

# News, Trends and Comments

## News

### **De-integration**

Recent decisions by the New York Times Company have stirred considerable interest in the information-provision world. First came the announcement, this winter, that on-line distribution of NYTIS data bases would be turned over to Mead Data Central, on an exclusive and permanent basis - though editorial control would remain vested in the New York Times Company. For users, this means new contract procedures and software, as well perhaps as new hardware (LEXIS/NEXIS-type terminals). The changeover was to be completed by summer 1983 - and of course represents a rather interesting contrast to recent and current developments involving certain other large information-producing organizations. Secondly, an agreement has been reached this spring with University Microfilms International whereby this Ann Arbor-based company will produce and market microform copies of the New York Times and the Times Indexes. UMI is thus taking over from Microfilming Corporation of America, an affiliate of the New York Times Company.

### **Imbalance**

"... considered questionable is the increasing practice of some Japanese enterprises unilaterally supplying much information to American data base service corporations for storage and selling to would-be seekers." This from The Japan Economic Journal for 28 December 1982 / 4 January 1983, p. 9, where it is also pointed out that there is "far less gathering of American information in Japan". The Japanese Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications is concerned over the situation, and would like to redress it - but without recourse to TDF restrictions. Such 'equalization' may be possible in the context of recent Japanese measures to "decontrol" data communications.

### **Full text**

The American Chemical Society has announced (on 11 April) that the full text of eighteen of its research journals will be offered on-line through BRS beginning 1 June 1983. Initially, the file will be retrospective to 1980, with biweekly updates. Natural-language searching and Boolean operators will be available. Information: BRS Customer Service, 1200 Route 7, Latham, NY 12110, USA; tel. (518) 783-7251 ((800) 833-4707 in the USA outside of New York state).

**Downloading**

Effective 1 April 1983, the American Psychological Association has inaugurated a new Permissions Policy for the PsycINFO data base - dealing in part with the activities of downloading, re-use, re-packaging and re-transmission. For details, readers are referred to PsycINFO News vol. 3 no. 1 (March 1983) - which also contains an editorial on the subject by PsycINFO Director Lois Granick - or to Permissions Section, PsycINFO, 1200 Seventeenth Street NW, Washington, DC 20036, USA.

**Downloading**

Chemical Abstracts Service has this April announced the adoption of a downloading allowance policy involving an annual fee and "minimum requirements for record keeping and reporting". Downloading licenses will be granted on a calendar-year basis, renewable each first day of January. For 1984, the fees are US\$4,000 (for Chemical Abstracts subscribers) and \$8,000 (for others). For further information, contact Edward P. Donnell, CAS, 2540 Olentangy River Road, P.O.Box 3012, Columbus, OH 43210, USA; tel. (614) 421-3624.

**Downloading**

Cuadra Associates (2001 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 305, Santa Monica, CA 90403, USA; tel. (213) 829-9972) has this April announced that it will conduct what it describes as "the first comprehensive study of 'downloading'". This multiclient study will develop "empirical data" and provide an "analysis and evaluation of alternative policies and pricing strategies" in order to facilitate appropriate decisions by its sponsors (data-base producers, on-line service operators et al.). Completion is scheduled for August 1983. We would remind our readers that the May 1982 issue of Information Services & Use (vol. 1 no. 6), a special ASIDIC Meeting issue, contained numerous contributions on the issues and problems of the re-use and re-packaging of bibliographic information, and refer to related items in vol. 2 no. 2, p. 137-143, as well as the first and second articles in the present issue.

**A&I information**

Some time ago, the very interesting idea was raised of including, in the CONSER machine-readable periodicals data base (produced by OCLC in cooperation with the Library of Congress and other institutions), information on the coverage of the various periodicals by abstracting and indexing services. Now the Council on Library Resources has decided to put some of its money behind this project - which is a joint undertaking of the Association of Research Libraries and the National Federation of Abstracting and Information Services - and it looks as though it may actually be carried through to completion.

**PDL**

Publishers Databases Ltd. has been launched in the UK, with the notion of fostering production - and assuring copyright protection - of machine-readable data bases on the part (or behalf) of member-publishers large and small. Membership (shareholding) will be open to some non-British publishers. The formation of the company was an initiative of the Electronic Publishing Panel of the Publishers Association UK.

**Optical disks**

In volume 2 number 2 (p. 122), we mentioned the Library of Congress involvement in investigating and implementing applications of optical disks as storage media. This involvement has now advanced, after developmental work in conjunction with Xerox Electro-Optical Systems, to the point of implementation for LC's Cataloging Distribution Service DEMAND system (involving laser printing technology), and contracts have been let for development of a mass-storage system to Teknekron Controls Inc. (Berkeley, CA) and Sony Video Communications Products (this latter for an analog video disk system). The projects - pertaining to storage of both print- and non-print materials - are being coordinated by Joseph W. Price, chief of the LC Science and Technology Division, as "director of projects". Also involved are the Congressional Research Service and the Copyright Office. LC has also established a Think Tank on Optical Disk Technology, and is in contact with the Optical Disk Subcommittee of the Association of American Publishers New Technology Committee.

