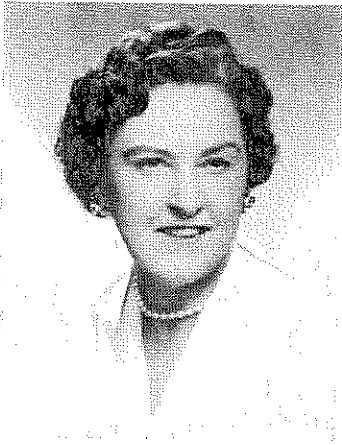


Reports of Members of the National Board and Special Committees As Presented to the Thirteenth Biennial Convention

Note: For the convenience of convention delegates and to save money in duplicating a special annual report, the Convention Number of INDEPENDENT WOMAN includes this material as it is submitted to the biennial convention for acceptance.



Report of the National President

MARGUERITE RAWALT

IT HAS been my privilege to serve through two years in which history-making directives of the 1954 Biennial have been transformed into achievement, resolutions have become realizations, and historic decisions for a boundless future of Federation growth have been launched. Harmonious teamwork among the six national officers, coupled with inexhaustible interest and willingness to work, have been the principal factors in these achievements. This corps of officers is leaving an invaluable legacy to the future of the Federation, and I express my genuine appreciation of the vision and cooperativeness of my five fellow officers, the 11 National Chairmen who have served on the Program Coordination Committee, and the State Presidents who have given their support, understanding, and encouragement.

This report will summarize the principal achievements of the past year.

1. *The 1929 Biennial* adopted the recommendation of a great leader, Dr. Lena Madesin Phillips, to establish a permanent national headquarters in Washington, D. C., and spontaneously pledged \$22,714 toward the purchase thereof. Twenty-five years and many side-tracked committee reports later, the 1954 Biennial ordered the move of headquarters from New York to Washington; undertook, within a three-year period, to raise a fund of \$325,000 for the purpose; and empowered its incoming officers to take such actions as were necessary to carry out these purposes. In two years, the \$325,000 has been

raised; in fact, 86 percent thereof was raised within the first year. It has been done without spending one cent of the contributed funds for professional assistance; the promotion pieces and writings were the work of your President and the Assistant Executive Director, Clara Longstreth. They were issued through the use of our existing office equipment and personnel, without exceeding our regularly budgeted funds for reproduction, postage, stationery, and through the medium of our official magazine INDEPENDENT WOMAN. Our finance staff efficiently and willingly processed the funds, a major work addition. The contributions have remained intact for the purpose for which they were contributed. Extra effort, long hours, and determination to accomplish the task were required. State and club treasurers have my highest praise for their extra duties cheerfully performed. But it was the many members, the individual members, who brought about the realization of this, the headquarters project, through the club *Scrolls of Achievement* and their enrolling thereon; it was the splendid members throughout the States who took on the voluntary promotion task which kept up enthusiasm until it was completed. The members entered into our promotion device as they elevated Betty Beep during her climb up each \$25,000 stair step to reach the Washington Monument at the \$325,000 top. The members entered enthusiastically into the Headquarters Sweepstakes as they noted the progress of their State's entry appearing each month

in INDEPENDENT WOMAN. And at the end of the first year, in July 1955, when the Kentucky Derby Headquarters Sweepstakes was celebrated in Louisville during National Board Meeting, 16 States had crossed the 100 percent goal line, and a total of \$265,000 had been contributed. Nevada was winner as first to collect its 100 percent goal, accomplished by December 1954; New Jersey second, for achieving the highest percentage of its goal (127 percent); Pennsylvania was recognized for having made the largest contribution to date (then \$18,839.37). We come to this Biennial to celebrate the achievement of our goal, not in pledges but in cash. This is a phenomenal accomplishment in the eyes of many other organizations and of many professional fund raisers.

