The Role of a Research and Management Information Unit in a Large Library

David Russon
The British Library


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THE ROLE OF A RESEARCH AND MANAGEMENT INFORMATION UNIT IN A LARGE LIBRARY

D. Russon

British Library Lending Division, Boston Spa, U.K.

Good management information is important in all libraries but particularly so in the larger ones where the senior management will have less contact with the day-to-day operations of the library and with users than a manager of a small library. By any standards the Lending Division of the British Library is a large library with a very high level of use. Its functions are well known to everyone present but it may be useful if I give some indication of the size and level of performance of the Division. It is primarily a lending library with a stock of about 1 1/3 million monographs, approximately 121,000 serial titles, and 1 1/2 million reports and other items. This stock is growing at a rate of 60,000 monographs p.a., and 80,000 reports p.a., mostly on microfiche. Nearly 49,000 serials titles are currently taken. In addition to its stock, the Division maintains and uses catalogues of material held elsewhere in the UK and abroad. In the last financial year some 2 1/2 million interlibrary loan requests were made to the Division, 2.2 million from the UK and 370,000 i.e. 15% from overseas. 2 1/2 million requests per annum mean on average 10,000 requests per day; but there is considerable seasonal fluctuation and at peak periods (which largely coincide with academic terms) some 12,000 requests are received each day. To acquire and maintain this large stock and records and to handle the very large number of requests made on it, the Division employs a staff of about 650 people and had a gross budget of £5 million in 1976/77. Of the 650 staff, 118 are graduates or of an equivalent status.

This then is the background against which we must consider the requirements for management information and research. The Division is perhaps more fortunate than most libraries in having a primary function which is clearly defined and so it is relatively easy to measure how far the Division is succeeding in its principal aims of meeting the interlibrary loan demand placed upon it. There are three main measures which the Division applies to assessing its performance.

1) The ability to meet interlibrary loan demand placed upon it, either from its own stock or elsewhere.

2) The speed of handling requests and

3) The cost of so doing.

The Division has a small research and management information unit of four staff to monitor its effectiveness and efficiency and the unit does this in three ways.

First, management data which is generated throughout the Division, is collected, synthesised and evaluated. Such data includes for example the number of requests coming from the UK and overseas, those which are valid and those which are satisfied. These data are used, together with information on the sale of BLLD interlibrary loan request forms, to monitor changes in demand, and to assess future trends. Such data are vital for the estimation of future manpower and other requirements. Examples of such data are given in figures 1 and 2 (Appendix B).

Second, other data which are not amenable to continuous collection are collected by means of ad hoc surveys. As an example a study (1) has recently been undertaken to determine how well the Division satisfies requests for particular categories of literature. The survey showed that BLLD's overall satisfaction rate has remained substantially the
same as that found in a similar survey in 1974. 94% of valid requests are dealt with satisfactorily, 83% are supplied from stock, 5% are given locations, and 4% are sent to BLLD back-up libraries. The comparable figures in 1974 were 95% dealt with satisfactorily overall, 84% from stock, 7% were given locations and 3% sent to back ups. The recent survey therefore shows two important changes over 1974. There has been a marked increase in the Division's ability to satisfy from stock English language monograph requests. 76% were satisfied in the recent survey compared with 64% in 1974. On the other hand the satisfaction rate from stock for foreign language serials has dropped. 85% were satisfied from stock in 1974 but only 73% now. Without surveys of this kind, changes such as these would go unnoticed and delay any possible remedial action.

Speed of service is also determined by means of ad hoc surveys (see figure 3).

A third area of investigation concerns the efficiency of the Division's operations. An example of studies that fall into this category is a recent assessment of the feasibility of microfilming stock at the Division in order to make more economic use of space. In fact it was found that the cost of filming stock is not economically feasible.

Apart from these housekeeping activities, the Research Section examines the relationship between the Lending Division services and other lending services. Two recent studies can serve as examples. One involved a comparative study of a regional interlibrary loan system in the UK and that of the British Library Lending Division. The same interlibrary loan requests were processed by each system and the requests were monitored to determine satisfaction levels, speed of service, and the costs of each system. This is described below in more detail.