Deserving of some attention here also are other recent related activities. Battelle Laboratories of Columbus, Ohio, has announced that it will now go through with its planned investigation of optical disk technology applications, after receiving the promise of private funding from various parties. A joint undertaking of the Longman Group (UK) and Grolier will test video disk technology in connection with Grolier's Academic American Encyclopedia. In March of this year, Matsushita-Panasonic had advanced so far in its development of an erasable optical disk system as to be able to demonstrate a prototype in the USA. Meanwhile, the British Library has successfully developed what it calls an "image digitiser" - with objectives similar to those underlying the LC projects.

**Better LAIT than never**

We borrow this heading - with all due acknowledgement - from the Library Association Record of March 1983, which in its turn took it from Norman Higham. It refers to the formation (approved late last year by the Council of the Association) of a Library Association Information Technology group in the United Kingdom. This group's mandate (perhaps too strong a word) is summed up in the December 1982 issue of the Record (p. 439), one of its functions being the establishing of "links with the various sections of the information industry". It is not certain to us just what this phraseology means. At any rate, an inaugural meeting was held on 31 January (with the ubiquitous ASLIB director Den-

nis Lewis as discussion-leader), and the annual general meeting was set for 18 May - on which occasion officers were also to be elected.

Meanwhile, across the ocean, the Library and Information Technology Association - a division of the American Library Association which has been in existence for some time - was looking forward to a possible reorganization of its structure. See LITA Newsletter no. 11 (winter 1983), p. 1.

### **Acquisitions**

Dialcom, which among other files distributes ABI/Inform and certain Bureau of National Affairs data bases, in addition to its electronic mail and other services, has been acquired by ITT.

CISI has acquired Wharton Econometric Forecasting Associates, and installed B.R. Lippke as its president.

### **Library automation**

The DOBIS-LIBIS (Dortmunder Online Bibliothekssystem - Leuvens Integraal Bibliotheek- en Informatie-Systeem) IBM-developed library automation system has been gaining broader implementation around the world. Already in May of 1982, the first meeting of the DOBIS-LIBIS Users' Group was held in Leuven (Louvain), Belgium. According to information appearing in volume 6, number 3 of Bibliothek: Forschung und Praxis, the system had already been licensed to thirty-eight institutions. Thirty-two of these already had put it into operation, or were in process of introducing it. The geographical breakdown was as follows: Belgium (1), Brazil (1), Canada (5), France (2), Germany (F.R.G.) (3), Ireland (1), Italy (6), Netherlands (1), Saudi Arabia (1), South Africa (3), Spain (2), Switzerland (3), USA (3). A number of other libraries appeared to be committed also - including one in Japan and three more in the USA. Users were more or less evenly divided between academic and special libraries, in addition to a few national and public libraries. The DOBIS-LIBIS Users' Group will have a permanent secretariat located at the university library in Leuven, and various project-groups headquartered in other countries.

### **Budgets**

US\$169.8 million was allotted for the operation of the Library of Congress over the fiscal year 1983, up \$6.3 million from 1982. (This allotment does not include funds for the operation of the Congressional Research Service, which received the amount of \$33.8 million, up from 1982's \$31.6 million.) Of this, \$120.3 million was earmarked for "salaries and expenses" - the remainder going to such special activities as the Copyright Office (\$10.5 million) and the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically handicapped (\$33.4 million).

## Data bases

There follows here a selected listing of files newly made available, or soon to become available, on various hosts, as well as other data-base news.

Since February, LISA (Library and Information Science Abstracts, from the Library Association in the United Kingdom) has been searchable on-line via Samsom Data Systemen - the first European vendor to offer it (ESA-IRS is considering doing so). Coverage is from 1969 (abstracts available from 1976 onwards only), and updating is monthly. A LISA training file is also accessible on this same vendor. Also in February, access was scheduled to begin to Ship Abstracts (from the Norwegian Ship Research Institute, coverage from 1973, updated ten times per year). Samsom has also announced the availability of MATHFILE (coverage from 1973, abstracts from mid-1979 onwards only, monthly updates) for March of this year.

Late last year, an agreement was reached between Grolier Electronic Publishing and Bibliographic Retrieval Services, whereby the latter would make available via its on-line service the Academic American Encyclopedia - which had earlier been taken over by Grolier from Arete of Princeton, NJ.

BRS was to offer SUPERINDEX in the first quarter of 1983. This file is composed of "back-of-the-book" indexes to reference works published by twenty-five major sci/tech publishers including Elsevier, Springer Verlag, Wiley, Prentice Hall, ACS, ASTM and CRC Press.

BRS is now making available the following additional files: RICE - Resources in Computer Education (coverage from 1979, bimonthly updates); ISMS (governmental and industry specifications and standards, also searchable as the separate files STDS and MLSS, from Information Handling Services); Sociological Abstracts (coverage from 1963, abstracts available from 1973 onwards only, updated five times per year); Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians (coverage from 1941); International Pharmaceutical Abstracts (coverage from 1970); MATHFILE; Epilepsyline (coverage from 1945, monthly updates); and the controlled-vocabulary data base TERM, incorporating subject headings from Thesaurus of ERIC Descriptors, Thesaurus of Psychological Index Terms, Medical Subject Headings (MeSH), National Clearinghouse of Mental Health Information Descriptors, National Council of Family Resources Codes, and including free-text synonyms (updated quarterly).

