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Introducing Herbert S. White, ISI®'s Senior Vice President for Operations and Administration

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This is the second in what I plan as a series of editorials to introduce readers of Current Contents to the people who make ISI work. In the first of the series, last year, you met Mr. Anthony Cawkell, who has for some time been ISI's chief representative in the United Kingdom and Europe. Now, I should like you to meet Herbert S. White, who is ISI's Senior Vice President in Philadelphia.

Herb White is already well-known among the group of CC® readers that includes librarians and other science information specialists, for he has made the management of science information work his career, in a very special sense. It's only in comparatively recent years that the concept of cost effectiveness has been associated with the management and operation of scientific and technical libraries and information centers. One of the first to insist upon it was Herb White.

Mr. White earned his B.S. in Chemistry at CCNY, and then a Master's degree in Library Science at Syracuse, after discovering in his own work how little scientists in general understood of science information problems, and with what difficulty information workers attempted to communicate with their scientist customers. While still at Syracuse, he was selected for the Library of Congress's program of internship in its Science and Technology Division, where he spent the years from 1950 to 1953.

There followed a succession of increasingly significant management assignments with the AEC at Oak Ridge, with what is now Ling Temco Vought in Dallas, and with IBM at Kingston and Poughkeepsie, where he ultimately headed the IBM Technical Information Center.

From 1964 to 1968 Herb White served as Executive Director of the Scientific and Technical Information Facility of NASA in College Park, Maryland, operated for NASA under contract by Documentation, Inc., which later became the Leasco Systems and Research Corporation. The NASA Facility remains one of the most effective and best-known of its kind. Testimony of White's contribution to it can be found in his office at ISI. Behind his



H.S. White

desk is a plaque given him when he left the NASA program; it's inscribed, in appreciation, with the more than 300 signatures of those who worked with him at the Facility, and of the personnel of the contracting agency as well.

Already a Leasco Vice President, he left the NASA program in 1968 to become Vice President for Information Management in the company's Bethesda offices. In the spring of 1970, he left Leasco to join ISI, where he is now our Senior Vice President for Operations and Administration.

As I've noted, Herb White is well-known in professional circles. Currently he's Chairman of the Delaware Valley Chapter of the American Society for Information Science; he's a past National President of the Special Libraries Association, and has served on numerous state and federal advisory bodies set up to study and promote the practice of library science. He has taught and lectured at a number of universities, and continues to do so whenever he can find the time.

Above all, however, Herb White is a manager, and as such he has in a short time done much to improve ISI's ability to deliver reliable, effective, and current information services at an acceptable cost, always of course with an eye on increasing both quality and cost effectiveness. ISI and our customers alike are already beneficiaries of that watchful eye. Herb White personifies antagonism of inefficiency and excess; every busted budget and scotched schedule is accepted as a personal af-

front. Indeed, he seems to have set out to smash once and for all an axiom-sacred if unspoken--about library and information work to which more of us may have once subscribed than we like to admit: that information work in science is its own justification, or in other words, that whatever resources of time, money, and people such work can absorb, it is justified in absorbing, without question. Herb White can express himself quite volubly on that attitude.

Away from the job and professional activities, he is still a very busy man; he's a member of the Singing City Chorus of Philadelphia, an experienced little theater player, a dogged violinist, and, as often as he can get there, a fireball on the tennis court. Everywhere else in sports he is an avid spectator, when he has not been successful in corralling friends and guests into table tennis, soccer, and basketball competitions.

Herb White has himself best summed up his role at ISI: "What we're trying to do is to bridge the gap between fundamental management concepts and the information sciences, where despite the strength of scholarship, there's been too little operating discipline. ISI is one of the largest private operations of its kind, and we mean to show, in a field where hugh deficits and government subsidies have too long been assumed necessary and taken for granted, that good management and good products spell out the same formula for success and customer satisfaction as they do in any other field."

 Garfield, E. A.E. Cawkell, Information detective--and ISI's man in the U.K. Current Contents No. 40, p. 5-6, October 6, 1971.