

The Association of American University Presses, Inc.

20 WEST 43RD STREET, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10036

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REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT,

Roger W. Shugg

Annual Meeting, May 1965

THE INTELLECTUAL COMMUNITY

Your President's Report, a custom established only six years ago by Harold Ingle at the Pittsburgh meeting of 1959, can be short and simple insofar as it is no more than a report of what has been accomplished during my two years of duty. This is not because nothing much has happened. Although I myself have not achieved even half what I had hoped to do, the officers and committees of this Association have surely done a great deal for us in the past two years. Their work, divided about equally between domestic concerns and international innovations, has all been of such a fundamental character that it offers much promise for the future even though it may be reported briefly now.

Last year, at our annual meeting in Chicago, The Association was completely reorganized. August Frugé's Special Committee rewrote our by-laws with a noteworthy Statement of Purposes calling for more educational work on our part and a closer alliance with the academic world to which we belong. A subsidiary corporation, American University Press Services, was established to look after our joint trade activities. And simultaneously, at one quick stroke, our income from dues was tripled with the larger presses shouldering their share of the heavier financial burden.

On the international front that same year, Chester Kerr's committee sponsored embassies to Asia and Africa, sending five press directors on extended travels through these continents to visit their educational institutions and presses and learn what we could do to help them. Reports made by these ambassadors at Chicago last year, remarkable for the information and insight they furnished us, point the way to effective collaboration among university presses on an international scale in the years to come.

This year just past has seen the establishment in Mexico City of our first common venture abroad, a cultural and business institution that has nothing to match it anywhere, the inter-American book center we call CILA, thanks to the cooperation of our member from Mexico, the National University, and the persistent, tireless work through four long years of August Frugé, Frank Wardlaw, and Chester Kerr, well-known as los tres mosqueteros, who won over the Rockefeller Foundation and wore down the Ford Foundation to secure their financial support.

Less spectacular, but no less important here at home, AUPS got itself organized and set about its work intensively, with competent directors and Carroll Bowen as president, all elected at your behest by last year's AAUP executive committee. The first full report of AUPS, now in your hands, is ample proof that its directors have run

our business services far more efficiently than the traditional committees which used to look after them by meeting once a year.

We took a long stride into the future with the appointment of a distinguished Advisory Board, which met with the AAUP board of directors to get acquainted and educate one another. We did not think it wise or well-mannered to rush ahead too fast and draft the Advisory Board into active assistance, but its members have clearly indicated that we can count on their influence and counsel as they come to know our needs.

Another new institution which should do us all much good is the AAUP Book Show, which has been devised with so much imagination by Burton Stratton's committee and is making its debut at this meeting in Kentucky.

A Scholars' Forum, provided for in our new by-laws and first staged at the Chicago meeting, is still another institution that we must assuredly develop with imagination and experimental ingenuity.

Regional meetings, now recognized in our by-laws, were held successfully this year by the southern and midwestern presses in New Orleans and Minneapolis, and joint midwestern staff meetings, without directors to overshadow or haunt their discussions, took place in Chicago for the first time.

Fundamental but flexible guidelines for the admission of new members, a vexing problem that has troubled us four long years and more, have been drafted by Savoie Lottinville, whose Jeffersonian hand is writ so large in our new by-laws.

Finally, I myself have at least reported to you in some detail a plan for the first of our training Institutes on editorial policies and procedures, and it should be held before we meet again next year at Rutgers.

I try to tell myself, although not too seriously, that it might have been organized this year if the time and energy of your outgoing officers had not been consumed the last few months by a kind of spring fever that broke out with astonishing virulence among some of our members. Disgruntled or impatient, and unable to wait for discussion at Lexington, they used the postoffice for a correspondence school in their appeals to the rest of us. They seemed to believe in a political cure-all that reformers back in the days of Teddy Roosevelt hailed as the panacea of direct government, devices like the initiative and referendum, although they stopped short of the recall of officers.

All in all, it was, in the words of one committee chairman, "a long, hard winter."

