

PD-AAR-214

598-475 ✓ 5980475-013
PD-AAR-513
CI



ORGANIZACION DE LOS ESTADOS AMERICANOS
ORGANIZAÇÃO DOS ESTADOS AMERICANOS
ORGANISATION DES ETATS AMERICAINS
ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES

Sp.

17th Street and Constitution Avenue, NW Washington, D.C. 20006

March 26, 1976

~~PD-AAR-513~~

Dear Mr. Johnson:

As you probably know, the United States Government made a special contribution of \$56,000 at the Fourth Meeting of CIECC, to support the project "Development of Scientific and Technical Documentation and Systems of Information" of the Cultural Program. That amount, to which was added \$30,000 from the OAS Cultural Fund (CEC), was used for the planning and carrying out of a special Course on National Systems of Library and Documentation Services at the Graduate School of Librarianship of the University of Denver. This course was the first activity of the Multinational Project on National Systems of Libraries and Documentation, as necessary infrastructure for national information systems.

The course was finished in October 1975 and was considered a landmark in the training of national teams to work together in the development of the library and documentation infrastructure needed for the establishment of national information systems. Although the team from Bolivia was not complete one national team from Colombia of four persons, and four other Latin American students from two additional countries studying at Denver profited from the special techniques developed for the OAS teams.

For reasons related to the dates by which specific funds should be spent, it was found necessary to utilize funds from the two accounts to get the project going. Therefore, all the CEC funds for the project were completely used, while the special grant from the U.S. Government still has a balance of approximately \$5,000 after the end of the course for other aspects of the library infrastructure, to develop the potential for transmitting bibliographic or cataloging information automatically. Therefore, it was planned to use this amount for a meeting of experts to discuss the translation and adaptation of a multilingual computer format based on the MARC format of the Library of Congress, but the work on this was not completed on time to hold this meeting during this fiscal year. With the participation of the team from Puerto Rico and a staff member of CONACYT in Mexico we did hold a Mid-Project Meeting on MARCAL at the Library of Congress the first week of February. The Spanish version of the MARC format and the manual for application should be ready in May.

Mr. Charles B. Johnson, Adviser
Bureau of Inter-American Affairs
Department of State, Room 6495
Washington, D.C.

1

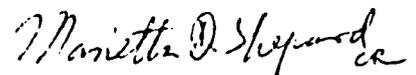
Essential to the development of national information systems in Latin America is the establishment of centralized cataloging services at the national or regional levels. Costa Rica submitted a project to the OAS for the creation of a national cataloging center at the University of Costa Rica, which would serve the national needs of the university and specialized libraries of the country, and later become a cataloging center for all Central America, eventually with connections with OCLC in Columbus, Ohio; Nicaragua and Panama have submitted requests for national centers to be linked with Costa Rica.

This will require a great deal of planning and the development of procedures for activities which will cross national borders, and personnel will have to be trained. As a first step, therefore, a preliminary technical meeting of experts from Costa Rica, Panama and Nicaragua, with the assistance of other experts from Puerto Rico, the OAS and possibly the Library of Congress, is being planned for June 7-12, 1976 in San José, Costa Rica. It is proposed that part of the remaining funds in the special account provided by the U.S. for the training at the University of Denver be used to finance the meeting in Costa Rica instead of the meeting planned to be held in Puerto Rico to discuss the computer format.

The nature of this "technical meeting" can be construed to be part of the training program for the development of national systems inasmuch as the centralization of cataloging services is an integral part of a national system of libraries, and library automation will eventually facilitate it. (The Costa Rican librarian who participated in the Denver course was especially interested in the role of centralized cataloging and prepared one research paper on planning for the creation of a service for Costa Rica, not knowing at the time of the fact that a request had been made by her country to obtain technical cooperation of the OAS to do just that.)

The administrative staff of the OAS would feel more certain about the use of the remaining funds in the special account No. 33-76-94B-7370 for the training-technical meeting in Costa Rica if you would initial this letter and return it to us with your approval so that we could go ahead and commit the funds. I attach a copy for your files.

Sincerely yours



Marietta Daniels Shepard
Chief
Library Development Program

Approved for the expenditure of funds:

Representative of the U.S.: _____

Date: _____

2