The National Library
in the Library Community:
Current Developments and Trends

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Library historians will undoubtedly view the decade of the 1960s as the high point in the development of Canadian libraries and librarianship. The growth of the academic library collections, the burgeoning of new library buildings to house them and the unprecedented emphasis on library budgets all wrought dramatic changes. If such phenomena were more evident in the area of university libraries, the whole library profession in Canada could share the satisfaction as the Canadian Library Association (CLA) looked back in 1967 to twenty years of real achievement and progress in the advancement of libraries and librarianship on every level. One of the CLA's most persuasive and persistent campaigns had been for a national library for Canada; one of its most satisfying rewards was the realization of a new National Library building, opened in Ottawa during Canada's Centenary.

   Assessing the decade, it is generally agreed that the impact created by the publication of the Williams Report in September 1962 provided the turning point for Canadian university libraries. The idea for the survey grew out of a library committee appointed by the then National Conference of Canadian Universities and Colleges (NCCUC) under the chairmanship of the National Librarian, Dr. W. Kaye Lamb. Its purpose was to gauge the level of research collections in the humanities and social sciences in Canada's largest academic libraries in order to discover which ones might serve as the nucleus for comprehensive research collections along the line of the Farmington Plan in the United States. Through the personal initiative of Dr. Lamb, funds were obtained from the Council on Library Resources in Washington, D.C., and Edwin Williams, Counsellor to the Director of Collections of Harvard University, agreed to conduct the study. Fourteen libraries were selected for the survey, totalling at the time 5,847,651 volumes. Williams found that except in the areas of Canadiana and medieval studies there were no outstanding collections in any major field and notable weaknesses even in the broader field of general acquisitions. Because of the "relative weakness and immaturity of Canadian libraries," he urged that priority be given to improving basic collections rather than establishing a Farmington Plan for Canada. His report recommended that the National Library of Canada should become the centre for the accumulation and dissemination of information on library holdings and plans for major library acquisitions. To this end, it was recommended that an Office of Library Resources be established in the National Library with one of its functions to

encourage libraries to build strong, coordinated collections and to bring to Canada publications that would add to the country's total library resources.[1]

The Williams Report aroused the concern of the Canadian university community and sparked immediate reaction from the administrators of the institutions surveyed. About the same time, 1963, the Canadian Association of College and University Libraries (CACUL) was established. The founding members of CACUL and those who guided policy during its formative years were librarians of Canada's largest university libraries who, a decade later, broke away to establish an independent body, the Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL). CACUL brought its corporate influence to bear in support of academic library needs and made strongly worded presentations to NCCUC, the National Library of Canada, and to the Bladen Commission which had been set up in 1964 to study the cost of financing higher education in Canada.[2] Among several related concerns, CACUL conveyed to the Bladen Commission its expectations for the National Library of Canada vis-à-vis the university library community:

> It now seems clear that the task ahead requires cooperation not only in the use of our collections for research, but also cooperation in the planning of our research collections, in acquiring them and cataloguing them, and in developing new bibliographical techiques employing automated data-processing. All our libraries will be employed at one point or another but the major initiative for planning and coordination of our efforts should be taken by the National Library....[3]

This was the first in a succession of statements and recommendations highlighting the role of the National Library in planning and coordination. Other suggestions would come from a variety of major surveys and reports commissioned by bodies investigating the present state and future development of library and information services in Canada. One of these was the nation-wide survey of all academic and research library resources co-sponsored by CACUL and the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada and carried out by Robert B. Downs in 1967. Referring to both the National Library and the National Science Library, Downs emphasized a role of "vigorous leadership" and presented a list of recommendations relating specifically to their responsibilities.[4] An indication of the heightened priority accorded at the time to the consideration of Canada's academic and research library resources was reflected in the "Libraries for Tomorrow" Conference held in Montreal on 19-20 April 1968, to coincide with the publication of the Downs Report. Participation came not only from librarians but from some fifty university presidents, deans of graduate faculties, members of library committees and

1   Edwin E. Williams, *Resources of Canadian University Libraries for Research in the Humanities and Social Sciences*, a report of a survey for the National Conference of Canadian Universities and Colleges (Ottawa, 1962).
2   Commission of the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, (Vincent Bladen, Chairman), *Financing Higher Education in Canada* (Toronto, 1965).
3   Canadian Association of College and University Libraries, *Forecast of the Cost of Academic Library Service in Canada, 1965-1975*, a brief to the Bladen Commission on the Cost of Higher Education (Waterloo, Ontario, 1964), p. 28.
4   Robert B. Downs, *Resources of Canadian Academic and Research Libraries* (Ottawa, 1967). *Ressources des Bibliothèques d'Université et de Recherche au Canada* (Ottawa, 1967).

representatives of federal and provincial agencies invited to join the sessions on the second day. The conference endorsed the Downs recommendations for the completion of the national union catalogue, its conversion to machine-readable form, the provision of national union lists of serials and other bibliographical services, the coordination of collection activities, and the establishment of a national communications network among research libraries. These were forwarded as resolutions to the President of the Treasury Board of Canada urging that both the National Library and the National Science Library receive adequate support to perform these essential services for the research and library community of Canada.[5]

