NEEDS IDENTIFIED BY THE FORUM

(a)   Financial support for research

It became apparent that investigations at the pure
research levels are in need of financial support (in
relation to the funds assigned to the developmental
level) but we did not discuss this problem in any
detail because different kinds of action would be
needed in the several countries represented.

(b)   Specific needs in research

We identified two major specific needs:

(i)   a large, well-designed test collection (with
       questions and relevance judgements) for use by
       anyone testing ideas for IR systems or parts of
       systems;

(ii)   an operating information service which could
       be used as a source of data and a test-bed for
       new ideas.

Although these two ideas were discussed together and were to
some extent confused, there is a fundamental distinction in
that the first would be something researchers could take away
and do what they liked with, whereas the second would be an
operating system providing services to a genuine group of
users.   This does not of course imply that the two could not
be combined in some way (eg the test collection taken from
the operating service).

(c)   Development of the subject

The view as expressed that the development of theoreti-
cal information science was likely to be inhibited by
close assocation with the training of professional lib-
rarians.   Some participants thought that the new
research needed would stand a better chance of taking
off if appropriate institutions were set up in countries
not yet committed to such association.   Another view

was that information science will attain the autonomy
necessary for its rapid development only in an institu-
tion wholly devoted to teaching and research (both
operational and theoretical) in information science and
set up in a university in which it can draw freely on
experts in any of its related subjects. But the value
of interaction with the practical problems of information
system development was also stressed.