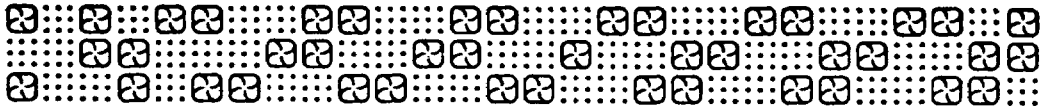


FIFTY YEARS AGO...



In this 100th edition of the *International Hydrographic Review*, we look back 50 years to the 7th edition, published in May 1927. The 2nd International Hydrographic Conference had just been held — the first to be organised by the Bureau — and much of this full *Hydrographic Review* was taken up with reports of the achievements of the 42 delegates, representing 21 of the 22 Member States:

THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL HYDROGRAPHIC CONFERENCE

"It is laid down in the Statutes of the International Hydrographic Bureau that an International Hydrographic Conference shall be held, "as a general rule, every five years commencing from the date of the establishment of the Bureau". As this occurred on 21st June 1921, the conference should have been held during the summer of 1926 but that period of the year is not suitable for climatic reasons and on account of the limited accommodation available for visitors in the Principality of Monaco, where the Statutes state that the Conference shall be held, "unless advantageous invitations to hold them elsewhere are received".

The Directing Committee of the Bureau decided, therefore, that it would recommend that the Conference should be held in the autumn when the hotels have begun to open for the winter season and, as a rule, the climatic conditions are better. It was suggested that the end of October would be suitable and, the States Members having acquiesced, Tuesday 26th October was selected as the date of the Opening Meeting and H.S.H. Prince PIERRE OF MONACO (*) kindly consented to open the Conference. Unfortunately, the climatic conditions were unfavorable, for, during the fortnight when the Conference was held, rain fell very frequently.

Of course many questions arise during the period between Conferences and it is the duty of the Directing Committee to study these and propose solutions. Such proposed solutions are communicated to the Members by Circular-Letter and in many cases, the majority of the Members having so voted, they have been adopted as proposed or, as the result of correspondence, they have been modified and adopted by vote after such modification. It is obvious, therefore, that any subject which lends itself to general acceptance is disposed of before the Conference meets and that those which remain to be discussed are necessarily controversial questions. This fact tends to lengthen the discussions and makes it the more necessary that the Delegates should be technical experts and that they should be given comparatively wide discretionary powers.

The offices of the Bureau do not contain a hall large enough to accommodate all the Delegates, interpreters, stenographers and other necessary personnel, and therefore the Directing Committee hired the Lecture Hall of the well known Oceanographic Museum which was established on the Rock of Monaco by the

(*) Consort of the Hereditary Princess of Monaco.

late Prince ALBERT I. The Plenary Sessions and some of the Committee Meetings were held in this Hall, which is large enough to allow two, and sometimes even three, Committees to meet simultaneously. Other Committee Meetings were held in the Library and in the Committee Room of the Bureau.

At the opening Meeting, which took place at 10.30 a.m. on 26th October 1926 and which was attended by H.S.H. the HEREDITARY PRINCESS OF MONACO, the Members of the MONEGASQUE GOVERNMENT, the CONSULAR REPRESENTATIVES of the States which had sent Delegates, and by prominent persons of many nationalities who were living in the vicinity of, or in the Principality, the President of the Directing Committee made an interesting speech welcoming the Delegates and briefly outlining the history of the Bureau and of Hydrography. Then, having thanked Prince PIERRE for kindly consenting to take the Conference under his patronage, he invited him to open its proceedings. Prince PIERRE, in his turn welcomed the Delegates, referred in moving terms to the death of the late President of the Directing Committee, Admiral Sir John PARRY, spoke of the work of the League of Nations, to which the Bureau is affiliated, and finally declared the Conference to be open.

The first Plenary Session was held in the afternoon of the same day and thereat Rear-Admiral J.M. PHAFF, President of the Directing Committee of the Bureau, and Captain W.S. CROSLY, Delegate of the United States of America, were elected respectively President and Vice-President of the Conference and Commander G.B. SPICER-SIMSON, Secretary-General of the Bureau was elected as Secretary-General. Owing to an unfortunate illness, Rear-Admiral PHAFF was unable to attend any but the earlier meetings and thus Captain CROSLY acted as President for the greater part of the Conference.

Six Committees were formed to examine and report on the following subjects:

- I. Statutes.
- II. Finance.
- III. Work of the Bureau.
- IV. Charts & Technical Documents.
- V. Tides.
- VI. Eligibility of Candidates for the posts of Director and Secretary-General of the Bureau.

The reports of these Committee, with the exception of that of the Committee on Charts and Technical Documents, were submitted to the Plenary Session, which adopted, modified or rejected the recommendations of the Committees. The Committee on Charts and Technical Documents, having to examine a large number of questions and proposals, did not complete its work until nearly the closing date of the Conference and thus was unable to present a definite report before the Closing Session. As, however, every State interested had been represented on the Committee, it was decided that this report should be drawn up by the Chairman of the Committee and distributed to the Hydrographic Offices by the Bureau. This has now been done".

Among the many Resolutions adopted were:

PUBLICATION OF INTERNATIONAL LISTS OF SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

"... The Bureau should prepare an International list of symbols and abbreviations exclusively for the use of mariners, and also another list of Symbols and Abbreviations for the use of cartographers".

DEPTH CONTOURS

"As various proposals have been made, ... the Bureau should examine the question afresh and submit new proposals to the States Members; no objection has been raised against the advisability of making the symbols for depth contours the same for all countries". Several Delegates considered that the five-metre line should be heavier than the others, because it is the most important.

COLOURING OF LIGHT SECTORS

"It is desirable that those States which can do so, should colour their charts in order to indicate the colours of the light sectors, in view of the fact that this method is practically perfect".

REFERENCE TO ADJOINING CHARTS

"It would be advisable to adopt the rule that the numbers of adjacent charts should be indicated in the appropriate positions, or in case of complex arrangement, a skeleton index should be given".

SEA LIMITS

Sweden withdrew the proposal as to "the possibility and means of showing sea limits of various kinds on specially printed charts".

INFORMATION CONCERNING DANGERS MARKED "P.D." & "E.D."

The Committee voted on the following proposal: —

"The I.H. Bureau is requested to draw up a list of dangers marked P.D. and E.D. on charts, each being accompanied by a short historical note. All States are invited to provide the Bureau with the information necessary for the preparation of the list".

No decision was reached as 6 voted for and 6 against the proposal and 1 abstained from voting.

METHODS OF PRINTING CHARTS — REPRODUCTION — COPPER PLATES, ENGRAVING AND REPAIR

"States Members should send to the Bureau all possible information concerning printing and reproduction of charts, engraving and repair of copper plates as well as the application of zincography and lithography in the preparation of charts".

and, prophetically, 22 years before the establishment of IMCO:

SAFETY LANES AND DANGER ZONES

"Some international Organisation, which may even not as yet be formed, be urged to take up the study of the delimitation of lanes of traffic and danger zones in much frequented waters".