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Max Rolfes

The International Association
of Agricultural Economists 1929 to 1969

The Growth of an International Fraternity of Scientists

With a Preface by Leonard K. Elmhirst

Reprinted for I. A. A. E. from

Zeitschrift für ausländische Landwirtschaft

Vol. 9, No. 2, June 1970

DLG-Verlags-GmbH · 6 Frankfurt (Main) · Rüterstraße 13

**The International Association of Agricultural Economists
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Preface

This is a documentary in the true sense of the word. With no little skill *Dr. Max Rolfes* has put together from the printed word and from thirty-five years of his own experience as a member, a summary history that can be a reminder to many and an inspiration to future generations.

Whether we are old, new or prospective members of what *Dr. Rolfes* has termed, not without justification, a fraternity, and whether we are farmers, bankers, business men, trustees of foundations or ministers of finance, we all need from time to time and in shortened form, a statement of the way in which this, a not unimportant branch of the social sciences, has grown and developed over the first forty years of its life.

When the President and Founder President recently approached UNESCO in Paris to find out whether the International Association of Agricultural Economists could qualify for a grant under that organisation's Charter, the first question put to them was: Who is your Director-General? What is his salary, and the total sum of your office overheads? The answer was: We have never been able to afford a salaried Director-General, nor a single paid clerk or official. We have always operated from hand to mouth and on a veritable shoestring. We have been kept alive by our membership fees and by annual grants from a few interested trusts in Portugal, Britain and especially in the U.S.A. We are assured of no single Government's backing. Nor can we count on regular gifts from rich firms supplying seeds, fertilisers or machinery to the agricultural industry. We have always had to live from hand to mouth and from Conference to Conference with the help of a great deal of voluntary labour.

Except for the strictly socialist countries, which choose their own delegations, our members are all individual members, entitled to speak their own minds. After they have paid their fee they are free to vote which way they will.

The objective of our Association, as laid down in the Constitution, is that of fostering development of the science of agricultural economics and of furthering the application of the results towards the improvement of economic and social conditions. The result is that our fraternity has depended for its membership mainly upon students, teachers and research workers from Universities and Institutes. But it has also included farmers, civil servants, bankers, business men and Members of Parliament and of legislative bodies. For although the aim of all our discussions is objectivity and detachment, the matter we discuss often impinges upon areas highly sensitive to government policy makers, to public welfare, to private interests and to international statesmanship.

A member of our fraternity who has made a life-time study, say of international movements in the market for sugar, may find himself suddenly appointed as an agricultural attache and sent abroad. He may even, through his new profession, become an ambassador or arrive back home a cabinet minister. Another achieves a professorship but then becomes a college president or a Secretary of Agriculture. But generally speaking it is from universities that our members emerge as they assemble for a conference.

Somewhat less emphasis should be given to the mystique, attached by *Dr. Rolfes*, to the man who still holds the title of Founder President. Thanks to his having taken degrees at Cambridge, England, and at Cornell in the U.S.A. and to his having invited collaboration from Cornell professors in the initiation of the Dartington enterprise in 1925 in Devon, there came together four men to whom should be given the main credit for having engineered the first two Conferences at Dartington and Cornell. Their names were *Dr. Carl Ladd* and *Dr. George Warren* of Cornell, and *John Maxton* and *Jock Currie*, formerly colleagues and graduate students at Oxford under *Charles Orwin*.

Dr. Rolfes writes with authority of the years subsequent to and including 1934, the year of the Bad Eilsen Conference. The cost of interpreting a Conference's proceedings simultaneously in another language becomes more difficult and expensive at every meeting. We often deal in highly technical terms. At our first two Conferences only English was used. But our third in 1934 had to be bilingual, using head phones for simultaneous translation either from English into German or vice versa. We had one volunteer interpreter, unpaid. We worked him hard throughout that and two subsequent Conferences. His name was *Dr. Max Rolfes*. I can still remember the look of trouble on his face in his little glass box as some professor rapidly speaking in English but using a broad Scottish brogue, outran, time and again, the period needed to transfer his technical jargon from English into good German.

Is the Conference still a viable process for the fraternity as it increases in size and complexity? This is a question that any such body must always be

asking itself. The Conference still remains a unique place for meeting. When it is over, international squabbles can be, and sometimes have been, settled over the phone by John calling up Tom across the frontiers between their two countries. The less-developed can meet the over-developed countries on equal terms. Often they use the occasion to choose and to invite professionals or experts from other countries to visit and advise. Graduate students hear the leading figures of their profession from all round the globe. Recorded and printed discussions illustrate the clash of searching minds. Thirteen conference volumes have proved a storehouse of material invaluable for teachers and students. The thinking and writing of men with outstanding minds, who never would take time off from their teaching and supervising to write books, can sometimes be found in the *Conference Proceedings* and nowhere else.

Slowly, but increasingly, governments, bankers, industrialists and charitable trusts have come to realise a need to support a fraternity of this kind so that the peoples they wish to serve can be offered, with increasing intelligence and foresight, an ever wider range of wisdom. They, and our fraternal members too, will be grateful for *Dr. Rolfes'* determination, in his retirement, to turn historian and to benefit us all with a short study, based on the printed record and also upon his own memory and direct experience. Others can build at greater length a more detailed history on the foundation he has here laid so well.

Leonard K. Elmhirst

The International Association of Agricultural Economists 1929 to 1969

I. Introduction

II. The Period prior to the Second World War

Dartington Hall 1929
Cornell 1930
Bad Eilsen 1934
St. Andrews 1936
Macdonald College 1938

III. The Immediate Post-War Period

Dartington Hall 1947
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IV. The Period of World-Wide Meetings

Mysore 1958
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V. Forty Years in Retrospect

I. Introduction

For a long time the great development of agricultural sciences from about the middle of the 19th century took the form of the application of the revolutionary findings of the natural sciences such as biology, chemistry and genetics, to agricultural production. Only after the turn of the century was it generally recognized that economics could and must make an important contribution to the agricultural sciences. The growth of agricultural economics as a subject for research and teaching began. It was fostered by men whom we have come to look upon as the "grand old men" of this science — men such as *G. F. Warren* and *H. C. Taylor* in the United States, *M. Sering* and *F. Aereboe* in Germany, *C. S. Orwin* and *A. W. Ashby* in Great Britain, *E. Laur* in Switzerland, and many others in other countries.

Thanks to their work, by the beginning of the second decade of this century agricultural economics had become generally accepted as an integral part of agricultural science as a whole. The time was ripe for the creation of an international organization of agricultural economists.

It was the great merit of three men — *Dr. C. E. Ladd*, of Cornell University (U.S.A.), *Dr. C. S. Orwin*, of Oxford University (England), and *L. K. Elmhirst*, of Dartington Hall, Devon (England) — to have realized the need for such an institution and by their persistent and co-ordinated efforts to have created it. In the last days of August 1929 they made it possible for fifty agricultural economists from twelve countries to meet at Dartington Hall upon the invitation of *Mr.* and *Mrs. Elmhirst*.

In the words of *Dr. C. E. Ladd* "the purpose of the Conference was to bring together agriculturalists from many countries to discuss research results and research methods that were of common interest; to discuss national and international problems in the field of agricultural economics; and to promote a more effective and more rapid exchange of agricultural economics information". The final goal — a permanent international organization of representatives of agricultural economics — was attained one year later, when, at a second meeting a simple constitution was drawn up and the organization was named "The International Conference of Agricultural Economists". On the basis of the statutes which were only very slightly changed as the need arose, the organization has held thirteen conferences in four continents. It

counts 1700 members, organized in 78 country groups. In the year 1964 the Conference decided to initiate an "International Association of Agricultural Economists (I.A.A.E.)", under whose auspices a variety of services to members were introduced additional to the holding of a triennial Conference.

When the Association meets in 1970 for its 14th session, it will have entered into the fifth decade of its existence.

At this point it may be opportune to look back upon the first 40 years of its growth and activities and to try to review briefly its achievements and its results and to summarize the changes of scientific thought as embodied in the Conference proceedings from 1929 to 1969.

Having been closely connected with the Association since 1934, I shall try to accomplish this task. It means picking out of thirteen volumes of *Proceedings* whatever is still of interest today, even if this interest be mainly historical; whatever is still of moment in the scientific debates of today; and whatever is important for the documentation of the development of our science through the last 40 years; and — last not least — whatever may contribute to the understanding of the personalities of the men who gave life and profile to our Conferences. In doing so, the author will be compelled to make omissions, often very reluctantly, in concentrating on what seems most important. This task undoubtedly calls for the greatest possible objectivity. The author must put aside his personal reminiscences springing from more than thirty years' acquaintance and friendship with leading personalities of the I.A.A.E.

But before doing so, it must at this point be said that the great value of the Conferences has always been twofold, based equally on the high scientific standards achieved in papers and discussions, and on the establishment of very human contacts. After the official sessions and on the study tours that always formed a vital part of the Conferences, friendships were made that lasted throughout many decades; a community of spirit was created that even the Second World War could not destroy. All this is to a high degree the personal merit of the founder and long-serving President *L. K. Elmhirst* and of his closest collaborators, particularly *J. R. Currie* and *J. P. Maxton*, of whose great services death deprived us far too soon.

In the following pages the thirteen Conferences are briefly reviewed. The whole period is divided into three parts:

1. The meetings before the outbreak of war in 1939, a period dominated mainly by the Great Depression;
2. The meetings between 1947 and 1955, which were concerned mainly with the aspects of post-war recovery efforts;
3. The period since 1958, the year in which the Association, by choosing India as the country in which to meet, definitely accepted the impact of problems of "Development" as a major force in the field of agricultural economics.

