

Opening Speech of Mr. L. A. de Lange

President of OSTIV

Mr. Muller, President of the Gliding Federation of Australia, Mr. Elliot, Mayor of Waikerie, Mr. Langford for the Department of Civil Aviation of Australia, Professor Wallington, Director of the XIVth World Gliding Championships, Ladies and Gentlemen,

In the period of time between our last Congress at Vršac and this Congress at Waikerie which I have the honour to open – to be exact since July 27, 1973 – OSTIV worthily strode over the threshold of the 25th anniversary of its foundation and has begun a second, equally long era, which will consequently be closed by its Golden Jubilee in 1998. Worthily strode, I said, because no grand receptions or other social entertainments accompanied this stride. Only a memoir under the heading «OSTIV 25 Years: 1948–1973», originally published in the official organ of OSTIV – the Aero Revue – subsequently reprinted and distributed as a «Memorial-Document» and inserted in OSTIV Publication XII, marked this Silver Jubilee, saving it from oblivion. If it should be given to me to attend – as a then nearly 90 year old man – the Golden Jubilee of our organization, it will certainly not be as its President. This position has now been held by me for almost 24 years, and I hope to be able to hand over this duty – that I have always carried out with great pleasure – in the next years to a younger, enthusiastic co-operator of OSTIV. Taking the same line of thought, Dr. Willy Eichenberger, who has been acting as Vice-President of our organization since 1948, gave me to understand that he is prepared only to remain as such at our disposal for one other term at the most, which means that he at least wishes to be relieved during the General Conference at Räyskälä in 1976. Overlooking the long period of our co-operation, we both concluded that a stronger bond must be created between the active participants of soaring and our organization, as a consequence of which the interest of the soaring pilots in our activities will also grow. The results of these activities, however, will then have to be opened up more to the generally not or less technically or scientifically qualified participants of soaring.

In this connection I am looking forward with great interest to the information and discussions in this Congress concerning the standardization of meteorological forecasts for soaring pilots which will lead us nearer to the realization of the «OSTIV Handbook of Meteorological Forecasting for Soaring Flight».

We shall have to show, and the soaring pilots should understand that OSTIV – in co-operation with them – exclusively exists to promote soaring and to lift it to a higher plane.

Before opening the Congress, I like to thank heartily the previous speakers for the kind words addressed to us.

Mr. Muller, your Federation has been a true member of long standing of OSTIV. Unfortunately your country is for many of us too far away from our domiciles to be able to keep intensive personal contact with you and your members. That's why we have so greatly appreciated that you invited us to hold our XIVth Congress here at Waikerie. In this way we now have the opportunity of establishing bonds of friendship with your members, which – as I expect – will lead in the future to a still closer co-operation between your Gliding Federation and OSTIV.

Beside thanks for your kind words, our gratitude applies especially to the great assistance from your side we had pleasure to receive when organizing our Congress at Waikerie. Here I want to mention in particular the Organizing Committee, consisting of Mr. Evans, Mr. Pascoe, Mr. Patching, Mr. Reid and Mr. Sunderland, of whom Mr. Derek Reid – in making preparations for the Congress – even had to make a world tour in order to exchange views with the OSTIV Board, meeting in The Netherlands, and to hear our desires. Your Worship, Mayor of Waikerie, Councillor Elliot, most of us have flown around half the globe in order to occupy ourselves here, in your friendly town with its fine surroundings: the river Murray with its large vineyards that we hope to visit next Friday during an excursion, with important questions connected with the development of soaring. We are grateful to you for your pleasant address of welcome, in which the hospitality is revealed that we shall undoubtedly meet with here.

Mr. Langford, this is not the first time that the Department of Civil Aviation of

Australia has been in contact with our organization. We were fairly often in correspondence with each other concerning the «Airworthiness Requirements for Sailplanes», drawn up by OSTIV, which – it is hoped – have been of great use to your Department. May the personal contact with you here at Waikerie ensure that the connection and co-operation between the Department of Civil Aviation and OSTIV will be further deepened and extended in times to come. In relation to this I am grateful to you for the words you have been so kind to address to us.

Finally you, Professor Wallington, you are – as winner of the OSTIV Plaque 1965, and as participant of many years in our activities – of course no stranger to us. Beside to the Organizing Committee, we are especially grateful to you for everything you have done to continue the tradition, also here at Waikerie, regarding the OSTIV Congress to be held at the same time and on the same place as the World Gliding Championships.

The fact that you have succeeded in solving the accommodation problems, in a relatively small town as Waikerie, also for the participants in the OSTIV Congress – in co-operation with the Organizing Committee – to our full satisfaction, makes us grateful. Thanks also for your kind remarks.

Last but not least, I should like to express our gratitude to the Board of Qantas Airways – and especially to you Mr. Thompson, to whom were entrusted the OSTIV interests, – for the travelling facilities offered to the participants in the OSTIV Congress. I shall never forget that, during the preparatory discussions in my hotel at Paris, you sacrificed (unintentionally) even your new raincoat for it, being on fire when the coat was hanging on a lamp-stand which you supposed to be a clothes-horse!

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On the 31st of August 1973 we lost through death one of our most faithful supporters, who was for many years the official delegate of the German Aero Club at our General Conferences, Seff Kunz.

He was a man of amiable personality and a great devotee to soaring, who often inspired us by his sparkling ideas. Let us observe a moment of silence to commemorate this great friend and cooperator of our organization.

Thank you

Trusting that this Congress – though less extensive than some ones – will rank, in quality, with the very best ones, I now have great pleasure in declaring this XIVth OSTIV Congress open.