NETWORKS AND LAW LIBRARIES

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[*The Tuesday afternoon session of the American Association of Law Libraries' 69th Annual Meeting, a panel on "Networks and Law Libraries," convened at 3:30 p.m. in the Sanders Theatre, Memorial Hall, Harvard University, Mr. Morris L. Cohen, presiding.*]

MODERATOR COHEN: At the 1972 AALL annual meeting in Chicago, a panel discussion was presented on *Library Networks-Implications for Law Libraries.* At that panel, I concluded my talk with these comments:

I think law library networks must be viewed against the often-expressed desire for inter-library cooperation that is evident in the reports of the earliest meetings of this association and also against the reality of professional failure by law librarians and our association in this regard . . . Despite our hopes and official statements, I think we must be candid and admit that we have had very little effectiveness with respect to inter-library cooperation on a national level . . . Despite all this, my own feeling is that we are now at a point in history where serious planning and study should begin toward the creation of a national law library network. I think the AALL can and should take the leading role in this effort . . . One of the last concerns mentioned is perhaps the most troublesome one. That is the possible lack of total commitment from the participants in the system, from the member libraries. That is a very hard problem, and it is one that cannot be studied away or planned away. It is going to depend on whether this whole notion is appealing to you and whether law libraries and law librarians are really committed to the concept of law library cooperation and networks.

That was 1972. Four more years have elapsed and not much has been done on the national level. A number of libraries have joined O.C.L.C., or moved closer to that step, generally for want of a better alternative. Several of the AALL Chapters have been active in regional cooperative activities. Information Dynamics Corp., with the cooperation of the Southeastern Chapter, produced on microfiche a new bibliographic service for law libraries, but that program did not achieve wide acceptance. The Chicago chapter held a useful conference on networks, but a major cooperative endeavor in the law library field was still lacking.

Ronald Miller will speak to us on "National and Regional Library Networks: An Overview."

RONALD MILLER: Networks is a very common word now. And to some, it's the latest buzz word. It has been around for maybe five years now. It is used loosely and can mean a number of things, depending upon who uses it.

For today's discussion I choose to place an operational meaning of the word on a continuum ranging from pure humanism to pure technology. A humanist definition arising from common parlance is simply that a network is people communicating with each other. After all, we have such things as the "crony network": I talk to my professional friends and they talk back to me.

At the technological end of the continuum, the most common example, I suppose, would be the wired electronic network operated by the telephone company.

But I think today we are talking somewhere in between those two extremes: namely people, or institutions, connected together by computer-mediated telecommunications to accomplish fairly defined purposes. Furthermore, I think we could agree that one well-defined purpose of this network is to share resources for the benefit of users of our libraries and institutions.

I want to narrow the operational definition even further and address my remarks to bibliographic networks rather than to networks which provide full text searching. This working definition does, I feel, serve as a solid example of this kind of hybridization of technological

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and humanistic networks of which I referred to earlier.

Within this context, I would like to discuss five topics here today:

First, I would like to talk about cooperation and how a network manifests that noble goal, if it does, if it can;

Second, I would like to address the topic of national, regional and local relationships within networks using NELINET and others as examples;

Third, I would like to talk specifically about OCLC and make some comments about its use from the standpoint of law libraries;

Fourth, I want to raise a few current issues and problems in library networking and how librarians individually and collectively can help to deal with them. Most people don't want to hear about problems these days; they want to hear solutions, but I think the road to problem solving is to have the problems well formulated to begin with. I am not saying that I am going to state problems clearly; I am merely saying that these are the ones that are nagging me as a network director, and I would like to share them with you.

Finally, the fifth and last activity for me today is joining with you and my colleagues at this table and in the audience in a discussion.

The first topic is cooperation. Cooperation is not charity; it is not a large benevolent institution providing free services to less fortunate institutions.

In the long run, charity is self-destructive because it really is a form of exploitation, and after a while the participants become uncomfortable in such a relationship.

In less erudite audiences I can get away with using the following word in the context of what cooperation can mean: it's usufruct. Many in this room know it as a legal term, and in abridged dictionaries it is defined as the enjoyment of the benefit of using someone else's property or resources without destroying them.

In general, the derivation of usufruct comes from the same word root as fruit, so I suppose it can mean "consuming someone else's fruit," a renewable resource. In this context the application of usufruct is raised merely to illustrate first, that no *quid pro quo* is apparent in this use of other people's resources or property, and second that information is not consumed as it is being used. The concept of shared cataloging is, for instance, a good illustration of usufruct applied to library networks.

A library network uses someone else's product (bibliographic information) without destroying it.

In libraries, the intent of cooperation derives from people or institutions banding together in a common cause. I am sure that Lorraine Kulpa will give you examples of how this activity has occurred in the law library community.

"Banding together in a common cause" is sometimes for the purpose of using someone else's money. Specifically, in the late sixties—a boom time for libraries—consortia banded together to obtain public tax money for local use, but not to contribute much local funds toward attaining goals. This windfall was a cohesive force then (and still is today). But there is one major problem manifested in this approach: institutions, I would submit, at some point are faced with the problem of contributing their own resources as evidence of investment in their collective future. The "matching funds" concept is used as a "dollar multiplier" to generate project income.

There is a danger, of course, in getting together in common cause to use someone else's money regardless of what that cause is. The danger is when someone gets tired of being on the short end of the "usufruct stick," if you will, gets resentful and quits outright. In a small consortium this act can render the group inoperable.

Cooperation is also related to the concept of equity. That is, if we use someone else's work at their expense, that someone should be repaid and not necessarily purely in terms of money. For a consortium or network to succeed, the problem of equity must be addressed and solved.

In a cooperative enterprise, as in most human activities, there always seem to be inequities.

For instance, in the New England Library Information Network, we have decided (albeit in a cooperative manner) that we would not charge our libraries who are connected by terminal on the basis of how far away they are located from the computer. In effect, we decided that member charges would be distance-independent. This approach is not true of the telephone company: it charges more for a telephone call across the country than for a local call. It *is* true in such commercial data transmission networks as TELENET and TYMNET. For the same hourly charge an hour you can call across the country or between any two nodes in these networks.

The NELINET decision was a conscious decision to share an unequal burden equally.

We also apply the same principle to terminal maintenance costs. If the library has a dud terminal, so to speak—one which malfunctions repeatedly—why should they be penalized by the network because of the vagaries of manufacturing processes? So we agreed that everyone shares equally the cost of terminal maintenance. And therefore to some degree terminal maintenance cost recovery is *ipso facto* distant-independent as well.

One great inequity which varies across the country, depending upon what network one finds oneself in, is the cost to different kinds of libraries to participate in networks. It is not related particularly here to the profit and not-for-profit charging problem. (That is, charging for-profit institutions more than non-profit institutions.) The difference I allude to here is the inequity of charges made to smaller libraries as compared to larger libraries, regardless of their legal status.

