

INTRODUCTION

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The Third International ICAS Congress, which took place at Stockholm August 27 through 31, 1962, was a great success. But just as the proceedings of this assembly went to press, a heavy blow was dealt to the International Council of the Aeronautical Sciences and, with it, the entire scientific and technical community of aviation. During the night of May 6-7, 1963, at Aix-la-Chapelle, where half a century ago he began his extraordinary career as a scientist, professor, and engineer, Theodore von Kármán, the founder and honorary chairman of the ICAS, died peacefully in his sleep.

His death, alas, made impossible the Introduction which he was to write for the Proceedings. The author of these lines is both saddened and honored to serve as his substitute in presenting this volume to the reader.

It should be obvious, therefore, that now, in accomplishing this duty, I wish to dedicate this Introduction to the memory of Theodore von Kármán.

Von Kármán's passing was observed with great solemnity in many places, particularly on the European continent. An observance took place in Paris at the Academy of Sciences, of which he was a foreign member, and also on May 28 at Aix-la-Chapelle, where the Rheinische-Westfälische Technische Hochschule held a deeply moving manifestation.

Those who participated at the Congress in Stockholm can still vividly recall how von Kármán opened and closed the Congress, and in their mind's eye observe him follow the principal events with an alertness of spirit and a competence not affected in any way by age. Once again his preference for profound remarks and humorous comparisons demonstrated itself without restraint, as in all the other international meetings in which he so frequently took part during the sixty years of his activity, and to which he so often contributed the initiative, energy, and efficacy.

In addition to all of his qualities as a scientist and his ability to create and to encourage progress in the various fields of mechanics, his personality was also characterized by a profound desire for international cooperation and exchange of ideas, experience, and knowledge.

Following a world war which, among other evils, had torn apart the international scientific community, it was on his initiative that in 1922, at Innsbruck, the first Congress on Mechanics took place, soon followed by the foundation of the International Union of Theoretical and Applied Mechanics as well as of the International Congress of Applied Mechanics, the tenth one of which will be

held at Munich in 1964. Of this Union, von Kármán soon became honorary chairman and one of its most active and distinguished supporters.

In 1956 his endeavor was to create a periodic reunion of specialists of all nations interested in the development of aeronautical sciences. Shortly thereafter, his idea took concrete form in the creation of the International Council of Aeronautical Sciences where, together with the members of the Council and in particular with those of the Executive Committee, I had the honor and the pleasure of assisting him in organizing the Congresses held by the ICAS successively at Madrid in 1958, at Zurich in 1960, and finally at Stockholm in 1962.

In presenting to the reader the volume in which the works of the latter Congress are published, I may assume that all those who have participated in these preceding meetings will share with me the emotion with which, in their name and in mine, I pay homage to the illustrious memory of Theodore von Kármán.

Paris, May 20, 1963