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INTANGIBLES TAX POT BOILING

Bitter controversy over intangible tax allocations has developed in three counties of the state which presages another tremendous battle in the Legislature next year. Here is a brief account taken in chronological order and using round figures.

Last fall Ross County Library with headquarters in City of Chillicothe (do not confuse with Chillicothe Public Library) requested a budget close to \$50,000. Only \$36,000 was granted. The library went to the State Board of Tax Appeals asking for the additional \$14,000 - \$6,500 to raise salaries of present staff, balance for staffing a bookmobile which it hoped to receive from Library Services Act. Board of Tax Appeals granted the \$6,500 but no more. The library accepted the decision but City of Chillicothe has gone to Supreme Court. City contends library is providing service to schools at a loss; that if school paid cost of such service library wouldn't need the additional \$6,500.

In Franklin County, all libraries asked for some increase in operating funds. In addition Columbus Public Library asked for \$320,000 for building and Bexley \$75,000 for the same. Net result, city and suburbs began complaining the rug had been pulled from under them budget-wise. Even the county jumped on libraries for its financial problems. Considerable newspaper publicity has resulted. Mayor of Bexley says change in law is a "must" in next General Assembly. Mayors of the county have organized and state they will carry the campaign to their residents.

Franklin County Treasurer, Newton A. Thatcher, made six public recommendations, two of which concern libraries. One, that each library receiving intangibles tax be asked to return to the county the cost of collecting the tax. Two, that the Columbus Law Library Association qualify itself as a county-wide library so that it could benefit under the intangibles tax law.

Coming on top of this we learn that the Cleveland Public Library will file an appeal before the State Board of Tax Appeals. The library was granted a \$100,000 increase over its previous year's budget but some \$500,000 short of its request. The library states the money is needed to provide salary increases and to operate the old Plain Dealer building purchased by the library, now being remodeled for library annex purposes. Cuyahoga County Library also is appealing because its allocation was \$386,000 less than requested. Chairman of the Cuyahoga County Budget Commission is former senator John T. Corrigan, who in the 1955 Legislature sponsored S.B.263.

WHEN YOU WRITE US

May we remind Ohio librarians when writing to be sure the address reads "The State Library, 65 South Front Street, Columbus 15, Ohio". Mail intended for us frequently lands out at Ohio State University Library. If you put "Ohio" in front of State Library, there is always danger the postman will read just the first two words, "Ohio State". Would speed service too if you could indicate on envelope the department you are writing (Traveling Library, State Circulation, etc.).

FEDERAL FUNDS FOR LIBRARIES IN OHIO

First bookmobile bought from federal funds and awarded to Guernsey County District Library was delivered early this month. Helen Sunnafrank, Cambridge librarian, and her board, brought the bookmobile over to Columbus where it was driven on the State House lawn and inspected by the Governor and the State Library Board. Some pretty good "mug" shots were taken. Perhaps they appeared in your local papers.

Five 22' bookmobiles at a cost of \$12,500 each are now under contract. Three of these have been awarded to the counties of Ashtabula, Holmes and Ottawa. Remaining two have been ordered by State Library to be used for demonstration of bookmobile service in two-county areas where sparse population may be served by one bookmobile.

LIBRARY SERVICES ACT APPROPRIATION

The President in his budget message to Congress reduced the appropriation for rural library services for the 1958-59 fiscal year from \$5,000,000 to \$3,000,000. This will cut Ohio's grant for library service in half. From library's standpoint this would eliminate a repeat order on the five bookmobiles ordered this year. From a business standpoint it would be even worse because out of the first year's appropriation, over the nation 77 bookmobiles were ordered. It's a safe bet that a majority of these, at least 50, were made in Ohio by the Gerstenslager Company, which meant that at an average cost of \$10,000, over a half million dollars came in to business channels here in Ohio.

DOCUMENTS DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM NOT TO BEGIN

Although H. B. 27 established a program for the State Library Board to set up a documents distribution system in Ohio, it looks like there will be no such system. Department of Finance has just informed us that it will not provide funds to begin this program. This is particularly disappointing in view of the fact that at the time of the passage of the bill, the Department assured the sponsor, Mrs. Swanbeck, it would provide funds for setting up the program.

AUTOMATION AND THE LIBRARY

News for librarians outside the immediate Cleveland area. A recent issue (January 17, 1958) of the Cleveland Plain Dealer devoted front page to Western Reserve University's plan to establish a \$36 million documentation center (use of machines to select from millions of pieces of literature those bearing on a particular subject) for world-wide use. While not sure this is the answer to our library problems, we are glad Ohio has this leadership and wish the Library School complete success.

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NEWS