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EDITORIAL

The delayed and erratic appearance of *The Emu* has probably contributed as much as anything else to recent dissatisfaction with the Union. It will be remembered that at Congress in 1968, when the Treasurer's report showed that our finances were low, it was resolved to curtail Volume 68 by not issuing Part 4, in order to conserve funds, and to issue Volume 69 only after determining *ad hoc* the size of each part according to our means. Council of that time, however, decided that Part 4 of Volume 68 could be issued in the normal way, but agreed with the Congress resolution that the parts of Volume 69 should be issued cautiously in accordance with the state of our finances. Later the same Council accepted the principle that *ad hoc* decisions regarding the size of each part were undesirable. They would certainly cause continued irritation to members, because the editor, being unable to plan ahead, could not hope to issue parts promptly and regularly, or plan a reasonably uniform volume. It was therefore decided last March, when it became probable that we would have enough money to issue four parts, each of 64 pages, for Volume 69, to proceed on that basis.

The present Council reviewed the position as soon as possible after taking office and agreed to uphold this sensible decision. Although our financial position is much better understood than it was in October 1968, it has hardly improved; and it would be clearly improvident to spend more on publication before our revenue was better established.

Council also realized that another important decision lay ahead and that this could be affected by the state of our finances. The Review Committee had drawn attention to shortcomings in certain aspects of *The Emu*. It was clearly Council's duty to review the matter and decide possible changes without delay, especially because, if this could be done promptly and showed advantages, changes could perhaps be introduced with Part 1, Volume 70. Accordingly, estimates for various changes involving different type settings, sizes, and so on, were obtained from the printers, and it became clear that we could economize by changing the format. We could save at least \$50 or about four of our present *Emu* pages

in each 64 page issue, and the saving increased with the size of the issue. We should therefore be able to publish more for the same cost and so provide members with more for their subscription.

Although the Review Committee recommended only a better type setting, Council considered that the saving justified going beyond that recommendation. The arguments for retaining a traditional *Emu*, though fully understood and appreciated, simply did not stand up against the hard economic facts. It has therefore been decided to introduce a new format for *The Emu*, starting with Part 1, Volume 70. It will be Crown quarto in size, or the same size as that of the Proceedings of the Royal Society of Victoria (247·6 x 187·3 mm), printed on good quality, but not on art, paper, in a type setting of 8 pt on 10. Doubtless at first the new *Emu* will seem more meagre than ever, but we feel sure that it will be redeemed to some extent by a more pleasing appearance and by being more easy to read. It will also be as well to remember that it will contain slightly more material. But basically the problem which faces us is that our funds are too low to allow us to print a larger *Emu*.