

## Inaugural Meeting of IAAS

Title 355

Acting as the Convener, it took me over two years to bring about an Inaugural Meeting, following the publication of my two Editorials in ISR in 1987. The German Volkswagen Foundation made a grant of DM 40000 available to the Leibniz Society in Hanover, and I worked closely with Professor E. Pestel, the President, and Dr W. Totok, the Secretary of the Society, to organise the Meeting. The Leibniz Society had its seat at the Landesbibliothek in Hanover, and its secretarial staff carried out the preparatory work of sending out invitations to all known Associations world-wide. I was glad that G.W. Leibniz (1646-1716) was linked to this endeavour, as in the 17th and 18th centuries he devoted much effort to the foundation of scientific academies, as for example the Berlin Academy.

Nine different Associations sent delegations for the Meeting which took place from 2 to 5 October 1989 in Hanover at the Hotel Luise Hof. They came from Australia, Bangladesh, Britain, China, Germany, India, Japan, Sri Lanka and Venezuela, and it was necessary to pay their air fares as well as hotel accommodation and meals. This exhausted the grant, as some Associations had sent more than one representative.

I asked Lord Dainton FRS to take the chair, the first mistake I made. I should have taken the chair myself. I doubt whether Lord Dainton, however excellent a chairman he proved to be in Hanover, considered the chairmanship as anything more than a single task and he was basically not convinced that IAAS was a worthwhile and permanent enterprise. My second mistake was to let the whole grant evaporate through air fares and the luxury of a five-star hotel. At least half the grant should have been available for follow-up work.

The Meeting agreed unanimously to a resolution that the IAAS should be founded and a draft constitution was passed in which the functions of the IAAS were defined, substantially those which I suggested in my Editorial [see Title 353]. The British Association was to take over all further work, as I personally felt unable to devote more money, time and effort, my third mistake. [See ISR 14/4, p. 329, where a brief report was published]

I was not invited to any further meetings. In 1991, the next reunion took place in Hong Kong where the name was changed to International Federation of Associations for the Advancement of Science and Technology, IFAAST, and in 1994 the AAAS published a Membership Directory, of the names, addresses, officers, principal activities and publications of a total of 34 Associations. I never received a copy. In the Preface to the Directory it was stated: "The IFAAST is the realisation of a Vision". I was pleased to be told this, but sad that I had not been asked to participate.

Back to Synopsis

To... ISR Volume 11 and Volume 12. ISR 12/3 A.C. Clarke: *\*Star War and Star Peace\**. Title 356.