In NELINET, it could be said that we discriminate against small libraries. We don't do it consciously or with malice; it's simply because it is more expensive for a smaller library to use our network than it is for a larger one. The fact that a library has to buy a terminal, a fixed cost, regardless of how much the terminal is used, means that a small library is required to buy unused terminal capacity. I guess the point here is that in setting rates and planning services, decision-making processes network administrators should be very sensitive to the effects of inequity on the participants, and constantly review them.

I mentioned earlier, the major purpose for libraries coming together for a common purpose was resource sharing. In this context we should not limit our scope of what constitutes a resource. It includes sharing people, their ideas, their abilities, their expertise as well as the money and materials in the participating libraries.

What about the national, regional and local networking scene? The National Commission on Libraries and Information Science is the agency, I guess, which has the spotlight on it now. It has taken on the challenge of trying to coordinate network development at both the national and regional, and to some extent, the local level as well. Just how this is going to happen, I don't know. I don't believe they know yet. Numerous studies and study committees have been formed and reported upon in the national professional press. The full influence of the Commission will be felt during the process of implementing the White House Conference (if it is held) and in the development of legislative support of its so-called national plan. But the plan itself is far from being specific enough yet.

The other key institution is the Library of Congress. About a year ago LC announced a new set of objectives involving a significant expansion in the provision of bibliographic services to the nation's libraries. The primary channel for these services will be through networks, and a new network office has been formed at LC under the able leadership of Henriette Avram, formerly head of the MARC Development Office. This announcement was made to the Council for Computerized Library Networks, and has since been promulgated as an ARL monograph. Since LC prefers to deal with clusters of libraries rather than individual institutions, the role of LC in coordination and design of national network developments will become very significant indeed.

Other agencies which exercise influence in network development include the National Science Foundation and the Council on Library Resources. The National Endowment for the Humanities also has increased its involvement.

Historically, professional societies have been very much involved in developing network-like services, both discipline and profession-wide. There may be some analogy here with the AALL interests, and it would be useful to at least look at other professional societies to see how they approach the so-called network problem.

There are at least four or five institutions such as those I mentioned above, but the coherence of these agencies—the way in which they will fit together—is not at all clear yet. I am reluctant to hazard a guess yet as to how the final mosaic will look a year or two from now.

I will say this, though, I think that at the federal level the Library of Congress will probably turn out to be the chief source of expertise and the chief mover and shaper as far as technological network developments are concerned.

Other nationwide, as opposed to national or federal, networking agencies are pervasive across the country. In addition to OCLC (about which more is discussed later), other kinds of network organizations exist too. Two of these are the communications utilities of the TYM-

NET and TELENET genre which I mentioned earlier.

These companies sell time for an hourly charge to any customer which desires to transmit or receive digital information to and from computers or terminals. A problem here is that not every city has a facility to handle these services, and small town users must dial at full long-distance rates to the nearest facility before the lower city-to-city rates can be exploited.

Other services. This audience is familiar with Lockheed, Systems Development Corporation and a new one called Bibliographic Retrieval Service under development in Schenectady, New York as companies in the for-profit sector which provide bibliographic services to libraries as well as to individuals. And you know their specialized counterparts in your own field better than I, many of whom are exhibitors at this convention.

Whether it is national, regional or local levels that network-line activities go on, some work better than others. It seems to me that there are some five or six elements which contribute to success (or lack of it) in networking. First, there must be clearly stated goals and a rationale for which services should be provided at a particular network level. This is part of the problem of national network design that the National Commission and LC are wrestling with. The question is raised time and time again: what is it that should be done nationally that shouldn't be done locally or regionally?

Second, one of the overall goals should be to improve user satisfaction and to reach the users that are not reached now.

Third, agencies at any one of these three levels add to the administrative overhead and user costs. Administrative viability is open to question until a network has some legal status, a status that is able to acquire money, use it well and make contracts.

Fourth, if more than a training or marketing relationship is contemplated as a primary network goal, it seems to me that technical capacity must be available as well. If any kind of electronic interconnection with other levels is desired, such capacity is mandatory.

The fifth element is money: principally what sources are available for what purposes. The providers of such funds should be prepared to take risks, even risks of failure to attain objectives. Why? Because we're moving into new, untrod territory and some ideas simply will not work out.

Sixth, there has to be commitment of principle, confidence and time from the people involved in the enterprise. I sense this is part of the phase that the members of this Association are going through now.

What resources and how much of each resource constitutes a commitment? What should we commit ourselves to? How much is it going to cost? What are we going to get for it? These are some of the basic questions that have to be answered.

I think Lorraine's remarks at the Chicago Association of Law Libraries last October went into the accomplishments of cooperative enterprises within the law library profession, and maybe she will share some of those with us here in her remarks.

Now at the regional level. By region I mean multistate, more than one state involved in the relationship and development of a so-called national network.

Names which represent this concept are SOLINET in the southeastern United States; MIDLNET, which is trying to find its role in Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Ohio, Illinois and that area; NELINET in New England; PALINET which began as an intrastate networking organization in the Philadelphia area and now has members in New Jersey and elsewhere. AMIGOS in Texas provides services of various kinds to that part of the country and outside of Texas as well. There seems to be a natural tendency for networks to grow and expand, to fill in the geographical "network cracks," such as may remain across the United States.

The Ohio College Library Center remains organizationally an Ohio corporation, but it is providing services outside of the State of Ohio under widespread contractual arrangements. But curiously enough, OCLC is not a multistate organization, as you may believe, even though its services are flung from border to border and coast to coast.

And finally, in Massachusetts, Connecticut and New York is the Research Libraries Group of which some of you may have heard. If you took the tour through the law library here, you may have heard about some of the plans of that group. It includes Harvard, Yale, Columbia and the New York Public Library. Among their first cooperative acts, or collective acts, is to connect at least two of the libraries to the Library of Congress' bibliographic computer system on a computer-to-computer hook-up. We

should hear more about this interesting prospect fairly soon if the connection is successful.

In any event, the rationale for regional multistate network organization can be tenuous. I think the reason for the existence of many such groups, NELINET included, is not because anyone performed a careful analysis and said: "Well, the message load in this population density and distribution pattern and the proven need for the following seven services lead us inexorably to conclude that the optimum network size should exactly cover the six states in New England."

No, it was not like that. The formation of NELINET was based more on the fact the New England region existed already, and a few librarians had the temerity to try a new idea. They said, in effect: "What can we do collectively to undertake something new in the world of library automation that will control costs, expand services and which we cannot do well in individual libraries?"

It was not quite that simple, and things started slowly. But they started with excitement. It was a heady time.

Then, the question: which library activity has the highest unit cost and is labor intensive? It didn't take long to discover that cataloging fits this criterion well, and to share the burden with the help of the computer was something that should be thoroughly investigated.