New on ESA-IRS is CETIM, covering mechanical construction control, mechanical engineering, robotics, casting, surface treatment and other subjects (file 54, up since March, coverage from 1975).

Biotechnology Abstracts, announced in ISU vol. 2 no. 2, is now accessible on-line through SDC in California and Derwent-SDC in the United Kingdom, but only to subscribers. (Note that the Royal Society of Chemistry in the United Kingdom has decided to go ahead with its "Current Biotechnology Abstracts" - which however will not at least initially be available for on-line access.)

Engineering Meetings (from Engineering Information) has been made accessible now on SDC - in addition to ESA-IRS and Data-Star, as we announced in an earlier issue.

At the beginning of this year, SDC opened access to METADEX, a bibli-

ographic data base from the American Society for Metals (updated monthly). SDC is promoting the use of METADEX in coordination with its exclusive ORBIT data bank MDF/I.

CRONOS-Eurostat is now accessible on SIA (London, UK), as well as on CISI and Datacentralen.

Control Data has mounted EDAPS (Energy Data and Projections System).

Now accessible on DIALOG: PTS Annual Report Abstracts (file 17, up since February, monthly updates) (see ISU vol. 2 no. 6, p. 335); Economic Literature Index (file 139, up since January, coverage from 1969, quarterly updates); Arthur D. Little/Online (file 192, up since February, monthly updates); UPI News (files 260 (backfile) and 261 (current file, daily updates with 48-hour delay), up since April); LC MARC (file 426, up since April, monthly updates); Ulrich's International Periodicals Directory (file 480; from R.R. Bowker; up since March; incorporating entries also from Irregular Serials and Annuals, Sources of Serials, and Ulrich's Quarterly; updated every four to six weeks); D&B - Principal International Businesses (file 518, from Dun & Bradstreet, up since February, annual reload-updates). Note also that BIOSIS Previews was in February re-mounted as three separate files (5, 55, 255), whereas it had before been searchable as two files (it was already in three segments on SDC (recently re-loaded), but is mounted as a single file on ESA-IRS, with coverage from 1973 onwards only). ABI/Inform (file 15) was re-loaded as of 1 March, with certain new fields. Finally, the Dialnet Palo Alto - London leased line has been connected to PSS, so that many users in the UK can enjoy somewhat lower telecommunication costs.

Newly available to searchers on the Télésystèmes-QUESTEL on-line information retrieval service: TRANSIN - offers and requests for new technology and industrial techniques (from Transinove International, coverage beginning with 1980, updated twice per month, announced as available from April 1983); LABOR (from the ILO, combines LABORDOC and INFSOC, updated monthly, announced as available from April 1983).

NLM/Medlars will offer a cancer therapy data base composed of 600 active treatment protocols registered by the US National Cancer Institute Protocol Data Query (PDQ) system. All protocols are NCI funded and the data base only provides whereabouts of research treatment sites. No instructions or recommendations are given.

PTS Annual Report Abstracts is also accessible on Data-Star (as well as on DIALOG, as indicated above).

Laborlaw from the Bureau of National Affairs (BNA), now available from DIALOG, is planned for LEXIS/NEXIS utilization.

CHEMLINE has been reconfigured on the NLM network. It is reported that the reconfiguration followed negotiations with CAS. The file will have fewer synonyms, but royalty rates will be reduced significantly. NLM has also announced that TOXLINE rates will be increased in the amount of US\$3.00.

BELINDIS is now making available ORBI (legal literature, from 1960, no abstracts, updated monthly). The data base comes from the Centrum voor Rechtsdocumentatie in Brussels.

The English- and German-language versions of the European Community legal data base CELEX were due to be put up early this year on the on-line host EURIS in Brussels, joining the already available French-language version.

Datacentralen is making available NCOM (on mass communication, coverage from 1975).

The Avery Index to Architectural Periodicals (coverage from 1979) is accessible on RLIN.

Now up on DIMDI is HECLINET (health care literature, coverage from 1969, bimonthly updates). DIMDI has recently implemented access via telex.

Announced for June 1983 on Data-Star and BRS: the Kirk-Othmer Encyclopedia of Chemical Technology, "Short File". The full encyclopedia is due to be accessible on-line in 1984.

March 1983 was the target date for availability of Harvard Business Review via Data-Star in Switzerland. It has been accessible for some time now on BRS, and is planned for DIALOG.

Disclosure II may now also be accessed on the I.P. Sharp system, which is also now offering access to ICIS (market information on chemicals), USSTOCK (prices and volumes from US stock exchanges), Federal Reserve Board Weekly, and UN Commodity Trade Statistics (coverage from 1976).

New on INKA is Inpadoc Patente (post-1977 patents of the F.R.G., Austria and Switzerland).

Daily Tax Advance is the name of a new on-line information service from the Bureau of National Affairs, available via Dialcom.

Now available on DRI is MTIS (Monthly Trade Information Service), containing statistics for Belgium, Canada, F.R.G., France, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, UK and USA.

ISI has developed plans to create an on-line version of Current Contents. This according to Eugene Garfield in his column Current Comments for 4 April 1983. An announcement was due "in the near future".

