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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this meeting of an invited group of concerned citizens was to focus attention on the interrelation of all types of libraries in British Columbia. It was intended to involve those who pay for library service in a discussion of its potential to meet the demands of the coming generation. This record, which is not intended to be a "proceedings", is intended as a means to continue the work of the meeting; to foster understanding and discussion of libraries in all parts of the province. It is hoped this document will serve as the voices of some citizens stimulating many others to discussion. Presentations included are: "B. C. Libraries - Alone Today, Co-operating Tomorrow;" "The Library, and Educational Force for the '70's;" "The Regional District's Role in Library Development;" "B. C.'s Tomorrow - The Future and The Challenge;" "A Hard Look at Today - A Bold Look at Tomorrow;" and "Where It's At - Where It Should Be." A list of registered delegates to the meeting is included. (Author/NH)

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Libraries: vital to tomorrow's world

a record of the

British Columbia Centennial
Citizens' Conference on Libraries

held in Victoria

May 3, 1971

Published by the Conference
Vancouver, 1971

BRITISH COLUMBIA CENTENNIAL CITIZENS' CONFERENCE ON LIBRARIES

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What Is This Booklet?

On May 3, 1971, an invited group of concerned citizens met to focus attention on the interrelation of all types of libraries in British Columbia. It was intended to involve those who pay for library service in a discussion of its potential to meet the demands of the coming generation.

If the words spoken at the May 3 conference were simply to be recorded and put on library shelves for posterity, we would have produced a volume of 'proceedings'. This, however, was not the intention. What you hold is deliberately called a 'record' of the Citizens' Conference, for its purpose is to continue the work of the meeting: to foster understanding and discussion of libraries in all parts of the province. An early opportunity for this is being offered in the Regional Citizens' Conferences which will be held during early 1972. We hope this document will serve as the voices of some citizens stimulating many others to discussion.

While the Proceedings Committee has been careful to preserve the meaning and context of what went on at the conference, you are reading a record which is in part incomplete, and in part edited and rearranged. The luncheon and banquet addresses, for example, do not appear here at all. Excellent and well received as they were, they constituted delightful 'hors d'oeuvres'. Mr. Alan Emmott provided just the right touch after a day of serious deliberations, and a number of his pithy comments appear herein as marginal notes. Mr. St. Pierre's luncheon address has already appeared in the July 1971 issue of the *British Columbia Library Quarterly*.

Similarly, two of the panel talks were general background on the future of industry and labour in the province, and not related specifically to libraries. You will find these panelists' ideas summarized in the panel moderator's words in this record. The need to put the library scene into the context of general economic and social conditions was well stated at the conference by Mr. Gordon Draeseke and Mr. John Fryer. In regional and local discussions we recommend similar attention to the voices of businessmen and planners.

With almost two hundred fifty delegates making their views known in the twelve discussion groups, each of which lasted at least ninety minutes, it is natural that many ideas were duplicated among several groups, phrased in slightly varying forms. We hope we have captured every significant idea developed in these groups, and consequently we ask that an individual delegate who looks for his words herein will forgive us if he finds his ideas reflected under some other guise. These 'voices of the conference' expressed in the discussion groups have been juxtaposed as marginal comments in italics alongside related ideas developed in the texts of the four major addresses from the platform which are here printed in full. What citizens think and say is what this meeting was all about, and we trust these marginal comments will be read as the real concerns of local taxpayers and library users, prompting them to further discussion of the problems raised.

*Proceedings Committee
British Columbia Centennial Citizens' Conference on Libraries*

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The Conference Opening

COL. THE HON. JOHN R. NICHOLSON, P.C.
Lieutenant-Governor of British Columbia

The Royal Visit begins today. What a wonderful day it is, and how fortunate that this first Citizens' Conference on Libraries is being held in this province and in its capital city on the very day when the Royal party will sail into Victoria's harbour. When I received your invitation to open the conference, and when the Provincial Secretary received your invitation to participate, we had a little inside knowledge that the Queen might be arriving today. I was quite relieved when I learned your meeting would begin early enough to make it possible for us to include both important events in today's schedule.

May I say that I really consider, as I am sure you all do, that this is a most significant conference held at an important time in the history of this province. I remember when public libraries were first introduced on a national scale, in the first years of this century when Carnegie funds were made available to establish them in various parts of Canada. Victoria was one of the fortunate cities. Since that time, through the good offices and the dedication of people like yourselves, libraries have helped make vital the lives of so many people, young and old, during the difficult years I have seen. And so it is fitting that in this centennial year you should be re-examining the potential and the future of libraries here in British Columbia.

Just over forty years ago I was crossing the continent by CPR train. It was before the use of air conditioning,

and dust was a particular problem, especially across the prairies. On our second day out, I was in a car which had only two passengers — the other one being an elderly lady in the section opposite me. Like most of the porters in those days, the one in our car was a black: a delightful fellow, and as there were few passengers, we had a chance to chat and get acquainted. He was dusting the window ledge this morning, when the lady turned to him and said, "Porter, what time do we get to Montreal?" He said to her very politely, "Twenty minutes after eight on Thursday morning, ma'am." Not half a minute later, one of the brakemen came through the car, and as soon as she saw him, the lady asked "Trainman, what time do we get to Montreal?" He turned to her and said, "Twenty minutes past eight on Thursday morning, madam." The porter was still there dusting. He turned to me, winked, and said to my travelling companion, "Now, ma'am, you have that in black and white."

This is no time for a long speech: you have a busy day ahead of you. I know it will be an interesting day. You have gathered a representative group from every part of the province, from almost the Alaska-Yukon border to the south-eastern corner, and you will surely have profitable discussions. It is now my pleasure, at the request of your organizing committee, to declare the British Columbia Centennial Citizens' Conference on Libraries officially open.

B.C. Libraries - Alone Today, Co-operating Tomorrow?

ENID DEARING & HARRY NEWSOM



The marginal comments printed in italics throughout the following pages are ideas expressed by the delegates during the discussion groups (see p. 40). The editors have arranged them alongside relevant points in the prepared talks.

The library could become the promoter of community activities.

Man has many needs. There are the basic ones — food, shelter and clothing. Employment or some form of productive capacity will always be necessary to meet these requirements. Extensive education and training are necessary prerequisites to employment and meaningful living today; but in the world of tomorrow automated techniques, advanced mechanization, and computerized operations beyond our comprehension, and basic and life-long education in all its varied aspects will be even more vital. Also, in order to have a satisfying life, man will need to be educated for the increased amounts of leisure time that this advanced technology will create. Man will be searching for the meaning of life itself, examining how mankind can survive, and yet maintain the world in a liveable state. He must adapt to change; his survival depends upon it. To meet these complex demands he will be forced to revamp institutions, rearrange patterns of growth, and create new services. This will not be easy, for while man is adaptable, paradoxically, he also resists change.

Man has other needs apart from the basic ones. He needs *information and re-creation*. He needs information for his general education, his job or career, his role as a citizen. He needs re-creation constantly to re-charge the batteries of the mind to maintain a balanced, sane and fulfilling life.

Information and re-creation needs are met in a variety of ways: through mass communication in all of its myriad forms; educational and cultural institutions; athletic programs; museums, galleries, diverse group activities; and, to bring us to today's subject, **LIBRARIES**.

A library is one of the few places left where a person is treated as an individual: it meets man's need for information and re-creation on

a personal level. **It is a refuge for the independent spirit and the inquiring mind.** Where else can man find a storehouse of the world's accumulated knowledge, hopes, desires, philosophy, history, life, designed to answer his own highly individual needs? Libraries are indeed vital to today's and tomorrow's world.

Just as there are many types of demands for information and recreation, so there are many types of libraries with varied roles to play and different needs to meet.

Let us look for a moment at the role of libraries taken as a whole:

1. To supply resources for personal, cultural and intellectual growth.
2. To support formal education from pre-school to university graduate programmes, and to provide a resource base for all types of in-service and lifelong continuing education.
3. To sustain to a great measure the increasingly complex information needs of government and industry.
4. To co-operate in assisting individuals and groups who, through lack of education or training, are isolated from the main stream of society and are unable to integrate with, or take a part in it.

It seems simple enough to state that libraries can be established and maintained to meet these needs. Let us introduce a few other factors:

1. The continued **movement from the central city** of the well-educated consumer of information and, conversely, the migration of many culturally and economically disadvantaged individuals to the central city.
2. The greatly **increased number of students and specialists** demanding immediate access to information which can be obtained only through complex and costly systems.
3. The **sophistication of the information needs** of a wide segment of the population. Boys and girls in grade three, for example, are searching for information on subjects as varied as the bomber squadrons of the RAF, the life span of the pterodactyl, or the composition of the sugar molecule.
4. **Advances in the storage and retrieval of information** by electronic methods make possible greater access to materials.

Libraries are for individuals.

Professional librarians assume that the public know what a library is, but that isn't necessarily true.

The body of scientific literature is now doubling every 2½ years. This fact has most serious implications for library costs. Unless we get a systems grid quickly we will never catch up with the information available on any given day!

