President's Annual Report to the 67th IFLA Conference in Boston

Christine Deschamps

Christine Deschamps held management positions at several university libraries in Paris and at the French ministry of education, before she was elected President of IFLA in 1997. In 2001 she was returned unopposed for an additional term as IFLA President until 2003.

Dr Melville Dewey, nous voilà - here we are…

The health of an Association can be seen above all in the number of its members and the active part they play in its affairs. On this point, I think we have no reason to

worry. When I became President of IFLA, we had around 1450 members (and I would like to remind you that a large association like the ALA which itself has 65,000 members is only one IFLA member), whereas we now have more than 1775 from over 150 countries. Similarly, the best annual conferences welcomed around 2500 participants, while we expect the final figures to be well in excess of 3000. There is no need to labour the point; the figures speak for themselves. IFLA is developing well and perhaps thanks to the important decisions made or implemented over the course of the year.

This has been indeed a year of great change. After the adoption of the new Statutes, we still had many things to do: hold the first elections by postal voting, invent procedures, implement the new structures, find a new annual timetable for meetings, establish new relationships between the elected members, etc. … All that, of course, had to be

done to a very tight timetable, since the elections had to be held not later than a specified time before the Conference, since in order to form the new Professional Committee we needed the results of the Section elections, and since we could not set up the new Governing Board until the chair of the Professional Committee had been elected … And then, how could we hold meetings of the Governing Board without forcing members to fund an extra trip to The Hague in the (Northern) autumn? We have to confront these simple yet unavoidable questions, at this time of comprehensive renewal.

I am pleased to be able to tell you today that the number of votes cast in the elections by postal ballot was particularly high. When one thinks that, until now, some countries were prevented from taking part owing to their inability to pay the cost of travel and registration at the Conference, even for a single representative, it becomes clear that this ballot will be by far the one that best reflects the whole community of IFLA members. We are delighted with this huge step forward for democracy within IFLA.

Still on this theme, the great reduction in membership fees for associations and institutions in the Least Developed Countries as designated by the United Nations, and the introduction of a special introductory low membership fee for students of librarianship, demonstrate yet again our resolve to make it possible for libraries and librarians in any country to join IFLA.

It is hardly necessary to repeat that we receive assistance, for the less developed countries, from such varied institutions as the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA), the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), the Soros Foundation, the Gates Foundation, the French Committee for

IFLA, the Royal Library in Stockholm, and many others. So it is that this year, for the first time, the joint IFLA/OCLC training programme was held in Dublin (Ohio, USA), bringing together librarians from Turkey, Malaysia, India and South Africa; and next year, thanks to the support of the American Library Association, UNESCO, and of course thanks to even more support from OCLC, a new group including three more participants will be able to benefit from this programme.

I think that, now we have taken all these steps, visited all our regional centres around the world, listened attentively to the wishes of our Division of Regional Activities (Division 8), and set up several programmes with UNESCO (whose constant support I acknowledge here), nobody will doubt the firm - even fierce - resolve of IFLA to help the less developed countries, to bring them into the world library community, and to support their development in this field.

All this, however, must be done in financial conditions which are occasionally very difficult, as can be seen in the situation of our Core Activities.

Our Core Activities were created in the period from the mid-1970s to the mid-1980s, with the addition in 1997 of the Free Access to Information and Freedom of Expression (FAIFE) and Copyright and other Legal Matters (CLM) Committees. At the time, a reserve fund was created to finance these activities, with the help of contributions from libraries (mainly national libraries) which chose either to host or to finance these programmes - and sometimes to do both, in the case of the most generous libraries. Unfortunately the flow of contributions to this reserve fund has gradually dried up, and the fund is today exhausted. Our Treasurer, Derek Law, had already sounded the alarm about this in 1997. Our first reaction was to circulate information about this widely and in particular to CDNL (Conference of Directors of National Libraries). We

also immediately informed the Directors of the Core Activities about the crisis in which we found ourselves.

Naturally, the first reactions were very mixed: some people refused to believe that IFLA had no more money, seeing us no doubt as a banker with deep pockets… Others took it personally and subjectively, believing that the information we put out was a direct or veiled criticism of their activities. When individuals feel threatened, they generally react violently. We were therefore obliged to state clearly just how much the library community within and outside IFLA appreciated and recognized the quality of the work that had been done. Objectives were certainly achieved and occasionally exceeded, the entire library community benefited from this and continues to do so. Everyone here today should be quite clear on this point: we are trying to change the mode of operation of the Core Activities not because their results are disappointing or inappropriate, not because the staff of these programmes failed to achieve the objectives they had set themselves, but solely for financial reasons.

Where can we find the money? And if we can't, what shall we do? I would like first of all to explain to you what we have already done.

We have talked with each host institution about the nature of its commitment to our Core Programmes, and the timeframe it envisages. We have declared ourselves willing to consider any change to the current system if it would allow us to make progress on the professional issues. For example, we proposed to funding bodies that they could earmark their contributions for certain purposes. We have looked for sponsorship, we have written to all IFLA members. But it must be understood that we need support over the long term: it is not effective for a library generously to make a one-off gesture of support if the offer is not repeated in subsequent years. These activities must now be governed by fixed-term contracts, prob-

ably of three years' duration. So we are appealing for support from all of you, so that your efforts will really bear fruit.

Otherwise…

Otherwise, we will be forced to close down some activities. That sounds rather tragic, but in the interests of IFLA, I refuse to be known as the President who let our Federation go into deficit. That would be really heart-breaking, believe me, and we are also well aware that it would deprive some of you, no doubt the least well-resourced, of products and services that are very useful to you. But we have no alternative, and we cannot conjure up miracles. Miracles can only come from the efforts of all of us. Perhaps we will be able to find a compromise solution by keeping a part of our activities; but in that case we will have to make a choice. And there again, I am counting on the support of our professional bodies to advise the new Governing Board and help us retain the most important Core Activities.

As you can see, the situation is extremely delicate. We did not want to conceal anything from you, and we are ready to consider any reasonable solution. So far nothing is irreparably 'broken' for 2002, but we must together seek a solution very quickly. I would just like to thank here and now the people who have worked so hard on these projects (in alphabetical order, not in order of preference!): ALP (Advancement of Librarianship), PAC (Preservation and Conservation), UAP (Universal Availability of Publications), UBCIM (Universal Bibliographic Control and International MARC) and UDT Universal Dataflow and Telecommunications) on the one hand, and CLM and FAIFE on the other. It is precisely the quality of their achievements which makes our choices so difficult…

Within the Core Programme for UDT we have the problem of maintaining our website, which is absolutely crucial to our operations; and which the National Library of

Canada can no longer host. Here I would like to take the opportunity to thank publicly the National Library of Canada and the staff concerned, including Leigh Swain and Gary Cleveland for the way they have developed IFLANET into an essential and integral part of IFLA.

The Governing Board will later this week be considering proposals from at least two organizations willing to take over as the host of IFLANET. We hope to be able to make an announcement shortly. Meanwhile, we have taken the opportunity of strengthening our role in this area at IFLA Headquarters by appointing Sophie Felföldi, whom many of you know as our Office Manager, as IT/Web Manager. We are also in talks with a number of institutions interested in the other aspects of the UDT Core Activity.

Next I would like to mention two actions, among others, which illustrate quite well the role and importance of IFLA in contemporary political and economic life.

In February, our Secretary General went to Kosovo on a mission jointly organized by UNESCO, the FAIFE Committee and IFLA, to investigate the conditions for reconstruction and restoration of the Kosovar libraries which had been so brutally destroyed. For me, that is highly symbolic, as it clearly shows that libraries play an obvious role in the economic and social life of a country, that their destruction is a drama for the population, and that the reconstruction of libraries after a war (civil or not) is not a luxury that can wait. It is a priority for the reconstruction of the social fabric of a country, its identity, and to aid its economic recovery. Even in the relatively recent past, we would have been told: "hospitals, schools, roads, housing, industries, railways, agreed: those are real priorities. But libraries…"

But now suddenly we are part of these priorities. I think that that event was a red-letter day for us: or - as we say in French - an event to be marked 'with a white stone', in this case surely the foundation stone of reconstruction. …

Still in the area of high symbolism, IFLA was also, and from the start, associated with the work of the G8 group on the digital divide. This group, also known as 'DOT Force', represents the countries which also make up the G8 (the eight richest countries), which, after their meeting in Okinawa, published a Charter setting out their action programme. 'DOT Force' is working on economic development through culture and education. At its very first meeting, its members discovered (in the case of some) or reaffirmed (in the case of others) the importance of the role of libraries. This was later repeated very strikingly by one of its members who, during a subsequent meeting at UNESCO, compared information to medicine:

> Information and medicines, which are all equally necessary basic products, may be sold (according to prevailing economic and market conditions) to those who have the means to pay for them, but they can and should be available free to the least well off: an example is the now recognized principle of providing generic medicines free to certain countries.

In addition, for 'DOT Force', the libraries which exist in the less developed countries must constitute the support network for access to the Internet, to information and to training. The buildings are there, the staff are there, the telephone lines are there in some cases, so why build everything from scratch elsewhere at vast expense?

Thus, right from the start, libraries are identified as an example, a vector and a means of ensuring equal opportunities throughout the world. I think I can say that we are all extremely pleased with this development.

Finally, as every year, I would like to give you some news about my visits and about the staff at IFLA Headquarters.

Since the last Conference, I have visited the libraries of Granada and Seville in Spain, at the invitation of the University of Granada, of the Federación Española de Sociedades de Archivística, Biblioteconomía, Documentación y Museística (FESABID) and of the Library Association of Andalucia. A fascinating visit to enchanting places, of which I have vivid memories due also to the riches of the region's libraries. In particular, I was able to admire there the first map representing the newly-discovered American continent, as well as the letter in which Christopher Columbus announced his discovery to the Queen of Spain. These documents are all the more moving to us here in the America of today because its outline then was so dimly perceived…

I also visited Brazil, our Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, but also the libraries of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, after taking part in the Conference of the Brazilian Library Associations in Porto Alegre in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, world famous since then but for other reasons. The astonishing Brazilian phenomenon of so many library associations meeting with the library authorities of regional councils and library trade unions really gives food for thought. But I was received with generous hospitality by colleagues who had never seen an IFLA President attend one of their conferences. With the IFLA Conference in Buenos Aires in 2004, let us hope that many of us will also be able to discover the libraries of Brazil.

Immediately afterward, and with fine disregard for the effects of jet-lag, I went to visit libraries in South Africa, at the invitation of LIASA, the new Library and Information Association of South Africa born of the merger of the old professional associations. South Africa is a country which must overcome all manner of problems, as you can imagine, but which is accepting this challenge with ardour and determination. I have seen universities where black and white students and teachers rub shoulders, ministries

where the primary aim is to achieve equality. … I also visited much less fortunate public libraries in townships, particularly in Soweto, which revealed the starting point from which development had begun. The starting point was a country where the young people of these townships enrol in university correspondence courses because there is no public transport to get to the campus, and who must study in the little local public library because at home they have neither electricity nor tables nor chairs. … Without these libraries, they would have no hope of improving their situation by such distance education courses.

But do not think that I visited only developing countries. I was fortunate in being able to take part also in conferences in Canada (on professional education), in Lebanon (on issues concerning the intergovernmental movement for French language and culture), and even in Paris (on science publishing, in a conference organized by ICSU and UNESCO). I also had the pleasure to visit two cities due to host our Conference: Boston and also Berlin.

I would like to end by giving you some news about the staff at IFLA Headquarters. Our Secretary General, whose difficult tasks are so many and varied, is managing to hold up splendidly under the strain, all things considered, and he was therefore even able to go and collect his reward in the form of the insignia of the Order of the British Empire awarded to him by Her Majesty the Queen - a well-deserved recognition which brings honour to us all.

But I have much sadder news to tell you about our Executive Officer, Ms Carol Henry. Some of you already know that she is extremely ill, and that we are not sure that she will be able to return to her work with us. No doubt she has given too much of herself to IFLA, over many years, and she is completely exhausted. We greatly miss her energy, her humour, her kindness, and her knowledge of the history of IFLA. I am sure that you will join with me in sending her our very best wishes for better health. It is therefore Josche Neven who, in cooperation with other headquarters staff, has taken over much of Carol's role in the preparations for this conference. Congratulations and thanks are due to Josche!

Also I have already mentioned, other tasks now await Sophie Felföldi: she has been appointed moderator of our web site. We must also say "thank you" and "good luck" to Sophie. In addition, we now have a new recruit: Magda Bouwens, of the former FID team, has joined our ranks. "Welcome on board!"

Finally, our other faithful staff are still there: Sjoerd Koopman, Jos de Block, Kelly Moore, Karin Passchier and Dini Verschoor. Their efforts are - more than ever - of decisive importance in this year of new directions for IFLA.

In conclusion, let me say that we will adopt a new way of working from now on, with a new President-Elect, with a Governing Board larger than the old Executive Board, and with more frequent meetings of the Executive Committee which will shortly be set up.

More than ever, and in all occasions, IFLA represents the world's libraries, and defends their status and their role. This new millennium has certainly got off to a good start. …
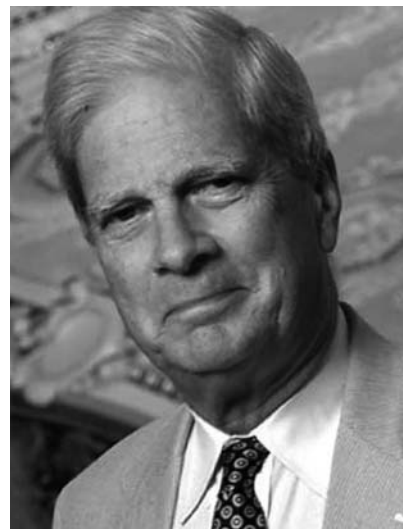
Humanizing the Information Revolution

James H. Billington

James Hadley Billington was sworn in as the Librarian of Congress on September 14, 1987. He is the thirteenth person to hold the position since the Library was established in 1800. Born in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, on June 1, 1929, Dr. Billington was educated in the public schools of the Philadelphia area. He was class valedictorian at both Lower Merion High School and Princeton University, where he graduated with highest honors in 1950. Three years later, he earned his doctorate from Oxford University, where he was a Rhodes Scholar at Balliol College. Following service with the US Army and in the Office of National Estimates, he taught history at Harvard University from 1957 to 1962 and subsequently at Princeton University, where he was a professor of history from 1964 to 1974. From 1973 to 1987, Dr. Billington was director of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. As director, he founded the Kennan Institute for Advanced Russian Studies at the Center and seven other new programs as well as the *Wilson Quarterly*. Dr. Billington is the author of several books on Russia, including *The Face of Russia* (1998), the companion book to the three-part television series of the same name, which he wrote and narrated for the Public Broadcasting Service. He has accompanied nine congressional delegations to Russia and the former Soviet Union. In June 1988 he accompanied President and Mrs. Reagan to the Soviet Summit in Moscow. In May 1999 he became chairman of the Russian Leadership Program (RLP), a non-partisan initiative of the US Congress that has brought nearly 4,000 emerging young Russian political leaders to local communities throughout America. Dr. Billington has received numerous honorary degrees and other academic awards. He is an elected member of the Russian Academy of Sciences and has been decorated as Chevalier and again as a Commander of the Order of Arts and Letters of France, presented with a Knight Commander's Cross of the Order of Merit by the Federal Republic of Germany, and awarded the Gwanghwa Medal by the Republic of Korea. He may be contacted through the Public Affairs Office, Library of Congress, 101 Independence Avenue SE, Washington DC 20540-1610, USA. Tel. +1 (202) 707-2905. Fax: +1 (202) 707-9199. E-mail pao@loc.gov.

If a school is a kind of gymnasium for the mind, a library is what the Greeks called Alexandria, a hospital for the soul. However large or small, a library gathers in fra-

ments of what people have known or imagined and gives to others not only a little more knowledge but also a little more wholeness. Transfusions of words make connections with collections; and those who have gone before us help us cope with what is to come.

The heart is reading. The vessel is the book. The heartbeat began with man's search for salvation - the Vedas, the Sutras, the Torah, the Koran. The thirst grew not just for preservation but for circulation of stories that gave meaning to life and coherence to communities.

Compendia of written knowledge are of ancient lineage. Paper, woodblock printing, even movable type originated in the Orient. But the great breakthrough in creating the book, as we know it today almost everywhere in the world, was the replacement of the scroll by the codex in the 4th century AD in the Eastern Mediterranean. For the first time pages were created, codified, and bound like a modern book; and a reader could move around easily in a text, guided by an index, and was able to compare

sources that made correlations possible and raised ever-new questions. Whereas a scroll could contain only about 1,000 lines, a codex could produce a single artifact large enough to contain the entire Old and New Testaments. Thus was Christianity codified into a Bible that still today is the central element in the faith of the two billion adherents of the largest, if most fractious, of the world's religions.

