

## NEWS OF THE ASSOCIATION

### Report of the Secretary-Treasurer November, 1979

The activities of the Secretary's office over the past year, beyond the ongoing management of daily correspondence, have focused upon two areas:

- arrangements for the publication of IJMES, and
- representation of Middle Eastern studies before the President's Commission on Foreign Language and International Studies.

1. Anticipating the expiration at the end of 1979 of the Cambridge University Press contract for publishing IJMES, extensive inquiries were made regarding alternative publishing arrangements. Various opinions were solicited as to the desirable relationship between cost and publishing quality; and more or less extensive negotiations were conducted with five publishers, including both trade and university presses. The goal of the negotiations was to obtain a publishing contract that would save the Association approximately \$5,000 per year, that being the anticipated built-in deficit projected for the year 1981 and subsequent years.

By and large, the estimates from other publishers indicated that a significant reduction in publishing costs could be realized only by undesirable changes in the size or format of IJMES. The offer of a new contract made by Cambridge University Press was eventually accepted because it held the promise of substantial savings for MESA, possibly as much as \$5,000 per year. By the terms of the new contract, Cambridge University Press will, for the next five years, print and mail the *MESA Bulletin*, without charge to the Association.

A second important provision of the new five-year contract is that in its first year, 1980, two volumes (8 issues) of IJMES will be published instead of one. The primary purpose of the extra volume is to liquidate the accumulated backlog of accepted but unpublished articles and reviews, and thus provide for prompter publication of newly submitted material. Two of the four added issues will be devoted to articles on various aspects of Islam as part of MESA's contribution to honoring the year 1400 of the *hijra*. These two issues constitute a special project for which outside funding is being solicited. Any funding obtained should help underwrite the cost of the entire volume. It is hoped that MESA members will not have to pay an extra amount for the additional volume, or that any such payment will be solicited on a voluntary basis and restricted to non-student members.

A final provision worth mentioning is the Press' commitment to undertake, at its own expense, a membership and subscription campaign in 1980.

2. With regard to the President's Commission, the Secretary attended a conference held by the Consortium of Latin American Studies Programs to meet and discuss issues with Commission members. Subsequently, with the co-sponsorship and funding of the Aspen Institute, the Secretariat arranged a small conference on the future of Middle East studies, which was held at Tarrytown, N.Y., on March 23-25. Thirty individuals—half from the academic community and the other half from business, government, foundations, etc.—met for two days of deliberation on future problems and priorities in Middle

## East studies and future funding sources.

After the Tarrytown Conference, the Secretary prepared a statement of MESA's position and sent it to the President's Commission. He also joined with other area studies association executive officers in drafting a statement for the Commission on behalf of area studies in general. There were other consultations with Commission personnel and consultants as well.

Over the past four months, the Secretary has attended three meetings of an *ad hoc* group of representatives of organizations concerned with international education for the purpose of discussing and planning for the follow-up and implementation of the President's Commission's report. Further meetings of this *ad hoc* group may be expected in the future.

3. The MESA co-sponsored Summer Institute for retooling small-college teachers to deal with the Middle East was held last spring at Hamline University in St. Paul, Minnesota. The success of the Institute, directed by Prof. Scott Johnston, strongly indicates that this type of activity is worthy of future MESA sponsorship. The report on the Institute is on file with the Secretariat.

4. MESA's membership has dropped over the past year. In addition to a number of cancellations because of the increase in dues, there was an unusually high write-off of members (those with outstanding bills) by Cambridge University Press:

| Membership             | October 1978 | November 1979 |
|------------------------|--------------|---------------|
| Fellows                | 615          | 545           |
| Associates             | 139          | 115           |
| Regular                | 258          | 231           |
| Students               | 333          | 376           |
| Total Individuals:     | 1,345        | 1,267         |
| Institutional Members: | 5            | 1             |

5. This year's visiting scholars, funded by a grant from the Ford Foundation, are:

- R.B. Serjeant - Cambridge University;
- Tajeddine Baddou - Institut national de statistique et d'économie appliquée, Rabat; and
- Kassem Toueir - National Museum, Damascus.

6. The auditor's report for 1978, as published in the July issue of the *MESA Bulletin*, showed a deficit of \$10,733. This left the Association with reserves of \$37,231 in various savings accounts at the beginning of 1979. For comparison, MESA had a deficit of \$11,914 in 1976, and a surplus of \$2,252 in 1977. In short, MESA had reserves of \$64,095 entering the year 1974, as compared with \$37,231 entering 1979. This represents a drop of 42% in MESA's reserves in a period of five years. Yet, during that five-year period, MESA was receiving various amounts of financial aid from the Ford Foundation.

Against this background, the budget estimate for 1979 shows a surplus of \$1,888. This will be followed by an estimated deficit for 1980 of around \$19,000. This deficit arises from the additional volume of *IJMES* to be published in 1980, and outside funding is being

sought to reduce or eliminate it.

In 1981, by which time all subsidies from the Ford Foundation for day-to-day operations will have come to an end, it is estimated that income and expenditures will be in balance. This will be the first unsubsidized balanced budget in many years, and it should prove possible to maintain the balance in the years following 1981. In short, by 1981, we hope to have reached the point of "living within our means."

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*International Journal of Middle East Studies*

The moratorium on manuscripts for the IJMES has been lifted. Manuscripts must be in English, not to exceed 35 typed pages, and double-spaced throughout (notes and references included). Send manuscripts to: Afaf Marsot, Editor-in-Chief, Gustave E. von Grunebaum Center for Near Eastern Studies, University of California, Los Angeles, CA 90024.

*Middle East Studies Association*

The 14th Annual Meeting of the Middle East Studies Association will be held in Washington, D.C., Thursday through Saturday, on November 6th through 9th, 1980.

Because this year's annual meeting will be in session on the first day of Muharram 1401 AH, the Program Committee has decided to honor the dawn of a new century of Islam by designating the central theme of the meeting as: "Islam in its Many Dimensions."