organization of entertainment (theme) parks and shopping malls — today's main gathering places for Americans and soon for Europeans. In these physical constructions, the spatial and structural environments are specifically designed and built to display (blatantly in most instances, less obtrusively in others) corporate imagery and values. A multitude of signs reinforce prevailing ideology and practices, i.e., goods acquisition, corporate and national loyalties, gender roles and private enterprise myths.\(^7\)

These phenomena, not all of recent vintage, are being internationalized at a remarkable speed. Political and technological changes account for the acceleration of the process of global commercialization of culture. Economic consolidation in Western Europe under the guidance of big business interests, the breakdown of statism in Eastern Europe, and the multiplication of private satellite broadcasting, cable and telecommunications systems everywhere, combine to push the movement forward. At this historical moment, no significant counter force has yet emerged to challenge, much less turn back, what is happening.

The onslaught moves forward relentlessly. Giant private goods producers and image-making conglomerates are rapidly staking out the world. Transnational manufacturing corporations locate their plants and facilities in markets (countries) around the world. Soon
after come their supportive services in distribution, advertising, polling and public relations.

Now, a new stage in the global informational-cultural condition has been reached. American, and other national media industries, have themselves become major players in the international market. Film and television-producing companies have joined traditional goods producers as heavy exporters. The media are also establishing production facilities outside their home bases. In fact, media and informational products currently constitute one of the few remaining surplus categories in U.S. foreign trade. The expansion of this field of non-material production is growing rapidly.

Trade reports announce the trend. "Hollywood is setting up shop in Europe." The major film studios are building numerous production facilities in Britain as a base for expansion onto the continent. The Walt Disney Company, along with its Euro-Disneyland theme park (nearing completion outside Paris), is also planning a production facility there. The head of MCA's Universal movie group declares: "We all see Europe as a major growth area in film and television. The privatization of television means new outlets that will have to be fed. The multiplexing of Europe will enable us to release twice as many movies."8

The U.S. record industry is no less euphoric, enthusing about developments in central and Eastern Europe: "We just found out we sold half a million copies of the Dirty Dancing soundtrack the first week East Germany was open," said the president of MCA records. He added: "I hear much talk about American companies buying radio stations and video retailers there [Western Europe]. The result is they're going to learn about American-style record retailing, and the Continent is ripe for that."9

Transnational media interests — Murdoch, Berlusconi, Maxwell, Bertelsman, Time-Warner, etc. — stalk the world for new outlets for their outputs. Murdoch buys tabloids in Hungary; Bertelsman is active in East Germany; a World's Fair, Expo 2000, is planned for northern Italy under the auspices of giant corporate interests — Fiat, Olivetti, IBM, Coca-Cola, Philips, Mondadori, etc. — they propose to transform Venice into a "floating Disneyland."10

The globalization of corporate cultural activity proceeds uninterrupted and practically unhindered. Does it make any difference that
one national cultural-informational institution after another is privatized and commercialized and that transnational media conglomerates take over national and regional space?

The first and most direct cost may be to the cultural work force itself. Reducing, sometimes eliminating entirely, state support for film, broadcasting, telecommunications and the arts in general, means less work in some cultural fields, and more carefully scrutinized work in others.

The plight of drama in the United States is suggestive of what may be expected of privatized arts activity, left to the play of the market. In 1988-89, for example, only 38 percent of the members of Actors Equity, the actors' union, worked at all during the year. Actors worked an average of 17 weeks. Average salaries for actors were at poverty levels. Taking these grim conditions into account, one drama critic advised: "If you want to act, learn to type." The employment situation is not very different in other creative fields. Market-driven commercially-supported arts produce poverty levels of existence for a majority of the creative workforce alongside super salaries for the "stars."

Much more difficult to estimate are the social costs to the community that accompany sweeping commercialization of the arts and the unlimited entry of transnational entertainment and media conglomerates to national space. Indigenous creative forces are swamped, and inevitably crippled, by the relatively cheap cultural products offered by the big media producers. The production quality of the material also is difficult to match because the producers allocate huge resources to the "packaging" side of goods — the sound, color, music, special effects, photography. The substantive component, the content, can be almost negligible with such fancy wrapping.

The heaviest cost of transnational corporate-produced culture, however, is that it erodes the priceless idea of the public good and the vital principle of social accountability. These crucial but immeasurable social criteria are discarded. In their stead are substituted the illusory promise of consumer choice and the hopelessly narrow standard of production efficiency.

Can the well-being and vitality of the community be left to the international business system, especially its powerful media-enter-
tainment sector, with these markers guiding the direction? When this does in fact occur, as in the case of Canada — the large northern neighbor of the United States, with whom it shares a 3,000 mile undefended military and cultural border — this is the assessment from a highly-placed cultural official: "From my Canadian point of view [the unrestricted operation of market forces] have delivered a whole nation into cultural bondage, to the point where Canadian voices have been drowned out of their own air." Canada, we may be reminded, is no less — and possibly more — industrialized than most European states.

A world without barriers, a free flow of information, free speech everywhere and unimpeded traffic of cultural products — these are longstanding and cherished objectives. The current global condition makes their genuine realization remote. The free flow of information principle has been one of the pillars of American imperial policy for nearly half a century. As it has functioned, it has facilitated a tidal wave of U.S. corporate-produced media product and informational goods to sweep across the globe.

Together with the free flow of information has also come a new interpretation of free speech. In the United States, and more recently in Europe, it is claimed that commercial speech — advertising and corporate opinion on social matters — is just as privileged as an individual’s speech. With this legal legitimation, can it be surprising that the corporate voice is the one now mostly heard, and listened to, in national and global arenas?

The removal of national jurisdiction, which is what the process of deregulation and liberalization amounts to, has allowed the cultural situation to be increasingly affected by the revenue calculations of private media and telecommunications entities. In the United States, where the process is most developed, there are these results: children’s television programming is largely in the hands of candy and toy manufacturers; incessant commercials; endless mayhem on the screen; the near-absence of social documentaries; the reduction of television news to glitzy two-minute or less sound "bites."

These are the cultural gifts of market forces in the world’s premier communication power. They also are being distributed and copied around the world. Do these cultural deformations offer a suitable model for emulation? A society would be well advised to
review carefully the arguments for an open door for cultural products which are circulated in transnational media circuits.

A national cultural assessment would also make a sharp distinction between the creative work of individuals and the products of cultural industries. This could not fail to bring into question as well the privileges now extended to corporate speech in the North Atlantic region. The efforts to reduce and destroy national broadcasting and telecommunications systems, now well advanced, would not pass unchallenged. National systems, with all their faults, remain the best means for encouraging local and regional creative work. The protection and nurture of local creativity in film, television, music, theater and publishing are not regressive objectives aimed against international understanding and cooperation. They support responsible and necessary measures intended to insure diversity of creative efforts. They defend the public against the drives of private, corporate, large-scale message and image enterprises.

The maintenance, even creation, of cultural and linguistic bulwarks, in this historical moment, fulfill vital social needs. Yet before embarking on this course, one important change in the world scene demands attention. No longer is the global arena dominated by U.S. power, as it was in the early post-World War II years. Though the American presence in the message and image business remains strong, a powerful and expensive transnational corporate order is the main engine of current worldwide cultural and economic activity. The presence and roots of this system already penetrate deeply in Europe, North America and Japan.