A further study has looked at the interlibrary loan demand for serials in oriental languages and the ability of the British Library to meet it. The study was undertaken as background to the consideration of the need for and role of union lists of serials in oriental languages. It was found that the British Library was able to meet 95% of requests put to it for this type of literature.

Finally, the Research Section undertakes studies which can only be done or are more appropriately done at Boston Spa because of the special nature of its services or facilities. The Lending Division is approached from time to time by other organisations or research workers who wish to undertake a study at BLLD or arrange for BLLD to do it on their behalf. Over the past couple of years contracts have been received from SINFDOK, the Swedish Information and Documentation Centre, to determine the frequency with which particular serial titles were requested on interlibrary loan. And last year the Division undertook a contract on behalf of the Commission of the European Communities to assess the problems involved in gaining better access to non-conventional literature in agriculture.

These are broadly the range of functions that the research and management information unit undertakes. For the most part, the measures derived to assess either efficiency or effectiveness are straightforward, easily understood, and relatively simply obtained. Similarly, the majority of the surveys do not involve very complex or sophisticated techniques and the unit can therefore be staffed by people with relatively little grounding in research techniques. The important thing is to decide what data is necessary and can be collected, and to avoid wasting effort on attempting to collect oversophisticated data, or a superfluity of data which will tend to confuse rather than clarify issues. Furthermore, it is obviously important to ensure that management information is clearly presented to managers at the right time in a way that makes it and its implications easy to understand.

The survey mentioned above, on the comparison between the interlibrary loan system based on a regional union catalogue and that based on the use of the central loan stock at the British Library Lending Division, will serve as an illustration of the scale and nature of surveys undertaken. It is also a good example of a comparison between a centralised and decentralised system.
Something like 75% of all interlibrary loan demand in the UK is channelled through the Lending Division, the remainder comprising requests which are sent direct to other libraries or channelled through one of the nine regional bureaux. The regional bureaux maintain union catalogues of the holdings of their member libraries. When making an interlibrary loan request a member library will approach the bureau which consults its catalogue and then sends the request on a rota of libraries which are found to hold the item. If, for any reason, the first library approached is not able to satisfy the request (because, for example, the item is already on loan), it passes it to the second library on the rota, and so on until the request is satisfied. If the item requested is not in the union catalogue, or if it is not satisfied within the region, then the item is often sent to the Lending Division. In the West Midlands Region of England, the Regional Library Bureau is currently reviewing its future functions. As part of this review it asked the Lending Division to co-operate in a comparative study of the two interlibrary lending systems, the factors chosen to compare the two systems being those described above, namely the ability of each system to satisfy the requests put to it, the speed with which these requests could be dealt with and the cost of doing so. For a four week period in March 1976 all requests which were sent to the WM Bureau were monitored. The date on which they were received at the Bureau was noted. The request form was photocopied and the original request was then dealt with by the Bureau in the normal way. Libraries submitting the request were sent questionnaires which they were asked to return when the request had been satisfied, or when they received notice that the item was not available. The questionnaire sought details of when the item was received by the requesting library and how many lending libraries had handled the request before it was finished.

Photocopies of the original requests were forwarded to the British Library Lending Division and these photocopies were entered into the Division's normal process. They were treated exactly as normal interlibrary loan request forms apart from the fact that they were date stamped before being put into the system, and that the Research Section intercepted items or forms that emerged from the system to prevent their actual despatch. At this point, the Section noted whether or not the item had been satisfied from stock, whether it would have been sent to a back-up library, provided with a location, or returned to the borrower either for more information, or returned unsatisfied.

Table 1 (Appendix A) shows how the two systems compared in satisfaction rate. It can be seen that both systems performed almost identically in this respect, the centralised system satisfying 85.7% of the requests that were put to it while the regional system (with the Lending Division as a back stop) satisfied 84.3% of the same requests. About 20% of this latter figure was however satisfied by the Lending Division after the regional system had been tried.

The speed with which the two systems coped with the requests is shown in figure 4. It can be seen that over the whole range the Lending Division is faster; and in particular it meets a higher proportion of requests very quickly. In the main these will be the requests that it meets from its own stock; the 'tail' is mainly composed of those items which are either bought for stock when the request is made, or items that have to be recalled from a current borrower before they can fulfill the present request. Forms which are sent on to back-up libraries or other locations will also incur further delays and account for much of the 'tail'. The Regional Library Bureau on the other hand is able to meet few requests very quickly and only 10% are satisfied within the first three days compared with 43% in the centralised system.