We must develop ways to reach the 70% (or more) of the population who do not use libraries.

We must motivate the non-users to want to read! I don't care how good your product is. If you can't sell it, you're dead.

Perhaps libraries should not lend books. The public library's reference function may be of greater importance than circulation.

Mail is no longer satisfactory for inter-library loan in large areas.

A diversification of material is the single greatest need of all libraries.



The demands and needs of individuals and special groups have resulted in various types of libraries.

The **special library serves a specialized clientele** in business and the professions. It has had to develop a sophisticated organization, and to pioneer the development of new techniques for the locating of detailed information. Although often narrow in scope, it provides technical information vital to every member of society.

The **university library is a research laboratory** for graduate students and faculty and a centre of information in any area of concern to any individual in its community. To fulfil this multiple role the library covers all fields of knowledge, provides depth in specific areas, and arranges access to other resource collections. In several fields such as medicine, law, engineering, and music the research library might well be considered a special library carrying responsibility for the needs of a highly-demanding clientele.

The **school library, so often incorrectly classed as a miniature public library, is essentially a miniature university library.** It is a laboratory for faculty and students of a particular community and a resource centre of information for the specific areas in which the school's demands are most heavy — the curriculum. It is the classroom for learning how to learn, the mecca for individual study. The librarian is a faculty member engaged, above all else, in a teaching situation; not as a collector or circulator of books, but as a resource consultant and fellow-planner with the English, science, and physical education teacher, and as a resource guide for the student.

The community college library's ties are chiefly with the university and school libraries. It is the resource centre for its own faculty and students. Its techniques, however, because of **its community — the undergraduate, the businessman, the housewife, the foreman** (as often enrolled in continuing education programmes as in initial basic programmes) — may parallel some of those of the public library.

The recent rise of the community college library, the expansion of special libraries to serve government and business, the establishment of school library systems, and the phenomenal growth of large uni-

iversity libraries should be a means of freeing the public library for its true role of service to the general public. The public library's responsibility is to all segments of the community. Many of the ills confronting the public library spring from the fact that it has tried to be everything to all men. Consequently, its objectives have been fuzzy and its goals blurred. **Today's and tomorrow's public library will act as a media shopping mall** for the individual in which he can satisfy his thirst for information, restructure his ideas, regenerate his knowledge, and stock up for relaxation.

To clarify the role of the public library in relation to other types of libraries possibly the best explanation is that information in a special technical field or broad academic field usually is best handled by a special library or a university library because of the specialized nature of the collections, the necessarily complex organization of the material, and the intensive use by a small specialized clientele. This also applies to the school library, which meets specific curricular needs of staff and students. The materials are used by scores of individuals, generally in a learning situation, not usually for recreation or just plain enjoyment. Public library service does not meet these needs in the same way.

The individual's needs, outside the frame of reference of the academic or special library, can best be met by the public library. This institution supplies materials on general subjects, such as cooking, model trains, fighter planes of World War II, pollution, poverty, the pill, the common market, Pakistan, hitch hiking, Quebec separation, and how to build a dog kennel, because scores or hundreds of persons in the community want such information. However, the public library ordinarily cannot supply material on the wave pattern of hair in natives of the Upper Volta, because only three individuals in all of Vancouver may want such information, which they can get from the medical library connected by telex to major medical centres.

It is not difficult to see that **the whole system of libraries is complex.** To most library users it is simply a matter of getting the information they want immediately if not sooner. A user gives no more thought to

You go shopping, and you pass a store-front with books in it, so you pick up something for current interest reading — for that sort of use, you don't want to make a separate trip to some forbidding institution.

Libraries should be where people can fall in the door: accessible when the individual needs them.

Not everyone is a student.

I have specific needs. Where are the resources? Where should I go? Whom should I ask? What can I expect?

There is a need to upgrade the quality of the demands.

We need more publicity: I don't think many people know all that a library has to offer.

Public relations are essential to the achievement of our goal. If the people aren't with you, there is little you can do.

Politicians do not listen to the public: they listen to an articulate segment of the public.

There are many materials available in public libraries of which users are unaware.

In major urban areas subject specialization sounds fine, but in small areas . . . ?

how the material was obtained than he gives to how groceries arrive at the supermarket ready for his basket. It is perhaps not necessary that he know how the books get on the shelves; but if his needs are not met, or are met inadequately, he feels anger and frustration. **The user has a responsibility** to see that his library does get the book, film, or microfilm he needs and that it has the financial support to do so. He must recognize, as well, that an understanding of the workings of this complex operation will help him secure the service he wants. Libraries have not helped themselves by hiding under the 'silence' signs that once were prevalent. The image of a little old lady with brogues and a bun sitting quietly behind a desk, speaking in whispers and stamping little cards, has damaged libraries in the same way that the stereotyped old maid school teacher harmed the teaching profession. We are talking about libraries as being vital to tomorrow's world, yet many libraries and librarians still exist in yesterday's world. Fortunately **the old image of libraries and librarians is dying out and may it rapidly rest in peace.** Today's libraries must prepare themselves for tomorrow and go to the public for the support that they need.

The countless forms of the printed word, coupled with the knowledge explosion already upon us, create a major complexity for all libraries, especially public libraries which must provide materials in all subjects. It should not be difficult to see that libraries must be *selective*. They must select the materials best suited to the needs of their individual libraries. They must then buy these selections with the limited funds available — funds that seem to decrease as the cost of materials continues to rise. This is a complex procedure that requires personnel with knowledge of the standards and methods of selection and of modern developments in the world on *all* subjects.

Man's recorded knowledge in this new age arrives in an ever increasing number of forms that complicate selection and create unique problems in making the material available for use. The masses of material must be organized and arranged so that they can be found and when needed. This requires highly trained personnel to develop card and book catalogues, use computers, and make indexes and biblio-

ographies. After cataloguing, it is important that a system for the utilization and updating of this material be maintained.

To sum up, a library may be compared to a large business with an invaluable inventory, a specialized plant often housing expensive and sophisticated equipment, and highly-trained employees to maintain and operate the business. This constitutes a large investment made for the most part — and almost entirely in the case of public libraries — with public funds. For this reason it is important that the people who provide these funds (the public) know how they are spent, and further, that they are spent in the most efficient way and are sufficient to provide the kind of service the public requires.

Now let us focus our attention on the problems of libraries in British Columbia.

Public libraries in this province for the most part have had a history of localism and individualism. There are some exceptions, notably the three regional library systems which serve many towns, villages, and cities on Vancouver Island, in the Fraser Valley, and in the Okanagan. These regional libraries are financed and operated as a single unit of service, supported by pooling all monies to provide an integrated system of branch libraries, bookmobile service, and centralized resources which are utilized by the whole system.

There are also three government-sponsored areas of associated public libraries. By agreement and payment of funds they obtain their books catalogued, processed, and delivered by the provincial government library agency, the Library Development Commission. From the Commission's three branch headquarters, at Dawson Creek, Prince George and Cranbrook, professional guidance and assistance to the individual libraries throughout their areas are also provided.

But there are still many independent public libraries supported almost entirely by municipal taxation supplemented by provincial grants. The public library associations serving many points in the province are supported as well by a combination of limited local funds and provincial grants, both usually inadequate. These libraries are maintained by volunteers. In the Lower Mainland alone there are six

And with subject specialization we will need a union catalogue!

Expanding the tax and financial base of a library does not necessarily increase its services or quality.



We don't know what our 'lost sales' are because we haven't analyzed the demands on libraries which cannot be satisfied in their present organization.

Equality of opportunity is what we are talking about: equal access to the printed word.

None of British Columbia's libraries is good enough. We all fall down. We have to provide the organized system that will make subject specialization possible.

Libraries must become more visible, more inviting.

independent municipal public libraries all operating, except for limited co-operative ventures, on an independent basis; i.e. local tax support and provincial grant.

Perhaps it is a combination of rugged individualism and rugged geography that has kept this independence alive. Libraries grew up in small isolated areas and the excuse of geography was a convenient way to avoid co-operation. **Individuality in libraries is to be fostered**, for each library must serve its own area and meet the specialized needs of its community. **But isolation is to be abhorred**. Lack of co-operation in developing better public libraries to avoid costly duplication has greatly hindered library development in this province. The tight-lipped "We are doing very nicely, thank you" attitude that has been prevalent, not only in the smaller centres but also in the urban Lower Mainland, must go. All public libraries in British Columbia need more materials, better trained staffs, and more financial support before any one of them can say it is doing very nicely.

Academic libraries face many of the same problems that public libraries do. Co-operation among the four university libraries is still in its infancy. The eight **community college libraries** are all new and groping to become established and with one or two exceptions are going it alone without much support from other libraries in the area. The case is similar for the two technical and nine vocational college libraries. These **academic and technical libraries** are facing the continuing problems of growing pains. In most cases the enrolment quickly exceeds the facilities. The library, instead of being the centre of the institution, must compete as a subject area as if it were part of the curriculum. It is often an afterthought, poorly and hastily planned, placing a great burden not only on the staff but on the local community library that is faced with the problems of trying to meet students' needs. The university library has the same problems on a much larger scale. Ever increasing enrolment places an additional burden on already limited facilities. Because funds seem to be splintered, libraries often get the thin edge of the wedge.

