

"June 1, 1976," by Saul Schniderman, Guild President

On June 1, 1976 the Library of Congress Professional Guild, Local 2910 was chartered by AFSCME, AFL-CIO. The charter hangs in the Guild Office, signed by then AFSCME President Jerry Wurf and Secretary-Treasurer William Lucy.

Happy Anniversary to the Guild! And to our loyal members - past and present - who participated in our many victories I thank you on behalf of our officers, executive board members and stewards.

In honor of the Guild's 36th anniversary, I would like to share with you portions of a document from the "Guild History" file: "The Professionals: A Profile of the Library of Congress Professional Guild, AFSCME Local 2910." Written in the 1970s this unsigned essay gives insight into the reasons why employees founded the Guild and what they hoped to accomplish. I believe it may be as relevant today as it was when it was written, more than 30 years ago:

### **What is the Guild?**

**Simply, the Guild is a professional union. It is run by and for the professional employees of the Library of Congress. The officers and activists of the Guild are library employees -- they receive no recompense from AFSCME. Their time and effort are volunteered to help improve working conditions of all professionals.**

**The Guild is affiliated with the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME International), a labor organization headquartered in Washington, DC Although we are affiliated with a national union we allow no interference from them in our local affairs. We have almost total local autonomy -- that is what makes AFSCME one of the most dynamic labor organizations in the country. We call upon "the International" for legal advice, training, publicity and other services which we pay for with our dues.**

### **The Goals of the Guild**

**Those of us who are active in the Guild think that we can do better than just making the lives of LC professionals bearable. We are conceited enough to think that we can make coming to work professionally and personally rewarding. We are trying to create a democratic work place in which the creative powers of professionals may be fully exercised and in which the highest professional standards can be achieved. We also hope to create an atmosphere in which**

**employees participate in decisions which affect their work lives and Library affairs.**

**To accomplish these goals, we are trying to humanize the administration of the Library of Congress -- to force the Library to treat us as intelligent, rational human beings who care deeply about the institution in which we work. We do not wish to be treated as robots or interchangeable parts in the Library's production line.**

**Professionals have good ideas about running the Library, and we intend to guarantee that the Library listen to them. Together we can make our voices heard. Alone we get stuck in the bureaucratic quagmire.**

### **Think about the Professional Guild**

**Take a look at us and our leadership. We are not radicals. We are reformers and even rebels. Don't kid yourself. We all need the boat rockers of society. They lead the charge for everyone in the long, uphill battles to guarantee fairness to all employees. Isn't there a little rebel in you too? Give a damn -- Join the Guild!**