#### **Data bases withdrawn**

EDE	Datacentralen
World Book	CompuServe
INPADOC	DIALOG
France Actualités	ESA-IRS
SSIE	BRS (temporarily)

#### **Digitizing Japan**

DDX, the digital data exchange network service of Nippon Telegraph & Telephone Public Corporation, is to be rapidly expanded to provide com-

munications to all parts of Japan, and at lower cost.

#### **News from Frascati**

Overall usage of the ESA-IRS on-line system was considerably higher in 1982 than in the previous year. In particular, the re-loading in one file (from 1967) of Chemical Abstracts last summer resulted in a notable increase in the use of that data base. Also, the host has recently implemented a new training file, EDIN (file 26), from the International Atomic Energy Agency (language: STAIRS). This joins the four training files already available: Chemical Abstracts (file 38), INSPEC (file 39), INSPEC "library" (file 31 - now re-loaded, with the inclusion of the Related Term facility), and Pascal (file 37). Furthermore, ESA-IRS has announced its new Personal Time Series (PTS) Service, in addition to its Data Dissemination System (DDS) - a sort of electronic mail and record transfer service with filing and retrieval functions, and costing, in 1983, 20AU per hour plus telecommunication charges.

#### **Outlook**

According to an April press release, a 101-page LINK Resources Corporation study entitled "Electronic Information Industry Forecast: North America" predicts an overall industry growth rate averaging 22.8% annually for the next five years. The hottest segment will be the consumer information market (growth rate: 76.2%), followed by "professional information services geared to vertical professional markets" (27.3%). Nonetheless, the lion's share of the market in 1987 will still belong to business information (approximately 70%, as opposed to more than 75% in 1982). The fourth segment taken into account, "scientific and technical information, and library support services", will represent a marginally larger share in 1987 than consumer information, but will realize only an 18.2% growth rate.

#### **"Industry" standards**

In January of this year, a revised version of the "Proposal for the Development of Publishing Industry Standards and Author Guidelines on Electronic Manuscript Preparation" became available to the Electronic Publishing Subcommittee, New Technology Committee, of the Association of American Publishers. The Proposal (submitted by N.A. Alter of University Microfilms International) foresees developmental support from such bodies as ANSI (Committees X3J6, X3VI, Z39), the Printing Industry Association, the International Group of STM Publishers, the Society for Scholarly Publishing, the International Federation of Scientific Editors' Associations, the National Federation of Abstracting and Information Services, as well as from selected technical experts. The project would be carried out by an external contractor, and probably take about two years altogether - beginning, provisionally, in May 1983. Initial AAP reaction to the Proposal was apparently positive, as was that of a number of other interested parties whose opinions were solicited. The AAP will more than likely seek outside support to help fund the project.



### **Floppy standard**

It seems that numerous manufacturers have now agreed to underwrite a common standard for 3.5-inch magnetic discettes, known as "microfloppies". These include Sony, Memorex, BASF, Atari, 3M and others.

### **French connection**

Access to Télésystèmes-QUESTEL has been arranged for data-base searchers in Canada, in such a way that only domestic telecommunications costs will be incurred. The idea is that the user connects, via the Datapac network, with the host Informatech in Montréal, and is switched through to the French Transpac network for linkage with the Télésystèmes computer. Informatech was already a host for French-language on-line data bases - among which were some of those from the Pascal group produced by the CNRS in France.

### **Tools of the trade**

BIOSIS has announced its 1983 edition of the BIOSIS Previews Search Guide. New features include a Subject Guide to the BIOSIS Concept Codes, added multi-word or phrase data, genus-species names, and special equivalence postings to handle changes in bacterial nomenclature since 1979.

Engineering Index has announced that SHE (Subject Headings for Engineering) will be revised and updated. The 1983 edition was to be published in January 1983.

Announced for July is the 1983 edition of the user guide Search INFORM from Data Courier. Price is \$47.50 in the USA, including surface postage; foreign prices are available upon request. Contact: Data Courier, 620 South Fifth Street, Louisville, KY 40202, USA.

Now available from INSPEC are the 1983 editions of the INSPEC User Manual and the INSPEC Thesaurus. Each of these costs £30 in the UK, £35 otherwise. Contact: Institution of Electrical Engineers, Station House, Nightingale Road, Hitchin, Herts. SG5 1RJ, UK.

The 1982 edition (in two volumes) of the NASA Thesaurus may be ordered from NTIS, 5285 Port Royal Road, Springfield, VA 22161, USA. Total cost is US\$55 (vol. 1 - hierarchical listing, \$35 - or vol. 2 - access vocabulary, \$20 - may be ordered separately).

A newsletter, BioSearch, has been announced by BIOSIS. BioSearch will replace BIOSIS Previews Memo in 1983 as the searcher's newsletter covering both the BIOSIS and Zoological Record data bases. Present subscribers will receive the new newsletter automatically. New subscribers should write BIOSIS, 2100 Arch Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103, USA -- User Services Department.

For US\$125, you can lay your hands on "The Ethernet Handbook" - from Shotwell and Associates, 680 Beach Street, Suite 481, San Francisco, CA 94109, USA.

**Distribution**

The Research Libraries Information Network in the USA is the beneficiary of a recent grant from the Carnegie Corporation in the amount of \$250,000 - to be used for planning the implementation of a distributed processing environment.