The central concept which was really exciting was the use of the word "network" in our name. The only other enterprise which I can recall that incorporated that idea at about the same time was the Biomedical Communications Network which Irwin Pizer was starting at Upstate Medical Center in Syracuse, New York.

Other ideas which are common now: central storage of serial, interlibrary loan, getting a handle on telecommunications costs and processing of bibliographic records for other purposes in machine readable form—all these were studied as possible projects, but the main investment of time, energy and resources was in the development of a cataloging and union catalog support system.

But what about library users—our clientele? The clientele of a regional consortium or network is usually the institutions in that region, but the clientele of the local library is, of course, the users of that library: this is the first priority of an institution. It follows then, that the clientele of a national networking organization should probably be primarily those regional or

statewide institutions which can handle the interface to local institutions in the most cost-beneficial manner.

But despite the insularity of, or attitude inherent in, serving one's own clientele, I think the administrator at each level always has to ask the questions: "Am I improving something?" "Am I keeping library service from getting worse?" The latter question is not altogether inappropriate in the economic situation in which we find ourselves now.

So implementing a local service, such as a circulation control system, should be done with a view to integrating that service with the regional network. In library network development, we are now, I believe, in an era of system integration at the national, regional, state, local and discipline levels of network operation.

The OCLC system. As most of you are well aware, the primary use of the OCLC system is to support shared cataloging and catalog card production. Other uses are increasing, about which more will be said later.

Network participants can use records created by another library, at no cost to the library which created the record. An example of usufruct if I ever saw one, since the fruit of someone else's labor is used by another without consuming it. The library which created the record, needed it itself for its own purposes, and put it into the system.

Other uses which participating libraries make of the OCLC system include pre-order verification and searching. Use of the system for these purposes has already had some impact on acquisitions decisions because an acquisitions librarian can now say, "I will not buy this item because I see on the terminal screen that our sister institution across the river already has it, and I can borrow it if we ever have call for this item." Of course, such lending arrangements have to be worked out before-hand so that seldom-used items can in fact be borrowed as a matter of planned, self-conscious policy.

Interlibrary loan is an obvious and common occurrence to us, and both OCLC and NELINET are planning to provide libraries with network facility so that libraries can send and receive ILL messages to and from other network members through the system. Much ILL-related searching goes on now. We don't know how much, but we do have evidence that time is saved through rapid verification and location techniques provided now by the system.

We have heard a lot about serials check-in. A

national data base of up to 200,000 records is being constructed by the CONSER participants on the OCLC system. You will hear more about this in the literature as time goes on.

No library that I know of in New England has clamored to use the OCLC serials check-in system at this point. Why? Because they haven't seen it yet, but that event will occur shortly because there are libraries using a primitive version of it now in Ohio, and it will be available nationwide. Exactly when, I don't know. Several deadlines have been set, then changed. Perhaps in the fall of 1976.

You can, incidentally, find that information about OCLC services and about NELINET and SOLINET and one or two of the other regional services that I alluded to earlier if you go to Booth 26 in the exhibit area. NELINET staff are giving demonstrations of the TYMNET access to the OCLC system there, and a quantity of brochures from other regional networks is there too.

So how do you make the best use of the system? Some improvements in speed and efficiency of library operations have been observed already. Local catalog card production has ceased for the most part. There is no more typing of headings on cards now, or alphabetizing them prior to filing. Manual searching of printed catalogs has been reduced. Proof slip subscriptions have been discontinued, as far as I know. On the average, processing books for early user access to them is faster than it was before.

Now, what would the optimum criteria be for a particular library to consider to make the best use of the system?

First of all, of course, if somebody else can pay for your expenses as a subsidy that is the best of all possible worlds. Several libraries have been able to obtain such help on their own initiative or through various networks. But this help is usually for a relatively short period of time until internal budgets can be adjusted to accommodate network expenses.

Secondly, being close to the Library of Congress practice in cataloging seems to be an advantage since minimum time is spent locally in changing records. However, there are a good many libraries that do take the staff time to alter records in the data base for their own purposes.

The apparent cost savings, I think, are sometimes a function of how efficient the library was run before using the network compared to work-flow efficiencies imposed as part of the process of integrating the system into new library work flow patterns. Most improvements have been brought about by staff reductions based upon increased productivity per staff member. A good technique for librarians who are thinking of joining OCLC, or any other network for that matter, is to find a current participant which appears to be similar and interview the director and his staff. This procedure goes on quite a bit now.

Law Libraries and OCLC

According to my information, there are 36 law libraries using OCLC in one way or another. .

The University of Toledo has reported recently that it has a 70.7% find rate of the records they catalog in the data base. (I assume it is their current monograph cataloging which is being searched.)

A study done at Cornell by Boisonnas reports somewhere between a 50 to 70 percent hit rate. I think that survey included seven law libraries that are using the OCLC system.

There are about 12 law libraries which are part of academic library systems which are themselves using the system. Other libraries which catalog law on the system include Drexel, Emory, University of Georgia, SUNY at Buffalo and Syracuse.

State libraries catalog law material for another category of users. In New England, the Connecticut State Library is the only one so far, but the New York State Library, State Library of Ohio, State Library of Pennsylvania and Texas State Library are some others.

I was informed this morning that the Connecticut State Library is intending to do processing for the County Bar Law Libraries. They will be using the network to support a central processing facility for those county units.

About 14 federal law libraries are using the system now within a newly named network group called the "FEDLINK," which is derivative from the Federal Library Committee.

Federal libraries using OCLC for law collections include the Central Intelligence Agency, Civil Rights Commission, the Departments of Commerce, Interior, Housing and Urban Development, Labor, State, Transportation, Treasury, the Federal Trade Commission, the National Agricultural Library, the National Bureau of Standards, the Pentagon and the U.S. Customs.

It is a mistake to make too much of the distinction between different types of libraries these days. Networks are bringing us all much closer together. For example, the University of Maine at Portland has received loan requests from the CIA and Yale University. Yale is borrowing some books now from small public libraries nearby, whereas previously they may have used another large academic library.

Network Problems and Issues

Data base quality control, public versus private use of networks, interfacing networks, organization and governance, authority file control, costs, form a set of problems which are being looked at by several groups now. An issue which may be of particular concern to law librarians might be the issue of developing geographic or joining profession-oriented networks, I will come back to this point.

Particular consideration must be given to the realities of loss of local autonomy when a library integrates itself with a larger institution to make best use of network services. Integration of smallish libraries into the system and integration of non-libraries into the system are also situations in which problems of equity and non-standard services must be looked at. For example, a book selection publication located in Middletown, Connecticut is a NELINET member which uses OCLC services. It doesn't contribute any cataloging. It is not a library, and it cannot be a book lender: it uses the system to verify its records prior to the publication of reviews. And the BOOKLIST in Chicago uses the system for the same purpose.