But I like to think that we have come to know one another a little better because differing points of view and misunderstandings or prejudices that have long been with us have now been brought out into the open, and consequently the Association should emerge from these debates stronger and more harmonious than ever before. In any case, it is no right of mine to discuss what the membership will decide tomorrow.

So much for a brief accounting of major events in Association history the past two years. Since this is the last time, fortunately for all of us, that I can invoke my presidential privilege to think out loud on matters of common and enduring concern as I see them, let me ask you in the half hour that remains to me to ponder certain problems of THE INTELLECTUAL COMMUNITY to which we all belong. This subject was suggested

by our genial host, Bruce Denbo, when I was thinking last month of talking on how charity begins at home. Since we are prone to add sub-titles to the books we publish, let me reassure you that I will deal only with a few aspects of our functional role as university publishers in the intellectual community.

My thesis is a simple paradox. Granted the many criticisms we can justly level at the intellectual community insofar as it is represented by some of the professorial authors we publish, nevertheless, we have serious shortcomings too, and we must mend our ways if we are to be fully recognized as members of the intellectual community. Only such recognition will enable us to participate more effectively in the most creative educational enterprises of our times. For it is no longer sufficient, I believe, that we should rest content as publishers with being servants of the learned world, the role prescribed for us some years ago by Jacob Viner, the economist. Rather we should now work to become nothing less than publishing partners and editorial collaborators with the academic profession which inevitably looks to us for publication of its highly specialized research.

Yet the intellectual community interested in reading our more general books extends far beyond the academic market-place. It embraces the keenest minds among the hosts of men and women who carry on their intellectual work in the professions and creative arts, in schools as well as colleges, in the scientific laboratories of industrial corporations, on the most influential organs of public opinion, and in the higher civil service and the policy-making branches of government -- in a phrase, all those engaged in the "knowledge industry." Whenever we publish what we like to call in our jargon a "trade book," particularly on those infrequent occasions when the author is not a professor, we are reaching out to a world-wide intellectual community that is by no means confined to the academic campuses on which we live.

More the pity, then, that we have been too timid to satisfy the civic need of this intellectual community for more controversial books of well-informed but speculative opinion on public policies and problems. In our universities we enjoy academic freedom, a freedom that social scientists could apply as boldly to their writing as to their teaching, if we encouraged them. Then they might enlighten the intellectual community with exciting books, however unpopular their views, for it is the social sciences and not literature or the arts that should boast an avant garde. But academic freedom is a tradition, I fear, with no sharper incentive for us to use it than for the majority of professors who suffer from over-specialization and conformity in our affluent society. Like them, we are conservatives; so we reprint new editions of classical authors. Like them, we are antiquarians; so we rescue from oblivion and put into print old manuscripts, artists' drawings, musical scores, and colorful Americana.

All this is well and good, indeed an indispensable work of conservation that publishers owe to scholars and libraries, but we should not be so preoccupied with it, or the luxury and prestige of such publishing, that we fail to search out and publish the most profound thinking our social scientists are capable of on crucial problems of racial injustice at home, international tensions abroad, and the age-old struggle for liberty everywhere. The university presses ought to be better known in the intellectual community for bold and daring books on public affairs. It is, I submit, our civic duty to publish them.

Another important category of books too frequently missing from our lists is to be found in the vast area of education itself. Who should be more concerned with educational research than the university presses? Yet here we have a blind spot, or a downright snobbish aversion, and tend to dismiss professional education as if it produced only textbooks, manuals, and syllabi, or monographs inferior to the worst

sociology. This may have been the case a generation ago. But now education has come alive with exciting research and experimental teaching that in combination are transforming the curriculum and upgrading instruction in the whole American school system. No longer can this flood of educational literature be handled by Teachers' College at Columbia or by the many professional societies of education.

Applied educational research is today, in its consequences for educating our children, reproducing the intellectual community, and preserving democracy, hot stuff, because it is revolutionary thinking at highly critical social temperatures. We must attend to it, some of it at least, in our publishing programs. I came to realize in my work last year as a publishing consultant to the United States Office of Education that the millions of dollars--forty-five millions in the latest congressional appropriation--which this Office is investing in comparative educational research is bound to multiply reports of vital experimentation for our schools that will go unpublished if we do not publish them. It was good news to us to hear only a month ago that the Office of Education may be prepared to pay the printing costs of these reports and monographs if we do publish them--selectively, of course.