Taking this phenomenon into account, nationalist cultural programs are fruitless at best, and at worst trigger xenophobia and chauvinism unless they acknowledge and engage the transnational presence in their national space. In sum, the frontiers of culture in the 1990's are the local and national efforts to defend and encourage the community's creative impulses and works against the massive message flows of a world business system and its global media extensions. The outcome is by no means clear.
Notes


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Half a century before the formation of the Progressive Librarians Guild, a group of liberal-minded people established an organization with uncanny similarities, both in name and in concept. The Progressive Librarians' Council was the brainchild of ALA members who felt the association did not adequately represent their views on major social issues. These upstarts were progressives of the old school, having come of age in the era of "Fighting Bob" La Follette and the drive for political reform. Their organization endured from 1939 until the late 1940s, and at its peak boasted some 250 members throughout the United States. Among the most active chapters were those in San Francisco, Chicago, New York, and Washington D.C.¹

A librarian named Philip Keeney supplied the initial drive behind PLC, which chartered itself at the 1939 ALA conference in San Francisco. Like many fledgling associations, it took a while for the Council to draw up its bylaws and a slate of candidates for office, but by September of that year it had issued a publication, the PLC Bulletin, and a statement of purpose: "to support and strengthen the efforts of the Third Activities Committee in bringing more democracy into the structure and functioning of the American Library Association; to promote federal and state aid for libraries by supporting the Thomas-Harrison Bill and strengthening state library agencies; to unite all progressive librarians whose single voices are inaudible into a group which will be heard."²

Of these goals, the third one should strike an immediate chord with librarians living in the late twentieth century, but the meaning of the first two has been clouded with the passage of time. The Third Activities Committee was a special task force of ALA, set up largely in response to complaints about the association's oligarchic structure. This structure concentrated power in the hands of a few ALA officers and staff members, and assigned near-dictatorial authority to the office of executive secretary. As a result of recommendations from the Third Activities Committee, ALA became more democratic by giving greater influence to the general membership. Perhaps most importantly, the ALA council was reconfigured to equalize repre-
sentation from all regions of the country and from the association’s diverse interest groups.

That the subject of federal aid once sparked controversy among librarians seems rather quaint in 1990, a time when no amount of government assistance to libraries appears excessive. Yet, this issue once divided the profession. Those librarians who objected to federal aid were leery of the government sticking its nose into library business, and while this could be interpreted as a liberal or even radical point of view, those who held it generally were conservative. These conservatives were able to remain comfortably in the status quo for a long time, for it wasn’t until 1956 that the Library Services Act was finally signed into law.

With federal aid a seemingly hopeless cause and with work by the Third Activities Committee completed, the PLC quickly moved beyond its original statement of purpose. By 1940, the group had expanded its agenda to include censorship, job security and tenure for librarians, as well as better library service to remote communities. As international conflict loomed on the horizon, it also was inevitable that the Council would have to consider world issues. In May 1940, the PLC took such action by sending a letter to President Roosevelt in which he was urged to avoid bringing the United States into war. After Germany invaded the Soviet Union, the group modified this position, but lent only guarded support to America’s participation in the war.

The PLC’s pacifistic outlook should not be taken as a sign that its members were isolationists, per se, or that they had no interests beyond American libraries. Spain’s Civil War was a major source of concern for the group whose most ambitious project was smuggling money to Spanish Loyalists exiled in France. The specific recipients of this generosity were a librarian named Teresa Andres and her husband Emilio. Unable to flee to Mexico as planned, the two remained in Paris and participated in the Resistance. Following World War II, Keeney’s wife Mary Jane traveled to Europe with an American reparations mission and met Teresa Andres for the first time. Sadly, the Spanish librarian who had struggled through two wars died shortly after this meeting. The Keeney’s, along with other members of the PLC, continued to send money and clothing to Emilio and his young son.
Since the PLC barely existed after the war, it would be more accurate to say that alumni of the organization continued to send contributions. In the June 1944 issue of the *PLC Bulletin* (the last number published), Mary Jane Keeney outlined the difficulties of sustaining the organization: despite the "official" pro-peace stance of the PLC, many members had joined the armed services or had left librarianship to accept war related jobs. The Keeneys themselves had obtained non-library employment in the government. Just as importantly, with the suspension of ALA conferences for the years 1943 through 1945, the PLC lost its annual opportunity to bring members together for face to face meetings. They managed to convene again at the Buffalo ALA conference in 1946, but apparently for the last time.\(^6\)

While the Keeneys must have suffered some pangs of regret over the decline of "their" organization, they were pleased by the PLC's achievements, which included the bedevilment of ALA's leadership. In at least two instances, the PLC's actions were not just irksome, but downright embarrassing for the larger organization. The so-called Peace Letter to Roosevelt was particularly vexing because it had been phrased in such a way that it almost appeared to be from the American Library Association. ALA officers made a desperate effort to dissociate themselves from the letter, sending the President their own agitated missive in which they claimed that most librarians would disagree with the position of the Progressive Librarians Council. Of course, they had no way of knowing this.

The other major annoyance created by the PLC was its endorsement of Archibald MacLeish's nomination for Librarian of Congress in 1939. Then, as now, many librarians were troubled by the idea that the nation's chief librarian was not a trained member of the profession, and the American Library Association opposed MacLeish's candidacy. Further complicating matters in 1939 was the fact that Carl Milam, ALA's executive secretary, coveted the post for himself.\(^7\) MacLeish, of course, became Librarian of Congress and insult was only added to injury when he appeared as guest speaker at the PLC meeting held in tandem with the 1940 ALA conference.\(^8\)

These jabs at the American Library Association may have been by design rather than by accident, for the Keeneys' differences with ALA were personal as well as ideological and dated back to a particularly bitter episode in their lives. The events that added up to
this episode took place at Montana State University in Missoula (now called the University of Montana) where Philip Keeney had been hired as head librarian in 1931. In 1935, the Montana State Board of Education demanded that the novel Passions Spin the Plot by Vardis Fisher, as well as “similar books”, be removed from all university libraries in the state of Montana. Keeney reluctantly complied with the order but quietly alerted faculty members at institutions in neighboring states about the board’s action. Anti-censorship protests from these outsiders only served to rankle the board, most of whose members knew that Keeney was in some way involved.

Just a few months after the board demanded the suppression of offending literature, it appointed a new president for Montana State University. The appointment was clearly politically motivated and made over the objections of many faculty members, including Keeney. Further alienating him from the administration were his poorly disguised efforts to establish a chapter of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) on the campus. It was clearly just a matter of time before the axe fell, and in 1937 the errant librarian was fired without regard to the niceties of due process.9

Keeney decided to fight his dismissal and sought the help from several organizations, including the AFT, the American Association of University Professors, and the American Civil Liberties Union. From these groups, he gained monetary and legal assistance that enabled him to carry his case through the courts. Scores of other professional and labor organizations quickly lent moral support by issuing statements on Keeney’s behalf. It was much needed moral support since litigation dragged on for two years (during which time Keeney was unemployed) and eventually led to the Montana State Supreme Court. In 1939, Keeney obtained a ruling in his favor, entitling him to reinstatement in his job as well as back pay. He accepted the money, but returned to Missoula as university librarian for only a few months.

Of the major groups from whom Keeney sought aid, the American Library Association proved least receptive, even though the association’s executive board had voted in 1936 to investigate dismissals that appeared to be unjustified. ALA officers insisted that they could not perform their duty because they hadn’t given any funds for the purpose.10 A statement of support would not have cost the association a dime, but it wasn’t until June 1938 — long after
many other organizations had responded to the case — that ALA issued a resolution conceding that Keeney had not received a fair and impartial hearing from Montana State University. Despite being ignored by ALA, Keeney became well known throughout the library profession and something of a hero. Luckily for him, he also captured the attention of people who could help him get a job. It just might have been a coincidence, but Keeney was employed at the Library of Congress just a few months after the Progressive Librarians’ Council gave its endorsement to Archibald MacLeish.

After working at the Library of Congress for three years, and after a brief stint with the Foreign Economic Administration, Keeney took on a unique task. Under the auspices of the War Department, he went to Occupied Japan to assess the damage to, and future of, libraries in that country. From January 1946 to April 1947, he traveled throughout Japan meeting librarians and absorbing Japanese culture. As a self-professed leftist, he was very intrigued by the activities of the country’s communist party and he shared this interest with Mary Jane through his letters to her. Unbeknownst to the Keeneys, their mail was being read by the FBI.

