Australian databases: a national policy?



n earnest discussion during a break in the seminar are Peter Judge, CSIRO (left), Ian McCallum, ACI centre) and Tony Ketley, National Library of Australia.

"HERE WAS STRONG support for a ational policy for the development of Austraan databases at the seminar 'Australian learinghouses and databases: towards a ational policy' held by Melbourne's Footsray Institute of Technology on 20 November, 982.

More than 80 people from different parts of Australia discussed the development of Australian databases without a nationally cordinated policy to rationalise effort, reources and experience in this very mportant area.

Opening the seminar, Allan Horton, Uniersity Librarian of the University of NSW, ntroduced the idea of AACOBS acting as a oordinating body in the development of Ausralian databases. Summarising the views of ome of the other speakers:

Gilles Chiasson, Manager of the Canadian sport Information Resource Centre, provided n international perspective to the developnent of national databases, emphasising the need for international cooperation and the upport countries like Australia could give.

Brian Yates, Assistant General Technical Services Division of the National Library of Australia saw finding a source of funding latabase development as being of paramount mportance. For cooperation, he felt that one hould look to informal rather than formal nechanisms.

Peter Judge, Officer in charge of the Cenral Information Library and Editorial Secion of the CSIRO, suggested that ALIC was vell placed to formulate a national policy on nformation services, including database deelopment. He also suggested that the newly ormed Australian Database Development Asociation (ADDA) act as a rallying point and atalyst for future development.

Ian McCallum, Manager, Information Rerieval Systems at ACI, suggested that coperation had succeeded where formal oordination of effort had failed, and that nybody representing Australian database levelopment should represent the players ather than the spectators. He was rather pesimistic about convincing the Australian Government to provide funding for the development of an Australian information ndustry.

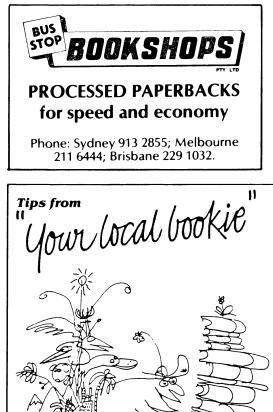
Neil Speirs, Editor of *Australian Business ndex*, suggested that a national policy would be very useful in outlining the role others could play in the development of Australian latabases.

The seminar concluded with unanimous

support for a resolution that ADDA be requested to survey the existing state of Australian database development with a view to inviting comments and suggestions from its members, and other appropriate organisations, as to the direction of future database development in this country.

ADDA was established at a meeting of interested people held at Footscray Institute of Technology Library on the day before the seminar. Its objectives were outlined in *In-Cite*, no1, 1983.

Proceedings of the seminar are now available from Bennett's for \$15.



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