

## Editorial

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Without trying to force the issue, there is a strong European flavour to this July edition. This need surprise nobody in that 1992 has been a major economic and political topic for some years now. The "Bookseller" has recently been full of information about the opening of British bookshops on mainland Europe and major publishers continue to establish offices in various European capitals. Library computer systems, already well-known in the UK, are selling increasingly in the wider Europe. Groups of librarians are meeting on a regular basis in each other's countries to exchange papers and ideas. One polytechnic librarian recently expressed to me a private concern at the time he was spending on advisory and consultancy work in Europe. In the last three months he had been dashing around France, Spain, Hungary and Turkey exchanging ideas and offering professional advice. His experience is not unusual and has to be viewed in the context of accelerating European interchange.

While the idea of Soviet bombers over Boston Spa has its comic element, nevertheless John Urquhart's recent visit to Eastern Europe is yet another manifestation of the togetherness of those involved in the information world. The generous aid to Bucharest and eager discussions on the freer exchange of information indicate the desire and need for closer links across the total Europe. It is not certain that Maxwell's "European" is achieving the sales figures hoped for, but the concept of a European paper is a good one. I noticed scores of people reading it at Terminal 4 last week; incidentally while flying off to Paris for discussions on my company's European marketing plan.

We should, therefore, applaud the UKSG initiative, in association with European publishers, in organising the first European Serials Conference in Amsterdam. First reactions seem to suggest a very successful event in the making. Nobody can yet predict the exact outcome but it will be surprising if the Conference does not spawn some kind of European Serials group and a sequence of Conferences located around Europe. With serial groups already active in the UK, USA, Australia and China, it is timely to have this European initiative.

The promotion of the European ideal will be carried forward in a variety of ways and UKSG hopes to make a major contribution. The Southampton Conference programme included papers from those operating on the Continent - they will be published in the November issue of "Serials" - and the March 1991 issue will be largely devoted to papers to be given in Amsterdam. At the personal level UKSG members - librarians, agents and publishers - are busy cementing professional relationships and creating a dialogue which will lead to further exciting developments. It is not difficult to envisage the creation of a European Serials Group with over a thousand members, perhaps with national sub-committees, each acting in turn as host to an annual conference. We shall have to wait for such developments; UKSG took a little time to grow into its present shape but the signs are there for a promising future of European collaboration. □

*John Cowley*