In the late 1940s, the American government officially cracked down on employees whose politics were considered disloyal. Mary Jane resigned from her job in the State Department before she could be fired. Philip was dismissed from the War Department without any official explanation in April 1947. The situation was painfully reminiscent of the one they had been in a decade before, but this time the Keeneys shared it with hundreds of other people. In 1949, the couple joined the unfortunate procession of people called before the House Committee on Un-American Activities. Like most people called before the committee, the Keeneys weren’t charged with any crime, but their careers were effectively ruined. The PLC being dead, and ALA leadership thoroughly disapproving of Philip Keeney, no library organization spoke out on his behalf. No mention of his troubles — not even his “retirement” from duties in Japan — appeared in the library press. Daniel Melcher, the publisher of Library Journal at the time, was a personal friend of the Keeneys so it is especially curious that nothing appeared in that periodical. For all purposes, Philip Keeney had become a non-person in the library world.
Philip and Mary Jane Keeney were not the kind of people to fold their tents and quietly steal away. That’s precisely what made them so adorable to their friends and so loathsome to their enemies. Within months of their unplanned departure from federal employment, the Keeneys were devising a scheme of library service for countries that were either undeveloped or socialist in outlook. They found themselves a potential customer in the form of the Czech government, but the whole plan was scuttled when the State Department refused to issue passports to the Keeneys, citing the pair as security risks.\(^{14}\)

Mary Jane then managed to get a job with the United Nations, but that evaporated when the United States pressured the UN to weed out American employees with leftist sentiments. It wasn’t a complete loss, however: the UN paid her a few thousand dollars in damages and with this money the Keeney’s embarked on a venture completely in keeping with the beat trend of the 1950s. They rented themselves a space in Greenwich Village and opened a movie theatre that they called Club Cinema. Most of the films were in foreign languages with subtitles, and occasionally a showing would be preceded by folksingers or by a poetry reading. Club Cinema lasted until the end of the decade when the building in which it was housed was torn down.\(^{16}\) In their old age, the Keeneys drifted away from their library friends, including people who had belonged to the Progressive Librarians’ Council. Philip Keeney died in 1962 at the age of seventy-one. Mary Jane, also at the age of seventy-one, died in 1969.

There is probably little point in sentimentalizing the Keeneys or what they accomplished through the Progressive Librarians’ Council. If nothing else, the PLC served as an irritant that changed the American Library Association. Those changes may now be imperceptible, but without organizations like the Progressive Librarians’ Council the American Library Association would be even more conservative than it is. Even “gadflies” are vital, and no one knew that better than Philip and Mary Jane Keeney.
Notes

1. Figures of the PLC’s membership count are taken from the *PLC Bulletin* 5, no.3, June 1944, p.7; the geographic strengths of the organization are also reflected in assorted issues of the *Bulletin*.
3. The PLC’s evolving agenda can be traced through individual issues of the *PLC Bulletin*. The organization’s position is also summed up by Joe Kraus in “The Progressive Librarians’ Council” *Library Journal* (July 1972).
6. FBI file for Nathan G. Silvermaster. File 65-56402-WFO100-17493: mail cover, excerpt of letter from Edith Lawrence to Mary Jane Keeney, p.66. Lawrence, of Berea College in Ohio, was the last chairperson of the PLC.
7. Thomison, pp.139-142.
16. FBI file for Philip and Mary Jane Keeney. file no.101-467, section 13, n.p.
CENSORSHIP IN SOUTH AFRICA IN AN ERA OF GLASNOST

by Christopher Merrett

It is generally agreed that since February 1990 South Africa has experienced a period of glasnost, allowing a degree of freedom of expression absent from political life since the late 1950's. President De Klerk in his 2 February speech to Parliament expressed the "...Government's declared intention to normalise the political process in South Africa without jeopardising the maintenance of good order." Some degree of normalisation has certainly taken place, but there is evidence to show that the variable tactics of censorship have made change more apparent than real.

All thirty-two organizations adhering to various ideologies ranging from Marxist through the Congress Movement to Africanist banned under the Internal Security Act were unbanned. Political prisoners convicted of membership and promotion of the aims of formerly banned organizations were made eligible for release. All publications banned specifically under the Internal Security Act were unbanned, although of eight titles proscribed from 1952 to 1977 only one (African Communist) is still being published. About one third of the 530 names appearing on the Consolidated List were removed. This automatically lifted the proscription of their publications and permitted the free circulation of classic left-wing South African works after many years. Once the negotiation process had started the authorities granted a temporary indemnity, until mid-August, from prosecution for past political offences for forty high-profile exiles such as Joe Slovo, Steve Tshwete and Max Sisulu. This was later extended to the end of 1990, but was granted at the sole discretion of the State President.

The State of Emergency was significantly amended in February, most notably in the sphere of the media, allowing publication of news about unrest, although controls were maintained over printing of visual material. All organizations and most persons restricted under the Emergency were de-restricted, but some individuals still had to report periodically to a police station. The conditions under which Emergency detainees were held were ameliorated with a time limit of six months and extended rights of access to lawyers and medical
practitioners. Subsequently, on 8 June the Emergency was lifted altogether, except in the province of Natal where it remained until 18 October 1990.

In all the “independent” bantustans, except Bophuthatswana where a state of emergency was declared on 14 March after the Garankuwa Uprising, a parallel opening up occurred. In Transkei organizations were unbanned, political prisoners released and charges dropped in all political cases except those involving violence. In Ciskei two overlapping emergencies existed for a while, but after the coup which toppled Lennox Sebe in March all security detainees were freed, and by the end of the month organizations were unbanned. In Venda Colonel Ramushwana unbanned organizations after the April coup.

In previous work on the structure of South African censorship\(^3\) the writer has identified six components: apartheid; apartheid education; security legislation; emergency regulations; publications control; and statutory censorship. Recent events have justified the addition of a seventh: informal repression. This model is used here to assess whether recent developments amount to more than a slight crack in the monolithic structure of South African censorship.

**Apartheid** as an institution has lain largely undisturbed except for the abolition of the Separate Amenities Act which segregated civic and provincial facilities. The crisis in black *education* has worsened because of unrest, particularly in Natal, and disputes with the Department of Education and Training on the part of pupils and teachers countrywide. Until apartheid and its educational system are abolished there can be no end to the South African censorship system.

**Security legislation** remains entirely unaltered, although the Minister of Justice hinted at possible amendment in March and at the Pretoria talks with the African National Congress (ANC) in August there was mention of doing away with the newspaper registration fee. The Internal Security Act of 1982 is a comprehensive piece of legislation which amounts to a declaration of war on the anti-apartheid movement: it continues to provide the government with the ability to crush all real opposition. Although no organization or publication is presently banned under its provisions, the power to do so remains. While the South African Communist Party (SACP) is
now legal for the first time since 1950 (when it was called the Communist Party of South Africa) it is still an offence under the Act to promote the aims of communism. Both the SACP and the ANC are severely constrained by the Act as a whole. Nearly 300 names remain on the Consolidated List of “banned” and “listed” persons. At least one, Buyiswa Jack, an employee of the Western Province Council of Churches, convicted in December 1989 of assisting a member of the ANC, has been added since February 1990.

Hundreds of political prisoners remain in jail, convicted under the Internal Security Act or its predecessors for acts of insurgency or treason against the apartheid state. From February to June 1990 there were 104 releases or only 5% of the suspected total. Some of those released were unknown to monitoring groups. Some have been restricted, with a fortnightly report to the police or an obligation to inform them of changes of address. Exiles who left South Africa illegally or were members of unlawful organizations have been turned back or detained at the border. Mary Benson, house arrested in the 1960’s for anti-apartheid activity and allowed an exit visa to go into exile, was granted a visa for only three months on the condition that she undertake no professional activity, which presumably included writing.

Up to the beginning of September 188 detentions had been noted under various sections of the Act, most notably section 29 which allows for detention for interrogation. A small group of these detainees comprised right wing elements suspected of acts of violence, but the remainder were attached to anti-apartheid organizations. In March and April two members of the Media Workers Association of South Africa (MWASA) were detained. Significantly in July prominent members of the South African Communist Party like Billy Nair and “Mac” Maharaj (also on the National Executive of the African National Congress) were held. It was suspected that the government was bending to right wing pressure and pursuing an old tactic of trying to drive a wedge between communists and nationalists in the Congress Movement. Whatever the motive, the South African government has clearly not lost its predilection for locking up opponents without trial in order to suppress their opinions.

Also under the Internal Security Act it renewed the ban on outdoor gatherings which has been an annual feature of the South African political landscape from 1976. Since 2 February over 200
people have died and 2000 have been injured in the dispersal of gatherings declared illegal under security legislation. Under other legislation controlling organizations, two—the United Democratic Front (UDF) and the National Union of South African Students (NUSAS)—remain “affected” and unable to receive foreign funding; while another—the Wilgespruit Center—is a “reporting” organization, whose financial links are under close scrutiny.