As already defined, **school libraries** should meet the specialized needs of the school environment; yet in British Columbia many fall far short of meeting these needs. School libraries suffer from lack of space, books and materials, staff time, financial support and, most important, an understanding of their role. In other words, they suffer from the same ills as other types of libraries. While school libraries have made some progress in recent years they still lack true identification, meaningful co-ordination, and any development toward fitting into an information system. They have a long way to go before they become 'learning centres' in the truest sense.

Each of the fifty-seven **special libraries** in British Columbia has its own special purpose and collection of materials. Yet much of this material would be most valuable to people across the province. The field of co-operation in this area, however, has been virtually untouched except for isolated cases. Special libraries often meet the same frustrations experienced by other libraries — a lack of funds and lack of awareness by those in control. Is this too bleak a picture? Perhaps before we start looking into the future possibilities we should also add that there are approximately 85,000 citizens in British Columbia without any access to library service, despite the existence of more than ninety libraries and a large number of school libraries in this province. There are many more citizens who have access to just one or two types of libraries, often inadequate. Yet, for the most part all public, academic, and many special libraries are directly or indirectly paid for out of the citizen's pocket.

Put together, the number of libraries of various types, the total number of books and other materials available, and services provided in British Columbia are quite impressive but the problem is that the libraries, especially the public libraries, are not put together. Now what can be done to make a cohesive whole?

The goal of library service tomorrow should be complete accessibility to materials for every resident of British Columbia. This concept of accessibility infers:



Are there any libraries in Indian villages?

We have too little to lend. Inter-library loan, xerox, etc. is fine in theory but far too expensive in practice. The people who want the material are the people who can't afford to pay for xerox copies — in hundreds I mean.

The wait is often too long for an individual book in the regional system. Problems are not solved merely by inter-library loaning.

It is possible that central processing and regionalization may actually give you fewer books on the shelves. Costs and proliferation of clerical-type central staff should be studied.

Use of the library by the public declines as their distance from the building increases.

There should be considerable latitude in each region as to how the system may be organized there

1. The development of a **planned acquisition programme** so that the necessary information from the great mass of materials produced will be available in British Columbia.
2. The acceptance by all libraries of a **province-wide 'information-users' identification card**, so that each individual may use every library.
3. The **planned resource-centre complex** serving library systems in the province so that libraries back up one another with materials and services. This implies the flow of materials and information between library systems.
4. **The development of co-operative services and programmes** at all levels, and this implies area and province-wide planning to make the widest use of both human and media resources.

What forms, then, can this co-ordination and these co-operative programmes take? The day of the existence of the single small community public library has passed. Such an institution could never supply more than a simple book service for the general populace. Yet a small outlet, accessible to all and tied to an area resource centre, can still be of value as a viable link in the information chain. **The community library is only the first step in utilizing the resources of an area, then the province, and finally the nation.** The community library can be tied into the information circuit through one of two major types of links: the **federated** network or **integrated** network of libraries in an area. These networks are called systems.

Where well-developed libraries already serve an area such as Greater Vancouver, the federated network may be the best means of providing total library service. Each municipal jurisdiction, through the local library board, retains control over specific aspects of the service such as buildings, general book collections, staff, and services. Each retains its autonomy and is responsible for the development of its own library.

Agreements are made with a metropolitan or regional district library board for services which can best be offered over a larger area with wider resources. Libraries in such a federation or federated system

may agree to pool resources for special collections, films, advanced reference needs, consultative services, or any other aspect of library service that will provide better service to all users.

The local library, serving as the information outlet for the public, is the funnel through which the total resources of an area can be channelled to meet a specific need. Such a federated system is then in a position to plug into the even wider resources of other systems.

The integrated approach means that municipal jurisdictions, for library purposes, agree to merge their autonomy, pool all resources, and utilize existing facilities, collections, and services. Implicit in such an agreement is the understanding that **a single municipal unit now serving fewer than 75,000 persons cannot offer library service in a meaningful context** to meet today's needs, let alone tomorrow's. Except where large libraries already exist the integrated system appears to serve the needs best.

Knowledge for mankind should transcend all political boundaries, racial barriers, and local prejudice; and libraries must think in terms of the maximum use of all materials by all, not of ownership. **Let us get off this 'ownership' hang-up, and get on to 'service'**. Libraries designed above all to dispense information and broadcast knowledge must clear away the cobwebs of parochialism and view their role not as *keepers* of the purchased materials but as supermarkets dispensing world-generated ideas.

As already stated, neither the individual library nor the public library system can meet the needs of the public fully. Consideration must be given to linking types of libraries in order to utilize resources fully and **make the wisest use of the taxpayer's dollar**. This does not mean total immersion. For example, the fruitful field for co-operation between school and public libraries lies not in the promotion of joint services within a building, but rather in co-ordination of services at the area level. Agreement on collections, the acquisition and processing of materials, and the 'back-up' services could be developed without interfering with the radically different functions of the school and the public library at the local level. The future must include similar co-

The whole province isn't going to go for regional systems overnight; perhaps we could show what can be done through a demonstration project in one group of regional districts.

It's not their school. It's not their books. This custodial attitude must go. Books must be got to people.

In small communities school libraries could function as community resource centres. School architects should be able to design libraries on the edges of schools so that the public would have their own entrance.

It seems to me an awful lot of forms will be travelling back and forth.

There must be co-operative programmes among all kinds of libraries to meet the new demands.

How do we discover what the public considers the needs of a library to be? So much depends on the individual citizen's knowing what the possibilities of good library service are.

Generally speaking, people want and expect improved service, but have not yet conditioned themselves to pay for it.

We want more service points, more staff, more money.

In each city, town, and community, public library trustees, school representatives, lay citizens, and librarians must work together to sponsor programmes to inform the public about library goals and needs.

Governments should be reminded that we exist, and be urged to take the initiative to improve province-wide services.

operation between the community college, academic, and special libraries on an area basis. Indeed, there should be co-operative planning — the kind of planning under way now for public libraries — of all types of resources and services, not only over a section but over the entire province.

Libraries will be required to inject resources and staff skills into many types of programmes designed to reduce functional illiteracy, to contact those in the lower socio-economic brackets, and to reach sections of the populace who, through indifference or lack of education, do not know of library services.

Just as important should be a new priority for those who seek immediate access to specialized information. Their sophisticated needs must be met to an increasing degree by libraries; no other agency can fill this need.

These newer concepts of service have stretched library resources to the limit. The city, county, municipal, and provincial official is becoming increasingly aware of the costs of information services. His reaction is often to press for joint public and school library services, a reduction in service, or a limit on the materials budget. It is time that those responsible stop selling the idea of such joint library services as a fund-saver, or as the ultimate answer to increased public demand for service. **Library services to meet today's and tomorrow's needs can be built only on adequate funding.** Librarians and trustees must recognize what is basic in library service and in the development of library systems, then build library services around these basics. Through systems, libraries can offer overall savings in joint collection building, area-wide processing, and other carefully integrated services.

In addition, libraries can meet the demands of the rapidly changing society only if they develop a flexibility which enables them to be integrated with society as a whole. The full potential of library service cannot be realized unless libraries themselves move to conceive and develop co-operative programmes. The paying public, trustees, councillors, municipal officers, and provincial officials involved with information services must work together in the drive toward this goal.

To sum up, such advancements should include:

1. **Breaking the old mold of isolation** through planning and implementing a network of public libraries throughout the province.
2. **Establishing such a network** of integrated or federated public library systems.
3. **Linking these systems** to other types of libraries — academic, school, and special, throughout British Columbia and the nation.
4. Recognition by all those concerned with library development of the ever-changing needs of libraries and the presentation of these needs to the authorities and the public so that **adequate funding** will be made available.

A co-operative master plan for British Columbia must come unless our libraries, still more atune to the nineteenth century than the twentieth, entirely abrogate meaningful responsibility. The most important recommendation must be that libraries plan now. **A month of co-operation lost at this time means a year of undoing later!**

Research groups are working now to develop guidelines for service before long-term plans are adopted. Co-operative leads made now will create a firmer base. Mutual and frank discussion will develop mutual trust.

The library recognizes it is at the service of the individual. It has a responsibility to provide him with the 'know-how' he requires to keep abreast in today's world. Alone today — co-operating tomorrow.

We must sell libraries to the people — make libraries a part of their day-to-day living.

Libraries have not come forward with an articulate statement of their need. Other groups have.

People often don't know what is best for them; someone has to show leadership and convince them.

What is needed is 'guts and more money'.



The Library, an Educational Force for the '70's

JOHN S. CHURCH



The goal of the library is to make easily available many viewpoints from which judgments can be made for future change.

