



IFLA

I wish to comment on 'An Open Letter to the President', signed by 18 members of the Association, which was published in the last issue of *InCite*. The organisers of the letter did not apparently consider it necessary to send me a copy, but I was shown it in proof recently when in Sydney.

The Open Letter commences by saying that I 'will recall that the technicalities of By-Law 16(a) and Joske have prevented a proper canvassing of membership opinion (either by plebiscite or at the Annual General Meeting) on the question of holding the IFLA Conference in Sydney in 1988'. This is nonsense. I have already explained in a President's column (*InCite*, 2 November) how an AGM is conducted, and what rules exist to ensure all members of the Association have the opportunity to participate fairly in the meeting. I can only repeat again that *every* member and Division had the opportunity and was invited to put forward any motion about IFLA. No member and only one Division chose to raise the question of IFLA, the latter being the motion from the ACT Branch asking for full information to be given to the members. To now argue that technicalities prevented the proper canvassing of the matter at the AGM is ridiculous, and the question of a plebiscite under By-Law 16(a) is irrelevant in these circumstances.

A second assertion is that I 'will be aware that there is already considerable concern among the membership about the lack of consultation on this question'. I think this statement not only astonishing but in some ways an insult to the integrity of those members involved at all levels in the governance of the Association. It is one thing to argue against the wisdom of the IFLA decision, but this statement implies a lack of proper consultation by those entrusted with this responsibility.

Let me therefore state several facts:

1. The IFLA initiative has been the subject of debate at various General Council meetings since 1979. All minutes and associated papers have been freely available to any interested members of the Association, and any member, Division or office bearer has had the opportunity to raise the IFLA matter in appropriate forums. This is the way policy development in the Association works, and there has been no more nor less opportunity for consultation about the IFLA proposal than about any other major policy matter in the last five years.
2. It is my understanding that *InCite* has published *all* correspondence received to date about the IFLA decision.
3. I wrote a long background President's column about the proposal for the 1988 IFLA Conference to be held in Australia (*InCite*, 27 July), in which I concluded by encouraging any member with an interest in the proposal to further discuss it with office bearers or General Councilors between 1979-84.

4. I have visited all States and the Northern Territory in the last nine months on LAA business, have met many members, and have addressed General Meetings in every capital except Sydney. I have also had extensive opportunities to discuss LAA matters with a wide range of members, formally and informally, both in Melbourne and when interstate on other business. I have yet to have this supposed concern about a lack of consultation raised with me at any meeting. I have also yet to have the decision to move towards holding the IFLA Conference in Sydney in 1988 raised with me at any meeting with members, apart from a question at an ACT Branch dinner and in Western Australia where strong interest was expressed in holding it in Perth! It is, however, fair to say that there has been widespread questioning on what on earth the fuss is about, why a small group of members seem so outraged by the decision in principle to invite IFLA to Australia, and what is now being made of this correspondence by overseas readers.

I will draw the attention of the next General Council meeting to the 'Open Letter to the President'. I have already indicated twice in *InCite* that the IFLA Committee and the Executive Director are committed to providing the fullest possible information to members as it becomes available, and that the formal invitation does not, under IFLA procedures, have to be presented until 1986 at the earliest. I believe that the final decision could not in any case be made until the possibilities of Government and corporate support have been fully explored. I have also expressed my firm belief that those entrusted by General Council with arranging the IFLA Conference are well aware of the necessary dictates of financial prudence, and I do not believe that future elected General Councilors who will have to make the final decision at the appropriate time would be so irresponsible as to proceed with these plans if the Association was to find itself in a position of financial risk..

W. M. Horton
President

Non-sexist

I would like to comment on a news item about Redress Press which appeared recently in *InCite* (31 August 1984, p.5).

"... the books must be written by *women* in a *non-sexist* way" (my emphasis).

This is quite a contradiction in one sentence. What if a publisher announced "MEN ONLY"?

Sexism can work two ways, and two wrongs don't make a right.

Martin Cawthorne

Editors' note: Fair comment, but Redress Press was set up by women specifically to publish books by women, and they do insist that material is presented in a non-sexist way, which sounds reasonable.

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The voucher system

At the AACOBS National Council meeting which was held on 1 September, Warren Horton advised members that the LAA had recently completed its review of the voucher system and that the General Council of the LAA had agreed that voucher only membership of \$25 would be available in future to all institutions irrespective of their budget.

The National Council formally resolved to express its support of and appreciation to the LAA for this decision.

As you know AACOBS has always strongly supported a national system based on the use of LAA vouchers for the supply of photocopies of requested items. Members consider that the LAA decision will greatly assist to secure the future of the voucher system.

Marion Newman
Secretary AACOBS



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