

CONCLUDING STATEMENTS

DUDLEY SEERS

Outgoing President

Concluding Remarks

I think we can draw some conclusions about the Association. When I worked at the Economic Commission for Latin America, I remember Prebisch telling me, that when the Commission had been set up after the war everybody, himself included, was very doubtful whether it was a viable proposition. There had been lots of doubts and opposition at the time of a conference, if I remember correctly, in 1949 in Bogotá; he told me that as the conference progressed he became convinced that the Commission for Latin America would live and went back to Santiago and bought a house which previously he had felt unable to do. I must confess that in a way the Association was an invention (somebody has mentioned social inventions), a copy to some extent of Claxo, and it was uncertain, slightly uncertain, whether it would have a role in European social sciences. At times it seemed a little artificial blowing light into some of the activities and one wondered whether they were going to become self-sustaining.

I believe now, at the end of this conference, and particularly having heard what I have heard today that Eadi will be a permanent item, an actor in the international scene. I think that morale, motivation in the meetings has on the whole been excellent. There have been grumbles, a number of which are justified, some of which came from rather the same people, always. On balance, I think however that we have not had too bad a spirit and that what we have heard this

afternoon has shown a considerable common determination to carry the work forward within the Association, while I was not sure how much of this determination existed before. May I say how much I admired the work of the rapporteurs especially because of that very difficult work, the rapporteurs of rapporteurs, those who have tried to put together the reports that they had only just heard earlier today from different sessions and to make, as they much succeeded in doing, a coherent whole out of very diverse material and experience. In fact, I understood better some of the sessions I had dropped in on after hearing the rapporteur's report that I had understood them at the time.

What, I think, was especially encouraging was, in almost all cases and not artificially, that it was apparently concluded at the end of the discussion that something else would happen, that they would meet again, that they would go on keeping in contact by news-letters, or that they would plan smaller group meetings to discuss research possibilities. This is something which makes me believe that the work of the next executive will be a little less strenuous in this respect, in trying to keep groups alive and what is more that they will not be so preoccupied with the question which much preoccupied us: whether groups were individually viable or not. As somebody said, we must not forget that many people, particularly perhaps in the groups dealing with the so-called "mainly national problems", are meeting anyway in different contexts, and we need not necessarily be bothered too much if they do not get together within Eadi framework once a year as a group with the name that we have rather artificially given them.

I think we will be less preoccupied in the future with that particular question and look much more for initiatives, for gaps which need to be filled, anticipating problems which seem either inadequately researched or at least which the researchers brought inadequately together discussing problems in common. I would like, for my part to stress the problems connected with the energy field, where we can anticipate many major issues in the next 15 years,

nationally and internationally, as oil world production reaches its zenith and begins to decline setting up enormous problems and tensions; many questions about alternative oil uses and patterns of consumption; the division of energy between nations and between the different parts of the world; and the possibility that this may shape the international distribution of income in the next century. There are at present, from the North Sea, from Alaska, from the Mexican Gulf, injections of additional oil which especially with a rather slow-moving world economy are creating a somewhat artificial atmosphere of lack of urgency about this problem, but everybody who has thrown a look into the future knows that these problems have got a face. And then the questions of whether to go nuclear and what that implies; of whether it is feasible to think of solar energy as a major answer to this question or not, and all the social and administrative implications of these problems which are going to face us in the next 10 years; it is perhaps there for something that we should anticipate and make some provisions in our Association work.

I give that as one example: but consider military dictatorships, the growth of academic repression, and you will see that there are other areas which I could equally illustrate as being undoubtedly pressing, increasingly important areas which in one way or another we might wish to tackle. Another thing (I hope I'm not being biased in saying I note it with a little satisfaction) is that the question of applying the development approach, raising development questions about Europe, which would have been almost unthinkable at Linz, has come through in many of the reports not merely in the "European Periphery" group, and is now, I think, fundamentally, essentially and permanently part of the agenda of the development profession in Europe becoming, so to speak, evident in these last two or three days. As far as one of the functions of conferences is to establish new trends, to draw attention to them, to shift the focus, the centre of gravity of work and so on, I think that it has played the function in this respect.

One thing I should like to mention is that there will be a

publication, a report of some kind, not yet quite clearly identified, coming out of the meeting — indeed it has been promised to those who paid their dues for the meeting, which is a large majority. We have been discussing this and I am in fact still going to continue my association with the Association by being the chairman of the editorial committee to deal with this. Now, we had a talk about whether this should be what one might call a professional document or a diplomatic document. There are some choices in this respect: does one just reproduce everything that anybody has said especially in the plenary sessions, irrespective of whether it is just old attitudes, generalisations without support, personal speculative biases, whether it is undocumented, or whether one aims at a professional level as one might do in a published document for a reputable publishing house. We decided on the latter alternative, partly because of the need to help establish the Association as a professional rather than as a diplomatic organisation. There are of course some diplomatic costs in this, and I would like to put it to you that we would need some understanding and support from those whose most treasured words might get eliminated in the process. May I put it more sharply: does anybody declare himself so egotistic that they would reject any cutting, amendment, clarification of their thought? I take it not. I take it, therefore, that people will accept the work of the editorial board in revising, amending or eliding as necessary and I am glad to have clarified this and harried the aftermath of the conference.

