Preface

At the Unesco Seminar on the Application of Electronic Data Processing in Libraries held in Regensburg in 1970, the idea of further meetings concerning the special aspects within this field was launched.

Thanks to the generous financial support of the Volkswagen Foundation the Arbeitsstelle für Bibliothekstechnik together with the IFLA Committee of Mechanization was able to organize the first European Seminar on the Exchange of Bibliographic Data in Machine Readable Form, especially regarding the MARC format. This seminar took place in Berlin-Nikolassee in which approximately 30 experts from eight European countries, the USA, and Canada participated. Experiences in the use of the MARC format and general problems of the exchange of magnetic tapes with bibliographic data were main topics discussed.

Through the utilization of electronic data processing within the frame of strict standardization, which applies to the formal structure and the recording of the individual elements of the bibliographic description in the work as well, it will be possible to create a national network encompassing one or more bibliographical centers. These centers will collect the bibliographical information covering the entire production of printed material published in their own country and transfer it into machine readable form, so that it may be distributed. The national centers will also exchange the data of their own national bibliographies among themselves, thus enabling anyone to obtain complete bibliographic control of the world's production in books and related material.

Therefore, at the end of the seminar, a resolution was passed, in which it was stated (although not openly expressed in its wording, but in the real sense) that the existing activities of the appropriate institutions in this field, especially the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) and the International Standards Institution (ISO) should be stimulated, and if necessary, supplemented by establishing one or two new working groups.

This international seminar was the first of its kind, organized by our newly founded Institution, which deals above all with problems concerning the application of electronic data processing in libraries in Germany.

Therefore, it is my personal pleasure and duty to thank all those who helped to make this seminar a success and without whom this seminar could not have taken place. These are above all, the management of the Volkswagen Foundation, my colleagues Dr. Kaltwasser and Prof. Dr. Pflug, of the Preparatory Organizing Committee, and my deputy Dr. Jacoby along with Miss Kaiser and Mrs. Volle from the local committee, especially, to the latter for proofreading.
Thanks must also be extended to various speakers, who in the short time given to them, prepared their manuscripts for reading and for publication, so that not only the seminar could be informative and proceed along a smooth course, but also making the preparation of the printed proceedings possible within a reasonable time period.

I would also like to express my thanks to the discussion panel for their contributing analyses, and to Dr. Helal who performed the difficult task of summarizing the results of the discussions.

Closing, I would like to express my hope for further seminars, similar to the one which took place in Berlin, in order to enhance the international exchange of bibliographical data in machine readable form by an international exchange of experiences and ideas, perhaps one day leading to the general adoption of a type of "Super MARC".

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