A distinctive new civilization developed in the European peninsula of the Eurasian land mass in the course of the millennium that followed. In Western Europe, where the Roman Empire collapsed, culture was preserved and defined less by power than by those Christian codexes - handwritten on animal skin in liturgical Latin and preserved in monasteries. Institutions called universities grew up after the recovery of pre-Christian classical learning in 12th-century Spain - mediated by Muslims and Jews as well as Christians, though the Muslims were often seen as an external enemy and Jews as an internal enemy of Europe as it moved to modernity.

Then came Gutenberg and the modern book - composed in vernacular languages, printed on paper by a press with movable type in large editions, reaching ever more people with increasingly secular content - and creating in the North American extensions of the North European Protestant Reformation and Enlightenment - the first and only world civilization created solely in the age of print. That the United States of America, the newest of all world civilizations, has been held together for more than two centuries by the world's oldest continuously functioning written constitution is in no small measure because its framers were themselves framed by books. Both the first meeting of the Continental Congress in 1774 and the first meeting of the Congress under our new constitution in 1790 physically took place in libraries - in Philadelphia and New York respectively; and the first committee involving both houses of Congress in the new cap-

ital of Washington, D.C., was the Joint Committee on the Library of Congress, founded in 1802.

Self-government became self-correctable and federal officials accountable largely thanks to the First Amendment guarantees and through Congress's free use from the beginning of the Postal Service formed in 1792 to give constituents free information on the activity of their government. Slowly - but not without sustained and unconscionable injustices to Native and African Americans - the United States grew from a republic into a more inclusive democracy. This evolution was driven inexorably, if at times subconsciously, by the realization that the dynamism of a continent-wide free society drawn from many strains depended on more people having access to more knowledge to be used in more ways. The quintessential expression of this ideal is our amazing public library system - for which we must specially thank Justin Morrill in the Congress, Andrew Carnegie in the private sector, and above all thousands of dedicated librarians throughout America whom one of my predecessors, Archibald McLeish, called our 'sentinels of liberty.' It is appropriate here to pay special tribute to another of my New England predecessors, Herbert Putnam, who came to the Library of Congress from the Boston Public Library, which hosted us all so graciously last night.

American libraries share with American society a tradition of adding without subtracting. New immigrants to America do not evict old inhabitants; and they do not reject, but rather renew old institutions. In like manner, new books do not generally replace old ones in libraries. Books that succeed and often contradict each other sit peacefully next to each other on the shelves, just as readers who disagree work peacefully next to one another in the reading rooms.

But the basic challenge now facing American libraries - and American society more generally today - is whether adding electronics means

subtracting books, and losing in the process the values of the book culture that made democracy and the responsible use of freedom possible in the first place. We are, in short, faced with the greatest upheaval in the transmission of knowledge since the invention of the printing press: the electronic onslaught of multimedial, digital communication. It bypasses the traditional limits of time and space and raises the haunting question of whether libraries - those historic houses of refuge for reading, those temples of pluralism and seedbeds of humanism - can continue to serve as hospitals for the soul in a medium that so far basically markets commodities for the body?

To use the language of cyberspeak: Is this post-Gutenberg world that is becoming hominized (that is to say brought under the control of an individual with a keyboard and screen) also becoming dehumanized (no longer serving worthy human ends)? Is communication replacing community? Are the new digital enhancements deepening social inequality by disproportionately favoring those who already have money and education to use them? And above all, is virtual reality displacing real virtue?

Public libraries, by their nature, have constructive answers to all these questions; and American libraries have already prepared themselves by bringing the new electronics more seamlessly and systematically into their traditional services than have many other public institutions.

Let me briefly describe how the Library of Congress has been working for more than a decade now to help meet these challenges and perform its traditional historic functions of acquiring, preserving, processing, and making accessible materials in the new digital age.

The Library of Congress assumed the broad functions of a true national library in the late 19th and early 20th century, when it acquired the mint record of American creativity through Copyright deposit, gath-

ered in most papers of presidents up to Hoover, collected unparalleled records of Native and African American culture, assumed most of the burden of cataloging for the library system as a whole, and produced free materials nationwide for the blind and physically handicapped.

Now the basic direction of where to go beyond electronic cataloging in producing services for the digital age for the Library of Congress emerged from a series of 12 forums that we coordinated with thousands of librarians all over the country in 1988. From these came the idea for the American Memory pilot project with CD-ROMS in 44 schools and libraries across the country in the early 1990s. Then, of course, came the explosion of the Internet, and American Memory was amplified in the late 1990s into a National Digital Library, which, by the end of 2000, as our generous introducer has mentioned, had put seven million items of American history and culture on-line. Just as the Library had traditionally lent other American libraries books through interlibrary loans free of charge, we were now providing digitized versions of our massive - and often one-of-a-kind - special collections free of charge to libraries everywhere.

We used part of the private money that largely funded this program to subsidize adding unique American historical materials from 37 other institutions, libraries, and repositories from all over America to this American Memory Website. We were trying to bring one-of-a-kind primary materials of broad interest and importance from special collections, which only a few had had access to and only in a special place, out to a broader audience but at the same time into the world of books, since American Memory was designed as an archival transfer and bridge to other libraries. We are trying to help bridge the resource gap between major repositories and local libraries; to blend old material into the new technology; and to provide memory for an inherently ephemeral medium that is forever

updating information and erasing previous drafts.

What was new for the Library of Congress was the assumption of a broad and nationwide educational function in an institution previously focused on serving the Congress, the government, the scholarly community, and the broader public mainly as a library of last resort.

American libraries have always served as local centers of lifelong learning. So a more active role for the national library was fully in keeping with the growing bipartisan recognition in political Washington that better education is essential for dealing with almost all our national and international problems. By raising large amounts of private, philanthropic money for the first time in the Library's history, we were able to sustain the historical American library tradition of providing to the public even this expensive new type of material free of charge.

As technological change accelerated and the educational crisis deepened in the 1990s, it has become clear that there are three separate, sequential needs each of which has to be met if American libraries are to sustain their historic function of transmitting inert stored knowledge democratically to a broad and diverse population.

First is the need to place on the Web educational content that is easily accessible, of dependable quality, and free of charge for everyone.

Second is the need to provide the hardware and software that can deliver this positive content to public institutions like libraries and schools where everyone can access them freely in local communities everywhere.

Third is the need for human mediators within those public institutions who can serve the special needs of a community and help integrate the new online knowledge with the older wisdom in books.

Only the second and the most impersonal of these needs has begun to be met. Both public and private funders in America have been relatively generous in equipping public schools and libraries with the hardware and software for new educational efforts. But the humanizing first and third stages that would provide free humanistic content at one end and humane guidance in its use at the other have yet to be seriously subsidized in America.

The Library of Congress has in recent years been trying to address precisely these two areas of national need with additional new programs that reach beyond our original National Digital Library Program.

For the first stage of generating positive free content, Congress, led by Senator Stevens of Alaska, has begun to extend our national program to a global one by providing funds for a project in which the Library of Congress is collaborating with the national libraries of Russia and with other repositories in both countries. We have already digitized and put online nearly 100,000 primary documents that illustrate our parallel experience of these two former adversaries as continent-wide frontier societies, adding bilingual text from our curators. We have started another such project with Spain, and are in advanced discussions with two others. Our collaborative multinational projects are becoming more widely accessible through the electronic gateway of the Bibliotheca Universalis. Representatives from the G7 and six other European countries are coordinating their policies for digitizing primary documents. All thirteen participants have already contributed content for this Website; and all this should eventually feed into a global online library and network.

We are increasingly conscious of the need to help a wider range of people not merely get access to, but creatively use and grow through the materials we are digitizing. In 1996, we introduced the Learning

Page, an interactive Website that helps teachers integrate digital content from the Library of Congress with common curriculum topics. Last year, we introduced americaslibrary.gov an interactive and child-friendly educational Website to promote intergenerational reading and storytelling. This prize-winning site logged 100 million hits in its first year, though it has only a small range of images. It is being supported by the first-ever nationwide public service campaign conducted by the Advertising Council on behalf of a library program.

In addition to providing humanizing content at one end of the electronic delivery system, the Library has also been trying in a small way to help develop human mediators at the other end.

A recent Markle Foundation study highlights the need for a trustworthy public face to mediate the Internet, a real person to go to with problems. For years now, we have been conducting summer institutes for local librarians and teachers with expertise for integrating the new electronic materials with the old books. But ours is only a small stream feeding into an enormous and ever-expanding ocean. The imaginative, recent call of the Digital Promise report by Newt Minow and Larry Grossman could open up new possibilities for this massive national training need if money could be obtained from the forthcoming sales of licenses for the electromagnetic airway spectrum.

Something, in any event, will have to be done to equip fully our libraries with knowledge navigators conversant with both the new technology and the old books. And children within schools must have better access to libraries, to books, and to knowledge navigators than they now have. There is presently only about one school librarian for every thousand schoolchildren nationwide.

Our great repositories can do much by sharing online more of their rarely seen but appealingly human multimedial and manuscript trea-

sures - and also by inviting more librarians and teachers from their localities into their institutions for substantive visits. Those who work in the educational trenches can become stimulated and inspired - as our summer institute fellows have been almost without exception - by seeing the originals of the documents being digitized and talking with their curators.

The manuscript material now available online free from the Library of Congress has direct human interest (Jefferson's working draft of the Declaration of Independence, with all the corrections, you can see their minds at work; the diaries of Teddy Roosevelt and George Patton; Lincoln's handwritten speeches; the letters of Susan B. Anthony and Frederick Douglass). The rich multimedial materials that we now have online (like Brady's Civil War photographs; early Edison movies; panoramic, block-by-block aerial images of American cities in the 19th century) appeal to an audiovisually active generation - and, at the same time, raise questions that can only be really answered by going back to reading in books.

The role of the librarian has become more, rather than less, important: to help learners of all ages make connections between print and electronic materials, and to help navigate through the sea of illiterate chatter, undependable infotainment and gratuitous sex and violence that is proliferating and that many say is the only real profit-making on the Internet. The Internet tends to feed upon itself rather than independently validate the material it transmits. You may have seen the lines making the rounds of library e-mail: 'A Zen librarian searched for 'nothing' on the Internet and received 28 million hits.'

The Library of Congress is trying to help develop librarianship for the new era through a variety of programs that, like the Internet itself, are inherently cooperative and networked activities. I am glad to be speaking with all of you. We will

all have to be working much more interactively together.

Our Collaborative Digital Reference Services now available worldwide 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The first question asked on it a year ago came from a Londoner seeking information on Byzantine cooking. It was routed through a Library of Congress file server and answered in a few hours by a librarian in Santa Monica, California.

We have two programs that have begun to put tables of contents on the Web - throwing open the door to those who browse the Internet for information as well as those who use our online public access catalog. One program is an enhancement of the Library's Electronic Cataloging in Publication Program. We now enter some tables of contents directly from the electronic galleys into the online bibliographic record without having to rekey the data. A second program scans and provides the tables from already printed publications - encouraging catalogers and reference librarians to decide which are most broadly important.

We have also set up a project to link Library of Congress catalog records with the full-text electronic versions of many social service monographic series of the working paper type, such as those of the National Bureau of Economic Research.

A fourth new program will provide full online information about new books (including jacket blurbs, summary, sample text, and author information), and it will be discussed later today in the Open Forum of the Section on Bibliography by John Celli, Chief of our Cataloging in Publication Program.

Finally, the Library of Congress has initiated a project to identify those international Web resources that are of most value to researchers and scholars. When completed, the project will produce an international homepage with pointers to reliable online resources for all of the nations of the world. By mid-Sep-

tember, portals for 20 countries will be available to users worldwide.

By far the most difficult new challenge looming for librarianship will be preserving and providing access to 'born-digital' materials, that swelling mass of material that appears only in electronic form. We have defined our task at the Library of Congress in recent years as 'getting the champagne out of the bottle.' But here the problem of capturing bubbles is another matter. Digital material and the technology to use it are constantly changing and evanescent. The average life of a Website is only about 75 days, and a growing body of important material has already been lost forever.

Election 2000 is our first large-scale collection of data-searchable Websites to be archived and made available on-line. We chose the subject long before the election became so historic. It was conceived by the Library's specialists and developed in cooperation with the Internet Archive and Compaq Computer. It collected copies of more than 1,000 election-related Websites, gathering some 2 million megabytes between August 1, 2000, and January 14, 2001, archiving many times a day-and often hourly - in order to record candidate responses to each other and to demonstrate at the same time the dynamic nature of Internet content.

Last year Congress directed a major special appropriation to the Library of Congress to develop and begin implementing a national plan cooperatively with other governmental and private institutions in order to preserve for future access important born-digital materials.

Congress incidentally deserves great credit for supporting all the work that the Library of Congress is doing to preserve and make accessible the nation's creative heritage and now much of the world's knowledge. Consistently for 201 years, on a bipartisan basis, our national legislature has been the greatest patron of a single library in the history of the world. And, in the last decade generous private

donors have also helped us in many new ways to get the champagne out of the bottle. Nothing, I repeat, nothing, would be possible, however, without our truly dedicated and diversely talented staff, so many of whom you have had a chance to know at these IFLA meetings over the years. The Library of Congress is doing more work with fewer people than ten years ago. The staff, which is doing it all, and they are all, as a body and individually, every bit as great a national treasure as our 121 million-item collection.

Electronic networks must become not just technological pipelines for marketing and infotainment, but a healthy circulatory system that regenerates all parts of the body of humanity. And that will not be possible without the heart, which is still reading, and the main vessel, which is still the book.

We are celebrating this year the 25th anniversary of our Center for the Book, which is linked with 43 state centers. On September 8, the Library will be mounting on Capitol Hill the first-ever National Book Festival. It will be hosted by Laura Bush, and I hope many of you will come for the wide variety of all-day, open-air activities that will be available.

Without books, the Internet risks becoming a game without a story - the game of mergers, speculations, increasingly violent video games, a surfing game on the surface of life, motion without memory - one of the clinical definitions of insanity.

The United States was built by people who read stories and did not have much time for games. The biblical story was at the core. The first book published in North America was a rhymed version of the Book of Psalms, often sung in its entirety in Puritan worship. It is from sacred stories that written books emerged almost everywhere; and those who forget altogether their own basic stories will have difficulty understanding those of others, as we must in the global age. If we do not listen to other

people whispering their prayers today we may have to meet them tomorrow when they are howling their war cries.

Properly used, the Internet will help scientifically to solve common problems shared by widely dispersed groups in fields like medicine and the environment, and at the same time to share online the primary documents that tell the distinctive stories of different peoples. We may even begin to see the outside world as a series of celebrations rather than just a source of problems.

An old Native American came up to me after a speech I gave at one of those forums I mentioned in Nebraska to librarians of the Great Plains states in which I described librarians as gatekeepers to knowledge in the information age. He told me that, even before the culture of the book came to America, the most experienced member of a tribe preserved the stories that contained the collective memory of its people the way librarians later did. 'We did not call him a gatekeeper,' he gently explained, 'we called him the dreamkeeper.'

One of the most imaginative of the many uses that libraries across the country have been making of our online American Memory materials is to ask students to use them to reconstruct not just the accomplishments, but the dreams of some other people in some other time or place. Electronic technology must be integrated into the world of books - new technology linked with old memories and old values. Above all, there must always be human intermediaries on the spot (teachers, librarians - local dreamkeepers) who can encourage curiosity and direct users back to books as they seek answers to the questions raised by fragmentary electronic materials. No machine can, or should, be a surrogate for direct discourse between people.

Readers enter into a kind of discourse with writers and often find that mute witnesses from the past are often better guides to life than

talking heads in the present. For, alone with a book, the reader's imagination is free to roam. Boundaries are not set by someone else's picture on a television screen; thoughts are not drowned out by someone else's sounds on a boom box.

Last year for our Bicentennial we received the greatest monetary gift in our history from John W. Kluge, who has been chairman of the Library's first national private-sector support group since it was founded a decade ago. With his gift, we are setting up a new, and we hope, catalytic center for advanced study in the human sciences within the Thomas Jefferson Building on Capitol Hill, hoping renew the discourse between thinkers and doers that created America in the first place, bringing more of the life of the mind and spirit into the city of power and politics - a little more Greece, perhaps even a little of Alexandria, into Rome. We will be bringing from all over the world very senior scholars both to range widely in our multiform collections and put things together rather than just take them apart. And we will also be bringing to the center very young scholars who are not yet embarrassed to keep on asking big questions.

Our hope lies in the words of the prophet Joel:

I will pour out my spirit on all mankind . . .

Your old men will dream dreams, Your young men will see visions.

Some of the best analysts of this new digital revolution have suggested that only artists can predict what the future will bring. So I end by quoting one of the great poets: T.S. Eliot's - famous lament, 'Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge? Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?' But even more, in 'Burnt Norton,' Eliot somehow suggests that a mix of blood and electricity might yet redeem the petty materialism of the modern world that he had previously seen only as a wasteland.

