

NOTES
NCLIS CONFERENCE CALL
March 21, 1996
11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

NCLIS Members Participating:	Jeanne Hurley Simon, Martha B. Gould, C. E. "Abe" Abramson (Member-Designate), Shirley Adamovich, Walter Anderson, Joan Challinor, Carol DiPrete; Mary Furlong, Frank Lucchino, Bobby Roberts, Gary Sudduth; Barbara Taylor, Robert Willard. [LeVar Burton (Member-Designate); Kay Riddle; Winston Tabb; and Joel Valdez were unable to participate]
Staff Present:	Peter R. Young, Mary Alice Hedge, John G. Lorenz, Jane Williams, Kim Miller, and Barbara Whiteleather

This was the first Commission conference call discussion since the December 14-15, 1995, Commission meeting was held. Chairperson Simon recalled that Friday, December 15, marked the beginning of a three-weeklong government shutdown and furlough which required that the Commission office be closed.

Notes from/about Commissioners and Staff

- Nominations for Commissioners-Designee C. E. "Abe" Abramson and LeVar Burton are still awaiting Senate confirmation action. The Senate committee is currently holding all pending nominations to NCLIS and for the Institute on Museum Services (IMS) National Museum Services Board pending final Congressional action on legislation affecting the Institute of Museums and Libraries Services (IMLS).
- According to the Senate committee staff, Mr. Burton's nomination paperwork has not been completed. Chairperson Simon expressed her hope that travel plans will bring Mr. Burton to the Washington area for a visit in the near future.
- Commissioner Furlong reported that she will appear on the *Today Show*, Monday, April 1, 1996, to talk about SeniorNet and her newly published book, Young@Heart.
- Ken Dowlin, Director of the San Francisco Public Library will be extending invitations to all Commissioners to a program held in conjunction with the opening of the new San Francisco Public Library building on April 14. Vice Chair Gould and Commissioner Furlong indicated their plans to attend and volunteered to represent NCLIS. Chairperson Simon is unable to attend.

- Commissioner Willard reported on a one-day ALA Information Summit meeting in California, *A Nation Connected: Defining the Public Interest in the Information Superhighway*, February 20. Discussions at the Summit meeting focussed on access to the information superhighway and the proposed role of the federal government. Commissioner Willard indicated that the conference provided an opportunity for ALA to videotape positive statements on the contributions of libraries. Conference details are included in the NCLIS Executive Director's Report covering February 10 through March 18.
- At Commissioner Challinor's suggestion, an article appearing in the New York Times on March 18, *Book Publishers Worry About Threat of Internet*, will be sent to Commissioners as an Information Document (ID).
- Commissioner Sudduth was praised for the flattering article appearing in the Star Tribune, February 5, 1996: "*A Voice of Calm Amid the Clamor -- In quest for the truth, Sudduth relies on reason, not rhetoric.*" The article was sent as ID #96-10.

NCLIS Budget and Operations

- On March 15 the President signed a one-week continuing resolution, thus keeping agencies without final approved FY96 appropriations in operation through March 22 and avoiding a third government shutdown.
- Both House and Senate action on H.R. 3019 in March recommended that NCLIS receive FY96 appropriation of \$829,000. The measure is awaiting House-Senate Conference action and Presidential approval. This level of funding for the Commission, if passed, will relieve much of the fiscal pressure under which we have been operating since October. If the \$829,000 is approved, the Commission will avoid staff furloughs. Chairperson Simon expressed thanks for the successful House appropriation action that increased NCLIS 1996 appropriation recommendation from \$450,000 to \$829,000.
- Chairperson Simon, accompanied by Peter Young, Mary Alice Hedge, and Jane Williams, presented testimony on NCLIS' FY97 appropriation on 12 March 1996 before the House Appropriations Subcommittee. Chairperson Simon stated that Chairman Porter listened intently and with interest to the testimony. She indicated that Rep. Porter's comments during the hearing recognized NCLIS' role in information technology and addressed the importance of the Commission's work in relation to the future of libraries. Testimony noted that the amount of time required to manage NCLIS' FY96 continuing resolution funding detracted from attention to issues related to policy and recommendations.

NCLIS Commission Meeting and Mini-Hearing

- Assuming that 1996 appropriated funds will become available, the Commissioners discussed holding the next NCLIS meeting in conjunction with the Interactive Services Association (ISA) Conference, July 21-24, in San Diego, California. Commissioner Furlong proposed that the Commission consider meeting with ISA. It was determined that such a meeting should have a two-fold purpose: (1) For NCLIS to learn more about ISA; and (2) for ISA to learn more about NCLIS.
- In addition, pending available funds, it was suggested that a mini-hearing be held during the July ALA Annual Conference in New York. Possible hearing topics suggested were: (1) Focus on the Commission's priorities; (2) Human resources training needs for information technologies in libraries; and (3) Information policy issues related to national programs.
- In order to develop plans for the Commission meeting in July, Chairperson Simon identified the following members of a Planning Committee: Martha Gould; Chair, Abe Abramson; Mary Furlong; Frank Lucchino; and Bob Willard. The Committee is expected to conduct its work through conference calls and e-mail.