Through better dissemination of information there will be fundamental changes in society here at home. The library's role is going to be vital.

It has become trite to comment on the revolutionary nature of the times, of the knowledge implosion, of the fantastic growth in the public's expectations, of the population explosion, and all their ramifications. Unfortunately, in British Columbia it has not been popular to consider seriously the educational implications of our headlong rush into the space age and the world of instant electronic communication. Now, however, **all members of society, including teachers, dare no longer postpone critical consideration**, within this context, of certain key educational questions. What is the purpose of education? Why do we have schools? What is the role of the teacher in the educational process?

Several years ago the distinguished educator, Robert Maynard Hutchins, noted that we now live in a world where work has lost its major focus for many. Because we live in what Hutchins calls a learning society, not a working society, and because the educational objective must be the development of manhood, not manpower, may I suggest that all schools from kindergarten to post-graduate institutions must now be structured to provide the opportunity for students to grow into independent learners; that is, **to help them to be ready for life-long learning in a world of accelerating change.**

The most effective kind of learning is that which grows from inner drives, or needs, or interests, rather than from external motivation of the learner. The skillful teacher must personalize learning; he must provide the learner with the opportunity to make choices from among available options in the areas of objectives, learning activities and their organization, learning materials and evaluation.

The students of the last third of the twentieth century require the intellectually exciting environment of their real world to be duplicated,

insofar as it is possible, in their schools. Surely we dare not continue the tragic situation where we expect students to accommodate easily and effectively to a school institution of one teacher, one blackboard and *the book*; that is, to talk; chalk and book -- even when augmented by a limited number of supplementary library books. Knowledge is expanding and today's facts are tomorrow's myths. Hence, students must learn to find, and then to apply, rather than simply to know the answer to a passing item. Therefore, **students must learn to operate independently** in the knowledge factory or in the library. May I suggest:

1. **A central library** which produces, stores, and makes knowledge available to students **is essential in each educational institution.**
2. Since students are the products of an instant-communications era, the library must store and make available **not only print media, but also non-print media:** pictures, charts, maps, filmstrips, filmslides, transparencies, loops, tapes, records, films. To understand our complex environment, students must have the opportunity to become involved in interpreting it by making filmstrips, shooting films, producing tapes, etc. In other words, the library or resource centre must become a production centre of media.
3. In elementary and secondary schools, **teachers and teacher-librarians must work more closely with each other** in planning, executing and evaluating their instructional programmes. When this improved co-ordination occurs, the discrete functions of teachers and teacher-librarians become somewhat blurred as both co-operate to assist students in carrying out their various research assignments. Nonetheless, the teacher-librarian will be identified as the 'materials specialist' of the team. When the professional team is supported by a team of non-professionals, then the professional group is able, by concentrating all their energies on professional tasks, to offer a vastly improved quality of service.
4. The library must be large enough to accomplish its purpose, but not so large that it ceases to be efficient. **It must be functional and flexible enough to adapt readily to a variety of purposes.** Above all,

Only 50% of the elementary schools in British Columbia have libraries.

The library is a symbol of aspirations.

We must look beyond the book and the periodical to a multi-media centre. New expensive multi-media equipment should be centralized. We already accept the idea of central reference service — central audio-visual service should follow.



There wasn't anything in that library's atmosphere that would make those kids want to go back!

In the last few years, provincial money has been pouring into school libraries. There should now be a study of total library resources. There has been a revolution in school libraries and few people know the extent of it.

It is very difficult to blend legal bodies, especially school and library boards. But a number of combinations of services should be possible.

the school library must be attractive, with carpeting if possible, practical furnishings and appropriate displays. It must exude warmth, friendliness, curiosity and a sense of never-ending wonder to students. It is frequently the most accessible recreational and cultural storehouse to students.

5. Ideally, **the library must be accessible to all the students, all the time.** Practically, this may be impossible. However, at least some of the time the library should be accessible to any student who wishes to use it.

In effect, in order to personalize learning for each student and to make education relevant to the needs of British Columbia society, inquiry-centred or library-centred education (the two are almost synonymous) must pervade the entire institution. When this happens, the library as such ceases to be merely a place and becomes, in effect, a method of education. **The library becomes the school, and the school becomes the library.**

No individual school library can possibly provide the range and depth of materials required to satisfy the burgeoning curriculum and personal needs of students. Furthermore, as citizens, as taxpayers, and therefore as realists, we have to recognize that there is a limit to what can be provided in each school library. In short, school libraries will have to devote much more attention to the preparation and management of a co-ordinated programme of library services. **We need to consider the advantages of a systems approach.** All the schools in a district co-ordinate their collections and their services. A district library or resource centre then stores and provides to the schools more expensive and less frequently used items — some films, certain loops, records, and tapes, for example.

Similarly, in order to increase the use of even less frequently called-for and high-cost media items, regional resource centres might be established. New developments, such as are taking place in the use of ultra-microfiche, ETV, and electronic video recording, for example, can only be successfully financed by several districts joining their

always limited resources. A system of regional resource centres and/or services co-ordinated with the district resources and their local school libraries provides one effective means of improving the management and increasing the use of school library materials.

Again, **there must be greatly improved liaison between public and school library systems.** Co-ordination and co-operation in selection, ordering, processing and cataloguing must replace the present all-too-frequent situation of unnecessary duplication and tragic omissions. There must be new avenues developed to ensure that the holdings and services of the public and the school libraries are more closely meshed to meet a growing range of client needs.

Generally speaking, the move to amalgamate the services and holdings of school and public libraries will continue to be slow. Each kind of library serves a separate purpose; **each must strive to increase the quality of service it provides** by working co-operatively, whenever possible. In small communities, where only one library service is possible, obviously a combined or joint operation must develop. The principle of co-operation between school and public libraries must extend to embrace specialized collections too. Eventually and ideally, one master library system or union catalogue may emerge.

One further word on this matter. We cannot justify for very much longer the luxury of school libraries being open for six or seven hours per school day on fewer than two hundred school days per year. Because I believe in the centrality of the school library in the learning process, **school libraries must be open to students many more hours per day and many, many more days per year.** Learning is not a nine-to-three function, five days a week, for nine months per year.

Our survival on this earth, let alone our survival as British Columbians, depends on the quality of education we can make available for our richest resource, our children. The quality of that education is very largely dependent on our financial and technical capacity to transform the oft repeated, rarely practiced phrase, **'the library as the heart of the teaching-learning process'** into a reality.

Children don't use public libraries after grade six. They use the school library.

Could school libraries be branches of public libraries, with a properly qualified librarian in charge?

Adults will generally not use the library much if it is always filled with children.

Co-operate with schools; but combine services only in a new, specially designed library building.



The Regional District's Role in Library Development

C. H. L. WOODWARD

There must be greater involvement of public officials — legislators, commissioners, mayors, councilmen — at local library meetings.

There is no value in just setting up a new form of machinery with no increase in money. There must be province-wide financing of library service on a more generous scale.

We're paying for too many things through the local property tax that shouldn't be financed in that way.

It is generally recognized that the development of a library system is a community responsibility. As a community responsibility it follows that policy direction and financing rest with the local level of government. Having accepted this premise, an examination is needed to assess the means available to local government to fulfil its responsibility in this field.

In British Columbia, we generally relate to our own local municipality when speaking in terms of local government. But when one is considering library service it is usually not practical to measure the cost and benefit of such a service solely in relation to the individual local municipality. The nature and scope of a library service is such that its use and benefit are much broader than the area under the jurisdiction and taxing authority of the local municipality.

Because of the broad scope of the service, support of a library system must be recognized as a total community responsibility on a regional scale, rather than merely a responsibility of the local community.

Having established these two fundamental principles — first, that library service is a responsibility of local government, and second, that it is a service of benefit to the total or regional community — it then becomes a matter of examining the available alternatives and selecting the most effective means of developing a practical and viable library support system.

There appear to be two alternatives — on the one hand to continue with the present method prevailing in British Columbia, whereby support for libraries generally is approached independently by the individual community (except for the three regional library boards), or, on the other hand to turn to a regional approach on a province-

wide scale structured on the regional district framework already in place in the province.

While the present method has done a creditable job, the obvious advantage of the second alternative — the regional approach — is that it is specifically designed to develop and provide broad-scope services such as libraries that are regional rather than local in use and benefit.

A secondary advantage, and an important one in terms of the development of library services, is that **any number of regional districts may be brought together to form a viable economic unit** of population and tax potential sufficient to support a library system.

The regional district has been designed to meet the service needs of the total regional community. While it is a relatively new form of local government **it really is nothing more than a natural evolution of municipal government** in keeping with the growth in population and the changes in the make-up of the community that have taken place since the turn of the century.

The majority of the municipalities of this province were established some fifty to seventy years ago. For the most part they are relatively small in area and were designed to cope with the limited service needs and smaller populations of that day. The regional district has been developed as a second tier of the basic local government organization. It is designed to provide and develop services, such as libraries, which, because of wider scope and application, are best approached on a much broader scale than that available to the individual municipality.

