

Opening Speech by Mr. L. A. de Lange

President of OSTIV

Mr. Rautio, President of the Finnish Aeronautical Association,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is written so simply in the constitution: "at least once in every two years an OSTIV Congress shall be organized for the reading of scientific and technical papers". "The papers read during the Congresses shall be published and offered for sale."

Before this constitution was adopted in the General Conference at Buxton, 1954, OSTIV Congresses were held during the World Gliding Championships in Samaden, 1948, Örebro 1950, and Madrid 1952, whilst in addition to these, in Paris 1949 an extra Congress was organized.

Through not embodied in the rules at that time, the practice development that OSTIV Congresses were held during the World Gliding Championships, and, since those championships were organized every two years, the outline for the congresses as fixed in the constitution – "at least once in every two years" – seemed to be logical.

However, after it was agreed between FAI and OSTIV – for reasons pointed out in my Opening speech in Vrsac – that the OSTIV Congresses would *always* be held during the same period and at the same place as the World Gliding Championships, and, after FAI changed its rules so that the championships – if necessary – could also be organized with an interval of three years, OSTIV Congresses take place at least once in every three years. Instances of Congresses held after three-year intervals are Junin, 1963, and Leszno, 1968.

Hence from that time, the Board of OSTIV is faced with the task of organizing once in every two or three years an OSTIV Congress, during the same period and at the same place as the World Gliding Championships, for the reading of scientific and technical papers which shall afterwards be published and offered for sale. Experience has shown how difficult it can be to fulfil these conditions!

First of all there are the problems resulting from the combination of world championships and congress.

Räyskälä – chosen from the point of view of ensuring good soaring conditions as the site for the World Gliding Championships – is a lovely place situated between forests and lakes, but presents few possibilities for holding a congress, certainly if the participation is so overwhelming as in this XVth OSTIV Congress.

Except for Motel Laakasalo, which offers a limited number of rooms, all hotels are situated far away – more than

40 km – from the airfield. The meeting room in this motel however could not ultimately be used because the management of the Motel was unable to comply with OSTIV's request to reserve the motel, in the period of our activities, exclusively for us. This meant that other visitors, including people from a neighbouring caravan-site, will be using the motel for meals and drinks, with the result that it would be impossible to secure, in the wooden building the quietude essential for the satisfactory conduct of the Congress.

Thanks to the personal intervention of the Secretary-General of the Finnish Aeronautical Association, Mr. Reino Kronholm, and the enthusiastic help of Mr. Pekka Tammi, it was found possible at the last minute to find still an excellent solution for this housing problem of the airfield.

Holding our congress far away from the airfield – which also would have been possible – would fail to achieve the great advantage of having close contact with the people involved in the championships. We must not forget that this direct contact between soaring pilots, scientists and technical people – all having a warm place in their hearts for soaring – is one of the main aims of our organization, and is more important than the glamour and comfort which usually characterize international congresses.

Secondly, I like to mention the difficulties connected with the other condition the Board has to fulfil, namely to publish and to offer for sale the papers read during the congresses. This too yielded a lot of problems in past years. OSTIV does not have any capital from which – as a kind of advance upon the earnings from the sale – the cost of producing of the publications can be paid. Consequently, the investments for new OSTIV publications must be drawn from the yearly income on subscriptions of the members and money received from sale of previous publications.

There is no Bank which will furnish a loan for the purpose, and only once – for "The World's Sailplane II" – one of our Active Members, the Swiss Aero Club, advanced the money for the making of the book. However, in this special case it was expected (rightly) that the loan could be paid off in less than two years.

The system of "self-financing" worked very well in the sixties – on the one hand because the impressions of 750 copies of the OSTIV Publications I to

VIII inclusive were sold out in a reasonable time (about 7 years), and on the other hand because the production cost increased tolerably slowly.