**BL**

Work is progressing on the preparation of the new British Library building in London (at St. Pancras). It began in April of 1982, and initial occupancy is planned for 1990. In the meantime, the "foundation stone" was unveiled last December by the Prince of Wales. At least from the esthetic point of view, the new structure will be considerably less than awe-inspiring, though one may assume that in respect of technological features it will more or less represent the state of the art. At any rate, Prince Charles seems from the photograph appearing on the first page of the December issue of British Library News not exactly enraptured by the architect's conception, and the excerpt from his remarks there printed suggests that he took the unveiling ceremony as something of a joke.

**Hard times for US software producers?**

Since 1969, the US Internal Revenue Service (IRS) has allowed to tax-paying enterprises a current expense or amortization option for expenditures on software research and development. Furthermore, the Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981 embodied a provision for a tax credit for incremental research and development expenditures - whose intent it apparently was to apply also to costs of developing software. Now, a proposed set of amendments to the IRS Code (in which the tax credit enactment had been incorporated) would deprive computer software developers of some of the tax breaks which they have come to enjoy. In March, Secretary of the Treasury Donald T. Regan (it being his department that originated the proposed new regulations) received a letter of objection signed by thirty-seven Congressmen. In this letter, we read the statements: "Sections 1.174-2(a)(3) and (4) [of the proposed new regulations] seem almost completely to preclude the eligibility of software development costs, contrary to the intent of Congress that there be a general presumption in favor of the applicability of the tax credit to software.", following the observation that "Section 1.174-2(a)(2) does not adequately allow for the product evolution and modification that are necessary to maintain competitiveness in many technological fields." Further on, it is pointed out that "the high technology companies that are most likely to utilize Section 174 and Section 44F must have the widest possible latitude for the development and continued modification of both hardware and software products in order to remain competitive in the world market." In April, Vico Henriques, president of the Computer and Business Equipment Manufacturers Association, stated, "Software is one of the most vital areas of US leadership, but our lead may slip because governments heavily subsidize software development in other countries. We cannot allow one of the few

software development incentives in the US to evaporate simply because the IRS has misinterpreted Congressional action." CBEMA member companies - who "put anywhere from 30 to 60 percent of their R & D budgets into software development" - had combined sales in 1982 of more than US\$75 billion.

### Linkage

As of 1983, the Complete Series of Basic Abstracts is available from Derwent in reel microfilm form. According to Derwent's 1983 on-line search service brochure, "programs will be made available to link a microfilm reader/printer to the online system via a microcomputer, so that retrieved online hits may be printed automatically".

### People

The honor of presenting the Miles Conrad Memorial Lecture at the Silver Anniversary conference of the National Federation of Abstracting and Information Services (NFAIS) this winter was bestowed on John E. Creps, Jr. A commemorative volume containing the Conrad Lectures (up to and including that of Creps) has recently been published by Information Resources Press of Arlington, Virginia.

New chairman of the board of directors of the Information Industry Association in the USA is Roy K. Campbell of Dun & Bradstreet Credit Services.

At the end of last year, Thom Collins resigned as General Manager of the SDC Search Service in Santa Monica, California - where he has now set up as an independent consultant. He had occupied the SDC position since 1978.

About the same time, the Research Libraries Group found a new president in the person of Richard W. McCoy. He comes from the University of Wisconsin, having served also with the Executive Office of the President, and will succeed RLG's former president Edward E. Shaw after Patricia Battin's brief period as interim president (see ISU vol. 2 no. 1, p. 57).

Also about the same time, retiring National Agricultural Library director Richard A. Farley was replaced provisionally by Joseph H. Howard from the Library of Congress, until a new director could be identified.

Loene Trubkin has this spring stepped down as president of Data Courier, to be replaced by Dennis Auld - who likewise becomes a director of the company. Trubkin will retain her place as a director.

The Centre for Library and Information Management (CLAIM) has found a new director in the person of Peter Mann, who comes from Sheffield University and its Centre for Research on User Studies (CRUS). CLAIM is located at Loughborough University, and both CRUS and CLAIM are funded through the British Library Research & Development Department.

Graham Jones has been appointed managing director of Pergamon Info-Line. His most recent position was with Derwent Publications, and he

had previously worked at Pergamon Press. Patrick Gibbins has become Pergamon InfoLine's deputy managing director.

Engineering Information has announced new appointments to its board of trustees. These include: W.T. Brandhorst (ORI, Bethesda, MD), A.L. Conn (Arthur Conn Assoc., Chicago, IL), J.E. Creps (Willow Grove, PA), and J. Harford (AIAA, New York, NY).

In connection with its restructuring of the various product groups, Lockheed has designated Richard W. Taylor as president of the information systems group (which will include DIALOG). He was formerly corporate vice president for corporate development at Lockheed.

Brian Vickery has retired from the University of London's School of Library, Archive and Information Studies, of which he was most recently the Head.

Susan Hills has become Head of Automation, New Technology and Reprography at the Science Reference Library (British Library) in London. In this capacity, she is also responsible for the Computer Search Service. She had previously been connected with the BL's R&D Department and with its Bibliographic Services Division (BLAISE).

Gerry Mears has become marketing manager at INSPEC.

