

June 10, 1966
(continued)

for the improvement of library legislation at both the state and national levels. As a member of the Committee on Government Relations of R. I. L. A., I was sent by the Governor, along with Miss Grace Sherwood, then State Librarian, to a conference in Washington when the rural library program was initiated at the national level. This Committee was also responsible for the introduction of legislation in Rhode Island that enabled this state to enter this program for rural libraries.

At both the state and national level, a movement was underway to include urban libraries in this movement. In Rhode Island, the General Assembly approved the establishment of a Legislative Commission on Libraries to review the state's library laws, to study the so-called Humphrey report on Rhode Island libraries, and to make recommendations for changes in the laws of the state as affecting public libraries.

I was fortunate to be included among Governor Kott's appointments to this Commission, and was honored to be chosen its Chairman. After a study of about 2 years, the Commission made a number of recommendations including the establishment of a separate Department of State Library Services, with state aid based upon population and state aid grants for construction purposes, and a program of regional library cooperation. The General Assembly passed the new law in time to take advantage of the new federal aid program. Greenville has been fortunately able to take advantage of these new aids and services.

Part of the increase in community interest in Greenville Public Library can be traced to the program of educational activities sponsored by the Library, first shows, an industrial exhibit, an exhibit of historical Smithfield shows featuring the Health League and the volunteer fire companies, as well as travel talks and other lectures, and Christmas programs - all have created an awareness of the Library in the community. Together with our improved hours of services, a growing book collection, the improved physical facilities of the building, these all have contributed toward a willingness to expend town money for the library's operation.

I cannot close these remarks without paying tribute to the members of the Executive Board for their ready cooperation in the various projects we have shared.