II. The Period prior to the Second World War — 1929 to 1938

The First Conference, Dartington Hall, Devon (England) 26th August to 6th September 1929

At this Conference 50 agricultural economists from 12 countries met. The meeting took place about two months before the outbreak of the great world-wide Economic Depression. But throughout the world agriculture had for some ten years been subject to great economic maladjustments, very many of which were due to the First World War and the clauses of the subsequent Peace Treaties. For a number of years before the meeting of the Conference prices had been declining on the world markets for farm products. Thus, though it can scarcely be said that the Great Depression already threw its shadow across the proceedings of the Conference, the discussions certainly centred around the unsatisfactory condition of agriculture, a condition to which many speakers applied the term of "crisis".

Thus, *R. R. Enfield* (Great Britain) gave an impressive picture of the critical situation of agriculture in Europe. In the light of subsequent events, his paper can be looked upon as a precursor of later discussions on the origin, problems and means of combatting the World Depression.

A number of papers on *British Land Tenure* opened up a very broad range of subjects of agricultural economics which dominated discussions at many later meetings. Already such perennial questions as the family farm versus the large farm, and tenancy versus owner-operation cropped up. The problems of the distribution of income among the various sections of the economy were presented to the meeting by *H. C. Taylor* (U.S.A.). He brought up problems which were only recognized to be vitally important very much later. Thus his argument, boldly brought forward in a period of increasing unemployment, that agriculture could only hold its own by diminishing the number of its workers became the central theme of a meeting some thirty years later.

The first Conference also took account of questions of *Marketing*, at that time a very new field of scientific research. Several papers dealt with marketing problems in the U.S.A. and in Great Britain, and also treated the role of co-operatives in agricultural marketing, a subject upon which at that time the Scandinavian countries were in the vanguard. Finally, this important first meeting of agricultural economists from many countries led to very lively discussions on *Research Methods*. A paper of basic value by *G. F. Warren* (U.S.A.) on the relative merits of calculation of production costs, analysis of farm accounts and farm surveys very ably set the scene for debate.

Before they parted, the members of the Conference expressed the wish that further meetings should be held. *Professor Warren* presented an invitation for a meeting at Cornell University (U.S.A.) in 1930. It was decided that the Conference proceedings should be published. A committee was also en-

trusted with the task of drafting a Constitution which should be submitted to the Conference at the next meeting.

There were quite naturally moments of misunderstanding when members of two different nations used slightly different terms to express the same fact or idea. Therefore a committee was set up to discuss and settle upon an agreed terminology. Time was also allowed for developing informal friendships. A concert, picnics and local farm visits were arranged. They were to become regular items of all following meetings. Americans were given lessons in how to play English cricket, and Europeans learned something about baseball. *Professor Case* of Illinois and *Henry Wallace* of Iowa competed in a hog-calling contest, to the delight of everyone else.

The Second Conference, Cornell University (United States) 18th to 29th August 1930

The Conference met some ten months after the famous "Black Friday" (24th September 1929) which ushered in the great World Depression. Obviously the papers and the discussions of the Conference were very strongly influenced by this event.

The Conference was attended by more than 300 people from 20 countries. The meeting was preceded by a three weeks' study tour under the able guidance of *Professor Harold Case* of the University of Illinois. The itinerary led from Washington, D. C. through the Middle West as far westwards as Minnesota. Thus the tradition of longer study tours in connexion with the Conference was very successfully established. After the Conference a short trip through parts of the State of New York brought Conference members into contact with farming in New England.

The *World Crisis* was the central theme of the Conference. Other subjects such as agricultural marketing and farm credit were treated in relation to this main subject. *M. Sering* (Germany) provided the basis for a discussion of the *International Agricultural Depression* in a paper reviewing the fundamental causes of the crisis. Among these he attached chief importance to the coincidence of a great rise in overseas production of food with a marked decline of purchasing power among the nations of industrial Europe, a decline which was in great part a consequence of political events. *C. von Dietze* (Germany) gave an analysis of the particularly serious situation in Germany.

The monetary aspects of the depression were strongly emphasized by *E. M. H. Lloyd* (Great Britain). He was energetically supported by *G. F. Warren* (U.S.A.) who gave preference to the price of gold as the factor governing economic depression or prosperity. *M. Ezekiel* (U.S.A.) drew attention to the critical increase of supplies of farm products in the U.S.A. as an alarming consequence of the depression. He advocated a policy of

restriction, but not without pointing out the limits and the dangers of such a policy. Thus production restriction, which was soon to become a policy of many a country, was for the first time discussed at a meeting of the Conference. It remained a subject of contention among agricultural economists for a long time. Papers by *L. C. Gray* (U.S.A.) and others opened up the very closely related subject of the use or abandonment of marginal land. The importance, but also the dangers of *Credit Policy* in times of crisis were handled by *K. Brandt* (Germany). And in the field of *Marketing*, the papers on the wheat market, particularly hard hit by depression, were the most important, at least from the point of view of the wheat-exporting countries.

Entirely different problems arose, when the *Russian* members of the Conference explained the agricultural policy of the Soviet Union, its tools and its aims. The central subject was always the recently implemented policy of collectivization. A critical answer from the viewpoint of the Western World was not given until the Conference met for the third time in 1934.

Purely scientific subjects were dealt with by *A. W. Ashby* (Great Britain) and *E. G. Nourse* (U.S.A.) in outstanding papers on the position of agricultural science as an applied science.

Problems of *Farm Labour* were treated under two very different aspects: *W. Seedorf* (Germany) commented on German research in the field of labour simplification, whereas *J. F. Duncan* (Great Britain) gave a most impressive review of the economic and social position of the agricultural wage-earner.

In the closing session of the Conference the Constitution, as drafted by a small committee led by *Professor Ashby*, was accepted. Now formally established, the "Conference of Agricultural Economists" elected as their officers:

President: *L. K. Elmhirst* (Great Britain)

Vice-Presidents: *G. F. Warren* (U.S.A.) and *M. Sering* (Germany)

Secretary-Treasurer: *J. R. Currie* (Great Britain).

The *Proceedings* of the Conference were edited by *Professor F. F. Hill* (U.S.A.).

The Third Conference, Bad Eilsen (Germany) 26th August to 2nd September 1934

The Conference met for the third time in 1934 at Bad Eilsen in Germany. By this time the great Economic Depression had been overcome. But almost all papers dealt either with the various measures by which the depression had been combatted, or else with the conclusions to be drawn from the depression and from the results it had left behind. There were study tours, each for about a week, before and after the Conference. The itineraries covered North and Central Germany before the Conference, and the South and West of the country after the Conference. The attendance was 170, from 19 countries.

The proceedings of the Conference were grouped in four main sections:

1. 'National Policies in Agriculture — Forms, Stages and Limits of Planned Economy'.
2. 'Social and Economic Aspects of Farm Organization'.
3. 'Population Growth and Agriculture'.
4. 'International Policies Relating to Agriculture'.

This programme was prefaced by two introductory papers, one by *H. Zörner* (Berlin) on *Agriculture in Germany*, and one by *M. Sering* (Berlin) on the *World Economic Crisis*.

In addition to the proceedings of the Conference, written reports were submitted, dealing with the economic conditions and political development in twenty countries, together with a report on the International Sugar Convention.

The numerous papers on *National Policies in Agriculture and Planned Economy* revealed very considerable differences of opinion between the various speakers, although in all papers the main theme was national policy as a means of overcoming the depression. *E. Laur* (Switzerland) showed that Switzerland, as a preponderantly industrial country, gave preference to protective tariffs. On the other hand, representatives of official *German* policy explained that the aim was to shield German farmers from the impact of the world market by a comprehensive system of marketing boards with great authority and power. According to *G. Tassinari*, Italy pursued a more moderate policy, the corporative structure of the economy providing the means for strong control of production and distribution, by which means Italy had achieved self-sufficiency in wheat. However, in the case of other vital farm products, it was still necessary to ensure sufficient supplies through trade agreements. *S. L. Lowmes* (Netherlands), speaking for a country whose agriculture depended mainly on exports, stressed the need for a vigorous control of production by means of quotas, whilst the Gold Standard, he thought, should be maintained. The main elements of the policy of the *United States*, as presented by *C. C. Stine* (U.S.A.), were credit aid and regulation of the volume of production. Apparently, the devaluation of the dollar had effectively helped to maintain the level of farm prices. The Farm Credit Administration had been able to stabilize credits, whilst production control concentrated on wheat and cotton. The report of *O. von Frangeš* (Yugoslavia) on the situation of the countries of the *Danube Basin* showed that State measures of price control and credit consolidation must fail where there was an insuperable lack of funds for such purposes. Here the only hope lay in a complete shift of the structure of farm output away from the preponderance of wheat to a greater diversity of marketable production and to trade agreements with importing countries. *Great Britain* and the *Dominions* seemed to have reaped the greatest advantage from the Ottawa

Agreements. These countries also relied very strongly on marketing boards, as both *J. P. Maxton* (Great Britain) and *J. E. Lattimer* (Canada) pointed out.

In the discussions on the *Social and Economic Aspects of Farm Organization* both the problems of the family farm and the new forms of farm organization in the Soviet Union were reviewed. *A. W. Ashby* (Great Britain) gave a very comprehensive and finely differentiated outline of the characteristics of the family farm and showed that social and psychological factors tend to outweigh the economic weakness of this type. *P. Borgedal* (Norway) fully supported the family farm as the most efficient type under Norwegian conditions. *O. Schiller* and *E. Lang* (both of Germany) gave a critical appraisal of the new forms of farm organization in the *Soviet Union*. They regarded the suppression of individual initiative and the neglect of livestock farming as inherent weaknesses of the collective system, whilst the State farms were oversized and over-specialized and also far too dependent on a centralized bureaucracy.