While Emergency controls over the media were gradually lessened, the police retained the power, under security legislation, to exclude journalists from unrest areas. Indeed it has been argued that the Emergency powers in force from 1986 to 1990 were simply a reiteration of existing security measures amplified by the arbitrary powers granted to the authorities. In early April Farouk Chothia of New African was ejected from the Mpumalanga area near Durban by police, whose powers over journalists’ access to unrest areas seemed not to be diminished by the lower-profile Emergency. Before police opened fire at Sebokeng on 26 March photographers were forced to leave the area. The film of others was confiscated, although some reporters and photographers managed to blend in with the fleeing crowd. In the Transvaal journalists were excluded from Thabong (Welkom) at the time of the consumer boycott and from the Lonehill squatter camp which was being demolished.

The authorities continued to use Emergency regulations in March to pursue the radical Afrikaans weekly Vrye Weekblad over six supposedly subversive statements published from December 1988 to February 1989 on conscription. One of the charges related to a speech from the dock by Charles Bester, sentenced to prison for his conscientious objection. Max du Preez, editor of Vrye Weekblad, speculated that this case might have been pursued by conservative elements in the bureaucracy trying to embarrass the government. It remains an offence to publish archival material formerly proscribed under the State of Emergency.

Recent surveys of the mainline Press suggest that attitudes framed during the Emergency linger on. They found that establishment newspapers were too ready to accept the statements of the security forces, for instance in the exposure of Operation Vula, an alleged plan by SACP members to overthrow the state by force should negotiations fail. This suggested that they lacked the ability to examine critically information from agencies known to have lied
in the past, for example over supposed infiltration by SWAPO into Namibia just before independence. Coverage of the Pietermaritzburg war at the end of March 1990 was found to be simplistic, sanitized, partisan, again too reliant upon official sources, and lacking in investigative or follow up material.

Under the Natal Emergency, gazetted on 8 June, persons could be excluded from a designated area, detained for up to six months, restricted or restrained in various ways by an indemnified security force. The latter also had powers of entry, search and seizure; and the right to control activities in a given area. This Emergency was lifted on 18 October, but had already been joined in August by the declaration of Unrest Areas under the Public Safety Amendment Act which covered 18 magisterial districts and 27 townships in the Transvaal. In November certain areas of Cape Town were added. This mini Emergency had the same basic characteristics as the Natal version. In September it was suggested that an old pattern of widespread detention of youth was returning in the Transvaal.

The Publications Act of 1974, used to proscribe specific titles for circulation or possession, remains firmly entrenched on the statute book. For example, while Nelson Mandela addressed the crowd on the Grand Parade in Cape Town on 11 February 1990 his book of articles, speeches and trial addresses No Easy Walk to Freedom remained banned for possession under this legislation, although it, and many other books by prominent opposition figures, has since been hurriedly unbanned. Nevertheless, Govan Mbeki's classic South Africa: The Peasants' Revolt remains banned for possession. In mid-May the blanket prohibition on the import of publications of the ANC was lifted, although many of its titles remain individually banned; and the late Francis Meli pointed out that his journal Sechaba was better known in Europe than in South Africa. Similar blanket restrictions on the International Defence Aid Fund (IDAF) and Inkululeko Publications (SACP) were lifted in June and July respectively. Louis Pienaar, former Administrator General of Namibia, took office as chairperson of the Publications Appeal Board on 1 April. There is nothing in his record to suggest that he will not serve the censorship needs of the apartheid state as readily as his predecessors. When he took office he made it known that he would find acceptable stiffer conditions following appeal, something
which had not happened under the previous chair, Kobus van Rooyen.

Statutory censorship has been unaffected by South African glasnost and was of sufficient concern to the ANC for inclusion in talks with a visiting United Nations delegation. The one threat posed to it came in March when the progressive Police and Prison Warders Civil Rights Union (POPCRU) considered revealing information about assaults and murders in prison, prohibited under the Prisons Act, if the prisons service were not desegregated. At the same time New Nation defied the law when it published pictures and an expose of degrading conditions at Johannesburg Prison. Further limitations on court reporting are feared. Examples of secrecy in South Africa's public life abound. Information about South Africa's secret stockpile of oil (rumoured to be three years' worth) and the country's consumption, a particularly pertinent topic, remain secret. The performance of South African companies in foreign markets is impossible to gauge because of secrecy engendered by the Companies Act. Max du Preez of Vrye Weekblad was convicted and fined under the Protection of Information Act for publishing news that an institute attached to Stellenbosch University acted as a conduit for information to the National Intelligence Service. The trial was held in camera. The same Act was invoked in a fraud case which revealed the fact that the Civil Cooperation Bureau (CCB) was involved in military interference in the affairs of another state. No further evidence could be led. In Pietermaritzburg in November the trial of a conscientious objector, Michael Graaf, was hurriedly adjourned when he revealed details about security force actions in Namibia as part of his evidence which infringed the Defence Act.

In late April four books were seized from a broadcaster by Customs officials at Jan Smuts Airport. Two, one on the Freedom Charter and the other by Oliver Tambo, neither of them banned, were not returned. This prompts the interesting question of how far the government is in control of its bureaucracy and police force. The latter is known to be heavily infiltrated by right wing elements loyal to the Conservative Party or fascist groups to its right. Journalists from the Star were harassed after publicizing evidence revealed by the Hiemstra Commission investigating allegations of spying by Johannesburg City Council employees on anti-apartheid activists, including David Webster, assassinated in May 1989. On 21 February
1990 the offices of SuidAfrikaan in Cape Town, also used by New Nation and Namagua News, were burgled with the loss of R30 000 of computer hardware together with software. In the past such burglaries, resulting in the disruption of the ability to communicate, have been linked to elements connected to the security forces. On 3 July a bomb went off at the offices of Vrye Weekblad after the paper had run stories on hit squad plans to assassinate ANC leaders, engage in sabotage and poison water supplies. Somewhat surprisingly it transpired that this was the first attack on a newspaper office since 1913, when the building housing the Star was burned to the ground by striking mineworkers who accused it of siding with capital. More serious, as it led to the loss of a life, was the parcel bomb which exploded in the Durban offices of PC Plus on 2 October. The firm was well known for supplying anti-apartheid organizations with hardware and software.

Informal repression, perhaps the under-estimated facet of South African censorship, is undoubtedly on the increase. On assuming office, President F.W. De Klerk made considerable play of the fact that he had abolished the National Security Management System (NSMS). In fact it has been replaced by the National Coordinating Mechanism (NCM) which is in all probability the same “military-controlled hierarchy of committees” described by IDAF. The Harms Commission, set up to investigate the Civil Cooperation Bureau (CCB) of the South African Defence Force, revealed a programme of arson, intimidation, murder and sabotage designed to disrupt the work of anti-apartheid organizations, which amounted to a covert war. Low intensity conflict theory was very much a part of the thinking of government during the P.W. Botha era. The full picture is not yet complete because of the restricted terms of reference of the Harms Commission and the illegal withholding of evidence by CCB operatives who appeared before it.

The authorities claim that the CCB was operationally disbanded on 1 August 1990. Its region 6 covered South Africa, but its operatives assigned to other, extra-territorial regions had been active in the country before it was set up in 1988. Whatever the structures, a culture of violent repression still exists in South Africa and its securocrats remain influential. It has been suggested that repression has been privatized, that pacification through so-called “black on black” violence is an underlying objective, and that there is an
attempt to re-order the political equation and the debate which surrounds it through violence and fear. The source of this pacification is complex. It can be traced to partial policing, exemplified by the Pietermaritzburg civil war of March-April 1990 in which Inkatha was aided by acts of commission and omission: large well armed bodies of men up to 10 000 strong could hardly have operated without security force assistance. The work of vigilantes politically allied to the apartheid state is another factor, with hundreds of attributable deaths in 1990, while the actions of shadowy hit squads allegedly operating within state structures, and freelance, right wing death squads have to be considered. For example in July 1990 alone, hit squads were responsible for 10 attacks and 4 deaths, right wingers for 20 attacks and 9 deaths. It is probable that membership of these two groups is not mutually exclusive. This pattern sums up the atmosphere of officially sanctioned lawlessness created by the 1985-1990 Emergency which has become an integral part of the South African condition, with severe censorship implications for the future.