2. *The Business and Professional Women's Foundation* was incorporated on February 27, 1956, upon recommendation of the President, and vote of approval of the Executive Committee and of the National Board of 1955-56, for the purpose of establishing a national Research Center in the fields of interest to all working women, in conjunction with the establishment of national headquarters of the Federation. Future growth, future leadership, future usefulness of the National Federation are thus insured. The Foundation's purposes qualify it for a tax-exempt status of the nature which will enable it to attract and to receive grants or gifts with which to carry on the great need for research, studies, and the assembling of comprehensive documented data affecting the advancement of working women throughout the world. The program effectiveness and prestige of the National Federation will be truly magnified thereby. New avenues and new vistas for programs and for service to our members are opened far into the future with this great step. Our gifts for National Headquarters are thus multiplied and projected into boundless possibilities for the future. Not only will our gifts provide the permanent home of which we have dreamed, they will also provide a research center of competence and national recognition. The Federation's leadership is thus made possible for all time.

3. *National Headquarters* were moved into the Dupont Circle Building in Washington, D. C., on March 24, 1956, with the transfer of properties and personnel from 1790 Broadway, New York City. This gives the necessary working base of operations and provides the staff with which to go forward with inspection and search for eventual and choice site for permanent National Headquarters. Whether we buy or whether we build, there must be systematic search and selection from among many sites, and continued and close supervision and cooperation with sellers, architects, contractors, attorneys, until the problems of ownership are resolved. Our prestige is given new vitality by location in the Nation's Capital. The consolidation of personnel and equipment of the New York and Washington offices brings about financial economy and increased efficiency. Legislative work with the Congress is facilitated. The growing liaison with Government departments, including the expanding program in international relations, are better served by direct access to and communication with the State Department, the International Cooperation Administration, the C.I.A., and the Labor Department.

Our goodly part in the exchange of persons program with other countries is facilitated by personal contact with their Embassies located in Washington. Our Federation's leading interest in this great international work

is now a matter of direct contact, rather than long distance telephone or letters from New York to Washington.

There has been a marked saving in rental costs. A reduction of \$6,000 per year on lease of space alone resulted. In addition, overhead charges for electricity and other New York maintenance costs totalling some \$2,700 per annum were eliminated and saved a total immediate annual saving of \$8,700.

Permanent Site. Scores of buildings and building sites have been inspected as prospective permanent headquarters. Conferences, interviews, telephone contacts, and study discussions have been necessary with real estate agents, brokers, bankers, architects, lawyers and builders. One building, known as the Kiep House, was decided upon as meeting our needs. A two-month preparation for a hearing before the D. C. Zoning Board, under the guidance of one of the city's most prominent and skilled lawyers in that field, was unavailing and our petition was lost. Support from members of Congress, from neighboring Embassies, was also unavailing. However, this was sought in our status as a *national membership organization*, as the *National Federation*; the chances are deemed to be improved in the status of an educational or research center. A bid, conditioned again upon zoning, was placed upon a second property of even greater size. It was purchased by another group by which it is used as a national foundation and promotion center.

4. *International Friendship.* Two major undertakings have greatly increased international friendships. In August 1955, for the first time in 15 years, the Federation carried out the task of officially sponsoring a tour of Europe, culminating in the attendance at the Silver Jubilee Board Meeting of the International Federation founded in Switzerland by our own Federation under the leadership of Dr. Phillips. For some years our budget has provided for the expenses of the President and another Board member, or staff member, to attend such International Board Meeting. This year, because we officially arranged and sponsored the tour, four national officers, Board member Helen Irwin, and over a hundred of our own members shared the pleasures of attending the meeting without one cent of cost to the Federation; in fact, there was a net profit turned in to our treasury of \$88.53. The budget item of \$2,200 was not touched, but saved for other use. More important than the financial saving was the sharing of opportunity with our one hundred members, by arranging for them to visit with the national officers of the Federations in England, the Netherlands, Sweden, Denmark, and Germany as we travelled en route to the meeting. Functions in London, The Hague, Stockholm, and through Germany were opened to all our members, not limited to the officers.

