

FOR INFORMATION

S.89-6

**SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
MEMORANDUM**

VICE-PRESIDENT, RESEARCH AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS

TO: Mr. R. Heath,
Secretary of Senate

FROM: Thomas W. Calvert, Chair
Senate Library Committee

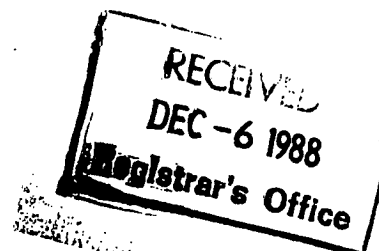
SUBJECT: ANNUAL REPORT OF THE
SENATE LIBRARY COMMITTEE

DATE: December 2, 1988

I attach the Annual Report of the Senate Library Committee. Will you please take this Report to Senate?

It will be noted that during the past year, the Committee paid particular attention to the maintenance of the collection. The rapid increase in the cost of many serials has been particularly troublesome. I want to record our appreciation of the assistance which the Senate Committee has received from the Library Committees in the Faculty of Arts and the Faculty of Science in reviewing subscriptions for serials.

Tom Calvert



SENATE LIBRARY COMMITTEE

ANNUAL REPORT

1987/88

PREAMBLE

This report covers the meetings of December 10, 1987 and April 15, 1988. In addition to the business conducted during the meetings there was considerable activity through Faculty library committees whose chairmen sit on and report to the Senate Library Committee.

The major concerns of the Committee this last year have centered around defining the Library role at the Harbour Centre site and budgetary problems largely associated with disproportionate price increases to the cost of library material in a period of restraint.

SUMMARY OF THE DECEMBER 10/87 AND APRIL 15/88 MEETINGS

Harbour Centre Site

The Library has been involved with planning for this site from the beginning. With a space allocation of around 10,000 square feet it was necessary to conceive of an information service centre far different from the standard university library. The plan developed was for a state of the art high-tech installation that would have a small program-oriented "reserve" type collection, but would, with the Burnaby collection as its main back-up, fulfill the needs of users. Further, as the Library is at the entrance to SFU/Harbour Centre the space and its furnishings are to be visually appealing.

Planning is continuing into the specific kinds of service that the various programs may require. The University Librarian is a "Special Advisor" to the Harbour Centre committee of S.C.A.P., assuring a mutual awareness of the needs and solutions to the establishment of this facility.

A major concern of the Committee has been to assure that in funding the Harbour Centre library there be no financial drain or diminution of service at the Burnaby site. The generous donation of \$1,000,000 by Mr. Samuel Belzberg should do much to allay any such fears.

"Hot Spots"

The Library has been examining areas where on-going restraint may have harmed or endangered services to users. Some of these are:

- (a) Equipment maintenance -- there has been a great expansion of technological devices over the recent past. Ability to maintain these hundreds of pieces of equipment is inadequate. One half-time staff member cannot provide first line maintenance for over 400 pieces of equipment; maintenance contracts for our system are eating up a disproportionate amount of the Operating Budget.
- (b) The basic computer system (GEAC) is stretched to its limit. Natural growth of the student body and collection, aside from essential improvements, will degrade response time and the general adequacy of the system. A system upgrade, though costly, will be required in the near future.
- (c) Centralization of reference service has long been a Library priority. This will require expensive space moves, but without either some form of centralization or extra staff, service is bound to suffer.

Collections

The maintenance of Library collections is the hottest of "hot spots", affecting as it does the main function of the Library. While in recent years the percentage budget increase for collections development has always exceeded the percentage increase in the government grant to the University, it has not been able to equal the avariciousness of publishers.

This problem is not a local one, but hurts all research libraries, particularly in North America where European publishers have piled on extra charges. While almost all research level material has been affected, the gouging has been most severe in the field of serials, especially scientific and technical journals. Efforts are being made by libraries in Canada and the United States to counter these high prices, but so far without success. We have handled the budget problem in the same way most research libraries across the continent have; we have protected serials at the expense of monographs.

Two factors have emerged from this practice. First, our purchases of monographs have fallen to a level where many faculty are concerned that several areas of the collection are inadequate, especially through failure to replace missing material and to duplicate important titles. Second, the inexorable thrust of serials price increases is endangering not only the purchase of monographs but of serials also.

During the last fiscal year the President decreed that there be no further degradation of collection development. One hundred thousand dollars were added to the materials budget -- which was still over-spent by \$45,000. This year we are assured of collections maintenance, but only with the aid of one-time funds. A cut-back in our serial purchases is inevitable.

The Faculty of Arts Library Users' Committee (which includes Communications) and the Science Library Users' Committee (which includes Applied Science) have been examining the question of where savings could be made, with the Collections Management Officer taking part in the deliberations. Currently, throughout the Faculties, there is an evaluation of serials under way which will establish priority levels which could be used both to cut back the list and to allow subscriptions for new serials.

When cut-backs in serials do become necessary the Library will assure that the broadest input is obtained from Faculty regarding specific titles. Currently the Library is purchasing state-of-the-art FAX equipment to ensure quick access to material in journals that must be cancelled.

In considering the Annual Report to Senate, the Senate Library Committee unanimously adopted the following suggestions:

- 1) That the Collections budget of the Library be maintained at a level to prevent further degradation of the primary collection and that every effort be made to provide funds for replacements.
- 2) That the upgrade to the GEAC system be given a high University priority.
- 3) That sufficient funds and staff be available to assure maintenance and servicing of technical equipment in the Library.