It was an opportune time. The federal government was already beginning to concern itself with a national information policy after several studies commissioned by various agencies clearly identified this as a federal government responsibility.[6] Many of them made reference to the role of the National Library and the National Science Library. Guy Sylvestre, who had succeeded W. Kaye Lamb as National Librarian of Canada, cited these recommendations and added several others when he presented a brief on behalf of the National Library to the Senate Committee on Science Policy in June 1969. He identified as major issues the rationalization or coordination of collections on a national basis and the improvement and coordination of library systems. He saw the future role of the National Library "as the very centre of a national network and as part of international library networks." He declared that if the National Library of Canada were to carry out its mission effectively in the years ahead, it was obvious that "it would have to have at its disposal much greater human and financial resources."[7]

A new National Library Act was passed in September 1969 which gave the National Librarian the power to coordinate library services within federal government libraries and to enter into voluntary cooperative agreements with libraries and related agencies in the private sector.

THE SEVENTIES: DEVELOPMENTS AND DILEMMAS

Perception of its role, functions and responsibilities has never been a problem for the National Library of Canada. From the beginning librarians and others have articulated what the Library should be doing for the library community. In the formative years librarians were inclined to use the services offered by the Library of Congress as their gauge. In the sixties, assessments tended toward the more objective channels of surveys conducted by individuals or bodies. The seventies saw

5   AUCC/CACUL Report on the Libraries for Tomorrow Conference, Montreal, 19-20 April 1968, AUCC files.
6   See, for example, Science Council of Canada Reports: *A Policy for Scientific and Technical Information Dissemination* (The Katz Report), SCC Report No. 6 (Ottawa, 1969); *The Role of the Federal Government in Support of Research in Canadian Universities* (The Macdonald Report), SCC Special Study No. 7, prepared for the Science Council of Canada and the Canada Council (Ottawa, 1969); *Scientific and Technical Information in Canada*, Pt. 1 (The Tyas Report), SCC Special Study No. 8 (Ottawa, 1969), Pt. II, chapter 6, "Libraries," SCC Special Study No. 8 (Ottawa, 1969).
7   "Brief submitted by the National Librarian to the Senate Special Committee on Science Policy," Canada, Senate, Special Committee on Science Policy, *Proceedings*, No. 78, Appendix 188, (Ottawa, 1969), quoted statements from pages 12 and 33.

a proliferation of studies initiated by the National Library itself — studies conceived with foresight and perception and arriving at meaningful conclusions. The frustration then, as in the previous two decades, stemmed from the clear gap between arriving at an awareness of possible solutions to identified problems and the obstacles impeding their implementation.

It is obvious that in an article of this scope one cannot attempt to assess, or even describe, all the significant developments which have taken place at the National Library since the opening of the new building in 1967.[8] A selective review may serve to place in perspective not just its achievements but also some of the more challenging issues which face the National Library of Canada in its relationships with the total library community.

The Pervasive Reality of the Computer: the National Scene

In 1970, as part of the administrative reorganization following the enactment of the new National Library Act, a Research and Planning Branch was set up at the National Library, including a Systems Development Division. Two years earlier a team of National Library researchers had started work with a management consultant firm on a systems development study exploring the feasibility of computerizing the various operations of the Library and establishing a machine-based union catalogue. The Systems Development Project Report, published in 1970, recommended a multi-phase program of computerization. One of its significant proposals was that the National Union Catalogue be developed as "the hub of a Canadian bibliographic data bank network." One of its main recommendations called for an integral bibliographic system for the National Library comprising such operations as acquisitions, cataloguing, serials control, *Canadiana*, the union catalogue and union lists.[9]

The report emphasized the need for standardization if the proposed bibliographical system were to utilize for union catalogues and union lists the bibliographical data available from the Canadian library community and from other countries. It pointed out that the present manual union catalogue had long been in difficulties owing to a lack of standardization. An invitational Conference on Cataloguing Standards, convened by the National Librarian in May 1970, resulted in the establishment of task groups: one to explore and make recommendations on cataloguing standards; another to work on a Canadian MARC (machine-readable cataloguing) format for monographs and serials. A special task group was also set up to study the nature and functions of the Canadian (National) Union Catalogue and to make recommendations on its conversion to a machine-readable format capable of serving a national network with international interfaces. Each of these task groups was composed of librarians from the field who had acknowledged

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8   For background information, the reader is referred to the author's earlier work entitled *The National Library of Canada: an Analysis of the Forces which contributed to its Establishment and to the Identification of its Role and Responsibilities* (Ottawa, 1973); and to a more recent conference paper entitled "Canada's National Library Services," eds., *Canadian Libraries in Their Changing Environment* (Downsview, Ont., 1977), pp.271-315.

9   *An Integrated Information System for the National Library of Canada; a Summary of the Report of the Systems Development Project* (Ottawa, 1970). (The full report was not made public.)

expertise in the areas to which they were assigned. The National Library's Research and Planning Branch was appointed as the permanent secretariat to coordinate the work of the groups.