The trilling wire in the blood
Sings below inveterate scars
Appeasing long forgotten wars.
The dance along the artery
The circulation of the lymph
Are figured in the drift of stars
Ascend to summer in the tree
We move above the moving tree
In light upon the figured leaf
And hear upon the sodden floor
Below, the boarhound and the boar
Pursue their pattern as before
But reconciled among the stars.

Another poem I like to cite was written by an unknown European priest for a nonexistent Asian audience in the already-dead language of Latin. Somehow these lines suggest to me, that whether any of us, we at the Library of Congress, or others in the global networks of the future, will be able to find the means and willingness to under-

stand other parts of the world and of the human past, we will still be ennobled by the effort.

When the Jesuit order left China after the most deeply scholarly and the most nearly successful effort in history to build a cultural bridge between that ancient eastern culture and the Christian west, they left behind, as their last legacy, a haunting epitaph.

Move on, voyager,
Congratulate the dead,
console the living,
pray for everyone,
wonder, and be silent.

Wonder and silence - easier for dreamkeepers than image makers. A library, even a small one in a home or a public place takes us out of our noisy, hurry up, present-minded lives and into what Keats called the world of 'silence and slow time.'

For whatever the confusion in our minds and the profusion of our electronic information, diverse things do still come together in a book - just as the hemispheres (east and west, north and south) come together in our single, fragile planet, and the left and right halves of the brain in one human mind. And within that mind, as the greatest poet of the English language reminds us at the end of his last play: 'We are' - all of us - 'such stuff as dreams are made on.'

Bibliographic Control or Chaos: An Agenda for National Bibliographic Services in the 21st Century

Michael Gorman

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He is the first editor of the *Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules, second edition* (1978) and of the revision of that work (1988). He is the author of The Concise AACR2 (1989); editor of, and contributor to, *Technical Services Today and Tomorrow, 2nd edition* (1998); and editor of *Convergence* (proceedings of 2nd National LITA Conference), and Californien, both published in 1991. *Future Libraries: Dreams, Madness, and Reality,* co-written with Walt Crawford, was honoured with the 1997 Blackwell's Scholarship Award. His most recent book, published by ALA in 1997, is titled *Our Singular Strengths: Meditations for Librarians.* Mr. Gorman is the author of more than 100 articles in professional and scholarly journals. He has contributed chapters to a number of books and is the author or editor of other books and monographs. He has given numerous presentations at international, national, and state conferences.

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(Biodata and photo reproduced with permission from the website of the Library of Congress's Bicentennial Conference on Bibliographic Control for the New Millennium (15-17 November 2000): http://www.loc.gov/catdir/bibcontrol/. Dean Gorman presented the keynote address, 'From Card Catalogues to Web-PACS: Celebrating Cataloguing in the 20th Century' at this conference.)

The great irony of our present situation is that we have reached near-perfection in bibliographic control of 'traditional' library materials at the same time as the advent

of electronic resources is seen by some as threatening the very existence of library services - including bibliographic control. Before considering the question of 'cataloguing the Web and the Internet', it is salutary to review the great achievements of the past thirty years - in considering where we are going it is necessary to know where we have been. When the ideal of Universal Bibliographic Control (UBC) was first advanced[1] thirty years ago, the international library community was only beginning to discern dimly the possibilities of the interconnection of international standardization and library automation. International standardization was at a very early stage (far closer to an ideal than a reality) and the ideal of each item being catalogued once in its country of origin - the resulting record being made available to the world community - seemed far from practical realization. Records were exchanged between countries (mostly between national libraries), but in the most inefficient manner possible - print on paper - and, since they resulted

from different cataloguing codes and practices, were integrated into catalogues with great difficulty. The choice was between incorporating international records without alteration - something that degraded the catalogue very quickly - or doing such extensive revision (and retyping) that it would have been cheaper and quicker to catalogue the item oneself ab initio. MARC was in its infancy when UBC was proclaimed as an ideal,[2] the International Standard Bibliographic Description (ISBD) was still being drafted,[3] and, despite the Paris Principles,[4] cataloguing rules in different countries lacked a common basis for the assignment and form of access points ('headings') and adhered to different descriptive practices. It was, I believe, the confluence of a need (national and research libraries throughout the world needing less expensive and more current cataloguing) and a means (automation and, more specifically, MARC) that has brought us nearer to UBC than anyone would have dreamed possible thirty years ago.

The idea of a universal bibliography is nearly as old as bibliography itself.[5] The idea of economies in bibliographic control by means of sharing catalogue records between libraries (cooperative cataloguing) or purchasing catalogue records for other (usually national) libraries goes back to, at least, the middle of the 19th century. In fact, the American librarian Charles Coffin Jewett drew up his cataloguing rules[6] specifically for a proposed scheme by which the Smithsonian Institution would produce 'separate, stereotyped titles' to be used in the catalogues of American libraries. In these, and in the hugely successful Library of Congress catalogue card service and the *National Union Catalog* to which it gave rise, we can see bibliographic needs and desires that lacked only an appropriate technology to be met. In hindsight, it is easy to see a trajectory of inevitability that made MARC, the ISBDs, AACR2, and other vehicles of international bibliographic standardization seem more the result of historical forces

than the often faltering and separate steps they were in truth. Each of the three standards I mention had original purposes that were quite different from their eventual impact on international standardization. MARC was brought into being originally to facilitate the creation of LC catalogue cards on demand. The ISBD evolved from the Standard Bibliographic Description drawn up by a committee appointed as a consequence of IFLA's International Conference of Cataloguing Experts (IMCE).[7] The SBD was seen, among other things, as a means of standardizing the *presentation* of descriptive data so that it could be machine-translated into MARC (hence the stylized and individual punctuation). AACR2 was the culmination of decades of effort to bring uniformity to cataloguing practice in the English-speaking world, and, particularly, to reconcile British and North American descriptive cataloguing practices. Each of these three standards metamorphosed and had an impact far beyond the anticipation of all but the most far-sighted. It is instructive to recall how and why each developed and expanded, because we need to understand that the bibliographic world (just like the real world) is full of unintended consequences and the ripples from a stone thrown in one part of the bibliographic pond may eventually cover it all.

The MARC format is, by any standards, an historic achievement. It has been the main force in international standardization from a practical point of view. It is, literally, the engine that has made UBC possible. The journey from the caterpillar of the automation of card production to the beautiful butterfly of today has been long and largely successful. It is worth pointing out, however, that its origins and original purposes (including being a carrier format rather than the way in which bibliographic information is stored and manipulated) have created drawbacks that should be hardly surprising when one considers we are dealing with a 30 year old standard. The structure of MARC is that of the catalogue card, when com-

puter systems call for a different approach. Be that as it may, the fact is that there are tens of millions of MARC records in the world; MARC is accepted and used throughout the world; MARC is the basis for almost all automated bibliographic systems (including commercially produced systems); and, no practically feasible or demonstrably better system has been advocated. It should be unnecessary to point out that MARC is merely a *framework* standard - that is, it is a way of storing and making manipulatable data that has been formulated in accordance with *content* standards (cataloguing codes and the like). I would not trouble to point that out were it not for the frequent references to 'MARC cataloguing' in writings about metadata and 'simplified' cataloguing. There is, of course, no such thing as 'MARC cataloguing' - MARC is the way in which we encode the results of the cataloguing process and has little or no influence on that process.

One of the two documents studied at the IMCE was a comparison of descriptions from cataloguing agencies throughout the world. The document revealed a great commonality of the information found in such descriptions and the order in which that information was presented. It found differences in the abbreviations used and other stylistic matters (mainly due to language differences) but was able to propose a conflation of the descriptions that formed the basis of what became the SBD and later the ISBD. The idea was originally to create a basis for agreement across cataloguing codes on the relatively non-contentious matter of descriptive data. Soon, however, this was supplemented by the idea that universally used distinctive punctuation, clearly identifying the areas and elements of the SBD, would not only aid in the understanding of bibliographic data in unfamiliar languages but could also be used in automatic translation of that data into MARC records. It is no coincidence that the areas and elements of the ISBD correspond exactly to the relevant fields and sub-fields of the MARC format.

In accordance with the theme of stumbling toward standardization, it should be noted that both MARC and the ISBD were developed initially for books and only later generalized into standards for all types of library material.

The second edition of the *Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules (AACR2)* is, in fact, nothing of the sort. It was politically expedient at the time to identify this new code as a revision of the previous *Anglo-American Catalog[u]ing Rules* (1968), but AACR2 is completely different from its predecessors in many important ways. One need only cite the facts that AACR2 is a single text (unlike its predecessors, which came in North American and British versions), is the most complete working out of the ISBD for materials of all kinds, and represents the triumph of Lubetzkyan principles, which the first AACR signally did not. Be that as it may, AACR2 quickly transcended even the historic achievement of being a unitary English-language cataloguing code to become the nearest approach to a world code we have. In the words of the introduction to the Italian translation of AACR2:[8]

> Le Regole di catalogazione, nella loro seconda edizione, sono il codice più diffuso nel mondo (sono state pubblicate in gran numero di lingue diverse) e l'unico che - di fatto - svolga le funzioni di codice catalografico internazionale. [The Cataloguing rules, in their second edition, are the world's most widely used (they have been translated into numerous different languages) and the only rules that are, de facto, an international cataloguing code.]

This state of affairs is partly due, of course, to the dominance of the English language (in its various manifestations) in the modern world. It is also due, in part, to the fact that AACR2 represents the most detailed working out of the principles of author/title cataloguing set forth in the Paris principles and based on the analysis and pioneering work of Seymour Lubet-

zky;[9] and of the application of the ISBD family of standards to all library materials.

Here we stand then, on the brink of Universal Bibliographic Control for all 'traditional' (i.e., non-electronic) materials with a universally accepted format for exchanging bibliographic data, a universally accepted standard for recording descriptive data, and a quasi-universal cataloguing code that is either in use in, or influencing the codes of, most of the countries in the world. Is there any reason *in principle* why we should not bring electronic documents and resources into this architecture of bibliographic control? The answer is 'no'. Are there *practical* reasons why this task is formidable? The answer is 'yes'.

I have written and spoken elsewhere about the problems posed by electronic resources and the proposed 'metadata' approach to bringing them under a form of bibliographic control.[10] I will try here to summarize the arguments put forward in those papers and to propose a direction that I advocate for a new age of bibliographic control. The first issue is that of the electronic resources themselves. Some are closely analogous to print documents - this is hardly surprising as many electronic documents are derived from print documents. Also, there is an established pattern of new technologies adopting the outward signs and structures of previous technologies - just think of radio news 'headlines' and of television 'magazines' with their 'front pages'. We even refer to elements of websites as 'pages'. Other electronic documents are quite dissimilar and, therefore, do not immediately seem to be amenable to existing bibliographic control structures. On reflection, however, we can see that there is a commonality between documents that embraces all formats. Electronic documents have titles, dates, texts and illustrations, editions, publishers, relationships to other documents (electronic and otherwise), authors,[11] contributors, and corporate bodies associated with them. We know well how to deal with each of these

bibliographic elements, how to record them, how to exercise vocabulary control, and how to create MARC records that can be integrated into library catalogues. Why then have many people either despaired of bringing electronic documents under bibliographic control or advocated solutions such a metadata, expert systems, and sophisticated search engines as alternatives to cataloguing? I believe there are a number of answers to that question (not excluding ignorance as a factor), but the most important center on the perceived characteristics of documents on the Net and Web.

The attributes of a well-regulated library are well known to us all. They are organization, retrievability, authenticity, and fixity. There are those who claim that electronic documents and sites (assemblages of electronic documents) are different in kind and not just degree from all the other formats that human beings have used to communicate and preserve knowledge across the centuries. (This is not a new phenomenon - just think of the semi-hysteria in North American libraries over audiovisual materials in the 1960s and 1970s. Then as now, A/V materials were thought to call for special and different cataloguing rules, specially trained librarians, and the transformation of the library into a 'resource center'. The tumult died as people came to their senses and integrated A/V materials into their collections and cataloguing rules - and we still have the Library of Congress not the Resource Center of Congress.) The strongest support for this notion of exceptionalism comes from the evanescence and mutability of electronic documents. Those characteristics, which any true librarian deplores, are really the logical outcome of the history of human communication - each format produces more documents than its predecessor, and each is less durable than its predecessor. It takes a long time to make many copies of stones bearing carved messages, but those messages can be read millennia later. You can send an e-mail message from

Boston to Addis Ababa in a twinkling of an eye, but that message may be expunged in a second twinkling. Many electronic documents are like those minute particles of matter that are only known because scientists can see where they have been during their micro-milliseconds of existence. Let me pose a deep philosophical question - does an e-mail message exist if it is deleted unopened?

There is another important difference between electronic documents and all the types of library material that preceded them. It centers on how electronic resources come to our notice. Let me tell you a short fable. There is an alternative universe in which there are books but no electronic documents. In that universe librarians have no control over the books that they purchase - no selection, no approval plans, and no collection development criteria. All these have been replaced by several trucks pulling up every hour, day and night, to the library's loading dock and depositing heaps of unordered and unwanted books - mostly from unheard-of publishers, vanity presses, and basement self-publishers. Some of those books might be of interest and use, but which are they, how do librarians and library users find them, and what on earth do they do with all the rest? In that alternative universe, librarianship becomes a much more random, disorganized process than anything on earth. The library would send out squads of trained personnel to root through the piles looking for worthwhile items to be catalogued and shelved. But wait! This is an alternative universe and, having selected 100 books from the piles and fully catalogued and organized them, librarians come back the next day to find that 25 of them have vanished and 25 have changed their titles! In the mean time, the piles outside the library are multiplying and shape-shifting and, for every 100 books the library SWAT team rescues, 200 are added by the unending delivery trucks. Small wonder that, in the alternative universe, librarians are careworn and cataloguers neurotic.

If you take that alternative universe and substitute electronic documents for books, you have a taste of what we are trying to deal with in bringing electronic documents under bibliographic control. There are too many of them, some of them vanish after being recorded, some change their attributes, some are inauthentic in that they are not what they purport to be, some cannot be found, and there is no filtering out of the ephemeral and the meretricious (as is done by the book publishing and selling industry). I believe that the idea of 'cataloguing the Web' is not only unattainable but also undesirable - most of what is on the Net and the Web does not merit the expense and the time of cataloguing. The questions are, of course, which electronic documents are worth cataloguing and how many of them are there? In order to answer those questions we need an, at least, outline taxonomy of the world of electronic documents. Most statements about electronic communication (laudatory and critical) tend toward generalization and the bandying about of vast numbers rather than being evaluative or descriptive. Whether one believes that the Internet represents a quantum leap forward for humankind; that the Internet is a vast wasteland; or that it is good in part and worthless in part, surely we can all benefit from understanding the nature of the documents and resources the Internet makes available. In that spirit, I offer the following breakdown of Internet and Web documents. What we are faced with, broadly, is

- Ephemera
- Commercial sites
- Print-derived resources
- Electronic serials (free-standing, i.e., not derived from print)
- Digitized archives (textual, sound, and visual)
- Original creative works (textual, sound, and visual)

Ephemera. Libraries have always ruled out, consciously or unconsciously, vast areas of recorded information. We have not only been selective within formats but also have been very selective when it comes to formats that we do and

do not collect. Much of the stuff that we used to ignore now shows up on the Net and the Web. To demonstrate this, just do a search using a search engine on any subject and review the inevitable few thousand 'hits' with a view to imagining their tangible analogues. Personal Web pages are the electronic versions of scrapbooks and diaries - of keen interest to their compilers but to few others. Restaurant reviews? Press releases in digital form? Association newsletters? Weather forecasts? Faculty lists of Australian universities? Syllabi? Advertisements? So, on and on it goes - acres of the cyberworld full of ephemera. We have never brought this stuff under bibliographic control - why should we start now?

Commercial sites and pornography. People anxious to sell you something populate much of the electronic frontier. From e-tailers to business-to-business sites to pornographers, they are all pursuing the Capitalist Dream of easy profits. Ironically, there are very few who have realized that dream and the concept of a new, knowledge-based economy now looks somewhat disheveled. The only uniformly successful commercial enterprises in cyberspace are those of pornographers. Libraries as a whole have never collected commercial information or, with few exceptions, pornography.

Print-derived resources. One of the indisputably valuable sectors of the Net is composed of many documents and sites that are derived from the print industry and are dependent on the success of that industry for their very existence. These do not, by and large, present much of a technical bibliographic control problem. We know, in principle, how to catalogue different format manifestations of texts and graphic publications - extending that knowledge into cyberspace is not a massive intellectual challenge. Further, print derived electronic resources are far less transient than their purely electronic counterparts.

