

Letters

Acts of Parliament difficult to find

MY attention has been drawn to an article entitled 'Government Publications Grapevine' by Mr Michael Harrington in your August 1980 issue of *The Australian Library Journal*.

There are two points I would make about that article.

Mr Harrington contends that my description of an Act of Parliament as 'a law which has been made by Parliament' is 'misleading'. I appreciate his problem that Acts have been made which have not come into force at the time that the reader studies them. What has been enacted by Parliament, however, is certainly part of the law of the land even although its operation may have been deferred. For example, Parliament may bring some sections of an Act into force whilst leaving others to come into force at a later date: obviously, that Act is part of the law of the land.

Mr Harrington has rightly drawn attention to the problem of finding out when an Act does come into force. The problem, however, is worse than he describes it. It has unfortunately become a common practice for Parliament to authorise the bringing into force of various sections of an Act on different dates. The reader is thereby faced with the problem of finding out at any particular point of time which of the sections of an Act are in force. Bearing in mind the retrieval problems to which Mr Harrington has rightly referred in his article, that is no easy task.

Another aspect of the problem arises from the practice of including amendments to one Act in another Act of a different name. This practice causes even experienced lawyers to miss amendments, the difficulty of the search is increased by the fact that the official publications of lists of amendments to Acts is usually substantially after the event. For example, the official *Index to Victorian Statutes* (which does list the amendments to the various Acts) has only been published up to 1978. Fortunately, a publication compiled by the legal editorial staff of The Law Book Company Limited (*Victorian Statutes Cumulative Supplement*) is up to the end of 1979.

Kenneth H. Gifford, QC
Law Book Co Ltd, Vic

Ideas wanted

THIS is the last issue of *Incite* for 1980. As far as I can gather members seem to be reasonably pleased with it. If you have any ideas how *Incite* can be improved I would really like to hear from you. It's your newsletter, it's up to you to send ideas and news.

By the time you read this I'll be recuperating on a deserted beach getting ready for next year's onslaught. So keep that copy coming in 1981.

Have a Happy Christmas and an even happier New Year. Ed.

'Political persuasion'

EVEN if my 17 October 1980 issue of *Incite* had arrived before the Federal elections, I can assure the writer of the article 'Freedom, Who Cares?' that in no way were my voting decisions influenced. I have been voting for too long to be influenced by one issue alone.

I daresay that I have been a member of the Library Association for the same number of years.

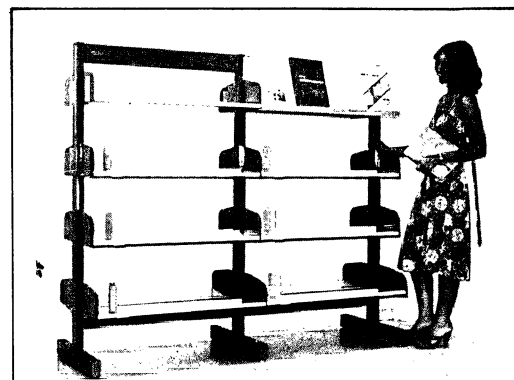
It is with disappointment and displeasure that I find that quite an interesting publication has been used as a vehicle for political persuasion.

J. Howarth
Roseville, NSW

Neasden fire

EARLIER this year a fire at our Chorley office destroyed our subscription records. It would help us if librarians who had subscribed to *News from Neasden* would write to us giving their address and when they subscribed. We will send a sample copy on request.

Will Pollard
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NSW information services

THE NEW SOUTH WALES Regional Committee of AACOBS recently extended its regular October meeting to include a two-day seminar on information services in New South Wales.

The seminar was first proposed in April 1980 when the committee was grappling with the State Information Policy. It became clear from discussion that different members were placing varying interpretations on aspects of the State Information Policy depending on their professional perspective.

It was thought that in the setting of a relatively small working group (25 people) perceptions and positions on fundamental issues could be aired, thoroughly discussed and some future directions decided upon.

Participants in the seminar examined a series of statements and assumptions relating to library and information services to clarify some of the difficulties involved in translating desirable goals and objectives into real situations. Many of the statements could be interpreted in a number of different ways. In some cases the variety in interpretation appeared to equal the number of AACOBS committee members.

Some possible models for regional and state information services were examined drawing on documents such as the 1977 draft State Plan for the Development of Public Libraries (prepared by the Library Council of NSW), the Illawarra Regional Information Service, the Report of the Committee of Inquiry into Public Libraries and overseas models.

In discussing the roles and functions of libraries which were seen as components of state-wide library and information services participants seemed to be in agreement that libraries have 'primary' functions which must come first. But it was seen that perhaps the 'secondary' functions could be met in a more responsive manner if each library service accepted its primary role and its collection and services reflected the consequent responsibilities.

After examining the current mechanisms of co-operation between components of different types of libraries, a statement of

purpose for the group was articulated and accepted:

'We seek a mechanism for formalising at the state level the present informal structure of resource sharing with the aim of improving the performance by the participants of their primary roles.'

The 'mechanism' was seen to be essentially a *planning body* which would not be tied to one institution.

A range of possible models for the 'mechanism' was discussed. The committee finally decided to appoint a working party with expertise in particular areas to develop potential models further. The working party is to report its progress to the December meeting of the New South Wales Regional Committee of AACOBS.

This tangible outcome of the seminar may be seen as a very small step. However, when one looks at the range of interests, philosophy, positions, personalities and background of the committee members the step indicates a real commitment to improving the present performance of the components of New South Wales library services.

It should be seen as an attempt by what one member called the 'library industry' to get 'its own house in order'. It may also provide a first step in more wide ranging and considered planning of library and information services in New South Wales. Marianne Broadbent

Fred Paterson Story

The AV Section of Macquarie University Library wishes to buy or borrow a copy of: *The Fred Paterson Story* (The Communist MP) by Fred Paterson.

This consists of two sound cassettes issued by an Australian firm called 'Round and Round Cassettes'. Have 'Round and Round' gone out of business? The Australian Record Industry Association is unable to help.

Please reply to: Bert Cornelius, Macquarie University Library, Audio Visual Section, North Ryde, NSW 2113. Phone: 88 9080.