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THE
ESTABLISHMENT
AND
DEVELOPMENT
OF THE
CANBERRA TEACHING RESOURCES CENTRE
1968-1976

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Field Study for the Degree of Master of Education

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ABSTRACT

The concept of the Canberra Teaching Resources Centre was derived partly from the teachers' centre movement which originated in England and to a lesser extent from the American educational materials centre concept. This field study uses historical method to trace the establishment and development of the Centre with an emphasis on the role of its first Director.

The planning initiative lay with the Commonwealth Department of Education and Science from 1968 to 1972 although considerable teacher input was invited and received in 1970. Originally seen as a regional centre in the N.S.W. education system, the Centre, when its Director took up duty in 1972, was influenced by educational reports of A.C.T. and national significance and in 1974 became part of the Interim A.C.T. Schools Authority. It operated in a limited way in 1973 but was ready by 1974 to act not only as a teachers' centre for the A.C.T. but as an agency of the new education system.

The Centre's activities, involving integration of five main functions, expanded rapidly in 1974 and 1975. Demand as a meeting place for teachers soon overtaxed accommodation in the City Education Centre and additional space was acquired in Griffith Infants' School late in 1975. Displays of educational material evoked the least response from teachers. Demands on the multi-media Library's loan service grew so quickly that related services could not be developed. The entrepreneurial in-service education activities expanded quickly in volume and range and played an important part in establishing a new system. Audio-visual services developed more slowly and production of curriculum materials was just beginning in 1976.

While teacher demand continued to grow, the Centre's development was held back from late 1975 by government economic policy and in mid-1976 it faced serious staffing and accommodation constraints. Closer integration with the Authority's Curriculum Branch seemed the Centre's most likely future path.

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