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On Developing an Administration Library for a Foreign University

THIS IS A CASE STUDY of the development of a specialized library for a foreign university by an American university library. While the incidence of such developments is decidedly on the rise, to this date there has been nothing in the literature to document such an experience. Even though the project under discussion was one of limited size, details of its planning, procedure and administration may be of relevance to others engaged in similar ventures.

Most library developments in special subject fields for foreign universities tend to be relatively minor parts of larger, more comprehensive technical assistance programs. The Cornell experience is perhaps unique in that the library development is the only part of a larger master plan which has thus far been undertaken.

Cornell University's relationship with Indonesia can be traced back over a long period during which it has become a leading center for Southeast Asia studies. In the winter of 1954, at the request of the government of Indonesia, Dean Edward H. Litchfield and Professor Alan C. Rankin of Cornell's Graduate School of Business and Public Administration visited Indonesia and conducted an exhaustive study of public administration in that country. Based upon this survey, a full-scale blueprint for the development of a formal public administration training program for Indonesia was subse-

quently prepared. This plan comprised a series of projects; Project I of the eight part program called for the development of administration libraries for Indonesian universities. The purposes of the library project were: (1) to provide four Indonesian universities with books and papers in administrative sciences generally and in public administration specifically, and to supplement the administration materials with basic reference works in the related disciplines of political science, sociology, economics and social psychology; (2) to train Indonesian librarians to direct the libraries thus established.

Because the entire public administration training program was designed to be financed by several different agencies—including the United States government, two international organizations, a private foundation and the Indonesian government—each of which was to assume financial responsibility for a different part, it was possible for any one of the separate projects to be independently activated. Up to the present time only the first phase of the library project—the development of a core collection for the University of Indonesia at Djakarta—has been carried out. The account which follows is a factual summary of the sequence of events while this collection was being developed.

PRELUDE TO THE FORMAL CONTRACT

Discussion of the proposed library project between administrative officers of the Graduate School of Business and Public Administration and university library officials began in the spring of 1954. Since the library of the school func-

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tions as one department within the network of university libraries, and relies upon central facilities for its acquisition and preparation processes, it was apparent that the planning group should include university library officers as well as school and school library representation.

At this early planning stage, long before an actual contract was being proposed, preliminary estimates were drawn up by library officers covering rough average costs of acquisition and cataloging, and a general approximation of shipping charges. As detailed hereafter, considerably more attention was focused upon the method of classification which would be used in the projected program.

During 1953, Mr. A. G. W. Dunningham, a British librarian, had conducted a survey of libraries in ten provinces in Indonesia. Based upon this study, the surveyor drew up a recommended plan for the implementation of a national pattern of library service in Indonesia.

While in Indonesia, during discussions with Mr. Dunningham, Professor Rankin had learned that Dunningham favored the general adoption of the Brussels expansion of the Universal Decimal Classification for Indonesian libraries. At Cornell the Library of Congress Classification is used. Classification of books by a modified UDC plan would have been more time consuming than the use of a familiar classification scheme, and would undoubtedly have raised preparation costs considerably, and resulted in curtailed acquisitions. After discussion of the issue it was agreed that a reasonable compromise would be the use of the Dewey Decimal Classification. The Dewey scheme was selected for several reasons. First, it was felt that the Dewey numbers could always be expanded to UDC at a later stage if the latter classification scheme proved to be indispensable. (Examination of Mr. Dunningham's report failed to disclose that many libraries in Indonesia were using the UDC. As a matter of fact, virtually every

library described in the report was depicted as an unclassified, closed stack collection arranged either by size or by acquisition number.) Second, it was felt that while the use of the Library of Congress classification might subtly suggest American government control to a sensitive foreigner, there could be no such criticism of Dewey. Further, it would be possible to follow standard procedures in classifying by Dewey in that Library of Congress cards could be used and the suggested Dewey classification numbers employed.

It was also decided that even though there was no university union catalog at any of the Indonesian universities nor a national union catalog in existence at the time, it would be advisable to provide a card for each of the two in addition to a full set of catalog cards and a shelf-list card for every title acquired. It was also agreed that the cards would be filed in a single dictionary alphabet arrangement.

During this early planning stage, several attempts were made to learn what experiences others had had with similar programs. Other universities known to have carried out similar projects, or those which were at that time engaged in such ventures, were able to provide no detailed information about their programs, planning or cost determination. There were therefore no yardsticks to apply nor any guideposts to aid in planning the proposed project.

NEGOTIATING THE CONTRACT

There were no further developments until the winter of 1955. At this time the United States Foreign Operations Administration (later changed to the International Cooperation Administration and hereafter referred to as ICA) tendered to Cornell University a contract in the amount of \$9,000 in order to acquire, process and ship a "complete library" of public administration to the University of Indonesia at Djakarta. The contract sum included an allowance of \$1,500 to

cover miscellaneous university overhead expenses. The balance of \$7,500 was to pay for all direct costs including labor, books, catalog case and shipping charges.