Electronic journals. Most electronic journals are, of course, based on the products of a flourishing print industry. There have been many forecasts over the last decade that electronic journals will supplant print, but no one has, as yet, produced an economic model for such a major change and there are, at this time, a microscopic number of commercially viable true electronic journals. The problem is, of course, that the whole concept of a journal (serial assemblages of articles which are paid for in advance - whether they are ever read or not) seems inapplicable to the electronic age. Many problems in adapting to technology are caused by simply automating procedures or resources and not re-thinking the whole issue. Why not, in an age of electronic communication, provide services that deliver desired articles on demand and charge the users only for the articles that are used? In such a world, the 'journal' would no longer exist and libraries would be cataloguing at the level of what S.R. Ranganathan called 'micro-thought' - a level that we have always left to indexing and abstracting services.

Digitized archives (textual, sound, and visual). One of the most important and valuable achievements of the electronic age is the way in which large archives have been made available to global audiences. Those archives (which are unique by definition) have, hitherto, been accessible only to researchers with the means and time to travel to the location of the archive. To take a well-known example, the Library of Congress's American Memory Project[12] is a vast assemblage of pamphlets and other texts, graphic items, films, sound recordings, maps, etc., that is taking advantage of digitization and the Web to give the world access to the untold riches of the Library's archival collections. Other institutions have created Web archives of coins, stamps, posters, manuscripts, prints and drawings, early films, sound recordings, photographs, and every other conceivable means of communication, including artefacts. There has long been a great divide between library cataloguing and

archival cataloguing. The former concentrates on individual manifestations of works and the latter has been largely concerned with creating finding aids for assemblages of documents. In the 20+ years since the appearance of AACR2, there has been some movement on this matter to bring the two cataloguing traditions closer together.[13] Although the two will always operate at different levels, there is no reason why their cataloguing practices cannot be harmonized and the results of such harmonization applied to the various parts of the American Memory Project and other such digital archives.

Original creative works (textual, sound, and visual). The advent of cyberspace has created a new environment for artists in all older media to extend and develop their art. Film, a new medium of communication 100 years ago, developed into an art form for directors (the French term auteur is particularly significant here), cinematographers, and a new breed of actors. Television, that great cultural wasteland, has not been as culturally beneficent as film, but it has given rise to video artists like Nam June Paik. In the same way, there are forecasts of new breeds of creators on the Internet including hypertext writers, digital artists, cyberpoets, and electronic musicians. When such productions belong to the same families as materials collected and catalogued by libraries (as is the case with hypertexts) they will be collected and catalogued. Other artistic productions in cyberspace will be the province of museologists, videographers, and art collectors.

Obviously, we need a more detailed analysis of the materials available on the Net and the Web than I have offered here and, crucially, we need more quantified analysis if we are to delineate the problem accurately and frame a response to it. Just as a beginning, we need to know which areas of cyberspace we are going to chart and catalogue and, by inference, which areas we are going to leave to search engines and the like. These will not be easy

studies, but facts are a far better basis for planning than are the techno-boosterism and hand-waving that characterize most discussions of these topics.

If we reach a point at which we have decided which electronic documents and resources we are to bring under bibliographic control, two important questions will still remain. Which standards shall we use? How is the cataloguing to be organized?

The first question brings me to the topic of metadata. The term means 'data about data' - a mostly meaningless concept that, taken literally, would embrace library cataloguing, even though metadata has been explicitly conceived as something that lacks most of the important attributes of cataloguing. The idea behind metadata is that there is some Third Way of organizing and giving access to electronic resources that is approximately half way between cataloguing (expensive and effective) and keyword searching (cheap and ineffective). Further, it is alleged that such low-level bibliographic data can be supplied by authors, Webmasters, publishers, and others lacking any knowledge of cataloguing.

It is entirely possible, since the original concept of 'metadata' did not originate among librarians, that no consideration was given to the use of 'traditional' cataloguing, and, even though librarians are now involved in the projects, the idea that electronic resources cannot be catalogued using existing standards may be firmly entrenched. Be that as it may, the fact is that electronic bibliographic entities have the same attributes as other bibliographic entities. It is perfectly possible to catalogue electronic resources in such a way that the resulting records can be fully integrated into library catalogues. There is a recent ISBD for electronic resources[14] that will form the basis of the revision of Chapter 9 of AACR2; electronic resources have titles and creators (authors) that can be used to provide standard access points, they have subjects that can

be expressed in classification numbers and subject headings, and all that data can be incorporated into a MARC record. In short, if one of the justifications for the invention of metadata is that it is needed to facilitate access to electronic resources in the absence of cataloguing standards, that justification is simply wrong.

Perhaps the decision has been made, almost without thinking it through. That decision appears to be, since 'traditional cataloguing' is too expensive, there must be a compromise - some third way - that will give the benefits of cataloguing without the effort or expense. In the words of the Introduction to the final report of the Nordic Metadata Project[15]

> Many specialists believe that any metadata is better than no metadata at all - we do not need to stick with the *stringent quality requirements and complex formats of library catalogue systems*. Instead, it is possible to live with something simple, which will be easily understandable to publishers, authors and other people involved with the publishing of electronic documents. (*My emphasis.*)

This is one of the few mentions in this long report of the perceived need for, and nature of metadata as an alternative to cataloguing. It is taken for granted that there is something between 'stringent quality requirements' and no quality at all, and that there is something between 'complex formats' and almost no format at all.

It seems to be generally accepted that the Dublin Core is the most developed application of metadata and is on the verge of being generally accepted. It was developed by OCLC at its headquarters in Dublin, Ohio, and named for that municipality. It consists of fifteen labeled descriptive elements. Cursory analysis shows us that each of these elements has its counterparts in the MARC format and that the content of each of them is governed by either codes in MARC fixed-length

fields, cataloguing codes/ISBDs, and/or subject headings lists/thesauri. Of course, the Dublin Core and other metadata 'standards' provide a framework for holding bibliographic data but no guidance on how to formulate those data. In short, it is a sub-set of MARC and nothing more. No bibliographic database of any significant size could possibly work if filled with Dublin Core records containing random data without vocabulary control and standard presentation. The 'literature' on metadata is full of references to the complexity of the MARC format and of cataloguing codes, which is always presented as being a bad thing. It is worth pointing out that that format and those codes are complex because the bibliographic world is complex. Contrary to rumor, cataloguers do not invent rules to deal with situations that will never occur. The idea that this complex world embodied in millions of bibliographic entities can be reduced to data entered by the untrained into fifteen categories is simply preposterous.

The Dublin Core is said to have the following positive attributes.[16] It is:

a) is very simple to learn
b) has repeatable elements
c) has optional elements
d) can be extended for more complex applications
e) can be embedded invisibly in Web pages
f) is recognized by the World Wide Web Consortium.

These are all true, but scarcely relevant to the basic concerns about metadata since none speak to the central points of the content of the bibliographic record or of the limited nature of the sub-set that the fifteen elements represent.

The literature of metadata reveals a discussion on the future of the idea between proponents of the original simplicity of the concept and the idea that the metadata need to be normalized and subjected to vocabulary control. This discussion boils down to a choice between an inexpensive and ineffective form of cataloguing in which the fifteen ele-

ments of the Dublin Core are filled with unqualified and uncontrolled free text on the one hand or an expensive and more effective form of cataloguing in which at least some of the elements of the Dublin Core are filled with normalized controlled data decided on the basis of professional examination of the resource. Such human intervention would not, in all probability be as time-consuming and expensive as full cataloguing, but it would certainly go beyond the simplicity and inexpensiveness desired by those who take the Minimalist point of view.

My inclination has been to dismiss the Dublin Core, as an attempt to reinvent the wheel as something other than round, and to advocate the full application of library or archival cataloguing to those electronic resources that we deem worthy of such treatment. It may be, however, that we could have several layers of treatment depending on the value we assign to the various electronic resources. Such a system would be a pyramid, with the apex being that relatively small proportion of electronic resources that will merit full cataloguing according to existing standards. The next level could be that of enriched Dublin Core records with data in applicable fields being subject to vocabulary control. Then there would be those electronic resources with uncontrolled Dublin Core elements. The last layer would the huge number of electronic resources that would be retrievable, if at all, by search engines using free text searching.

My second question was 'how is the cataloguing of electronic resources to be organized?' It centers on how to proceed in identifying 'worthwhile' materials, in creating and maintaining the databases that will result, and in coordinating the national effort. Again, we have choices. They are between, first, a Grand Plan such as the Library of Congress's action plan called 'Bibliographic control of Web resources'[17] and, second, a grass roots movement in which individual libraries and librarians and groups of libraries choose and cata-

logue the documents, resources and sites that have been agreed to be worthwhile. Both approaches call for a common understanding of which types of resources are to be catalogued and agreements on the standards to be used. Perhaps the answer lies in national and international agreements that foster and coordinate individual action but do not inhibit it. That approach will be in many ways a reprise of the history of libraries. Individuals and individual libraries built collections, one choice at a time, over many years. It was not until much later that union catalogues and library collectives brought those individual collections into national, and later international, systems. The difference this time is that the benefits of the work of individual libraries and groups can be made available to all contemporaneously. Let a thousand cataloguing projects bloom, and record by record, collection by collection, worthwhile Net resources will be organized and made available in what will ultimately come to be international systems and databases based on internationally agreed standards.

When it comes to the question of bringing the Net and the Web into bibliographic control, the elephant in the room is that of preservation of the human record. Supposing we solve all the problems of bibliographic standardization and the organization of a massive international effort, what is the point if the resources identified and catalogued are not preserved? Those with more faith than I look to gigantic electronic archives maintained by governments and private companies that will ensure the indefinite survival of the electronic records of humankind. This idea appears implausible when one looks at the cost of such archives, the dizzying rate of technological change, the need for the archives to be eternal, and the lack of interest outside the library and archive professions in the onward transmission of the human record. We can, of course, ignore the problem and hope that it all turns out right in the end - after all, that is what we are doing now. Alternatively, we could turn to the only known way of preserving massive numbers of texts and images - print on acid-free paper. If you are inclined to dismiss that suggestion out of hand, I would recommend that you explore the financial costs and the cultural costs of the alternatives and keep an open mind.

In summary, when we get beyond all the pomposity and techno-babble that dominates discourse on our topic, we can see real problems and real issues. What are we going to do about identifying and making accessible the valuable records of humanity that are only available in electronic form? How are we going to deal with the mutability and evanescence of those records? How are we going to preserve those resources and transmit them to posterity? We will only answer these questions if we employ wisdom and insight, understand the lessons of history, and work with the interests of all our users, present and future, in mind.

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The Double Edged Sword: A Brief Comparison of Information Technology and Internet Development in Malaysia and some Neighbouring Countries

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Introduction

One of the most astounding phenomena in the past millennium is the emergence of sophisticated technological inventions. Research into telecommunication, biotechnology and other technologies has been followed by the development of products which have become responsible for both comfort and chaos to nature and its inhabitants.

The introduction of computer technology is one of the most important developments in the second half of the last century. The computer, which arrived late in the second millennium, has not only become the supplement for nearly every aspect of human socio-economic endeavour but has emerged as a 'craze' for a new generation. The personal computer (PC) became a mass commodity in some parts of the world in the early 1980s, transforming human life styles and ushering mankind from modernism to the post industrial era and the cyber era. Towards the end of the second millennium, nearly all existing communication sectors embraced cyber technology in varying degrees, thereby creating a great potential for cyber-oriented products and services.

Coming not so long after the emergence of the PC, the Internet has created a 'borderless world' - a platform for mankind to interact and share knowledge with astonishing ease. As a result, interaction and communication from one corner of the globe to another can take place within seconds. With such potential for speed, comfort and accuracy at relatively 'affordable' cost, many people believed the world would be wholly 'cyberized' within a decade. Undeniably, the potentials of the Internet or information technology (IT) are so great that it is hard for any country to resist their invasion, be it small or big, rich or poor. Countries moving slowly in acquainting themselves with IT and cyber products face the threat of being left behind economically in the near future in comparison to those who are giants in the cyber arena.

However, the relevant question to ask is: to what extent has the dream of a fully 'cyberized' world has been realized?

Global Atmosphere and IT Ownership

The truth is that a transformation of the whole world into a 'cyber platform' with nearly every human being transformed into a 'cyber participant' has not materialized as predicted by many leading figures in the IT world a decade ago. The demand for IT products has simply not matched the global supply and information technologies have not reached every human being as predicted by some people simply because the PC has yet to reach an affordable price for most people, particularly those living in the developing countries.

The PC is still seen as a luxury item for many groups of people around the globe. The fact is that in poor

countries the PC is available and utilized only by some elite groups who are wealthy.

Various reasons can be attributed to the slow evolution of IT globally. The dominant constraint has been the imbalance of the 'socio-economic' structure of the world. In a world where nations are still categorized as 'rich' or 'poor'; 'literate' or 'illiterate', 'developed', 'under developed' or 'developing', etc., it is only to be expected that such disparities will have a fundamental effect on the spread of IT and Internet globally. Poor countries cannot easily put into place the telecommunications infrastructure necessary for accessing the Internet. The high cost of access to cyberspace in many such, which generally have very low personal incomes, restricts usage of the Web.

In other words not all countries have the same opportunity to access technological and scientific progress. The growing power of the Internet also risks widening the divide between the world's haves and have-nots. In fact the digital divide is getting deeper between countries as most of the world is still without any access to the World Wide Web (WWW). The difference is showing up not only between rich and poor countries but also between rich and poor citizens within a country.

IT and Restrictive Policies in Some Asian Countries

Apart from the socio-economic constraints that have hampered a smooth transition of IT and Internet globally, another great constraint on the development of IT and the Internet in developing countries has been domestic policies which have crippled the free media. The media, being one of the most crucial means of enlightening the population of all nations, has often been kept closed and controlled by the ruling elites in these countries. However, IT and the Internet can both be double-edged swords for

governments in some developing countries. On the one hand, they can be a potent instrument for accelerating broad-based growth and sustainable development and for reducing poverty. On the other hand, they allow any citizens access to an unprecedented degree of freedom of speech, and this freedom can constitute a threat to the government.

Indonesia, India, Thailand, the Philippines and Malaysia are five Asian countries which have permitted the free flow of information through IT and the Internet. There is no censorship on the Internet in those countries. Apart from these cases, most other Asian countries have responded to information and communication technology (ICT) in one way or another.

One response to the new IT has been to prohibit its acquisition by private citizens. This has been the approach of the more authoritarian regimes like North Korea and Myanmar, which have banned the Internet altogether.

In Myanmar, "Sales of computers are growing rapidly in Myanmar's otherwise sluggish economy. The 100-member Myanmar Computer Federation estimates that there are more than 50,000 computers in this land of 48 million people (approximately 1 per 960), one of the world's poorest. But networking between those computers and the outside world is still forbidden. A 1996 law imposes a 7 to 15 years jail term for the unauthorized ownership of a modem. Burma remains one of the most heavily censored countries in the world." (Krebs, 2001)

The other response, adopted by governments such as those of Singapore and China, has been to control the use of Internet in varying degrees.

Singapore stands tall as one of the leading Internet users in the world with 45 percent of its population owning PCs. It has one of the most sophisticated communication webs, called Singapore ONE (One Net-

work for Everyone). Yet the Internet is monitored and censored and it is not 'free', 'private' and 'transparent' as hailed by the pioneers and founders of the Internet. In 1999 it was reported that the IT Security Unit of Singapore's Ministry of Home Affairs had monitored approximately 200,000 personal e-mails of its citizens for 'irregularities' in 1999. When Louise Williams, in the *Sydney Morning Herald* of 29 April 2000. exposed this scandalous state of affairs, the Singapore government responded by claiming this was a normal procedure to check virus infection! With many restrictions by the Singapore government, it is open to question whether the quantity of PC acquisition is a measure of real development.

Under the Singapore Broadcasting Act (SBA), Internet content providers are automatically licensed and given clear directives as to what their responsibilities are. Internet Service Providers (ISPs) may be required by the broadcasting authority to restrict public access to 100-200 sites which the SBA considers 'undesirable'.

Singapore recently introduced a new censorship law. The new legislation is an amendment to Section 42 of the 1994 Broadcasting Authority Act. This law attempts to limit critical debate and permit the Singapore government to declare that any foreign broadcasting service is 'engaging in the domestic politics of Singapore', although the Act does not define what 'engaging in domestic politics' involves. Fines up to SGD 100,000 may be levied on those found guilty of contravening the new regulations.

China, with 16.9 million Internet users (or 1.34 percent of its more than one billion population) is also subjecting Internet users to government regulation. China makes sure that all websites are registered with the government. Last year China passed a law on Internet crime which provides for a crackdown on political dissent. It launched regulations that made websites responsible for ensuring that users are not

critical of government policy. The Chinese government wants to ensure that its Internet users do not post messages deemed 'illegal' - that is to say, anything against the constitution or that 'harms China's honour and interest'. China's Ministry of Public Security said that 1000 'Internet crimes' were reported in the first six months of 2000, the same number as throughout the whole of 1999.