As introduction to the debates on *International Policies Relating to Agriculture*, *C. H. Taylor* (U.S.A.) presented a paper that would still command interest today. He underlined that any extreme nationalism must always be a great danger to successful international planning. The United States had in his opinion made a great mistake by adhering to tariff protection after having become a creditor country. The most important prerequisite for international planning must be sufficient reliable data. And in order to be effective, international planning must be anchored in international treaties. Quotas were only tolerable as short-term emergency measure. He finally emphasized that international planning in agriculture must be part of comprehensive economic planning. *E. M. H. Lloyd* (Great Britain) discussed international planning as a means of regulating supplies on the basis of the discussions of the World Economic Conference (London 1933). Increase of demand should always be more important than reduction of production. He also reviewed the effects of international agreements on rubber, sugar and coffee. The poor results in the case of sugar clearly proved the need for including all important producers in such agreements.

**The Fourth Conference, St. Andrews (Scotland)
30th August to 5th September 1936**

When the Conference met in 1936, the World Depression no longer dominated the agrarian scene. But it had left in its wake an agriculture that was very different to that of the late twenties. Government policies of control and guidance, originally conceived as temporary emergency measures, had definitely become permanent, partly because it was neither easy nor advisable

to change them quickly, partly because they fitted admirably the political and economic creeds that had come to govern the political life of a number of nations. Mechanization was a further economic factor that was gaining ever greater influence on the ways of farming in almost all countries. Finally, the great crisis had unmistakably revealed that, for better or for worse, farming was inseparably tied to the other sections of the economy.

Such considerations influenced the programme prepared for the Conference which met at the University of St. Andrews in Scotland. As the President pointed out in his opening address, events had proved that the time had come for a synthesis of scientific research, economic thinking and sociology and psychology. At least three main themes of the Conference were closely linked to the question: What is the place of agriculture and its institutions in such a synthesis?

The Conference was attended by 220 persons coming from 22 countries. A number of them had taken part in a pre-Conference tour. It had introduced them to efficient Scottish farming, to the beauties of the country and to the striking characteristics of the Scot and also to some problems of the Scottish farm workers.

The main themes of the Conference can be grouped as follows:

1. 'The Relation of Agriculture to Industry and the Community'.
2. 'Land Tenure and Economic and Social Development of Agriculture'.
3. 'Farm Organization with Special Reference to the Need for Development of Agriculture'.
4. 'The Provision of Agricultural Credit'.
5. 'Problems of International Trade and Agricultural Marketing'.

The first subject was treated by *W. R. Scott* (Scotland). He posed the question whether, in view of the increasing importance of State action and planning, classical economic theory still held good. Discussion centred around this point. The broad subject of *Land Tenure* was presented by *M. Sering* (Germany) and *A. W. Ashby* (Great Britain). *M. Sering* stressed the very different effects of historical factors on the system of land tenure in Germany, as compared to Great Britain, with the result that the family farm was still very important in Germany, as against the preponderance of capitalistic farming in Great Britain. *A. W. Ashby* emphasized the weight of the long-term view of the entrepreneur, in contrast to the interest of the operator in current returns, both being inherent parts of land tenure in Great Britain. He also pointed out how social stratification and the aspects of exploitation of labour influenced the forms of land tenure. In the discussion, interesting reports on the land tenure systems and the resulting economic and social problems of Canada and France were given by *J. E. Lattimer* (Canada) and *L. Drescher* (Germany).

The problems of *Farm Organization with Reference to the Development of Agriculture* were presented by *A. Bridges* (Great Britain) and *H. Zörner* (Germany). *Bridges* reviewed the forms of farm organization and farm size from the point of view of best utilization of capital, labour and management, whereas *Zörner* defended the family farm — which had not come off best in *Bridges*' paper — for economic, social and political reasons. A subsequent paper by *A. Boss* (U.S.A.) on the *Evolution of the American Family Farm* very clearly outlined the development from the original subsistence homesteads of the early settlers to modern economic and social units under the influence of expanding markets, mechanization and growing use of capital. As was pointed out in the discussion, this paper clearly demonstrated what a heterogeneous mass of types were included under the term "family farm", so that greater precision of terminology was urgently needed.

The most important papers on the subject of *Farm Credit* dealt with the Farm Credit Administration of the United States. *F. F. Hill* (U.S.A.) gave a detailed account of this organization and its task in checking the flood of foreclosures by means of credit consolidation and in providing cheap credit for productive purposes. Following up this paper, *A. L. Deering* (U.S.A.) reported on practical results of this system, whilst *E. H. Thomson* (U.S.A.) handled the problems of mortgage credit in the United States.

The discussions on *International Trade and Agricultural Marketing* were introduced by a paper by *A. Cairns* (Great Britain) on the outlook for international trade in farm products. He gave a pessimistic forecast, mainly because in importing countries the wheat price was a political price, designed to support the nationalistic agricultural policy in many countries which aimed at boosting home production at the expense of imports. This created great insecurity in the exporting countries. These views were largely shared in the discussion. *H. C. Taylor* (U.S.A.) doubted whether the responsible politicians were really guided by economic reasoning in making their decisions.

Papers by *W. H. Bronson* (U.S.A.) and *J. Davis* (Great Britain) dealt with the problems of the regulation of the market for milk in the countries of the speakers. These papers were supplemented by others dealing with marketing questions from the angle of the consumers, their habits and their demands.

**The Fifth Conference, Macdonald College, McGill University (Canada)
21st to 28th August 1938**

The fifth meeting of the Conference took place on the campus of Macdonald College at Ste. Anne de Bellevue (Quebec Province). As an introduction to Canada, there was a remarkably instructive and pleasant study trip through a great part of Quebec Province. The Conference was attended by 510 persons from 23 countries. For the first time since the founding of the Conference the

President had the sad duty of announcing the death of two members: *G. F. Warren* and *H. Zörner*. Both had rendered eminent service to the Conference.

In his opening address the President said that this meeting should carry on the work of the St. Andrews session by reviewing economic problems of agriculture in their social implications. This was the purpose of three of the four main Conference themes:

1. 'The Social Implications of Economic Progress in Present-day Agriculture'.
2. 'Land Tenure and the Social Control of the Use of Land'.
3. 'Farm Labour and Social Standards'.
4. 'International Trade in Relation to Agricultural Development'.

Additional papers were read which had more the character of national reports on specific subjects. Finally, group work on selected matters was definitely incorporated in the programme after tentative experiments at earlier meetings.

The opening paper on the *Social Implications of Economic Progress in Agriculture* was given by *J. F. Booth* (Canada). In the course of development of farming in Canada political action shifted from the individual farmer to economic groups or nationwide problems. But in times of falling prices the social problem is always the fate of the individual. *M. L. Wilson* (U.S.A.) doubted whether prevailing economic and political trends were ever entirely compatible with social aims. He distinguished between the commercial and the subsistence farmer, the latter being particularly subject to non-economic influences. In the prolonged discussion *A. W. Ashby* (Great Britain) denied that economic and technological progress must always cause social maladjustments on the land. *H. Niehaus* (Germany) emphasized that there was general agreement on the need for better co-ordination of economic, technological and social progress and that to this end some degree of State action is inevitable. The subject of *Land Tenure and the Social Control of the Use of Land* was the subject of a paper submitted by *C. von Dietze* (Germany). In the absence of the author it was read to the meeting. It reviewed in detail the growth of liberal policies of land tenure after the fall of feudalism, and cited the Homestead Act as an example. But in the course of the great economic and social developments of the 19th century complete liberalism could not be maintained. Largely for social reasons policies were introduced which aimed at control of the use of land. Examples were laws for counteracting fragmentation of holdings or for preventing the expansion of latifundia, or land reform legislation and the protection of the rights of tenants. The complete abandonment of all liberal policy leads to collectivization and State ownership. The second paper on the same subject was read by *H. C. Taylor* (U.S.A.): Freedom was the guiding principle of land tenure in early American farming. But the present generation was willing to "trade freedom for security". Freedom might be good for the most competent, but others preferred security.

In American policy, control by the State, by management and credit institutions is spreading. It is often social as well as economic. Although voluntary in theory (as is the Agricultural Administration Act), it is compulsory under the pressure of production limiting policies. Control over farming can do harm as well as good. It fails to prevent excessively high land prices and has done nothing to move people out of farming. *Taylor* pleaded for better education for all, as being in the long run far more effective than any short-term action. In the very lively discussion, *A. Stewart* (Canada) made the point that effective control tended to bring more production into inelastic markets. *J. D. Black* (U.S.A.) supplemented *Taylor's* statements by saying that the aim of U.S. policy was primarily the more effective use of resources, and not security. *V. S. Timoshenko* (U.S.A.) gave a detailed critical analysis of collective and State use of land in the U.S.S.R. *Farm Labour and Social Standards* was the subject introduced by *F. W. von Bülow* (ILO, Geneva). The wage level and the social security of farm workers had always lagged behind urban levels. In the Depression widespread unemployment had brought great hardships to farm workers. However, recent investigations of ILO showed that today collective bargaining was almost universal and that social conditions were improving. But in agrarian countries rural overpopulation and underemployment were still common, whilst in industrial countries seasonal lack of home labour had brought back alien labour once again. In spite of higher wage levels working conditions were still unsatisfactory. Control in agriculture should also embrace the farm labour problem. The second paper on this subject was given by *J. F. Duncan* (Great Britain): Originally the first steps towards the attainment of social standards were made by voluntary institutions of the workers, and only later by the State. Although the work of ILO had given great impetus to the establishment of social standards, where they exist in agriculture they are low. Satisfactory levels in this sector cannot be attained without regard to the social standards of industrial labour, otherwise the rural exodus would continue and would endanger also the labour system of the family farm. Discussion on the two papers showed unanimity on the need for improved social standards for farm labour, but did not get very far in showing how they were to be achieved.

