



Amsterdam, 31 August and 3 September 2002

At the invitation of the Netherlands National Committee, the Koninklijk Nederlands Historisch Genootschap, the Bureau held a meeting in Amsterdam on August 31 in the Hendrick room of the Trippenhuys of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (Kloveniersburgwal, 29). The meeting continued on the afternoon of September 3, 2002, at the Internationaal Instituut voor Sociale Geschiedenis (Cruquiusweg, 31).

Present: Jürgen Kocka, President; Eva Österberg, Vice-president; Jean-Claude Robert, Secretary General; Pierre Ducrey, Treasurer; Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch, William C. Jordan, Koichi Kabayama, José Luis Peset, Gregory Bongard-Levin, Member Assessors.

Excused: Ivan T. Berend, Counselor, Michael Heyd, Member Assessor and Romilla Thapar, Vice-president.

Invited guests: Even Lange, President of the Organizing Committee of the XIXth Congress (Oslo, 2000); Martyn Lyons, President of the Organizing Committee of the XXth Congress (Sydney, 2005).

Agenda for Saturday, August 31:

1. President's opening statement and remarks
2. ICHS affairs and Secretary General's report
3. Treasurer's report
4. Nominating Committee
5. Report on the Sydney Congress

Agenda for Tuesday, September 3, 2002

1. Report and follow-up of the General Assembly

1) President's opening statement and remarks

The President welcomed Bureau members and, on their behalf, thanked the Netherlands National Committee for inviting the Bureau to Amsterdam. The President spoke in memory of François Bédarida and the important work he had done for the ICHS. He also spoke in memory of Theo C. Barker, past president of the ICHS (1990-1995). Both men died in 2001. The President reiterated the main purpose of the meeting and the upcoming General Assembly, which is to prepare the next Congress in Sydney in July 2005. He acknowledged the presence of Martyn Lyons, President of the Organizing Committee.

Next the President emphasized one of the ICHS's main missions, which is to expand as much as possible in all parts of the world. He noted the fact that the ICHS is firmly planted in Europe, North America and Japan, but is all but absent in other parts of the world. It would seem vital, however, that in this age of globalization and internationalization, an organization with an international vocation should expand to



every country, especially poorer nations. In this context, Sydney represents a new phase, and therefore an opportunity not to be passed over. The floor was then given to Jean-Claude Robert.

2) ICHS affairs and Secretary General's report

***ICHS affairs**

The Secretary General presented his report, which was distributed to Bureau members during the meeting and would be distributed later to the delegates at the General Assembly. The full text appears in the minutes of the General Assembly. He began by highlighting the support of his institution, the Université du Québec à Montréal, which has made office space as well as a small budget available to the Secretariat. He also underscored the work of Sylvie Freney, PhD candidate, who is assisting him in his duties. Moreover, thanks to the efficient collaboration of the staff of the Internationaal Instituut voor Sociale Geschiedenis, the General Assembly had wonderful prospects.

The Secretariat is now off and running in Montreal, and the archives with dates prior to 2000 have been turned over to the national archives of France, located in Paris. Mr. Robert explained that he would be working on the three main concerns of his predecessor, i.e. revitalizing, rejuvenating and expanding the ICHS.

***Bulletin**

The 27th edition of the ICHS 2001 Bulletin d'information was sent out at the beginning of the year. In the interest of reducing production and shipping costs, the number of copies had been pared down to 800. In the future, the Secretary General intends to publish the Bulletin in the fall so that he can include the minutes of the latest Bureau meeting and get the information circulating among members more quickly. For instance, this would enable the Bureau to publish the list of themes for the Sydney Congress as early as 2002. In the 2003 issue, the Secretary General will pursue his predecessor's tradition of including a section on the ICHS's history in each issue, either as an article or a separate document.

The responsibility for the ICHS's web site is being given to the Secretary General. The goal would be to make further use of the site to convey information and regular updates, making the site an extension of the Bulletin and disseminating the latest news on the ICHS more quickly. The Secretary General thanked Treasurer Pierre Ducrey, who built and launched the web site.

***ICHS members**

The National Committee of Georgian Historians (Republic of Georgia) has requested admittance. After examining their constitution and finding it consistent with that of the ICHS, the Secretary General made a recommendation to the Bureau that during the General Assembly it should propose admitting the organization. The Assembly will therefore have to issue decisions on three cases: a new National Committee (Georgia); changing the International Commission on Historical Demography to an Affiliated International Organization; and creating the International Commission on the History of Travel and Tourism. Unfortunately, it will be necessary to discuss withdrawing four National Committees. Venezuela has withdrawn; the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Mongolia and Uruguay, having made no reply to the ICHS's letters for over ten years, have qualified for section 7 of the ICHS's Constitution and are considered having withdrawn. The number of National Committees now stands at 54.



