

# RETIRING PRESIDENTS REPORT to the Tenth Biennial Conference Hobart ~ 17th August 1979



Two years ago on the 17 August, 1977 I reported to you in Sydney and a summary of my remarks is included in the minutes. At that time I was concerned over two issues, the first of which was finance. How were we, with a grant of \$28,000 per annum (if indeed we received it), to see through the next two years in the face of inflation? I used the phrase "to see through" not in terms of survival, but in terms of productive work. The second issue was my concern that the role of the Secretariat, set up by this council and working under its direction, was not understood. Indeed, it was clear to me then that some regarded it with suspicion.

The Secretariat was set up to be the hub of our national activities, to assist branches by shouldering the administrative burden, and to encourage and co-ordinate activities. The Commonwealth grant we receive is not for the general purposes of the branches or the council, it is a grant made to maintain the Secretariat in such shape or form as we find it, but always, and this I emphasise, in a shape which conforms with the budgetary requirements of the Commonwealth Government. If we have no Secretariat, we have no effective national administrative body. The Secretariat does not have funds to enable the Executive Director to move around this country, however desirable this may be. His function is to keep you in touch, and this the Secretariat has tried to do.

Since I last spoke, I believe we have not only survived but by every effort and by adopting drastic economies, we

ended the financial year with a balance of \$7,000 in our grant account and almost \$4,000 in our general account, from which we had advanced \$2,500 to the Tasmanian Branch to facilitate arrangements for this excellent conference. We have used our reserves but this was a great effort, and our thanks are due to those who made it possible.

In that two year period, we saw the birth and growth of the A.C.P.C. Forum. To those of you who will control the Council's destinies in the future, I suggest you should not allow that publication to lapse. Initially, we found that to gain contributions was and still is a difficult task. But we should be grateful that since this was planned, we have received six publications which contain not only much of interest, but adequate information as to the activities of Branches and the Secretariat itself. All this has been achieved at an extraordinarily low outlay, but tremendous effort. Over this two year period the fortunes of the State and Territory Branches have waxed and waned. Overall, whatever adaptations have to be made to cope with financial structures our future is healthy. Since I spoke to you two years ago, our membership has increased by 256 per cent. Today we have over 400 subscribers to membership including organisational and voluntary organisational members. This is a good reflection of three things, maintenance of enthusiasm in some branches, the impact of the Journal, and the work of the Secretariat.

What of the future? Old questions remain such as the grant

for this financial year; will it be cut? Realism prevents me pondering possibilities of an increase. Those of you who remember the old days will be conscious and sad that we just do not have funds for frequent or regular council meetings or get-togethers. State Governments and other instrumentalities no longer supply fares. But we have to adapt to these stringencies.

Much is said about moving the Secretariat from Queensland where it was moved years ago as a matter of sheer economy and nothing else. This will not in my view solve a single problem. It is naive to think that the presence of the Secretariat in Melbourne, Adelaide, Sydney or Canberra will increase levels of activity or co-operation. It won't. In planning, do not overlook the cost of removal and re-establishment, the cost associated with setting up a new office. A Secretariat does not tick away like a clock, it depends on people and success. It depends on the energy of these people and the simplicity of their liaison with the Council. We have experienced energy from our staff and this in plenty from two people who can not, at times, measure work security save in terms of weeks. The new Council will have many decisions to make and all I ask is that they be made with care and realism. But please do not perpetuate the erroneous notion that moving the

Secretariat is a matter of shutting one door and opening another elsewhere. And we must not forget that if we do not have a Secretariat, the Council and its members must take on all the Secretariat's responsibilities, and without staff the Council will have to decide how and by whom all these things are to be done. These are crucial matters which require much thought and planning. Over the years I have found it a privilege as President of this Council to be closely involved with the work of the Secretariat.

In conclusion, may I say this. We must try to encourage the growth of the Council as an ever-developing body. We can only do this by sharing our interests and our successes. It would be a pity if we waste our energies by pointing critical fingers at the National Body because the fact is our deficiencies do not lie within the Secretariat, they lie well and truly within our own Branches and Committees. The success of this splendid Conference indicates how much a few people working together can achieve. On behalf of you all, I thank them for their efforts, their hospitality, and their friendship. They have given the Council a great start to the next two years.

Mr. Justice J.H. Muirhead  
17th August, 1979



# SECURITY GUARD DOG SPECIALISTS

24 Hour Security Service  
7 Days a Week

- ★ Guard Dogs
- ★ Uniformed Security Guards
- ★ Dance Hall Supervision

Guard Dogs — the economical way to  
protect your property

**625 5772**

**22 Rupertswood Road,  
Rooty Hill, N.S.W.**