The subject of *International Trade in Relation to Agricultural Development* was opened by *G. Minderhoud* (Netherlands). Although absolute Free Trade never existed, world trade expanded steadily prior to 1914. After the war the trend towards an increase in self-sufficiency in food persisted. International trade became dependent on bilateral treaties; the "most-favoured nation clause" was made ineffective, and restrictions on the international circulation of gold and currencies created great divergencies of national price levels. The volume of international trade fell and its channels were changed. *Minderhoud* confirmed the pessimistic forecast of *Cairns* at the St. Andrews meeting: The trend towards further government control was irresistible and international trade would continue to shrink. *H. A. Wallace* (U.S.A.) outlined the U.S. policy in international trade. American loans had had a bad effect on international trade in the twenties, as the credits had not been used for

productive purposes and the U.S.A. had failed to use payments on foreign credits for buying in debtor countries. But he advocated a policy of moderate foreign loans as part of the U.S. Middle Course Policy. The aim was to increase imports as far as was compatible with home production through the Trade Agreements Programme. Agriculture should be adjusted to a lower volume of exports. This policy was opposed by pressure groups and impeded by mistrust of highly nationalistic policies in Europe. Without sharing the pessimism of the first speaker, this paper was not optimistic concerning the immediate future of world trade. Nor did the discussion reveal great hopes.

The sectional group meetings proved extremely useful in enabling members to exchange experience and ideas on the following subjects:

- International use of agricultural statistics.
- Research in farm management.
- Research in marketing.
- The significance of economic extension work.
- Rural rehabilitation and resettlement.
- Price analysis.

The fifth meeting of the Conference closed under the cloud of the Czechoslovakian Crisis — a portent of the impending catastrophe. The first period of the International Conference of Agricultural Economists had come to an end.

In the first ten years of its existence there had been five meetings. It had developed from the informal gathering of fifty men at Dartington Hall into an institution numbering over four hundred members from thirty-four countries. Its proceedings give a picture of the reactions of economists to the vicissitudes of farming all over the world and of the trends of agricultural policy between the two World Wars. This period was first characterized by the struggle against the maladjustments resulting from the First World War. The failure of this struggle was evident in the Great Depression. All efforts to cope with this disaster led to government action of unprecedented scope in all countries. Whatever may have been the part played by Liberalism and Free Trade prior to 1914 in the framing of actual policy or in the formulation of concepts of scientists, it had now vanished.

The personalities who had put their stamp on the first period of the Conference were the men who had given true scientific status to agricultural economics. Inspired by the President, men such as *A. W. Ashby*, *J. F. Duncan*, *C. E. Ladd*, *G. Minderhoud*, *M. Sering*, *H. C. Taylor*, *G. F. Warren* and others, all combined to give a high academic level to the proceedings of the Conference. Together with many other members and above all with the President and his collaborators *J. P. Maxton* and *J. R. Currie* they created a spirit of enduring friendship.

These assets — a high level of impartial scholarship and true community of spirit — were the basis on which the Conference might and could be built up again, albeit in a world of ruin.

III. The Immediate Post-War Period — 1947 to 1955

The Sixth Conference, Dartington Hall, Devon (England) 28th August to 6th September 1947

Thanks to the efforts of the President and his collaborators and to generous co-operation on both sides of the Atlantic, the Conference was able after the war to meet again at Dartington Hall in 1947. Owing to the conditions of the immediate post-war period it could only be a comparatively small gathering. But 82 people from 12 countries found their way to Dartington Hall, among them twelve veterans of the first Conference held on the same spot. The exceptionally pleasant surroundings at Dartington Hall created a remarkably intimate atmosphere and helped to renew old friendships and to make new contacts.

Although the world was still suffering acutely from the hardships of the war, the subject matter of the meeting was directed not to the past but to the future. The subjects were:

1. 'The Movement of Farm Population'.
2. 'The Flexibility of Land Tenure, Capital and Credit Systems to Meet Technical, Economic and Social Developments'.
3. 'The Effectiveness of Market Mechanism for Adjusting Farming to Public Need'.
4. 'The Place of State Buying and Selling in Free World Trading'.
5. 'The Human Satisfaction of Rural Work and Rural Living'.

In addition there were fourteen non-discussion papers, many of them in some way related to the main themes.

In introducing the subject of *Movement of Farm Population*, J. P. Maxton (Great Britain) brought up many points which remained crucial for a long time and occupied later Conferences repeatedly. He dealt with emigration, movement out of farming into the industries, and movement from bad to good land as different forms of mobility. In discussing policies of influencing population movements he advocated the creation of effective incentives. In discussion, numerous aspects of mobility of population in many countries were brought up, in connexion with problems of age, professional training and movement of capital.

R. R. Renne (U.S.A.), in opening the subject of *Flexibility of Land Tenure, Capital and Credit Systems*, reviewed the land tenure systems of the U.S.A.,

their problems and their flexibility. In dealing with the various aspects of tenancy, he made pertinent comparisons with the British Agricultural Act. Recent legislation of American States was designed to overcome the inherently weak points of existing land tenure conditions, such as absentee ownership, fragmentation of ownership and their consequences by providing for the formation of "districts" regardless of ownership boundaries for grazing, soil conservation, etc. Renne stressed the need for realistic valuation of capital as a basis for credit and for flexible methods of repayment.

In the discussion much information was given concerning land tenure problems in various countries. E. O. Heady (U.S.A.) contributed a systematic analysis of the possible aims of land tenure policies.

In introducing the subject of the *Effectiveness of Market Mechanism for Adjusting Farming to Public Need*, L. J. Norton (U.S.A.) stated his conviction that the market mechanism had effectively mastered the great problems of adjustment in the U.S.A. with a minimum of State interference. He was convinced that the less government intervened and the more it devoted itself to the promotion of education and research, the better the public would be served. As E. F. Nash (Great Britain) said in discussion, "this was the cool wind of honest *laissez-faire* optimism from the Middle West". Other speakers held State action to be inevitable in times of emergency, in face of monopolies and wherever, as often was the case, the market mechanism was too slow in adjusting to change. But the limits, dangers and preconditions of price control policies were also emphasized, particularly by J. H. Kirk and A. W. Ashby (both of Great Britain).

A. C. Gilpin (United Nations, Geneva) spoke on the theme: *The Place of State Buying and Selling in Free World Trading*. He defined "free world trade" as trade carried out predominantly in a private enterprise framework. The main factor favouring State trading at the cost of private enterprise was the acute lack of balance of payments between the U.S.A. and the rest of the world. Only the U.S.A. could put international purchasing power into circulation. It was to be hoped that borrowers would make productive use of credits and that the U.S.A. would accept imports in payment of credit costs. The speaker outlined the Charter of the International Trade Association that was under consideration, and discussed what might be the functions of this organization in stimulating international trade.

A. W. Ashby (Great Britain) opened his paper on the *Human Satisfaction of Rural Work and Living* with a review of the most common needs that rural life ought to satisfy, and emphasized the difference between rural and farm life. One factor limiting the satisfaction gained in rural life was the fact that many farmers entered the profession more by inheritance than by choice. Furthermore, in many countries underemployment, primitive working conditions and low income levels caused a great lack of satisfaction in agriculture. Improved technology, better education and consequently higher incomes might improve the situation. Non-agricultural rural life was approaching

urban life in its needs and desires and in the means of satisfying them. In the discussion, most of the speakers fully agreed with *Ashby*. Only *R. Henderson* (Great Britain) claimed that farming as a way of life offered satisfactions never to be found in the cities. American speakers emphasized that mechanization gave satisfaction to farmers quite apart from its effects on farm incomes.

The non-discussion papers mostly took the form of national reports on farming and agricultural policies in various countries. They are valuable as documentation of the state of agriculture and its most urgent needs in the immediate post-war period.

During the Conference a number of short visits to neighbouring farms were made, and after the meeting had closed a bus trip of one week took a number of members through a great part of the South of England and the Midlands.

For the period 1947 to 1949 *G. Minderhoud* (Netherlands) and *E. C. Young* (U.S.A.) were elected Vice-Presidents as successors of *G. F. Warren* and *M. Sering*, both deceased.

The Seventh Conference, Stresa (Italy) 21st to 27th August 1949

The seventh meeting of the Conference was held at Stresa on the shores of Lago Maggiore. The British group made a pre-Conference tour, landing them at Stresa. According to all reports, it must have been something of an epic, needing all the leadership of *Jock Currie* to get the busses and their occupants over the Alps. The Conference was attended by 271 persons hailing from 25 countries.

As introduction to the guest country, the programme included a number of papers on farming and agricultural policy in *Italy*. The three main subjects of the Conference were closely interrelated. They were:

1. 'Diagnosis and Pathology of Peasant Farming'.
2. 'Agricultural Co-operation and the Modern State'.
3. 'The Spread of Industry into Rural Areas'.

G. Medici (Italy) introduced the first subject. Peasant farming took different forms according to the relations between the farmer and the land: owner-operation, tenancy, *métayage*. Originally, self-sufficiency was common to all types, but this changed with the growth of a market economy. The pathological symptoms of peasant farming stemmed from rural overpopulation with consequent fragmentation of holdings and with underemployment. Industrialization relieved the pressure on the land, family farmers sought owner-operation, or else capitalistic large farms with hired labour predominated.

