such as the metropolitan centers of the country. It must serve the scholar, the industrialist, the scientist, the lawyer—all sectors of society—denying no reasonable request from anyone in the country.

Users differ in their requirements for physical access to information. For example, most often the individual concerned with the arts, be it graphic or verbal, needs the original or a reproduction of the original visual representation. The scientist, on the other hand, is often likely to want a distillation of the original and be willing never to see the latter. This does not mean that the scientist never wants to see the original document. Some sciences are less concerned with quantitative data, or the original is needed for the study of methodology or insight into the overall purpose of the study. At the same time the artist may need but a fact or an abstract. Thus the information system which is to provide full physical access must be able to supply the original, an index or abstract of the original (surrogate) and a distillation of the original. How to do this best is the crux of the physical access part of the problem of providing full information service to the nation.

At the present time it is the user's library or information center, whether it is public, academic, special or government, that provides him with physical access to published information. It must be recognized however, that the amount of significant information already available and the accelerated rate at which new information appears makes it impossible now for this local library to acquire all the publications its patrons need. Some new approach is needed that will enable every local library to have assured and, most important, ready access from another source to what it cannot provide from its own collection. Essentially this amounts to the assurance that there is such a source—a national lending library system—from which any library can borrow (or acquire a photocopy), quickly and easily, any needed item not available in its own collection. The user will still apply to his local source, but backing up that local library or information center will be all the stored information elsewhere in the nation and the knowledge that under a national effort all new data is being collected someplace as it becomes available. Only when this is a reality will that basic need be taken care of—a copy of all publications somewhere in the country that is readily available to all. Confronting us at this point is the problem of copyright, the means by which enterprise in the intellectual field is given a property right. The whole copyright law is now under study for possible revision. What the exact nature of these revisions may be is not of concern to the problem of access to information so long as the means is retained to make information readily available. Solutions range from free copies of anything to a fee system for all copies. Somewhere in this range is the answer that will protect the author and publisher of information and still make it readily and quickly available to all.

It must be emphasized, however, that any system assumes, and its planning recognizes, continuance and even the strengthening of local resources. The corporation or government agency or school or public library is expected to provide—and may be assisted by various means to do so—a substantial proportion of needed services. The national system is a back-up resource. It is not intended to replace the local resource but to produce what this cannot practically provide for itself. It must also be recognized that there should be relative equivalence of access in all regions and at all necessary levels of complexity. The context of local resources and the means of supporting them will require study and the formulation of measures of need. Considerable evidence can be mustered that costs of information and services drastically handicap educators and researchers in many segments of the country and the world.

This new national system to provide ready access to all information is a huge task. Such a system is predicated, of course, on the assumption that library service will be available to all within the next few years. Behind this service there will then have to be the over-all coordination of acquisition programs and of distribution programs for the acquired materials. Modern technology already can ease the task greatly, and it is even possible now to visualize the time when such an information system will be able to provide directly the information wanted, rather than the document itself in some form.

Instantaneous recall of some information is essential in our age. However, it is recognized that such speed is not always necessary, another factor easing the burden of this great national effort. The combination of requesting by telephone and receiving by airmail, backed up by TWX or some other similar machine, will take care of the large majority of requests. The technology for this last method of