The Canadian Task Group on Cataloguing Standards presented a report in 1972.[10] It provided standards for the future development of union catalogues and union lists and recommended that the National Library assume responsibility for the standardization and publication of library classifications for categories of Canadian material since the Library of Congress (LC) classification schedules were considered inadequate. Prompt implementation resulted in classification schedules for Canadian history and Canadian literature as well as the completion of a Canadian law schedule to be included in the LC classification for law. The National Library also accepted responsibility for the development of subject headings in English for all Canadian materials and for subject headings in French for all fields of knowledge. The responsibility for these and related ongoing programs was placed in the Office of the Library Standards set up in 1973.

The National Library acted with similar despatch in response to the Report of the MARC Task Group.[11] In January 1973, a permanent Canadian MARC Office was established to develop formats for the exchange of bibliographic data on all library materials. Since then the program has advanced in an impressive manner, thus bringing Canada prominently into the mainstream among those countries with developed national MARC formats. (NLC has negotiated agreements with several of these countries and the expanded Canadian MARC Distribution Service includes foreign tape services for which exchange agreements and conversion programs have been completed.) Along with the development of the Canadian MARC program, implementation of the automated production of *Canadiana* progressed to its final stage. An integral part of the *Canadian* system has been the development of computerized authority files to include subject heading authorities and authority headings for federal and provincial government publications as well as for non-governmental publications. The National Library's automated control system has a direct relationship to standards development. It has also become a significant area of cooperative endeavour with other established Canadian and international systems such as the Library of Congress and the University of Toronto Library Automation System (UTLAS).

The Canadian Union Catalogue Task Group

The terms of reference given to the special Task Group on the Canadian Union Catalogue in 1972 called for a research approach to various facets of the investigation relating to the feasibility, maintenance, and use of a machine-based union catalogue. The task group was composed of senior librarians representing all types of libraries and all parts of the country under the chairmanship of Basil Stuart-Stubbs, then Librarian of the University of British Columbia. Sub-groups

10   Canadian Task Group on Cataloguing Standards, *Cataloguing Stndards: the Report* (Ottawa, 1972).

11   MARC Task Group, *Canadian MARC; a Report of the Activities of the MARC Task Group resulting in a Recommended Canadian MARC Format for Monographs and a Canadian Marc Format for Serials* (Ottawa, 1972).

and individuals working under contract with the National Library carried out a number of related studies. For example, to define the role of the Canadian Union Catalogue in a national library network, a study was done on the nature and dimensions of interlibrary lending in Canada.[12] Another purposefully reviewed the literature pertaining to interlibrary loans.[13] A national survey sought to compile documentation on the number and nature of union catalogues, union lists, cataloguing support services and other cooperative projects maintained by libraries and groups of libraries across Canada on the assumption that, although separately created and maintained, these constituted the elements of a bibliographical network.[14] The task group came to terms with the nature and role of a Canadian Bibliographical Data Base — a master file, the most comprehensive in the country, would be constructed from MARC records produced by national libraries around the world as well as original records supplied by Canadian libraries.[15] In 1973, the task group submitted its "First Report and Interim Recommendations," to which the National Librarian replied.[16] In March 1976, a plenary session of the task group approved the "Final Report," which was published in abstract with the "Preliminary Statement" of the National Librarian one year later.[17]

The philosophy underlying the report's main recommendations was the equalization of opportunity of access to library resources for all residents in all the provinces and territories of Canada. It presented an evolutionary plan calling for the creation of a decentralized National Library Network composed of three interrelated components: a bibliographic network, a resource network, and a communications network. Its recommendations assumed that in the financing of these three systems the Government of Canada would accept a major responsibility, working through its established agencies, the National Library of Canada and the Canada Institute for Scientific and Technical Information (CISTI), in cooperation with the provincial and territorial governments and with any other governments, organizations or institutions responsible for maintaining libraries (Recommendation 1)[18] The Canadian Union Catalogue would constitute one element in the national *bibliographic network* and would be developed as part of a bibiographic system in cooperation with existing regional and/or provincial systems. The *resource network* would be created from the holdings of the National Library and other federal government libraries designated as resources libraries across the nation, and

12   Basil Stuart-Stubbs, Margaret Friesen and Douglas McInnes, *Interlibrary Loan in Canada; a Report of a Survey* (Ottawa, 1976).
13   Basil Stuart-Stubbs, Kathleen Nichol, Margaret Friesen and Douglas McInnes, *Survey and Interpretation of the Literature of Interlibrary Loan* (Ottawa, 1976).
14   National Library of Canada, Canadian Union Catalogue Task Group, *Survey of Union Catalogues, Union Lists, and Bibliographical Services in Canadian Libraries* (Ottawa, 1973).
15   Roderick M. Duchesne, *Canadian National Bibliographical Data Base Study, The Report* (Ottawa, 1974).
16   The Canadian Union Catalogue Task Group, "First Report and Interim Recommendations, Ottawa, October 29, 1973," *National Library News*, Special Issue (January 1974): 3-12; "Statement by the National Librarian on the First Report and Interim Recommendations of the Canadian Union Catalogue Task Group, Ottawa, October 29, 1973," *Ibid.*, pp. 13-19.
17   "National Librarian's Preliminary Statement on The Report of the Canadian Union Catalogue Task Group" and "Abstract of the Canadian Union Catalogue Task Group Final Report, 1976," *National Library News*, 9, no. 2 (March-April 1977): 3-17.
18   Canadian Union Catalogue Task Group, *Final Report to the National Librarian of Canada, March 1976* (Ottawa, 1979).