On 1 December last, Thomas Seeger completed, with a public lecture under the title "Communications-theoretical Aspects of the New User-oriented Services in Information and Documentation", the process of his "Habilitation" in the subject "Science of Information and Documentation" within the section for Communication Sciences at the Free University of Berlin. He was only the second person to achieve this high academic grade, after Gernot Wersig in 1972. Both Wersig and Seeger are connected with Projekt INSTRAT at the Free University.

New Prestel marketing director is David Musson - who certainly will have his work cut out for him. It was also recently announced that Prestel marketing in the USA will be handled by Torch Computers Corporation of Boston, Massachusetts.

We note here also the retirement of Robert A. Kennedy, Director of Libraries and Information Systems at Bell Laboratories in Murray Hill, NJ, USA.

## **Software**

The Institute for Scientific Information has launched a large publicity campaign for its new Sci-Mate Universal Online Searcher microcomputer software - a menu-driven system with automatic log-on and tutorial features, as well as a universal command language for searching MEDLINE, DIALOG, BRS, and ISI itself. For local manipulation, this software may be used in conjunction with ISI's Sci-Mate Personal Data Manager software. Total price: US\$880; the Online Searcher system alone costs \$440, the Data Manager \$540. Every purchaser must sign an "End User Agreement", which deals among other things with conditions and restrictions for downloading (from ISI data bases), multiple users, and proprietary rights. In the March 21 instalment of his column Current Comments, incidentally, Eugene Garfield stated concerning Sci-Mate: "We

think it's a logical step in our mission to improve access to scientific information", and "Sci-Mate may well be the first reason you may acquire a microcomputer". He also promised that ISI is "making provisions for continuing improvements and updates to the software". For further details, contact Joel Sartorius, ISI, 3501 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104, USA; tel. (215) 386-0100.

### **Hardware**

The European Space Agency Information Retrieval Service in Frascati, Italy, plans by the end of this year to have available 40 Gbytes of fixed-head storage, after recently putting into operation twin Siemens 7865 model II computers with IBM-compatible central processing units.

### **Reports**

From CIT Research we note the following: Videodisc: a Guide for Media Producers; Teletext: Experiences and Opportunities; Micrographics: a Secure Future in the Information Technology Field. Prices vary from £295 to £385 for initial copies, and further information is available from Paul Broadhead, CIT Research Ltd., 21 Great Titchfield Street, London W1P 7FD, UK.

### **New publication on information technology**

The Longman Group, in cooperation with the UK Parliamentary Information Technology Committee, has inaugurated PITCOM: Information Technology & Public Policy, which is meant to appear three times per year (volume 1, number 1 is labeled September 1982, though the launch party was held more than two months later). The administrative and editorial structure appears to be entirely British - as also the predominant orientation of the first issue's contents, although some attention is devoted to European Community matters. Subscription price is £25; ISSN: 0263-614X.

### **Copyright registrations automation**

The 41-million-card Library of Congress Copyright Office Card Catalog, covering the period 1870-1978, has been closed as a manually maintained file. Post-1977 registrations are available on-line, with the exception of periodicals. During fiscal year 1982, the Copyright Office registered 468,000 claims to copyright.

### **Glass houses?**

In the January 7, 1983 issue of the newsletter Infotecture, published at Paris, we read the interesting, if typically acrimonious, statement (here translated from the French): "As we have often written, too many producers are themselves pirates, and one oughtn't easily to make accu-

sations against others for practices in which one engages oneself". This in connection with alleged complaints by data-base producers that users are downloading sections of their files for local use on micro-computers.

**And last,**

But not least - we are pleased to welcome the two most recent additions to the ISU advisory editorial board. They are Marjorie M.K. Hlava, president of Access Innovations Inc., and M. Lynne Neufeld, executive director of the National Federation of Abstracting and Information Services. We note also here the retirement from the board of Mark Bayer and Ben Weil - both charter members.

---

## Trends

**Promising future?**

Volume 34 number 1 of Nachrichten für Dokumentation (February 1983) is given over largely to the subject of videotex, including the question whether this medium holds significant promise for the field of specialist information and documentation. The numerous inherent obstacles are recounted, but at least to W. Rauch and D. Strauch, the future looks bright. They conclude their article with the following remarks (p. 7 - translated here from the German): "In view of videotex development, ... it is not an exaggeration to speak of a fundamental, entirely novel challenge to the information and documentation field. We must come up with nothing less than a new strategy, which corresponds on the one hand with the power of the technology and on the other with the tasks of practical information provision. We ... are convinced that it will no longer be possible to talk about information and documentation services without taking videotex into account."

We might furthermore observe that "Specialist Information and Videotex" is the theme chosen for the 1983 Convention of German Documentalists (Deutscher Dokumentartag), to be held this October in Göttingen. Those interested in this subject may be referred to Nachrichten für Dokumentation vol. 34 no. 3 (June 1983), p. 157-166, where appears a 259-item international bibliography on videotex with particular respect to its importance for the area of specialist information and documentation, compiled with an introduction by Peter Stahn of the Information Center, Society for Information and Documentation, Frankfurt. (We discover in this excellent bibliography by chance, however, the omission of the new publication by Serge Gauthronet, La télématique des autres: les expériences de vidéotex en Europe (Paris: La documentation française, 1982), which deals especially with the situations in the F.R.G. (Bildschirmtext), Finland (Telset), Sweden (Datavision) and the UK (Prestel).)

