

Some Kudos for *Current Contents*[®] on Its
650th Consecutive Issue.

June 3, 1970

In the 15 year history of *Current Contents* publications, the scientific and information communities have written very little about *Current Contents*. As its creator, I have found this rather painful at times, but understandable. Information scientists have a propensity for complex systems. *Current Contents* is so simple it defies the complex treatment accorded the more esoteric systems usually described in the documentation and information science journals. In fact, most scientists today take *Current Contents* so much for granted that they cannot imagine how difficult it was to sell the idea to the scientific community. The emergence of *Current Contents* as the most heavily used information service in the world was gradual—not spontaneous or explosive; and, every FASEB meeting we attend, every advertisement we run, every seminar we present, indicates that our job has only begun.

Recently, *CC*[®] did receive some direct attention. In one case, a pair of Indian scientists¹ indicated how important *CC* was for that country. *CC* enables

scientists in developing countries to keep in touch with what is going on. An Australian² has also written an article indicating that *CC* generates about half of all his reprint requests. This confirms what we already knew from reader surveys.

Another report from the National Lending Library³ confirms that *CC* accounts for a large percentage of all requests it receives.

Since *CC* is not new, and since its preparation methods are interesting but not absolutely earthshaking, I suppose *CC* may never qualify as the topic of an article in *Nature* or *Science*. *CC* does use computer methods and production techniques that are not obvious to the user, but after all, his only concern is that it remains prompt and complete. With postal, air, dock, printers' and student strikes occurring almost weekly, this is not always easy; but, perhaps even such august journals as *Nature* might consider it newsworthy that *CC* published its 650th consecutive weekly issue without interruption.

1. Bannur, B.B. and Purandare, G.M., "Current Contents An Essential Economical Tool for Indian Research Libraries", *JASLIC Bull.* 14(3), 102-105 (1969).
2. Posen, S., and Posen, J.S., "The Geography of Reprint Requests", *J. Med. Education* 44(8), 648-654 (1969).
3. Wood, D.N. and Bower, C.A., "The Use of Biomedical Periodical Literature at the National Lending Library for Science and Technology", *Methods Inform. Med.* 9(1), 46-53 (1970).