unique collections held in other libraries. The National Library of Canada would work with appropriate agencies in developing a plan for the support of outstanding collections of national importantce at university, public and special libraries. A periodical resource centre and a storage center would be the responsibility of the National Library and CISTI. The concept of the *communications network* envisioned the actual transfer or delivery of the items to which access was provided by the other network components. The report recommended that costs of transmitting materials among libraries should be absorbed, or at least regionally equalized, by the federal government.

The innovative aspect of the Canadian Union Catalogue Task Group Report was its departure from the previous emphasis on a centralized national system such as was recommended in earlier studies, including those of Downs (1967) and Macdonald (1969). The utilization of the facilities and resources of already existing (and potential) provincial and regional bibliographic centres would be a step forward in the effort to coordinate and rationalize systems and collections at the national, regional and provincial levels. The task group, at the time, was aware of the jurisdictional and funding complications and other factors that would be involved in multi-level planning. It was also aware that some positive cooperative planning and action were already underway among provincial and intra-provincial groups in Canada.

Cooperation and Computerization: the Regional Scene

A fact that is often overlooked in reviewing the beginnings of large computerized bibliographic utilities in North America is that the University of Toronto was one of the first libraries to actively explore the role of the computer in various aspects of library operations. In 1965, the University Library implemented a computer output book catalogue for the initial library collections of five new Ontario universities which the Government of Ontario had undertaken to establish. This so-called ONULP Project was completed in 1967 and led to the University of Toronto being invited by the Library of Congress to participate in its MARC I project in 1966-67. From the beginning, the initiators of the University of Toronto operation worked on the premise that a computerized system could serve a large and complex group of libraries such as those comprising the University of Toronto system and would also be capable of serving other libraries as well. The library automation system was developed with this in mind.

In 1971, the University of Toronto Library Automation Systems (UTLAS) was organized as a separate administrative unit — the same year that the on-line shared cataloguing program of the Ohio College Library Centre (OCLC) became fully operational. The UTLAS on-line cataloguing support service was inaugurated in September 1973. Since then UTLAS has grown into one of the major bibliographic utilities of North America, second only to OCLC in terms of staff and clients and, according to the 1979 survey conducted for the American Library Association, credited as well with the second largest data base — 3,125,000 unique bibliographic records, or about two million less that OCLC. However, UTLAS has the added advantage of having developed authority files as well.

When the Ontario University Library Cooperative System (OULCS) was established in mid-1973 with one of its goals a catalogue support system and the

maintenance of a machine-readable union catalogue, member univerisities decided to adopt the on-line Cataloguing Support System (CATSS) designed and operated by UTLAS. This system provided the capability of searching, displaying and editing on a CRT terminal any record from its LC/MARC and CAN/MARC data bases as well as from any of the member library data files. The year 1976 saw the beginning of a consortium of university, public, special and government libraries in Ontario and Quebec which had come together to produce and use a computer-based library cataloguing support system and to create a union catalogue, utilizing the computer services of UTLAS. This consortium known as UNICAT/TELECAT (Union Catalogue/Télécommunication catalogage) developed bibliographic standards to which all its members had to adhere; it also produced coding manuals and undertook to implement goals in the management and use of automated data bases. By 1979, the consortium comprised some twenty-one member libraries and its union file contained over 900,000 cataloguing records.

In the meantime, other regional consortia across Canada were working toward computerized cataloguing support and/or networking systems using a variety of facilities including UTLAS services, but very often attempting to maintain more of their own planning and governance. Systems such as the British Columbia consortium, the Atlantic Provinces consortium of multi-type libraries, and the individual in-house system at the University of Guelph were developed in response to such needs.

Toward a Computerized Library Network for Canada

In view of the recommendations of the Canadian Union Catalogue Task Group (1976) regarding the utilization of existing resources in a decentralized bibliographic network for Canada, it was a logical step for the National Library to launch a comprehensive study of computerized bibliographic services in Canada. The study team composed of librarians and information specialists gathered information on existing and emerging computerized bibliographic centres and associated service organizations, examined the funding and jurisdictional elements involved, and gathered opinions and viewpoints from institutions and agencies which might be included in the planning and evolution of an effective Canadian computerized bibliographic network. By 31 March 1979, studies were completed and a summary background paper presented for the consideration of the National Librarian.[19] The final report of the study, published in 1980, explored the concept of a Canadian computerized library network and described projected National Library programs relating to its development.[20] In October 1979 the National Library Network Project was established to advise on the development of programs relating to networking and to promote and ensure the involvement of Canadian libraries, consortia and other agencies in the planning and implementation of a nationwide decentralized bibliographic network. In the same year, the National Library's Research and Planning Branch became the Library Systems Centre, reflecting the change from developmental to operational status.

