

### 3. NATIONAL BOOK DEVELOPMENT COUNCILS - SOME GUIDE-LINES

108. While the main aims and objectives of a National Book Development Council are likely to be common to all countries, the priorities and methods employed to achieve these objectives will and must vary according to the needs and circumstances of a particular country. Above all, a National Book Development Council is a co-ordinating body, a common platform representing equally the interests of all concerned with the preparation, production, promotion, distribution and use of books; governments as well as private concerns, individual members of the public (including and particularly children) as well as professional organisations. (See also Appendix 6)

109. The mere existence or establishment of a National Book Development Council will not in itself resolve national problems unless there is in some form a book industry within the structure of which it can operate. A National Book Development Council, by coordinating, advising, planning, training, can act as one of the means towards an end; it is not, and cannot be, the end itself.

110. The objectives of a National Book Development Council can be summed up as follows\*-

- a) Coordination of activities and interests of all branches of and bodies within the field, locally, regionally and internationally.
- b) Planning, in order that the development of a book industry may be incorporated into overall national development, both economic and educational.
- c) Encouragement of authors in all available ways, but in particular by helping to ensure that adequate means exist for their works to be published.
- d) Development of means and measures whereby production facilities can be made available and be used both nationally and internationally, and ensuring that there can be a free flow of materials into the country.
- e) Advising and assisting in the development of proper and adequate means of distribution.
- f) Easing relations between authors, publishers and other parties who may at times feel that their interests conflict.
- g) Generating and promoting the reading habit.
- h) Creating and strengthening links in the structure of the book industry by short- and long-term planning and by training of personnel.

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\*See also Abul Hasan, The role and functions of National Book Development Councils, contributed paper in Delhi, Report.

111. The members of the Council will be drawn from both government and private sources, and should represent, either by means of individuals or nominees of professional organisations and government departments or all three, all possible interests. The day-to-day affairs of a National Book Development Council are, however, best entrusted to a smaller Executive Committee, elected or nominated from members of the Council, who might meet monthly.

112. The constitution of a National Book Development Council should be so drawn up that though the body may be wholly or partly supported by government funds, it is nevertheless not only autonomous, but seen to be autonomous; and its Executive Committee and Chief Executive free to act where necessary without the machinery or influence of Government. Only in this way can its objectives properly be carried out, and the interests of all parties truly represented.

113. Development is planning. It can be brought about more effectively and quickly by means of what some might call "agitation" and others "bringing the voice of reason to bear in the right quarters". An active and autonomous National Book Development Council does both these things and at the same time commands the respect of all parties.

114. A National Book Development Council is a coordinating body. It should not diversify its interests by entering into the field of publishing, except in the case of bibliographies and other guides which might supplement its activities. Publishing requires a set of skills, personnel and accommodation, which are totally different from those needed to perform the objectives and functions of a National Book Development Council; besides, to act as a publisher would be also to enter into competition with a sector of the book industry whose interests the Council, by its very nature, is pledged to support.