

ROALFE PLAN ENDORSED BY THE ASSOCIATION OF  
AMERICAN LAW SCHOOLS

The Association of American Law Schools met in Chicago at the Stevens Hotel from December 27th to December 29th, 1934, inclusive. On Saturday, December 29th, at 9:30 a.m. a meeting of the Association's Round Table on Library Problems, under the chairmanship of Professor Ralph Fuchs of Washington University, St. Louis, was held. At this meeting, the program of the Round Table called for a report on the present status of the Roalfe expansion program of the American Association of Law Libraries.<sup>1</sup> This was presented by Eldon R. James, Frederick C. Hicks, and William R. Roalfe. Mr. James' statement was as follows:

*Mr. James:* The plan, generally known as the Roalfe plan, for the expansion of the activities of the American Association of Law Libraries, was adopted by the American Association of Law Libraries at the annual business meeting held June 29th, 1934 at Montreal. This plan was developed in a report of a committee of the American Association of Law Libraries, of which Mr. William R. Roalfe, the Librarian of the Law School of Duke University, was chairman and Mr. Gilson G. Glazier of the Wisconsin State Library, Professor Frederick C. Hicks of the Yale Law School and Mr. John T. Vance, Law Librarian at the Library of Congress, were members. The report was submitted to the Association and discussed at its 1932 and 1933 meetings. Briefly, the report urged an expansion program upon the Association for the purpose of developing the activities and services of American law libraries in various ways through the Association as a coordinating agency. It was suggested that the Association might establish a library of material on law library administration, become a clearing house for general information and a depository for statistics with regard to law libraries and undertake research with respect to special problems, such as a survey of present law library conditions, the preparation of legal bibliographies and legal indexes. An expanded Law Library Journal was proposed. Suggestions were made for making the Index to Legal Periodicals more widely useful. The publication of check-lists of current legal literature, it was thought might be undertaken by the Association. In order to accomplish these ends, it was proposed that permanent national headquarters be established and an executive secretary be elected and that competent assistants be secured. To this end, recommendations in the form of amendments to the Constitution and By-laws of the Association were proposed. One amendment established an institutional membership. Another amendment provided for an executive secretary and treasurer, who should receive such compensation as the Association might decide. It was also proposed that the Association be incorporated. The By-laws

<sup>1</sup>The program of the Round Table included, in addition to the *Report on the Present Status of the Roalfe Expansion Plan of the American Association of Law Libraries*, the presentation of the following papers: *Contents of a Law Library Maintained on an Annual Budget of \$2500*, by Lucile Elliott, University of North Carolina (Miss Elliott's paper was read by Dean M. T. Van Hecke); *Law Books and Law Publishers*, by Arthur S. Beardsley, University of Washington (Mr. Beardsley's paper was read by Dean Harold Shepherd); and, *Government Documents for the Law Library*, by Miles O. Price, Columbia University (Mr. Price's paper was read by Professor Samuel E. Thorne of Northwestern University.)

The full text of each of these papers will be published in later numbers of the Law Library Journal. (Editor's note.)

were to be amended providing for annual dues of \$5 a year for individual members and from \$10 to \$40 a year for institutional members, the amount varying according to the number of full time employees in the library. The annual dues of associate members, it was proposed to fix at \$20 a year.

Roughly, this is the Roalfe plan as it was approved at the Montreal meeting of the American Association of Law Libraries. In addition to approving the plan, it was voted to establish the headquarters permanently in Washington. Among other things, this was regarded as having the advantage, not only of bringing the Association in close contact with the Library of Congress, but also of enabling the Association, when its reorganization is completed, to undertake, through its Secretariat, the service of supplying its members with government publications, now so difficult to obtain.

The amendments proposed in the report of the Roalfe committee will be submitted to the members of the Association and will be acted upon, I have no doubt, favorably, at the next annual meeting to be held in, June 1935, at Denver. If these amendments are adopted, the way is clear for the reorganization of the Association. It will be possible to accept institutional memberships and to proceed with incorporation and to begin the development of the service contemplated in the Roalfe report. It would greatly assist us if this Round Table were to adopt a resolution approving of the plan of the American Association of Law Libraries and requesting a similar endorsement by the Association of American Law Schools. Undoubtedly, the American Association of Law Libraries has taken a great step forward. While its membership includes librarians from libraries other than those of law schools, it will be able, when it is reorganized, to render great services to law school libraries and can be of very considerable aid to the Association of American Law Schools and its members.

I have asked Mr. Roalfe, the chairman of the expansion committee of the American Association of Law Libraries, who is, I think, the real author of the plan, and Professor Hicks, also a member of the committee, to take up the balance of my time. They will present to you in more detail than I have done, certain aspects of the Roalfe plan which will be of special interest to law schools and their libraries.

Mr. Hicks spoke as follows:

*Mr. Hicks:* The outstanding periodical in the world devoted to the professional interests of law libraries and law librarians is the *Law Library Journal*. I was tempted to say that this is the only such periodical, but that would have been unfair to the *Law Library News*, and to several local publications issued by law libraries.