19   R.M. Duchesne, M. Islam and D.A. Guenter, *Overview of Computerized Library Networking in Canada* (Ottawa, 1979).

20   R.M. Duchesne, D.A. Guenter and M. Islam, *Toward More Effective Nationwide Library and Information Networking in Canada* (Ottawa, 1980).

One of the related undertakings — which was not without an ultimate irony — was the agreement concluded by the National Library with the UNICAT/TELECAT library consortium in late 1978, authorizing the National Library to interrogate the UNICAT/TELECAT union file to test the feasibility of integrating regional automated union catalogues with a national location service. A second phase of the project was begun in August 1979, utilizing the UNICAT/TELECAT members. The irony was that on 30 June 1980, UNICAT/TELECAT was dissolved by a consensus of its members. There were several reasons for this decision. Costs were escalating and knowledgeable librarians were seeking new and more time and cost efficient responses to their problems. Technology had developed to the point where alternatives to the cataloguing support system used by the consortium were already in place in other libraries which had opted out of the system and where librarians would have more control and say in the management.

DOBIS

In the creation of library management systems over the past few years, there has been a return to the goal enunciated in the sixties in the effort to design integrated systems capable of managing all the technical operations of the library including acquisitions, cataloguing, circulation, book ordering, and so on, as well as the library's intellectual functions, such as reference and information retrieval. One such example of the integrated approach is the DOBIS system (Dortmunder/Biblio- theskystem), a computerized library information and management system designed by IBM for the University of Dortmund in West Germany. The National Library of Canada selected DOBIS in 1975, after considerable examination of available software packages, because of its potential for managing a bibliographic data base of the magnitude and complexity envisioned in NLC planning. From 1977 to 1979, the system was tested and evaluated by means of pilot projects undertaken by the National Library and CISTI. After formal government approval of the system in November 1979, DOBIS moved into a production mode within the National Library and some other federal government libraries.[21] Input to the National Library union lists of serials in the humanities and social sciences is now handled by DOBIS and the in-house list of the Library's periodical holdings has become almost fully accessible on-line through their entry into DOBIS. In March 1980, the Library's manual union catalogues of books and serials were closed and DOBIS utilized for recording new holdings. The National Library is now using the system to catalogue its own collections as well as for verifying and locating material requested for interlibrary loan and for subject searches. Just recently the British Columbia Union Catalogue Executive's Study Team recommended the replication of the NLC/CISTI DOBIS system for the proposed British Columbia Library Network to provide a bibliographic utility with a full range of computer-based services to all the libraries of British Columbia in support of a provincial library network. In Ontario, DOBIS already has a head-start because of its adoption and development by the College Bibliocentre in Toronto, a consortium of Ontario's twenty-two community colleges. The system is under experimental testing in Alberta and

21   William Newman, et. al, "DOBIS: The Canadian Government Version," Canadian Library Journal 36 (August 1979): 181-94.

elsewhere. The Council of Federal Libraries is working with a group of federal libraries in Ottawa interested in participating in the benefits of DOBIS operations.[22] The National Library is looking forward to the increased capability which the system will provide for cooperation with other libraries in the development of a Canadian library network. '

CONSER (Conversion of Serials) Project

A major component in the development of a national bibliographic data base has recently been made available though the CONSER project, a notable example of interlibrary cooperation in the international environment. Begun in 1975, the CONSER data base now contains authenticated serial records of some fifteen participating institutions in Canada and the United States. What tends to be overlooked in the operational success of the project is that the idea has its roots in a contract given by the National Library of Canada to York University in Toronto to explore potential data bases for union lists of serials. The idea for the contract, in turn, grew out of the Cooperative Union Serials System (CUSS) begun at York in 1972 when ten Ontario univeristy libraries agreed to a pilot project for merging machine-readable serials files. The chief investigator for the NLC contract eventually enlisted the interest and support of several large libraries in Canada and the United States which led to discussions during the informal meetings at the American Library Association Conference in Las Vegas in 1973; the result was a decision to mount a project to convert serial records into a compatible machine-readable file to produce a joint serials data base of some 200,000 serial titles in North America. Although participating libraries have contributed staff time, equipment and other resources to the project, the Council on Library Resources funded the CONSER Project in its earlier stages and still contributes to some of its communication costs. OCLC is the host utility and provides the use of its on-line system, managerial support and the funding of participants' meetings. Under the auspices of CONSER, bibliographic information is authenticated by the Library of Congress (including the National Serials Data Program) and the National Library of Canada (with the International Serials Data System, Canada). The National Library's responsibility includes the input of data for all types of Canadian serials, current and retrospective; the establishment of data elements such as Canadian corporate headings as well as the authentication of Canadian serial records created by other participating libraries. Institutions participating in CONSER can upgrade and add information to the OCLC on-line union catalogue in accordance with bibliographic standards and agreed conversions. A computer-output microfilm (COM) list of all authenticated records in the CONSER file is now available in a register/ index format with annual supplements. Subscriptions to the microfiche are handled by the National Library for Canada and abroad, and by the Library of Congress for the United States. Canadian serial titles represent over one-fifth of the authenticated CONSER data base. The National Library's participation in the CONSER Project has assured the inclusion of high quality records for Canadian serial titles and has, therefore, enhanced the world-wide dissemination of information