Where family farmers gained ownership, they often attained high efficiency. But with the continuation of rural overpopulation and lack of industrialization, pathological conditions persisted. The only remedies were economic development and education. In the discussion attention was drawn to the very diverse forms of family and peasant farms that existed, to the role of co-operatives in promoting the efficiency of family farms and to the need for a more precise study of the effects of industrialization. Together with the Conference trips, this discussion awakened the interest of many overseas members in European peasant farming and its problems. *A. W. Ashby* (Great Britain) introduced the subject of *Agricultural Co-operation and the Modern State*. Both co-operatives and governments' systems vary greatly. Recently the Welfare State assumed responsibility for many functions hitherto fulfilled by co-operatives; they all sought to enable "members to pursue mutual interests in obtaining service at cost, by mutual action, in mutual confidence". Trading co-operatives faced the problem of compelling the member to deal solely with and through his co-operative. The State was willing to promote co-operatives and to use them to help implement State policies, e.g. by participation in land consolidation projects, or by co-operative distribution of water in State irrigation schemes. In Palestine, Yugoslavia and Russia voluntary co-operative organizations and State trading co-existed. The speaker suggested that "the only option for those who fear collectivization is that of starting immediately to build the co-operative commonwealth". In the second opening paper on this subject *V. Visocchi* (Italy) discussed the economic theory of co-operatives and then referred to the seven basic principles of co-operatives as set up by the International Co-operative Conference (Vienna, 1930) but not always fulfilled: Open membership, democratic control, dividend on purchases, limited interest on capital, political and religious neutrality, cash trading, promotion of education. He discussed their applicability to rural co-operatives. States might delegate certain functions to co-operatives, e.g. the creation of a compulsory dairy system (as in Ireland), or the formation of compulsory pooling organizations. In Russia, rural co-operatives were still tolerated side by side with collectives and State farms. Finally the speaker reviewed the development and present forms of co-operatives in Italy. The discussion produced many statements on the development of co-operatives in various countries and an account of the intricate system of numerous forms of co-operation in Israel. Opinions were divided as to the usefulness of machinery co-operatives as a means of economic mechanization of small farms.

In the opening paper on the *Spread of Industry into Rural Areas*, *R. G. Tugwell* (U.S.A.) gave an analysis of the subject that is still of interest today. The problem was not so much the expansion of industries, but the choice of the location and the type of industry. The problems of bringing industries into rural areas were very different in advanced areas in comparison to backward regions. In advanced countries industrialization of rural areas meant integration of rural society into the industrial society and industrialization of agriculture itself. In backward areas the first aim was to create "minimum conditions upon which the autonomous spiral of industrial advance could

operate", which meant infusion of technical services and capital. Apart from philanthropic motives, aid from outside could be inspired by the wish for political security and the desire to find profitable investments and markets. The process of industrialization should start by creating sounder conditions in farming itself and by establishing small industries, often on the basis of industrial raw material. Credit grants had to be combined with supervision. One of the many reasons for this might be the predominance of a privileged class averse to progress. In the discussion a number of speakers confirmed the statements of Tugwell and supplemented them by showing that per capita income increased in inverse proportion to the number of workers in agriculture (*L. H. Bean*, U.S.A.), or by emphasizing that the industrialization of rural areas created additional markets for farm products (*M. Tofani*, Italy).

Both the papers themselves and the discussion brought out very sharply the close interrelations of the three main subjects of the Conference. Among the non-discussion papers, that of *Sir Manilal Nanavati* (India) on the progress of *Co-operation in Indian Agriculture* very ably supplemented what Ashby and Visocchi had said on this subject. *B. H. Thibodeaux* (U.S.A.) gave an account of the European Recovery Programme (ERP), one of the most powerful agencies in the revival of European economy in the first post-war decade.

Post-Conference excursions took the participants through the Po Valley and to Rome. Many farms and agricultural industrial establishments were visited. In addition to the warm hospitality offered on these occasions, rapid glances at the artistic beauties of old Italian cities gave a special charm to these tours.

For the period 1949 to 1952 the Vice-Presidents *G. Minderhoud* (Netherlands) and *E. C. Young* (USA) remained in office. Two new Vice-Presidents were elected: *A. W. Ashby* (Great Britain) and *Sir Manilal Nanavati* (India).

**The Eighth Conference, Michigan State College, East Lansing (U.S.A.)
15th to 22nd August 1952**

For the eighth meeting the Conference assembled at Michigan State College, East Lansing. It was attended by 340 persons from 45 countries. A number of tours were organized in connexion with the Conference, giving members the opportunity of seeing a great deal of American farming and rural life, and at Lansing the American hosts and their families offered very warm and welcome hospitality.

In his opening address the President stated that one of the basic themes of the Conference was: the problems and objectives of agricultural economics in the light of world-wide needs and resources. This brought the problems of

the less developed countries into the orbit of the Conference proceedings. The subject was treated under the following titles:

1. 'The Economics of Population and Food Supplies'.
2. 'The Economic Objectives of FAO, Point IV and the Colombo Plan'.
3. 'The Problems of Planning Agricultural Programmes in Less Developed Countries'.
4. 'Agricultural Developments in the Tropics and Sub-Tropics: Ways and Means'.

The first paper on *Population and Food Supplies* was given by *F. W. Notestein* (U.S.A.): Population growth is tied to complicated, interrelated economic, social and demographic processes. In Europe population grew greatly owing to reduced mortality; a corresponding fall of the birth rate only came later when in a mainly industrial society the small family became the social ideal. Will non-European nations react in the same way? Japan has done so. But in the great densely populated areas of high fertility death rates will fall but high birth rates will persist. The result will be enormous problems of moving population from farms to industries and of feeding rapidly growing masses. Research is urgently needed in order to be able to cope with the problems of these areas.

Speaking of the problems of *Population Growth and Food Supplies*, *J. D. Black* (U.S.A.) gave a comparative analysis of the present situation and probable trends in all parts of the world: In North America and Europe the full application of known techniques could step up food production faster than demand would grow due to population increase. In East and South-East Asia, Japan might have difficulties in placing the exports which were needed to pay for food imports. India would have to make great efforts both in food production and in slowing down population growth. Other parts of Asia had land reserves, but their exploitation would require high capital investments. In Latin America and Africa there was a danger that agricultural development might make for more and bigger plantations and for more and smaller holdings, both undesirable for economic and social reasons. The developed countries could not embark on a policy of wholesale food production for the less developed areas. The problem is that of wise integration of food production and population policies, country by country.

K. Brandt (U.S.A.) analysed the *Economic Objectives of FAO, Point IV and Colombo Plan*. After explaining the origin and functions of these organizations, he emphasized that all activities of these agencies in developing countries must be followed up by action of the aid-receiving governments themselves: Investment capital must be efficiently utilized; competent administration, including educational and advisory services was essential, and many things such as better infrastructure, improved market facilities, etc would be needed in order to gain full benefit from the aid provided.

J. R. Raeburn (Great Britain), speaking of *Agricultural Development in the Tropics*, emphasized the limited scientific knowledge available for designing development schemes, particularly concerning the consequences of disruption of traditional social systems. More attention should be paid to a comprehensive analysis of benefit-cost relations as a sound starting-point. A review of the factors causing success or failure of past schemes revealed the importance of land tenure and credit systems, particularly of indigenous farmers, scientific research on the spot and effective extension work. Often improvement of farming without change of structure could be extremely effective and could in great part be implemented by research on the spot and extension services, without heavy capital outlay. Correct blending of skills, management and capital was essential. The Conference also devoted considerable time to the discussion of *Professional Problems in Agricultural Economics*, such as the training of agricultural economists and research and extension workers. Thus themes that had formed an important part of the early Conferences and that had been treated in group work at the Canadian meeting were picked up again and led to very animated discussions.

In an extremely interesting paper on *Economic Problems in the Integration of Western European Agriculture*, G. Minderhoud (Netherlands) outlined the great economic and political difficulties of achieving integration. In reviewing the possibilities, he stipulated as essential the free exchange of men as well as of goods and capital. This idea later became a basic principle of the Treaty of Rome. He also foresaw practically all the problems that are still being debated at Brussels now in 1970. E. F. Nash (Great Britain) made an important contribution to world-wide development problems with a paper on *World Purchasing Power in Relation to Food Production*.

Taken as a whole, the papers on problems and objectives of agricultural economics in connexion with the less developed parts of the world were certainly the most important contribution of the eighth Conference. In many ways they broke new ground and developed lines of thought that twice within the next ten years led to the decision to hold meetings in less developed countries.

Since the last meeting the Conference had had to deplore the death of J. P. Maxton. He had not only fulfilled the task of editor of the *Conference Proceedings*, he had also acted as chief engineer of programme building for the meetings. His successor at Oxford, Roger Dixey, became editor of the *Proceedings* and of the *International Journal of Agrarian Affairs*. Furthermore, the Council decided to do away with Honorary Vice-Presidents altogether, and to give a single Vice-President the task of programme builder for succeeding Conferences in consultation with the President, the Executive Officers and former Presidents. Professor E. Thomas, of Reading University, was asked to prepare a programme for the next meeting, as Vice-President.

The Ninth Conference, Otaniemi (Finland) 19th to 26th August 1955

The ninth Conference was held at Otaniemi, not far from Helsinki, in the summer quarters of the Technical College of Helsinki. The attendance was 364 persons from 38 countries, including for the first time since the war a Russian and a Chinese delegation. There were extensive pre- and post-Conference trips which included parts of Denmark and Sweden in their itinerary. During the Conference members enjoyed remarkable hospitality at the homes of their Finnish hosts.

As the President outlined in his address, agriculture was under the impact of technical progress which made for rapid and far-reaching changes. The problems connected with technical advance in the broadest sense were the central theme of the Conference and were dealt with in some twenty papers under economic, sociological and regional aspects.