Some libraries appear to be intentionally delaying cataloging if the appropriate record is not in the OCLC data base. Withholding books from users until someone else catalogs them is a travesty and is not within the spirit of shared cataloging. The benefit to all network participants is, therefore, reduced.

Institutions should process books quickly both to get them to the users as fast as possible and to contribute the bibliographic records to the system for others to use.

What Can Law Librarians Do

Law librarians, in particular, have the reputation for very high bibliographic expertise, as well as the desire to address knotty intellectual challenges.

The opportunity for you to share this exper-

tise with your colleagues is enhanced by virtue of network participation. You can help to improve the quality of the shared data base. In order to do this, of course, you have to join. That may be the biggest decision for each of you to make.

Another intellectual challenge resides in the access to bibliographic records. Improvement of search techniques; what words should be put in on-line indexes, so that all of us can access the data once it is stored?

I think your legal expertise and access to even more extensive legal talent certainly would be invaluable to helping solve network governance problems.

Last of all—I alluded to this quality earlier—a main value of networks is that they bring people in the library profession together to address problems in a very immediate and non-theoretical way. An example: the Federal Reserve Bank in Boston is using a terminal located at the Episcopal Divinity School. This could be viewed as a pocket manifestation of church-state interrelationship, and it was done for purely pragmatic reasons. No problem. There was a need, and the parties got together to solve it. Thank you for your attention.

MODERATOR COHEN: The next speaker is Lorraine Kulpa who will speak on "Regional Efforts Among Law Libraries."

LORRAINE KULPA: At one of the American Association of Law Libraries annual meetings, an outstanding law librarian presented a paper entitled "Opportunities for Regional Law Library Service". Based on my own research, I would say that his remarks were the first to exhort law librarians to broaden their concept and philosophy of service beyond the confines of their own libraries and their own clientele. Among other things he said:

> "Regional planning is now a familiar phrase. In general, it refers to the development of various local, state, and national projects. It is an expression of the belief that a systematic organization of labor, natural resources, and industrial opportunities leads to a more economical governmental administration and a greater spread of efficiency. The term as applied to libraries was first used to express the idea of service by a public library system to adjacent rural sections and communities; later to counties as a whole, and now in its enlarged concept to groups of adjacent and contiguous counties or sections thereof. In this larger sense governmental administra-

tive lines mean but little. In fact, regional library service means service to a certain region more or less undefined and unlimited in size. Hence regional library service becomes a vision of service of the greatest good to the greatest number.

The advantages of the regional plans are easily adaptable to libraries engaged in specialized services, such as medical libraries, banking libraries, insurance libraries, law libraries, and others of similar character.

Many librarians now believe that the time has come for special libraries, and particularly legal research libraries, to enhance the concept of a broader field of professional service; and to prepare for the future development of aid and assistance to the law schools, and to bar association areas greater in extent than those of their immediate localities."

I wonder how many of you recall these words of Dr. Arthur S. Beardsley, law librarian of the University of Washington spoken on June 26, 1935 at the American Association of Law Libraries 28th annual meeting.

Since that date, we have done a lot of talking about "regional cooperation". Time and time again, we've endorsed its spirit, its philosophy and its objectives. However, after I have recounted what we have done to make all our talking a reality, I'll let you be the judge of whether we indeed are practicing what we have been preaching or whether we talk more than we do. After all, talk is cheap but action might cost us some and sacrifice is a much more difficult word to deal with than cooperation. Trouble is that the two go hand in hand but we can't seem to be able to bring ourselves to realize that fact or realizing it, we don't want to admit it.

So much for editorializing. Now let's examine our track record of accomplishments. Before I begin, I want to make a few qualifying remarks about the meaning of the words in the title of this presentation. The first word is "regional" and I am interpreting the term much as Dr. Beardsley did—undefined in area and unlimited in size—which means that I will use it to refer to a single municipal area or a county or a state or multiples of any or several of these units. The second word is "efforts". Note that it is not networks. So, for the sake of having something substantive to say, I am giving it a broad interpretation. Thus, for my purposes, it means

any undertaking which has had some tangible effect on a community of law libraries whatever their regional configuration. The last three words are "among law libraries". They indicate that I will exclude any mention of efforts that have not involved law libraries directly or efforts in which law libraries are extensively involved with non-law libraries or where law libraries are involved in regional projects because of the involvement of parent institutions. You might say that I'll be talking entirely about just us.

The first regional effort I'd like to mention developed as a WPA project under the direction of the Massachusetts State Library in 1939. Two years earlier, an American Association of Law Libraries Committee had been appointed to prepare an index of state bar association reports and proceedings but it was soon recognized that the focal point for the project would have to be a library with a good core collection of such material and the Massachusetts State Library was in a position to volunteer. To fill in the gaps and complete its extensive collection, law libraries were asked to send to the State Law Library copies of the needed issues free or on an exchange basis so that a thorough index could be compiled. This undertaking to send material to a central place for the development of a tool that would be useful to all law libraries is one of the earliest cooperative endeavors recorded in the *Law Library Journal*.[1]

The next significant effort is an Association sponsored project which is still functioning today and is probably the closest thing to a national endeavor among law libraries. I'm speaking of the American Association of Law Libraries Committee on Exchange of Duplicates. The Exchange was established in 1938 but it really got underway in 1940 and thereafter. At its inception, a card file with author, title, institution, date, price and designation of items as wants or duplicates was generated and from it lists were prepared with a general classification scheme of twelve categories. Needless to say, this endeavor has involved a great deal of work on the part of those who have managed it over the years. In 1940 there were eighteen law libraries across the country participating and now the figure is much, much larger. In 1960 the American Association of Law Libraries Ex-

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[1] Dooley, "Massachusetts State Library Appeals for Cooperation in Project of Indexing State Bar Association Reports and Proceedings," 32 *LLJ* 23 (1939).

change enlarged its activity by having its lists distributed to Universal Serials and Book Exchange, Inc. (formerly United States Book Exchange) thus permitting law libraries to draw upon and contribute to that organization.

Those of us who remember the colorful personality of Mr. Charles McNabb, librarian of the fourth Appellate Division Library, New York Court of Appeals in Rochester, New York, will recall that he was instrumental in launching a well-known cooperative cataloging project among four major law libraries in the Chicago area. The best description of that effort, which also continues today, is in his own words and is found in the Golden Jubilee issue of the *Law Library Journal*[2]. To quote him:

". . . the phenomenon of the cooperative spirit that exists in Chicago" is ". . . that it sprang from hunger".