Such repressive groups are allowed maximum latitude in those bantustans which have become known, curiously, as pro-apartheid (as opposed to those like Transkei, Kangwane and Venda which have shown some degree of liberalization and questioning of apartheid’s future). The role of Inkatha and the KwaZulu government is particularly suspect. In the space of four days in late June the Congress of South African Trade Unions/United Democratic Front (COSATU/UDF) Joint Working Committee documented a sequence of incidents with censorship implications. At Umgababa a man was assaulted for wearing an ANC t-shirt, while at Empangeni posters protesting at the on-going conflict were confiscated, and at Umlazi possession of a pro-ANC book led to another assault by police. In the same period activists at Esikahweni wearing “Scrap the KZP” stickers were attacked by the police, while a man was arrested at Empangeni also for wearing stickers. On the weekend of 14-15 July the same KwaZulu police (KZP) broke up an ANC meeting at the AA Community Hall in Umlazi. When challenged to name the law under which the gathering was being prevented, police allegedly replied “We don’t use the law when we do our work.”10 In May 1990 during an Inkatha recruitment drive in the Ndwedwe area the “banning” of ANC t-shirts and other media was recorded. On 3 September the COSATU office at Empangeni was raided by police who were accompanied by a local warlord linked to Inkatha. In the South Coast
region of Natal around Port Shepstone the security forces act as if the ANC was still banned, and they routinely raid meetings or place restrictions upon them.

The Press is a major target. In Natal there have been reports of journalists fired on by the KZP and Inkatha vigilantes. Journalists on the newspaper *Umafrika* have been subjected to death threats, police harassment and legal action over their coverage of Natal politics. In particular the threats have been linked to the trial of Samuel Jamile, a KwaZulu government deputy minister appearing on 15 murder charges. In Natal there is a clear campaign, led by Gatsha Buthelezi, against the anti-Inkatha press: he told the European Community funders of *New African* (the Durban weekly) that they were financing "black on black violence" by supporting a "propaganda mouthpiece." The future of the paper, which has publicized numerous human rights abuses by Inkatha supporters in the Natal region since April 1989, is in doubt.

In another example of KwaZulu inspired censorship, performance of a play entitled *Kosiplay*, based on the conflict between conservation and human needs in the Maputaland area, had to be called off. The cast included schoolchildren and the play was forced off the stage in Pietermaritzburg in October by the Natal Education Department after pressure from the KwaZulu Bureau of Natural Resources (KBNR). Its director had not seen the play, but objected to the fact that one of the sponsoring bodies was the Association for Rural Advancement (AFRA), which has criticized KBNR in the past. The content of the playscript seems to have been an irrelevance in what was a straightforward act of political censorship by a bantustan authority.

Inkatha has an ideology based on ethnicity, reverence of leaders and collaboration with the apartheid regime, although it has theoretically held out against "independent" status for KwaZulu. As a political movement it has required oaths of loyalty from public servants, indulged in a rhetoric of threatened violence, and practised human rights abuses orchestrated by highly placed officials, including members of the KwaZulu Legislative Assembly. Its political objective, regional hegemony and recognition in the national negotiation process, has led it to embrace violent censorship in a way similar to the actions of the South African state from 1950 to 1990. Comparable events are recognizable in Bophuthatswana, although
for different reasons. The ANC is de facto banned. Detentions, and alleged assaults, followed its launch at Modderspruit. Its chief recruiting officer was among those detained and membership cards were confiscated. The launch of the GaRankuwa branch took place at the Medical University of South Africa (Medunsa) two kilometres across the "border" with South Africa, an ironic use of apartheid's divide and rule policy by its oldest opponent.

The government of South Africa has been forced, through its desire to legitimize the negotiation process, and its need for international approval, to be more tolerant than in the past towards the propagation of dissenting opinion. This has been a political tactic to suit the ends of the National Party government and has in no way extended the right of the South African people to gain access to viewpoints and information. Government policy is opportunistic and lacks a commitment to open government and freedom of expression. For instance, the Internal Security Act, described by the Human Rights Commission as "...a monument to the way in which loopholes and avenues of expression could be closed down one by one, until space for legitimate political opposition vanished altogether"13, needs to be replaced by inalienable rights to statutory freedoms. Forty years of habitual repression may have been repudiated by the National Party's ideologues, but it is deeply entrenched in its bureaucracy. There is also considerable doubt about De Klerk's attitude to censorship. Is he, for instance, a relative liberal who is being undermined by a congenitally conservative bureaucracy? Or is he a closet conservative weaving a liberal image who is happy to see reactionary forces in his regime preventing real change? The latter interpretation is certainly not unreasonable in the context of De Klerk's political career as a conservative within the National Party up to mid 1989.

The government's relationship to informal repression is not absolutely clear but there is evidence to show that it is prepared to benefit from it, particularly in Natal, to entrench its interests and those of its allies, like Inkatha. Increasing violence of various types from conservative factions seems likely to pose a major censorship threat in the near future. This is consistent with the history of South African censorship. It has never been a static institution: while one element has diminished others have strengthened. Thus, while legal censorship may be less obvious than in the past, extra-legal forms are gaining the ascendancy.
Notes

1. Natal Witness, 3 February 1990
2. The Consolidated List appears annually in the Government Gazette indicating banned and listed persons. Among other restrictions all their published work is banned for circulation.
5. Intercepted radio messages about SWAPO military movements across the Angolan border into Namibia turned out to be a hoax perpetrated by conservative South African elements and publicized by the government.
6. In November he resigned to take up another government position.
7. One alternative newspaper has recently defied the law and published details about oil supplies and reserves: see Weekly Mail, 6(42) 2 November 1990, p.3.
Your Excellency, Distinguished Members of the Special Political Committee,

I am honored to have another occasion to address this Special Political Committee. Last year, I demonstrated to this Committee that the commitment of national and international library organizations to the liberation movement in South Africa was not only negligible, but often counterproductive. This year I might have reported the same, were it not for the fact that rank-and-file librarians in South Africa, the United States, Scandinavia and elsewhere grew impatient with the leadership of their organizations and forged ahead to re-align librarianship with the policies, strategies and goals of the liberation movement.

In the United States, the Progressive Librarians Guild was formed not long after my testimony here last November. The Guild now has over 200 members in 26 states, and has been at the head of the struggle to maintain the cultural and academic boycott as defined by the May 1989 Guidelines of the African National Congress. To this effect, the Guild joined other components of the American Library Association (ALA) to block the powerful U.S. publishing industry - represented by the Association of American Publishers - from receiving carte blanche approval from the ALA Executive to re-enter the apartheid market. The Guild alerted the ANC and relevant bodies of the Mass Democratic Movement that this lobby was attempting to break the boycott. At the ALA’s Mid-Winter Conference in January 1990, the ANC’s Chief Representative to the United Nations, Tebogo Mafole, issued a statement spelling out the liberation movement’s policies on interactions with South Africa. This statement helped block a resolution calling for an end to the boycott. At the ALA’s Annual Conference in June 1990, the publishing lobby made another attempt at breaking the boycott: it solicited a statement from the Congress of South African Writers in a most deceptive manner, and then quoted this statement out of context to suit their own purpose. We alerted the Congress of this falsification, and they sent a second statement which spelled out in no uncertain terms that they were committed to the established policies of the liberation movement, and that no statement they wrote could be construed as advocating a breakdown of the boycott. As a result of this, and the powerful testimony of the great South African poet, Dennis Brutus, and the testimonies of librarians from virtually every constituency of the ALA, the Executive was forced to draw up an official resolution stating that it would not heed the publishers call for an end to the boycott.
On the international level, members of the ANC, Progressive Librarians Guild, the BIS group of Scandinavian librarians, the Library and Information Workers Organization (from South Africa), and others set up a picket at the annual conference of the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) in August 1990. Placing no qualifications on which delegates could represent South African librarianship, IFLA was in fact bestowing its blessing on apartheid librarians who have staunchly defended apartheid censorship, apartheid education and apartheid amenities. It is librarians such as these who allow their facilities to refuse services to those citizens whose pigmentation they cannot bear to have in their midst. When the de Klerk Government lifted the Separate Amenities Act of 1953 a few weeks ago, it did so irresponsibly. There are so many loopholes now that any municipality wishing to bar groups of citizens from using their facilities may do so with ease.

