

LETTERS

Linos Document

Dear Editor,

The South Australian Branch wishes to inform interstate colleagues that in response to the General Council's November decisions on the publication of the LINOS document and the future of the Information For the Nation campaign, the following motions were passed unanimously at the 1989 Branch AGM.

Motion: 'This annual General Meeting of the South Australian branch expresses its great concern about the publication of the LINOS document, and earnestly requests General Council to reconsider its decision at the earliest opportunity'.

Motion: 'This Annual General Meeting of the South Australian Branch regrets the decision not to continue with IFTN in view of the increasing demands for promotional activities'.

These motions have been forwarded to General Council.

Jan Heath
President
SA Branch

Note: The LINOS Document is a research report which will be published by mid-February 1990. Neither ALIA nor the Commonwealth have endorsed the content of the research report.

In 1990 ALIA will develop and fund a number of promotional strategies for the Australian library and information science community. It will also coordinate Australian Library Book Week. Materials will be produced to support all strategies. This has been a positive outcome of the IFTN campaign and the National Library Promotion Forum.

Sue Kosse
Executive Director

Loud hurrahs

Dear Editor,

Loud hurrahs for Lynn Allen and her 'Frontline' (*inCite* 10 (19) 27 November 1989) Her declaration of intent for 1990 is salutary.

The need to represent our case to governments and others in terms of client-centred outcomes, rather than in

the context of expert prescriptions, is bracing. Governments are rightly suspicious of arguments which only result in the creation of infrastructures, with little discernible benefits to the end-users services.

It is arguable, for instance, that if the profession had exercised itself over the last 20 years to place adequate collections of children's books in every community (as distinct from libraries - the two contexts are not coterminous), with the same vigour which it has applied to highly expensive, elite-serving networks, we might be fighting less of a rearguard action on other fronts, including school libraries, now.

And notice that much of the argument about the very real decline in school library services is couched in terms of its effects on the professional groups (teacher-librarians vs librarians) rather than in relation to the impact on children. Politicians are not long on theory but they will respond to issues which are couched in terms which they and their constituents will understand.

We have to find better ways of manifesting the synthesis which we believe (don't we?) exists between our professional services and the betterment of the life of the ordinary wage-earning citizen, and of couching it in terms which are acceptable.

It isn't a matter of money - this country is richer than it has ever been - but of persuading politicians and other people that an adjustment in the order of priorities is what's required. To do this will require a lifting of the vision to focus on the realities which exist outside our cosy, salaried, tight little professional fiefdoms, and as Lynn so gloriously says, on 'client-oriented activities.'

More, please, Lynn.

John Levett
Editor

Australian Library Journal

Congratulations

Dear Editor,

Veteran readers will recall that I wrote a series of letters to *inCite* over several years asking for the IFLA Conference Committee to keep members informed of developments in financial planning for the conference. It was disgraceful that such letters had to be written at all, and I make no apology for doing so.

However, I note with great pleasure that the audited accounts of the IFLA Conference show a profit of more than \$75 000. The Conference Com-

mittee deserves our congratulations on this result.

Neil Radford

Aggressive librarians

Dear Editor,

It is with some glee I report this postscript to the Promote and Flourish forum held in Adelaide in August.

Two participants in the media panel will obviously never view us library folk in quite the same way. Keith Conlon, representing radio on the panel, has since been heard to refer on air to librarians at the seminar as 'aggressive'. (This translates, I think, to librarians can give as good as they get!)

And Des Ryan, editor of Adelaide's community newspapers, tells me somewhat indignantly that he has been inundated with press releases from libraries since the forum.

It was clearly an eye-opening session for all concerned!

Lee Welch

The Pacific Rim

Dear Editor,

I refer to George Miller's article in *inCite* dated 27 November 1989 concerning Australian librarians' relationships with our colleagues in Pacific Rim nations.

I am writing in my capacity as Convenor of the Asian/Pacific Committee of ALIA's 1st Biennial Conference committee. I thought that I should make ALIA members aware of our planning in relation to this very question.

In the very early stages of our planning we determined that our international colleagues should be encouraged to attend and participate in the conference. After some discussion we decided to limit our efforts to contacting librarians in the South East Asian and the South Pacific area.

We compiled a list of Library Associations, major libraries and senior librarians and sent them all copies of our Second Circular and Call for Papers, together with a personal note from Steve O'Connor, the Conference Convenor, inviting recipients to make an effort to come to Perth and to offer papers.

We also contacted as many suitable aid agencies as we could find and advised them of the conference and

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requested advice on how to apply for funds to encourage librarians from developing nations, in particular, to attend and asked the agencies to consider any applications sympathetically.