Finally, however, we note, on the less optimistic side, that the

Deutsche Angestellten-Gewerkschaft has recently projected, over the middle term, a loss of 50,000 to 80,000 jobs in the German wholesale and retail trade as a result of videotex applications - in addition to further potential job-losses in the insurance, banking, and travel sectors.

#### **Data-base industry**

The Groupement Français des Producteurs de Bases et Banques de Données (GFPBBD) has carried out a survey whose results should perhaps surprise no-one. Data-base production in North America rests more with the commercial sector (about 50%) than is the case in Europe; more of the data bases pertain to economic information; there is a larger proportion of big data bases (more than 100,000 records) produced in North America; government data-base producers in the USA tend less often to charge fees for use of their files; European not-for-profit producers tend to charge more than their North American counterparts. Contact: GFPBBD, B.P. 6009, 45060 Orléans, France.

#### **Next: LABOHEME?**

Sardou and Puccini may well be turning over in their graves. The US Library of Congress has developed a project which it calls TOSCA (Total Online Searching for Cataloging Activities) - designed to allow descriptive cataloguers to "use only the machine-readable files to do such tasks as establishing or revising headings".

---

## Comments

#### **Nomen omen?**

It seems that a name change is in the offing for the National Micrographics Association (USA), which wants to be known in the future as the Association for Information and Image Management. In the meantime, what used to go under the designation International Micrographic Congress (a 20-year-old trade and professional federation based in Bethesda, Maryland) has actually become the International Information Management Congress.

Microcomputers (and even "microflopies") are of course very much in fashion these days, but the term 'micrographic(s)' has grown rather out of vogue. Even so, the two re-namings mentioned above appear a bit pretentious, if not exactly dishonest perhaps. Leave it to the British (Microform Association of Great Britain) to come up with their own perspective: From that island realm we hear the interesting claim that 'microform' as a term should really also subsume the technology of magnetic storage.

**Swedish videotex**

Prestel will become available in Sweden, as a result of an agreement between Prestel and the Swedish company Viewdata AB. The argument behind it is that international gateways and uniform standards will now "make the appeal of viewdata irresistible". What about the old chicken-and-egg dilemma of not enough information in / not enough terminals to the system? Irresistible appeal, by the way, is compatible with zero practical usage ... or isn't it?

**Digital switching**

In a rapidly moving technology like ours, opportunities to buy hardware should be highly transparent to users. This requirement is harder to fulfill as our PTT's are more involved. Then, politics take the place of transparent knowledge, and, the user's outlook is clouded beyond comprehension.

Let us assume, for one moment, that you are living and working on the European Continent. Your job is to choose the next-generation PABX for your organization and you are clever enough to recognize that the future is in digital switching. Thus, you apply to your PTT to get a switch (they, the PTT's, still have a monopoly, you know, prohibiting you to get into contact with the manufacturer of that digital gadget you would like to buy). Then, your PTT might respond that there is no chance for you to get one, since:

- "we have given the monopoly for digital switches to company Y and they are still not ready to market one";

- "our relation, company Y, has just got an agreement with company X with the result that we might allow you to get an X-Y digital switch in about two years";

- "there are talks going on between our provider, company Y, and company Z, in the USA, to reach a joint venture which will allow them to market digital switches, but not before 1987";

- "yes, we know that various switches are being offered, but we are in the process of testing them and our testing programme will not be finished before 1986".

What are you going to do? Any suggestions? Anyone to write a (some-prize)-winning case study about how to solve your networking problems in 1983, despite the monopoly of your PTT?

**Gobbledegook**

That was the heading of a recent item in ESA-IRS News and Views, commenting on an older item in ISU News, Trends and Comments (ISU vol. 1 no. 6 (1982), p. 379). We like it so much that we would like to quote it in full (thereby infringing ESA-IRS copyright?):

"We read with interest a comment in "Information Services and Use" for May 1982 on the use of jargon in the information industry which led the editorial team of News and Views into a reflection on the continuative problems involved in reporting accurately and explicitly the simplest ways to get the best out of a most sophisticated albeit user friendly information retrieval service notwithstanding the inescapable



idiosyncrasies of each and every single database inevitably integral which are due to a well known plurality of factors including acquisition policy indexing rules (un) verbalizing for machineability together with the refinements imbedded in a realistically speaking reduced number of commands where the inherent stupidity of computers even of the fifth generation imposes much to our regret an unusual precision to our customers in respect of the form expected by the central computing unit for the relevant parameters while the software team struggles to allow for almost infinite variations in same expressions in view of the inherent creativity of said customers and not having even spoken about the unending changes in telephone numbers procedures intended to recognize a user as truly so when accessing the system through various cascaded packet switched networks or by the telecommunications front end mini-computer as well as other miscellanies which constantly crop up in a totally uncoordinated fashion thereby requiring an inordinate time and effort from the above referenced editorial team to check them out whereupon customers may expect hopefully to find out in forthcoming issues of News and Views worked out solutions to the continuative problems involved in reporting accurately and explicitly see above GOBBLE-DEGOOK!

