

REMARKS OF THE HONORABLE JOHN E. FOGARTY, REPRESENTATIVE SECOND CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT, RHODE ISLAND AT THE DEDICATION OF THE NARRAGANSETT LIBRARY, NARRAGANSETT, R. I. ON SUNDAY, OCTOBER 29, AT 1:30 P.M.

It is a great privilege to have an opportunity to participate in the dedication of this splendid library in the town of Narragansett. At a time when we are told that our national survival depends on the success with which we as a people rise to our responsibilities, it is encouraging to note this fine example of community initiative. The hopes and aspirations of a free people are not secured by words and firm resolves; they are achieved by deeds and specific actions. This new library is a tribute not only to your ability to cooperate as a community in the provision of an essential service to citizens, it is a mark of confidence in the power of education to secure our democratic freedoms and our national future.

The report of the Commission on National Goals entitled "Goals for Americans," which by the way had the good fortune to have as its chairman, one of Rhode Island's distinguished educators, Dr. Henry M. Wriston, President Emeritus of Brown, has

much to say about the needs of our people. One brief passage from the report says:

"The development of the individual and the nation demand that Education at every level and in every discipline be strengthened and its effectiveness enhanced... The increase in population and the growing complexity of the world add urgency."

"Greater resources - private, corporate, municipal, state, and federal - must be mobilized. A higher proportion of the gross national product must be devoted to the education of individuals. This is at once an investment in the individual, in the democratic process, in the growth of the economy, and in the stature of the United States."

One of the first tasks of American Education is to produce well-rounded, cultured, and intellectually mature citizens who are capable of exercising good judgment upon the great problems confronting our society. As the educational agency which provides

the means for the continued self-education of our citizens, our public libraries must be supported with the means adequate to the needs of a new era.

As the Nation and the States move to strengthen the educational foundations of our security and freedom, it is imperative that the country's need for libraries and their services be fully recognized and adequate provision be made for their support.

In a sense a library is yeast for all the worthwhile life of a community. Its services are supplementary and illumine every civic and cultural project. It is not competitive with other agencies, but enriches the work of each. The scope of any school is meager if the students cannot supplement their reading beyond the one or two basic texts. A child lacks an essential growth in our modern world if he is cut off from the intellectual leaven of a library. Adult education, <sup>similarly,</sup> ~~similarly,~~ becomes impossible without recourse to books. The wide-awake citizen is crippled in the pursuit of his interest if he cannot check his own experience against

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that the federal government is interested in participating in efforts to improve public library - and all library service - at every level. Government at the national level is interested - and indeed has a real stake - in seeing to it that our people have access to that kind of community library service which is qualitative - that is, that kind of service which meets standards of excellence as worked out by national professional bodies - in this instance the American Library Association.

How does a good public library serve the educational needs of its people? The individual searching for a personal philosophy of life can find within the public library the basic guidelines written by others who also have sought their own personal philosophies and set down their own doubts, their own questionings, their own answers. Those men and women seeking an understanding of the community in which they live, its social needs and problems, its goals and its possibilities as a more desirable place in which to live and raise a family, find the library stocked with the best of

current thinking to aid them in becoming better, more knowledgeable citizens. Men of good will, in a world beset by crises and tensions originating now in this part of the globe, now in that, become acquainted with their fellowmen in other lands through the well-filled shelves of libraries.

Today's businessman has learned that for him, no less than for the seeker of culture, either the local or regional library has much to offer. His manufacturing department calls regularly for data about new technological trends; his advertising staff makes repeated use of the library's picture files; his sales force improves its skills through books on sales techniques. Few industries and business firms can support the research libraries needed to supply them with all the facts, data, statistics, and studies required to enable them to complete successfully in today's business world. The library, with its carefully assembled mass of business materials and its staff of librarians trained to know the collection and to search out the needed facts, serves as the

research department for any business that chooses to use it.

And as local business uses the library for the facts and statistics it needs, it becomes all the while more knowledgeable, more competitive, more successful, adding to the economic wealth of its city and providing more and better jobs for its employees. Thus does the library make its contribution to the economic life of the country, so that it may grow and in growing reach upward to new heights of civic betterment.

And there is more. Today a young man may be led on to a deeper appreciation of art; tomorrow his neighbor may learn how to build an outdoor fireplace. A worker facing retirement may today embark, with library books, on a new hobby; a housewife may tomorrow be guided to an understanding of modern psychology. An executive, harassed by conferences and decisions, may at the end of the day find welcome solace in a mystery story; tomorrow his wife may

gain relaxation in reading a volume of light verse. The library serves all these needs, and more besides, lending its resources of thought and opinion and knowledge to the whole man, developing his many facets and making of him a more rounded person.

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But the library is not limited to services for adults. In public libraries throughout the country, boys and girls guided by children's librarians are learning the manifold joys of reading. Beginning with the oldest fairy tales or the newest of picture books and progressing onward through exciting tales of yesterday or stories laid in the here and now, they are drawing inspiration for their own lives and dreaming dreams that someday may just come true. From biographies of yesterday's great men and women they are gaining the courage to reach for stars themselves. From books of science and from books about other lands and other peoples they are learning to understand more about the world around them. From poetry and from the finest of literature they are attaining an appreciation of the magic and beauty of words, knowledge that will someday enable them to express their own thoughts with distinction and grace.