Well, I think there is really no need for me to say much more. If I go back to my opening remark, I said that Raoul Prebisch was uncertain before the 1949 meeting of the Commission whether it would live; now the Economic Commission for Latin America seems to us part of the scene and it is difficult to imagine that continent without it. I have some confidence that in a few years, not yet, but in a few years, it would be difficult to imagine Europe, our professional part of Europe, without Eadi.

LOUIS EMMERIJ
Incoming President

Statement

I have not prepared a speech, I will do that in three years from now when I have to be very careful in drawing up a balance sheet. I am new to this Association and I do not quite understand why you have elected me, most of you do not know me personally and what you have heard of me may be completely wrong, as I do not hope you may find out very soon. My impression is, viewing Eadi from the outside, that it has had success. The enlargement of membership, both institutionally and individually, that it has achieved, is already a token of success, and the increase in member fees we have just decided and the choices this might entail may confirm or not this success. The second success, and this is what I immediately noticed when I first arrived this morning, was enthusiasm and the potential energy available in many of the people I talked to. I did not expect to find so many people speaking enthusiastically of what they believed Eadi should do for them and in turn of what they could do for Eadi and I think that this success must, to a large extent if not 100 per cent, be given to those who made Eadi, and not only all of you, all of us, but particularly those who have started the whole operation. Again, I viewed all this from the outside, but I think I should mention a few, running the risk of forgetting one or two: there was Wan Bilsen, there was Seers, Paul Marc Henry and behind him, and now much independent from him, Giulio Fossi and Madame Di Giacomo, who is also one of those

visible-invisible persons behind the scenes, Arne Hazelbach and many others, but I think it must be stated that enthusiasm is due to a large extent to them, to those who started the operation.

But there is a failure, as far as I can see also from the outside, and that is that Eadi has not yet established a real identity. Eadi is unknown, not only to the people in the street, but also to people who are quite well informed about development methods. That is part of the reason why we have problems in finding the appropriate finance for the operation. In order to get money, in order to attract finance, you must be able to show that you are doing a certain number of things with which everybody immediately associates you with. The question raised is what is the value-added which Eadi contributes to institutions and to individuals who are its members. Now, of course, there is the big danger that everybody sitting here as member of Eadi wants things to be brought to him on a silver plate. "Let's elect him for President, let's see how he does it! Let's elect the next executive committee, let's see how they do it!". But it is a joint effort, it is only through a combined enthusiasm that we get anywhere. And this comes back to the first point of success I mentioned. I think that enthusiasm is there. Now, what has struck me looking around the room and looking at members, is that most probably Eadi could contribute a lot to mastering the energies and working capacity of smaller institutes and individual members; the bigger institutions will look after themselves, and for them Eadi will always be something which is probably marginal. But for the smaller institutions and individual members Eadi could be a catalyst and offer the opportunity to focus on certain aspects, on certain points and to joint forces. That means that the executive committee and that all members, including the bigger ones, should stick up their necks, take certain actions, should not wait for things to happen, but rather move into joint projects with the smaller institutions and individual members.

Now, there are two points I would like to finish on, one is that Eadi should and could become a kind of European pressure group in times of increasing difficulties for the development lobby in many

European countries. We have our problems, I see also in my country a certain enthusiasm, which was noticeable until a short time ago, disappear, I see "real Politik" approach, in my country and in other countries. I do not express any value judgement, whether this is wrong or right, but I believe that one of the important things that an Association like Eadi could do at a European level is to make statements from time to time about important issues relating to the development scene. But in order for that to have any effect, coming back all the time to identity, we must have a scientific prestige, under the label Eadi, a certain number of important and relevant things must be done and, on that I think we all agree, a line of that kind was started by my predecessor, Dudley Seers. Our institution must become more relevant for the decision-making process, we must do much more work on problems of the economic structure, employment, etc., on the decisions which are made here and which have important repercussions in many developing countries. I think that we are already moving in this direction and that this direction should be pursued so that we are increasingly being seen as a member Association doing relevant research and making relevant observations on problems that touch the population right here in our own countries.

And once again I believe that it is possible to do so through the potential which is available in the smaller institutions and individual members and by doing that and increasing not only our scientific prestige but also our political relevance here, we will be able, as an Association, to have much more policy leverage at important junctions of the 1980s. In this way we shall achieve what Dudley Seers said before, that Eadi will be here to stay and will have made and will have the opportunity to make an important contribution.

Thank you very much.