The amazingly rapid improvement in the quality of American education over the last several years, in both schools and colleges, has analagous implications for the university presses. I hope you will not think me irrelevant, illogical, or heavy-handed in my humor if I ask whether it has become harder for the young to enter university publishing today in the same degree that it has grown increasingly difficult for our children to win admission to colleges and graduate schools? And once employed in a press, are we given the training to develop faster, as students are today in school? Is better work of a higher professional calibre demanded of us as we advance through the grades to a coveted post as editor or director of a press? Are we expected to keep our minds alive and growing with whatever self-discipline may be necessary for self-education -- reading more books than manuscripts or proofs, and carrying on our own specialized studies to keep abreast of the major subject we studied in college -- as every true member of an academic community must do if he is not to be known as deadwood?

These are legitimate questions, I believe, because it is obviously both an academic privilege and an intellectual honor for us who are fortunate enough to work in university presses. At least I can ask these questions because I am approaching superannuation and may soon be unable to answer them for myself. In all sobriety, however, the intellectual community and our own universities must progressively expect more of us as they do of all their better students, scholars, and professors. And we should ask more of ourselves intellectually if we are to do a more professional job of publishing scholarship.

In our editorial work, for example, we could more often aspire to be creative rather than reflexive editors. It has been our habit to wait on scholars for any dissertation or monograph they choose to write in pursuit of their own research, even if it is trivial, redundant, or dryasdust. Then we gratefully solicit the opinions of so-called experts and submit these reports to faculty committees for permission to publish our books. Following these traditional procedures, we have been content to claim that for ourselves we know only two things: a good style of writing when we read it, and the craft or mystery of publishing. Our own expertise is all too modest and hardly academic or intellectual in any recognizable sense. If you think we are not so limited or so passive in our editorial work today, I would claim that this was the situation not many years ago, and that what was good enough yesterday is not going to be good enough tomorrow.

We must question any system of refereeing or editorial review that is confined to academic experts. Not only is it much more difficult in the busy academic world

nowadays to obtain well-considered and highly critical manuscript reports, but the whole process of refereeing is essentially incomplete and lacks any focus until we of the presses are able to be competent referees of the academic referees. Not just to judge the style and publishability of a manuscript, but to have a considerable voice in judging its content. Who can be trusted to referee the specialist readers if we cannot? The traditional answer is the professors on the Faculty Board or Committee of the Press. Granted we must have their editorial aid and advice. But I hardly need tell you that outside his own field each one of them is a layman and often at a loss: the physicist to appreciate the usefulness of textual correlations in literature, the modern sociologist to see any importance in documentary sources for historians, and so on and so forth. Are we then to be merely reactive to their decisions, like medieval clerks, and let them, often not as widely read as we are, run our presses, determine our publishing program? Here is the critical and collaborative juncture in our editorial work where we, by developing and making manifest an informed judgment across the board of academic disciplines, can secure the acceptance we seek in the intellectual community, and consequently the power to fulfill creatively our publishing responsibilities.

Many of you are probably dismissing much of what I am saying here on the intellectual character of our work as a homily or harangue only for editors. On the contrary, I would argue that a similar reorientation of our work in promotion, advertising and sales might produce astonishing results if we could be more creative and intellectual in these areas too.

Is it logical for us, by way of example, to spend thousands of dollars on advertising our books in general newspapers and magazines and a few comparatively paltry hundreds in academic journals and the convention programs of learned societies--often using the same copy, which tells the specialist reader far less about the book than he wants to know? Is it logical to send salesmen to break their heads and hearts against the walls of indifference they encounter in department store book sections, while they skip the very small, specialized bookstores, many of the less accessible college bookstores, and practically all libraries? Is there any good reason for granting extravagant discounts to trade jobbers and bookstores, and only nominal discounts to libraries?