A Special Committee on Pan American Friendship was created because of our belief that our program should also focus upon our close neighbors in Central and South American countries. The chairman, whose work has given her an intimate knowledge and appreciation of Latin American relations, and who speaks Spanish fluently, was made the honoree at a special function held during her attendance as the Federation's representative at the important Conference of the Inter-American Women's Commission held in San Juan, Puerto Rico, in June 1955. During a month spent in Cuba this year, she encouraged cooperation between the existing clubs of Havana, and reactivated their interest in the Interna-

tional Federation. The Pan American Union of the Organization of American States, with headquarters in Washington, D. C., noted and signified its endorsement and approval of our action by making your National President a guest at an official function, attended by men and women of eight Latin American countries, on October 6, 1955.

International Contacts. It has been my privilege to be the Federation's representative at two meetings of the International Federation—the first in Venice, Italy, in September 1954; the second in Berne, Switzerland, in August 1955, a privilege happily shared with 170 other members. In addition, it was my honor to spend one month in Germany at official invitation of the government of the Federal Republic of Germany, as one of a group of seven U.S. lawyers and judges selected by the German Government to study the judicial and legal life of the Republic. We left New York City April 13th, by German *Lufthansa*, and were returned there May 14th. Word reached members of the German Federation, who met me upon arrival in every city and whose homes and clubs were visited in free hours from the lawyer regime.

5. Leadership Training. With the hearty approval of the Executive Committee, I have put into practice our oft-quoted adherence to leadership training opportunities. This has been done in a practical manner by opening the meetings of the National Board to attendance by State Vice Presidents, attending as auditors only and at their own expense. A total of 16 State Vice Presidents attended the 1955 Board Meeting in Louisville. These were State leaders and potential Presidents; many of them are attending the Biennial as State Presidents and members of the 1956-57 Board. They thus entered upon National responsibilities with some knowledge of Board problems. Both the 1955 and 1956 annual meetings of the National Program Coordination Committee were similarly opened to State Presidents and Regional Chairmen; and the last one, in February 1956, to State Vice Presidents. The Program Coordination Committee itself is comprised of just 17 persons, the 11 Standing Committee Chairmen and 6 national officers. Yet at the open meeting held in Washington all day February 25, 1956, the observers outnumbered the committee, for 32 State Presidents, one Regional Chairman, and 16 State Vice Presidents attended. In other words, two-thirds of the National Board, and one-third of the potential future State Presidents took advantage of the opportunity to sit in on this open program planning meeting. A feature of this meeting was a discussion and presentation of the Foundation with our attorneys present—followed by a resounding vote of approval by all but one person present.

6. Americanism. I began my term of office with a pledge to emphasize the preservation of our American way of life, and with the plea to our membership to be informed about the meaning of Communism, since information is the true defense and the groundwork for combating its advance within our country. Therefore, the conferring of the Freedoms Foundation Award in July 1955, for our Federation's work, and a personal Award of Merit recently received by me from the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution, for talks and writings on the subject, are prized outside recognitions of the National Security and Public Affairs aspect of our program interest.

7. Program. Experimental Period. Program is the important core of our existence. The report of the Pro-

gram Coordination Chairman will encompass the story of the two years. We have passed one year of operation under the 1954 Biennial directive to discard, for a two-year trial period, the firmly ingrained practice of promulgation of a uniform annual printed program. We are entering upon the second year of the experiment. The Program Coordination Committee in February 1956 reported that many clubs have displayed admirable initiative. The results to be announced by the Special Program Awards Committee at this Biennial meeting, with its selection of five winners, will indicate the nature of such venture. Mrs. Matheny has given outstanding and individual leadership in the difficult role of charting the path for the Program Coordination Committee, whose chairman members were caught between the directive not to formulate program and the cries for help from many clubs and state leaders. New clubs, not yet versed in the manner of carrying out objectives, are in need of closer direction and guidance. The Program Committee which meets in 1957 will have a greater challenge. The theme "Aim High" has been focused for the coming year toward leadership training and development—"Aim High—New Levels of Leadership."

