

The year 1986 was very eventful—on 28 January the US Shuttle *Challenger* exploded a few seconds after launch from Cape Kennedy. The reason for this first American tragedy in space, seven astronauts killed, was traced to human failure, a faulty ‘O’ ring having been fitted. [See Title 349]

In February I travelled to Paris to see M. Kadoora at UNESCO to find out if the free issue of ISR to 100 Universities in the Third World could be resumed, as it had proved so successful in the past. It was a unique event which was never repeated for financial reasons. I also saw Dr Salvatori at the Headquarters of the European Space Agency, ESA in Paris, to find out if a Special Issue of ISR about ESA would be welcome [see ISR 13/2, Title 360]. From Paris I flew to The Netherlands where in Noordwijk I discussed this Issue with the Public Relations Department of ESTEC, the Research Institute of ESA.

While in Holland I called on G.W. Rathenau, a Member of our Editorial Board who had been the Director of Philips Research and was distinguished by his exceptionally wide interdisciplinary knowledge and experience. He lived in the small and beautiful community of Aalst-Waarle, ideally suited for his scholarly retirement. It was always a great pleasure for me to talk with this wise, elderly statesman of science and to listen to his many valuable comments.

In June I was in Pisa and Florence to take the Chair at the annual Meeting of the International Astrolabe Society of which I was the President. In July I visited Lindau for the annual Meeting of Nobel Laureates, where I always benefited greatly from their lectures, some of which were published in ISR.

Stefanie Maison and I spent a pleasant holiday in Hinterzarten, in the Black Forest during August, and on the 22 August, my 70th birthday, we were in Würzburg admiring the Tiepolo Frescoes of the five continents in the Residenz. We drove in her Honda Civic all the way and home again to London through Cologne and Mainz to the Hook van Holland and Harwich. However, my most important European visit was to Hanover in December.

For some time I had considered the formation of a New International Association [see next page] which had to be financed. In Hanover, through an introduction from Professor Eduard Pestel, the President of the Leibniz Society, I was able to meet with the Staff of the Volkswagen Foundation there. I had by then written my two Editorials for ISR 12/1 and 12/2, 1987, dealing with “An International Association for the Advancement of Science”. These were accepted by the VW Foundation for the financing of an Inaugural Meeting in Hanover in October 1989. [See Titles 353-355]