Speed and satisfaction rate are simple measures which are easy to compute. The third part of the evaluation, costs, is more difficult. The Lending Division has a good knowledge of its own costs, but there has not been a great deal of work done to calculate the costs that other libraries incur when attempting to meet interlibrary loan requests. For this reason, the following figures are based on a number of assumptions and must be treated with some caution. The average cost of a request sent directly to the Lending Division was found to be £1.45. The average cost for a request which was sent to the regional system was found to be £1.94 i.e. 34% higher, this extra cost being mainly due to
the fact that requests were handled by more libraries in the regional system and also that the bureau costs have to be met. As well as determining the overall cost, an attempt was also made to apportion these costs between the various components in the system namely the borrowing library, the British Lending Division, and other libraries which were quoted as locations either by the Regional Bureau or the Lending Division. Tables 2 and 3 show that the borrowing library and libraries within the regional system incur very heavy costs when using the regional system compared with use of the central system. In the latter case the Lending Division incurs the bulk of the costs. A report of this study has recently been published. (2) Thus we see that judged by the criteria of satisfaction rate, speed and cost the centralised system is at least as good, and may be better, than this particular form of decentralised system. It is a good illustration of a situation where co-operation may not yield the most cost-effective solution.

References


### Table 1. Satisfaction rates for requests sent first to the West Midlands Region Library Bureau and first to the British Library Lending Division.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requests sent first to WMRLB</th>
<th>% Satisfied</th>
<th>% Not Satisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Requests sent first to BLLD</td>
<td>85.7</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 2. Proportion of costs borne by participants when requests are sent directly to BLLD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Locations</th>
<th>Cost per request</th>
<th>% of cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Borrowing library</td>
<td>51p</td>
<td>35.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locations used by BLLD</td>
<td>20p</td>
<td>13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BLLD</td>
<td>74p</td>
<td>50.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>£1.45</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 3. Proportion of costs borne by participants when requests are sent to WMRLB first

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Locations</th>
<th>Cost per request</th>
<th>% of cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Borrowing library</td>
<td>110p</td>
<td>56.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locations used by WMRLB</td>
<td>70p</td>
<td>35.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locations used by BLLD</td>
<td>3p</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BLLD</td>
<td>11p</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>£1.94</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>UK Requests Received</td>
<td>Overseas Loan Requests Received</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Monday</strong></td>
<td>8545</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tuesday</strong></td>
<td>10095</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wednesday</strong></td>
<td>9795</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Thursday</strong></td>
<td>9207</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Friday</strong></td>
<td>9016</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>46658</td>
<td>517</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Satisfaction Rate**: 94.7%
**Satisfied from stock rate**: 83.6%
**Percentage of all requests received originating from overseas**: 16.0%
### FOUR-WEEKLY STATISTICAL SUMMARY

#### 7 March 1977 to 1 April 1977

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Current period</th>
<th>Equivalent period last year</th>
<th>% increase or decrease</th>
<th>Cumulative total this financial year</th>
<th>Cumulative total to this time last financial year</th>
<th>% increase or decrease</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UK requests received (gross)</td>
<td>199605</td>
<td>182 121</td>
<td>+ 9.6%</td>
<td>2 147 476</td>
<td>2 070 795</td>
<td>+ 3.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overseas requests received (gross)</td>
<td>34614</td>
<td>28 907</td>
<td>+ 19.7%</td>
<td>376 299</td>
<td>299 478</td>
<td>+ 25.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All valid requests received</td>
<td>205971</td>
<td>190 790</td>
<td>+ 8.0%</td>
<td>2 239 682</td>
<td>2 149 679</td>
<td>+ 4.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction rate</td>
<td>93.8%</td>
<td>93.9%</td>
<td>- 0.1%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction from stock rate</td>
<td>81.8%</td>
<td>83.3%</td>
<td>- 1.5%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales of UK loan/photocopy forms</td>
<td>159 350</td>
<td>219 100</td>
<td>- 27.3%</td>
<td>1 808 536</td>
<td>1 806 600</td>
<td>+ 0.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(number of forms)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales of overseas photocopy coupons</td>
<td>33940</td>
<td>44 100</td>
<td>- 23.0%</td>
<td>394 660</td>
<td>338 990</td>
<td>+ 16.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(number of coupons)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Time within the BLLD for requests to be processed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of days taken within the BLLD</th>
<th>Number of requests 'finished with' (as a cumulative percentage of total)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>54.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>68.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>75.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>81.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>87.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>89.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>92.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>94.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>96.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>97.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>98.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>98.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>99.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 4: Cumulative percentage of requests dealt with
OPEN DISCUSSION ON FUTURE ACTIVITIES OF IATUL
introduced by the President of IATUL Mr. G.A. Hamel

