



NEWS from THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Washington, D.C. 20540

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THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS TODAY

James H. Billington, who succeeds Daniel J. Boorstin to become the 13th Librarian of Congress, will preside over the world's largest library--a treasury of nearly 85 million items that is growing at a rate of approximately 7,000 a day.

The lively institution that Dr. Billington heads is more than a repository for the nation's historical records and the world's most comprehensive record of human history, cultures, and knowledge. While its primary mission, for which it was created, is to serve the Congress, the Library is used by scholars from more than a hundred countries and is open to the public. To assure that its collections are as easily accessible as possible, the Library develops and uses the latest technologies to preserve, store, and circulate its information. Manuscripts, rare books, old maps and photographs from the Library's collections are regularly exhibited and discussed in lectures and symposia. The five Stradivarius instruments owned by the Library are kept not merely as museum pieces but are regularly played by the resident Juilliard String Quartet and Beaux Arts Trio in free public concerts. The Library's archives of folklife are a source of periodic publications and exhibits; recordings and performances of folk music are regularly sponsored by the Library. The Library's early motion pictures are shown to the public, as are its collections of prints, posters, and other visual materials. Poetry and literature from the Library's collections are given voice by poets and writers themselves in public readings. Reading materials are produced in braille and recorded form by the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped.

Recent History

Writing about Dr. Billington's nomination as the 13th Librarian of Congress, a New York Times reporter recently described the position as "the pinnacle of American intellectual life." After helping to elevate the Library to such national prominence, Daniel J. Boorstin announced in December 1986 that he would step down from the position he had held since 1975. The Congress in July designated him as Librarian of Congress Emeritus, a title he assumes on September 14. President Ronald Reagan nominated Dr. Billington in April 1987, and the Congress confirmed the nomination in July.

Before leaving office, Dr. Boorstin with other Library officials testified before the Congress in support of a Library request for 1988 appropriations of \$258 million, some \$28 million more than in 1987. The bulk of the requested increase would provide for increased costs associated with pay increases and retirement benefits for the Library staff; for some additional staff positions in the Copyright Office, Congressional Research Service, and the Law Library; and for the costs of updating automation and increasing utilization of the Library's optical disk system.

For the past two years, the Library has had to operate with smaller appropriations from Congress as the result of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings Act). Congress reduced its appropriation to the Library from \$238.5 million in fiscal 1985 to \$230 million for fiscal 1986. A later cut reduced the budget further to \$210 million. For fiscal 1987, Congress increased the Library appropriation to \$223 million, which was \$30 million less than requested.

With less to spend for collections, Library staff members reviewed acquisition policies and concentrated on obtaining research materials of vital interest. Savings were achieved by reducing the number of current periodical subscriptions, and increased reliance was placed on receiving serials through exchange, gift, and copyright.

Notable recent additions to the collections have included the original manuscript of the American classic, Crèvecoeur's Letters from an American Farmer, and one of only four known copies of the 1787 call to the constitutional

convention. Crèvecoeur's manuscripts were acquired with support from the Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation and the Foundation on the Bicentennial of the United States Constitution. The other document was a gift from Mr. and Mrs. William Randolph Hearst, Jr.

Other recent significant gifts to the Library's collections include approximately 600 drawings, designs, letters, photographs and other materials from the archives of industrial designer Raymond Loewy; the entire collection of some 20,000 early television programs from the National Broadcasting Company; and the first fire insurance atlas of London, produced in the 1790s.

The Copyright Office continues to be a major source of new materials for the Library's collections. As the result of an 1870 law requiring that the Library get extra copies of work submitted for copyright protection, the Library acquires more than half a million items each year; thousands are selected for the collections. The Copyright Office also advises Congress on legislation relating to copyright questions, such as those pertaining to new information and communication technologies.

To preserve, store, and make its collections more readily accessible, the Library is proceeding with projects involving the latest technologies. To try to stem an estimated annual loss of 70,000 books through deterioration of paper, the Library is continuing a pilot project to deacidify books to prevent embrittlement. The Library has contracted with a Texas firm to engineer and design a book deacidification facility in which large quantities of volumes can be treated at the same time, to preserve them for hundreds of years.

One of the latest technologies in storing information, the compressed audio disk, was developed for the Library in the past two years. A single side of this laser-read, seven-inch disk stores 33 hours of sound and holds nearly every spoken-word recording made in the United States before 1910, as well as major political speeches recorded between 1918 and 1920. Another Library program, the Optical Disk Pilot Project, provides rapid access to 150,000 still images on videodisks available to the public in the Prints and Photographs and the Motion Picture and Television Reading Rooms.

