



## 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

(\*) Consort of the Hereditary Princess of Monaco.

well known Oceanographic Museum which was established on the Rock of Monaco by the 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 Committees, 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.

It should be noted that, on *technical* subjects, each State which sent a Delegation to the Conference had one vote, but that on *administrative* subjects the States Members of the Bureau only were allowed to vote, one vote to each.

The Committees on Statutes, Finance and Eligibility of Candidates dealt entirely with administrative subjects; that on the Work of the Bureau was partly administrative and partly technical and the other two Committees dealt with technical subjects only.

The following were represented at the Conference :

<i>STATES MEMBERS OF THE BUREAU</i>	<i>Number of Delegates</i>
ARGENTINE .....	2
BRAZIL .....	1
BRITISH EMPIRE (UNITED KINGDOM & AUSTRALIA).....	4
CHILE .....	2
CHINA .....	2
DENMARK .....	2
EGYPT.....	2
FRANCE.....	3
GERMANY .....	2
GREECE.....	2
ITALY .....	2
JAPAN.....	2
MONACO.....	2
NETHERLANDS .....	2
NORWAY .....	1
PERU .....	1
POLAND .....	1
PORTUGAL .....	1
SPAIN.....	3
SWEDEN.....	2
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA .....	1
<i>STATES NOT MEMBERS OF THE BUREAU</i>	
BRITISH INDIA.....	1
SERB, CROAT, SLOVENE KINGDOM.....	1

*Total 23 States*

*42 Delegates*

The only State Member of the Bureau which was not represented at the Conference was SIAM.

For the discussion in Committee and in Plenary Session the reader is referred to the " Report of Proceedings of the Second International Hydrographic Conference " which will be issued shortly.

The Plenary Sessions lasted 26 1/2 hours and the Committees sat (some of them simultaneously) for a total of 81 1/2 hours, *viz.*

Committee on Charts and Technical Documents.....	30 hours
"    " Statutes .....	27 1/4
"    " Work of the Bureau .....	8 1/4
"    " Finance .....	7 1/4
"    " Tides .....	6
"    " Eligibility of Candidates .....	2 3/4

The principal Resolutions made by the Conference are given in the next Article, page 51.

According to the Statutes of the Bureau, elections are to be held during the Conference for the appointment of the Members of the Directing Committee and of the Secretary-General for the ensuing five years. These elections were held on 6th November and resulted as follows :

#### DIRECTING COMMITTEE

Rear-Admiral A. P. NIBLACK D. S. M. (United States of America)	President
Monsieur Pierre DE VANSAY DE BLAVOUS Ingénieur Hydrographe Général (France)	Member
Captain L. TONIA (Italy)	Member

#### SECRETARY-GENERAL

Commander G. SPICER-SIMSON, D. S. O. (Great Britain).

During the evening of the opening day of the Conference, Their Serene Highnesses the HEREDITARY PRINCESS and Prince PIERRE OF MONACO received the Delegates at the Palace.

By the kindness of the French Government a French Surveying Vessel, the *Beautemps-Beaupré*, and her tender, the *Alidade*, were present in the harbour of Monaco during the first three days of the Conference. The Captains and Officers of these ships gave a reception in honour of the Delegates to whom the Recording Echo-Sounding apparatus installed on board was exhibited and explained.

On 28th October, H. E. the Minister of State entertained the Delegates at lunch and in the evening a gala performance was given, in honour of the Delegates, at the Monte Carlo theatre.

The Mayor and the Municipal Council of Monaco gave a lunch, at the Hôtel de Paris, to the Delegates on 30th October.

On Sunday 31st October, the Bureau organised an excursion to the Gorges du Loup to which the Delegates were invited to bring the members of their families who had accompanied them to Monaco. The excursion included lunch at Grasse and a visit to one of the perfume factories.

Monday, 1st November being All Saints Day and a legal holiday, no sessions were held.

The Electric Submerged Log Company having installed a log in a motor-boat, this boat was placed at the disposal of the Delegates, for the purpose of testing the Log, during the remainder of the Conference.

The Delegates and the members of their families were kindly entertained at tea by Mr. and Mrs. HARRISON-BENNETT, at the Chateau de la Vigie, on 1st November.

Another excursion was organised on Sunday 7th November. On this occasion, St. Raphael was visited and lunch was taken at Valescure. In the evening the Municipality of Monaco gave a firework display in honour of the Delegates.

On Wednesday 10th November the Delegates invited the Monegasque Authorities, the staff of the Bureau and all who had entertained them during their stay in Monaco, to a thé-dansant at the Hôtel de Paris.

G. S. S.