Five regional papers on *Technical Change* in different environments covered great parts of Europe, Asia, Latin and North America. They proved that technical progress took very different forms: in the less developed areas, the first steps were the improvement of primitive production techniques; in advanced regions, the massive replacement of labour by capital was typical. But almost everywhere, there was the problem of the double effect of technical advance: higher productivity both of land and labour, and always there is the need for a balanced economy capable of absorbing higher production and redundant labour. Important factors governing the spread of technical change were the mentality of the farmers (subsistence or commercial), the size of the farms and the land tenure systems, the quality of management, educational and advisory services based on research, and the provision of capital. Many of these needs can only be met by considerable State action.

E. Colon-Torres (Puerto Rico) stressed that economic progress must be consistent with social and cultural aims and that this must be taken into account in the training of technicians. J. R. Bellerby (Great Britain) introduced the problem of agriculture's share of the benefits accruing from technical progress. The ratio of farm income must be relatively low owing to low prices and income inelasticity for farm products, the flexibility of expansion (but not reduction) of farm output and the relatively low cost of farm labour. Thus technical progress would not tend to raise the relative level of farm income, but in the long run cheaper supplies of industrial goods and services might tend to raise the purchasing power of farmers. C. Clark (Great Britain) emphasized the long-run positive effect of education and prophesied that a strong growth of population would create increased demand. In discussing the problems of *Finance of Capital Required for Technical Change*, W. G. Murray (U.S.A.) advocated a certain degree of State action in providing and controlling credit because of the volume and peculiar nature of this type of credit. A vital problem was thorough farm-management training of those responsible for allocation and control of credits for financing technical progress.

On the subject of the *Adequacy of Existing Institutions*, J. Horring (Netherlands) reviewed the necessary technical standards of land tenure: tenancy with long-term security and freedom of action for the tenant; in general, promotion of desirable farm size and scope for co-operative action. Speaking of size and lay-out of farms, H. Niehaus (Germany) advocated sufficiently large family farms. M. Bandini (Italy) discussed the factors that should be taken into account in all forms of land settlement in the interest of technical progress, e. g. well directed subsidies, promotion of co-operatives, prevention of fragmentation, price and market policies. K. L. Robinson (U.S.A.) pointed out that State action is often needed to eliminate obstacles to technical progress, but that long-term policies to this end are often subject to political obstruction, whereas many forms of short-time policy intended to foster progress often tended to perpetuate old customs instead of stimulating progress. The members of the Russian delegation reviewed in their papers current problems and achievements of technical progress in their own country. A. V. Bolgov (U.S.S.R.) described the present structure of agriculture with its three elements (sovkhoz, kolkhoz, MTS) as a realization of Marxist theory and gave examples of its success. The principles of agricultural planning within this structure were based on the complex character of agriculture and its correlation with the industries. Planning proceeded down from the national level to the level of each farm unit. It embraced production, distribution, utilization of capital and income for investments and payment of workers. K. P. Obolensky (U.S.S.R.) discussed the role of science in attaining the targets of agricultural planning and described the organization and co-ordination of research. In particular, he spoke of research concerning allocation and specialization of production and regional development. Both papers gave rise to a lively and often critical discussion. The Russian speakers gave their answers to the numerous questions in the form of a written statement.

At the end of the meeting H. C. M. Case (U.S.A.) took over the post of General Secretary-Treasurer, and J. R. Currie (Great Britain) assumed the office of Honorary Secretary.

With the meeting in Finland the Conference definitely completed the chapter of recovery after the Second World War. Attendance and membership surpassed the figures for 1938, and the reappearance of a delegation from the U.S.S.R. restored the situation as it had been before political developments in Central Europe caused the U.S.S.R. to withdraw from the Conference.

With the decision to hold the 1958 meeting in India, the Conference broke new ground. This step demonstrated that the Conference had outgrown the status of a quite preponderantly North American-European institution and had attained world-wide scope and recognition. It was a confirmation of the development since 1947. Important papers had been contributed by members from India and Latin America; the contributions of members from the so-called less developed countries to discussion had been vigorous and often very enlightening; the number of members hailing from Asia, Africa and Latin America had risen from 12 in 1949 to 43 in 1955.

In the 1947—1955 period many members of the "founder generation" still played a leading part in the proceedings of the Conference: H. C. Taylor, G. Minderhoud and particularly A. W. Ashby, whose death was a great loss to the Conference. But others — pre-war veterans and newcomers — came to the fore in these years: amongst others E. Thomas, L. J. Norton, H. C. M. Case, J. Ackerman, G. Medici and the two Indian members who did so much to draw the attention of the Conference to the countries of the Tropics: Sir Manilal Nanavati and S. R. Sen.

IV. The Period of World-Wide Meetings

The Tenth Conference, Mysore (India) 24th August to 3rd September 1958

The tenth Conference was splendidly housed in the Lalitha Mahal Palace at Mysore. On the opening morning the Maharajah of Mysore sent his elephants to greet the Conference members — 350 in number — in their hotels.

India's official welcome to the Conference was expressed by Prime Minister Pandit Nehru himself. For over an hour the audience sat spellbound listening to a great statesman pleading the cause of his country — an unforgettable experience.

In opening the proceedings the President L. K. Elmhirst gave an account of his many connexions with India and Indians and then outlined the central theme of the Conference: *Agriculture and its Terms of Trade* — a consideration of the problems of balance between agriculture and other activities in the process of economic growth of states and in the development of a sound world economy, in its bearings on agriculture both in developed and less developed regions.

The Shifting Fortunes of Agriculture in General was the theme of W. A. Lewis (Great Britain): The factorial terms of trade depended on the comparative growth of productivity inside and outside agriculture, on the demand for agricultural and non-agricultural products and on the mobility of population. At all stages of development "the main remedy for farmers' ills must be to have fewer farmers". Movement out of farming must be highest in developed regions where production of food grows faster than consumption, but must also act in less developed areas with high demographic pressure on the land. Speaking of the developed countries, D. G. Johnson (U.S.A.) stated that returns to labour were lower in agriculture than in other occupations because of high birth rates, low income elasticity of the demand for food and because of technological progress. The result was at least a relative decline of farm labour through migration. The long-run effect of State policies

was often low because they failed to produce this result. Decrease of farm labour must be balanced by investments raising labour productivity. The shifting fortunes of farmers of the less developed countries were discussed by *D. R. Gadgil* (India): In all these countries production in industries rose faster than in agriculture, where yields stagnated, so that one farm worker could scarcely feed two persons. Economic insecurity, due to instability of yields and prices, growth of unsalable surplus owing to the displacement of agricultural raw materials by synthetics, immobility as a result of rapid growth of population and lack of occupations outside farming were the main causes of low farm income. Unless the vicious circle is broken, there is little hope for an upward trend in the fortunes of farmers. The subjects of movement of rural population (a hardy perennial of many meetings) was taken up by *K. O. Campbell* (Australia).

Speaking of the *Technical Peculiarities of Agricultural Supply*, *Sherman E. Johnson* (U.S.A.) compared commercial and subsistence farming as the two main types of developed or less developed areas. Commercial farmers reacted to the profit incentive by increasing cash turnover; the use of non-farm inputs rose. Long-term investments often made it difficult to change the form or volume of production. Besides reducing costs per unit of production, most non-farm inputs tended to raise total outputs. But the main inputs of small subsistence farms were labour and land. Most of the output was consumed on the farm, and often the land tenure system impeded progress. The only answer was an effective combination of technical, economic and institutional changes together with competent leadership.

Many points brought up by speakers were co-ordinated by *U. Aziz* (Malaysia) who discussed the *Interdependent Development of Agriculture and other Industries*. He stated that Imperialism had destroyed the traditional socio-economic rural balance to the disadvantage of farming, both in plantations and in villages. The result was poverty due to low productivity, exploitation by landlords, insecurity of tenancy, exorbitant rates of interest, and lack of investment in agriculture. The remedies were general and vocational education, provision of sufficient cheap working capital, agrarian reform eliminating the exploiter groups, and co-ordination with industrial development, including investments of non-exploitative sources. Other aids would be: effective forms of co-operation and creation of an infrastructure adapted to rural needs. All this called for comprehensive, skilful planning and execution.

A. F. Hanau (Germany) gave a critical analysis of the problems of *Disparate Stability of Farm and Non-Farm Prices*. His conclusions were: Both monetary and non-monetary factors caused the movements of farm prices; raw material and wholesale prices varied more than retail prices, and farm prices more than others. In the long run, disequilibrium in food and agriculture was hard to avoid. Demand shifted with growth of population, per-capita income and income elasticity of demand. But supply changed for quite different reasons: expansion of acreage, rise of yields and productivity of livestock farming. Technology raised output both of land and labour. But the growth of food

production varied between less developed and developed areas. In the latter it tended to outstrip the growth of population. Thus supply and demand were disparate because they depended on very different sets of factors and therefore price fluctuations had very complex causes. As a whole, the price elasticity of demand and supply is low and subject to time-lags, hence price fluctuations on free markets.

In discussing the *Lack of Institutional Flexibility*, *R. Bićanić* (Yugoslavia) gave a socio-economic review of causes and effects of institutional rigidity. In face of migration of farm population, the various groups showed very different degrees of flexibility in their reactions to the "pull-out" factor (higher earnings) and the "push-out" factor (mechanization). The forms of entering and leaving farm life also varied among tribal, family-farm and collectivized socio-economies. The peasant attitude was rigid in face of emigration and in the principles of farm organization. The institutional lack of flexibility in the use of land, capital and other resources was a main reason for the low effect of State policies. In less developed countries local markets showed extreme rigidity at the cost of the often illiterate peasant farmer, who was in the hands of monopolistic trader-cum-moneylender groups.