Such automation makes it possible for the Library to serve the Congress and readers from the public, who can obtain most materials within an hour. The

Library's Automated Systems Office operates one of the largest computerized information service centers in the world, with more than 12.5 million records in Library computer databases. As part of a project to renovate the Thomas Jefferson and John Adams Buildings, an expanded computer catalog center and a telecommunications system are being installed to service the two buildings. The renovation project also will include the installation of new electrical systems and additional space for working scholars.

Serving the Congress is a Congressional Research Service (CRS) staff that fields nearly one-half million inquiries a year on topics ranging from domestic social and economic policies to foreign affairs and defense. CRS specialists in nearly a hundred fields analyze issues and weigh policy alternatives for the Congress, prepare reports, and conduct briefings.

Lawmakers of the nation and the world are assisted by the Law Library, which houses the world's largest and most comprehensive collections of foreign, international, and comparative law. By the end of fiscal 1986, the Law Library's holdings comprised some 2.5 million volumes. The Law Library staff shares information through publications and national and international conferences.

The Library of Congress also makes its treasures available through exhibitions, publishing, and public performances. For example, the Library is celebrating the Bicentennial of the United States Constitution this year with a major exhibition, "The American Solution: Origins of the United States Constitution." A Library publication by the same title traces the story of the Constitution from Shays' Rebellion through ratification. The Library's own town crier, Leo Anderson, has dramatized the events taking place in Philadelphia 200 years ago with his regular weekly appearances in front of the Jefferson and Madison buildings this summer.

Although public readings have been presented at the Library since 1897 and the Library has long enjoyed the services of a Consultant in Poetry, the position of Poet Laureate Consultant in Poetry was created by an act of Congress in 1986. The nation's first Poet Laureate was Robert Penn Warren, succeeded this year by Richard Wilbur, whose first appearance at the Library is scheduled for October.

THE LIBRARY'S ACTIVITIES AT A GLANCE

In 1986, the Library of Congress:

*Welcomed 2,309,303 users and visitors

*Held 84,694,819 items, including--

14,045,520 books in the classified collections

8,472,541 nonclassified books, pamphlets, technical reports, and other printed materials

3,699,260 musical works

1,149,065 recorded disks, tapes, and audio materials in other formats

36,175,568 manuscripts

3,862,328 maps

6,653,286 microfiche, microfilms, and micro-opaques

10,637,251 motion pictures, photographs, posters, prints, drawings, videotapes, and other visual materials

*Acquired 1,028,331 items for the collections

*Prepared 941 bibliographies containing a total of 131,082 entries

*Aided scholars and researchers by circulating 3,176,956 volumes for use within the Library

*Completed full-level cataloging of 190,857 titles

*Answered 1,165,458 inquiries in person, 147,165 by mail, and 524,859 by telephone through reference specialists

*Completed 433,666 research assignments for the Congress through the Congressional Research Service

*Sponsored 465 different events for the public and special audiences at the library

*Circulated 19,885,800 disk, cassette, and braille items to a blind and physically handicapped readership of 682,500

*Had more than 12.5 million records in computer databases accessible through 65 computer terminals at various public locations in the Library

*Employed a staff of 5,234 employees

*Operated on a budget of \$210,522,000 from the Congress in direct appropriations, \$10,614,000 in fees from the Cataloging Distribution Service and Copyright Office, and \$7,419,000 in obligations from gift and trust funds.



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JAMES H. BILLINGTON SWORN IN AS 13TH LIBRARIAN OF CONGRESS

James H. Billington was sworn in on Monday, September 14, as the 13th Librarian of Congress since the Library's founding in 1800. Nominated by President Reagan on April 17 and confirmed by the Senate on July 24, Dr. Billington takes office as one of the nation's leading cultural representatives and keeper of the world's largest library.

President Reagan addressed guests assembled in the Great Hall of the Thomas Jefferson Building after the oath was administered.

Chief Justice of the United States William Rehnquist administered the oath to Dr. Billington with President Reagan at his side. Raising his right hand and placing his left on the Bible held by his wife, Marjorie Brennan Billington, the Librarian Designate repeated the oath of office.

The Bible used in the ceremony was a 1782 American Bible, the first complete Bible printed in the United States in English. The volume, known as the Aitkin Bible, was from the Rare Book and Special Collections of the Library of Congress.

The ceremony in the Great Hall, attended by more than 800 guests, began at 11 a.m. with an invocation by the Rev. Dr. James David Ford, Chaplain of the U.S. House of Representatives. Senator Wendell H. Ford, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration, presided, with greetings presented by Representative Thomas S. Foley, Majority Leader, U.S. House of Representatives. The Rev. Sanford Garner, Jr., Rector of Christ Church, Georgetown, pronounced the benediction.