NIIAC

- To date, no response has been received from Greg Simon, the Vice President Gore's Domestic Policy Staff Chief, regarding a proposed advisory committee established under NCLIS to implement the recommendations from the National Information Infrastructure Advisory Council's (NIIAC).
- Thanks to Bob Willard copies of the following NII Advisory Council's final reports have been received and distributed to the Commissioners as ID #96-12:
 1. *A Nation of Opportunity: Realizing the Promise of the Information Superhighway;* and
 2. *Kickstart Initiative: Connecting America's Communities to the Information Superhighway.*

WWW.NCLIS.GOV

- NCLIS staff are working on the development and release of the NCLIS World Wide Web (WWW) home page with Issue Dynamics, Inc. This project was made possible by Commissioner Furlong's contact with IDI. The NCLIS home page WWW site launching is set for April. If possible, Commissioner Furlong hopes to have an opportunity to make reference to NCLIS home page during her appearance on the *Today Show*.

Survey of Public Libraries and the Internet

- As of March 13, a total of 970 responses to the 1996 Survey of Public Libraries and the Internet have been received from two survey mailings which were sent to a total sample of 1,495 public libraries. Current plans call for the preliminary survey results to be available in time for Vice Chair Gould to announce them at the Public Library Association National Conference in Portland.

NCLIS Annual Report

- Delivery of the *FY 1994-95 NCLIS Annual Report* from GPO is expected on April 6. Each Commissioner will be mailed 10 copies at that time. Additional copies are available upon request.

Legislation

- There appear to be major House-Senate Conference problems on the proposed Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) that have not been resolved by conference committee staff. Ms. Hedge indicated that a quick and simple one-year LSCA extension would not be a surprise. It was pointed out that there are only 50 "good" Congressional working days left in FY96 due to the demands of an election year schedule. The proposed CAREERS Act is essentially on hold for the time being.
- On February 8, Chairperson Simon testified before the House Subcommittee on the Courts and Intellectual Property on H.R. 2441, the NII Copyright Protection Act of 1995.
- Regarding the Telecommunications Act of 1996, lawsuits have been filed challenging the provisions of the Communications Decency Act.
- NCLIS plans to submit comments to the FCC on the Universal Service provisions included in the Telecommunications Act of 1996. Each of the 50 Public Utility Commissions (PUC) at the state level will be a major factor in fashioning workable provisions for implementing Universal Services. This is regarded as a very important issue, and one demanding the Commission's attention. Libraries ability to achieve discounted rates for core and advanced telecommunications services, especially in support of Internet access and use of electronic network information services, depends on this FCC ruling.

Government Printing Office

- In a meeting with Chairperson Simon, Mike DiMario, the Public Printer, discussed the possibility of involving the Commission in contracting for a basic study to assess the ability of depository libraries and federal agencies in order to develop and implement a transition plan to a more electronic depository system.

NCLIS 25th Anniversary Ad Hoc Committee

- Commissioner Taylor, Chair of the NCLIS 25th Anniversary Ad Hoc Committee, encouraged Commissioners, who have not already done so, to send in their nominations for the Silver Awards. Plans call for the names of the recipients to be announced on April 1 and to be placed on NCLIS' WWW homepage. Because of NCLIS' fiscal situation, the type of award/memento has not been selected.

LSP

- The Library Statistics Program (LSP) is in the process of receiving an additional \$100,000 from the National Center for Education Statistics to carry out additional work. The ninth annual FSCS training workshop for State Data Coordinators was held March 18-20.
- John Lorenz, Mary Alice Hedge, and Barbara Whiteleather are working with staff from NCES, the Office of Library Programs, and the Institute on Postsecondary Education, Libraries, and Lifelong Learning on a Forum Planning Group to plan for the fourth annual Forum on Library and Information Services Policy. This year's forum is tentatively scheduled for May 20-21 and will focus on *Impact of Information Technology and Special Programming on Library Services to Special Populations*. The planning group has developed the following list of special populations:
 - Services to business and employers
 - Senior citizens
 - Rural and rural-remote areas
 - Educationally and/or educationally disadvantaged (including literacy programs)
 - Multicultural population (including limited English-speaking)
 - Physically handicapped

Suggestions for knowledgeable participants in this year's Forum are requested.

IFLA

Given the current human rights situation in China and the uncertainty of ICSECA funds from the State Department, NCLIS Commissioner travel to the 1996 IFLA Conference in Beijing does not appear possible.

4/1/96