The subject of this morning's first discussion is IATUL's program, IATUL's identity. Amongst the papers you have been given is one by Dr. Schmidmaier, a historical narrative on the association, which was founded in 1955 and accepted as a member of the International Federation of Library Associations. His paper describes the statutes. It says that IATUL in 1972 had some 97 members. It gives attention to our publications and the conferences we have held, and describes IATUL's objective as: "the furthering of the exchange of experience between technological and university libraries." The exchange of experience has largely taken place through publication and written communications.

In another paper on the history of IATUL from 1966 to 1977, Mr. Dehennin, our secretary, presents a less optimistic view of what IATUL is. Many plans, few realisations. He says that our publications have been very much cited, in particular the proceedings of the conference held in Loughborough on user education. I expect that for the years to come our proceedings will continue to be cited.

The time has come, I think, to analyze IATUL, and plan for the future. An association such as ours can be seen from various angles. One may look at it as a platform where people meet to exchange views, a focal point where all experiences and ideas come together or a forum which gives answers to questions. It could act as a clearing house; and most of all, one would expect it to act as a catalyst. Well, we are not conceited, or tenacious, but we should not be shy either. And this is why Mr. Hill wrote a paper based on a paper by Dr. Sydler. Mr. Hill's paper has been handed out, and I would like to repeat a few sentences that I have underlined. Hill points out that there are too few international organizations of libraries. IATUL is an international organization small enough for the members to develop individual relationships, yet widespread enough to interest libraries operating in virtually all modern social, political, and economic situations. IATUL presents an excellent opportunity for the development of a formal international network. He says that networks should not only consist of computers and telecommunications facilities but also of more traditional means of inter-library communication. He suggests that you authorize the committee to explore and where possible implement the establishment of links between members. These links would be based entirely on the voluntary collaboration of those members. Next, he observes that the role of IATUL is to act as a focal point. It cannot at present, for lack of permanent or paid staff, present itself as an organization that can undertake work. But what it can do is continue to explore a few problems of mutual concern. On p.3 the suggestion is made that areas which might be profitable for collaborative research should be identified. A list of these problems has been made by Dr. Sydler. On p.4 you find seven more items which appeal to anyone working within technological universities. These are suggestions for those who would like to take up research or do some collaborative work. You will have seen from this paper (which is a paper presented on behalf of the board), that it is our intention to get others to do the work. The new members on the board live in different countries, and it is not possible for them to do all the work. They would like to know what difficulties members are confronted with.

We would like to make a list of problems and a list of fields of interest to any of our members. This list should be distributed in order to get people who have the same fields of interest into contact with one another. On Monday afternoon we discussed the suggestion put forth by our editor, Mrs Fjällbrant, to accept in IATUL proceedings, publications in other languages than English. As you know our statutes indicate that English will be the language of formal communication. We have decided that papers and communications (but not letters) could just as well be accepted in French or German provided that they include an abstract in English. If we can enlarge, stimulate and speed up the production of IATUL proceedings, we believe that the club will work more effectively. What we are after is "effective cooperation", according to our statutes. We as members of the board are committed to organize effective cooperation, but you, the members, help us with your suggestions as to the fields in which we should stimulate cooperation.
I would like to take up the question whether we should continue to organize meetings of the type we have now had seven times and whether we should continue to have meetings and large-scale gatherings.

As a board, we decided that we should arrange a congress in 1979 - and that reports on cooperation between those who have similar interests and what they have established and carried out in the meantime should be a subject at this congress. So we would like members to report on the progress made between 1977 and 1979.