As a result, we see the Witbank Public Library institute a $7.80 “deposit fee” on books taken out by so-called “non-residents”: since Witbank’s residents are all white, as determined by the Group Areas Act, this maneuver maintains the Witbank Public Library as an apartheid institution. The Bethel Public Library took stronger steps than this: it instituted a $200 “annual fee,” again for so-called “non-residents.” The best effort to prevent public access to the public library was made by the enlightened administrators of the Newcastle Public Library, which simply declared itself closed to all “new” members. During celebrations of the Freedom Charter in June, patrons in the town of Ashtown were evicted from the whites-only public library when they attempted to apply for membership. The patrons then set up a picket line. The South African Police arrived, gave the patrons 5 minutes to disperse and then fired birdshot, which resulted in serious injuries. The patrons were there to celebrate that part of the Freedom Charter which states, “The doors of learning and culture shall be opened.” Apparently, the municipal board of Ashtown feels otherwise.

The point here is that the government-approved library organization - the South African Institute of Library and Information Science (SAILIS) - has yet to be heard from with regard to any of these incidents. Last year I told this Committee about Joyce Mabudafhasi, a librarian who is also a leading activist in the United Democratic Front. After her house was bombed in the mid-1980’s, Joyce was detained from 1986 until January 1989. Did SAILIS protest on her behalf? Did SAILIS demand that this librarian be released immediately? Did SAILIS organize other librarians to speak up on her behalf? No. Just a few weeks ago, it appears that another assassination attempt was made against this courageous woman. Why won’t SAILIS speak up for their colleague? It is clear that Joyce is not their colleague. She is a librarian who participates in the liberation of apartheid.
South Africa, and SAILIS is an organization that participates in maintaining the status quo in _apartheid_ South Africa.

A group of South African librarians that grew tired of SAILIS formed a new structure, the Library and Information Workers Organization (LIWO), in July 1990. LIWO is dedicated to the Freedom Charter, and though they are still regionally based, they hope to become a national library structure within a year or two. This organization is asking important questions about South African librarianship: Can existing librarians unlearn the old practices and the old professional ideology? Why is accessing information designed the way it is in South Africa. If possible, how can one repair the damage caused to library collections by _apartheid_? Can the interests of a non-racist, non-sexist, democratic and redistributive South Africa be served by existing library structures?

At the launch of this new structure, the ANC’s Department of Arts and Culture said, “Your task, comrades, is a gigantic one: no less than the establishment of a New Information Order for the new South Africa.” A similar sentiment was expressed at a Summer demonstration against the South African Broadcast Company. Workers carried banners reading, “Free the Airwaves,” “The People Shall Broadcast,” and “Democratise - Don’t Privatise.” Your Excellency, Distinguished Members of this Committee, is this not a key issue in the building of a new South Africa? Does this not immediately bring to mind the battle in this building, led by brilliant persons such as the late Sean MacBride, for a New World Information and Communications Order?

The reason the U.S. publishing lobby approached librarians to get approval to re-enter _apartheid_ South Africa is because we purchase $4.5 billion worth of materials from them each year. Their battle cry was that [the] book boycott blocked the “free flow of information.” But we all know that they meant the “free flow of Western information” or, even more specifically, “the free flow of North-Western information.” And though some member states had a rather violent reaction to the New World Information and Communications Order, and others dismissed the concept of cultural hegemony as mere abstraction, it cannot be denied that the information and communications conglomerates have been used for other services. Before his death in 1988, Sean MacBride wrote, “Control of the media, written and electronic, is of vital importance to those who wish to destabilize a government or create tensions in different parts of the world.” Librarianship can play a role in this arena. The current issue of _Library Journal_ has a letter from a disgruntled librarian who complains that the profession should not applaud those who make available to the public any materials that could undermine “national security.” We have too many sad memories of what is done in the name of “national security”: Iran and Guatemala in the 1950’s; the Congo, Vietnam, Brazil, Indonesia and the
Dominican Republic in the 1960's; Chile and Angola in the 1970's; Nicaragua throughout the 1980's, and so many others far too numerous to mention here today. Librarians in the United States have a responsibility to provide access to and dissemination of any materials that pertain to such disgusting activities. If U.S. Secretary of State James Baker states that the United States will provide "electoral and political advice" to South Africa by way of the National Endowment for Democracy, it is a librarian's duty to provide information pertaining to the history and activities of that structure. If a librarian had information on activities that may be happening in the Caprivi Strip right now, it is their job to make such information available.

In closing, I ask that member states, especially those from the Non-Aligned Movement, encourage the development of a New Information Order in the new South Africa. Those in your countries who have actively participated in democratising your information and communications sectors should establish and maintain relations with relevant bodies of the liberation movement. Your national library structures should establish relations with the new library structure in South Africa that I have described above.

The people of South Africa are working day and night to achieve their liberation. But the adversaries of liberation are also working around the clock. It is crucial that we each act, in our professional capacities, to fully support the liberation movement of the African National Congress in stopping the seeds of destabilization from taking root. Data, documentation, information and knowledge - these are the tools with which we can expose such criminal activities. I might also mention that the Special Political Committee performs a great service in providing non-diplomatic personnel with a forum. The victories we have scored in the field of librarianship are in large part due to the opportunity you gave us last year. We hope to return next year to report more accomplishments. Thank you.

LIWO's Guiding Principles

LIWO recognizes:

- the inalienable right of every person to participate in the free and equal exchange of information;
- the right of library and information workers to collect, store and distribute information freely and without interference;
- that everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression and that this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media regardless of frontiers;
• that library and information services in South Africa have been distorted by apartheid in such a way that the information needs of the majority are not being satisfied;

LIWO accordingly believes that the free flow of information is essential to the development of a free, non-racial, non-sexist, united and democratic South Africa.

In accordance with that belief, LIWO commits itself in policy and practice to:
• the selection, presentation and distribution of information to all, without prejudice, and to resisting any attempt to interfere with that objective;
• developing information services in response to community needs;
• promoting research into library and information services, which research will have as its purpose the planning of future services as an indispensable part of the wider educative process;
• developing the education and training of library and information workers in such a way that it identifies the social context within which libraries and information services operate, addresses user and community needs, and mobilizes expertise in all related fields;
• promoting more democratic procedures and practice in the workplace;
• the elimination of all discrimination on any arbitrary criteria;
• initiating and developing communication between LIWO members and information workers in other countries, and particularly in neighbouring African countries.

LIWO Resolution on the Academic and Cultural Boycott

This organisation, recognizing that

1. the objective of the boycott strategy is the isolation of the South African government and state structures from the international community, in order to indicate international abhorrence and rejection of apartheid, and to deprive apartheid structures of the benefits of international contact and communication;

2. the apartheid state has been instrumental in using information as a tool in its propaganda campaigns in an attempt to assert its legitimacy both locally and internationally, and state censorship strategies have been used to inhibit the free flow of information useful to those involved in the struggle to abolish apartheid;

3. the international boycott strategy has been modified after consultation with appropriate structures representative of the majority of South Africans, in order that the anti-apartheid work of individuals and organisations within South Africa may not be hindered by a total boycott strategy;
And believing that

1. the boycott strategy represents one of the last non-violent mechanisms which can be used to pressurise and destabilise the South African state in order to bring about fundamental change in South Africa's unjust political dispensation;

2. a selective boycott strategy with respect to the free flow of information is essential in order to ensure the survival of anti-apartheid information agencies and the provision of material support and intellectual input from the international information community, whilst at the same time ensuring the isolation of information agencies which contribute to the means whereby the South African state retains power, whether in terms of propaganda campaigns or military supremacy;

Calls for

1. respectful, serious and sensitive discussion of the boycott issue within the ranks of this organisation, conducted in consultation with representative anti-apartheid organisations, with a view toward the publication of a document encompassing the views of the organisation's membership on the academic and cultural boycott, to be circulated nationally and internationally;

2. immediate contact and communication with organisations of library and information workers abroad to are participating in the academic and cultural boycott debate, in order that the views be made known internationally, and that we may embark upon constructive interaction with such organisations with a view toward seeking their assistance in developing anti-apartheid information structures.