As a result of our efforts we received many expressions of interest from overseas librarians who offered papers and others who requested more details about the conference and assistance for those who hoped to join us in Perth in 1990. We are following up many of those letters.

The program committee has also been in touch with Anthony Ketley, President of the Asian Pacific Special Interest Group of ALIA, and he is preparing a 3 -hour session which will form part of the conference. This session will include speakers from both Australia and overseas and will deal with different aspects of our relationships with libraries and colleagues in the Asian Pacific Region.

Finally, we have discovered that librarians coming to Perth from the eastern States are eligible for a wonderful package deal which includes a 5 day stay in Singapore for very little more than the fare and accommodation package to Perth. Therefore, we have contacted our colleagues in Singapore and have almost completed arrangements for a 2 day post conference in Singapore. In that way we hope that Australian librarians will take the opportunity to meet many more South East Asian librarians and that our colleagues in South East Asia will be able to join us in Singapore even if they can't come to Perth.

All along we have worked with the idea that our international colleagues have much to teach us and regular contact between librarians for all nations can only improve our services to our clients. We hope that our efforts will be rewarded with a large representation of international colleagues at our conference and that Australian librarians will take the opportunity to meet and discuss mutual problems in Australia's most exciting city. 'Where on earth but in Perth?'

Roslynn Membrey
Convener - Asian/Pacific
Committee
ALIA 1990

Outraged

Dear Editor,

I read, with interest, the report of 'ALIA's first AGM' (*inCite* 10 (15):2 October

1989), especially concerning the Children and Youth Services Section, NSW Group, resolution:

"That the Children and Youth Services Section NSW calls upon ALIA General Council to re-introduce 'free' membership of one section and one special interest group. The Group calls upon all divisions of ALIA to support this call."

The report of 'intense debate', and the fact that the motion was carried, even if it was with the 'aid of 74 proxies' was satisfying. However there were several items that outraged me:

* The votes of the members were disregarded by the General Council

* The statement in the report... "They (the Councillors) noted, however, that this (the drop in membership of Sections and SIG) is probably reflective of Section activity levels and reinforces the fact that "you've got to be good to survive".

This motion was originally formed due to the outrage about the large increase in membership fees for this Association, and yet no increase in services from the body of the Association is apparent.

The Sections are the lifeblood of this Association, something that the General Council deems fit to ignore and even dispute. It is the Sections that enable the members to develop their professional interests. And isn't that what a professional association is for? Obviously from the overwhelming support that this motion received from the 'ordinary' members, I am not alone in feeling outraged.

However, it is the second point which shows the Councillors view of Sections. The autocratic statement 'you've got to be good to survive' is so totally wrong in this context that it proves that those in the high lofty towers of this Association are wearing thick blinkers to stop them from seeing.

Though I do want to take this opportunity to thank Tanya Whitmarsh (NSW General Councillor) and the representatives from Queensland, Victoria and West Australia for their support.

The Section I am proudly a member of, Children and Youth Services Section, NSW Group, finds that the work we do, the seminars we organise, are financially successful that we manage small profits which are spent in printing seminar papers. Why are we so successful? Because of the attendance of non LAI members.

Does this say something to the Councillors too? Is this Association good enough to survive? Remember, only sixty attended the AGM of the Association. How many sections can

outdo that number at their AGM's.

We, the Section, survive, but we are looking for support from those high lofty towers of this Association so that we can concentrate on the professional development of our fellow professionals, and not waste time on chasing up membership. I hope this letter will stir the Councillors so that members' voices are heard.

M.M. Redrup
Guildford NSW

Note: The 1986 Corporate Plan and Review overwhelmingly endorsed the unbundling of membership fees. This was reindorsed by the General Council in November 1989.

The General Council represents ALIA members in each State. An AGM in a non-conference year will often only be attended by those members resident in that city. Hence its view may not be the national view.

The General Council does provide national democratic representation, and can thus give a national viewpoint. Sections are currently directly funded, based upon ALIA members deciding, and paying, to be members of Sections. Additional funds also come from their own activities.

Sections, Branches and Divisions provide professional development activities etc., to ALIA members at the most needed 'grass roots' level of ALIA. A major issue to be yet successfully addressed by ALIA is the 'right' balance of the division of resources among local, state and national needs.

Sue Kosse

inCite!

Want to share your views
with 7500 Australian Li-
brary and Information
Association members? Feel
strongly about something?

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inCite Editor, PO Box E441, Queen
Victoria Terrace ACT 2600.

Letters to the Editor should be about topics and issues relating to library and information people; brief and to the point; clearly typed. Please state your name, position in life, address and phone number! (Full address and telephone details will not be published - but the editor may need to contact you.)