In Indonesia it is important to observe that ex-President Suharto came to power in the mid-1960's in a bloodbath which resulted the slaughter of at least half a million people. He also detained without trial more than 100,000 writers, artisans, unionists and other dissidents and prohibited them from producing or promoting any form of dissent for nearly more than a decade. However, Suharto relaxed his grip when the imperatives of rapid development forced him to permit the growth of IT and the Internet in Indonesia. The Internet came to Indonesia in the mid-1990s. The rapid growth of IT and its supplementary technologies enabled the intelligentsia to become aware the corruption of the Suharto regime. Although the number of IT users is relatively small (Indonesia has 400,000 Internet users and this amounts to 0.18 percent of the 220 million population) nonetheless the Internet played an important role in the reformation struggle. Although it was the Asian economic crisis which finally spelt the doom of Suharto and his military regime, the process of his downfall was in no small measure assisted by the presence of a small but influential IT-literate intelligentsia. The pro-democracy movement, especially the students, used e-mails to coordinate their demonstration and other actions.

The Philippines, a nation well known for its 'people's power' movements, provides more space for free expression compared to its other neighbours. It is moving to construct a sophisticated information infrastructure. There in no Internet censorship in the Philip-pines. A country of contrasts, the Philippines has had a long tradition of subscribing to the trappings of a liberal democracy. The Philippines is also a country without secrets, even when the dictator Marcos declared martial law. This tradition has gone over to the Internet. The only dampers perhaps are the country's laws on libel and sedition. The Philippines has 500,000 Internet users, about 0.62 percent of the total population.

At the height of the anti-Estrada movement, from October 2000 to January 2001, several websites promoted the ousting of the President on the Internet. Newsgroups were launched for this purpose too. The Internet served as the repository for intellectual justification for the ousting of a President whom the middle and upper classes saw as corrupt, incompetent, immoral, and leading the country into an economic abyss. Nevertheless, the effects of the Internet had to interface with other new media as well as traditional media. The other new medium was cellular phone texting. This served to call the middle and upper classes to gather to protest in Manila. But they would not have really been aroused if they had not been disgusted with what they saw of Estrada's impeachment trial on television and by what they read in the broadsheet newspapers.

The Case of Malaysia - The Double Edged Sword

Malaysia is clearly ahead of many countries in terms of personal computer ownership, Internet usage (quantity) and in 'value usage of Internet'. The Internet first made its debut in Malaysia in 1996. Since then Malaysia, with a population of 22 million, has five Internet Service Providers (ISP) with about 2 million Internet users.

Malaysia has been a strong advocate of IT and the Internet. Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, the Prime Minister, has an ambitious plan to transform Malaysia into an information technology centre. This resulted in the establishment of the Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC) at a cost of USD 20 billion. Although in many respects Mahathir's regime does not differ much from that of Lee Kuan Yew in Singapore in terms of the curtailment of freedom and civil liberties, development has taken a different course, thanks to ICT. The motive of Dr. Mahathir Mohamad in establishing the MSC was primarily to take full advantage of ICT for the purposes of accelerating economic development. However, to attract and secure foreign investments to make the MSC a success, Mahathir has been forced to guarantee that there would be no censorship of the Internet. As a result Malaysia is unable to exercise the sort of censorship that Singapore has been practising. Moreover, because of this guarantee the Malaysian government is unable to adopt the sort of censorship measures with regard to the Internet which it exercises over the non-electronic media in the country.

The MSC, a large zone covering 750 square kilometres, was built as an attempt to create an Asian version of Silicon Valley. This zone, which runs from the glistening Petronas Twin Tower in Kuala Lumpur to the new international airport 60 kilometres to the South, already contains Putrajaya, the government's new administrative centre; Cyberjaya, an industrial park for high technology and software companies; and a Stanford-style Multimedia University that receives guest lecturers from such high-tech giants as Lucent Technologies. The project, started in the mid-1990s, was expected to take two decades to finish. It promised fibre-optic networks, research facilities, tax breaks, and new 'cyber laws' to any multinational setting up shop. Malaysia intends to provide the best incubator on the planet for high-tech businesses and create an environment in which a native high-tech industry could take root and boost the country into the ranks of developed nations by 2020.

In Malaysia the ruling party has kept control over the non-electronic media. Mainstream newspapers as

well as television channels are owned or controlled by the governing coalition parties. Given this scenario, new political forces released by the Internet have created a dilemma for the political establishment. All disgruntled elements within the political spectrum have been channelled through the Internet. The proliferation of web sites critical of the government has increased. The Internet serves as an important alternative medium in Malaysia and provides space for pro-opposition views and news. To date the government has been unable to do anything to curb this tendency effectively. As Malaysians become more educated they desire to seek things out for themselves and this often leads them to clash with authority. Every new form of communication riles authority, and the Internet is no exception.

Oblivious of the power and speed of the Internet, Mahathir underestimated the growth of the opposition to his ousting of Deputy Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim along with his reformation agenda, which started in 1998. Prior to the emergence of the Internet, Mahathir could overcome nearly every crisis by controlling the 'authentic' news and information reaching the public. Given the government's control of the non-electronic media, he anticipated that Anwar's reformation struggle would soon die off - a tradition among Malaysians, who are known to have very short memories.

Such an anticipation would have come true if there had been no ICT in Malaysia. But in 1998 the personal computer and the Internet was already a 'craze' among Malaysians, especially among teenagers and middle class society in general. Even those Malaysians who had no PCs of their own could access news of the opposition thanks to the government's computerization of government departments and services. Here it was possible to gain access to information sent by the reformation groups. In this way the reformation groups manage to rally their supporters and help keep the flow of information going. Mass gatherings were

successful, thanks to IT and the Internet.

Although the non-electronic main stream media were still under government control, the trust and respect of the Malaysian people towards them had diminished. When Malaysians began comparing the information from the non-electronic mainstream media with that from the Internet many felt for the first time that they had been misled and began to lose their faith in the official media. A sceptical attitude towards non-electronic mainstream media began to develop. Now, even though flaws and untruthful elements do also exist in cyber-based sites, many Malaysians regard them as more authentic and trustworthy than the non-electronic mainstream media.

Malaysiakini.com, Laman Reformasi, Freeanwar.com, Harakahdaily.com and FreeMalaysia.com are five out of over 50 websites which give alternative news coverage. They are visited by more than 250,000 visitors daily. In addition to such web pages there are 'e-group' discussion platforms. Another major advantage of the Internet is its interactivity - its ability to gather information about voters, their likes, dislikes and attitudes. In Malaysia opposition opinions sped across the net; sites offered the juiciest rumours, truths or facts on corrupt business deals and personal scandals involving the government. Because of the lack of a platform for intellectual discussion in Malaysia the Internet has become a haven for those Malaysians who longed to voice their long, long repressed opinions and ideas.

Sangkancil@malaysia.net is one of the many electronic discussion groups which has earned a great reputation for intellectual discussion ranging over politics, religion, race, culture and nationalism.

The political tumult of the late 1980s, which resulted from the constitutional crisis after the sacking of Lord President Salleh Abbas, was unable to garner much popular sup-

port for opposing views in spite of its having triggered more opposition from within the governing parties than the unceremonious sacking of heir apparent Anwar Ibrahim. This was to some extent due to the lack of alternative channels of information dissemination a decade ago. The Internet has been credited with playing a pivotal role in sustaining the current reform movement. The World Wide Web has helped in facilitating dissent in Malaysia by providing a means by which information can be disseminated in a heavily-regulated media environment. The reform movement, though at its nascent stage, has been able to sustain itself and mobilize grassroots support due to the alternative news and analysis available through the Internet. The sacking of Anwar Ibrahim unleashed a 'revolution' which brought about a drastic change in the way Malaysians view politics and politicians, and a shift from the politics of personalities to political issues. The belief that the government was invincible is now gone. People dare to speak about an alternative government and toy with the idea of changing the government. Dr. Mahathir Mohamad is struggling very hard to recover his support.

The Internet provides views and calls for action on many important issues such as freedom of speech, assembly and the press, the independence of the judiciary, the abolition of draconian laws, an effective police force and the abolition of cronyism, nepotism and corruption. These pertinent issues are not allowed to be questioned or discussed in the mainstream media. Hence, when the public are enlightened to such alternative views via the Internet, the Internet has turned saviour. The Internet has broken the monopoly of control over free expression.

Conclusion

Access to the Internet will for a long time remain available only to elite groups in developing countries. However, as shown above, despite

this ICT can have a profound impact on political development, in particular by opening up new avenues for the expression of popular dissent. Today it is Malaysia which is experiencing the impact of the IT revolution, but other regimes such as those in Singapore and China should bear in mind that they cannot avoid the inevitable impact of this revolutionary technology on their society. They have no other course other than to loosen their grip on their media and make room for dissent.

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The IFLA/UNESCO Public Library Guidelines

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At the last three IFLA conferences I have given a paper on the revision of IFLA's Guidelines for Public Libraries. On each occasion I have given a progress report

and asked for comments on the draft we had prepared. These were lively meetings and an important part of the consultation process. The comments we received were very useful to us in finalizing the revised document. Today my task is a rather different one for I am happy to announce that the Guidelines are complete and have been published by K.G. Saur as an official IFLA publication.[1] Importantly the Guidelines have for the first time been endorsed by UNESCO, who have also generously provided funds for them to be translated into the UNESCO languages.

This publication is part of a continuum in IFLA's policy making on public libraries. This started with the first version of the IFLA *Public Library Manifesto* in 1949, continued with the second Manifesto in 1972, the *Standards for Public Libraries* published in 1973, the *Guidelines for Public Libraries* published in 1986and most recently the third version of the *Manifesto* published in 1994.

The *Manifesto* is an important statement of principle but the Com-

mittee of the Public Libraries Section realized there was a demand for a more detailed document and that the dramatic changes in the information world had rendered the 1986 *Guidelines* obsolete. In drafting a document, which we hoped would have world-wide relevance, at a time of unprecedented change in ways of storing, accessing and using information we faced a number of challenges. Perhaps the most significant could be summarized as follows:

- Is it possible to produce guidelines and standards for public libraries that will have relevance world-wide?
- What is the role of the public library in this age of rapid and dramatic development in information and communications technology?
- Does the public library have a future or is it a 19th century institution which has no future in the 21st century?

There was a clear message from the outset that librarians were hoping for some international standards that they could use in developing their public libraries. In some areas, notably building standards, this is very difficult but we have given examples of standards used in different countries. We have proposed some standards in staffing levels and collection development that we think will be useful to librarians in many societies. As well as standards we have included brief summaries of initiatives and services to illustrate the text. This is a feature of the guidelines and we have included 79 examples from 44 different countries. We do not say these are the most outstanding examples of public library provision but they are an indication of the way public libraries in different countries have responded to the challenges they face. We hope these examples will give both ideas and encouragement to those who use these guidelines.

It is no exaggeration to say that the last few years have seen the most rapid and dramatic developments in information and communications technology in history. The public library is radically affected by these developments. Even in the three years of the project the changes have accelerated and there is little sign of any reduction in the speed of change.

There were those who said that we should promote the adoption of information technology as the basis for all future development with the implication that we should not support the development of print-based services. The developments in ICT, particularly the Internet give public libraries many exciting opportunities which many have taken eagerly and in a creative way.

There is another story. The United Nations *Human Development Report 1999*, while stating that the Internet was the fastest growing information tool, also revealed that South Asia, with 23.5 percent of the world's population, had less than 0.1 percent of the world's Internet users. A quarter of the countries of the world have less than one telephone per one hundred people. The risk of a growing gap between the information rich and the information poor has never been greater. This gap is not just between coun-

tries but also between groups and individuals within countries. The UN report says "determined efforts are needed to bring developing countries and poor people everywhere into the global conversation".

This presents public libraries with an exciting opportunity to help bring everyone into the global conversation. To do so should the public library nail its colours firmly to the technological mast and accept that print-based and other services should no longer have a high priority?

We took the view that to fulfil the principle of access for all libraries must continue to provide information in a variety of ways, for example through print and the oral tradition. While becoming the gateway to the electronic information world they should not close the other doors through which knowledge and information are provided. This presents public libraries with a major challenge and their success in meeting it will determine the future of public libraries.

This begins to answer the question: does the public library have a future. Working on this project has made me realize how, though we live in a world dominated by market forces, public libraries through-

out the world at different stages of development and with varying levels of resources are continuing to grow in response to public demand. As long as public libraries meet the needs of the public and act as an agency for change they will continue to develop. They must also meet high standards of service as they are in competition with other agencies for people's time and specifically with other information providers for public interest and support. If they lose that public support they run the risk of becoming irrelevant and. losing their place in the social fabric. We believe these guidelines will help public librarians to achieve these goals.

We have highlighted what we see as the three key roles of the public library:

• Education
• Information
• Personal Development

Different societies give these different levels of priority. It is very important that priorities are agreed and maintained to ensure the most effective use of resources.

Support for formal and informal education has been a key function of public libraries since their inception. For many countries it is the primary role of the public library service.

The acquisition of reliable information is vitally important enabling people to enjoy fulfilling lives and be fully participating citizens. There are now many ways in which people can access information so public libraries have to prove by their performance that they are one of the key agencies. They require policies, plans and services to enable them to provide high quality information services.

Public libraries have always played an important role in providing opportunities for personal development. They provide a range of ideas, opinions and creative experience not available anywhere else. Many people, famous and otherwise

Launching the Public Library Guidelines. Left to right: Sjoerd Koopman, Philip Gill, Gary Strong, Klaus Saur

have said how their lives have been changed by the use of public libraries. The provision of books and other materials including access via information technology, paid for by the community and for the use of the community, brings the world's knowledge and literature to everyone. This is an amazing achievement and makes the public library a unique institution.

Librarians have always been concerned with the quality of the information they provide and organizing access to it. In this changing information world this remains a core function. The librarian is now the knowledge navigator presenting new and exciting challenges in this information age.

To fulfil its functions the public library should be supported by legislation and adequate and sustained funding. They should be well governed and administered. It is very important that they represent all ranges of human experience, free from the risk of censorship. Librarians and their governing bodies must uphold these basic human rights and resist pressure from individuals and groups to limit the material available in the library.

Public libraries must aim to meet the needs of their users. The guidelines stress the importance of community needs analysis, user involvement and the judgement and experience of the librarian as the key factors in determining the shape of the public library.

A fundamental principle of the public library is that it should be available to all and not just to the able-bodied, literate adults able to visit the library. The public library must be service-focused, developing services that met user's needs and delivering them where they will be most effective. Library services must go beyond the walls of the library and the development of

information technology provides many new ways of accessing services from the home or the workplace. We have heard of many imaginative ways in which the service is provided.

A high standard of customer care should be an integral part of all policies and procedures. User education is increasingly important with the advent of information technology. No public library, however large and well-funded can meet all the needs of its users from its own resources. Public libraries should be part of networks and resource-sharing schemes to enable them to meet the public's demands.

Libraries are made up of collections of information and cultural materials in a range of formats. We have proposed standards for collection development while recognizing that these will have to be adjusted to meet local circumstances. The key criterion must be the relevance and currency of the collection not its size. Organizing access to materials in the library and beyond is an important part of collection development.

Staff are a crucial part of any library service. We have included what we see as the main duties of the librarian though no list can be exhaustive. Library staff must maintain high ethical standards if they are to retain the confidence of users. Effective staff training is vital at a time of such major changes in library and information services.

The quality of management is an important element in the provision of a successful library service. Library managers must develop skill to enable them to provide effective leadership and build good working relationships with their governing body, the staff and the public they serve.

Public libraries will not realize their full potential if they are not actively promoted in the community. Librarians should develop marketing and promotion plans and be able to work with the media and in the community. We should not forget that satisfied users are the best advocates for the public library.

What happens next? As I have explained the guidelines will be translated into the UNESCO and IFLA languages. We have already received a number of requests to translate the guidelines into other languages, and the translation work has already started in some countries. The *Public Library Manifesto* is now available in over twenty languages and it is my hope that these new guidelines will be available in at least as many languages. If, therefore you want to organize translation into your own native language contact IFLA Headquarters who I am sure will be happy to give you permission to do so.

With the participation of public librarians throughout the world we have spent three years drafting and refining these guidelines and standards. Our hope is that you will make use of these guidelines in meeting the great challenges and opportunities that public library services now face. You now have an additional weapon in the battle to provide exciting and relevant public library services. We wish you every success in achieving that important goal.

