

## STATE DOCUMENTS AT CRL — POLICY CHANGES SURE TO AFFECT INDIANA ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

---

Andrea Singer  
Associate Librarian  
University Libraries  
Bloomington, IN

---

---

On July 1, 1991 the Center for Research Libraries terminated existing depository arrangements and standing orders for state documents. The Center plans to develop a new collection development policy based on systematic deposits from member libraries or acquisition of specific titles. A CRL U.S. State Documents Task Force, which will convene in October 1992 for the first time since the new policy went into effect, will identify the categories of material which will be in the retrospective collection of documents.

For Indiana member libraries Indiana University, Purdue University, and the University of Notre Dame, CRL's state document policy changes mark the end of a period beginning in January 1952<sup>1</sup> in which comprehensive coverage of official

publications of all U.S. states and territories and their various departments and agencies (with some exceptions) was sought. The comprehensive policy was part of a Center goal to "create a situation in which it will be possible for each member library to review its own state documents policy and its current acquisitions list with a view to canceling infrequently-used titles and depending upon the Center for them<sup>2</sup>."

At Indiana University, collection development policy for state documents other than Indiana documents has relied on access and contributions to the Center for many years. A report of a truck pick-up bound for the Center on April 5, 1953, included "122 boxes, 111 bundles state documents" from Indiana University<sup>3</sup>. Other early

member libraries also welcomed the Center's cooperative program for state documents. E.B. Stanford of the University of Minnesota Library wrote, "The most recent challenge in our deposit program has been State Documents. With nearly 10,000 cards in our checking file, it had been simply impossible to claim consistently individual items which had failed to arrive automatically. Some series, still considered active, covered material for which there had been no demand within anyone's memory; other cards represented items which are needed as soon as they come off the press... It was estimated that we could depend upon M.I.L.C. for as much as 50% of the material we had been receiving in the past<sup>4</sup>."

The Center attempted to acquire little-used material on behalf of its member libraries, and newsletter articles and notes reported on progress in acquisitions and collection management. One administrative "headache" was solved in 1955 by selling 100,000 state document duplicates which accumulated during organizing the documents deposited by members. Since an early membership decision was that the Center should retain only one copy of each

state document, and efforts to place duplicates in other libraries were slow, a bookdealer's offer to buy duplicate documents and resell them to a "number of western college and university libraries" at a profit to the Center supplied a solution<sup>5</sup> which left the Center with a manageable collection of 100,000 state documents.

In 1991 the state document collection, comprised of the 1952-to-date materials as well as extensive backfiles of pre-1952 imprints deposited by members, was estimated to contain over 700,000 volumes of which approximately 40% was pre-1952 materials. According to an April 1, 1991 letter to member libraries' directors in which Donald B. Simpson, CRL President, summarized recent studies and decisions of the Center, the new policy revision to be begun on July 1, 1991 proposed "to build a research level collection, to fit the Center's collection more closely to members' needs, and to maintain a collection that can be managed in terms [of] bibliographic access and preservation<sup>6</sup>."

In 1992, Indiana documents librarians are particularly concerned about two aspects of the Center's

plan: the possible disposal or dispersal of the retrospective collection, and the parameters of the new collection. Documents librarians at Indiana University Libraries are urging that CRL's U.S. State Documents Task Force poll documents librarians including those responsible for U.S. State documents for their conception of the categories of materials essential to a retrospective collection. At the same time, these librarians who normally directly serve library researchers could be asked to contribute ideas for managing these difficult but precious archival collections. (The same sort of far-sighted planning which contributed to a National Newspaper Project might also generate a National U.S. State Document Project.)

Undoubtedly Indiana member libraries will be looking closely at the Center's plans as they relate to individual institutional needs and goals.

## REFERENCES

1. CRL's pre-July 1991 collection policy for State Documents appears on p. 128 in its Handbook (Chicago: The Center for Research Libraries, 1987.) Categories of materials excepted from the comprehensive collection policy include session laws and compiled statutes, publications of state colleges and universities, publications of organizations that are only in part tax-supported, expensive occasional publications known to be widely available, state court reports and decisions, maps except when they accompany text, joint publications of interstate agencies or of a state and federal agency, reprints, media guides, fair premium lists, publications intended to promote tourism, publicity materials and other ephemera, and agricultural experiment station publication.
2. From the Midwest Inter-Library Center Newsletter, No. 24, November 30, 1951 p.4. The Midwest Inter-Library Center (M.I.L.C.) became The Center for Research Libraries (CRL) in May 1965, enlarging its mission from a regional role to one of service to the United States and Canada.

Indiana University, Purdue University, and the University of Notre Dame had all been members of the Midwest Inter-Library Center, and continued as members of The Center for Research Libraries.

3. Ibid., No. 40 (May 30, 1953): 2.
4. Ibid., No. 57 (November 30, 1954): 2.
5. Ibid., No. 65 (November 30, 1955): 4.
6. April 1, 1991 letter from Donald B. Simpson, President of the Center for Research Libraries, to James Neal, Dean of University Libraries, Indiana University.

# # #