The international relations area of program has been improved by the separation of duties of program director and United Nations Observer, to give appropriate and enlarged emphasis to club program work by a director whose sole responsibility is program. We have secured a highly trained volunteer member living in the New York area, whose time is available to attend U.N. meetings, and who is highly competent to report on sessions of that body and to represent us there. The full time of the International Relations Staff Associate is now spent in the headquarters office and is thus available without interruption for full-scale program work and aid to clubs.

8. Liaison. Liaison is the term under which we consider the magnitudinous phase of our cooperation and contact and communication with other organizations. This Federation received, in a six-month period, a total of 120 requests to publish the program of other groups in our magazine; circulate the program materials of others; carry out such programs and projects of others through our international relations committees, or health and safety committees, or public affairs committees; or education and vocations committees; requests to use our mailing list for mailing by such others; requests to send representatives to meetings of others; to use the Federation's name on the letterheads of others; to sponsor all sorts of movements and causes, and worthy ones, let it be said.

The members of our First-Choice Federation have only their "luxury time" to give to their club work. The threat of having our own limited program action time submerged and consumed in the work of others was recognized as a very real one by the eminent members of the Special Review and Development Committee, whose report was adopted at St. Louis in 1954, launching our two-year experimental period. Mrs. Margaret Culkin Banning, writer and former National Program Coordination Chairman, and Miss Margaret Hickey, editor and former National President, served on that committee. Their report cautioned that we "should never overshadow, obscure, or supersede" our own Federation purposes with engaging in activities as "a community service organization, or for social and cultural enjoyment or study." The Biennial adopted the recommendation

clubs feel free to fit programs to local interests. provided such activity or interest be in harmony with national policy and legislative efforts of our own Federation, and provided cooperation in projects of others results in proper recognition of members of our clubs at a policy-making level.

Every member of this organization should be alerted and trained to recognize the existence of the issue of whether we are going to be submerged by programs and direction from outside sources. There are literally hundreds of organizations, well financed and expertly staffed, working in worthy causes—all they need is workers and advocates within local clubs with prestige and know-how.

This Executive Committee determined that BPW must survive and grow by promoting its own programs. It has had the fortitude to withhold the use of our magazine pages, to refuse to exhaust our postage budget, and use our mailing list and employees' services to disseminate pamphlets and literature of other organizations to the exclusion of our own original material. It has refused to commit you, the club members, to being made defenseless and unwitting instruments for the campaigns and purposes of other groups. Offers have been received by other organizations to finance the issuance of program materials under our own name, with, of course, due mention of programs of others. We believe (with the Special Committee and the Biennial vote of approval) that the BPW leaders should be conserving the limited time of BPW members for BPW program objectives. It isn't easy to hold that line! Offers of honors, offers of one's name on a distinguished list of sponsors, offers to finance the printing and distribution of pamphlets, public entertainment honoring your officers (club, state, and national)—all sorts of bids are made, directly and indirectly, to secure the support and effort of our members. Attacks have been made upon this Executive Committee because it did not continue, or accept without question, the pressures to promote others' interests. And some of these have come from within our own ranks, perhaps by those who were unaware of the real purpose. We must maintain our high prestige by focusing our efforts and by keeping on the track of our declared objectives. In that direction lies progress and continued leadership. Let BPW clubs serve BPW and carry forward BPW programs first. Every BPW club should budget its program time just as carefully as it budgets its dues.

The National Program Coordination Committee of 1954-55 was given the list of over 120 organizations or groups with which the name of the Federation had been linked by prior National Headquarters Office action, without sanction of Executive or Program Committees. It recommended approval of 8 out of 120—some organizations, and these 8 were voted approval by the Executive Committee, with the later addition of three others.

Does this Federation want to become vulnerable to the charge of "packaged thinking" and "subsidized programs"? The charge of "packaged thinking," the charge that women's organizations do no original preparatory work, but simply accept what is handed them in packages by others who do know what they want, rings in our ears. Is it true? Is it partly true? Please think this over.