22   *Federal Libraries and DOBIS/ Les Bibliothèques du Gouvernement et DOBIS,* Published for the Council of Federal Libraries (Ottawa, 1979).

on Canadian serial publications. It has made available to Canadian libraries a data base of considerable value in the control of serials. CONSER has afforded the National Library of Canada valuable experience and visibility in the conduct of a cooperative bibliographic project of considerable complexity with international dimensions.[23]

Canadian Library Collections as a Resource Network

The great flowering of Canadian universities in the sixties created such momentum in the programs of academic libraries that by 1968 they collectively overshadowed the National Library of Canada in the areas of acquisitions, cataloguing and conventional library services. Nowhere was this more a reality than in their collection activities. In 1971, Statistics Canada reported the volume count of books, periodicals and pamphlets in universities and colleges at 24,000,000. In 1961 (before the Williams Report), the count had been 6,993,000 volumes. Of the total in 1971, over 20,000,000 were in the largest university libraries — in institutions offering multi-graduate and research programs. Libraries in Ontario held over 10,000,000 volumes, in Quebec 5,000,000, and in British Columbia 3,300,000.[24] By the mid-1970s these figures had increased considerably with the Canadian academic member libraries of the Association of Research Libraries piling up impressive collections statistics, headed by the University of Toronto with approximately 4,500,000 volumes in 1974-75.[25] In steady succession, several other Canadian academic libraries climbed beyond the 1,000,000 mark. In spite of the deceleration of the past ten years due to shrinking budgets, their combined collections and acquisitions programs are still far beyond those of the National Library of Canada. The problem appears to be facilitating the use of existing collections for the benefit of all.

The issue of coordination of library collections in the academic sector of Canadian libraries has been a matter of concern since the late 1960s.[26] The Office of Library Resources at the National Library was set up for this purpose in response to the recommendations of the Williams and Downs reports. Its first published endeavour, a six-volume quantitative survey of *Research Collections in Canadian (Academic) Libraries*, fell far short of the ideal for a fully detailed census of Canadian research collections. More effective have been the collection surveys aimed at determining the strength and location of research collections in specific fields, carried out under the aegis of the expanded Resource Survey Division of NLC's Collections Development Branch.[27]

23 For further discussion of the project, see "CONSER and The National Library of Canada," *National Library News/Nouvelles de la Bibliothèque nationale* 13, no. 3 (May 1981): 2-5.
24 Statistics Canada, *University and College Libraries in Canada, 1970-71*; and *1960-61*, quoted by Bruce Peel, "Canadian University Libraries," in Garry and Garry, eds., *Canadian Libraries in Their Changing Environment*, p. 190.
25 Association of Research Libraries, *Library Statistics, 1974/75*, Rank Order, Table 1: "Volumes in Library."
26 The original concept is discussed in Donnelly, *The National Library of Canada*, pp. 170 and 218.
27 The series of successive library resources surveys undertaken in the 1970s and published by the National Library of Canada as monographs includes collections in *Theatre; Fine Arts; Music; Slavic and East European Studies; Federal Government Libraries; Law Library Resources in Canada;* and *Official Publications Collections in Canadian libraries.*

Over the years, the National Library has been a member of, or has otherwise supported, groups such as the Library Committee of the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada which have tried to establish a basis for the rationalization of collections within academic libraries. In 1973, a committee set up by the AUCC Commission to Study the Rationalization of University Research urged that large collections be considered as national resources, whether they be centrally located or not, and that the AUCC explore, along with the National Library and other agencies, ways and means of recompensing libraries which participate in providing national services.[28]

In outlining its blueprint for a Canadian library resources network, the Canadian Union Catalogue Task Group reasoned that, since university libraries are an important source of interlibrary loans for other libraries, they are fulfilling a national responsibility in the network context even though their principal mandate is to serve their parent institutions. If through a rationalization plan, some libraries could be identified as a major resources in a particular subject area, this should be recognized and support provided to sustain these collections in the national network. It argued "that to build on existing strengths, particularly in the humanities and social sciences, would be far less expensive than to develop centralized collections of monographs at the national libraries."[29] However, the task group conceded that the requirement for strong collections of periodicals, organized for efficient retrieval and quick delivery, was the primary responsibility of the National Library of Canada and CISTI, cooperating together to provide a permanent serials data base for a national resource network.