LIWO Resolution on Censorship and Freedom of Information

This organization, recognizing that

a) South African governments have over the centuries deliberately erected a massive censorship apparatus in order to inhibit the voice of the oppressed and the demands of democrats;

b) the censorship apparatus comprises a number of interlocking parts: apartheid and its educational system; security legislation; states of emergency; statutory suppression of information; publications legislation; and diverse means of informal repression;

c) censorship and self-censorship have become an integral part of South African life and this development has been aided and abetted, wittingly and unwittingly, by librarians and information workers;

And believing that

a) the abolition of censorship and entrenchment of the principle of the right to know are essential to the participative democracy to which we aspire;
b) it is the professional duty of all library and information workers to defend with the utmost vigour freedom of information for all;

**Calls for**

a) the implementation of an educational programme designed to persuade library and information workers to refuse to implement any part of censorship legislation and support them in the struggle against repression;

b) critical reviews of library collections and resource centres to correct imbalances which have led to biased views of South African history and society;

c) close monitoring by the new association of all forms of censorship, and communication to progressive librarians in other countries of ongoing abuse of civil rights in this regard;

d) discussions with the liberation movement, and other progressive bodies, with a view to the formulation of a freedom of information policy in a democratic South Africa.

**DOCUMENTS: MIDDLE EAST**

**PLG Press Release on Gulf Crisis, 9/90**

The Organizing Committee of the Progressive Librarians Guild has issued the following statement at the request of members attending a PLG meeting on September 22, 1990:

We oppose U.S. military intervention in the Middle East.

The Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, while in violation of international law, does not in any way justify the massive mobilization and deployment of the terrible machinery of war being orchestrated by the U.S. and its supporters. The crocodile tears being shed for the Kuwaitis (and in particular for the regime of the ruling family) cannot disguise the interventionists' utter contempt for the Arab masses whose rights and lives will be trampled in the bloody dirt and whose calls for justice in the region will be drowned out by the insane clamor of war.

Even before a shot has been fired thousands are suffering the dislocations and privations created by actions preparatory to an armed conflict. Hundreds of thousands will die, soldiers and civilians, in the event of war. And what is this war actually about? Make no mistake about it - people will be fighting and dying not for noble principles but in defense of big oil profits and a profoundly warped sense of Western "strategic interests".

As socially responsible professionals in the field of librarianship, we demand that the troops be brought home now, that immediate consideration be given to a negotiated settlement of the conflict and that our national resources be re-directed from policing the world to fighting against the
many ills that plague our own society and helping to peacefully construct a better world based on social and economic justice and mutual understanding.

We urge all of our members to participate in the anti-war movement, to work as librarians to counter propaganda emanating from the war-hysteric mass media by assuring the provision of alternative viewpoints on the conflict and to oppose all manifestations of the anti-Arab racism which the intervention is generating.

We call upon all bodies of ALA to unite in condemnation of U.S. involvement in a Middle East war.

**MSRRT Persian Gulf Resolution, 1/91**

WHEREAS nearly half a million U.S. troops, a disproportionate number of them lower class and persons of color, are now deployed in the Persian Gulf; and

WHEREAS veterans hospitals in the United States are preparing to handle at least 40,000 casualties; and

WHEREAS the enormous cost of this military adventure threatens to severely worsen the budget deficit and scuttle the long-overdue “Peace Dividend”; and

WHEREAS the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, while a clear violation of international law, does not in any way justify the massive American mobilization and deployment of offensive forces; and

WHEREAS the internationally-approved economic sanctions and regional peacemaking efforts by the Arab League have not been given a chance to work by the Bush Administration; and

WHEREAS the United States displays a “double standard” in condemning the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait while remaining silent or actually supporting Israel’s invasions and occupations of the West Bank, Gaza, East Jerusalem, Golan Heights, and southern Lebanon; Syria’s intervention in Lebanon; Turkey’s invasion of northern Cyprus; Morocco’s occupation of Western Sahara; the oppression and slaughter of Kurds by Turkey, Iran, Iraq and other states; and the Reagan/Bush invasion of Grenada and Panama, as well as unprovoked bombing of Libya and covert war against Nicaragua; and

WHEREAS there has not yet been a full and open debate concerning U.S. goals and aims in the Persian Gulf; and
WHEREAS the American people receive information on the Gulf crisis that is largely precensored by Saudi and our own military authorities; and

WHEREAS the American library profession has mainly acquiesced in the censorship and mutilation of reading materials destined for Persian Gulf troops, thus violating its own basic canons of intellectual freedom:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Social Responsibilities Round Table of the American Library Association condemns the U.S. military response to the Kuwait invasion and calls for the immediate withdrawal of all foreign troops from the region, including Iraqi soldiers from Kuwait and American forces from the Persian Gulf;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that SRRT demands an embargo on arms shipments to all Middle East governments and urges the settlement of the Persian Gulf, Israeli-Palestinian, Kurdish, and other regional conflicts by peaceful, diplomatic means — such as economic sanctions and international conferences — that primarily involve the United Nations and Arab League;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that SRRT calls upon the President and Congress to initiate an energy policy emphasizing reduced oil use, conservation, recycling, and development of non-nuclear, renewable power sources, as well as redirecting the massive sums now being squandered in the Gulf to end poverty, homelessness, hunger, and illiteracy in the United States;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that SRRT invites all American librarians to promote — through programs, displays, bibliographies, and materials selection — a genuine national debate on the Gulf crisis, interventionism, and energy policy, necessarily including “alternative” viewpoints and analyses from such sources as the American Friends Service Committee, Women Against Military Madness, National Council of Churches of Christ, Military Families Support Network, War Resisters League, New Jewish Agenda, Daniel Ellsberg, and Noam Chomsky;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that SRRT opposes the censorship and mutilation of books and magazines everywhere, including both the United States and Saudi Arabia.

Submitted to ALA/SRRT Action Council by Minnesota Social Responsibilities Round Table
In a time when major publishing houses focus on negotiating million dollar book contracts, with a handful of commercially viable authors, the small press movement continues to flourish year after year. Historically, small presses have played a critical role in developing awareness of progressive issues and concerns. They offer an alternative view, new ideas and sources of information, as well as a voice for minorities, traditionally not represented in mainstream media. Small presses such as the Feminist Press, Singlejack Books, New Star Books, Four Walls Eight Windows, and Kitchen Table Press offer important works on labor movement issues, books by and about women of color, experimental poetry and literature, and Central American, feminist and socialist titles. The importance of the small press, or independent publisher, has become evident, both as a reflection of important literary, social and political movements and as a forum for new writers.

The Small Press Center was established five years ago, as a non-profit, educational program which promotes interest in small presses. Housed in the General Society of Mechanics Library, in New York City, the center has become a meeting place which offers something for everyone, from writer to publisher to the general public.

There are a variety of services and programs offered at the center. For small press publishers, becoming a member offers them the opportunity to have their books on permanent exhibition in the library alcove, making them easily accessible. The small library also includes books on self-publishing, small press catalogs and directories, as well as periodicals. The center is hoping to develop a more extensive and structured reference collection in the coming year. Open to the general public, the Small Press Center also sponsors lectures and readings by small press authors.

The Small Press Book Fair, held annually, has become an important gathering for all interested in independent publishing. The 1990 fair was a tremendous success, with nearly 3000 visitors and 110 presses represented. It is an excellent opportunity for publishers to gain exposure and sell books, as well as being an effective means
of introducing the small press world to the public. The fair is open to the public free of charge. Another event sponsored by the Small Press Center is an annual thematic exhibit. Recently, an exhibit entitled "The Environment" was on view. Opening on Earth Day, the exhibit highlighted an enormous variety of titles which focused on some aspect of the environment, published by 200 different small presses. A bibliography also accompanied the exhibit and is available through the center.

Depending primarily on grants from several foundations, the Small Press Center operates on a small budget, with a limited staff. An executive committee, consisting of publishers, librarians, booksellers and editors, contributes active support for center projects, as well as implementing new policies and developing long term goals.

The Small Press Center has established itself as an important resource for all those interested in contemporary writing and publishing. Due to the nature of small press publishing, these materials are frequently absent from library collections. Limited circulation and distribution, sparse budgets, lack of exposure in mainstream library and publishing journals all contribute to their low profile in libraries. For librarians, the Small Press Center can serve as a clearinghouse, offering access to an abundance of information which is otherwise difficult to find. The Small Press Center is located at 20 West 44th Street, New York, NY 10036.

by Karen Gisonny
**Suppression of Information Under Israeli Rule: A Bibliography**


Bahbah, Bishara. “Perspectives in Conflict: The Role of the Palestinian Media in the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem.” *Communication* (Winter 1985).