Special guests on the platform included Mrs. Reagan, Librarian of Congress Emeritus Daniel J. Boorstin and Mrs. Boorstin, and Representative Frank Annunzio, Vice Chairman of the congressional Joint Committee on the Library.

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PR 87-139
9-15-87

Editors: Biographical material and remarks attached.

JAMES H. BILLINGTON
THE LIBRARIAN OF CONGRESS

James Hadley Billington was sworn in as The Librarian of Congress on September 14, 1987. He is the 13th incumbent of that position since the Library was established in 1800. An author and historian, as well as educator and administrator, Dr. Billington came to the Library from the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, where he had served as director since 1973.

A native of Pennsylvania, Dr. Billington was educated in the public schools of the Philadelphia area. He received his undergraduate degree from Princeton University, graduating as valedictorian of the class of 1950. Three years later he earned his doctorate from Oxford University, where he was a Rhodes Scholar at Balliol College. Following service with the U.S. Army, he became a history instructor at Harvard University in 1957 and an assistant professor of history and research fellow at the Russian Research Center the next year. He moved to the faculty of Princeton University in 1962 and was professor of history at Princeton from 1964 to 1974.

From 1973 to 1987, Dr. Billington was the director of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, the congressionally created national memorial to the 28th President. Under his directorship, eight new programs were established at the Center, beginning with the Kennan Institute for Advanced Russian Studies in 1974. The number of meetings grew to more than 250 a year, including about 20 multi-day international conferences annually. Two of the projects Dr. Billington initiated at the Center were The Wilson Quarterly, founded in 1976, which now reaches 110,000 paid subscribers, and the publication of 12 detailed scholars' guides to educational resources in Washington.

Dr. Billington is the author of a number of books, two of which--The Icon and the Axe and Fire in the Minds of Men--were nominated for National Book Awards, and he is widely published in both professional and popular journals. He has also participated as a host, commentator, or consultant on numerous educational and network television programs, and he has accompanied several congressional delegations as well as a library and a church delegation to the U.S.S.R.

Concurrently with other positions he has held over the years, he has also been a longtime member of the editorial advisory board of Foreign Affairs, a former member of the editorial advisory board of Theology Today, and a past director of the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies. He was a member of the Board of Foreign Scholarships in 1971-76 (chairman, 1971-1973), which has executive responsibility for academic exchanges worldwide under the Fulbright-Hays Act. He has been a Guggenheim Fellow, a McCosh Faculty Fellow of Princeton University, and visiting lecturer or research professor at numerous universities and research centers overseas. He is also a past vice chairman of the Board of Trustees of St. Albans School in Washington, D.C.

Dr. Billington holds a number of honorary degrees and is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and a Chevalier of the Order of Arts and Letters of France.

Born in Bryn Mawr, Pa., on June 1, 1929, Dr. Billington is married to the former Marjorie Anne Brennan. They have four children, Susan Billington Harper, Anne Billington Fischer, James Hadley Billington, Jr., and Thomas Keator Billington.

(9/15/87)

REMARKS OF JAMES H. BILLINGTON AT SWEARING-IN CEREMONY
SEPTEMBER 14, 11 A.M.

Mr. President, Mrs. Reagan, Mr. Chief Justice, Secretary Baker, Senator Ford, Congressman Foley, Members of Congress, distinguished guests.

I am grateful to you Mr. President, not just for the responsibility you have entrusted in me, but for the honor you and Mrs. Reagan accord to the entire dedicated staff of the Library of Congress by coming here today and affirming the importance of its mission as a "vital center of scholarship and ideas."

I specially like that word vital: full of life. For libraries are today's living link between the record of yesterday and the possibilities of tomorrow. the Library of Congress is not just all these books and buildings, but the anguish, achievements, and aspirations of our forefathers living on here near the heart of our country. This Library's life blood is all those people who keep the rejuvenating flow of free inquiry circulating through our land: millions everywhere who benefit from these collections, thousands on the staff here who keep them healthy, and the variety of users who come here to blend memory with desire into hope: the researcher seeking truth, the artist creating beauty, and the legislator devising the good.

The pursuit of truth may be not just the highest form of the pursuit of happiness, but the best arena in our time of increasing physical constraints for keeping the horizons of human freedom infinite. One man who has embodied as well as defended that ideal of knowledge as endless exploration is my predecessor and our new Librarian of Congress Emeritus, Daniel J. Boorstin. We all thank you and wish you and Ruth Godspeed as you move ahead into the full-time company of the creators.

