

Editorial

The last few months have seen the appearance of several important and long awaited documents on which the library and information community's views have been sought. Besides a healthy chunk of LIRG news, including a report of the Annual General Meeting and the Chairman's and Treasurer's reports for 1993/94, this issue contains a report of two meetings organized by LIRG on the research aspects of the Follett Report. It also reproduces the Group's response to the consultative document on the proposed National Commission for Libraries, which is now likely to go ahead, once the agreement of the appropriate government departments has been secured.

Despite some negative views expressed by many respondents (for example the lack of Welsh and Scottish support, and concern over the precise role of the British Library Research and Development Department) the responses are understood to have been positive overall. There is also a feeling in some quarters that there will never be another chance to establish such a body, so we must capitalize on the opportunity presenting itself now. There is expected to be an announcement within the next few weeks, with key appointments, such as the Chairman and the Executive Secretary, to be made during the autumn. The Commission is likely to be established by the New Year, becoming fully operational by April 1995, with, inter alia, responsibilities for National Information Policy and the European Library Plan. There will also be a sub-committee on research, which will work closely with BLRDD. Although there are clearly many issues to be resolved before the Commission can be formally set up the timescale is nevertheless felt to be realistic.

This time the Research Reports section comprises a cornucopia of award winners, now that LIRG administers the T C Farries/LIRG Student Prizes, besides the Daphne Clark Award and the Elsevier/LIRG Award. Richard Milne (Hypertext and its implications for library services) and Tony Stevens (The information needs of prisoners: a study of three penal establishments) won, respectively, the first Undergraduate and Postgraduate Prizes and Sarah Ellis (Data protection and the media) was highly commended for the Postgraduate Prize. Also in this issue is a report by Andrew Green (Staff appraisal in university libraries), which won the 1993 Daphne Clark Award, and which proved interesting reading for someone used to the Civil Service reporting set-up.

Many of you will know that BLRDD recently celebrated 20 years of being part of the British Library, with a gathering, in April, of the Great and the Good, and the production by Jack Meadows (reviewed here by Harry East) of Innovation in information: twenty years of the British Library Research and Development Department.

Finally, we still want to continue the Contacts Column which appeared a couple of issues back, so if anyone needs contacts for their research please let me know.

Roslyn Cotton