The *Law Library Journal*, published by the American Association of Law Libraries and now in its twenty-seventh volume, began its life as a non-identical twin of the Index to Legal Periodicals, when that Index was born in January, 1908. It is still published in conjunction with the Index, its periodicity being quarterly like that of the Index. During most of its life, it has been used chiefly as the vehicle for publishing the papers and proceedings of the annual meetings of the American Association of Law Libraries. This has been its chief function, and only occasionally have the limited funds available permitted the publication

of other material. Despite this limitation, the Journal is the most complete repository in existence of information concerning the history, management and problems of law librarianship. Even under difficulties, it has proved itself to be a professional journal indispensable to law libraries.

When its function as a professional journal for law librarians is emphasized, I mean also to emphasize its importance for the practising lawyer and the legal scholar, for bar associations and for law schools. Certainly every increase in professional knowledge and skill induced in law librarians by means of a professional journal shows itself in increased facilities and services available to the users of law libraries. It is for this reason that it is pertinent to discuss with law teachers and administrators of law schools, the idea of expanding the Law Library Journal, as one phase of the plan for extending the activities of the American Association of Law Libraries. I am therefore taking the liberty, on the invitation of Mr. James, of giving a prospectus of what I should like to see the *Law Library Journal* become. The proposals are:

1. That it shall be published monthly instead of quarterly.
2. That, in addition to publishing the proceedings of the annual meetings, it shall publish contributed articles, information and news concerning law books and law publishing, law libraries, law library skills and practices, and law librarians.

The contents of the Journal under the heads enumerated would include the following:

(a) *Law Books and Law Publishing*

The Journal would take over the functions of the present Law Library News in listing new and forthcoming treatises, laws, periodicals and reports. It would serve as a medium of exchange and sale of second-hand books. It would not review law books, but would leave that field to the existing law journals and reviews. It would, however, contain articles concerning new trends in law publishing, the history of classes of law books, and of law publishing firms. It would provide a forum for discussing difficulties encountered in the use of law books, and for pointing out gaps in the facilities for finding the law provided by Federal, State and Municipal governments and by private publishers. It would also contain short bibliographies and subject lists prepared by librarians and other contributors. It would call the attention of librarians and users of libraries to existing indexes and reference tools which may have been neglected by some of them. It would not hesitate to call attention to facilities presumably well known, because it would expect to serve the beginner, and those whose opportunities have been few, as well as those in the larger libraries.

(b) *Law Libraries*

The Journal in the past has contained many articles about particular law libraries. There are many more that ought to be described, both historically and as to their present condition. Such articles would be given space in the expanded Journal; and summaries of the annual reports of law libraries would be informative items of news. Through such summaries unusual acquisitions would be pointed out, the location of special

collections would be made known, and original ideas in law library management would be brought to light.

(c) *Law Library Skills and Practices*

Hereunder lies a large opportunity for service through the Journal. There is no published Manual of Law Library Economy. For information concerning methods used in law libraries one must even now turn to the present Journal, since in it is to be found practically all that has been published. In an expanded Journal, under the stimulation of competent editorship, many more technical articles would be published. They would answer to real needs not only of beginners, but of experienced librarians. They would deal with book-selection, book-buying, serial records, cataloguing, classification, reference work, loan desk service, charging systems, binding, library statistics, labor saving devices, book-plates, library supplies, library furniture, lighting, ventilation, rare book exhibitions, library hours for readers and for staff, and a hundred other similar matters. Although law books would not be reviewed, there would be extensive reviews of books and articles relating to the technique of law library science.

(d) *Law Librarians*

Material concerning law librarians would be included for two reasons, first, by publishing biographical articles concerning law librarians of the past, to give to those of today some idea of the dignity of the profession in which they are engaged; and second, by news items to keep law librarians informed as to the activities of their colleagues in the profession.

Such a monthly journal as I have outlined would probably not immediately be self-supporting. It would, however, have two means of support at the outset, namely the amount now paid as a subscription price for the Law Library News, and law book advertisements. Subscribers to the Law Library News now pay \$3.50 a year. They would gladly pay as much or more for the expanded Journal. Law publishers, I believe, would advertise extensively in a monthly journal, read by every law librarian in the country. Costs of editorship, publication and distribution in excess of the above income would have to be underwritten. It is thought likely that this underwriting could be arranged for, if the Roalfe plan of reorganizing the American Association of Law Libraries were carried through with the aid of the Association of American Law Schools.

Mr. Roalfe closed the discussion of the Roalfe plan with the following:

*Mr. Roalfe:* Since a library is an indispensable feature of every law school worthy of the name, we will no doubt all agree that the improvement of our libraries is a legitimate and meritorious aim. Therefore, without further introduction, I will endeavor to set forth some of the reasons why we believe that support of the expansion program of the American Association of Law Libraries will contribute to the achievement of this end.

