NEWS IN BRIEF . . .

1978 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD IN HAARLEM

Attending 1978 IUGS Executive Committee Meeting, left to right: Prof. T. Tatsumi (Japan), Prof. I.E. Altinli (Turkey), Dr. S. van der Heide (Netherlands), Mrs. M. Peltenburg-Jager (Netherlands), Prof. Gy Grasselly (Hungary), Dr. W.W. Hutchison (Canada), Ing. G.P. Salas (Mexico), Dr. V. Lafferty (Canada), Dr. P.H. Abelson (U.S.A.), Mrs. K. Metz (Austria), Prof. P.F. Howard (Australia), Prof. R. Trümpy (Switzerland), Prof. K. Metz (Austria), Mr. J.E. Cudjoe (Ghana), Acad. V.V. Menner (USSR), Dr. J. Eftekharneshad (Iran). Missing: Prof. J. Aubouin (France). (Photo: Courtesy GSC, 1-11-78)

The annual Executive Committee Meeting of the International Union of Geological Sciences was hosted by the Geological Survey of The Netherlands in Haarlem January 31 to February 3, 1978. It was an appropriate setting for the last meeting at which Dr. S. van der Heide participated in his capacity as Secretary General, thus bringing to a close eight years of active service to the Union.

Following are some highlights of the meeting:

The Future of the IUGS Scientific Program

One of the most significant issues raised during the meeting pertained to the current status and the future scope of the IUGS Scientific Program. Concern was expressed over the need for IUGS to keep pace with the evolution of geoscience and over the methods used for conceiving, formulating, evaluating and launching new scientific programs. The importance of improving links with existing scientific bodies within the framework of IUGS and particularly with its Affiliated Organizations was stressed repeatedly.

Committee members considered the possibility of establishing a small committee of eminent scientists to review the IUGS Scientific Program and to report its findings to the Executive Committee. It is anticipated that further action will be taken on this prior to the next meeting of the Executive Committee. There was general consensus as well on the desirability to hold small, annual scientific conferences in conjunction with the Executive Committee meeting, at least on a trial basis starting in 1979.

Inter-Union Commission on Geodynamics (ICG)

Since the ICG program is due to end in 1979, both IUGG and IUGS have agreed to establish ad-hoc committees to explore themes requiring co-operation among geologists and

geophysicists. The President announced that an informal IUGS group would meet in Paris on February 19 to discuss the subject. Current plans are to have both committees meet by summer of this year to compare progress, plan future co-operation and report back to their individual Unions early next year.

International Geological Correlation Program (IGCP)

The organization of the Program is currently under review in Unesco and Dr. E. von Braun of the IGCP Secretariat reported the results of a questionnaire circulated to Unesco's National Commissions. The Executive Committee expressed the hope that the basic nature of the Program would not change, though, in the interest of efficiency and economy, it recognized the need for some modifications. (Responses to the questionnaire generally indicated support for the present system of appointing the Board and Scientific Committees, or a slightly modified version of it, as well as a reduction of the total number of scientists serving on the Scientific Committees.) The feeling of IUGS is that a drastic reduction of Scientific Committee members might seriously impair the Program.

26th International Geological Congress (IGC)

Professor Aubouin, President of the next Congress to be held in 1980 in Paris, outlined the problems and challenges facing the Organizing Committee in planning what will likely be the biggest Congress convened so far. IUGS has requested that time be set aside during the Congress for three sessions of the IUGS Council, and that special attention be paid to ICG's proposed Colloquium. IUGS appreciated the invitation to participate in a "preliminary" meeting with the Program Committee of the Congress on February 20 in Paris, as well as in the meeting being scheduled for mid-May with representatives from the participating countries, when

specific plans for field excursions listed in the First Circular of the 26th Congress will be drawn up.

Annual Reports of Commissions, Committees, Affiliated Organizations

Notwithstanding the general high level of scientific activity within the Union and its Affiliated Organizations as recorded in the annual reports, it was felt that in some cases more effective communication between the scientific groups and the Executive Committee could be established to facilitate the Committee's task of dividing its resources to best effect.

Finances

The bleakest part of the meeting dealt with the financial prognosis for 1978. Last year the Union had a deficit of approximately \$15,000. Anticipated total revenues for 1978 are expected to be \$106,000. It was found necessary to take approximately \$10,000 from reserves (now below \$50,000) to make \$46,000 available for the total scientific activities of the Union (which includes fixed commitments of \$10,000 each to ICG and IGCP). Requests for uncommitted funds this year totalled more than \$70,000.