By that he was referring to himself because at a time when he was out of a job he was approached by the heads of the law libraries of the Chicago Bar Association and the Chicago Law Institute—two people who apparently never talked to each other—with an offer to promote a cooperative cataloging project! Just prior to this offer, the WPA had financed the work of putting together a union catalog of all the holdings of all the libraries in the Chicago area including the law libraries. Those assigned to this task went through all the Chicago libraries and copied the names of the books off all the stacks (!) except at Northwestern where a catalog already existed. When about 80,000 cards had been typed and about 150,000 hand-written slips collected, the works stopped but the two law libraries mentioned decided to continue the project and chose Charlie McNabb for the job. At the same time, the Chicago Association of Law Libraries came into existence and it created an Executive Committee with representatives from the four major law libraries which continued to maintain the union catalog. Until 1951 it was a complete dictionary catalog with author, title and subject entries but thereafter it was kept up on a single entry basis because by that time the four libraries had created catalogs of their own. Out of this effort there developed among the same four law libraries a cooperative acquisitions program, especially for foreign law and bar association materials which also continues today and a formal contractual agreement embodying reciprocal interlibrary loan

policies among them. The four law libraries which continue to participate in these programs are those of the University of Chicago, Northwestern University, the Chicago Bar Association and the Cook County Law Library. Further, spinoffs of these cooperative endeavors have been a union list of foreign legal periodicals prepared under the able direction of Mr. Kurt Schwerin and active donations of infrequently used legal materials to the Center for Research Libraries, formerly the Midwest Inter-Library Loan Center. So, this venture has been a success story from its inception.

Another metropolitan area where a couple of significant cooperative efforts have been launched is Washington, D.C.—headquarters of the Law Librarians Society of that town. Serving the bench and the bar in the nation's capitol is very demanding and it soon became quite clear that one of the most recurring requests was for legislative history information which, even in Washington, is difficult to collect and collate. So, in 1944 a committee was appointed to compile a Union List of Legislative Histories in government and other law libraries in and around the District of Columbia. The very first lists appeared in the *Law Library Journal* in 1946 and 1947. The first formal edition was printed in 1950 and supplemented in 1954. A second edition appeared in 1959 with a supplement issued in 1961.

The third and latest edition was published in 1968 and supplemented in 1971. A fourth edition is about to become available soon. This tool has been of invaluable use not only to the participating Washington law libraries but to all law libraries throughout the country because of the opportunity to borrow these histories from the libraries which have them. In addition, this same chapter undertook the compilation of a *Union List of Legal Periodicals* in D.C. law libraries, again in recognition of a long felt need for such information. A committee was formed to compile the list which was issued in 1960 followed by a second edition in 1968 and a supplement in 1970. Discussion is now underway for the preparation of a third edition.

Another successful bibliographic project may have been inspired by a 1961 *Law Library Journal* article entitled "Foreign Legal Periodicals in American Law Libraries—A Union List", by Kurt Schwerin.[3] In it Mr. Schwerin wrote that

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[2] "Cooperation in Law Library Service—a Panel," 43 *LLJ* 413 (1956).

[3] Schwerin, "Foreign Legal Periodicals in American Law Libraries—A Union List," 54 *LLJ* 145 (1961).

because of the publication of the American Association of Law Libraries *Index to Foreign Legal Periodicals,* many law libraries were displaying considerable interest in knowing more about foreign legal periodical holdings of various law libraries. In any event, in 1968 the Southwestern Chapter of the American Association of Law Libraries proposed a method for extending the availability of foreign legal periodicals to law libraries within the Chapter. The first phase called for the generation of a union list of holdings. Thereafter, based on specific preferences, a plan of cooperative acquisition of foreign legal periodicals among the participating law libraries might be launched to assure that comprehensive coverage and availability of the titles indexed in *Index to Foreign Legal Periodicals* would result. This latter objective apparently was abandoned. However, in 1970 the Union list became a reality thanks to the efforts of the University of Texas Law Library and several others in the Southwest Chapter. In 1972 a second edition was issued. This effort remains an active one and one which has benefitted many large and small law libraries spread out over a fairly wide geographic region.

Undertakings at the chapter levels among the law libraries within their geographic boundaries have been quite numerous and on the whole have been successful as the preceding examples demonstrate. In 1973 under the direction of Betty Taylor, the Southeastern Chapter began the compilation of a Union List of that region's law school libraries' holdings of the *AALS Law Books Recommended for Law Libraries.* In addition to supplying each participating library with information on the holdings of items in other law libraries, it presents an analysis of each library's collection; also it functions as a buying guide for libraries based on a ranking of books in order by the number of libraries holding each title and a desiderata list for a cooperative acquisitions program. This project is also an ongoing one and it is no longer restricted to law school libraries but is open to anyone wishing to join. The last major effort that I want to mention is one that comes closest to being characterized as a regional effort or, at least, an attempt at organizing a cooperative effort on a multistate basis. The acronym for this new association is TALON and it was briefly noted in a very recent issue of the *American Association of Law Libraries Newsletter.*[4] Not surprisingly, the person

behind the effort was Roy Mersky of the University of Texas. In September 1975, Roy wrote to all the law school librarians in Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma and New Mexico (hence TALON) again praising the virtues of cooperation and calling for an unstructured meeting to pursue the idea with the invitees. Fourteen law librarians responded and met in Austin on November 10, 1975 where they discussed a variety of projects. They determined that the first priority of business should be a skills and resources inventory. The data obtained would then be published in the form of a directory. Just nine days after the meeting a survey questionnaire was distributed and in April of this year a *Directory of Special Collections and Resources in Law School Libraries of the Southwest* was issued and distributed to all the participants. One of the aspirations expressed in its introduction is that the information it contains may aid the participants in formulating individual and specialized acquisition plans and may lead to other cooperative endeavors.

There are, of course, many other cooperative efforts which could be recounted but I'm not going to take the time to do so. This is not because they are not worthy of mention but because they are pretty much the same in character, scope and objectives as the ones I have just described. LLAGNY, ORALL, SCALL and others have generated union lists. Connie Bolden organized a union list of catalog entries from law libraries in the Pacific Northwest which, although it was largely unsuccessful among the law libraries in that area, has been donated to the Pacific Northwest Bibliographic Center with three law libraries still providing input into it. There are also publications like the Los Angeles County Law Library's *Foreign Law Shelf List,* Harvard's *Current Legal Bibliography* and the Columbia and Davis catalogs which might come within the scope of regional efforts in the sense that although one library alone has compiled each of these bibliographic tools, they have all made them available to anyone who wants them on a continuing basis.

The question remains, however, whether these efforts, important as they have been to those who initiated them and have continued them, whether they have provided us with enough preparation and experience to take on the kind of effort that Morris will advocate in his remarks. Ron Miller has told us what is happening among other libraries outside of our specialty and it remains to be seen whether we have what it takes to overcome the stage fright

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[4] AALL Newsletter vol. 7, no. 3, p. 9 (March, 1976).

which I feel still exists among us. Your reactions this afternoon and on Thursday will provide some indication of what the future developments will be—more of what we have been doing so far or the beginning of something much more challenging, demanding and engrossing.

