Mr. President, Dear Colleagues,

First of all let me thank you for giving me the honor to take a chair beside my dear teacher Prof. Dr. Arnts and also for the opportunity to say some words about the future of the traditional information and documentation services.

When I read the papers presented to this Session 0 I felt pessimistic about the future of the traditional services. Every paper speaks principally about economic considerations more than about the importance and advantages of these services.

Also, they remark about the decline in the use of such services, mostly because of the increase in the use of mechanical and automatic ones. We could think that in a very near future the traditional services will disappear. Of course, if they take only into consideration the economic factors and also only the great producers of data bases and banks, this situation seems to be true.

But the professionals working in the information services cannot think only about themselves. They must take primarily into consideration the end user. The end user in its complete extension. There are different types of end users. The information scientists are more concerned with the possibility of handling and dominating the big amounts of information produced in the world, than with the real needs of the end users.

This question should be the most important, when one remarks on the low use of the very sophisticated and expensive information systems. We must think, as well, that information scientists and workers have two missions: one consists in keeping the documents and the information produced all over the world for the future development of humanity. This work cannot be profitable. But when they prepare documents and information for a well defined user they must obtain economic benefits.

This well defined user will take many different forms. There are many kinds of end users. We can think, for instance, about the user in a little or middle size enterprise. Should they take very expensive and sophisticated information services? Could they have enough information using the traditional systems?

Also from country to country the situation is quite different. Paradoxically the less developed countries have very important and modern information systems, because they have grants and subventions from the international organizations. Therefore for them, the traditional services are not so necessary nor important. But, if we think about countries in the middle level of development, where the traditional services are working for years and years, we must assume that they will continue using them still for long time.

Of course, when we take in consideration the mini and micro devices, such as mini or microcomputers or microprographic systems, and the great influence in time and prices of working, we must be again pessimistic about the future of the traditional services. But it will take still some years till every enterprise can be able to have such machines.
We must also take into consideration the different types of traditional information services. It is possible that the secondary services, like the Chemical Abstracts or the Bulletin Sémantique will disappear in its printed form, but some alert and quick information services, like the current contents, will continue being alive for a long time. The periodical selective information services will, as well, exist for many years in traditional printed form.

The open libraries and the documentation centers with free public services will have also for a long time, beside the TV screen, reference information publications in printed form.

Which could be the picture in the 2000's is a very difficult question. Who can imagine it? We know the present information systems and possibilities, but are we thinking about the new inventions and discoveries? Who knows what can happen?

Summarizing the ideas said here today and my own ones, allow me to present some questions.
- Should we consider as a very important task the race for having the most modern and sophisticated information systems, even if they are too expensive or little used?
- Should the economic factors in an information institution be more important than the service to the real user?
- Should the present critical economic situation in the world influence the benefits of the information industry?
- Are the big information institutions thinking of the real end user?
- Are the big information and documentation services thinking of the small and medium size user enterprises?
- Should the world critical economic situation, a consequence of the fever to have and buy more and more modern machines, forgetting the good traditional ones?

Mr. President, dear colleagues, with these questions, I finish my report and thoughts. I beg you to think about them and to make your own conclusions.
Thank you.