A Communications Network: Centralized Lending Services and Subsidized Interlibrary Loans

The survey commissioned by the Canadian Union Catalogue Task Group on *Interlibrary Loan in Canada* provided disturbing statistics about the distribution of interlibrary lending and the demands made upon libraries identified as "net lending libraries " — libraries which lent more than they borrowed. The task group's report recommended that "the federal government, through the National Library, the Canada Council or some other agency capable of making direct grants, or negotiating contracts with individual libraries, reimburse net lending libraries, other than national, provincial or government libraries" (Recommendation 11). In 1975, net lending libraries such as the Universities of Toronto, Laval, McGill, McMaster, Ottawa and British Columbia asked the Canada Council for reimbursement of costs. Their request was rejected. Two of these libraries, Toronto and British Columbia subsequently announced the implementation of a minimum charge of eight dollars per loan, beginning in January 1976. Because of the inequality of access such a system would create, the Canadian Library Association took up the issue at its 1976 Conference and presented a brief requesting the federal government to assume the costs involved in out-of-province loans made by libraries other than federal libraries. The government referred the CLA Brief for study to an

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28   Commission to Study the Rationalization of University Research, (Louis Philippe Bonneau and J.A. Corry, co-chairmen), *Quest for the Optimum: Research Policy in the Universities of Canada* (Ottawa, 1973).

29   Canadian Union Catalogue Task Group, *Final Report*, p. 55.

Interdepartmental Ad Hoc Working Group on which NLC and CISTI were represented. This group rejected, for "a number of reasons" given in their report, the solution proposed by CLA and presented a new one — that of creating a centralized national lending library modelled on the British Library Lending Division at Boston Spa. The proposed National Lending Library at Ottawa would be implemented in stages by strengthening already existing CISTI and NLC collections so as to provide national loan collections of first resort. The report offered tentative time and cost estimates, with priority one given "to strengthening holdings of current journals in all fields, and of books in the social sciences and humanities."[30]

The proposal had persuasive factors. The development of a national lending collection would be a logical extension of the lending function already in current operation at both CISTI and NLC, which the survey on *Interlibrary Loan in Canada* identified as the first and second, respectively, among Canada's net lending libraries. Policy-wise, several other national libraries have already accepted the principle of a national lending collection as a means of lessening the burden of interlibrary loan on individual libraries while equalizing opportunity for access to library resources by a greater number of users. A convincing argument is the success of the British Library Lending Division already cited in the Report.

The British Library Lending Division as Prototype

The British Library Lending Division (BLLD) had its origin in the National Lending Library for Science and Technology, designed by Donald J. Urquhart and established in 1963 to cope with the inadequacy of British interlending facilities for science and technology. The principle on which it was based — a central loan stock simply arranged with a minimum of record-keeping — was maintained with some modifications after its extension into the fields of the social sciences and humanities, following its merger with the National Central Library under the British Library Act of 1973. The British Library Lending Division (BLLD) now attempts to acquire all worthwhile serials on all subjects and in all languages, wherever published, and all significant monographs in the English language. It is selective in its purchase of foreign language monographs, but is specifically concerned with the acquisition of conference proceedings, reports, theses, British official publications and individual music scores. In establishing acquisition policies, BLLD has not attempted to have available on demand all material which may be asked for on interlibrary loan by any library in the United Kingdom. It has pointed out that such a collection would be impossible to develop since much of the material is out of print and unavailable on the second-hand market. Even for current printed material, funds would never be available for the development of a completely comprehensive acquisition program. BLLD, therefore, bases the growth of its collections on three criteria: level of subject matter, demand, and availability of material elsewhere. It recognizes as a principle that it will always be necessary to have a supporting system for items which the Lending Division does not possess as well as for those that are unavailable when requested.

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30   Interdepartmental Ad Hoc Working Group to Study The Canadian Library Association Brief on Interlibrary Loan, *Report to the Ministers* (Ottawa, 1977). (The "Executive Summary" of the Report was presented to the Canadian Library Association Annual Conference in Montreal, June 1977).

Since 1973, the British Library Lending Division has extended arrangements with certain large libraries in Britain, and in some cases with smaller ones having specialized resources, to serve as *back-up* collections to its own stock and to the holdings of other libraries represented in the British Library union catalogues. Back-up libraries are paid the estimated full cost of fulfilling requests. Other libraries which are simply given as locations to requesting libraries are paid the value of the BLD loan/photocopy form. Claims for payments are made quarterly to the Lending Division, and so administrative costs are kept to a minimum.[31]

Without suggesting that in all aspects it is a perfect fit for the Canadian situation, it is fair to say that the Boston Spa model is a persuasive one for the National Library of Canada. With the demonstrated emphasis on the lending of serials at the British Library Lending Division, it can be argued that a major component for a national lending system already exists in the combined serials holdings of the Canada Institute for Scientific and Technical Information and the National Library of Canada. A further point is that a national central lending library at Ottawa need not be in conflict with the philosophy of the resource network expounded by the Canadian Union Catalogue Task Group. The increasing acceptance of a regional library presence within the British system and the formalized involvement of support or *back-up* libraries provide both a precedent and a pattern for similar agreements with identified resource libraries across Canada. Such understandings will be essential assuming that there will be a time lag of several years involved in acquiring sufficient monographic holdings to meet even first resort loan requests on a national scale in Canada.