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Seizing the Moment: Issues and Opportunities towards the Creation of an Information Society

H. Kay Raseroka

Kay Raseroka was born in Kwazulu-Natal in South Africa. She is a citizen of Botwana and has been in librarianship for over two decades during which she has made great contributions to the profession. She is currently the Director, University of Botswana Library Services. Kay has served IFLA in many different capacities, most recently as member of the Executive Board (since 1997) and Governing Board. In 2001 she has been voted President-elect and will succeed Christine Deschamps as President of IFLA in August 2003 for a two-year term.

It is a great honour and privilege for me to have been invited to give a keynote address to this august body of professionals engaged in public and school librar-

ianship. As a librarian I wish to express our collective appreciation to government representatives here present for their commitment to the cause of public and school libraries.

I wish, also, to congratulate the organizers for the approach they have selected of bringing together major stakeholders in the practice of public and school librarianship. This forum affords an opportunity for the sharing of perspectives on the latest developments in each of the separate but closely linked areas of practice.

Last, but not least, I wish to express deep gratitude to the committed professionals who have worked tirelessly examining current practice in the light of rapid changes in the information environment and produced the products here before us. The various workshops, as is this conference, have brought together librarians from the various regions to share experiences and discuss the drafts of these documents being presented here today. These fora have been made possi-

ble by the generosity of various donor funding which is warmly acknowledged.

The strategy of promoting the *Public Library Manifesto* and the School Library Manifesto together with the new *Public Library Guidelines* and the draft School Library Guidelines is laudable. It promotes the reality of library customers: information service seamlessly provided at a point of need whether the location is the school or public library. Let us hope it is the beginning of links which will be nurtured in the various areas of practice where partnership and unity of purpose provides strength, in the face of limited resources.

Introduction

Various authors, (Sturges and Neill (1990), Mchombu (1990) Isaak (2000)) have drawn attention to the unsatisfactory state of public library services in developing regions, in particular, Africa. Perhaps development of public library systems is more advanced in some Arab states, if public library service in Tunisia (Fettahi, 1994)is a typical example. (Our appreciation of the state of public libraries in the Arab world is limited by linguistic constraints and poor distribution channels of scholarly communications from developing countries, even when they are in English or French: an area which will be given attention later in this paper). However, within the last decade, there have been innovative approaches to public library service. A review of the various case studies suggest a commitment to the principles propagated by the Public Library Manifesto: in its injunction on the right and equality of access to information for all communities 'regardless of age, race, sex, religion, nationality, language or social status'. It is notable however that the innovations have been largely

'reliant upon external donor funding' (Isaak, ibid:21).

School libraries 'exist and evolve in relation to their environment' (Dike, 1993). School library development everywhere is entirely dependent on education and learning policies, their interpretation and implementation by school principals. These policies are reflected in teaching methods, the degree to which textbooks and supplementary sources of information are infused in learning, as well as the moral and structural support of school or teacher librarians. A survey of book provision across the various educational traditions in Africa discovered that, not only did students from primary and secondary schools lack basic textbooks, but they also had no access to learning resource support materials such as classroom reference texts and had no school libraries. Public and academic libraries had no funding to purchase up to date sources of information (Buchan, 1991).

Ten years later how different is the state of government support of public and school libraries in African and Arab societies? Do national governments establish education policies that recognize the role of varied information sources for individual and ultimately for national development? Is there tangible evidence of commitment to the creation of an information society? Are there national information policies that indicate the political will to financially support and sustain the development of essential infrastructure for information systems such as: school, academic or public libraries, information communication technology infrastructure and regulatory mechanisms that facilitate access as a social good through school and public libraries - i.e. free of charge?

This paper seeks to highlight prerequisites for the successful implantation and application of the public and school library Manifestos and the Guidelines respectively. It will discuss issues on the information society. It will draw attention to the need for the establishment of national government policies as a basis for changing the conditions which have obtained for the last thirty years, in spite of the existence of, for example, the *UNESCO Public Library Manifesto's* past editions and librarians' endeavours to implement them. It will then propose a holistic approach to information services and skills needed by the library and information professionals as a strategy for changing the paradigm, while seizing opportunities and contribute to the creation of an information society.

Information Society

The African Information Society Initiative (AISI) vision is the creation of a sustainable information society in Africa by the year 2010 (UNECA. *Africa's Information Society Initiative (AISI)*, para.18). The AISI goals are to create an enabling environment which facilitates the development of Africa's informa-

The conference participants

tion society. This is a term used 'to refer to the pervasive benefits to all Africans, of proactive policies on information and communication technologies' *(ibid.)* The significance of AISI is the unprecedented promise for political and financial support to information, knowledge resource creation, and communication to all levels of communities in Africa.

A pertinent question to ask is whether the values that establish an information society as encapsulated by both the Public and the School Library Manifestos, have been accepted and internalized sufficiently by African and Arab societies to influence public and school library services for the benefit of their communities.

The convergence of information abundance and information communication technologies has provided a unique opportunity for world communities to share information across borders. Information has become the lifeblood of all nations. Thus governments have established visions of an information age: information as an engine for national development in all spheres.

This vision aims at the following:

- Availability of information resources which reflect the needs of government, business, culture, education, tourism, energy, health, transport and natural resource management.
- Open dissemination of information and knowledge for use by business, the public at large and disenfranchised groups…to make rational choices in the economy…and for all groups to exercise democratic and human rights.
- Global accessibility of information, not only to international, regional and national information 'highways' but also to 'off ramps' that cater for grassroots communities. (UNECA, 1996).

The significance of this vision of information for public and school librarians as professionals who organize, manage and facilitate information access to customers is profound.

The Manifestos for both the Public and the School Library provide the mission and values within which the Guidelines should be applied and outcomes of services provided are measured. Operational levels, however, are dependent on the context within which each service operates.

It seems to me the fundamental question which needs to be addressed within both the African and Arab librarianship contexts is: How well appreciated is the role of information (within the information society context) by the communities in which librarians operate? The significance of such a question lies in the fact that school and public library usage in our societies has been influenced by the conceptual framework linked to receiver-type information acquisition rather than the inquirer, explorer knowledge creator approach. Hence the school and public libraries are generally used as study rooms and their use is not extended to the exploration of available information resources to enrich or question the information received from teachers, from the media or from personal contacts. The authority-linked teaching methodologies and cultural information exchange systems have contributed to this approach. From the point of view of librarians the restrictive custodial approach to library service (Sturges and Neill, 1998) rather than the information-facilitator role has also deprived customers of opportunities for exposure to alternative approaches to the use of information resources in libraries.

An information society may be described as a society characterized by the rapid growth and use of information and the widespread exploitation of telematic and information technology for access to information which is needed for personal decision making and contribution to socioeconomic development (Jylha-Pyykone, 1997).

Components which have been associated with well-developed information societies are:

- a well-developed technological infrastructure
- a culture that appreciates the importance of information for all aspects of life and a people who are ready to manipulate it creatively to achieve a competitive edge
- an extensive range of educational institutions that support literacy and education
- a library and communication system through which all levels of society are able to access information to meet their needs in pursuit of personal development and contribution to socioeconomic development.

An assumption which is laced through these components is that the use of information communication technology (ICT) is an essential component of a viable information society. The wide usage of a variety of ICT infrastructures in the African environment is evident in the numerous Internet cafés in cities or donor-supported experiments with telecentres in the rural areas. Hence the potential for wider access of ICT exists, but has yet to be developed as a strategic tool for the realization of political pronouncements by governments, through the Economic Commission for Africa, on the creation of the African information society. It has been said that students who utilize technology show increased learning gains compared to those learning in traditional settings (Addo, 2001). The question which we should ask is: Are schools and public libraries in African and Arab societies availing ICT to customers for use or are they limited to administrative purposes?

The other essential component is an attitudinal one which empowers communities to appreciate information as a commodity and use it creatively for knowledge which may give an advantage in personal life and for socioeconomic development. Technical infrastructural needs are identifiable and relatively simpler to advocate for. However, people-linked perceptual needs for

the appreciation of the characteristics and an attitudinal stance necessary for a viable information society structure, are identifiable only through research.

This is the area that offers the greatest opportunity for librarianship within the age of information, provided that librarians, in both school and public arenas are committed to enhancing their roles as information gatekeepers. This means that there should be an analysis of how and under what circumstances each of the systems operates and is accepted as a trustworthy source. In the process, the following need to be explored:

- identify cultural characteristics and contexts which are hospitable to and may form the base for the development of an information society
- identify stages for the facilitation of the development of an information society and the entry points where the library and information professionals may make strategic interventions, whilst building on local contexts and frameworks
- define basic infrastructural requirements for the establishment of a viable information society
- establish collaborative linkages with stakeholders who operate the necessary infrastructures required for an information society, for mutual benefit
- establish advocacy channels which address the various stakeholders both in awareness raising and support for information society developmental goals
- last but not least, both public and school librarians develop a mental attitude of partnership rather than one of separate spaces and segregation of customers and, in a worst case scenario, compete for resources needed for the development of an information society.

National Information Policies

Government support for the establishment of school and public libraries is accepted as the most essential factor for their sustainability. National information policies within which both systems operate are essential for long-term strategies in the provision of information for socioeconomic development. Such national policies need to:

- encompass the understanding of information as a commodity
- define the role of information communication technologies, wireless and digitized networks in the information strategy
- integrate information resource/content as an essential component for the creation of an information society and knowledge for enhancement of decision making at all levels of the society.

Within this national information policy framework, then create the various library development policies that will operate as separate but complementary entities based on an agreed national vision and mission.

The establishment of national information policies within Africa and Arab contexts is an area of fundamental importance. Governments need to be convinced about the importance of committing to the establishment of holistic national information policies by law, in line with their vision of establishing information society through which nations may have a chance to be players in the global economy. The prominence of ICT in information delivery and the need for privatization, at the instigation of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, has resulted in the revival of interest in the formulation of national information policies. More often than not, however, such policies are concerned with information conduits rather than information content. It is imperative, therefore, that library systems, as content providers, participate in all efforts for creating information policies and advocate for the creation of a holistic approach through which clearly defined roles and sustainable financing of activities of all information service stakeholders may be established. This is an area in which high level international advocacy through UNESCO and IFLA is urgently needed. As Mchombu and Miti (1990) have shrewdly observed, past efforts by librarians at establishing national information policies were misguided, since formulation of national policies is the right of governments.

Information Materials

Public and school library services, as information services, need to provide access to information sources carried in various media: from the orally communicated to the electronic. The advancement of information technology offers librarians opportunities to facilitate collection, packaging or repackaging and creating local content in formats suitable to the needs of various communities.

National bibliographic control is the foundation for African and Arab communities to build stocks of locally produced information materials. It is basic as a means of contributing to communications which are unique and have the potential not only to enrich local communities, but also contribute unique content to the global information society, through the Internet or digitized databases. If these library systems contribute to their national information sources, we shall be providing a basis for intra-African and intra-Arab sharing of information resources and establish cooperative programmes.

What is required to encourage the organization and development of comprehensive databases on local materials? I wish to suggest that we need to develop the following:

- a culture of placing value on local and indigenous information in whatever medium
- recognition and acceptance of a moral obligation for its systematic, comprehensive collection and organization for access which meets community needs and preservation of heritage
- commitment to and support of the principle of information as a fundamental right of all citizens

regardless of the level or lack of literacy.

The urgency of strategic thinking and practice in this area cannot be overemphasized. The advent of IT compounds complexities for organization, access, and preservation of ephemera and grey literature because the products are on diskettes, tape or other electronic formats.

One of the criticisms levelled against libraries in developing countries in general and Africa specifically, is the lack of innovative approaches to servicing of information needs of the various categories of customers, as affected by literacy or linguistic constraints. Although orality has now been recognized as a viable medium for information access, there are inadequate programmes for harnessing, preserving and making orally transmitted information accessible to customers as needed.

Available print information is generally of foreign origin because of the poor local publishing record. An essential ingredient for the development of an information culture is the provision of high interest or understandable materials. Innovative approaches to the creation of children's stories as part of their language and reading acquisitions skills programmes have proven to be an invaluable source of relevant reading materials. Examples of such activities are provided by non-governmental organizations in countries such as Senegal and South Africa. Is there a possibility for partnership among the various stakeholders concerned with the realization of the vision articulated in the Manifestos? Which are these stakeholders? I should like to suggest that teacher-librarians, public librarians, teachers, government officials responsible for libraries and for education, the publishing and book distribution sectors, and last but not least, parents need to form alliances and create book development councils. These ideas are not new. It is suggested, however, that the time is right for reviewing strategies. There is a

need to facilitate practical means of advancing the establishment or enhancement of a reading culture which relates closely to the exploitation of information access while linking to the broadly recognized need and concept for the creation of knowledge and thus develop attributes of an information society.

It has been said that Africans have no reading habits outside reading for school or work- linked purposes. The popularity of the Onitsha Market literature (Obiechina 1972) in the 1970s in Nigeria, however, proved beyond doubt that relevance of reading materials is an important factor for sustaining a reading culture. Casual observation of teenage girls' reading habits has indicated a high interest in the Mills and Boon novelettes. Could it be that the simple romance or love story themes address their inner needs? The advent of Internet information sources offers potential areas which librarians could analyse as part of researching customer information needs.

An important area of exploration is the development of South-South distribution channels of materials produced in the various developing nations. It is especially worrying that, for example children's literature such as folk tales from across the African and Arab cultures is not easily obtainable for purchase outside the country or region of publication. In the Anglophone countries, the distribution of intra-regionally published materials is facilitated through a company based in the United Kingdom, with the attendant high handling and foreign exchange costs. Is there no possibility for intra-regional management of book distribution, with commitments for wide distribution in public and school libraries as part of a holistic strategy of creating an information society and intra regional trade? The role of ICT in this area cannot be overestimated.

Training of Personnel

The delivery of the Public and School Library Manifestos provides

an opportunity for us to review the skills which we need if we are to facilitate the infusion of their principles meaningfully and strategically and contribute to the creation of an information society within the developing regions. The challenge is for us to carve out niches in the various elements which underpin a viable and sustainable information society. Issues which we have discussed indicate that the real underpinning for successful programmes which seek to create a viable interactive environment is human resource development. Leadership vision is dependent on thorough understanding and internalisation of the human right to information, not simply as a means to an end, but empowerment inherent in human dignity.

The following areas of human resource development are isolated as areas which need to be addressed urgently, if the window of opportunity is to be exploited successfully:

- better professional grounding which facilitates full appreciation of ethical issues in information service generally, and especially the interactive environment
- technical and professional skills in handling ICT as a tool for enabling efficient access to information in an interactive environment
- development of partnership across librarianship specialisms in the interest of effective and efficient customer services that focus on seamless access and timely delivery of information
- development of excellent communication skills as a base for advocacy and interaction with stakeholders, particularly government officials; the latter's commitment to sustainability of library programmes is indispensable for the successful implementation of the Manifestos and Guidelines
- development of strategic planning skills and their application within the contexts of national strategic vision and national developments.

Raising Awareness and Marketing

The *UNESCO Public Library Manifesto* has been disseminated throughout the world, judging from the various languages through which it is published. It would be worthwhile to find out in how many African and Arab countries has the Manifesto been officially launched by library systems with the moral support of and collaboration with the parent Ministry or funding authorities. The results will be an indicator of how well librarians have matured in the area of marketing their programmes to their stakeholders. The area of marketing is one which needs to be developed by librarians in general and specifically by public and school librarians, if the gains made through workshops and conferences are to be maximized.

There is no doubt that it is a great achievement that the Public Library and the School Library Manifestos are being presented together with the Guidelines to both library systems. It is hoped that joint discussions of these documents by practitioners and government officials will enhance a deep appreciation of the paradigm shift from perceptions that these are totally separate instruments of information delivery. The paper has attempted to illustrate issues which need to be addressed by librarians if the Guidelines are to have a chance in affecting the crucial need for development of an African and Arab information society, if these societies are to become global economic players.

These may be summarized as the need for the appreciation of the paradigm shift from the usage of libraries as buildings to the exploitation of information content as part of the vision of the establishment of information society. In the process librarians also have to develop an appreciation of their own roles as facilitators of the paradigm shift if past failures to plant the library services are to benefit current efforts in establishing a culture of information.

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Lifelong Learning: Bridging the Digital Divide and Planning for the Future

H. Kay Raseroka

Kay Raseroka was born in Kwazulu-Natal in South Africa. She is a citizen of Botwana and has been in librarianship for over two decades during which she has made great contributions to the profession. She is currently the Director, University of Botswana Library Services. Kay has served IFLA in many different capacities, most recently as member of the Executive Board (since 1997) and Governing Board. In 2001 she has been voted President-elect and will succeed Christine Deschamps as President of IFLA in August 2003 for a two-year term.

Some 43 participants from 23 African countries from the Anglophone, Francophone and Arabic librarianship traditions, and six representatives of IFLA and

UNESCO, met at the Ecole des Sciences de l'Information (ESI) in Rabat Morocco to participate in the African/Arab Conference on Public and School Librarianship, held from 19-21 September 2001. This paper summarizes the issues raised by participants during a plenary discussion on 'Lifelong Learning: Bridging the Digital Divide and Planning for the Future'.

