



Introduction

H. C. CAMPBELL

IMMEDIATELY AFTER WORLD WAR II the need for a fresh look at the planning of national and international bibliographic and documentation activities became apparent to librarians and research workers in many countries. The first impact of the new electronic communication and data processing methods and machines began to have an effect on traditional library methods and practices and the new information technology was launched. The general result of this, at least in the United States of America, the U.S.S.R., France, Germany, Italy and Great Britain, was to stimulate the growing concern of scientists and techologists for mechanization and automation of many of the traditional functions of the larger national, public and special libraries. This realization of the need for change provided an impetus for the development of mechanized means of indexing, abstracting, and communicating the vastly greater amounts of knowledge required by scientists, research workers, managers, and all others engaged in the use of information.

Coupled with this interest in applying new methods to national systems of libraries and information services, was the growing research programs established in the U.S.S.R., the U.S.A., Great Britain and Germany in the field of information handling itself.

From the historic days of the UNESCO-Library of Congress Survey of Bibliographical Services of 1948 to 1969, there has been a lapse of over two decades. In this time over fifty new national states have been created, each one concerned with establishing national documentation and information services to meet the needs of national writers, thinkers, scientists and educators. In 1969 it would appear useful to try to describe the trends now taking place in some of the major countries of the world in the organization and rationalization of national documentation and information services.

Particularly important is the task of recognizing the role of the

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emerging documentation and information services as distinct from the role of established libraries and information centers. How are these new services different, if they are different? A particularly important question is that of planning new national information networks as distinct from isolated single services. How are these to be established—on a national, regional or international basis?

Central to this is the whole question of economic and social development and the criteria for planning decentralized and regional documentation and information services, particularly in countries with large land areas, such as India, Brazil, and the U.S.S.R., where there are also large concentrations of population. The problems of such vast population areas as India and Latin America are instructive. The description of the attempt in India to keep pace with the development of scientific discovery and to adapt it for local use has been admirably documented by B. S. Kesavan. Abner Vicentini has done the same for the case of the Latin American countries.

A particularly dramatic case of a densely populated country's efforts in the area of documentation and information services is exemplified by Japan. Far more than is commonly supposed, the bulk of Japan's own industrial and agricultural production goes into satisfying its domestic needs. Japanese exports in 1967 amounted to only about 10 percent of its gross national product, as compared with 15 percent for Great Britain and 32 per cent for the Netherlands. Yet Japan has emerged as the world's second largest producer of automobiles and in 1968 became the world's third largest industrial power, edging out West Germany.

Japan invests annually some 30 percent of its G.N.P. in industrial production as compared with 17 percent in the U.S.A. and around 20 percent in Western Europe. Along with this goes the investment in information needed by management to organize such gigantic changeovers as a completely new national steel industry and the largest shipbuilding industry in the world. In his article on Japan, Yutaka Kobayashi has highlighted the developments which the Council of Science and Technology in Japan is attempting to carry out in the next few years. He has also emphasized the role which the computer has played in establishing Japan in the forefront of the information innovators of the twentieth century.

The description of South Africa by D. G. Kingwill brings home the advantages which a country with a small homogeneous population can enjoy, but points out the stratification and separation of

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specialized services which must take place to meet the needs of separate categories of users.

These articles all emphasize that in dealing with developments and trends in bibliographic and documentation services one is more than anything else dealing with the organization of people, their work habits, their social aspirations, their goals and objectives and the interaction which comes about with peoples in other countries. While it would have been interesting to have heard of developments in Pakistan and Turkey, in Yugoslavia, Spain, and Portugal, it can be seen that such countries which are struggling to raise their economic levels all have to make very important decisions as to the way in which their information and documentation services will meet general needs or will be restricted to serve the needs of particular classes of users.

Nowhere better than in the description by Bjorn Tell of developments in the countries of Scandinavia is it possible to glimpse the fruits of successful cooperative ventures practiced over many years by people who have developed the ability to work with each other, although separated by differences in national languages and traditions. The various Scandinavian plans which have evolved to meet the needs for the organization of services within Scandinavia and abroad, testify to a great willingness by the peoples of these countries to work together.

A special debt of gratitude is owed to Herbert Coblenz for the preparation of the article on Great Britain, to Joseph Becker for his views on developing information networks in the U.S.A., and to Günther Reichardt for an analysis of the U.S.S.R. and the Comecon countries. This latter analysis was prepared by Dr. Reichardt following the news that the 34th Congress of the FID and World Documentation Conference in Moscow, scheduled to be held in September 1968, had been postponed and the material prepared for the Congress, which would have found its way into this issue of *Library Trends*, did not materialize. It is to be hoped that in the very near future the regularization of contacts within the International Federation for Documentation will make it possible to resume the annual meetings which have been a regular and notable feature of this organization since before World War I.

No explanation need be offered concerning the brief review of national planning for Canadian science and social science information systems. This material was included at the suggestion of a number

of persons who have followed the current developments in Canada, where a good deal of activity in this area has been going on for several years. The results of the inquiry launched by the Science Council in 1967 under the auspices of the Science Secretariat, Ottawa, will be available in 1969 and will provide details of the national scheme being contemplated.

Special mention should be made of the article contributed by F. A. Sviridov, which touches on the problems associated with international organizations in the field of documentation and bibliography. A whole issue of *Trends* could be devoted to the problems and achievements of the more than fifty international agencies which specialize today in various aspects of international documentation and bibliographical activities.

If it is true that the national organizations which have been created to collect, analyse and make available knowledge through libraries, information systems, publishers, government agencies, and related bodies are complex and composed of many parts, then this is even more true of the international agencies which have taken up this task. The national services involve many segments of daily life and affect many persons. In the case of international agencies there are even more people involved, scattered over wide geographical distances. Just as national organizations concerned with information exchange must contain a dynamic structure which facilitates the interaction of participants, and insures that users are served with the most recent information, so the international agencies must continue to struggle to achieve this dynamic quality without which they cannot survive, and through lack of which they will become fossilized creatures, carrying out rudimentary functions of little concern to most of the world's citizens.

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