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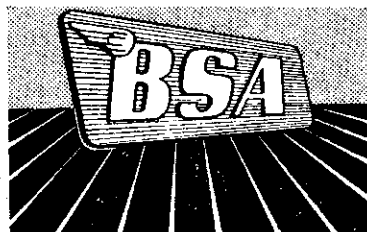
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## U.S. LIBRARY GOES HOME

*—But its Books and Films will Remain Here*

AS soon as the United States Information Library in Wellington officially opened its doors to the public in 1944, it became a gathering place for New Zealanders searching for news about America. And its shelves gave them an uncomfortable feeling that their knowledge of America was absurdly inadequate. That was part of the idea. Since then every department on the library's four floors, in Woodward Street, has been open to Government departments, the Press, professors, teachers and students—to anyone wanting to find out something about the United States and willing to go and ask for it. Last week the Library closed down, the United States Congress having cut down the appropriations for such work.

New Zealand is not the only country to lose its U.S. library. Similar institutions in Australia, South Africa, Portugal, Malaya, the Dominican Republic and Honduras have been or are being closed; in some other countries the service has been curtailed.

The thousands of people who have used the Wellington library will naturally be anxious to know what is to become of the collection. It will not be returned to the States, but will remain here. The films and film-strips are to be handed to the National Film Library for custody and use, and the books and other literary material will be placed on loan in the custody of the National Library Service.

Although the library was under the direction of the United States Legation, several New Zealanders were attached to the staff, working with the American professional librarians. Their term of office ended officially on July 31, but in the comparatively short time they have been associated with the service they have learned much about American methods of handling books and American reference systems.

#### Something About Everything

The library's primary purpose has been to offer reference facilities, but books and magazines could be borrowed for week-ends. In this way some of the work of the reference staff was lessened, because inquirers, by taking away a book

or pamphlet, were able to sift out information for themselves. Membership of the library inter-loan system made it possible for people all over New Zealand to obtain reference material on practically any subject, from how to judge a flower show to the latest methods of electric accounting.

In its three years the library built up a collection of 64,000 items, including works of reference, and about 30,000 pamphlets not yet put up in book form. Of these pamphlets the most sought after were those on soil erosion and conservation, hydro-electricity and housing. There was also a steady demand for works on music and the other arts in America; social questions, industrial management and industrial psychology also came in for much attention.

#### Comparisons for Specialists

Through such works New Zealand experts in special subjects were able to find out how their opposite numbers in

the United States dealt with them. Answers were given to about 21,000 reference questions; and some of these took a considerable amount of looking out. One occupied a reference expert two whole days.

Apologising for keeping a certain pamphlet for an unusually long time, a borrower explained that he had sent it round the country to agriculturists; he probably saved the reference department some work, for farmers and others reading the book would find in it answers to some of their problems.

From the shelves in the library people took home 42,000 items and under the inter-library loan plan, 159 places outside Wellington were served with information.

#### First Film Show in the Chathams

The Film and Publications service attached to the library, under the care of a New Zealand supervisor and staff, was



THE PHOTOGRAPHS on these pages show the U.S. Information Service's Wellington library as thousands of New Zealanders will remember it. School-children (above) were among its regular visitors and the reference room (top of page) was always busy