The plea made by *Aziz* and other speakers for more education was strongly supported by *A. T. Mosher* (U.S.A.) in his paper on the problems of *Education, Research and Extension* with particular emphasis on Asia and Latin America. But *T. H. Strong* (Australia) was rather sceptical about the *Use of Economic Research in Policy-Making*.

During the Conference, excursions were made to villages, tea plantations and forests. They were very effective in bringing Conference members into contact with rural life in India. After the Conference, the Indian Government put two trains of air-conditioned sleeping-cars at the disposal of the Conference. In this rolling hotel a trip was made from Bangalore in the south up to the foothills of the Himalaya. In little more than a week, members saw very much of the Indian countryside, visited most impressive monuments of art and history and inspected great development projects.

At the end of the Conference *L. K. Elmhirst* retired from the post of President after almost thirty years of service, during which he had helped to make the Conference an institution of world-wide standing among agricultural economists. In recognition of this he was elected to the life-long post of Founder-President. His place as President was taken by *Sherman E. Johnson* (Washington, D. C.). He took over the task of preparing the next meeting of the Conference, to be held in Mexico. He had the able assistance of the Vice-President *E. Thomas*, the experienced programme builder of the Conference. *J. Ackerman* (Chicago), already for many years a pillar of strength in the Conference, succeeded *H. C. M. Case* as Secretary-Treasurer. The duties of Secretary, hitherto performed by *J. R. Currie*, were divided between two Regional Secretaries: *J. R. Currie* and *D. G. Karve* (India).

**The Eleventh Conference, Cuernavaca (Mexico)
19th to 30th August 1962**

The eleventh meeting of the Conference was held in the extremely pleasant town of Cuernavaca on the Central Mexican Plateau, some 50 miles from Mexico City. It was attended by 485 members from 67 countries, naturally including a strong Latin American contingent. For the first time since the foundation of the Conference, the Founder-President *L. K. Elmhirst* was unable to attend for reasons of health.

President *Sherman E. Johnson*, in opening the proceedings, introduced the general theme of the Conference: *The Role of Agriculture in Economic Development*. He emphasized the importance of the subject to Latin America and also the achievements of Mexico in economic growth.

The first paper, given by *I. Sventnilson* (Sweden) dealt with the *Concept of Economic Growth*. Economic growth, being not merely an economic, but also a sociological phenomenon, could not be measured by purely economic means such as national accounts. The conclusions of the speaker were: "We must not let growth and the correlated concept of efficiency be interpreted in a narrow technocratic way that excludes important elements of human happiness. We must not let the economist predominate in deciding the targets for the development of society to the detriment of sociological and psychological aspects". *S. Kuznets* (U.S.A.) discussed *Economic Growth and the Contribution of Agriculture*. Economic growth had closely interrelated aggregative, structural and international aspects. The contribution of agriculture lay both in the sale of agricultural products and in the purchase of goods from other sectors in the course of development. Hereby the contribution to national exports could be of strategic importance. Apart from market contributions there were factor contributions in the form of transfer of capital (often as taxes) and of labour to other sectors. The problems of *Regional Agreements for Agricultural Markets* (as a phenomenon of economic growth) were the subject of a paper presented by *S. L. Mansholt* (European Economic Community, Brussels). Bigger economic units can be created by merging national economic systems. The ultimate goal of EEC was a single market based on supra-national co-ordination of economic policy. National policies had usually aimed at shielding farmers from foreign competition. Therefore the problem of including agriculture in the EEC policy arose. The reasons for including agriculture were the interdependence of agriculture and the rest of the economy; the vital importance of agricultural exports to many member countries; the significance of food prices as a cost factor in the non-agricultural sectors; the role of agriculture in economic growth as body of consumers and a manpower reserve. But the inclusion of agriculture exposed farmers to competition and called for great structural changes. Therefore agreement was needed on the goals and methods of a common agricultural policy which must also seek to stabilize food prices in the region, if necessary, by protection. This paper gave rise to long and lively discussion. As an introduction to the subject of the

Contribution of Foreign and Indigenous Capital to Economic Development, *A. K. Cairncross* (Great Britain) had submitted a very scholarly paper. In his absence, it was presented in summary and commented upon by *K. Brandt* (U.S.A.). A very comprehensive historical review revealed that the share of the less developed regions in the flow of international capital had more than doubled since 1913, although investments in agriculture were impeded by unsatisfactory land tenure and farming systems. Investments in mines and plantations, although often condemned, usually led to higher labour productivity and earnings of foreign exchange. *Brandt* proposed that the financing should in part be borne by the host country. He also urged that the reduction of subsidies and price supports to farmers in the industrialized countries would widen the market for vegetable fats and proteins from undeveloped areas. But an essential requirement for investments in the less developed countries was the creation of a social and political environment favourable to economic growth. *O. V. Wells* (U.S.A.) discussed the problems of *Market Structure for Agricultural Development*. He stressed the close connexions between production, marketing, infrastructure and vocational education. Effective marketing development schemes must embrace: supply of means of production, provision of credit to purchase these, marketing co-operatives, transport and storage facilities, and an education of the farmer enabling him to function in this economic environment. The subject of development planning was also taken up by *D. G. Karve* (India). He advocated the *Organization of a Unified Agricultural Development Programme* on the lines of the "Intensive Agricultural Development Programme" put into effect in several regions of India. Both the advantages and the problems of such a form of "blazing a new trail" were reviewed. *Country reports* on the role of agriculture in economic development were presented for Nigeria, Brazil, the Uzbek S.S.R., Ireland and the Federal Republic of Germany. *The Development of Patterns of Farm Units* in the process of development was treated in papers on new lands and settlements, on consolidation of farm holdings and on the experience of large collective and State farms of the U.S.S.R. The complex matter of social, economic and political environment was covered by papers on the *Educational Environment*, the *Sociological Environment*, the *Institutional Environment* and on *Health and Nutrition*.

A problem of peculiar interest to the scientist is the *Use of Research Findings in Policy Issues*. It was discussed by *M. Ezekiel* (FAO, Rome). A first effort of the State to find the necessary data for policy-making on a research basis was the foundation of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics in Washington, D. C. Later, the pioneer work of *J. Boyd Orr* and *J. M. Keynes* strongly influenced economic policies. The introduction of methods of quantitative economic research made it possible to provide research findings of greater value for policy-making. After the Second World War, the provision of research results on a supra-national level and designed for specific purposes became the task of FAO. In view of the *Development of Research Methods*, the paper of *Earl O. Heady* was of great value. Modern methods were reviewed critically and not without an enlivening sense of humour. The point

was emphasized that the choice of method required a searching analysis of the research problem before the decision was made. This paper revealed the revolutionary development of research methods since *G. F. Warren* spoke on this subject at the first Conference in 1929. A number of *work groups*, efficiently prepared and organized by *H. Trelogan* (U.S.A.) were actively engaged in discussing specific subjects during the Conference. A number of day trips were also made to objects both of agricultural and historical interest. After the Conference, members had the choice of several longer trips to various parts of Mexico.

With the end of the Conference, *Sherman E. Johnson* retired from the office of President. He was succeeded by *Nils Westermarck* (Helsinki). The name of the Conference was changed into "*International Association of Agricultural Economists*" (I.A.A.E.).

The Twelfth Conference, Lyon (France) 24th August to 2nd September 1965

The twelfth Conference was held at the Palais des Congrès at Lyon. The members were very comfortably lodged in the modern Cité Universitaire. The Conference attendance reached the record figure of 562, 62 countries being represented. The proceedings were opened by the President *Nils Westermarck*, who announced the central theme of the meeting: *Disparities in the Pace and Form of Agricultural and Rural Development*.

The discussions can be grouped under four main headings: Basic problems of economic growth in general; methods of research and planning related to economic growth; problems of the relations between agriculture and other sections of the economy and of the adjustment of agriculture to economic growth; and finally, the reports on practical experience in the field of rural and agricultural development.

The theoretical discussions were introduced by an analysis of the *Current Relevance of the Theory of Comparative Advantage to Agriculture*, presented by *G. Haberler* (U.S.A.). After developing the theory of comparative advantage, which is based on a simplified and ideal model, the deviations from these assumptions were discussed. One main qualification was necessary: one must allow for the type of external economy on which the "infant industry" argument is based. In the following discussion, a number of other qualifications were brought forward, in particular by *D. K. Britton*. A second paper of basic type was presented by *P. Lamartine Yates* (FAO) on the subject: *Need Agriculture Be Disadvantaged in a Growing World?* The position of the food-exporting high-income countries on the world market could not be viewed with optimism; many of their products were in surplus and for a long time

less developed countries would not spend currency on food imports. The adjustment of agriculture to economic growth in the advanced countries with shortage of labour and abundance of land and/or capital must solve the problem of too high an agricultural potential. For the overseas countries of this group export markets were the main concern; in Europe structural reform and technology might lead to low-cost production, but the disparity between remoter and poorer areas and richer regions could not be eliminated by economic measures alone. In low-income countries, farming would for a long time retain a high share of the population, therefore, as a general rule, labour intensity would have priority over capital intensity.

The first paper on methods of research was given by *G. Weinschenck* (Germany). He presented a systematic review of mathematical research methods and their appropriate application. In many points this paper very well supplemented that of *Earl O. Heady* at the preceding meeting. *J. Klattmann* (France) discussed the methods and the data available for *Assessing the Contribution of the Region to the Gross National Product*: It was necessary to assess the present or potential productivity of a given region as a basis for regional development policies. The data available were mainly statistics with numerous shortcomings. In drawing up regional accounts for regional development policies more emphasis must be placed on inter-sectoral and inter-regional exchanges, and co-ordination between the economist and the sociologist was imperative. The paper of *C. P. Meekan* (U.S.A) on *Economic and Technical Research in Agriculture* treated the subject under the aspects of development. The main conclusions were: both technical and economic research should be motivated by "usefulness"; the two fields were interdependent and should operate in partnership; the training of scientists for service in development projects should give priority to economically oriented instruction.