Turning to organization, there are twenty-eight regional districts in the province. Each is governed by a board of directors drawn from the component units of the region. Those members of the board who represent the municipalities within the region are appointed annually from and by the council of each municipality. Board members representing the non-municipal areas within the region are elected for a two-year term of office by the residents within each representational area. In this manner the regional district is directed by a board representing all of the people within the region, and the voting strength of

The six dollars per capita that Vancouver residents pay already helps to serve a lot of needs outside Vancouver.

In some areas it will be very difficult to sell the regional district concept, because some towns will be assessed more than they now pay for purely local library service. They may balk at what they consider to be their subsidizing library service for areas now without any.

The regional districts created by the provincial government have taxing authority. Library service should be included in this tax so that the cost is fairly shared in the whole district.

Library services should be as available as health services and education.

Would regional districts be permissive, allowing communities to opt in or out? Some local bodies would never co-operate.

What we are asking for libraries is only on the order of five dollars per capita — a lot of people don't recognize how expensive any service, say garbage collection, is.

As for finance, look no further than the school tax base. All libraries have to do with education, and they should all be under one provincial system, financed with a formula similar to the school tax base.

I have no choice about paying a tax for social welfare, and I think education through libraries is every bit as important as social welfare.

the members of the board of directors in deciding policy matters is related directly to the population of each member area.

Each regional board has two fundamental roles to fulfil: (1) the regional governmental institution; (2) to provide services that are regional in scope. In its institutional role it acts in the same manner as a municipal council except that its policy decisions relate to the whole regions, not to just an individual community within the region. In its secondary role the board may undertake to provide those services within the region that are best dealt with on a region-wide scale. Two of the services now being carried out by regional districts are statutory functions: that of providing hospital facilities for the region through the medium of the companion regional hospital district, and that of undertaking and developing a master regional plan focusing on the development of the total region — something that could not be accomplished in isolation by the individual municipality.

Other services that lend themselves to a regional approach are elective and depend upon the individual and varying needs of each regional district. In this group, **which would include the development of a library system**, are such services as the acquisition and development of regional parks, regional waste disposal systems, and the development of regional recreational programmes and facilities. In the provision of each of these services the total benefiting community is involved both in terms of representation and in cost-sharing.

The regional district provides a sufficiently broad tax base to develop a fair and equitable cost-sharing formula. It has the flexibility to implement cost-sharing formulas based on any number of factors, such as taxable assessment, or population, or any combination of these or other appropriate factors. There are, however, the ever-present limitations of priorities. Local government, like other levels of government, has many demands upon its resources. It is not always possible to fulfil these demands to the satisfaction of everyone. Library service, like any other service, must take its place within these priorities.

My remarks do not for a moment describe fully the role and service functions of the regional district. But they do serve to illustrate that

the financing and development of library needs is within the capability of the existing local government framework. **The essential foundation for the development of a viable library system is the regional district.**

The trend today in local government is toward the regionalization of services where the demand or scope extends beyond the individual municipality. A further extension of this trend would be the assembly of groups of regional districts to form economic library support units.

In closing, I think we should look back for a moment to what has gone before. Thirty years ago the population of this province was well below one million. Today it is over two million. In another thirty years it is estimated to reach more than four million. If libraries are an essential service to people, a proper foundation should be established now to ensure that the service will be in a position to meet the challenge and demands of the years ahead.

The Library Development Commission should lay increased emphasis on co-operation in order for a library to qualify for maximum grants.

Some regions are too small in population to finance library service. What do the school districts do?

The organization should be from the Province to the regions, and then to municipalities.



B.C.'s Tomorrow - The Future and the Challenge

Summary of a panel discussion

Moderator: DEAN W. HALLIWELL

Panelists: GORDON L. DRAESEKE
JOHN S. CHURCH
JOHN L. FRYER
C. H. L. WOODWARD

In preparing for a panel discussion on 'British Columbia's Tomorrow — the Future and the Challenge', the conference Programme Committee decided to have four presentations: two of general background and two focussing rather directly on areas of library concern.

The latter two, by Messrs. Church and Woodward, are printed in full in the preceding pages. The discussion as a whole, and in particular the two more general papers, are summarized here from the remarks of the four speakers and by the panel moderator. — *Editors*

From the remarks of Mr. Draeseke, there can be no doubt that British Columbia's economic base is likely to remain in primary resource industry for a long time to come. Not all these resources are renewable (for example minerals), but the most important ones are: namely the forests, fish, and water-power. And all of these show a potential for considerable growth on a sustained-yield basis. These facts are significant in the planning of library services. They imply the continued existence of difficult-to-serve, but nonetheless vital and active 'out-post' communities — we can never be as completely urbanized a province as present trends would prophesy for other parts of the continent. But these 'pioneer' industries are becoming more sophisticated. Each year, greater skills are required even on jobs once classified as 'unskilled manual labour'. Mr. Church and Mr. Fryer have emphasized an increasing need for the knowledge libraries can provide.

Against a broader background, Mr. Fryer has pointed out how labour and management have historically been at odds in an economy like ours. His call for more materials in libraries on the social aspects of the working man, on the trade union movement, and on industrial relations is well taken as a reminder that the library is a place where *all* opinions are represented — and therefore where understanding can be generated, and with it a greater possibility of mutual good will.

On a very practical level, Mr. Draeseke tells us that our type of economy can sustain considerable growth. This is of course a prerequisite for the provision of adequate financing of all public services such as libraries. Since our economy is based on primary resources with a generally steady market, taxes available for public services may not be as severely affected by the world's economic ups and downs as would be the case in some other types of economy.

But we are also reminded by Mr. Draeseke that a highly sophisticated service type of industry is rapidly growing in British Columbia, particularly of course in Vancouver. This is the service of engineering and technical consulting. There are few professions which make such intensive use of specialized information. The needs generated by these firms, and the library resources they must themselves build to support their work, will become more and more important factors in the province-wide information network.

Mr. Fryer's comments about the growing militancy and restlessness among trade union members are applicable to many other segments of society as well. If this

activism we see all about us is to build a better society, as the militants and all of us claim we want, it must be an activism based on informed understanding of all the issues, ramifications, and points of view involved. I feel the first three panelists have given us a good picture of the need for better and more pervasive library services against the general social background. Following them, Mr. Woodward has shown quite clearly that, at least as far as public libraries are concerned, the existing pattern of municipal and regional government is flexible enough to permit an effective organization of service to meet the needs of the future.



A Hard Look at Today - A Bold Look at Tomorrow

ROY B. STOKES



It would not be appropriate today for me to attempt to comment critically on the present state of libraries in this province. In the past few months I have seen too little of them to attempt such a survey. Nor can I usefully produce detailed proposals for the future. I interpret my task today, based on the experience of what is happening in other countries with a culture not dissimilar to that of Canada, as that of sketching the broad pattern of development in preparation for British Columbia's centennial.

It is natural I should make some observations and comparisons with the library scene in the United Kingdom where my working life has been spent. This province covers an area approximately three times the total area of the United Kingdom and is inhabited by a population no greater than that of the cities of Liverpool and Glasgow combined. The possibility and indeed probability therefore of future expansion here is enormous, whereas the problem in the U.K. is to rationalize the present overcrowded situation. Similarly, the growth of libraries in the U.K. since the mid-nineteenth century has been largely unplanned and sporadic. The result has been a spate of activity in the post-war years to try to regularize a situation which was getting out of control: re-definition of local government areas, new public library legislation, commissions on the roles of the major university libraries, and — most recently — an attempt to co-ordinate the national services as a whole. This last alone involves an expenditure, which the government has recently accepted, of approximately one hundred million dollars. It is not unreasonable to suggest that, had real government interest been awakened a generation or so ago, and had an attempt been made to forecast the development of library needs before the explosion took place, much wasteful chaos could have been avoided

and the final cost to the taxpayer might have been substantially reduced.

It is precisely because this kind of experience is so much in my mind of recent years that I believe that Canada and **this province can gain enormously in every respect by laying solid foundations now.** If one looks at the population graph alone, it is impossible to escape from the feeling that we are now standing at a point of departure. We are not so much concluding one period of a hundred years as beginning a new one. Library services are established; now they have to be made ready for the twenty-first century.

One problem which is basic to an appreciation of the development of library services is certainly not unique to this particular area. There needs to be a very clear understanding of the division of responsibility for library services between federal and provincial government. Federal participation is still very small, but it is growing. The establishment of a National Library in Canada is extremely recent. Its function as the cornerstone for the whole system of libraries throughout Canada may not yet be fully accepted. Yet there is, in my opinion, no doubt at all but that this is what should be envisaged.

Dr. Guy Sylvestre, who has been National Librarian since 1968, spoke on the role of the National Library at the Canadian Library Association's 1970 conference. It was a pronouncement of interest and concern to all participants in this conference, and I hope you will have the opportunity of reading it in full. The statement was greeted by the Association's president as "the most important policy statement which has ever been delivered in all the years that the Canadian Library Association has been in existence". There are one or two sentences which I should like to bring to your attention.