Uniquely among all great national libraries, this one is open to all people and collects in almost all disciplines, languages, and media of expression. Its very title bespeaks a distinctively American linkage of a library to a legislature and reflects a unique and historic determination among those who make laws for our people to be close to a place that seeks truth for

all people. This tie began when our very first Continental Congress met in Philadelphia in 1774 in a building with a major library and was institutionalized by the founding of the Library of Congress in 1800. And for most of the diverse citizens who helped make democracy work here, in the beginning truly was the word: The Bible that guided most of them, the compact signed by the first of them, the constitution written by the wisest of them, and all of the songs and stories, sermons and scholarship of our many diverse communities.

We acquired a stunningly original constitution almost exactly 200 years ago as a result of a rich debate among literate men who weighed arguments and settled on a complex system that divided power to protect liberty — in contrast to many later revolutionaries who mobilize emotions with sloganized simplicities that only relegitimize tyranny. Our type of democracy has depended on knowledge and grown through books, which by their very nature, foster freedom with dignity. Books do not coerce; they convince. They speak to the active individual confronting in private the voice of reason; they do not shriek to a passive crowd cowering in public before the megaphones of authority. At the same time, in America, books tended to put things together and create connections for a widely scattered people.

So how do free men and women in America today — more crowded together yet often more lonely than before -- responsibly use the unparalleled resources we have here as we move ahead to the year 2000, when this Library will celebrate its Bicentennial as humanity reaches its Bimillennium? Though the Library of Congress contains the world's greatest collection of maps (as of so much else), it has, of course, no chart for the future. As a practical people we would in any case be properly suspicious of any prepackaged blueprints for complex human problems or institutions.

But there are, I think, two general directions in which this institution should move simultaneously despite the seeming contradiction between the two: out more broadly and in more deeply.

Moving out means making the riches of this place even more broadly available to ever wider circles of our multiethnic society: lending materials to

local libraries, using new technologies to share the substantive content and not merely the descriptive catalogue of the nation's library, and extending even further out into the world this Library's unique and invaluable mission of foreign collection on behalf of all our people. We ourselves are a nation of nations increasingly interconnected with other nations. More of us need to know more about more of them if we are to live peacefully and to compete successfully in tomorrow's world.

I would hope that just as America was immeasurably enriched by the great human immigration that passed by the Statue of Liberty whose centenary we celebrated last year, America might also be replenished anew by a fresh immigration of ideas that will pass through this beautiful building by the time it celebrates its hundredth anniversary ten years from now.

There is probably very little that we as a people need to know that could not be found out in this very library if we had the energy and imagination and could read the languages.

Of course, merely translating foreign words doesn't guarantee understanding if you don't have a feel for the culture — as I learned in reading the French subtitles to a Western movie some years ago. When the bad guy entered and said "Gimme a shot of red eye," the subtitle was "Un Dubonnet s'il vous plait"; and then, when the good guy slowly sauntered into a barroom full of hostile houbres for the showdown and quietly began "Hello, sheriff," the French version was "Bonjour, Monsieur le Commissaire."

But reaching out ever more broadly beyond this library complex will not mean much unless there is also deep new movement inside. This library serves both the working government of a free people and the scholarly frontiers of all people. It will not serve either well if it simply spreads information to other places without generating knowledge and distilling wisdom in this place. We need to keep the record from disintegrating on acid paper and nitrate film and to celebrate the intellect as we do the arts. To sustain in our time the great experiment in freedom begun in Philadelphia 200 years ago, we will need in this city new peaks of intellectual excellence: learned people who are able to look beyond the present-minded advocacy agendas of our political process here -- and

also rise above the narrowness of methodology and ideology and indifference to broader concerns sometime found in our academic guilds. The republic of letters no less than the capital of this republic needs people able and willing to put things together and not just take them apart.

Facing many and conflicting demands, proliferating information, and rapid technological change, this Library will need people of imagination as well as intelligence and integrity to help make all the hard choices about what to collect, how to record, when to conserve. Neither our own children nor the many others who still look to America as the experimental cutting edge of the human adventure will forgive us if we simply lapse into living off of our accumulated capital in this as in other areas. For this is an exciting time when much of the rest of the world is newly aspiring to replicate key elements of our accomplishment: the political and economic freedoms, the ethnic pluralism, advances in human rights, and the ability simultaneously and harmoniously to sustain in most of its citizenry both personal religious faith and a common quest for enlightenment.

The founding fathers spoke of the sun rising 200 years ago, Mr. President, just as you have spoken of sunrise in our own America. I hope that, by the year 2000, whether or not I am here to see it, the sun may still be shining on this place, that its talented staff will be reflecting even more light out to others, and that the composition of both staff and users will reflect ever-increasing human variety. This place has a destiny to be a living encyclopedia of democracy: not just a mausoleum of culture, but a catalyst for civilization.