Well! The Editor of "Information Services and Use" was definitely NOT objecting that News and Views was insipidly verbose but simply chiding us gently for having abused (once) the use of acronyms.

He is right. We appreciate the comment. The root of the matter is that our title is probably not reflecting enough the fact that this is a technical bulletin for a learned audience - our customer community. We do look forward towards simplifying the task of our customers - the ZOOM command is a first step so that we may emphasize the "Views" facet in our bulletin as a consequence of user's creativity being liberated.

Acronyms useless clutches of the mind will have then disappeared!"

We appreciate ESA-IRS etc.'s editor's honesty. As we said, we all are guilty.... No need to prove that: read your computer/information technology journals, even ... read ISU. The editors of this journal would like to get in touch with interested colleagues to found the AAS (the Acronym Avoiding Society)!

By the way, ESA-IRS etc. editor: help a non-English native: is it gobbledegook, gobblydegook, gobbledygook or gobblydygook? My Webster could not help me ....

P.s.: My wife helped me out: Oxford Advanced says gobbledy..., Concise Oxford says gobblede... or gobbledy.... ESA-IRS editor: appreciating your communication problems as an official 6-language organization, can I offer you a sympathizing drink sometime and smoke the pipe of peace?

- CvdW

### **Crossing the ocean**

It is possible that some of our readers have never heard of the so-called Bridge Project, and that many who have heard of it are not entirely clear what it involves - or was meant to involve. The basic presumption, founded upon earlier survey results, was that the (potential) American on-line data-base market was such as to allow some room

for penetration by information-retrieval vendors located in Europe - that American users would be willing to take advantage of the information and services offered by host centers on the far side of the Atlantic, if they were sufficiently made aware just what information (for example, in files which are not accessible on North American systems) and services were in fact available, and if access to these should be made as efficient and painless as possible. Inherent obstacles (unfamiliar command languages, increased telecommunication costs, foreign-language records, strange and complicated access procedures and user-system interactions, accounting and payment problems) were considerable, but it seemed (especially to the European Commission, but certainly also to some of the vendors) worth a try. An interesting approach was taken: let a selected group of North American information brokers form a sort of interface. The scheme was to be coordinated in North America, under contract, by the well-known consulting firm of Cuadra Associates, and was initially to involve only a limited number of files.

In the event, it didn't work out so well. The European Commission put considerable moral and tangible support into the project. The brokers (out of apparently varying motivations; both for-profit and not-for-profit organizations - twenty altogether - were involved) seemed unusually prepared to do their part. What appears to have been lacking was the organizational and coordinative ability (or commitment) necessary, and in particular on the American end of things. The brokers had to be provided with the essential orientation, instruction and documentation - a process whose execution left something to be desired. Perhaps it is a pity. Perhaps it isn't, really. It seems to have been a fragile scheme anyway. Possibly it would not have caught on with American users even if all preparations had gone smoothly. The current attitude of European vendors seems to be that if they are to carve out pieces of the American action for themselves, they will have to do so on their own, through imaginative and perhaps aggressive marketing (and data-base acquisition) strategies. Some have already pursued this approach to a considerable length; others have begun to move in such a direction. It isn't, and won't be, easy. The interested parties in Luxemburg may be wondering whether it is indeed reasonable to talk about European information services export on a significant scale, at least in a westerly direction. It would probably be easier if a healthier spirit of entrepreneurship and competition (along with less pronounced nationalistic attitudes?) existed within Europe itself. In the meantime, the American vendors are not bashful about going after even more transatlantic customers - not without success. Just to take into account the major US purveyors of bibliographic files - two of them have, through special telecommunications and/or cooperative arrangements, virtually become de facto "DIANE" (European) hosts (the other, of course, already belongs to a European company). If however one of these - as is rumored - is destined to go under, if the long-awaited shakedown among European hosts actually takes place, if the above-mentioned marketing strategies meet with some success, if other - partially political - obstacles can be avoided - then the international on-line information-provision situation may come to look quite a bit different even over the middle term - perhaps to the benefit of users (and intermediaries?) on both sides of the water. That is, however, quite a few "if"s.

Meanwhile, it is perhaps unfortunate that an optimistic attempt to

broaden somewhat the horizons of American information seekers may come to little or nothing.

#### **Microcomputing literature on-line**

BRS/DISC (Data-processing and Information Science Contents) provides access to microcomputing literature. Nice supplement to good old INSPEC C-8500?

#### **INTUG**

INTUG (just for the few who have not read vols. 1 and 2: the International Telecommunications User Group) have produced another marvellous bulletin. Part of its contents:

- Europe lags behind in Information Technology
- Landmark conference held by OECD
- The paperless office
- Data protection developments in Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Japan, Spain, Switzerland, UK

Why do we mention it when most of you already have become a member or have got a subscription? To convince the few! Contact: Donald Stephenson, Bywell House, St. Mary's Hill, South Ascot, Berkshire SL5 9AP, UK.

#### **IIASA**

Report from IIASA (the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis, Austria): RR-83-6 (March 1983), Paavo Uronen, Integrated Computer Systems in the Pulp and Paper Industry.

Nice, if you work in that industry, but how about you, when you transform your office from paper to electronics, producing pulp? Read it?

#### **What are you going to be doing in...**

1984?

1985?

1986?

1987?

1988?

---