MODERATOR COHEN: You have heard Ronald Miller and Lorraine Kulpa present information about general library network activities and regional efforts among law libraries. As you all know, law libraries have not made much progress nationally toward a serious network approach to inter-library cooperation. This disappointing situation exists despite much professional discussion during the last ten years, despite several conferences on the subject, despite increasing pressure from our Deans, administrators and governing bodies, and despite the almost unanimous conviction that the time is ripe, the need is real and the technical feasibility is clear.

Last December a group of thirty librarians from a variety of law libraries throughout the country met at the annual meeting of the Association of American Law Schools in Washington, D.C. to discuss possibilities for a law library network. The meeting was fruitful and, although there was disagreement on a number of issues, there was a clear consensus that a serious effort could and should be made to establish a law library consortium now.

The basic objective of the consortium was a computerized data base in law and related fields, either independently or as part of an existing network. This data base would be controlled by the law library profession for its use in providing a variety of services, but could be managed by and stored with an existing service firm or organization. Some services would be offered nationally from this data base to any law library wishing to subscribe to them; other services would be left for implementation by regional networks of law libraries. Those services which are suitable for regional implementation would be supported bibliographically by and from the national data base, but would be set up, administered and paid for by the regional groups and their members. These regional groups could be AALL Chapters or any other law library groups with common interests. Thus, of our obvious library needs and services desired some would be offered by the national consortium and some by regional groups. As we know, several AALL Chapters are already

engaged in programs which can use such services to advantage.

Initially the network would provide bibliographic data for at least the following services:

1. Full bibliographic data for cataloging
2. Catalog card production
3. Acquisitions selection information
4. Public service access; S.D.I. profiles
5. Cooperative acquisitions
6. Inter-library loan arrangements
7. Photo-copying arrangements
8. Recording of holder codes.

Other suggestions were more ambitious and far-reaching. I will mention several later in this talk.

We would try to offer on-line access to this data, print-out capabilities, and catalog card production. At lower rates, batch processing would be available and probably would be preferable for many routine functions. Schemes for cooperative acquisitions, interlibrary loan and photocopy arrangements, however, would be implemented by regional groups using the common data base through holder codes that it would provide.

The data base would include English language MARC records from 1968 to date; MARC records in *all* languages from 1970 to date; Harvard Law School Library cataloging from 1973 in common law areas; and cataloging from selected other law libraries from the date of inception. Retrospective records prior to these periods would be added at a subsequent time, as funding became available. The data base would be limited to materials in Roman alphabet, but would include all languages with those characters, or which could be transliterated into Roman characters. The data base would include monographs and serial titles. There was strong interest in including periodical indexing and content analytics. Some, however, favored including the latter two categories only at a future time.

Bibliographic data from libraries other than the Library of Congress would be entered only in conformity with standard cataloging rules (AACR and ISBD) and L.C. subject headings. L.C. classification numbers were considered an essential data element. Any participating library could add its holding code to any title in the file. We would consider whether duplicate entries for the same title would be kept in the file, and, if not, which entries would be chosen for retention and how.

We felt that the consortium would have to

incorporate as a separate organization, although a close relationship with the AALL would be desirable and valuable. The form of organization would be a consortium of a limited group of law libraries, presumably consisting of many of those represented at our initial meetings, but all services would be offered to a much larger group of law libraries. We felt that an AALL sponsorship or nexus would be desirable, but that tax considerations and administrative problems would require a separate legal entity. The incorporation would be as a non-profit organization in a form similar to that used by several regional library networks. We would undoubtedly also seek some association with the American Bar Association. The corporate structure would include a Board of Directors elected by the incorporating libraries, and officers elected by the Board.

The group was unanimous in feeling that the services offered should be available to all law libraries who are prepared to pay the fees involved whether or not they are incorporators. The service fees would be the same for *all* users, but the voting and control would rest only with the incorporators. Advisory groups were considered essential to broaden the in-put from users. Structures would be devised to provide effective participation by law libraries using the service.

The system would probably have to be ultimately self-sustaining from users' fees, with several alternatives available for initial development costs. The three main possibilities for that seed-money would be an AALL grant or loan (if the latter, it would be repayable from operating charges); a foundation grant (among the possibilities for this were the Council on Library Resources, the American Bar Foundation, or one of the large private foundations); membership contributions from the incorporating libraries; or some combination of these. Since the terminal charges and users' fees are likely to run into several thousand dollars a year for each library, it would not be easy for the incorporators to contribute substantial sums for development, but if the other sources of seed-money were not forthcoming, that might be necessary.

We assumed that many law libraries would want on-line access to the data for several of the services offered; batch processing will undoubtedly suffice for some needs and should be available at a lower rate. The group was somewhat divided on the question of whether we should try to establish a separate data base of our own, or join an existing service, such as OCLC, and become merely a special user group in such a larger organization. Some preferred contracting with an outside service organization to create and maintain the data base for law libraries and to obtain the services we want that way. In either case, fees and other charges would be negotiated on behalf of law library users, by the consortium with the supplier. Most of the group preferred that we own the data base ourselves, but realized that would undoubtedly be difficult if we contracted with a commercial supplier who already had the basic MARC data. In any case, we felt that we should control the content and quality of the data base and the type and quality of the services to be provided. We all realized that technically any number of firms and organizations could provide this service. The question is which would be able to do so most effectively, at the most attractive rates and conditions, and with the least delay. Preliminary information was presented for our consideration of existing services, primarily on OCLC, IDC and BALLOTS. The recently developed possibility of direct on-line access to the Library of Congress for use of MARC records here was greeted with considerable enthusiasm and may provide a basis for the whole operation. The technical compatability of our service with other existing systems and data bases was clearly a matter of prime concern.

The location of the organization was briefly considered and felt to be best determined by the location of the data base and the source of systems support. For example, if a direct link with LC could be developed, we might favor securing space in the Law Library of Congress, if that were feasible. Some thought we could be set up in Chicago, near the AALL headquarters. There was no enthusiasm for creating a new bibliographic center for the organization, particularly if most of the public service functions were to be handled through regional networks. Locating the office in a major research law library would certainly be desirable and could serve that purpose, if the library could offer bibliographic support.

Most of the group thought that a full-time professional law librarian administrator was necessary to run the program, but some thought that a systems or network specialist was equally desirable. Either person would also need a secretary, travel funds, supplies, etc.