A further plea for the co-ordination of different branches of science was made by *J. Tauber* (Czechoslovakia) in a paper on *Co-operation between Rural Sociology and Agricultural Economics*. Co-operation is needed in investigating the general laws of development and the formulation of theories for long-term planning; in the study of social relations between agriculture and other groups; and in the organization and administration of agricultural enterprises.

An important paper dealing with the relations between agriculture and the rest of the economy in the course of development was that of *B. N. Ganguli* (India): *Population and Migration Factors in Rural Development*. The problems were treated under three aspects: the impact on total agricultural population; the impact on production; the impact on net productivity of farm labour as compared to non-agricultural labour. These factors were reviewed in theory and in the light of Western and Japanese experience. A related subject was that of *S. Krasovec* (Yugoslavia), insofar as *part-time farming* indicated at least a partial movement of labour out of agricultural production. But it could be the result of a "back-to-the-land" movement, and it also

embraced the individual farm production of workers of socialist collectives. The paper dealt mainly with the first-named group and its problems under varying economic conditions. Changes and adjustments in agriculture were the subject of papers by W. J. Thomas (Great Britain) on *The Changing Structure of Agriculture's Labour Force* and by S. H. Lane (Canada) on *The Growing Dependence of Commercial Farming on Ancillary Industries*. And in a paper on the *Impact of Vertical Integration by Contract in Agriculture*, R. L. Kohls (U.S.A.) discussed an important new form of marketing in the modern industrial society.

Among the papers which may be classified as national reports on development and its problems, that of K. P. Obolensky (U.S.S.R.) on *Large-Scale Agriculture and its Problems* was particularly interesting as an example of agricultural evolution in the Soviet Union. E. D. Brandao (Brazil) showed that the economic progress of Brazil, whose statistics were impressive, was nevertheless entirely concentrated on a comparatively small part of the country, to the detriment of other large regions. Country reports from Italy, Sweden and Peru dealt with practical experience in rural development. The Italian paper revealed the very great regional disparities of agricultural productivity and reviewed the methods of development appropriate for the various regions. In the case of Sweden, the measures designed to raise agriculture to a level of productivity comparable to that of the rest of the economy were discussed. Peru was shown to face quite different problems in planning rural development.

Both during the Conference and afterwards members were given very ample chances of seeing French farm life, and opportunities to enjoy the products of French cuisine and cellars were by no means lacking.

Once again, thanks to the very thorough preparatory work of H. C. Trelogan (U.S.A.) the *work groups* were set very worthwhile tasks. In addition to the scientific value of this kind of work, these small groups proved to be most effective in creating valuable personal contacts which otherwise become more difficult as the Conference grows in size.

At the end of the Conference, E. Thomas retired from the office of Vice-President and programme builder. His successor was J. R. Raeburn (Great Britain).

The Thirteenth Conference, Sydney (Australia) 21st to 30th August 1967

The thirteenth Conference was held on the campus of the University of Sydney. It was the first visit to the Southern Hemisphere. The meeting was attended by 501 members representing 56 countries. Throughout the Conference and during the excursions, one of which included New Zealand, the members enjoyed the most cordial hospitality. In opening the proceedings

the President Nils Westermarck introduced the central theme of the meeting: *The Economist and Farm People in a Rapidly Changing World*. This main subject was presented in four "theme papers" on four aspects of the theme:

1. 'Population Growth'.
2. 'Trends and Prospects from the Standpoint of Natural Scientists'.
3. 'Approaches and Findings of Economists'.
4. 'Agriculture and the Political Scientist'.

These theme papers were discussed in four opening reviews, each of which with two pre-appointed speakers, general discussion and a report of the findings of each group. Similar procedures were adopted for the treatment of the problems of farm production economics, marketing and international trade, and economic growth and development. The Conference closed with a synoptic review of the proceedings. As numerous meetings were held simultaneously, the Conference produced an exceptionally great volume of material.

In the first theme paper W. D. Borrie (Australia) gave a very comprehensive review of *Population Growth — Demographic and Sociological Viewpoints*. In an historical outline he showed the development of population growth as the outcome of birthrate and mortality as the main governing factors both in developed and less developed parts of the world. His forecast of the world population at the end of the century was 7,000 million if the rate of growth remained as now, or 6,000 million as minimum figure taking into account a relatively high effect of all kinds of control of fertility. On the basis of the actual population policies of a number of less developed countries, a certain reduction of the rate of growth might be expected. But in any case, growth of population meant not only higher food requirements but also the provision of a very great number of non-farm jobs. "A balance between food production, social investment and industrial development has to be sustained in the long run". The second theme paper on *Trends and Prospects from the Standpoint of Natural Scientists* was presented by F. C. Bawden (Great Britain): The natural scientist could only say by what means yields were increased, but nothing about the political or economic implications. In the developed countries agricultural production had doubled in the last thirty years, but was still far below the potential achievable by full use of all means provided by natural science. In less developed countries the gap between actual and possible yields was far greater. Whether the fears of Malthus "will continue to go unrealized will depend on the wisdom of people and governments in deciding whether to apply the knowledge provided by science and technology". The third theme paper on *The Approaches and Findings of Economists* was delivered by T. Kristensen (OECD). He dealt with the potentialities of science and stressed that much more fundamental research on the process of economic growth was needed and that applied research must be effectively keyed to the specific problems. The validity of projecting recent

trends into the beginning of the next century was questioned. This also concerned the present disequilibrium between developed and developing countries. The possibility or practicability of exports of industrial goods by the developing countries in exchange for food imports was also doubted. The absence of a social and anthropological approach to the central theme of the Conference was deplored.

The discussions on *Aspects of Farm Production Economics and Management* were based on three papers dealing with the subject in the light of research in the U.S.S.R., in the U.S.A. and in Asia. The speakers outlined the main objectives of research, the methods available and their fields of application. The papers revealed great similarity in the preference of quantitative research methods for a wide range of research problems. *I. S. Kuvshinov* (U.S.S.R.) also gave information on the methods of utilizing research findings in the Soviet economy.

The *Aspects of Marketing and International Trade* were the subject of papers presented by *W. J. Anderson* (Canada) and *T. J. Dams* (Germany). *Anderson* gave a brief review of international trade policies which largely confirmed the forecasts of Cairns and Minderhoud at earlier meetings; he outlined efforts to liberalize trade in spite of maintaining national protection by such means as concessional sales, commodity agreements and tariff reductions. *Dams* emphasized the lack of a general concept of world-wide co-ordination of national agricultural policies of GATT, the EEC and the Kennedy Round.

The discussion on *Aspects of Economic Growth and Development* were prefaced by a paper of *L. E. Virone* (Italy) on *Raising the Rate of Economic Growth in Low-Income Countries*. The speaker treated the main factors of development: motivation, the land factor, diversification of rural communities, infrastructure, agricultural inputs of non-farm origin, and the human factor (hygiene and education). All factors should be integrated into a "rural development" approach.

The main papers excepting the theme subjects were supplemented by the activities of no less than 17 group meetings, all of which treated subjects closely related to the central theme of the Conference. This meant that this subject was reviewed under a very great number of aspects.

At the close of the meeting, *L. K. Elmhirst*, the Founder-President took stock of the Conference. His main anxiety was that the very necessary highly modern research work under the aspects of economics might lead the scientist too far away from the farmer on the farm and from aspects of human happiness other than financial success.

V. Forty Years in Retrospect

Beginning with the Mysore meeting, the International Association of Agricultural Economists has met in four continents in succession. And now it assembles in the greatest of the centrally planned countries, the U.S.S.R. With this last step, it definitely attains world-wide scope.

Whilst enlarging its geographical sphere of action, the Association has greatly broadened and deepened its scientific approach in the course of its existence. A study of the proceedings shows how first and, indeed, at once the need was felt to widen the concept of agricultural economics so as to embrace both production and marketing economics, and both the micro- and the macro-economic approach. Then, step by step, both under the influence of purely theoretical reflexion and as interpretation of actual events, one new subject after another was added to the basic subject matter: general economics, political science, sociology, applied natural sciences and perhaps also anthropology, although its absence has been deplored. Furthermore, these sciences were not merely regarded as accessories to agricultural economics. On the contrary, all of them, including agricultural economics, came to be regarded as intimately connected by innumerable and insoluble interdependencies. This was the background of the "Stocktaking" by *L. K. Elmhirst* at Sydney, where he emphasized that economic success was only part of what forms the happiness of rural people.

This broad view of its work is one of the merits of the Association and has certainly contributed to its success. One may well ask what else has been important in those forty years?

One vital point is certainly, as I stressed at the outset, the human atmosphere. Another is the very simple and flexible constitution, as formulated by *A. W. Ashby*. It has enabled the Association to adapt itself to changing situations without losing its character. Perhaps thanks to this constitution and its observance, the Association has always remained a meeting of independent scientists, not functionaries, and everyone has always been held responsible only to himself and the Association for what he said, regardless of his post in any public institution.

It should also be said that the problem of programme building and the collaboration of members in this field has always been well solved in spite of limited finances. Programme building has always started with the collection of ideas from members — the more advanced, the more welcome. Then it has been the task of men like *John Maxton*, *Edgar Thomas* and *John Raeburn* to transform a mass of ideas into a coherent programme. Their success at this task ensured the success of the meetings.

The spirit in which the Association has gone to work in all fields is best characterized by the words of the Founder-President at Sydney: "This Conference has been one attempt to deal with ideas on a world scale, to stop the drift. Our meeting was established as an exciting adventure in the field of ideas. May it ever remain so!".