

# Can Academic Librarians Afford *College & Research Libraries?*

Some people now serving on COPES and the ALA Publishing Board are seriously considering the abolition of divisional newsletters and the consolidation of divisional journals. At the Budget Assembly meeting in Los Angeles the chairman of the ALA Publishing Board noted the present drain on ALA publishing funds to support divisional journals. Similar concerns have been expressed recently by the chairman of COPES and by the treasurer of ALA.

It may not be appropriate for me as editor to plead the case of *CRL*, but I do believe the membership of ACRL should understand how its journals are financed. After all, members pay the bills.

First, it must be reported that \$5.00 from membership dues is *not* allocated to the support of the journal, even though this commitment is indicated on the dues payment form. I have heard all sorts of explanations, rationales, and justifications for the present policy of depositing these monies in a general fund. If the journal did indeed receive a \$5-allocation for each member of ACRL (approximately 12,000), the journal's financial picture would be extremely bright.

The 1970-71 *CRL* approved budget anticipates an income of \$74,525.00, derived from advertising, classified ads, subscriptions, reprint sales, and extra copy sales. Expenses are expected to exceed \$79,000.00. Manufacturing costs and the cost of ALA's Central Production Unit's services are the main expenditure items. To insure a balanced budget, \$12,547.00 has been allocated from the ALA publishing funds. But if *CRL* actually received its \$5.00 per membership subscription, the red ink would be transformed into a shiny black, for the coffers of the journal would be swelled by over \$60,000—enough for the journal to contribute to other important ACRL activities. In other words, *CRL* contributes more than \$47,000 to the ALA program.

Why then are we being told that our publications are a drain on ALA? Does the membership want to continue *CRL* or could we satisfy our publishing needs equally well if ALA did consolidate journals into one or possibly two interdivisional publications? Regardless of the solution, I believe academic librarians must have an outlet to publish the findings of their research.

Is it possible that ALA, due to present budget stringencies or attitudes toward publishing, will ignore the special needs of academic

librarians? Will it be necessary to turn to another organization for a solution, further eroding ACRL's professional role within ALA? On the other hand, if we do not need a divisional journal, then in the interest of economy we should support efforts to reduce operating costs.

If you want to continue *CRL* and *CRL News*, now is the time to be heard. We need reader reactions before we can formulate our recommendation. Please, send us your views.

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