I submit that it is our opportunity as non-profit presses, and our duty as university presses, to concentrate concurrently and naturally on experiment and invention in every phase of the publishing craft. Granted that we are all undercapitalized and understaffed and so have neither time nor money to throw away on innovations just for the sake of novelty. Still, we are nonprofit publishers, and large and small alike we should find means to afford the trial of new ideas and new ways, even though they may often end in error.

Of course we must exclude accounting and the handling of inventory from such experimentation, since in those economic concerns we are bound by financial laws that apply to us no less than to strictly business enterprises. But in editing, production, advertising, and selling, we have no reason to continue being mere copycats of the commercial publishers. Indeed, they are often far more inventive and daring than we. Look how long it took us to follow them into paperback publishing!

If we consider design and printing for a moment, we must ask why the book has remained so unchanged, so conventional in form, for generations if not centuries? Is it such a perfect thing that no drastic improvements are possible? That is a question for our designers and manufacturers. But let me rashly suggest lesser innovations. For instance, if we can insert maps in endpaper pockets (admittedly to the irritation

of our librarian friends), why could we not insert microprint cards in such pockets to accommodate with greater economy our long bibliographies, appendixes of statistical tables, descriptions of method, and the like? Why must footnotes always be footnotes and never side notes? Why could not pages be broken vertically rather than horizontally for a heavily glossed text? Why do we unthinkingly maintain the fetish of splendid jackets for the majority of our books when these are never put on competitive display in the bookstores?

If we turn to consider advertising again, we find ourselves still aiming at the conventional use of costly space in the pages of media in which our books are rarely reviewed. And most of us continue to use expensive printed announcements in our direct mail, instead of adapting and extending the use of seasonal and subject catalogs as is so often done by booksellers and publishers abroad. Has any of us ever tested the pulling power in direct mail of a substantial, trenchant letter written by the author to his fellow specialists? Have we analyzed the costs and effectiveness of giving away more free copies to scholar-teachers in place of scatter-gun space and direct mail promotion? Could we do selling as well as library lending by bookmobiles traveling to college communities? Might a concerted effort persuade selected libraries to exhibit our books as they regularly do travel posters and objets d'art?

There is nothing startling in these ideas which I have had the temerity to toss out here, and they are probably all quite impractical. But they may suggest something of what I mean when I plead that we try for creative imagination, experiment, and invention in all phases of our work, instead of resting content with easy, lazy, imitative adherence to custom.

Now let me speak once again of what the intellectual community lives on just as much as the business community--money. For us in the university presses it must always be a question of unfinished business, a problem that has plagued us in varying degrees since the first of us began. As one reads the newspapers and magazines, the bulletins from one or another federal government agency, the annual grant lists and reports from foundations, even the reports of disbursements from our own universities, one can only shake his head and say wearily again: millions upon millions for research and not one cent--well, hardly a cent!--for publication.

True, we have had grants-in-aid and are grateful for them. I think of the \$12,000 given to the University of Chicago thirty-three years ago to initiate and develop the Educational Directory, which now supports so large a part of our cooperative undertakings. Of the small grant that made possible Chester Kerr's phenomenal survey of university publishing in 1949. Of the gift in support of Richard Underwood's study of manufacturing and production processes, and the funds from the Asia and Carnegie Foundations which financed our missions to Asia and Africa. I certainly do not forget the recent contributions from the Rockefeller and Ford Foundations with which we are getting CILA under way. And I am especially mindful of the munificent, long-term aid from the Ford Foundation which has enormously expanded the publication capabilities of each of us.

But gratitude for help received cannot blind us to the fact that this aid has all been given for special purposes and projects, not in understanding or recognition of our collective needs as university presses in the peculiar programs we must carry out. Let's face it: even the great Ford Foundation grant was not made to us as publishers, or to our Association, but expressly through us to our scholar-authors and only for the purpose of paying our printers.