From the multitude of books in their libraries - both public libraries and school libraries, for our children need both - millions of boys and girls are becoming acquainted with this heritage of books which is theirs,

and in doing so are building sound foundations of character and mind strong enough to face the adult world which will soon be theirs. And what is more important - they are having fun while they read.

For adults, too, there is a variety of programs and activities. Some gather to participate in discussion groups, informally exchanging their views and opinions on important subjects of today. Others attend showings of the best in education films, at times presented as part of a series of forums with discussion, at other times shown merely for their own inherent values. Still other adults are attracted to the library by an outstanding lecture. They join with their neighbors and newly-made friends in a series of music appreciation concerts built around the library's collection of recordings, or they visit the library to view a noteworthy exhibit of art.

The long-range goals of school and public libraries are the same, that is, to help citizens become better informed. The public library has as its long-range objectives (a) to educate and enrich life, (b) to provide an opportunity for life-long education, (c) to provide occupational

information, (d) to help fulfill the obligations and meet the needs of constantly expanding vistas of active minds.

However, the immediate goals of the two types of libraries differ. The school library supports a program of instruction and introduces boys and girls to the joys and the values of reading. The community library serves all age groups with a much broader and larger collection of books. Therefore, personnel, book collections, physical facilities, and programs of service will, of course, differ.

While the public library is perhaps more informal in the provision of its services, its use is voluntary; the school library tends to be more formal, and the use made of it is more or less required.

As to physical facilities, the public library must have a location convenient for busy adults, near transportation and highways. It must be inviting, relaxing, and comfortable. It is well to have a ground floor entrance, easily accessible. Its hours of opening should be convenient to the public, not closed during vacations, afternoons and evenings. The school library facility should be the hub of the school. It exists

to meet the need of the curriculum, therefore its book collection is geared to this important goal.

In providing service to children, the public library is a community organization, serving children of every age, in every institution, as well as reaching them through their parents. The public library has an air of informality with the child, just as it has with the adult. The public library collection must be selected with consideration given every reading background, no matter how advanced or retarded it may be. Therefore, the library and the school library differ in the provision of this kind of readers' guidance.

It is clear that every unit of public library service will be unable, on its own, to provide all these desirable activities. But this is the reason that the federal and state governments are working out programs - through joint effort and appropriations to help make such service available to all the people. We are fortunate in Rhode Island to have an organization at the state level - Public Library Services in Rural Areas, headed by an enthusiastic and devoted worker, Miss Elizabeth G. Myer - to bring to rural areas (those with fewer than

10,000 people) supplementary library service. Most of you know of the excellent work of Miss Myer's office in helping provide books that supplement local library book collections and bookmobile service that brings a collection of books on wheels to those places that do not have or are not near a local library. In addition to book services, this agency at the state level provides advice on such matters as work with children, reference materials or other specialized services.

In addition to federal and state interest in library development, active roles are being played by schools, colleges, universities and foundations. Brown University through its Education Department is now sponsoring and administering a study of library service in Rhode Island. Professor Elmer R. Smith sparked the program by securing funds from the Council on Library Resources, a foundation operating under a grant of the Ford Foundation, charged with the investigation of a variety of library problems: The University has long been interested in community affairs especially as they relate to education. It is highly commendable that a man who is a nationally recognized authority in the field of

education, as Dr. Smith is, should assume this interest and responsibility.

The project is being directed by John A. Humphry, Director of the City Library in Springfield, Massachusetts, and will be completed in March of 1962. We all await with interest the findings and recommendations.

Included in the study will be an investigation of existing library services in the state, a review of current methods of coordination and actual experimentation in new ways of integrating services. A report to be published at the conclusion of the study should be of assistance in other metropolitan areas where there is a desire to improve library services in this way.

The manner in which this study first came into being is in itself an interesting one. On May 9, 1959, school librarians in Rhode Island were invited to the Brown Campus to discuss ways in which the secondary school library might be improved as an educational force in lifting instructional standards. The meeting coincided with a growing popular appeal for more rigorous study in the high schools, more effective training in subject matter for teachers, and more emphasis on book learning

as opposed to other types of learning activities. The theme of the Conference was "A Better Library Makes a Better Student: A look at the Rhode Island Situation." More than 75 school librarians attended.

The daylong conference was designed only to dramatize the need for stronger school libraries in the state. It apparently was a complete success as subsequent developments proved.

Jarred by disclosures made during the conference, Rhode Islanders have been taking stock ever since. There is every indication that steps now being taken in several communities and at the state level will result in greatly improved library service to students in Rhode Island schools. It is encouraging also to note plans which have been completed for the building of new libraries at the University of Rhode Island and Rhode Island College and the extensive addition in prospect for the John Hay Library at Brown University. The likely establishment of a school of library Science at the University of Rhode Island will further the development of effective library programs in this state.

As you can see, there is a dramatic new interest being expressed in libraries. Rhode Island is going to move ahead! The strong effort that citizens of Narragansett have made to improve library service locally will be joined by efforts in other Rhode Island communities. The building which we are dedicating today is tangible evidence of what can be accomplished when a clear objective is established and citizens cooperate in its achievement.

This delightful library which has been erected for the free use of all the people in the community in the pursuit of their intellectual and recreational interests is a tribute to each and every one who had a share in its development. This is another in the chain of more than 8,000 libraries which stretch across this country - another beacon which sends forth its beam to help keep this nation a nation of free and informed men. Is anything more important in these critical times.

I congratulate you one and all and I thank you for the honor you have bestowed on me in inviting me to make these remarks on this impressive occasion.