Hopefully, office space could be donated by a law library, in which the group was based. Administrative costs, however, even without rent, would be at least $40,000 per year. That's a lot, but it was hoped that the development funding would cover the first year of that expense and thereafter it could be met from user fees. No one felt that the organization could operate successfully on volunteer efforts, nor did we think that the administration could be left to a commercial firm, nor to a systems person alone, without law library background. We felt that it would certainly be desirable to form a broad advisory committee with representation from the AALL, ABA, the Federal Judicial Center, and other prestigious and interested groups, including also some specialists from the systems and information science fields. Such a group would be advisory only and not exercise control functions. If any of these groups provided the necessary seed-money, they might, of course, also expect and receive representation on the Board.

During the conference we decided to form a series of small study groups covering each of the central issues involved, namely, national and regional services and needs; data base components and standards; form of organization, affiliations, membership, voting and control; financing; source of data and systems support; and administration. Volunteers were assigned to each of the six study groups and chairpersons were selected.

During April, representatives of each of the study groups and several other members of the original conference met in New Orleans, prior to the Southeast and Southwest chapter meetings here. Our discussions there were considerably sharper and more focused. We spoke specifically about possibilities for new services to be rendered by the consortium, aided considerably by preliminary reports from the Study Groups on National and Regional Services, and on Data Base Components and Standards. Discussion on the choice of systems support was advanced considerably by work done by Signe Larson and the Study Group on Source of Data and Systems Support. Preliminary drafts of several study group reports were represented and work has continued on them.

To illustrate some of the service suggestions being considered, the Study Group on Data Base Components and Standards, chaired by Betty Taylor, recommended inclusion in the data base of tables of contentes and/or abstracts of monographs, book reviews, an automated

book order system, in-process control procedures, financial record-keeping, circulation control, serials records and serials checking, periodical contents and abstracts, data and control of audio-visual material, bar and continuing legal education publications, computer assisted legal instruction, current legal research in progress. That is a far-reaching list and may seem quite utopian today. However, in planning such a data base ultimate goals and future capability must be taken into account. There is, of course, the dual dangers of short-sightedness, on the one hand, and over-ambition, on the other. The balance between vision and caution is always a delicate one.

What is the next step for this effort?

This Thursday at the end of the Convention there will be another working session of the consortium group from 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. (not 11:30 p.m., as in your program) in Independence Room C and E. Visitors are welcome to attend the session and hear our discussions. Any of you who wish to join the organizing group should communicate with me in writing after the meeting. A progress report, based on that meeting, will appear in a forthcoming issue of the *AALL Newsletter.*

We hope that this effort brings us closer to the goal we have talked about for so long. It is certainly too early to tell whether we will be successful, but at least we will have tried. I am sorry that our planning could not have been carried on by a larger group and in a larger forum. It was a calculated risk to proceed the way we did, but it seemed to be the most effective way to move quickly on a difficult project. The group is not closed, however, and we welcome inquiries from additional participants. They can be addressed to me at the Harvard Law School. The ultimate success of the venture will depend, of course, on the attractiveness of the consortium's ultimate shape and service potential and on the readiness of each of you to take the plunge!

There is now some time for questions from the audience.

MR. A. MICHAEL BEAIRD (University of Houston Law Library): My question is whether there was a consensus that this consortium should affiliate with an existing group such as OCLC in some way.

MODERATOR COHEN: There is no consensus. There are a number of people who are already affiliated with OCLC in the group. There is some feeling that this is the way to go.

OCLC is interested.

There is other feeling very much against the OCLC approach because of some of the problems that OCLC has had.

I can't answer that there is a consensus. I really would be curious to know what Ron Miller thinks about this sort of notion, unless it seems too naive and general, but what he would think we should do in this sort of situation.

Help OCLC, look for something else, try to do something on our own.

Can we get some advice?

MR. MILLER: That's a tough one. You have got me in a trap because I cannot tell an audience to take a course of action which may not be in the best interest of each institution, and each institution must make up its own mind. NELINET has chosen to participate in OCLC for a very good reason. Each of you must choose on the basis of whether your own needs would be met by making the same—or a different choice.

Morris has helped me a bit in understanding some of the forces at work in the law library profession, but I haven't absorbed it all.

It seems to me that moving toward more coherence of position on certain issues relating to bibliographic networks is definitely a plus. That is to say, take a position on how you as a group want to control bibliographic quality. Take a position on what kinds of products you want a network to provide. Take a position on why certain things that are not now happening on your behalf should be happening.

Now, if that can be done best in a collective environment, it seems to me you have got a lot more going for you.

If this audience were a consortium, for instance, which could, through a spokesman, represent all law librarians, you could say: "We would like a contract with X vendor to do Y services." Whether the "vendor" was OCLC or somebody else, it seems to me that you as a group have an awful lot of negotiating leverage, and negotiating leverage is what you need.

Now, whether the consortium or another organization like that which Morris proposed could, in fact, represent everybody is a problem of consensus, and consensus is an internal problem among the librarians that make up the organization or whatever this group becomes.

Ms. BETTY W. TAYLOR (University of Florida Law Library, Gainesville, Florida): How does NELINET handle libraries that are associated with profit making groups? Would you foresee NELINET offering a service to law firm libraries, for instance?

It is necessarily in the best interests of an organization like OCLC or a commercial vendor to deal with individual institutions because individual leverage is less, and theirs is greater.

It is simple power politics if you want to look at it that way, but in order to get that, you have to have a coherent stance on the issues that you want to make, and each consortium member must not take unilateral action.

I think another point here, and I have no inkling whether this is right or not, is that if a law library is part of an organization that has cast its lot with one network organization or another, I don't know what your freedom of choice is as an individual component of that institution. Can you do something on your own initiative? Can the component itself even belong to an external corporation?

These issues seem to me to be the obvious questions which you as a special network constituency must answer soon. I think you are making a good start.

MR. MILLER: The answer to that is yes. We have had legal advice about this.

One reason for this stance is that the New England Board of Higher Education, which is the NELINET umbrella organization, is equivalent to a state agency. It is an "instrumentality of the six New England states."

Ms. SHIRLEY R. BYSIEWICZ (University of Connecticut School of Law Library, West Hartford, Connecticut): Morris, you called yours a national law library consortium. Yesterday's panel discussed a national law library under the Library of Congress or separate.

Do you consider your consortium a law library?

MODERATOR COHEN: I guess for the last few days I have heard definitions back and forth on networks and consortium, and I am a little confused myself. We view it as a cooperative venture, not as a network as such because we thought the networking activities were really going to be done at the regional level. We viewed it as a consortium, certainly, not as a national law library.

In any case, this group would not be either a national law library as such or really as a network as such, but rather a consortium to provide the data base which then could be used by networks of law libraries in various parts of the country.

MR. ROGER F. JACOBS (Southern Illinois University School of Law Library): Mr. Miller raises a point which troubles me and makes me ask whether or not the idea is not too late. In my view, something like 15 percent of the libraries

approved by the American Association of Law Schools have already decided on an automated system. They have opted for OCLC.