Several contract provisions were subject to question. Following discussions among the principals, the office of the university Vice-President for Research was advised to attempt to negotiate these difficulties before signing the contract. Clarification was sought for the stipulation that a "complete library" be provided, since it was apparent that a total expenditure of \$7,500 would result in a collection of little more than 1,000 volumes, hardly a "complete collection" in any sense of the term. The contract also called for delivery of materials in Djakarta within six months after the effective date of signing the contract. While assurances could be given that materials would be shipped before the end of the six-months period, it was strongly felt that under no circumstances could Cornell ensure delivery in Indonesia by any specified time. Following negotiations between Washington and Cornell's Vice-President for Research, it was agreed that "complete library" would mean only that the collection would be complete within the financial limitations of the contract, and that having the shipment on board a vessel by the end of the six-month period would be satisfactory to the ICA officials.

Another point at issue was the method of payment to the university under the terms of the contract. Certain elements could be easily recorded. The cost of materials (books, catalog cards and catalog case) and shipping charges could be exactly recorded in dollar amounts. Personnel costs could not be so exactly measured. ICA required a detailed hourly payroll record for every person directly engaged in the project. As an alternative, the university library proposed a unit price based on average costs for acquisition, cataloging and processing in the preceding year. This proposal was re-

jected by ICA and the university was required to accept the hourly payroll method of determining personnel costs.

CARRYING OUT THE CONTRACT

The contract was formally enacted on September 30, 1955. Cornell University agreed to develop and ship the library to Indonesia before the end of the six-month period ending March 30, 1956. The plan called for the selection of materials to be made by the librarian of the Graduate School of Business and Public Administration, with the guidance of the school's faculty, and for the acquisition, processing and shipping to be handled by the university library. The university library was, in effect, subcontractor to the school and agreed to maintain records for and controls over the entire operation.

BOOK SELECTION

Selection of materials was actually begun several months before the contract was officially enacted. This was both an advantage and a disadvantage. Under the terms of the contract there could be no compensation for work done prior to the contract enactment date. However, since the largest part of the selection had been done before the contract date it was possible to launch the acquisition program immediately and thus have the use of the full contract period for the technical aspects of the program.

An early check had revealed that there was no ready-made list of in-print materials in the fields which the collection was to cover which could be used as the basis for book selection. A random selection, after including a discount calculation of 15-20 per cent, suggested a rough average book cost of \$3.33. Considering the probable acquisition, preparation and shipping costs, it was estimated that the total collection would run to about 1,000 titles.

The principal difficulty encountered in

the preparation of the buying list was the need to confine selection to titles which were in print and available from publishers within a reasonably short period. Because of the limited finances, it was also important that materials covering all of the major areas of administrative activity, and including the tangent disciplines of psychology, sociology, economics and anthropology, be represented in the collection. Another requisite of the selection process was the need to provide comparative materials; that is, works dealing with institutions and ideas identified with countries other than the United States. This was an important factor if the collection was to have the appearance of something more than an exclusively American product. It was imperative also to make the collection a blend of the practical as well as theoretical, the elementary as well as advanced, since the range of users would be likely to include the practitioner and professor, the unsophisticated as well as the seasoned administrator. Finally, it was extremely important that sample and illustrative materials, such as charters, codes, budgets, governmental reports, commission studies and other representative materials on, about and by agencies of the major levels of government—national, state, county and local—be included. To achieve these many objectives made for an extremely challenging assignment.

The method used in selecting materials consisted of reviewing recent bibliographies, considering catalogs of professional societies in public and business administration and consulting with faculty members expert in the substantive areas of administration. Before ordering any title it was checked against *Books in Print*. Included in the collection also, were relevant government documents, key periodical sets covering the period of 1950 to the end of 1955 which were available from the original publishers or from dealers, and appropriate bibliographic and index tools.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE PROJECT

When the unit cost proposal for acquisition, cataloging and processing was rejected by the ICA, a tentative personnel budget on a payroll basis was prepared. The plan was designed so that the operation would take place with approximately one-half of the project to be carried out during regular working hours and the other half as an overtime operation. In preparing this estimate, department heads were instructed to limit work on the project to a relatively small number of staff members so that payroll records could be held to a minimum. After the tentative budget was approved, the contract was signed. The university auditor's office thereupon set up a contract account with its own account number and with the total amount of the contract as a credit item against which expenditures were to be made. At this point the project was begun.

In planning the actual work of purchasing, receiving, cataloging and processing, procedures for this special project were set up separate from, but parallel to, the library's own acquisition, cataloging, and processing procedures. Standard library forms, clearly marked as belonging to the Indonesian project, were used through most of the processing. After bibliographical searching, orders were dispatched to publishers and dealers with a special covering order letter which requested that the material ordered be shipped as separate items, be billed on separate invoices and be identified as belonging to the Indonesian Project. For the most part publishers and dealers followed instructions and both material and invoices could be readily identified when received. In a number of instances, however, separate invoices had to be requested a second time. Upon receipt, parcels were allowed to accumulate until a reasonable number had been received. They were then opened and the materials passed through the invoice

checking stage. At this point each item was marked with a special flyer and given a special serial number. This serial number was also recorded on one copy of the multiple order form and these slips were filed in numerical order.