M. W. Hill: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think there is little I need to add to your admirable introduction. You did talk about our being a family. I suggest in this context that the first thing we should do this morning is congratulate our President on becoming a grandfather for the first time. But to more mundane matters: the paper that I have been asked to put before you. The paper informs you of the way your board is thinking, and as a board we are coming to you and saying "Well, are we thinking along the right lines?" It would have been a great pity to miss the opportunity to test this assembly of ideas to see whether we are proceeding along the right lines. As the Chairman said, the basis of the board's thinking is that this is an informal association - in the English term we are a "club" of members - not a formal linkage. The ideas for areas for study largely stem from a most helpful document which the board received from Dr. Sydler and he should receive the credit for having assembled many of these ideas. On the other hand, he should not receive the blame for having added from various other sectors. I do not think I should add any more at this stage except to emphasize the point that this is the way the board's thinking has gone, gathering as best it can from various sources and ideas, and we really would welcome the members' reactions.

Mrs. N. Fjällbrant: The board has decided to accept articles in German and French, as our President told us, for publication, with a short abstract prepared by the author in English. We hope this will increase the flow of articles from the French and German-speaking members of IATUL. I hope to be able to bring out theme issues as well as more general issues of the proceedings. The first theme issue will deal with user education and I am very grateful to many of the members here who have helped with contributions and to those who have promised to submit them as soon as possible.

There will be other theme issues, and I would appreciate your suggestions. Two suggestions have already come in: one is for a theme issue on new library buildings, because if one is planning a new building it is very good to have a theme number that one can look at. Another proposal is a theme dealing with education and training of personnel for work in special and technical university libraries. The number of proceedings that come out is very much dependent on the support of members, and I will be sending out written communications to our members when the next number of the proceedings comes out, but I would like to appeal to all of you personally, since you are here to help to stimulate your staff to send in contributions so that we can get a good selection of material. One other possible thing we could do in connection with the proceedings, if you should decide this would be convenient, is that we could attempt to form a project catalogue of ongoing library research projects. This we would do by sending out a simple questionnaire to the members and expect to get these returned so that we could in fact make a straightforward listing of the project with a short description of 250 words maximum of the project - the number of people engaged on it, the head and the contact person, together with their telephone and telex numbers. This would enable our members to contact each other to discuss the possibilities of cooperation; and if you feel this would be useful, Chalmers University of Technology Library would be prepared to try to start this. Mr. Webster has promised to let us have details of his work and his publications, and this I will try to distribute, again through the IATUL proceedings, so that you can receive details of his work. We will also have a complete set of material, and Mr. Webster has generously agreed to let us copy certain specific items for IATUL members. Thank you.

Mr. A.C. Bubb: I wonder if I may, Mr. President, turn our attention, to something basic to all our discussions, and that is the nature of our membership and perhaps the size of it. I
see that Dr. Schmidmeier said that we had 97 member libraries, but that was in 1972. I
do not know what our present membership figures are, and furthermore, I am not quite
sure myself what a technological university is in every country concerned. The other
point is that, by accident or design, our membership seems to be concentrated to a few
countries. Many of those share common traditions of librarianship. There are some
countries in Europe which are very poorly represented in IATUL, or perhaps not at all. I
think this is a fundamental question: do we wish our membership to grow by word of
mouth, or do we wish to try and include almost every institution which could be called a
technological university? It would alter the nature of IATUL, and I quite appreciate that,
if we did double our membership, administrative and other problems, which at the
moment have to be carried out by busy people in addition to their other work, would
increase. But I feel that if we are considering our future and a general sort of forum of
discussion on the topics which have been brought up, we should perhaps look at the nature
of our membership, whether we wish to actively recruit new members. Thank you, Mr.
President.

Chairman: I cannot immediately answer all your questions, but I can say that membership
has not grown very much. We can say that there is not even distribution over the various
continents. We have one or two members in Australia and one in South Africa and two or
three in South America, but it is still a club of European technological university
librarians. We should not forget the others, and particularly not forget those universities
that are being established in the younger, developing countries. Our Indian colleague has
already suggested that he would be happy to try to convince his colleagues to become
members too.