The primary objective of the Conference was to present the UNESCO Public and School Library Manifestos and respective Guidelines to the African and Arab professional librarians who work or are experienced in policy formulation or training for public and school librarianship. The Conference provided the opportunity for a review of the state of public and school libraries in the various countries through the presentation of country reports. Last but not least participants debated burning issues which need to be addressed by African and Arab countries, for the Manifestos and Guidelines to facilitate development of the public and

the school library systems and meet the needs of communities in the various countries.

The participants grouped themselves into the Anglophone and Francophone linguistic and librarianship traditions and discussed defined topical public and school librarianship issues. Recommendations from groups were presented at plenary. They were followed by a plenary discussion on Lifelong Learning: Bridging the Digital Divide and Planning for the Future.

This report will focus on thoughts that were put forward at this session, which was informed by the intense debates on and analysis of various case studies as influenced by the contexts in which they operate. The objective is to encourage a debate among IFLA members as part of a broad consultative mechanism addressing the specific issue of Bridging the Digital Divide.

In spite of the environmental influences on the practice of information delivery to communities, participants considered the following areas as fundamental to planning for the future of these libraries if they are to be effective in the development of an information society.

Information as the Core Business of Libraries

The main content of the library is information and not the book. The public library and the school library are communities of users, whose knowledge creation needs are met through the information provided by the library. Partnerships between the public and school libraries are essential if communities' needs for information are to be met seamlessly and effectively, since the majority of public library users in Africa are of school going age. Librarians need to utilize all opportunities to put the library in

the centre of the world of information and knowledge.

Development of Library Associations

Bridging the gap in the African and Arab contexts begins with the self-empowerment of library professionals through the establishment or strengthening of library associations into efficient and effective organizations, whose members share the core values of their profession: the right of all individuals to information. Thus:

- Take charge of themselves and assume responsibility for advocacy in partnership with related associations, and pressure governments to put into effect their belief in the African Information Society Initiative (AISI) through sustained moral and financial support for library development.
- Sensitize and raise awareness of governments and communities that the school library is fundamental to national economic development; provide school library access to digitized information at affordable costs in order to facilitate independent learning and democratization of information.
- Influence policies and practice in teacher training institutions to support and facilitate the development of attitudes and provide skills through which teachers appreciate the usage of multitude information resources in their facilitation of learning processes.
- Promote the teaching of information literacy skills in schools as a basis for life-long learning.

Human Resource Development and Multi-Skilling of Librarians

Develop human resource skills to bridge the digital divide through

the provision of sustained access to local content and the development of positive attitudes and policies to the democratization of access to information:

- Librarians to develop appreciation of IT capabilities and organize themselves to exploit available information and communication technology (ICT) infrastructures and facilities for the creation of local information content.
- Establish a niche through which the application of librarians' expert information and knowledge organization skills, within sectoral applications and in support of the rural areas, becomes a central area of professional practice and provides access to local content for the global information environment.
- Librarians to develop excellent research capabilities to facilitate needs analysis, strategic planning and iterative evaluation of services and exploitation of factual data for enhancement of information services and advocacy activities.

National Information Policies

IFLA and UNESCO commit themselves to form partnerships with related information organizations and with national library associations in influencing governments in the development of holistic develop national information policies.

Cooperation and Networks

Librarians promote and enhance cooperation through the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) for networking of sectoral information sources through listservs which are linked to existing regional infrastructures

such as COMESA (Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa), ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States), SADC (South African Development Community), etc.

Marketing

Librarians commit themselves to marketing the UNESCO Manifestos for the Public and School Libraries and the respective Guidelines to librarians as well as to stakeholders. As part of marketing activities provide translations to local languages for publication by IFLA.

Training and Library Schools

Librarians, IFLA and UNESCO urge library schools to teach the principles in the Manifestos and the core values of the profession, to facilitate the necessary paradigm shifts attitudinally and in practice.

Post-War Rehabilitation of National Information Infrastructures

Considering the devastation of a large number of African countries by wars, librarians advocate for national programmes which are supported by international organization such as IFLA, UNESCO, UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund), UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) etc. to assist in the rehabilitation of national information infrastructures and culture; facilitate leapfrogging through the setting up of digital libraries to preserve and conserve local collections and indigenous information sources and systems.

School Library Development in Africa: The Regional Conference on the Strategies for School Library Development in the ECSA Region, Harare, Zimbabwe, 28-30 November 2000

Enoch H. Chipunza

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Background

For a long time the Zimbabwe Library Association (ZLA) had been concerned with the lack of support for the development of school libraries in the country and indeed in the region as a whole. This concern was raised at different fora in the association's meetings and conferences. Members of Council searched in every direction for a possible solution. A proposal was written targeted at institutions with interest in school libraries. IFLA was the most appropriate and therefore the first to be approached. This assumption was confirmed by IFLA's positive response. Funding was made available to hold the conference that would bring together experts to discuss this issue and chart the way forward to achieve good school libraries in the region. The funding was made available through the IFLA/ALP section of IFLA.

The Zimbabwe Library Association did not waste time in calling the conference. Of course it takes a while to call a conference. Time was required for national associations in the countries to select suitable candidates for the conference and the candidates needed time to collect information for their country reports. The Organizing Committee also needed time to process travel arrangements for these candidates. The conference was held in November 2000, from 28th to 30th. Eight countries were sponsored to attend, and these included Botswana, Kenya, Malawi, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. However, the Kenyan and Malawian delegates did not make it to the conference. In addition to the country delegates, senior librarians from the region were also invited. These were, however, expected to find funding from other sources.

The devaluation of the Zimbabwe dollar, which preceded the conference, caught the conference organizers unaware. Conference money had been transferred into the association's account, so the devaluation meant less value for the money, and this was particularly felt in the purchasing of air tickets and hotel accommodation for delegates. And as if this were not enough, the conference was also caught up in price increases of a number of commodities. In spite of these setbacks, the conference carried on with almost the same steam, as IFLA was quick to inject additional funds. These funds went a long way to enable the conference to proceed.

The Conference

The conference was officially opened by the Acting Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture, Mr. Matimati, who is also the Director, Policy and Planning. From his opening speech it was clear that his Ministry was a keen stakeholder willing to receive the advice and guidance of professionals in the library field. Delegates from other countries remarked, "Did the Acting Perma-

nent Secretary write the speech he read? For if the speech was written by the government official, then Zimbabwe had no hurdles in trying to implement the conference's recommendation". The Acting Secretary assured the delegates that all that was read was the way government viewed school library development.

In his preview, the National Chairman of the Zimbabwe Library Association, Mr. Enoch Chipunza, stressed the need to bear the objectives of the conference in mind throughout the deliberations. The objectives of the conference were to come up with ways to improve school libraries in the countries of the region. This was to be achieved through a good understanding of the state of school libraries in these countries so that participants could make recommendations to overcome both common problems and those specific to some of the countries. Sharing experiences would facilitate the countries learning from each other. The recommendations were to be divided into both short-term objectives (immediate) and long-term objectives. It was important to come up with an ideal situation for school libraries (utopian situation, only achievable when all conditions are favourable) and an achievable state of school libraries to be targeted by all participants on return to their respective countries.

Report on the Country Papers

In this report only highlights from the country papers are given in alphabetic order of the countries.

Botswana

There were many lessons to be learnt from the paper on Botswana. Botswana has free education from primary to secondary school with many free programmes at university level. Although primary education is still not universal, it has reached 95 percent. The Ministries of Labour and Home Affairs, and that of Education, are still responsi-

ble for school libraries. Sadly, Botswana has no government primary school libraries but this function is being fulfilled by the Book Box Service, which already reaches out to 264 primary schools in the remote areas of the country. However, Junior and Senior Secondary school libraries fall under the supervision of the Educational Libraries Division. The interlibrary service was facilitated by linking to the Government Data Network (GDN), a service likely to be upgraded with the proposed Education Data Network (EDN).

Botswana has been favoured by two national policies of education, which ushered in major improvements in school libraries. The first worked for the introduction of school library courses at university, reduction of teaching load for teachers in charge of school libraries, introduction of Library Assistants in secondary schools and the creation of a School Library Coordinator. The Ministry was working towards the creation of the post of full-time librarian in all secondary schools. As a result several posts were created by the Ministry of Education and the library received much needed impetus. The second was equally powerful. It listed libraries and resource centres as facilities that should be standard for every primary school and addressed the issue of secondary school libraries and recommended computer skills for all Junior Certificate and Senior Secondary school children. As a result, by 1996 the school curriculum already recognized these skills.

School Libraries

Unfortunately teachers were transferred without regard for their library qualifications or skills. This rendered their library training a waste of time and money. Luckily, the formal training for librarians that began at the University of Botswana (UB) in 1988 and at Molepolole and Tonota Colleges of Education in 1990 eased the library personnel issue.

There were satisfactory library facilities in all the 205 Community

Junior Secondary Schools (CJSS), with a core book collection averaging three books per pupil. The library was made a prerequisite for all new Community Junior Secondary Schools and funding for the CJSS libraries was also approved to ensure regular additions to stock, based on the school enrolment. By now most senior school librarians in Botswana have either a diploma or certificate in librarianship. The situation in Botswana is quite encouraging and there is hope for improvement.

Ghana

It was learnt that the establishment of schools in Ghana between 1927 and 1948 is attributed to both the government and the missionaries.

School Libraries

Ghana was lucky in that one of the first schools, Achimota, took the first step to have a clearly defined library policy targeted at service to the school community and to prepare pupils for university work. Efforts to improve the lot of school libraries in Ghana started as early as 1940 with a committee appointed by the Carnegie Corporation, which recommended a grant to be given to the Department of Education for school and college libraries. This was taken a step further a decade later by the Central Advisory Committee on Education, which also recommended the provision of libraries in schools and colleges. The survey of 1958 made recommendations for space, ventilation and lighting in addition to book resources and staff. The Ghana Library Board was then asked to manage school and college libraries. It was learnt that Ghana was the first country in Africa to establish a Library Board.

The Ghana Library Board provided library services to schools between 1959 and 1968, but could not continue in the next decade due to financial constraints. Other efforts include those of the Ministry of Education, which also provided for libraries for some time from 1956 and stopped due to lack of finance, and the British Council with its

ODA grants for the purchase of books. By 1991, eleven schools were selected in each of the ten regions to build up model school libraries, and already teachers have been trained to help the school children to use libraries. Ghana further benefited from the establishment of the School and College Library Department within the Ghana Library Board in 1972. This department provided effective and efficient library services to schools and colleges in the country.

Problems and Solutions

The major problems enumerated in the report include those of lack of qualified personnel, library buildings and equipment, poor stocks, low priority accorded to libraries in the school, lack of a national policy on school libraries and lack of finance, among others.

Namibia

The report divides Namibia into seven Education Regions, corresponding to the political regions of the country. It provides useful statistics on schools by education region. The statistics include the number of schools, number of teachers and number of school pupils and also covers education for the disabled.

Strategies for School Library Development

The problems facing Namibia in its efforts to provide an efficient school library service more or less correspond with those faced by Botswana, i.e. lack of reading resources, lack of appreciation for the role of school libraries, lack of library buildings, lack of time for teaching staff to devote to library work, regular transfer of personnel in charge of the library without regard for their role in the library, lack of trained personnel in many schools. However, the report also highlighted the absence of a culture of reading among its population.

The report put up very strong arguments in favour of school libraries. The arguments included the fact that the new education system was resource-based and learner-centred, which depends heavily on resources, therefore a good library service is required.

In view of the above the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture came up with a Strategic Plan for the period 2002-2005, which favoured the development of libraries. The plan was that the Ministry allocates an annual budget for school libraries to the tune of NAD 85,000. The interest shown in library development is attracting donor organizations and NGOs to come to the government's rescue. A lot has already been accomplished with this aid.

The survey conducted in 1997 found that 76 of the 81 Senior Secondary Schools in the country have a purpose built library, while 316 schools of all kinds have libraries or resource centres of some kind and National Priority Area 7 of the Strategic Plan aims to establish a school library or other suitable facility for every school by the end of 2004.

The National Library And Information Service Act of 2000 provides for the development and support of ministry libraries, national, community, school and education libraries. Between 1990 and 1995 book distribution favoured the previously disadvantaged schools; from 1996 the emphasis shifted to interested schools, but is now (from 1997) on those school libraries with less than one book per pupil.

Affirmative Action

Namibia has benefited from affirmative action aimed at improving the less advantaged schools. However, other schools were also provided with periodicals for up-to-date information, with Senior Secondary Schools still receiving fiction as well as curriculum-related library materials.

Important Lessons from the Namibian Experience

Namibia is one country from whose experiences most of the participating countries could benefit. The

Namibian education authorities have become conscious of the need to introduce information technology to school children and this is receiving attention at various levels. Other initiatives include:

SchoolNet Namibia Programme

The report gave a detailed account of an 'insect computerization project' involving sixteen schools, which was conducted by the National Museum of Namibia in collaboration with 51 sponsors. The success of this project, called Insect@thon, has given rise to SchoolNet Namibia, whose final goal is to have all schools connected by 2004.

Namibian Children's Book Forum (NCBF)

Concern for the development of a reading culture made Namibia come up with a good number of projects to promote reading. These included the Children's Literature Awards, which aimed at encouraging a love of reading and a book culture among children and youths and the promotion of the production and distribution of Namibian juvenile literature, and which was characterized by a number of activities aimed at promoting reading. The activities included symposia, talks, writer's workshops, lectures, discussions, radio and television interviews, and children's book awards and prizes for manuscripts.

Other important projects included the following:

READATHON

This is an annual event held in September and celebrated by all schools in the country under the sponsorship of the Finnish Embassy to enable the Namibia Library and Information Service conduct enjoyable story reading sessions.

Writing Competition

This project is targeted at story writing. To achieve this end competitions are organized in which writers are encouraged to submit stories to the organizers. The sto-

ries are grouped and judged by appropriate panels of judges. Writers are encouraged by the prizes on offer. As a result many writers have come up in Namibia.

Namibia also reported some interesting community initiatives, among which is the Oshikango (Ondangwa East) Library, which was built from beer bottles, and the food for work programme in Katima Mulilo, in which community members built a library using traditional materials such as mud and pole and grass for thatching.

South Africa

The South African report highlighted the effects of the racial divide between the white and black communities, perpetuated during the colonial period. In apartheid South Africa's racially based education, schools for whites had good libraries while those for blacks had none. This fact was confirmed by the two government-sponsored surveys of 1997 and 1999. However, since the curriculum of the day stressed rote-learning, there was no interest in libraries in South Africa, as a result libraries were little used even where available, a fact confirmed by the Overduin and De Wit survey of 1986.

School libraries only began to improve by the end of the 1980s due to efforts made to promote library development and educate teachers on how to use library resources. The authorities in charge of Coloured and Indian schools adopted a centralized school library policy, which permitted the appointment of school librarians and the setting aside of resources budgets for libraries. This was followed by vigorous library education programmes.

The lack of funds curtailed all positive efforts and by 1993 all had ceased. Existing school librarians had lacked attention from the early 1990s, and by 1996 retrenchment was already threatening their operations and their very existence as School Boards enforced the national pupil/teacher ratio. This particu-

larly affected the former white schools, as the majority government could not afford the luxury of supporting some sectors of the community while neglecting others. Full-time class teachers were now expected to take charge of the school library as well.

When the Department of Education audit of school facilities was made in 1997 it revealed that less than 30 percent of schools had libraries. In 1999 when the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) was commissioned to investigate school libraries further it also confirmed the findings of the Department of Education, reporting huge disparities between provinces.

Like most countries, South Africa experienced a period of intense change in education after independence. Like Zimbabwe, the change may have been attempted too quickly for the economy to be able to cope with it.

The government policy of 1998 redressed the funding of school libraries. Curriculum 2005 gave school libraries a boost by which they were set to benefit from increased project work. However, contrary to this, teachers in the poor former black schools did not change from chalk and board and textbook teaching. This is largely because they lacked the resources needed for this change. The National Policy Framework for School Library Standards (1998), still awaiting presentation to the relevant education authorities, has, among some of its major weaknesses, a lack of quantitative standards, although it managed to explain the role of school libraries in the new curriculum. However, its major advantages include its offer of alternative services: classroom boxes; libraries for clusters of schools; school and community libraries; regional resource centres; and the virtual library system.

The delegate suggested that, "if we really believe that educational reform will fail without school libraries, then we have to speak

with a far louder voice to a wide range of people".

Tanzania

This report traced library development in Tanzania back to colonial times when there were a few libraries meant for settlers and the East African Literature Bureau, which established a few centres that operated mobile library services to a few schools.