Library of Congress catalog cards were ordered for all items for which they were available. Cards were not ordered at the time of ordering the books since it was recognized that many of the titles might not be immediately available and order instructions included automatic cancellation if a publication could not be supplied immediately.

Prior to the actual ordering of catalog cards it had been determined by correspondence with the Library of Congress Card Division that catalog cards for such a government project would be available at a reduced price. A special number was assigned to identify orders for catalog cards which were to be used in this project. Books were held until the catalog cards had been received from the Library of Congress, and then the books and cards were forwarded to catalogers. Books were grouped so that they would represent approximately a one-half day work load for an individual cataloger. Following cataloging, classification and revision, the books were again allowed to accumulate in lots and were then marked and labeled. Upon completion of processing the books were assembled on specially designated shelves, sets of catalog cards were allowed to accumulate as a separate group and then cards and books were matched for checking. The final check prior to packing for shipment came when individual books were compared to the item numbers assigned to them when they were originally started through the acquisition process.

Special forms were prepared for the use of the individual staff members in recording regular time and overtime. Two payrolls were prepared each month, one covering regular time, the other overtime. These payrolls were submitted

to the university auditor's office and charged to the special contract account.

Under the terms of the contract, there was to be compensation only for work directly connected with the project; supervisory services, planning and over-all direction were not compensable. The rate of payment for each employee was based upon the individual's annual salary translated into an hourly amount. Payment for overtime was made directly to the individual staff members; payment for regular time was credited to the university's salary recovery account and may be transferred to the university library budget at a later date.

PROBLEMS AND DIFFICULTIES

The element of greatest uncertainty and the cause of most concern was the difficulty of estimating the cost of publications and the cost of personal services. The object, of course, was to use all of the contract funds and at the same time to avoid exceeding them. Experience here indicates the desirability of selecting more material at the outset than can apparently be purchased. Purchases must then be budgeted against the original estimates and a careful review must be made of the cost of the publications as they are received and the payroll costs which result after their acquisition. Since discounts are inconsistent and rather unpredictable, and since, to a certain extent, the availability of material can only be determined by placing an order, it becomes necessary as the project proceeds to place additional orders in order to bring purchases to the estimated amounts. Furthermore, if personnel costs either fall short of estimates or exceed them, adjustments must be made between the personnel and book purchasing parts of the budget in order to keep the two in reasonable relationship. Apparently the only reasonably sure way of achieving a final balance is to set aside a limited reserve fund. Near the close of the project, when all cost factors have

been calculated, this amount can be used to pay for advance subscriptions to key periodicals. This device serves to expend the unencumbered remainder funds and to assure that the institution will receive in the future the journals which are already represented in the collection by bound files when they had been obtainable.

RESULTS OF THE PROJECT

At the conclusion of the project a library of 1,109 titles, a catalog case and catalog cards for each item arranged in dictionary order were shipped to the University of Indonesia. An important by-product of the entire program was the preparation of a bibliography. This list contains an entry for every title acquired and provides a convenient record of in-print titles (as of winter, 1955/56) in the broad field of administration. In order to make the list useful as a library book ordering aid, the following details are provided for each entry: author, title, publisher, date of publication, price, and Library of Congress card order number. This list has been reproduced in the Bibliography Series of the school under the title of *Basic Library in Public Administration*. Copies are available upon request to the Graduate School of Business and Public Administration, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York.

CONCLUSIONS AND PROPOSALS

The advantages which accrue to a library which carries out this sort of project are of several kinds. Perhaps the single most important advantage is the experience gained in planning, estimating, directing and carrying out a special project for a specific amount of money within a limited period of time. Another value is in the preparation of a current bibliography which can be used to review the library's own book collection in the subject. Still another gain is that

such an opportunity enables the library to cooperate closely with an academic division of the university in furthering a program considered to be of value to the division involved. And finally, such programs afford an opportunity for the library to play a role of some significance by contributing to the university's overall program for the advancement of scholarship and learning.

According to a recent article by the university contract coordinator of the International Cooperation Administration, there were 75 ICA financed inter-university contracts for technical assistance under way on September 30, 1955.¹ It would be difficult to estimate how many special programs of this kind include library development features. A number of American universities, however, have already been engaged in developing foreign library installations, and as the Point-Four technical assistance program continues many more will undoubtedly become parties to similar programs.

In the light of the experience at Cornell it would appear that, if future programs of this type are to be conducted at maximum efficiency and minimum expense to the government and to the developing agency, a fairly standard pattern should be developed for the guidance of the contracting government agency and for the libraries that may be involved. Such a function might be assumed by a central library information clearing center operated either within the International Cooperation Administration or the American Library Association. Such an agency might then provide previously prepared buying lists, cost data when available and procedural details, and perform a notable function for the federal government and the library profession.

¹ J. Russell Andrus, "Technical Assistance Through Inter-university Contracts," *Higher Education*, XII (1956), 75-80.