The core of Dr. Sylvestre's paper lay in the words, "I wanted to make it clear shortly after my appointment . . . that I had no intention of attempting to plan the future development of the National Library in isolation and that the active participation of other libraries would be sought." His willingness to think in much wider terms than the National Library itself, in both national and international fields, has



Resources could be pooled to solve financial problems.



A library can just as well be an 'information depot' from which you can get what you want, even if it isn't stocked right there.



already been evidenced by the reports concerned with the automation of the National Library and also with the control of bibliographic records. Again, in his own words, **"We cannot afford to do our own thing; we must tackle most of our problems co-operatively."** His invitation to co-operation was stressed when he said, "let me state clearly once and for all that the services of the National Library are equally available to any library anywhere in Canada. It is a fact, however, that many libraries could make a greater use of our services, and I invite them to do so." No one could ask more of a National Librarian than this: that he should make his services available over the whole country and that he should show himself responsive to area and to special demands.

Evidently it would be absurd for us to plan the further development of libraries in this province without reference to the activities of the National Library. *Something* is sure to happen. Dr. Sylvestre said, "We now have in Canada the beginning of a library policy which, I hope, will be expanded and clarified in the years ahead. I shall have to advise eventually the government on the desirability of establishing and proclaiming a comprehensive library policy, which does not exist at the moment except in general terms." Here, in British Columbia, **we need to be in motion ourselves so as not to be swept along by the tide of external events.**

Turning now from the general to the more specific, it seems right that we should begin where everything begins and where our work is at its most vital, with the children and young people. If our endeavours are successful here, in librarianship as in all other fields, then we are saved from a vast amount of difficult and frustrating toil in future years. A cent well spent at this stage can save a dollar later on. John Church has said that **children are the province's greatest wealth. If we do not believe in them, then we have no need for a conference because we have no future.**

My personal experience here since last August, however, compels me to make one observation which introduces a rather bleak note. I think we have to acknowledge the fact that library services to children

and young people are forced to work without any appreciable support from the other media of communications. Indeed, I think that if the library services have any standards worthy of the name they must find themselves in active opposition — particularly to television. I am not referring to the field of educational television because I have no experience as to the way in which this is related to the school curriculum. I have, however, been profoundly disappointed and disturbed by the vapid and inane material, not necessarily harmful but certainly mind-rotting, which is so abundantly available at those times of day when young people might reasonably be expected to watch. It is high time that this opportunity was used more constructively. If this is outside the very limited scope of commercial television then, maybe, the Province should become actively involved. The Canadian programmes show a far more responsible attitude than others which are available, but there is all too little which suggests that responsible intelligences are actively at work.

Because I see nothing else which shows concern for the intellectual development of the child, I think **we must be prepared for library services to bear the full weight of this responsibility.**

In many, probably most, communities a clear case can be established for the provision of both school libraries and children's departments in the public library. The problems which they present are different, although very closely related. The most important single fact about a school library, viewed simply as a library, is that it provides the first encounter for very many children with the expanding network of library services throughout the country. The child's ability to understand this, and so to be able to benefit fully from the whole range of library resources throughout his lifetime, depends heavily upon this initial introduction. The school library must, therefore, be capable of performing two distinct tasks. The first is to be an instrument of education within the school itself. This has long been recognized as the primary objective of the library within the school: that **it can teach the child to teach himself**, that learning does become *personalized* learning. Unfortunately, recognition of a fact does not always mean



The public is addicted to hucksterism, and the library has to compete.

There is a real conflict in use and time in the school library. We need both public and school libraries to serve two entirely different kinds of clients.

A joint school/public library will work if you set out to make it work, but what it costs you to make it work may be more than to set up a good separate public and a separate school library.



It's the personnel in the library that reflect what is going on.

One good school library in each community could provide reference if the public libraries are inadequate.

that anyone does very much about it. As far back as 1928, in the Report of the Survey Council of the British Columbia Public Library Commission, we can find adherence to this doctrine. "For schools, the library is a part of the very fabric of any complete educational system. In modern educational method the child 'attacks his subject from the point of view of the investigator and the doer, not merely from that of the learner and memorizer'. For that complete educational foundation which the school aims to build, the scholar's daily work demands daily use of library material." Progress in putting accepted ideas into action, however, is so slow that it was necessary for John Church, in his report *Personalizing Learning* to make much the same point forty-one years later and to show that it was still a dream in the majority of schools.

The second task for the school library is one which, in default, has probably contributed to the high percentage of failure in carrying out the first task. The school library service must be recognized as an integral part of the nationwide network of library services. If it is to become so, in fact as well as in theory, then the quality of its librarianship must be no less than that of any other part. This means that, if we are not simply to pay lip service only, **we must in future have a larger number of fully qualified professional librarians in the school library service.** Only in this way can school libraries cease to be a back-water with all the dangers inherent upon that condition. It would be naive to suggest that it will, for some time, be possible to have a full-time professional librarian in *every* school in the province. If we accept one paragraph from Recommendation 13 of the Church Report we should, at least, expect that "the professional librarian would probably serve in larger schools — perhaps as a specialist librarian or as a teacher-librarian's librarian". At present, it is very disquieting to go into schools of fifteen hundred to two thousand students and to find them without the services of a professional librarian at all. It is equally disheartening to think that in certain areas the school library may house a better collection of books than an inadequate local public library service for young people. Yet, as John Church said this morn-

ing, they will be locked up for major part of the year.

If an integrated pattern of school libraries were established throughout the province, then the professional librarian would, at the outset, have certain very clear fields of responsibility. As long ago as 1945, the Joint Committee on Library Policy formulated a *Programme for Library Development in British Columbia*, and recommended "That a Director of School Libraries be added to the staff of the Department of Education *immediately*." The passage of a quarter of a century has not diminished the necessity for a professional librarian in this role. Obviously, however, we need now to think of a stronger word than *immediately* if we are to accomplish anything by 2071.

The major difficulty in assessing the planning of public library services is that of attempting to define fairly precisely what a public library should do. **Economic disaster and administrative chaos face any authority which hopes that an individual public library can be all things to all men.** This possibly worthy, if completely impractical, aim is, in some measure, responsible for the limited success which public libraries have achieved in most parts of the world. The basic assumption must surely be that anything which is paid for out of the public purse by the community at large must render services which benefit the community as a whole. Only in this way can priorities be established. Once discussion begins on these lines certain clear front-runners begin to emerge. There are the services to children, who are our immortality — these need, in the majority of public libraries, to be given a larger slice of the available cake than at present; services to students, whom we are grooming to take over where we finish; services to industry, trade, and commerce, without whom we have no substance — now or in the future; services to those with special needs in the communities: those in hospitals and institutions, the elderly and particularly those in need of shut-in services, the minority language groups . . . The list is long, but it is upon people like these that our life as a community depends.

Public libraries also face the problem of that movement to and from our cities to which Miss Dearing and Mr. Newsom referred. Urban

Books should not be locked up while people want to use them.



You can't calculate the direct return in dollars from money invested in libraries, but in the long run any community profits from good library service.

Libraries should go where the people are; be open at times when people can come; reach out to people who have not used them before.

Let's face it. The problems are different in different places and we should not pretend otherwise. Vancouver is not Dawson Creek.

All of a community's public information sources should be marshalled in one building. It is even more important that this happen in a small community than in a large one. The library could then function as the community centre where books and audio-visual materials would be available and where art, hobbies, lectures, discussion groups etc. would take place.

Would you be willing to pay a little more to help equalize service around the province?

Plan now, so that we will eventually get what we want.

and rural areas raise quite distinct problems, and traditionally, librarianship has been most tardy in coming to grips with the latter. **Governments and institutions have a tendency to become urban centred.** The city dweller's picture of the countryman as a slightly inferior character with straw growing out of his ears is a long time a-dying. By reason of their stubbornness in choosing to live individually in remote areas rather than in serried ranks of houses down trim avenues, country dwellers raise difficult administrative problems. This has put them, all too frequently, at the end of the queue for such basic amenities of life as power, water and sanitation. Certainly they have straggled at the end of the line for library services. This province, in the Fraser Valley Union Library, pioneered one of the great experiments in dealing with this problem. Nearly everything still remains to be done. **There is no justice in assuming that somebody living in a rural area must, of that necessity, enjoy library services so markedly inferior to his urban counterpart.** The difficulties are considerable but, today, we are taking a bold look. During the war I saw a minute written by Winston Churchill. It said, quite simply, "I am told that science can accomplish anything. Pray let a plan be prepared." In 1971 there seem to be even fewer limits to what man believes himself capable of doing — so, pray let plans be prepared.

From all this, it must not be assumed that everything is a bed of roses in the garden of the urban library user. He has his own problems. The 1928 survey by the British Columbia Public Library Commission said, "an intelligent citizenship is the first essential of a government founded upon the expression of the popular will, and **good libraries raise the level of citizenship.**" The role which the public library can play in helping to create this eminently desirable citizenship is based primarily in its ability to provide accurate factual material, and a plenitude of opportunities which will enable the individual to come to his own informed opinions and judgements. This is an impossibility unless means are available to provide material, resources, and personnel in depth. In their turn, these are impossible unless the administrative authorities are of sufficient financial status to foot the bill — and it is a large bill.