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FROM THE PALESTINE HUMAN RIGHTS INFORMATION CENTER

An annotated bibliography which supplements the *Bibliography on Suppression of Information* is available from the Palestine Human Rights Information Center—International Office for $3.00. The annotated bibliography contains 78 entries drawn from the Palestine Human Rights Information Center’s monthly periodical *Human Rights Update*.

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Book Review

The Alienated Librarian, Marcia Nauratil (Greenwood Press, 1989)

The phenomenon of burnout or occupational stress has received considerable attention over the past decade or so in academic, professional and popular literature. In keeping with the individualistic tenor of American culture most of this literature emphasizes the psychological dimensions of the problem, attributing burnout to particular personality traits and recommending a variety of individual coping strategies. While the organization and conditions of particular work settings are sometimes examined along with the psychological makeup of employees, the broad social-structural reasons for intolerable occupational stress are rarely investigated. Without ways to understand how socio-economic factors such as bureaucratization, hierarchy, and routinization militate against the possibility of meaningful, fulfilling work, millions of Americans have no choice but to blame themselves for the profound occupational dissatisfactions they feel. After all, we are told, “the good life” is available to all in this society. Hard work, initiative, and talent is rewarded. If we feel frustrated and dissatisfied in our work it must be due to our own shortcomings. Meanwhile corporations increasingly offer things like yoga and transcendental meditation as palliatives to prevent employee stress from interfering with productivity.

To attribute the frustration, ennui, and powerlessness so many of us experience in our jobs to the very nature of work within corporate capitalist society is to bridge an ideological chasm of substantial proportions. To its considerable merit Marcia Nauratil’s The Alienated Librarian succeeds in interpreting occupational stress in librarianship in terms of factors specific to the historical development of the profession, recent trends in librarianship, as well as broad historical and structural factors integral to the development and functioning of capitalist society. In order to make the shift from an individualistic psychological view of burnout to a social-structural one, Nauratil employs Marx’s theory of alienation as a conceptual paradigm. Because workers in capitalist society do not own the means for producing what is necessary for their own subsistence, they must sell their labor power to those few who own the means of production. As a consequence of this situation workers are alienated from both their productive activity and the product of that activity.
since they have no control over the conditions of their work or the disposition of the products of their work. Furthermore, according to Marx, under conditions of competition and inequality workers are alienated from other human beings and eventually become estranged from their own potential for creative, cooperative activity. At the core of alienation lies the worker’s fundamental lack of autonomy with regard to his or her productive life. Citing numerous studies, Nauratil identifies a lack of control over the circumstances of one’s work activity as a crucial causal component of occupational stress and concludes that burnout is a manifestation of a pervasive and deeply rooted socio-economic alienation.

While industrial workers have historically been most severely victimized by alienation, recent trends towards the assimilation of professionals into public and private bureaucracies have proletarianized professional work through deskilling, routinization, and subordination to organizational goals and thus increased their susceptibility to alienation. Nauratil makes the case that librarianship is especially susceptible to alienation and attributes this to several historical factors. A rigid, autocratic style of management and bureaucratic organizational structures emphasizing efficiency, quantification, and stasis have decreased the opportunities for innovation and the exercise of professional judgement as well as reducing the interaction between librarians and patrons to brief, mechanical exchanges. The feminization of librarianship in light of traditional and pervasive societal sexism has contributed to an undervaluing of the profession. Furthermore, the lack of a clearly defined, articulated and defended sense of professional purpose has historically enabled socio-political elites to manipulate librarianship for their own reactionary purposes. The arguments here are not unconvincing, but as in the overview of work in Western history earlier in the book, Nauratil casts her net a bit too widely. She tries to cover too much of American library history in too short a space and the results are often superficial. Nauratil is on firmer ground when she analyzes current trends in librarianship which contribute to alienation. Here she confronts issues which are among the most critical in librarianship today.

Common to the various, contemporary trends which have circumscribed the professional autonomy of librarians is the imposition of entrepreneurial ideologies and methods in an attempt to deal with
fiscal constraints and burgeoning technology. Private sector austerity management strategies are fundamentally incompatible with the public service mandate of libraries. The emphasis on productivity, efficiency and autocratic “bottom line” decision-making entailed by such strategies subjects librarians to the tyrannies of the private corporation and results in role conflict among librarians who regard themselves as autonomous professionals committed to the public good. The impact of automation, while somewhat more ambiguous given the possibilities for improved user services, also plays a role in alienating library workers by intensifying task specialization and fragmentation as well as tending to compel workers to adapt to the imperatives of the technology. In order to pay for costly new innovations in information technology and as a solution to shrinking budgets libraries are increasingly adopting a marketing orientation which attempts to identify the more lucrative market segments and tailor services to appeal to them while ignoring those segments considered unprofitable.

The Alienated Librarian concludes with a critique and rejection of current approaches to ameliorating burnout which recommend individual coping strategies while ignoring the deeply rooted structural causes of alienation. Teaching employees to adapt to oppressive working conditions reinforces their sense of powerlessness (a major component of alienation) by assuming that those conditions are inamenable to change. Nauratil advocates collective intervention at the organizational level, specifically direct worker control over the labor process and direct or representative influence on organizational policies. She suggests various forms of participative management (quality circles, autonomous work teams, codetermination) which should be feasible in libraries and urges the mobilization of forces in library associations, unions, and education to advocate the restructuring of libraries along lines conducive to optimum professional autonomy.

Worker alienation, not only in libraries but throughout American society, is a phenomenon which can only be addressed through a fundamental restructuring of the workplace and the economy. Nauratil draws examples of workplace democracy from European and Scandinavian countries with solid socialist traditions and, while she acknowledges the difficulties in implementing participative management in a capitalist society, she perhaps underestimates the
enormous resistance in this country (even in the public sector) to ideas of this sort.

A more fundamental, though not fatal, criticism of Nauratil’s book is that given the severity of the threat to free and equal access to information represented by the efforts to commercialize libraries, one wishes that she had given more emphasis to analyzing how many of the same factors which contribute to the alienation of librarians also undermine the public’s right to know and consequently the foundations of democratic decision-making. The application of the values and methods of the marketplace to libraries erodes the status of information as a public good and creates an underclass of the information poor at the same time as it deprives librarians of their professional autonomy. Nauratil understands this and touches on it in several instances, but given the severity of the situation, more attention might have been warranted. Still *The Alienated Librarian* is admirable for its efforts at analyzing library issues in the context of broad social, political, and economic structures. It is readable, well documented and, most importantly, shows flashes of the critical spirit and social imagination so lacking in much of what passes for scholarship both within and without librarianship today.

*by Henry T. Blanke*
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Library and Information Workers Organization (LIWO) was founded on July 14, 1990, in Durban, South Africa. It is the only librarians group in South Africa committed to the anti-apartheid movement.

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PLC STATEMENT OF PURPOSE (DRAFT)

The Library has long been assumed to be the bastion of liberty and learning, where people are free to reflect on the past and converse with the present in one of the few settings where commercial speech is muted. Signaled by the change in the name of what we do from librarianship to "information management", we may be giving up our professional responsibility to protect free public access to the knowledge generated in this society. We also seem to be forgetting that the library is an agent of democratic education and cultural development, and have instead embraced unthinkingly the idea that libraries must transform themselves into "competitors" in the "information marketplace."

We must dedicate ourselves to the renewal of the democratic ethos of library service, combat the attacks on library service that emanate from the various sectors of the information industry and work to restore libraries as socially progressive educational institutions. We must attempt to make known and to change the disparities of information provision for different sectors of our society and oppose and attempt to roll back the pervasive imposition of fees for library service. Above all, we will dispute the claim for the library as a neutral, non-political organization that serves best when preserving the status quo, and attempt to renew the library as an agent for progressive social change.

To accomplish these goals we have established this organization.

Its purpose will be to:

• Provide a forum for the open exchange of radical views on library issues
• Conduct campaigns to support progressive and democratic library activities locally, nationally and internationally
• Defend activist librarians as they work to effect changes in their own libraries and communities
• Bridge the artificial and destructive gap within our profession between school, public, academic, and special libraries
• Encourage the debate about prevailing management strategies adopted directly from the business world and propose democratic forms of library administration
• Consider the impact of technological change in the library workplace and on the provision of library service
• Monitor the professional ethics of librarianship from a socially responsible perspective
• Facilitate contacts between progressive librarians and other professional and scholarly groups dealing with communications worldwide.