We have had a difficult time keeping up with the number of libraries which are making this decision to use OCLC first as a cataloging tool and then possibly for the subsequent systems which might be developed. However, in the process of making this choice, they are training their staffs, making capital investments and investments in the procedures of their organizations. That is going to make it very difficult for them to consider seriously whatever system develops from your consideration unless it is compatible with the OCLC system.

MODERATOR COHEN: I don't think it is reason not to look at the other approaches. Basically, you are just using MARC data and perhaps MARC data can be made available to us in a better system, more effectively, and more cheaply, for example, by going directly to the Library of Congress, as they say we can, or by going to BALLOTS, or somebody else.

I wanted to know whether Mr. Miller thought that it was too late for us to be fussing with alternatives or whether we just shouldn't get together and try to do the best we can with OCLC. But it seems to me he has not answered that clearly. Maybe it can be read into some of the things he said.

MR. MILLER: I think Mr. Jacob's comments are correct. Let us draw an analogy: the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) has gone through the same kind of considerations that you are looking at now. It has tried to organize itself as a network headquarters, or a network management organization. Maybe someone here can-more clearly define it.

The fact remains that the components that would make up this proposed coherent network organization are going their own way, down the rail as fast as they can, more or less ignoring the intentions of the other components. The same set of events seems to have occurred here: I doubt if the law libraries now using OCLC are going to hold off for three years to go to another system.

The only thing that I think would crack it would be if the OCLC system performance generally becomes intolerable. Then, your position to develop a separate network becomes somewhat more tenable. But no, you are right. It is difficult to hold people back who want to go their own way, and that weakens concerted action.

Ms. JUDITH M. FOUST (State Library of Pennsylvania Law Library, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania): Is it is necessary to include retrospective materials, or will retrospective materials be included?

MODERATOR COHEN: I think Betty Taylor has already been feeding into OCLC a fair amount of retrospective material. I don't know as to what extent the LC shelf lists can be made available or are being made available on MARC tape. There was a hope that we could put in retrospective files. The Harvard Law Library has been classifying considerable amounts of retrospective material. As it is classified, much of it is being recataloged. That material was being put on tape by Information Dynamics and made available. We would hope that such material could be made available. We recognize that there is a great deal of interest in retrospective holdings, and we think it could be placed into the data base from a variety of sources.

Ms. TAYLOR: I think she ought not go off believing, though, that there are not many things that are in there because every periodical in the *Index to Legal Periodicals* is in there, and we have run a test of about 50 standard legal reference services, and they are in there. The encyclopedias, the digests, Shepard's, state statutes, annotated statutes. These are all in there. A small library's catalog is mostly on-line.

MR. JERRY CLYDE PHILLIPS (University of New Mexico School of Law Library): You mentioned before that the consortium data base might be composed of MARC tapes, Harvard cataloging and other selected library cataloging.

Are you implying that selected libraries or individual larger libraries will have control over the input of what goes in the data base and smaller libraries have none?

MODERATOR COHEN: Access to the data base would be open to all law libraries. But the question of what records would go into the data base is not settled. Standards are very important to us and I doubt whether we would have an open repository like OCLC in which anybody's data could be filed.

There are obviously a whole range of possibilities. Our discussions started with the possibility of a more selective system. That is, a controlled system in which all the data that went in would be clean data, and perhaps come from a limited number of sources.

I really can't answer your question now, because it hasn't been decided, and I don't know. There is a wide range of options from a file which is subject to tight quality controls to an

open file like OCLC. All of them are possibilities, and I guess I just can't give a definite answer at this point.

We realize what the advantages of input from other specialized libraries like the American Bar Foundation which might have a particularly strong collection in one area, or perhaps a library that had a very strong American Indian collection, or a library that had a particularly strong legislative history collection in Washington, D.C. We realize that it might be desirable to get data from a selective number of libraries because of their peculiar resources.

MR. PHILLIPS: Is there a feeling in the Planning Board that these libraries would be the larger libraries, such as Columbia, Yale, etc.?

MODERATOR COHEN: No, it wasn't on the basis of size. I guess Harvard was considered partly on the basis of size, but more because of the speed and quality of its acquisitions and cataloging. Harvard cataloging could be available much faster than MARC records for lots of material, but the other libraries were not considered on the basis of size. We certainly never considered limiting input to large libraries.

MR. MEYER W. HALPERN (Marin County Law Library, San Rafael, California): Secretary-Treasurer of the Council of California County Law Librarians.

Do you envisage the California County Law Libraries as recipients of services of the national consortium?

MODERATOR COHEN: I think any group of law libraries with common interests or a common basis of organization would be a potential user. That could be an AALL chapter or a group of law firms in the downtown New York area. We could conceive of almost any sort of grouping which has a rationale because of common interest.

MR. CHARLES R. DYER (St. Louis University Law Library): I think it would be good for the consortium to note that even if it does decide to build its own data base rather than to go with OCLC, it should be compatible with systems like OCLC for the purpose of being able to make a contract to use their data base for searching for inter-library loan.

MODERATOR COHEN: Throughout the discussions there are two key words that have kept coming up—compatibility and standards. People want bibliographic standards and they want compatibility. That is, they don't want to be tied

into something which would limit access to other data bases.

I think your point is well taken.

MR. RICHARD L. BEER (Oakland County Law Library, Pontiac, Michigan): I have the same fears as Roger does. But I don't think it is too late. But I don't think we can be like the Library of Congress was with the development of Class K.

If we go, we have got to go now because if we don't, we might as well forget it.

MODERATOR COHEN: I think that is a fact of life that we all realize.

Ron, did you have a comment?

MR. MILLER: Another professional group, the medical librarians, have some similarity in terms of common interest, that law librarians do, although they have had federal legislation and funding to back them up.

There is a concept called the "improvable catalog" proposed by Bill Cameron. He asserts that a record can be created in a data base which is imperfect, and that as subsequent users of the data base use that record, they improve it for everybody as a by-product of improving it for themselves.

I think that this concept is beginning to work in the OCLC data base too. The MARC records in the OCLC system are replacing records created earlier by other libraries. Medical Subject Headings, not put in by the Library of Congress, are being added to particular records by medical librarians who use the system.

So, if you want to start at the national level then, I suppose what one needs is a subject heading field in the MARC record format that would be available for law librarians on the OCLC system. Is there a national subject authority file used by law libraries which supersedes or supplements such headings generated by the Library of Congress? If there is, this requirement can more easily be adopted.

However, there is a much more direct way of doing that without going through that laborious procedure: anyone can add any subject heading to any record that they want to use in the OCLC system any time they want.

MODERATOR COHEN: I thank you all for being here and I thank the panelists for their contribution. We do hope that something will come of these discussions.

[*The Panel recessed at 5:00 o'clock.*]