No question has bedevilled the public library service more, during my life in the profession, than that of the economic units of service. It is difficult to produce statistical evidence on this score which has any real validity. There is a mixture of considerations involving geographical area and conditions, size and type of population, and the available finances. What is quite certain is that **there are many units of service at present operating which are not viable economically.** It is not easy, however, to persuade anybody that anything should be done about it. The parish pump creaks most loudly when it is in a state of disrepair. It appears to me that some basic decision has to be reached as to what our community is in this late part of the twentieth century. I had assumed that this conference accepted the idea that the Province was our parish. Some voices were raised in discussion groups today which sounded much more tribal in the protection of their own highly localized services.

For example: the *Programme for Library Development in British Columbia* in both 1945 and 1950 recommended metropolitan library systems centred around Victoria, Vancouver, and New Westminster. In 1956 the *Programme* stated, "The recommendation still holds good as an eventual objective." In 1971 it is reasonable to ask: "How eventual is eventual?" If things are left much longer the recommendation may need to be changed. The fusion of populations and their very close interrelations could soon produce excellent reasons for the integration of all the library services of the Lower Mainland area into a single viable unit. (Victoria may, of course, be saved — as Britain has so often been — by the narrow stretch of water in between.) This same 1956 report made recommendations for further **regionalization** in rural areas, and this **must be brought well to the forefront in terms of library priorities**, as it has been in other fields through the establishment of regional districts by the provincial government. The present situation can be judged, especially if you agree with what I have said about services in rural areas in general, by reference to a passage in the 1970 *Report of the Library Development Commission*. It speaks of its fields of operations in "the vast sparsely settled portions of the province

Something is better than nothing, but is it really public library service?

Break down the 'I'm all right, Jack' attitude. Local authorities must co-operate.

The Library Development Commission should be strengthened in money and power.



British Columbia may be a difficult geographical area when you're on the road, but in this era of electronic communication it is no more difficult to transmit information here than in a more compact area like England or Denmark.

All citizens should have equal access to tax-supported libraries.



where municipal or regional library service is not yet feasible. The majority of its readers never see their library, and only a very few borrowers are known to the Commission's staff in any way except through correspondence."

Until such time as the complete co-ordination of library services with appropriate geographical groupings can be brought about, it is to be hoped and expected that co-operation between the present units of service will be vastly increased. The complete interavailability of borrowing privileges was raised in at least one discussion group today, and **there is surely no valid reason why this should not be implemented without delay.**

The problems which face the libraries in institutions of higher education are, in certain respects, simpler. The establishments are limited in number and their basic duty — to provide services to the faculty, students, and staff — is quite clear cut. Like the public libraries, they have a need for co-operation and this is an aspect on which the three public universities, Victoria, U.B.C., and Simon Fraser, are working in the interests of efficiency and control of costs. The automation of library services, shared cataloguing, the co-ordination of reference services, and joint storage for little used material are being investigated and in some cases already implemented. It is, I think, important that solutions should be found for these problems at the earliest possible moment because two bigger problems are on the way.

One of the three public universities (Simon Fraser) is very new, as is also the private university, Notre Dame of Nelson. In other words, within the last decade the number of universities within the province has doubled. In addition to this, the whole complex of community, technical, and vocational colleges has been created. If the situation has changed to such an extent in so short a time, what does the future hold? The libraries of these institutions will adapt much more readily and much more effectively to the crisis of change if, as they evolve, they are all regarded as **part of a co-ordinated service.**

The second change may be even more basic, although it may be closely associated with the first one. The North American concept of

the university has never been one of quite such complete separation from the general public as was that of the older European tradition. It may not, therefore, feel quite the same pressures of change. In both cultures, however, there has grown up the urge to reach out with extra-mural, extension, adult education, or continuing education departments. In most of these cases, nevertheless, the student has been brought into direct contact both with the institution and personally with the faculty. Now, the next decades may well see the fuller development of the 'Open University'. The media of instruction may be radio, television, and whatever new media await us in the future. The students will not leave their own homes, and the 'resource centre' for them will be the public library rather than the academic library. The public library may re-assume the status which some of its nineteenth century originators claimed for it: 'the university of the common man'. It is yet one more straw in the wind to suggest that **the compartmentalization of our library activities is breaking down**. I hope that day may be soon — the day when we no longer designate ourselves as public librarians, school librarians, university librarians, special librarians, but simply as *librarians*.

During the post-war years there has been a great increase in the number of libraries which have been formed within industrial and commercial organizations and professional societies. There is no doubt but that they were formed in order to fulfil a very real need, and in many instances they have probably satisfied a basic requirement. They pose a very important problem, however, regarding their future development.

There are fifty-four such libraries in British Columbia. Of these, thirty-five are looked after by clerical and secretarial staff — or are virtually unsupervised. This is perhaps the moment to urge recognition of **the difference between a library and a mere collection of books**. The future welfare of the province must depend on the trade, industry, and commerce which either is here now or — equally importantly — will be attracted here in the future. In the past, the provision of library and information services to industry has been largely left in the hands

Let's not get all tied up in bringing people into the library: we must also bring the library to people in 'outreach programmes'.

The luxuries of isolation cannot be afforded.

To avoid the 'donated books in a little room' concept of a library, the idea of library service must be sold to the citizens.



Unless co-operation between libraries is achieved it will be extremely difficult for all types of libraries to obtain increased funds, particularly in the present period of high unemployment

There is often poor co-operation between different kinds of libraries in the same area, let alone libraries in different areas.

of industry itself and to its individual firms. The result of this is that thirty-five out of fifty-four have done practically nothing. The public library system has had to, and has been quite willing to, undertake a fair measure of this kind of service. Few public libraries, however, are geared and financially capable of providing such service in the depth and of the quality which is really required. New industries and organizations are not uncommonly without the benefit of significant information services during the vital periods of their growth. One other lesson which has been learned during the partial recession of the past year or so is that this is an operation all too readily cut out or curtailed when an organization runs into economic rough water. Sadly, it is frequently at times like this that they need information services the most.

The overall impression is one of extremely patchy provision, whereas it needs to be excellent. It is an old adage of housekeeping that you can feed a family of six more economically per capita than you can a single individual. The same principle applies here. There has been a clear drift during the last ten to fifteen years for services of this kind to be provided on a co-operative regional or subject-interest basis. The system can be centred on a large public or academic library where all the necessary library facilities will exist in depth, while the individual organizations can subscribe at a cost normally far less than that involved in setting up their own service. In the result, both library and firm benefit. A very small percentage of businesses will be large enough to cater for their own needs. For the remainder, co-operation is the only path to survival and growth.

When many aspects of library service have been passed under review, as has happened here today, what can be our final conclusions and hopes?

First, that Canada will develop an overall, comprehensive library policy which can be integrated with the more detailed patterns evolved to suit the particular and peculiar needs of each province.

Second, that within this province **we should see all library services as directed towards the same goal.** We must ensure that library services

are not endlessly bifurcated according to the administrative accidents of the parent institutions. We must ensure that all libraries, down to the small service point in the remotest area, are closely tied in to the province-wide system and that each feels itself to be a part of the whole. Co-ordination, co-operation, integration: these like Kipling's garden will not come by saying 'Oh how beautiful' and sitting in the shade. They must be planned and worked for. **Someone has to sit and think.**

The Library Development Commission dropped the word 'Public' from its title a few years ago. As I understand it, however, the Commission has not as yet noticeably extended its bounds much beyond the public library field. If we need some organization to produce firm proposals as to the steps by which the objectives may be reached, we may not need to look any further. This province already has an organization with many years of experience behind it. If it is thought necessary to widen the terms of reference of the Commission, to widen its composition to admit of more library interests, then this would be infinitely preferable to attempting to create a fresh organization. **Libraries are complex;** this has been one of the major themes of today's discussions. **Libraries are expensive,** libraries are closely allied to the varied needs of many different kinds of community. We must work in unison and there must be a think-tank **with strong powers of recommendation** if we are to see some semblance of order and progress.

I think that I have one regret about today's activities. I understand that our papers and discussions will be printed and become available as the proceedings of the 'British Columbia Centennial Citizens' Conference on Libraries.' It will be just another report. On the shelves of our libraries it will join with 1928, 1945, 1950, 1956, Vainstein, Church, etc. as yet another memorial to good intentions and weak resolve. Let us have done with reports and surveys. Let us now do whatever is necessary to initiate action. *You* are the people who *have* power in a democracy. Our legislators are your servants and are answerable to you. **The ball is now at your feet.**

Set up a pilot project to show what is possible.

The Library Development Commission is the obvious body to plan and develop a network of library systems.

The citizens present may be able to achieve a higher priority for libraries, but the Library Development Commission will have to provide the leadership.

