

1987 COMMENTS

HAVING READ AND RE-READ THE COMMENTS IN THIS "BLACK BOOK", THERE IS LITTLE LEFT TO WRITE. I SHARE THE COMMENTS MADE BY OTHER PRESIDENTS CONCERNING THE ASSISTANCE AND CO-OPERATION OF ONE'S FELLOW LEGATEES NOT ONLY WITHIN THE BRANCHES AND GROUPS OF MELBOURNE LEGACY, BUT ALSO FROM THROUGHOUT VICTORIA AND IN OTHER STATES WHERE CONTACT IS MADE, PARTICULARLY SYDNEY, ADELAIDE AND HOBART.

I THINK THE PRACTICE OF USING STATISTICS OF NUMBERS OF WIDOWS TO EMPHASISE THE EXTENT OF OUR WORK LOAD CAN BE COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE. IT MAY INFLATE THE EGO OF LEGATEES IN AN AUDIENCE AND IMPRESS GUESTS, BUT IN MY VIEW CLOUDS THE ISSUE. RECENTLY AT ONE OF OUR MEETINGS I HEARD A POST WWII LEGATEE CLAIM THAT WE ARE NOT OVERWORKED AND THAT MORE ACTIVITY COULD BE TAKEN ON BOARD PARTICULARLY BY POST WWII MEMBERS. I WAS RATHER STARTLED AT FIRST BUT I BELIEVE HE IS RIGHT. IF WWII LEGATEES LOOKED AT THE MATTER REALISTICALLY THE DEBIT SIDE CONSISTS OF ADVANCING AGE AND ITS ASSOCIATED PROBLEMS (E.G. DRIVING - DAY AND NIGHT) BUT ON THE CREDIT SIDE WE HAVE RETIREMENT - (EXTRA TIME AVAILABLE) - THE SUCCESSFUL ESTABLISHMENT OF WIDOWS' CLUBS AND THE REALISATION BY WIDOWS OF WWII MEN THAT AFTER THE INITIAL VISITS AND PENSIONS ETC. WORK HAS BEEN COMPLETED, THAT VISITATION IS WELCOME BUT NOT EXPECTED AND THAT TELEPHONE COMMUNICATION IS REGARDED AS A SUITABLE ALTERNATIVE.

FOLLOWING ON FROM THIS POINT, I WOULD MENTION THAT I VISITED AND ADDRESSED FOUR WIDOWS' CLUBS DURING THE YEAR. THESE CLUBS HAVE CLOSE LIAISON AND WATCH EACH OTHERS ACTIVITIES THROUGH THE WIDOWS' NEWSLETTER (AN INVALUABLE PUBLICATION INCIDENTALLY). THE REQUESTS FOR VISITS BY THE PRESIDENT WILL, I THINK, INCREASE SUBSTANTIALLY. HAVING IN MIND OTHER REQUESTS FOR PRESIDENTIAL ATTENDANCE - SUCH AS KINDRED ORGANISATIONS, DVA, THE INCREASING INCIDENCE OF FUNERALS AND MEMBER'S HOSPITALISED, I THINK THE SENIOR V.P. SHOULD BE RELIEVED OF COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES AND SHOULD ASSIST THE PRESIDENT WITH VISITATIONS OTHER THAN TO BRANCHES, GROUPS AND OTHER CLUBS. I WAS UNHAPPY WITH A DECISION MADE LATE IN 1987 TO ASSIGN THE SVP TO CONTACT ACTIVITIES.

I THINK THE TIME FOR DETAILED RECORD KEEPING IS OVER. WE ARE WASTING THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS EMPLOYING PEOPLE TO SHIFT PAPER. AFTER ALL HAVING FILED THE INITIAL CONTACT REPORT AND BEARING IN MIND THAT PENSION APPLICATION PAPERS ARE FILED IN THAT SECTION, WHY DO WE NEED TO PROVIDE SPACE AND LABOUR FOR FURTHER RECORD KEEPING. ANY LEGATEE WORTH HIS SALT CAN PIECE TOGETHER A HISTORY BY DIRECT CONTACT. WHERE WE COME ACROSS AN ODD WIDOW WHO TELLS UNTRUTHS FOR FINANCIAL GAIN, THE COST TO US COULD NOT POSSIBLY EQUATE THE PRESENT COST OF RECORD-KEEPING. IN ADDITION LEGATEES COULD KEEP THEIR OWN BRIEF NOTES OF SIGNIFICANT FACTORS E.G. WELFARE/HOUSING ASSISTANCE ETC.

I HAVE ALWAYS FELT THAT MELBOURNE LEGACY SUFFERS FROM A LACK OF CONTINUITY IN THE TOP ECHELON OF THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT AND LONG RANGE PLANNING CAN BE EITHER NON-EXISTENT OR NON-EFFECTIVE. THE INCOMING PRESIDENT ALSO IS AT A DISADVANTAGE NOT KNOWING OF HIS SELECTION UNTIL 3 OR 4 MONTHS PRIOR TO BEING EXPECTED TO TAKE OFFICE. I HAVE NO DISAGREEMENT WITH THE COLLEGE OF CARDINALS METHOD PER SE, BUT SURELY THE SELECTION COULD EXTEND TO THE VP'S. IF A VP KNOWS HE IS EXPECTED TO BE PRESIDENT AFTER SERVING 3 YEARS AS A VP, HE CAN BE PREPARED IN MANY WAYS - PARTICULARLY PERSONALLY. SOME OF COURSE WILL DROP OUT DURING THIS PERIOD. I THINK IT IS MOST IMPORTANT THAT EARLY ACTION BE TAKEN ON THIS MATTER AS WITHIN 10 YEARS (AT THE MOST) POST WWII LEGATEES WOULD BE THE ONLY CANDIDATES TO BE CONSIDERED. THIS FACTOR EMPHASISES THE NEED PARTICULARLY BEARING IN MIND THE FAMILY AND FINANCIAL PROBLEMS OF YOUNGER PEOPLE.

I AM GLAD TO HAVE HAD THE PRIVILEGE OF SERVING THE CLUB AS IT'S PRESIDENT IN 1987.


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