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## Editor's Forum

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The *American Archivist* will next appear in late summer; the July and October issues, numbers 3 and 4 of volume 35, will be combined. The magazine will be double sized, and in addition to expanded departments, it will include the annual bibliography and will carry articles on archival training in the U.S. and Canada, the use of archives in teaching, the Sam Rayburn Library, inventorying magnetic-media records, and on other topics. Featured will be Ernst Posner's study of medieval Islamic recordkeeping, a sequel to his new book, *Archives in the Ancient World*.

Both the quantity and quality of the combined July/October issue will assure *American Archivist* subscribers that they continue to receive their money's worth, even though this year their journal is mailed to them but three times. This schedule adjustment, not without precedent among periodicals, will return the journal promptly to its regular appearance dates. The maneuver will also save 20 percent of the cost of an issue by eliminating covers, binding, mailing envelopes, and postage fees for 2,700 copies.

### TO THE EDITOR:

The Robert Schnare and Herbert Janick paper on the papers of the Connecticut governors in your October 1971 issue points up the differing approach that the various State chief executives have taken towards retention of the records of their administrations. The problem they discuss is not limited to Connecticut.

I suspect that many of those serving as Governors in the various States would welcome some sort of realistic but politically neutral guidance in evaluating their records. Why couldn't records schedules—comparable in scope and tone to the Federal General Records Schedules—be developed by the Society to provide some sort of consistent guides or standards against which these men, or their administrative associates, could exercise some sort of reasonable judgment in appraising their records for retention? Obviously, these schedules would not have any legal force; they might be presented to the State legislatures for endorsement—in somewhat the same format as that given the recommended uniform legal codes.

I realize that there might be professional and procedural problems connected with doing so—but this might be something that the Society could undertake, either alone or, say, in conjunction with the American Association for State and Local History.

BELDEN MENKUS  
*Bergenfield, N.J.*

## TO THE EDITOR:

On September 30, 1970, according to the *American Archivist* of January, 1971 (page 45), over 300 persons crowded into the Empire Room of the Shoreham Hotel in Washington, D.C., for a session entitled "The Archivist and the New Left." Howard Zinn, professor of government at Boston University, delivered a paper entitled, "The Activist Archivist." The *Archivist* contented itself with a summary.

I did not attend that SAA convention, and would have been none the wiser had not the Boston University *Journal*, Fall 1971 issue, carried a piece drawn from this paper. In it, Professor Zinn termed the Oral History Collection at Columbia "almost a caricature of the biases I have noted," by which he meant biases that "buttress the existing social order and values" of society. "It has long ignored the poor, the obscure, the radicals, the outcasts—it has ignored movements and living events." There was more, all of it defamatory.

The rhetoric has a ring to it, but what of the substance? In the hope that all who were present are devoted readers of the *Archivist*, I would like simply to point out that a host of books like *Poverty and Politics*, by Sidney Baldwin, *The Progressives and the Slums*, by Roy Lubove, *Seedtime of Reform*, by Clarke Chambers, *Seeds of Southern Change*, by Wilma Dykeman and James Stokely, *Harlem: The Making of a Ghetto*, by Gilbert Osofsky, *Rebels Against War*, by Lawrence S. Wittner, *The Socialist Party of America*, by David A. Shannon, *American Communism in Crisis*, by Joseph R. Starobin, *Cry From the Cotton*, by Donald Grubb, *From Race Riot to Sit-In*, by Arthur Waskow, all acknowledge use of primary source materials in the Oral History Collection. The very titles give the lie to this charge. So does a wealth of material that has yet to be put to use.

Ah, yes, and there is even *La Guardia in Congress*, by Howard Zinn.

LOUIS M. STARR  
Columbia University