It's not just the money. The attitude and organization of libraries is often very good, but we live in a complex world. Only major government action can solve the overall provincial problem.

We need some kind of representation at the political level if we are to sell libraries.

The word about the challenge to today's libraries and the pressing needs of the future should go on down to the grass roots.

Where It's At - Where It Should Be

For two hours in the early afternoon of the conference, each delegate was assigned to one of twelve 'discussion groups'. On the basis of the presentations they had heard up to that point (all except the paper by Mr. Stokes), and of their own experiences in using library services, they were asked to discuss the following points:

1. In your opinion what kinds of library services, materials and facilities do you think your community requires to meet its informational, educational and recreational needs?
2. In your opinion what are the best means of obtaining the library service you want for your community?

3. What methods or procedures do you think should/could be adopted for the financing of improved library service?

Finally, each group was asked 'What one major recommendation concerning library service would you like to see come out of this Conference, and how would you implement it?'

Understandably, much of the same ground was covered in many of the discussion groups. From tape recordings of each group's session were culled the comments which have been arranged as italicized marginal notes to the formal presentations printed in this book. The 'recommendations' made by each group are, however, published here without further editing. — *Editors*

Group 1

Libraries are financed by public funds, and the question of either integrated school and public libraries, or separate libraries, should not be decided on an arbitrary basis by the Library Development Commission's five-year plan, but should be a matter for decision on the local level, bearing in mind the needs of the different types of community.

Group 2

Public libraries should become a regional district function, and we concur with the intention of the government of financing only the aforementioned systems approach to library service in the Province of British Columbia.

Group 3

The Library Development Commission should work toward an integrated system so that libraries within a region are combined into a single regional public library, centrally administered with branches in each community. This single regional public library should be assigned the responsibility of assessing the total library resources of the region, and for working toward full co-operation among the different types of libraries in the region.

A pilot project should be established in one regional district (or group of districts) to ascertain the details of achieving an integrated system.

Public libraries should be open to the public the required number of hours per week to serve the public adequately as community centres.

Group 4

The Library Development Commission should be expanded as needed to become a guiding force in the development of library systems.

The financing of libraries, using both local and provincial funds, should be province-wide rather than completely local.

An information network based on the regional district or districts should be established which includes all types of libraries.

Group 5

The provincial government should divert sales taxes from printed materials to design a provincial system to maximize the utilization of library resources throughout the province.

Group 6

Whereas this Citizens' Conference has determined that there are scandalous and shocking inequities in library service in British Columbia, particularly affecting its smaller communities, and

Whereas the Library Development Commission is unable to overcome these problems within its present budget,

Therefore, this Citizens' Conference records its determination to make library service as available as educational and health services to every resident of British Columbia.

The Library Development Commission should be enabled to match local contributions to libraries on a formula similar to that pertaining to hospital construction and operation.

We further recommend the pooling of library and educational services to remove duplication and to apply savings thus achieved to wider coverage and more books.

Group 7

We recommend the implementation of a public relations programme to communicate to the public the value of library services as an enriching and integral part of community life.

We recommend the use of a public relations firm on a consultative basis to carry out this function.

We recommend the inter-connection of libraries on a regional basis for all purposes.

Group 8

We recommend a provincial systems approach to library organization, and favour a financial formula that parallels the school district financing.

We recommend that all tax-supported libraries be under a single department of government.

We recommend that necessary legislation be framed to set policy in motion. All citizens in British Columbia should have access to all tax-supported libraries.

Group 9

In endorsing the development of a province-wide network of public library service, we would instruct local library boards and municipal government officials to request the establishment of library service exclusively through regional library districts.

The provincial government should be responsible for the levying of taxation for public library service, not based solely on the property tax assessment.

Group 10

We support the concept of systems development in providing improved library service to the people of British Columbia through a procedure that is approved and fiscally equalized.

The systems developed should consider the most effective way of achieving the greatest degree of co-operation and mutual use from all facilities in their geographic area, and an improvement in the supply of all types of media, print, film, tape, sound), with the aim of linking each region and each element of each region to all resources in the province.

A strengthened Library Development Commission may begin implementation of this aim by the encouragement of the uncommitted parts of the province to form regional systems.

Group 11

Libraries should adapt merchandising techniques to reach present non-users and to maximize the use of present resources; e.g. 'how-to' courses, store-front libraries, increase in non-book holdings, provision of current materials, cost-recovered contract services to individuals, and the identification of the *real* needs of the community.

There should be full portability of library cards — perhaps for an extra fee.

Group 12

The Library Development Commission should initiate a programme of assistance in the areas of publicity and public relations. Such a programme should encompass the role of *all* library resources in a community, and help each community to determine vital areas of co-operation and co-ordination among its libraries.



SYSTEMS FOR THE SEVENTIES

A LIBRARY SYSTEM IS A GROUP OF LIBRARIES ACTING TOGETHER TO PROVIDE BETTER SERVICE THAN ANY ONE OF THEM COULD PROVIDE ACTING ON ITS OWN.

THE NEXT STEP IS A NETWORK EMBRACING ALL LIBRARIES IN THE PROVINCE.

WHY A SYSTEM?

TODAY FEW COMMUNITIES IN BRITISH COLUMBIA CAN RAISE SUFFICIENT TAX MONEY TO PROVIDE A TOTAL LIBRARY SERVICE FOR THEIR RESIDENTS THEREFORE THE LARGER UNIT OF SERVICE OR SYSTEM IS A MEANS OF BROADENING THE TAX BASE AND DISTRIBUTING COSTS MORE WIDELY.

WHERE CAN A LIBRARY SYSTEM BE FORMED?

A LIBRARY SYSTEM MUST BE BASED ON A SUITABLE POLITICAL UNIT SUCH AS A REGIONAL DISTRICT.

A MINIMUM POPULATION OF APPROXIMATELY 75,000 PERSONS IS NECESSARY.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

THE INFORMATION CENTER AND RESOURCE CENTRE RECEIVES AND MANAGES FINANCIAL AND MAINTAINS A CENTRAL REFERENCE SERVICE AND REFERENCE SERVICES ESTABLISHES A POOL OF KNOWLEDGE, MANUSCRIPTS AND OTHER MATERIALS TO AUGMENT THE COLLECTIONS OF LOCAL LIBRARIES OPERATES BOOKMOBILES DEPOSIT STATION AND MANAGES THE PERFORMANCE OF PROFESSIONAL AND TECHNICAL SERVICES FOR ALL LIBRARIES PROVIDES IN SERVICE TRAINING AND ADVISORY SERVICES.

HOW IS THE SYSTEM FINANCED?

A LIBRARY SYSTEM RECEIVES MOST OF ITS SUPPORT FROM LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT. ALL COSTS ARE PAID BY THESE GOVERNMENTS. THE LIBRARY SYSTEMS RECEIVE ADDITIONAL FUNDING FROM FEDERAL GOVERNMENT THROUGH GRANTS AND FROM COLLECTING AND SELLING BOOKS.

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To Tomorrow's World

ROBERT D. FERGUSON

Chairman, Library Development Commission

Ladies and gentlemen—

This is the end of a productive day of well-prepared presentations, searching discussions, good food, and stimulating company. If we were all to go home now and just 'sleep it off', we could all, I think, say we had profited from the experience. But of course if we did that and no more, this Citizens' Conference would be a complete failure. Our discussions were not conclusive in two senses. First, we have been dealing with many issues which have no easy solution, or whose solution must be different in the different parts of our province. Second, no one here has the power to impose a solution which may seem 'best' to him on a community which must pay for it. For both these reasons, this conference has been deliberately designed as the *beginning*, not as the end, of a process of give-and-take, among the Library Development Commission (as representatives of government), the professionals or 'experts' in librarianship, and the citizens these groups both serve.

You have been invited to participate in this conference because you have expressed interest in and concern for library services. We must all carry this interest and concern to every part of the province — we must talk up libraries, their problems, their cost, their benefits, to *our* community. The Library Development Commission, in carrying out its statutory responsibility to guide the development and operation of this vital information and re-creation service needs to know what the citizens wish,

and to show the citizens the best available means to meet their library needs.

At this closing of the first British Columbia Centennial Citizens' Conference on Libraries, and in the Commission's name, I wish to announce that in the spring and early summer of 1972, a series of six 'Regional Citizens' Conferences on Libraries' will be held at convenient places throughout the province. The co-ordinator of these conferences will be Miss Joy Scudamore, and in the course of the next few months, she will be working closely with local groups, and I trust with you, to ensure that the message of libraries and their services is brought to every part of British Columbia in an effective way in the regional conferences next year.

May I respectfully ask that you put to good effect the enthusiasm generated here today, by helping Miss Scudamore and your fellow citizens in your own community to make the regional conferences the success that today's province-wide one has been. Thank you.

REGIONAL CONFERENCE DATES

Burnaby	March 10, 1972
Vancouver Island	March 25
Kamloops	April 14
Nelson	May 8
Prince George	May 19
Prince Rupert	June 3



libraries are people places