The challenge today and of the immediate future for the Federation is to continue to maintain our claim to being the recognized spokesman as the largest organization devoted exclusively to business and professional women. We must keep our own program our own, keep

it channeled within BPW purposes, needs, and interests, and tailored to the advancement and interests of business and professional women, to hold our members while we launch forth to increase public prestige and appeal to other working women. The Business and Professional Women's Foundation is a great means of leadership in the advancement of business and professional women, which is our business.

9. Membership. Project No. One for this current year has been membership expansion. Our endeavors to break away from a static situation are beginning to show results, with a reported net increase, as of April 30, 1956, of 3,806 members over last year's membership figure. In 1955, the annual net increase was 2,307; in 1954 it was 2,444. The April 30 record of 3,806 net increase exceeds any net increase since 1950. It is hoped we are emerging from the doldrums.

But growth in numbers remains the outstanding challenge of this First-Choice organization. In this last year, at National level, we have endeavored to set a proper background for membership promotion through the medium of arranging two pilot forums for women who work, which would focus public attention upon the leadership of our Federation. One forum was held in Atlanta and the other in St. Louis. They were chaired by our national officers. Attention was centered upon working women by the addresses and attendance of representatives of the U. S. Chamber of Commerce, local merchandizing establishments who cater to the working women, and by the editor of *Charm* Magazine presenting aspects of career life. This had for its purpose an advance in public relations and the attraction of non-members into membership in our Federation, and the setting of a pattern which a State Federation might adopt. It is not deemed, in general, adaptable by the club as a unit.

New membership promotion pieces have been worked out, under the guidance of our Public Relations Counsel, and former membership promotion pieces have been reprinted. One area of immediate moment is the growth of membership in our cities. New York, Chicago, St. Louis, Washington, and other metropolises, each with a vast potential membership, are crying out for membership expansion.

10. Finances and Economics. Last July, when the National Board was discussing and adopting budget for this year, concern was voiced in a minority report of the Finance Committee even over the temporary transfer of some of our accumulated excess income for membership promotion purposes. I wish to call attention to a few savings in the year's operations.

We have been conscious of the fact that we are spending other people's money and have insisted upon normal economics in operations. Approximately \$4,400 was saved by holding two meetings of the members of the Legislative Recommendations Committee in conjunction with the Program Coordination meeting, since the members of the former committee are all members of the latter. *INDEPENDENT WOMAN* has been used more as a medium of Federation information and ideas, promotion of Project Number One each year, and program dissemination, thus serving the dual purpose of saving expensive club mailings and, at the same time, bringing the information to every one of the 170,000 members, rather than to club presidents or chairmen only. The headquarters promotion is a case in point. It is customary to pay 10 percent of the financial goal as a fee; in our case, this

would have meant paying out \$32,500 had we employed professional direction. We may legitimately congratulate ourselves that we have saved such a sum.

The Washington, D.C., luncheon of January 1955, in honor of the women of Congress, was entirely self-supporting because of advance planning and careful management; in fact, it came out with a profit of \$12.16 over all expenses. Your President treated this as a test occasion financially, to prove that the National Federation can, if its staff is determined, operate economically without any sacrifice of Federation prestige. The budget item provided \$1,400 for such special functions; thus management resulted in turning back nearly \$1,000 after deducting \$400 which represented the cost of a relatively small reception during the *Herald-Tribune* Forum in New York in 1954.

In office operations, definite economies have been effected in purchase of supplies in gauged quantity; in securing bids for printing; in installing new techniques.