Professor James has presented a brief outline of the plan and has reported its present status, and Professor Hicks has emphasized the importance of expanding the Law Library Journal, and has indicated how it, as a more adequate professional organ, can render a service which will directly or indirectly con-

tribute to the advancement of the legal profession. The Journal, although extremely important, is but one feature of the plan. Essential bibliographical tools of direct interest to the law teacher and practitioner are of course also included, but, unfortunately, limitations as to time prevent detailed accounts of other aspects of the program.

The American Association of Law Libraries has had a slow but steady growth, due almost exclusively to the efforts of its own members. When all factors are considered a very creditable showing has been made. But the appropriate and, in fact, absolutely essential future development of the law libraries of America is an undertaking which, while it should be under the direction of the professional law librarians, requires the mobilized support of the bench and bar and the law teaching profession. Does it not then naturally follow that law librarians should look to the Association of American Law Schools for interested and active collaboration? For it in fact represents the leading law schools which together have exerted and will continue to exert a profound influence on the development of the legal profession. When one stops to consider what an important part the printed page has played in this movement, the library is unmistakably seen in its rightful place in our legal educational scheme. Regardless of the changing theories and fashions in methods and objectives of legal education, it remains a vital feature with potentialities yet untapped.

But if anyone should still ask: Are not conditions satisfactory as at present, we would reply by putting the question: How many competent law school teachers are really satisfied with their law school libraries? Certainly anyone who appreciates the contribution that our law libraries can and should make to legal scholarship and to the advancement of the standards of the bench and bar, realizes that even the best fall short of the goal. As for the rest, their performance is grossly inadequate. This inadequacy arises from a number of sources, some of them being, because of ignorance and indifference on the part of those with the authority to remedy conditions, because librarians are far from always qualified, because when they are qualified they frequently do not receive the support they deserve, because libraries are often administered by persons who have other duties that take most of their time, and finally, for lack of necessary funds.

The expansion program now in progress is the result of the ferment taking place within the ranks of the law library profession itself and indicates a healthy response to vital needs. That this development will continue is altogether probable but a broader interest will greatly facilitate this movement. At this juncture then the active interest and support of the leading American law schools through their association can and should serve to correlate these two movements which together will achieve a further and vital step in a development, the object of which has been the elevation of the standards of the American Bar, by means of a great program of formal legal education of which it is the chief sponsor. And, after all, legal education should not end with graduation from "law school." It should continue as an integral part of professional life. But how can this be possible if adequate libraries are not at hand? Certainly, at present, thousands of lawyers in many parts of this country are not so provided.

May we now point out a few of the ways in which we believe the law schools will greatly benefit from the vigorous development of the American

Association of Law Libraries. Among other things, they should be able to look forward to a higher type of law librarianship, as the professional status of this specialty becomes more widely recognized and established. A finer type of library administration will inevitably follow. This will be expressed in more adequate bibliographical tools, now so urgently needed; more effective assistance in preliminary research; a vigorous policy in the acquisition of materials needed in each institution; a genuine collaboration between the librarian and the faculty he represents, now so often lacking; and last, but not least, the mobilization of a strong professional group, which can, with the support of the bench and bar and the teaching profession, exert a broad constructive influence with respect to all matters which relate to their libraries the country over.

Since the law teaching profession has played such an important part through its influence in the creation and preservation of the record of the law as it appears in print (need I mention any other class of books than the law school periodicals and their growing influence) it would seem that the active support of the American Association of Law Libraries by the law school faculties might be stated as that of an obligation. But, however that may be, it appears to us that it more appropriately presents itself as a great opportunity—the opportunity to mobilize the moral support of the law teaching profession in behalf of a basically sound and creative movement, the primary objective of which is to contribute to the improvement of the legal profession in all its branches by providing the essential “laboratory materials” coupled with the necessary related services, out of which the law of each tomorrow must be made to more nearly serve the great purposes of the nation.

At the conclusion of these statements, Mr. James presented the following resolution:

Resolved, that the Round Table on Library Problems being convinced that the expansion program of the American Association of Law Libraries is of great significance to legal education, expresses its interest in and sympathy with the development of this program and its hope that the program will be carried out. The Round Table is also interested in the plans for extending the usefulness of the Law Library Journal and desires to place itself on record as approving of institutional memberships in the American Association of Law Libraries.

This resolution was unanimously adopted. Mr. James then presented the following resolution:

The Round Table on Library Problems recommends to the Association, the adoption of the following resolution:

Resolved, that the Association of American Law Schools endorses the expansion program of the American Association of Law Libraries.

This resolution was unanimously adopted.

Mr. Hicks offered the following resolution:

Resolved, that it is the opinion of the Association of American Law Schools, that the Federal government should provide for the compilation, publication and indexing of existing Federal executive orders and regulations; for the current publication of new orders and regulations in an official gazette or otherwise; and