Why is it that we have failed so completely for so long to make our financial needs and problems, our deserving poverty, our honest beggardon, sufficiently clear to get

something done about it? Is it because a few of us put on the appearance of affluence? Or because we all overemphasize the business side of our dual role in university publishing and minimize the intellectual services we exist to render? Or have we all managed too well to scrape along with what money we can beg here and there and anywhere, so that our true claims of real need to alleviate our marginal existence seem unconvincing?

Whatever the cause of our failure to date, I believe we must try again, and now, to state our case convincingly to all who dispense funds for research. The principle we must somehow establish is simple enough: in every budget presented for a research grant, and in every such grant made, an estimate and allowance must be included for financing the publication of the research findings and report. And this estimate and allowance must be for publishing costs, not merely the printer's bill.

Each of us ought to enunciate this principle at every conceivable opportunity on his own campus: to every administrative officer and dean, every faculty group, and every individual faculty member from whom he can get a hearing. It may be especially helpful to hammer home this point frankly, and without any sense of guilt or shame, whenever a research report or monograph must be rejected for lack of funds to publish it.

But to our individual efforts to obtain proper support must be added, I think, our collective voice through a planned, persistent program of education--call it propaganda, if you choose--carried on by this Association. It is a program in which the influential members of our Advisory Board can be of immeasurable assistance, which I feel sure they will give once we have made our situation clear to them. To do this we may need an updated financial self-study, concentrated perhaps on the two-thirds or more of our member presses whose entire operation must be heavily subsidized by their universities, and including a generous sampling of honest profit-and-loss statements on research monographs we have actually published.

Equally important for support of the Association and the development of new activities and programs essential to our professional improvement as university publishers is a well-argued case, carefully thought out, of what we need collectively as an Association. This is a program of necessary development which I had very much hoped to get started during the past year. But we can depend on our incoming president, who has a special magic for securing funds, to get this poverty program going.

In conclusion, returning to the intellectual aspects of our work, I would like to point out a fact of which I have become increasingly certain these past two years, when I have been, naturally, a little less myopically focused on the work of my own Press. The importance and influence of university publishing in the United States derives from no small group of presses among us; it is the product of our combined endeavors. True, the older and larger presses, through sheer cumulative impact and contact, undoubtedly receive more first chances to publish outstanding manuscripts, but they by no means monopolize the works of quality and significance in scholarship. As I have examined the issues of Scholarly Books in America and looked over the books on display in our joint AUPS exhibits, I have been struck again and again, as you must have been, by the composite character of our best publishing. The worthwhile and enduring books of any season are just as likely to bear the imprint of the smallest as of the largest press among us.

Consider a more or less random choice from a single recent issue of SBA--and if I fail to mention your contribution, forgive me; Harvard issues a basic reader in modern Japanese, and the University of Washington Press provides a manual of spoken Tibetan. Under modern linguistics, M.I.T. lists an appraisal of the new directions in the study

language, and Wisconsin adds an application of this new approach to the form and use of the English verb, and Laval contributes the great Gustave Guillaume's probes into the structure of language. While Pittsburgh publishes an important history of art patronage in Europe to point up the contrast with our neglect in America, Indiana gives us a serious study of the puppet theater, and Minnesota makes available translations of three plays by Ernst Barlach, the foremost German expressionist playwright.

If you want to survey the output of reference tools for scholarship, you will find, among others, a cumulative index to the first 57 volumes of the American Political Science Review, issued by Northwestern; a concordance to the poems of Emily Dickinson from Cornell; a bibliography of Hungarian literature from Harvard; a bibliography of the works of Edwin Muir from Alabama; and a full-scale checklist of W.H. Auden from Virginia.

It is Nebraska who gives the student of philosophy an introduction to the thought of Martin Heidegger, and Kansas who translates for him some of the works of Vilhelm Grønbeek, the Danish thinker whose fame abroad rivals that of Kierkegaard. Ohio State is publishing the works of Nathaniel Hawthorne, and our host, Kentucky, the papers of Henry Clay.

I could easily go on all night with this bibliography, but clearly, it takes every press in our Association to cover the academic waterfront, and each of us, small or large, is justly entitled to share in the pride and the glory of our joint achievement.