But there you have your question. Do we want to embrace more and more technological
universities and can we in fact administer and arrange congresses on general topics?
What a technological university exactly is, is very difficult to define. I know my own
university is gradually growing in another direction. It is still a technological university
but it has added two faculties in the social sciences. There is an application from one
school which is not a technological university, but an agricultural university where people
become engineers. Are the members of IATUL interested in this type of engineering?

I cannot give exact answers, but I believe that the committee should consider these
questions before launching a program. It does hold true that those who have a certain
project or problems in common should find one another. Therefore I consider the
suggestions of Nancy Fjällbrant of great importance. If a circular letter accompanied by
a questionnaire is issued then we will know to what extent we are members of the same
family.

Prof. A.J. Evans: Over the past six or seven years I have suggested repeatedly that
IATUL should be kept as simple as it is now. I think that the sort of recommendations and
suggestions made this morning have been eminently practical, particularly those
concerning the proceedings. I have three points to make. One is a request, one is an
offer and the third is a question.

My request, first of all, concerns the proceedings. My request is that the abstracts of
papers in French and German will not be too short. I would like to know if a paper is
really worth translating. I think something like a two hundred word abstract is necessary
for this. My offer, is that we have talked about where we can have centers or act as a
focus. We have been fortunate at Loughborough in having a grant from the British
Library for an officer in user education. As a result we produce a newsletter called
"Infuse" which is my sales gimmick for today because we are taking subscriptions for it if
anybody wants one. We would be quite happy to use this as a media for ideas coming in
from other countries.

My question is about EPFL. From 1970 to 1975 I represented IATUL in EPFL. EPFL asked
me if I would represent them at this IATUL meeting. This means that they would like a
short communication for the EPFL newsletter. The new EPFL statutes make it
reasonably clear that we cannot stay an international member and keep our own identity.
I feel that the international membership is the right one in our case, but I would be
delighted to hear other people's opinions.

Mrs. C.M. Lincoln: I would just like to add to Prof. Evans' remarks that I did bring a copy of the newsletter "Infuse", and have in fact given a copy to Mrs. Fjällbrant. If anybody would like to see it they could look at this copy.

Mr. R.F. Eatwell: To the English librarian EPFL does not mean very much. I would be very sorry to see IATUL becoming a member of EPFL. More generally, I think this is a good club. You get to know people, and this is the way cooperation starts. In England we have lots of members of EPFL, but we really do not know what goes on at the grass roots level. So, I would like to see us stay small.

What do we expect from a club like this? These meetings are extremely good. You meet your colleagues, and you can get to know people. So we can cooperate.

Publication is the second thing. Publications are an extremely effective way of keeping in touch.

Thirdly, as to cooperation. One of the things is on collaborative acquisitions-stock building. I doubt very much if it could work internationally. We can cooperate on research, I think. We are all reinventing the wheel over and over again with computers, with library instruction, with methods of issue systems and so on. We should get to know what other people are doing.

The other thing which an institution like this could help with is interlibrary loans. Many of us are producing catalogues on microform. I certainly would like to have microfilm catalogues of colleagues in Germany, Switzerland and so on, because I find it very hard to get material that they would have. I am already going to get one library's catalogue. I could supply catalogues in microfilm to other people. We could at least get things that the British Library cannot get quickly this way. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. T.J. Tanzer: I think we ought to make two distinctions concerning EPFL and IATUL. I think that if EPFL decides to make a technical university library section committee working party, one can very well join in, and I think one should make a very clear distinction between the forums. IATUL is for certain discussions. EPFL is for certain other ones. The two are not necessarily connected. IATUL has its raison d'être.

The other thing is, I think we ought to keep our ends limited so that we can achieve them, rather than having a list of dead bodies as in Mr. Dehnnin's report. I think there are many things which we can achieve. For example, you mentioned tape slide shows. I bought some of them, I got the texts with them. I translated them into French and it was made available to other people.

Chairman: Thank you. I would like to thank you for the suggestions and in particular for the offer Prof. Evans made to us, that he can make his information center available to all of us. With regard to EPFL, I can say we will stay an international member of EPFL, but that we will remain free enough to stay as we like and that we do not fuse with EPFL. Would you like to make any comments? We would like to keep in very close contact with our friends outside Europe, particularly India and the United States. Thank you.