11. Office Administration and Personnel Policies. This Executive Committee has taken the first action in many years to work out and formally adopt personnel policies and office procedures, particularly respecting officer-staff relationships, which it found to be an outstanding need. A general directive of six years' standing for the preparation of a complete and current manual of existing personnel policies and office procedures, was carried into realization by Miss Hurd, after taking charge of the office as recently as February 15, 1956. Such a manual has been prepared in accordance with the numerous policies adopted by the Executive Committee and sound practices taken out of past experience. It has proved to be a valuable reference for our new employees and an acceptable and needed basis for efficient office operations. We repeatedly declare that our National Headquarters should be a model business office. A real foundation has been laid in official actions and in this drafted manual, upon which to build more exemplary personnel policies and practices in the future.

12. INDEPENDENT WOMAN—our official magazine. Conscious endeavor has been made by the editor and the president to adhere to the recommendations of the special committee which reported at Biennial in 1954, as to balance of content in the magazine, as well as to adhere to the recommendations of the Finance Committee by reducing the cost of our magazine. *INDEPENDENT WOMAN* was reduced from 40 to 32 pages, beginning with the October 1955 issue, thus effecting a saving of some \$10,000.

Particular observance has been given to the biennial committee's directives that the magazine act "as a voice to reflect the purposes of the Federation itself," and to serve as "an intercommunication of Federation life between the individual members, the local club, the State Federation . . . to disseminate the program in all its phases and component parts," and that "international news articles and features be *proportioned* to space allocated to the other phases of the Federation program."

It is believed that we have carried out these mandates of the Biennial with reasonable efficiency. Many letters of commendation have indicated approval of the greater use of the magazine for inter-Federation matters such as our headquarters fund; our membership promotion; program ideas; and news of Federation activities such as have appeared in the "In Your Interest" column and elsewhere.

13. Indexes of Official Minutes and Transcripts

of Biennials and National Board Meetings. Within the past year, I engaged the services of a competent woman in Washington, D. C., who, under my personal direction, has prepared indexes of the transcripts of the official meetings of our biennial conventions and National Board from 1945 through 1955. Her compensation was covered by our regular budget provision for salaries. Uniform index headings and subheadings were determined upon. I am happy to report that such uniform indexes are completed, have been reproduced and filed with the transcripts and official records to which they pertain.

This index was ordered prepared by Executive Committee action March 31, 1951. At the beginning of my term as President, only one biennium had been indexed (that of 1948-50), notwithstanding reports to the contrary. The other four bienniums are now indexed. Such a record has been sorely needed to save wasted time in tracing policy directives and seeking the source of authorities. It has seemed obvious to the national officers that our *Handbook of Federation Procedures* should be revised so as to adhere to adopted policies and procedures and to eliminate unauthorized directives presently contained therein. It will now be possible to issue such a revised and documented, authoritative Handbook.

14. Information and Consultation. Having served continuously for 13 years on the National Board, I have endeavored to share leadership knowledge by keeping Board members informed on Federation activities. There have been a record number of letters of information issued to the National Board these two years. It would be the easy path for the President and/or the Executive Committee to make decisions, put them into effect, and report annually what was already done. I have informed the Board continuously, invited their opinions and taken ballots by mail.

Visitations by the President. I have been forced to deny myself the real pleasure of attending State Conventions. I have refrained from these satisfying and highly important experiences because of the necessity of focusing my energies and limited time toward the definite and particular accomplishments of the Headquarters, Foundation, and membership projects which have been adjudged to warrant temporary precedence and attainment. The promotion campaign for headquarters funds, the legal and business entanglements of obtaining exoneration from a long-term and expensive lease in New York, the setting up of the Foundation, the time spent inspecting buildings and building sites, a losing zoning battle, changes of personnel and the necessity of finding and employing new personnel, exacted priority of time and effort.

I feel there is no greater post of leadership in organizations than the presidency of this Federation. I am glad indeed to have had the opportunity to be the President during these two years of progress. May the light of God's favor always shine upon this Federation and its leaders.

Recommendation: Believing that the future, like the past, of our Federation lies in its being, and being recognized as, the leader in advancing the interests of all business and professional women, I recommend that immediate steps be taken to activate our Research Center through contributions of funds and materials to the Business and Professional Women's Foundation, and through the presentation to the public and our own members of its unlimited potential services.