November 2013

On the Road

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Recommended Citation

Jaeger, Don (1994) "On the Road," Against the Grain: Vol. 6: Iss. 1, Article 25.
DOI: https://doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.1516

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EXCHANGE RATES IMPROVE OUTLOOK ON PRICES FOR FRENCH MATERIALS

by Gilles de La Rochefoucauld

PARIS, France — In the past two years, many librarians have complained about the high cost of European materials. Everyone knows the main reason: the low value of the U.S. dollar (USD) compared with most European currencies. Fortunately, this has been changing and the purchasing power of American libraries for European titles should improve dramatically in the coming months.

For example, the main issue affecting the amount of expenditures for French journals and books is the value of the USD versus the French franc. In the fiscal year beginning July 1992, the value of the dollar jumped by 22%, while the inflation rate on books and journals was 3%. Analysts expect the dollar to gain another 7.5% in the fiscal year which began July 1993, with inflation of 2.5%. These factors combine for a net increase in the purchasing power of the USD for French materials of 19% in fiscal 92/93, and 5% in fiscal 93/94.

Beyond July 1994, one can only guess at the change in purchasing power of the dollar for French materials. It would seem that we can expect roughly a 10% increase in the value of the dollar, which would combine with continuing inflation of around 3%, for another 7% decrease in the cost of acquiring French materials.

On the Road

A glimpse at “Life in the Trenches” —
“On the road again/ Just can’t wait to get on the road again......”
Column Editor, Don Jaeger (Alfred Jaeger, Inc.)

Jim Boyer was formerly a regional sales representative for Ballen Bookellers International for many years. Prior to that he was with Kraus Periodicals and Reprints, Majors Book and Springer Verlag. Due to health reasons, Jim had to retire a few years ago, but we understand he’s coming along well. I’m still waiting for the story from the salesman who had tattle-tape sewn into his briefcase that set off the security device in every library he visited. What about the International reps who visit libraries in Europe and Asia? Surely you have some interesting travel stories!?!?

All stories, all anecdotes, all shared experiences are welcomed. Fax them to 516-543-1537, or mail to my attention at Alfred Jaeger, Inc., 66 Austin Blvd., Commack, NY 11725-9009. — DJ

On the Road
by Jim Boyer

A traveling man has many stories and life on the road holds many pleasant memories for me, as I found librarians are intelligent and a pleasure to be with. I have two stories to relate.

First — many years ago I had an appointment at the Furman University campus library in Greenville, South Carolina at 4 P.M. and then a later appointment at a major hospital in the area. After discussion with the librarian, I asked to use the telephone to call my office in New York. The librarian stated the telephone was in the men’s facilities. About 5 o’clock after using the telephone et al, I left the men’s facilities and discovered I was locked in the library. I searched for another telephone but ended up back in the men’s room where I called the librarian at the hospital to change my appointment. She was very understanding and said that this was her late day. I proceeded to explain I didn’t know when I would go to her library that evening, and she continued to be so understanding that I finally had to describe my situation. When I finally confessed that I was locked in the library at Furman University, she thought the situation was hilarious. I did find a couch, many books, and a vending machine. The security guard did not answer the phone until about 6 P.M. I explained the problem and he stated that I was a student pulling a joke and hung up the phone. I called back and insisted he open the library and rescue me which he finally did. Needless to say, security thought it was very funny. With my wider vision now, I know I should have spent the night in the library with its collections and become much smarter.

In my second story, I traveled with Warren Eisenberg after a convention in Dallas, Texas. The next day we visited Texas A&M University and had a nice lunch with the librarians. Warren insisted we had to get to Austin that night for our appointment the next day, as he had a dinner date with a librarian who I will call Ginger. I let Warren drive. At excessive speed we made it to our hotel by 6 P.M. He stated Ginger would meet him downstairs at 7 P.M. and did I want to come along. I said no, I would take a shower and order room service. Warren left all dressed up in a three-piece suit and no tie. I stated it was a conservative city and that he should take a tie, but Warren said no. Unfortunately when he left, I did not lock the door. Instead, I turned on the TV, took off my clothes, and prepared to take a shower. About half an hour later, the door opened and Ginger came in first with Warren behind her. Guess what? They had come to get a tie! When they spied me “ex clothes,” Warren said “oops, Ginger, you better stay outside.” She allowed as how it was too late. She had seen everything.

The next day in the library Ginger remarked how different I looked with clothes on. Needless to say I could have killed Warren. Years later, we laughed about it.

Life on the road. Fun and games. 

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