This part of the Secretary General's report raised many questions. Gregory Bongard-Levin questioned whether it was appropriate to strike members in Asia off the rolls. It appears, however, that the ICHS has had no choice in relation to the total breakdown of communication with these countries over the past 10 years. A discussion ensued regarding the problems some countries are experiencing in paying their membership dues. Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch said that although the African countries have little representation with the ICHS, there are nevertheless a good many historians there, but the problems lie with organizing and funding a group. A discussion followed, during which Martyn Lyons said that contacts had been made with developing countries, but the calls had never been returned. Eva Österberg suggested that in the case of Latin American countries, contact should be made with the universities that have a good number of active historians. The President then mused about the best way to attract people to the ICHS. That topic had already been discussed in Oslo and Princeton, without leading to a satisfactory answer. It was suggested that the ICHS might change its structure. This question would have to be explored because it is complex and has many ramifications.

***Relations with UNESCO**

Relations with UNESCO are conducted through two bodies, the joint ICHS-UNESCO committee and the International Council for Philosophy and Humanistic Studies (ICPHS). The Secretary General discussed the status of the joint committee, which had gotten off to a good start in 2001 only to encounter some failures afterwards. After the Secretary General described the disappointments, a discussion followed in which it was noted that relations with UNESCO were not always easy. It was agreed that the ICHS needed to remain a part of UNESCO without, however, relinquishing its independence. The President emphasized that the ICHS must continue with the project of holding a symposium in Latin America. During the discussion regarding the uneasy collaboration with UNESCO, Koichi Kabayama offered to personally contact Mr. Koichiro Matsuura, the Secretary General of UNESCO, to improve relations with the ICHS.

The ICPHS has continued playing an important role in international cooperation and consultation with other large-scale organizations. The next meeting will be held in September in Porto Novo, Benin. The Secretary General will be there to represent the ICHS. This Assembly must also approve requests to subsidize various meetings among which is one made by the ICHS for the 2005 Congress.

***Upcoming meetings**

There are two meetings on the agenda: as agreed at the Princeton meeting, the Bureau restreint will meet in Sydney from February 25 to 28, 2003. One of the main purposes of the meeting will be to visit the Congress venue and make a report to the Bureau. The regular meeting of the ICHS Bureau will be held in Paris on August 29, 30 and 31, 2003, at the invitation of the French National Committee.

***Miscellaneous**

***Indian National Committee**

The Secretary General explained the problem created by censorship attempts and other restrictions to freedom of expression apparently involving the Indian National Committee. The problem is not new, and the Secretary General has yet to receive a response to his letters. The organization has therefore deemed it necessary to take action once again through the Secretary General, who has sent a new letter asking for an explanation, a copy of which was distributed during the meeting to those present. If the allegations are verified, drastic measures may follow. Gregory Bonard-Levin stressed that the situation is complex, and that Indian historians should not be penalized. For her part, Eva Österberg



thought that the letter contained well-founded arguments and was a good idea. Concluding the discussion, the President indicated that there would be no exclusionary decision for now, but that it was necessary for the ICHS to remain on guard. He added that this particular case was a matter of condemning the attitude of a government, rather than chastising Indian historians.

***Translation of K.D. Erdman's book**

The President gave an update on the progress of the project to publish an English translation of the Karl Dietrich Erdman's book, *Die Oekumene der Historiker*, which was published in 1987. Funding prospects are favourable, and Bureau members agreed that the ICHS should contribute to the financing. Wolfgang Mommsen has started working on updating the book with a chapter on the last two decades of the 20th century. His research to gather the various archives related to the history of the ICHS is still ongoing. It was suggested that the book be presented at the Sydney Congress.

***Regional symposium**

The President has received a proposal from China that a joint symposium be held to discuss modernization in Asia, and he obtained the Bureau's approval for this project. It does seem important to encourage the new trend among Chinese historians, particularly in view of the Sydney Congress.

3) Treasurer's report

Pierre Ducrey presented a financial report that is substantially the one that will be presented to the General Assembly. He pointed out the great number of membership fees in arrears and the fact that non-payment results in exclusion from the ICHS. During the ensuing discussion, the Secretary General and the Treasurer emphasized that the ICHS's constitution must be followed, and that there is no merit in supporting countries that have given no sign of life for over 10 years, such as Mongolia, Uruguay and North Korea. The President concluded that although losing these members would be regrettable, the Bureau had to remain firm in its stance. He assured everyone that the ICHS would always be vigilant about issues of members withdrawing. For other countries that long ago defaulted on their payments (over 10 years), a decision would be taken during the next meeting of the Bureau restreint. The Bureau unanimously approved the accounts and the financial report as presented.

