THE ATLANTIC PROVINCES CHECKLIST

A guide to current information in books, pamphlets, government publications, magazine articles and documentary films relating to the four Atlantic Provinces..., 1957--

APEC, the Atlantic Provinces Economic Council,¹ a non-political and non-governmental organization, was formed in 1954 by business, industry and various institutions to promote the economic development of the four east-coast provinces -- New Brunswick, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island. The Council receives its financial support from membership subscriptions. Its members, to quote from an APEC publication The APEC Story, do indeed "believe deeply in the future of the Atlantic Provinces and most of them try to promote in every possible way this faith".

Quite naturally, in the beginning, APEC embarked on a series of studies of many aspects of the Atlantic economy. Its aims were, and continue to be, ambitious. Members of the Council endeavoured to contribute in various ways to assist APEC to achieve its goals. Out of this genuine desire to co-operate, the Atlantic Provinces Library Association (then the Maritime Library Association) resolved at its Annual Conference meeting in Sydney, Nova Scotia, in 1957, to compile an annual checklist of information and to offer area-wide library service to the Council officers and members. Volume one of the Atlantic Provinces Checklist for the year 1957 appeared in 1958 and it has appeared in its Atlantic-blue cover every year since that date.

Before APEC and APLA reached final agreement regarding the scope of the Checklist considerable preliminary discussion took place. It was first suggested that members of the Association might compile subject bibliographies to assist with the various research projects, and with matters of concern related to the various regions, e.g. coal mining, forestry, etc. It was finally decided however that the most useful contribution the Association could make would be to compile a guide to current information relating to the four Atlantic Provinces. It would be APEC's responsibility to publish and to distribute the annual checklist. Those who took part in the initial planning

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1. Atlantic Provinces Economic Council, 1591 South Park Street, Halifax, Nova Scotia. Price of the Checklist is \$2.00 per copy.

were Mr. Stephen Branch and Mr. Nelson Mann of APEC and Mr. James F. MacEacheron and the first Editors of the Checklist, Miss Shirley Elliott² and Mr. Douglas Lochhead.³

Once the proposal to compile the Checklist was approved, librarians were appointed in each province to act as contributing editors and to submit entries dealing with their areas. As material was gathered by the chief editors it was revised, classified and prepared for publication. One of the major tasks of the present Editor continues to be to make certain that all those contributing to the Checklist submit material on time and properly designate its nature; e.g. fiction, poetry, biography, etc. From the beginning it was considered essential that the Checklist contain as many entries as possible within its defined limits. Emphasis is placed on the importance of including materials from private presses and those governmental publications with limited distribution.

With a few modifications the Checklist is very similar to the form used in the Bibliographical Series of the Geographical Branch of the Department of Mines and Technical Surveys, the Selected Bibliography of Canadian Geography, published annually. The form of entry follows closely that used in the Canadian Index. The latest volume of the Checklist (volume 6, 1962) contains a map of the Atlantic region, a brief foreword by the President of the Atlantic Provinces Economic Council, an Editor's Preface, and an explanation of how to use the volume. The actual text begins with a general survey of all four provinces, followed by a subdivision of subject references by province, alphabetically arranged. One exception to the provincial breakdown is literature and this is included in the ATLANTIC PROVINCES GENERAL section, subdivided according to Fiction, Short Stories, Poetry, etc. A glance at the table of contents provides an outline of the significant events in the life of each province in a given year. Also included in the Checklist is an author index as well as a list of all periodicals cited, together with their addresses.

As its subtitle implies, the Checklist attempts to include everything published in the area in a given year, in all languages, but with the exclusion of two distinct groups of material (1) daily and weekly newspapers, (2) annual reports of the provincial governments. Authors included in the Checklist may be natives of the area or living elsewhere, or they may not be indigenous to the area, yet writing about some phase of

2. Shirley B. Elliott, Joint Editor, 1957-1959; Editor, 1959-.

3. Douglas G. Lochhead, Joint Editor, 1957-1959.

its life. The Checklist makes no claim that it is exhaustive. References omitted may be included in the compilation of the following year.

Now in its seventh year, the Checklist has developed from an experimental venture and has established itself as a reputable source of information on the Atlantic provinces. Its circulation is almost 2,000 copies and distribution is world-wide. As a continuing, current bibliographical source it has proved itself to be fundamental to effective reference and research service. It has been used as a model for similar regional bibliographical projects in the United States. Consideration is now being given to the possibility of publishing a ten-year cumulation.

APEC, which performs both research and promotional functions, considers that one of its major tasks is to provide up-to-date information about the Atlantic Provinces and to see that this information is disseminated. In the words of the current President of APEC, Mr. Gerald E. Martin, "... the Checklist constitutes an essential part of the information and educational services which the Council provides". This was the hope of those who first initiated the Checklist in 1957 and of those who continue to produce it year by year.

Douglas G. Lochhead