THE FUTURE OF THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF CANADA

The "major issues" identified by the National Librarian of Canada in his Brief to the Senate Committee in 1969 — those pertaining to the rationalization and coordination of systems and collections — claimed top priority in the decade of the 1970s. The same year, nevertheless, witnessed the reorganization and extension of the Public Services Branch, the inauguration of computer-based reference service, the establishment of the Library Documentation Centre, the planning and implementation of the Multilingual Biblioservice, the involvement of the National Library in the promotion of Canadian bibliographical activity, and the appointment of specialists and consultants for children's literature, rare books, and Hebrew literature.

As the National Library approached its twenty-fifth anniversary in 1978, the National Librarian called for a review of the Library's role and objectives — its organization and services — with a view to establishing essential priorities and long-term goals. The review got underway in 1976 and succeeded in soliciting significant input not only from the library and information science community, but from other professional and scholarly groups and individuals across Canada. In the words of the National Librarian, the National Library review was "one technique

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31   See also Maurice B. Line, "The British Library Lending Division," in W.L. Saunders, ed., *British Librarianship Today* (London, 1977),pp. 86-108; and Keith Barr, "Systems and Procedures at the BLLD," *BLL Review* 4, no. 3 (1976): 71-78.

for coming to terms with a changing world." The review team submitted its report to the National Librarian in 1978.[32]

The report of the National Library Review Team became a major working paper along with other previously submitted reports and surveys, including the Canadian Union Catalogue Task Report, in the high-level discussions leading to the final phase of the National Library review. Out of their numerous findings and recommendations emerged the final report on the role of the National Library — a long-range planning and policy document presented to the Secretary of State by Guy Sylvestre in 1979, and published under the title, *The Future of the National Library of Canada*. Like the brief presented by the National Librarian to the Senate Committee ten years before, it was a document intended to take the National Library through the next decade — and beyond.

The main thrust of this blueprint is an examination of the implementation of a decentralized national library network over a five-year period. The plan would extend to sharing not only bibliographic records, but library materials and expertise as well. An essential element in the development of the resource network would be the identification and appointment of back-up national resource libraries and the assurance of adequate funding to maintain these collections. Other components in the network would be the proposed National Lending Centre incorporating the lending operations of CISTI for scientific and technical material, a Canadian Book Exchange Centre, and expanded services to specialized groups such as the Multilingual Biblioservice and the physically and visually handicapped. A "third over-all priority" would be given to the expansion of bibliographic and resource services for researchers in Canadian studies.[33]

Beyond the clear-cut and presumably feasible plan for the implementation of a Canadian national bibliographic and resource network over the next five years, *The Future of the National Library of Canada* raises other related questions to which the answers are not so clear-cut. These pertain to the identification of the mandate and role of the National Library of Canada *vis-à-vis* its institutional neighbours, the Public Archives of Canada and the Canada Institute for Scientific and Technical Information. Issues pertaining to role and responsibility have been recognized since the earliest years of the National Library of Canada and were in fact addressed on a number of occasions and with consummate tact by the first National Librarian and former Dominion Archivist, Dr. W. Kaye Lamb. They have now to be resolved in the context of a dynamically changing society with untraditional organizational patterns of information seeking and document retrieval demanding more efficient coordination of resources to serve the highly diversified information needs of an ever widening public. *The Future of the National Library Report* accepts the challenge and forthrightly undertakes to present alternatives in the formulation of its five-year plan.

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32 National Library of Canada, *The Objectives, Services and Organizations of the National Library of Canada*, Final Report of the National Library Review Team (Ottawa, 1978).

33 National Library of Canada *The Future of the National Library of Canada/ L'Avenir de la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada* Ottawa, 1979.

While the preoccupation of the present is necessarily with the future, in a presentation such as this it is not only appropriate but imperative to recall and pay tribute to the constructive efforts of the National Library's pioneer years. For the first decade and a half of the National Library's existence, a small group of highly competent and committed professionals, under the leadership of Dr. W. Kaye Lamb, provided the service goals which helped to propel the National Library of Canada into its now recognized role of leadership and innovation among the national libraries of the world. One can hardly recall the pioneers without referring at the same time to the role played by the Canadian Library Association, not only in campaigning for the establishment of a National Library for Canada, but also in its vigorous and tactful promotion of National Library growth and expansion. In support of *The Future of the National Library of Canada*, the association has again affirmed its pledge of cooperation for the years ahead "to assume and assist the development of firm connections between the libraries of Canada and the National Library of Canada."[34] Their common goal will be the provision of more adequate library and information services for all Canadians by promoting the development of a national library network optimizing the use of Canadian library resources — with the National Library of Canada as the keystone.

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34   Canadian Library Association, *The Future Role and Priorities of the National Library of Canada: Brief to the National Librarian of Canada* (Ottawa, 1977).