4) Nominating Committee

In accordance with Article 5 of the ICHS Constitution, the Bureau designates three of the seven members of the Nominating Committee for election to the Bureau (in 2005), and the Assembly elects four people.

The three members designated by the Bureau are: Jürgen Kocka, Eva Österberg and Jean-Claude Robert. During the first session of the General Assembly on September 2, the Bureau must present a proposal for the four members up for election. The Secretary General nominated the following four people: Anna Maria Rao (International Commission on the History of the French Revolution, Italy); Marcel van der Linden (International Commission for Social History, Netherlands); Jinty Nelson (British National Committee of Historians, Great-Britain); and Cha Ha Soon (Korean National Committee). The Bureau approved the nominations, however, the Assembly may propose amendments to this list before voting begins during the second session on September 3.



5) Sydney Congress 2005

Martyn Lyons offered a very detailed presentation of the organization of the Sydney Congress. He began by stating his primary objective, which is to attract historians from across the globe. The Congress will be held from Sunday, July 3 to Saturday, July 9, 2005. These dates reveal a minor change: the Congress will be held over 7 days instead of 8. Mr. Lyons also gave the location for the sessions and a list of hotels with prices. The Congress Organising Committee includes representatives from libraries, archives and historians outside the universities. Contacts have been made with professional organizers and tourism professionals. Mr. Lyons stressed some important points. The opening and closing sessions must be fleshed out quickly. In order for the organization to proceed smoothly, it is important to know who will be attending. The web appears to be a very useful link between the Congress and the various members of the ICHS. Lastly, Mr. Lyons would like to have the French language given the same attention as English when the major topics are discussed, by way of a simultaneous translation service. The President congratulated Mr. Lyons for the clarity and precision of his presentation. The Bureau viewed the status of the preparations on a positive note. Additionally, the Bureau restreint will be traveling to Sydney this upcoming February to visit the premises and touch base with the members of the Organizing Committee.

Registration fees will be \$160, and 250\$ after the deadline. There will also be a special registration fee for students.

Some members viewed the plan for simultaneous English-French translation of the main sessions as being too costly. After discussing the issue it was judged that since the ICHS had two official languages in use, it would be important to maintain the use of French, particularly because a great deal of the members understand it, especially those from Latin America and Africa. Once again the importance of attracting young historians to the Congress was emphasized. Particular care must be taken in the selection of specialized topics to keep them as appealing as possible and allow historians of all stripes to express themselves. The President added that the Congress afforded an opportunity to attract PhD candidates and young professors from the Asia-Pacific region.

The discussion turned to the funding of the Congress. Foundations and private international organizations, such as telecommunications companies, were the suggested avenues. The organization must be cautious, however, to refrain from becoming an advertising vehicle. Above all, the ICHS is a scientific entity. The President asked for solutions that would enable the Congress to increase the number of subsidies to bolster attendance, keeping in mind that the ICHS would take the subsidies typically set aside for the publication of the proceedings and use them for travel assistance, and that UNESCO, through the ICPHS, would provide a small subsidy towards the participation of developing countries.

***Congress themes**

The members of the Bureau were given the list of theme proposals being contemplated by the sub-committee, which met in Berlin last March. The comments arising from that meeting were integrated in large part in the final list of proposals that the Secretary General has forwarded to all the Committees and Commissions. The Treasurer remarked at the outset that consistency among the themes was important because no one was going to travel to hear about only one theme. The Bureau approved the list, judging it sufficiently varied and respectful of all chronological periods. The President voiced his firm intention to give consideration to the proposals and suggestions at the Assembly.



The Secretary General also stated that the proposals are just that, and much flexibility can still be expected as concerns the formulation or distribution of the themes. As to the selection of organizers and rapporteurs, a balance of men and women was emphasized, and of specialties and periods, in addition to an equitable selection of countries. The President noted that the program must be finalized as soon as possible so the preliminary program can be developed and distributed. Lastly, the Bureau approved the presence of a guest celebrity at the opening session, a personality like Umberto Eco or Steven Spielberg. This idea will be submitted to the General Assembly.

In the absence of any kind of question, the President concluded by thanking Bureau members for their numerous contributions to the meeting.

2nd session of the Bureau, Tuesday, September 3, 2 p.m.

The members of the Bureau expressed satisfaction with the outcome of the General Assembly. Several members said they received favourable comments from the delegates. The discussion gave rise to the idea that a session should be given on how historians can use computers and the Internet. It was proposed that the same procedure used in Oslo should be followed, i.e. one extraordinary session organized concurrently, that might run one or two days.

The discussion then turned to the opening session. It was proposed that a session be organized on the theme of history on film, featuring famous directors and some colleagues known for their expertise in the area. The final decision would be taken during the next meeting of the Bureau.