It was reported that, after independence in early 1960, the government revived library building efforts and passed the 1963 Act, which established the Tanzania Library Services Board (TLSB) the following year. The TLSB was to spearhead a public library service in the country and it included a children and schools division. Its library services included book box services and advisory and consultancy services to schools. It was sad to learn that service to schools ceased in the mid 1980s due to lack of financial resources and transport.

The lack of a clear regulated government policy left libraries to depend on well-wishers until the Ministry of Education and Culture, in cooperation with TLSB, issued School Library Resources Centre Regulations which required every school to have a library within the Resource Centre. By now one sixth of government schools have a modern library and five out of six schools have libraries that meet modern library requirements. The Ministry of Education, in cooperation with TLSB, has made major contributions to school library development in Tanzania.

Limitations

The limiting factors listed in the Tanzanian report included the more common problems of personnel, resources, funding and accommodation, and added to the list the attitude towards the library, the misuse of libraries and the lack of a reading habit among the children and staff.

Useful Strategies from Tanzania

The report gave a plan of action for Tanzania, which can be useful for the region. The plan involves regular inspection of school libraries by professional librarians, involvement of the Ministry of Education in fund raising for school libraries, involvement of community members in school life, appointment of someone to coordinate school libraries in the country, appointment of a trained librarian to manage the school library, setting aside of funds for school library development, curriculum changes that encourage self-reliant study habits, provision of comprehensive collection of learning materials by government, that librarians be more innovative to promote reading and love for books, ready availability of materials, a more aggressive approach to provision of library services outside urban centres, and the provision of an adequate annual library budget by school heads.

Conclusion

In the conclusion the report stressed the centrality of the school library in the school and its importance in the life of the child.

Zambia

Zambia's population is officially given as just over 10 million inhabitants with an estimated current figure of about 12 million. Contrary to the situation in other neighbouring countries such as Zimbabwe, most of the people in Zambia live in the urban areas.

Of the 600 schools, 400 are senior or high schools. It was learnt that the former all-white schools had purpose-built and well stocked libraries with full-time librarians, while the former black schools did not have any library facilities.

The majority government did not improve the situation, instead most of the existing school libraries were turned into classrooms, and new schools built had no provision for a library. The teacher-centred type of learning, in which a teacher is the source of all information, did not encourage libraries. However, the Zambia Library Service (ZLS) start-

ed to serve school libraries through library centres, loaning materials to institutions and schools. The Library Policy strengthened the ZLS by providing finance to support public, school and teacher training college libraries.

In the early 1990s the ZLS launched a campaign for school libraries with the help of donors. Many libraries were set up. These libraries are used as models for policy makers to prove that implementing the policy can change the situation. Already the Ministry of Education has moved to pupil-centred learning.

Libraries have proved useful in Zambia as is seen in boys reducing drug abuse, a drastic reduction in drinking and the improvement in examination results. Some school heads are already reclaiming library buildings. The ZLS and the Zambia Library Association (ZLA) train teachers to run school libraries. Although the library's image is still poor there are signs of improvement as the two organizations have formed a united front to improve libraries.

It is worrying that teachers who have been trained to run school libraries are being transferred or promoted to senior teachers, deputy head teachers or head teachers without regard for the library. At present school librarians exist mostly in private schools.

Developments in library services did not lose sight of information technology. Zambia included IT in all library plans and the government now provides computers to schools, while the Zambia Library Service has been computerizing its public libraries since the year 2000.

Zimbabwe

Education and Libraries

The Zimbabwean report opens with the background to the education system in the country and proceeds to show how library development is intertwined with the education system. Although the differential system of education that had existed

before independence had been dismantled, provisions still reflected the old differences. The absence of a libraries policy in the country is one major disadvantage in library development efforts. Neither libraries nor reading are covered in the current education policy. As a result the disparity between urban and rural information resources as well as that between high density and low density areas in the towns still exists. However, the report recognized the major efforts of the majority government to expand education; it put emphasis on building schools in the rural and disadvantaged areas. It is a pity some of its noble ideas, such as free education, could not be maintained due to the heavy financial investment required. But the shift of emphasis from a few to the majority did the country a lot of good; more citizens can now make their contribution to the national efforts.

It was noted that, despite the above efforts, libraries still remained a privilege of the urban dwellers in a country whose economy is agribased and with the majority of the population residing in the rural areas. "The majority of the Africans has no access to reading materials" (Library Commission, 1970).

Libraries still rank very low in Zimbabwe. There could be many reasons but the fact that libraries have not identified themselves with national goals of development is certainly one major reason. School libraries have been hard hit. They lack representation because if school authorities are not fully conversant with the role of the school library in the school how can they vote funds to it? In class, however, the teachers never have adequate time to give children all they ought to learn, thus requiring pupils to supplement their class work through further reading, and the library comes in handy. Furthermore, the expansion in education after independence has led to a higher pupil/teacher ration, which leads to an increased need to have access to reading materials. Unfortunately this is not being matched

with developments in school libraries. School libraries still suffered from poor funding, lack of trained personnel, poor literary resources, and poor, or no accommodation at all.

The report uses information from a survey on school libraries carried out by the writer. The survey used workshop participants at five different workshops as its sample population, totalling 130 respondents. On funding, 98 percent reported that they had no annual allocation for library books and other library materials. Those few who reported having an annual allocation received it from the school authorities and not the government.

Personnel

Some 92 percent of the respondents (in charge of the library) did not have any formal library training and 79 percent had no training of any kind. They were left to find their own way in the library. As a result, when asked to indicate their need for training 98 percent of them checked A = 'highest'. Therefore the need for training these people is paramount for the development of school libraries. In most instances language teachers were put in charge of the library with neither the required training nor time to attend to the library; as a result the library duties suffered.

It was reported that there was no stability among library personnel in charge of school libraries. Some 59 percent of the respondents had worked for less than one year in the library, 23 percent for between one and five years, while only 18 percent for more than five years. As a result school libraries in Zimbabwe suffer from the lack of both trained personnel and experienced personnel.

Literary Resources and Books

The survey revealed that the situation was worse in the rural areas, where there are no libraries to speak about. Only those schools which had benefited from donations and programmes run by local and international organizations had

libraries and these were thin and far apart. In the survey 63 percent of the respondents reported between 0 and 500 volumes in their collection, 35 percent had between 501 and 1000 and only 2 percent had above 1000 volumes.

Note that the collection starts with 0 volumes. Indeed, some schools had no libraries, therefore they checked zero under collection size. The situation is different in the urban areas where some schools reported good libraries and this has led to higher percentages in the above figures.

Information Seeking Patterns

It was reported that children in schools with libraries had developed better information seeking habits. Reading habits and information seeking habits were improved in schools where there were trained librarians.

Networking and Interlibrary
Lending Services

In the urban areas communication between schools was mostly by phone, and e-mail was also used, where available. Rural schools still relied on letters and messengers for communication. However, most of the communication the schools engaged in was not for seeking information. It was mostly just to pass messages, make announcements and give notices. There is no meaningful interlibrary lending in schools. Only 1 percent of the respondents reported some form of interlibrary lending between schools. This only involved teaching staff loans. Resource sharing was not encouraged as a matter of principle. Even universities and colleges did not allow sixth form students to use their libraries.

Efforts of Various Stake Holders

The report highlighted the efforts of the various stakeholders in the provision of library facilities.

Zimbabwe Library Association
(ZLA)

The Zimbabwe Library Association takes the centre stage, and is

involved in lobbying government and other organizations to support library development. It is also engaged in community awareness programmes that are targeted at improving library services. It uses every means possible to reach out, the TV, radio and newspapers. The association is also involved in organizing library appreciation courses and workshops for library personnel. The ZLA has seized every opportunity to forge agreements with interested parties to cooperate in library service improvement. The cooperation made in 1997 with the Scandinavian library associations has produced some very good results.

Government

Government has set up commissions to make investigations and recommend a course of action to improve library service in the country. These have led to the Varley report of 1950, the Greenfield report of 1970 and the Alison report of 1980, all of which made their mark on library developments. The Alison report led to the creation of the National Library and Documentation Service (NLDS) to spearhead library developments in the country. The Better Schools Programme funded by the Netherlands government and the World Link Programme are results of government lobbying. The former programme seeks to develop school libraries in clusters to be served by the same resource centre and the latter has as its thrust the introduction of computers in schools. Government has introduced library training at the polytechnics in the two major cities of Harare and Bulawayo and recently at the National University of Science and Technology (NUST). The polytechnics offer diploma courses while NUST offers a degree programme.

Zimbabwe Book Development
Council (ZBDC)

The ZLA also cherishes the efforts of the ZBDC in the promotion of reading through such efforts as the Children's Reading Tent held during the Zimbabwe International Book Fair (ZIBF), the Children's

Book Forum, the National Book Week, and the Book Fund Project. The ZLA sits on the governing board of the ZBDC and ensures that reading and library matters are taken seriously. The Book Fund Project has given grants to 600 schools to purchase locally published books over a period of three years starting from 1999.

Rural Library and Resources Development Programme (RLRDP)

Set up in 1991, the programme has injected a lot of energy into library development in rural Zimbabwe and is currently working with 250 community libraries, which it has funded. RLRDP's efforts have brought tremendous improvements to those communities where it is present.

Zimbabwe International Book Fair (ZIBF)

The ZIBF is a most welcome annual event. It provides a wonderful opportunity for librarians to come together and share ideas and experiences. The ZLA has capitalized on this event to make friends with associations from other countries. Already some very useful cooperative agreements have been established through the ZIBF platform.

Comments

It is of great concern that school libraries still lag behind in development despite the efforts recorded above. However, the association is encouraged by the fact that gains have been made and that there does not seem to be any sign of giving up by the library fraternity.

Recommendations and Conclusion for Zimbabwe

- As a matter of urgency, Zimbabwe should adopt a school library policy to guide library development.
  It is recommended that the Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture seriously considers reviving the post of Senior Schools Librarian to spearhead school library development in the country.
- Every school should have a library.

- The Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture should make the inclusion of a library building a condition for registration of new schools.
- There is a need for a reasonable annual per capita grant set aside specifically for school library resources.
- The ministry should establish posts for school librarians in all schools in the country. These posts must be filled by trained librarians or qualified teachers, with some library training or skills. This could be effected in stages, starting with high schools, coming down to secondary schools and then primary schools.
- Where a teacher is in charge of the library, he or she should be given a reduced teaching load to be able to accommodate library duties.
- School librarians should be recognized as essential for the school and be graded according to qualifications and experience, just as is done for teachers.
- Library studies should be included in teacher's training colleges so that interested teachers can take the course.
- The class timetables should include a library period, so that children can develop a liking for using the library.
- Government should strive to provide schools with computers.
- The school curriculum should include a course on computer studies so that children and staff are exposed to IT. This is essential if the future nation is to be comfortable with the use of computers in their every day life and work.

Conference Recommendations

The conference made important recommendations, emanating from different papers. The recommendations were divided into two categories, Immediate Objectives and Long-term objectives. From the discussions that ensued it was agreed that each country should ensure that the resolutions of the confer-

ence were effected and that funds allowing a follow-up conference of the participating countries should be organized to review the progress made. It was suggested that IFLA be sensitized about this need. The recommendations formed a major component of the solutions which were found to be essential for the implementation of a viable school library programme and they are as follows:

Immediate Objectives

1. The Ministries of Education should pass a library policy to enforce the establishment of libraries in every school.
2. There must be an annual allocation for library materials based on pupil/student numbers.
3. There must be an affirmative action favouring rural school libraries development.
4. Teachers in charge of school libraries must receive the necessary training to man the library as a stop-gap measure.

Long Term Objectives

1. School libraries must meet the stipulated minimum standards for a school library as set by the professional body from time to time.
2. All countries in the region should work towards having a trained librarian in every school library.
3. The Ministries of Education to work in close collaboration with the professional library association in existence in the country and seek its leadership in library matters.
4. Every school must have a library.
5. Library studies should be included in the curriculum of the Teacher's Training Colleges.
6. All school libraries should at least have the stipulated minimum core collection.
7. The countries of the region should work towards the promotion of indigenous publications.
8. All libraries should have computers for information access.
9. The idea of a follow-up conference was to be pursued to allow the region to review progress.

Conclusion and Observations

It became clear that there were similar problems facing school libraries in most countries of the region. Major among them were financial, lack of expertise, scarcity of resources and lack of library policy. These problems were compounded by other factors not so obvious to the eye, for example, the scarcity of library resources is made more complex by the fact that besides the lack of finance, most of the materials required for school libraries are still imported. Importation has far greater repercussions than is easily thought. It requires foreign currency to import materials and usually the supplying country has a stronger currency than that of the importing country (often a developing country). The price of the materials is pegged on costs that do not reflect the realities of our economies and so often erode the very fragile economies of the developing countries. In addition, there are also other costs that come with importation of materials, which the developed countries do not have to bear, freight charges, customs duty, storage, etc. The lack of local publications deprives library users of materials with local background. Children are better motivated when they read books set in familiar backgrounds.

The question of personnel poses the challenges of local training facilities in the region. This is further exacerbated by the fact that most education administrators are not conversant with library services and so do not give the necessary support. In almost all the countries represented, the question of lack of trained library personnel came up. There are either no library schools or there are few library schools in these countries to produce the required manpower. Faced with the reality that it is expensive to support a student overseas or in another country, the region is experiencing manpower shortages. Most developing countries still need support to establish library schools locally.

It became clear that, if positive results are to come from the efforts of the developing countries to improve their lot, there is a need for participation by the countries of the developed world. Only then can the efforts of the developing countries succeed. Making readers of people of the developing countries will no doubt benefit the developed countries as well, as once they are adequately provided with reading materials, the people of the developing countries will buy more and more books, and the developed countries supply most of these. The same applies to computers; once people in the developing countries become used to using computers to find information, all countries will benefit, some directly, as they earn from increased sales, while others will benefit indirectly. As the people of all nations become better educated, there are many benefits to be earned, social benefits, faster rate of development and political maturity will ensue.

The benefits are endless. The conference was an eye opener and its benefits were immeasurable.

Countries of the region had a chance to share experiences and share ideas. It was gratifying to see how some of the problems facing one country had already been solved in another country. A lot more was learnt from discussion sessions as more direct questions could be addressed, quite often with examples of what had been done. All expressed a wish for similar chances in the future.

Presenters of Country Papers

Country reports were presented by the following people listed below in alphabetical order of the countries.

Botswana: Margaret Baffour-Awuah (Ms) (Principal Librarian, Education Libraries Division, Botswana National Library Service)

Ghana: Margaret Ninsin (Ms), (Participant)

Namibia: Joan Diedericks (Ms), (National Library Service of Namibia)

South Africa: Genevieve Hart (Ms), University of Western Cape & LIASA School Libraries & Youth Services Interest Group)

Tanzania: Truphina Nsemwa (Ms)

Zambia: N. Kabyema (Regional Libraries Coordinator, Zambia Library Service)

Zimbabwe: Enoch Chipunza (Mr)(Librarian, School of Social Work; National Chairman, Zimbabwe Library Association)

Special Papers

The conference also heard twelve papers from the librarians listed below. These papers were also taken into consideration in the conference recommendations.

1. 'Management of school libraries in Eastern, Central and Southern Africa' by Professor S.M. Made, Head, Department of Library and Information Sciences, National University of Science and Technology, Bulawayo.
2. 'Creating an enabling environment for the development of school libraries' by Audrey Mhlanga, Librarian, Bindura University of Science and Education.
3. 'Changing perceptions on librarianship: the possibility/impossibility of the mission' by Eniya Gunda, Ruware Primary School, Marondera.
4. 'Secondary school libraries in Zimbabwe: the way forward' by Robin Doust, Librarian, Bulawayo Public Library, Bulawayo.
5. 'Solutions to the state of school libraries in Zimbabwe: a personal view' by Eric Maunze, Librarian, Prince Edward School, Harare.
6. 'Alternative strategies for school library development: qualities of a school librarian' by Ivy W. Nazare, Librarian, Girls High School, Harare.
7. 'Innovativeness and proactivity in Zimbabwe school librarians:

the situation on the ground, what needs to be done' by F. Motsi, Danhiko School, Harare.

8. 'The purpose and role of a school library' by S.R. Dube, Director, National Library and Documentation Services, Harare.

9. 'The use of multimedia technology in school.' by Timothy Tapfumaneyi, Zimbabwe Librarian, Broadcasting Corporation, Radio 3, Harare.

10. 'Facilitating shared information access among school libraries: a personal vision for implementing telematics in Zimbabwe school libraries' by Mondli Sibanda, Law Library Information Specialist, University of Zimbabwe.

11. 'ICT in education: appropriate technology?' by Jane Campbell, Head, Library and Information Services and Arts, British Council, Harare.

12. 'Report of the 29th Annual International Association of School Librarianship Conference in Malmö, Sweden 6-10 August 2000' by Scolisiwe Ngwenya, Librarian, Coglan School, Bulawayo.