

PRESIDENT'S REPORT, MAY 8, 1961

My report this evening is going to be very brief. It is not going to be an address; it is hardly even a president's report, as promised by the convention program. It is intended mainly to be my sincere expression of gratitude to many people.

It is tomorrow, at the Business Meeting, that you will hear further chapters in the full and meaningful story that accounts for the progress of this Association. Tomorrow, as the reports of the various committees are unfurled and discussed, you will feel and understand further the very high level of dedication and professional competence, as you did this afternoon, that account both for the strength of this Association and for the distinguished accomplishments of its individual members in the field of scholarly publishing.

During the past two years, fifty-one persons have served on our Association committees. Steady progress has been achieved, it seems to me, and this is a credit to their work. There is nothing I can say that would sufficiently emphasize my own belief and gratitude that the main strength of this Association springs from the dedication, the forward-looking spirit, and the cooperative effort demonstrated so convincingly by its committees. All of this is a credit, just as certainly, to the willingness of all members of the Association to cooperate with the work of their committees.

Just one more comment about committees: During the past year there were ten committees serving our Association. Seven of these committees held one or more meetings during the year, responding to the Executive Committee's encouragement that they should meet. By meeting, they have greatly speeded the process and increased the effectiveness of committee action, otherwise so slow and difficult when conducted by mail and telephone. The Association treasury has borne a substantial share of the expenses of such meetings.

As a result, preliminary and even final reports of committees were submitted to the Executive Committee early in the fiscal year, several as early as November, and a number of important modifications and improvements in existing programs were put into practice as developed. If I would have one strong recommendation to offer for the future, it would be that this practice be continued --- that committees be urged to meet once or twice during the year and that the Association pay a substantial share of the costs of meeting.

In 1959, when I became your president, the most valuable prize in my legacy was the Central Office. Though only five months old, it was already solidly entrenched as a credit to the wisdom of the members who persisted in their determination to establish it. Not only has the Central Office given new meaning to the work of committees, and contributed a new high level of management and

efficiency to all our enterprises. it has also opened many doors to new opportunities for cooperation in the interests of scholarly publishing, both in America and on an international scope.

We have paid particular attention to the organization and work of the Central Office during its formative years. We have devoted special thought to help define and establish in practice, sensible working relationships between the Executive Secretary and the various committees, between the Executive Secretary and the Executive Committee of the Association, between the Central Office and other book industry organizations. We have taken care to build a sound financial structure, and to report our finances in an understandable manner to the membership. Within the limits of our best judgment, we have been particular to see that all these things relate properly to the Association's activities and objectives as a non-profit association of non-profit publishers.

The staff of the Central Office, including the staff of the Educational Directory in Chicago, has handled the business of the Association with diligence and the cooperative spirit of full partners in a useful cause. I want to take this opportunity publicly to express our gratitude to all of them. They are Carol Franz, Phyllis Rubenstein, Irena Nakonechny, and of course, Tom Schmid, of the New York headquarters; and also Marian McGregor and her staff of the Educational Directory.

In closing I would like to say just a few words about the prospects for our future:

For the Association as a whole, now that we have the Central Office there is a new and vast opportunity, and, indeed, a responsibility, to acquire new projects, but carefully, that will bring to us greater stature and larger capacity to serve ever more effectively our responsibility to scholarly publishing.

The Latin American translation program, already a reality --- a very successful one in fact --- is an example of a very worthwhile new program. In addition, there are several new proposals of international significance which you will hear about tomorrow.

Largely on the domestic scene there are, of course, the several programs which are being given business-like management because of the Central Office --- Statistical Survey, SBA, ED, Exhibits, and so forth. And there are other potentially valuable programs that ought to be carefully studied. Perhaps cooperation in central warehousing, and additional programs of sales and distribution offer opportunities for serious examination.

As concerns our future as individual university presses: Each of us shares a heavy burden of responsibility. Never before has the printed word --- the printed word of truth --- been called upon, or counted upon, to do so much. Its potential power and influence is tremendous in determination of the future of man.

This is the burden of the printed word of truth --- wherever you see it --- in newspapers, in magazines, in scholarly books and journals. Whether this burden will be borne in triumph, whether intelligent man's faith in the power of the printed word will be fulfilled, is a heavy responsibility.

If there is any level of communication where truth still commands a premium throughout all of the world, it is exactly at the level where we participate as university presses. Regardless of their political environments, communication among scholars of the world is, and must continue to be, basically the communication of truth. Not even the greatest, nor the cleverest leader, and certainly not the crudest, can dare to be without the truth. It doesn't matter whether he plays it straight, or how much he may choose to twist it. He must first know what is the truth, and truth must provide the basis for his decisions and action. More than ever before he is turning to his nation's scholars for the truth.

It is up to us to serve well this stratum of communication where truth, above all else, is sought and honored.

It is up to us to make sure that all men who are permitted access to truth shall have it.