This basis for "self-financing" changed rapidly after 1970 in both respects: the sale of the Publications goes less smoothly so that there are still appreciable stocks of Publications IX, X and XI, and the production cost has increased enormously as the result of that well-known disease inflation and of continual currency fluctuations. This has led in the last 3 years to a total cost increase of the order of 50–75%.

Taking into account also that the expenses for the housekeeping of our organization grow, OSTIV's financial situation in 1975 deteriorated to such an extent that the OSTIV Board – much to its regret – had to delay the making of several publications, even OSTIV Publication XII containing the papers read during the Congress in Vrsac, 1972.

The Board considered this situation so serious that it decided to appeal to the Active Members to increase the subscriptions by 52% for Active and 42% for Individual Members, and to make use of the possibility given in the Constitution to arrange for this purpose a vote by correspondence.

After the quorum, required for raising the subscriptions, was reached in March last – 19 of the 25 Active Members were in favour, 3 did not answer and 3 were against – the completion of Publication XII, of Prof. Morelli's "Static Stability and Control of Sailplanes" and of the new edition of "OSTIV Airworthiness Requirements for Sailplanes" could be started again.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I rejoice to be able to show you here, at this festive OSTIV event, the first copies of OSTIV Publication XII and of Prof. Morelli's book. You can order both publications at the OSTIV Secretariat in the Congress building. The new, revised edition of the "OSTIV Airworthiness Requirements for Sailplanes" will be available in September next, and will be designated the "September 1976 Edition". Then we will start with the preparation of OSTIV Publication XIII containing the papers read in Waikerie, 1974, which will be available for sale in Spring 1977. After the clouds pass, the sun is still shining! However, we will have to lay down a line of conduct during the General Conference here in Räyskälä to prevent for these past situations from recurring in the future.

The OSTIV Sailplane Development Panel met – for the last time under the guidance of General Oyens – in Amsterdam last year from 24–26 April, and finished the new, revised edition of the much-belauded "OSTIV Airworthiness Requirements for Sailplanes".

After having served as Chairman of the Panel for 12 years, General Oyens has

resigned and has been succeeded by Prof. Piero Morelli. I like to pay here a tribute to the excellent work done by General Oyens, in particular with respect to the airworthiness requirements for sailplanes.

The OSTIV Meteorological Panel, lead by Dr. Joachim Kuettner, assembled from 8-14 March this year in Oerlinghausen, Germany, and drafted a first-rate handbook for soaring forecasters and for pilots interested in soaring flight prediction methods.

This book, a copy of which can be seen at the OSTIV Secretariat here in Rääskälä, called "Forecasters Manual for Soaring Flight", is currently being studied by the Commission for Aeronautical Meteorology of the World Meteorological Organization, and this study may lead to some small changes being made.

The soaring world is greatly indebted to the members of the Panel, and in partic-

ular to Dr. Kuettner and Mr. Bradbury, for the excellent work done.

As already announced in our official organ, the Aero Revue, OSTIV has lost in the past years one of its Board Members, the likable Leszek Pituch. He served for several years, and was very helpful when organizing the OSTIV Congresses in Poland 1958 and 1968. In spite of his poor health, Leszek Pituch spared no effort to promote gliding to the highest level.

Let us observe a moment of silence to commemorate that enthusiastic co-worker of our organization.

Thank you.

Before opening the Congress, I wish to thank you, Mr. Rautio, for your kind words and good wishes addressed to our organization.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

If you have cast a glance at the program, you will agree that we have seldom had such an extensive and interesting range of subjects as we have here in Rääskälä. In this connection I will draw your particular attention to Section 3 of the program: "Special Subjects", which is of interest for everybody involved in soaring flight, and has therefore been selected for joint sessions between the scientists and technicians and the pilots, to be held in the Briefing Room on the airfield.

In the hope that, as a result of the fine co-operation and mutual understanding between the people on the airfield and the participants, and of the introduction of special subjects for joint sessions, this congress will be even better than those of the past, I now have great pleasure in declaring the XVth OSTIV Congress open.