Committee members recognized that new initiatives, ways and means must be found for alleviating administrative costs on the one hand, and for improving the income revenue of the Union on the other. The budget for 1978 reflected the effect of world-wide inflation, the devaluation of the US dollar (which is the currency for national contributions to IUGS) and the costs of transferring the Secretariat from Haarlem, Holland to Ottawa, Canada.

(NB: A summary of the audited Treasurer's Report for 1977 will be published in *Episodes* later this year.)

Tribute to Dr. van der Heide

At the close of the meeting, the president expressed his thanks to the Geological Survey of The Netherlands and its Director, B.P. Hageman, for hosting the meeting, and paid a special tribute to Simon van der Heide, the outgoing Secretary General. He drew attention to the fact that Dr. van der Heide's term of office constituted a decisive period in the evolution of IUGS, a period during which the Union was transformed from a small "family" organization to

The stately headquarters of the Netherlands Geological Survey on the Spaarne Canal, Haarlem. (Photo: Courtesy GSC, 2-9-78)

one of the largest and most complex of the international scientific unions. Dr. van der Heide recognized the need to make the Union truly world-wide and was instrumental in fostering its growth from 59 countries in 1970 to 83 countries in 1978. While the administration of the Union grew in complexity, it maintained, nevertheless, a sense of humanity and a spirit of friendliness due largely to the efforts and initiatives of Dr. van der Heide.

(NOTE: OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE 1978 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING ARE AVAILABLE, ON REQUEST, FROM THE IUGS SECRETARIAT).

A break in the meeting. Left to right: Dr. P.H. Abelson, Prof. R. Trümpy, and Prof. I.E. Altinli. (Photo: Courtesy GSC, 1-3-78).

IGCP BOARD AND SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEES MEET

At the annual meetings of the IGCP Scientific Committees and Board held in Paris February 14-24, 1978, the progress of the 64 ongoing IGCP projects was appraised and the new projects submitted for consideration during the past year were evaluated. In addition, each of the Scientific Committees proposed recommendations to the Board regarding the general direction of the Program and its internal structure and operation.

The Board, under the chairmanship of Dr. D.J. McLaren, considered these recommendations and the options for the future organization of the Program under four general "working groups" concerned with the following issues: Publications and Public Relations; Reporting Procedures; Structure and Classification; and Developing Countries. The working groups made their recommendations at the plenary sessions of the Board. In general, they focussed on increasing the economy and efficiency of the Program, on streamlining all operations, on amalgamating the present four Scientific Committees into one, and on improving the identification of IGCP publications and publicity. Two standing committees – on Publications and Publicity and on Program Development were established to review some of these problems on a continuing basis.

Two Board members – Professor Janet Watson and Dr. John Reinemund have, at the request of the Board, compiled a summary of the activities of IGCP over the last five years. Entitled "Achievements of the International Geological Correlation Program as related to Human Needs", the report is based on submissions by the various project leaders and will be edited by Dr. M.G. Bassett, Chairman of the IUGS Advisory Board on Publications. It will be submitted to the next General Conference of Unesco and will be published simultaneously in the June issue of *Episodes* and in Unesco's "Nature and Resources".

NEWS IN BRIEF . . .

For the first time since the beginning of the IGCP Program, the Scientific Committees and the Board met during two consecutive weeks. While this resulted in an additional workload for the IGCP Secretariat at Unesco, it also led to a substantial saving of resources and time, sparing a number of members the need to travel to Paris twice.

A full report of these annual meetings will appear in Geological Correlation, Number 6, which will be released in mid-summer, 1978.

AGID CONFERENCE ON MINERAL EXPLORATION TECHNIQUES IN TROPICAL RAIN FORESTS

This international conference, sponsored by the Association of Geoscientists for International Development (AGID), was held in Caracas November 18-23 and was followed immediately by a short training course on practical techniques which lasted until December 3, 1977. The conference was attended by some 100 participants (including 55 from Latin America, 17 from Africa and 8 from Asia), all of whom were actively involved in rain forest terrains. The fifth Venezuelan Geological Congress and the first Ibero-Latin American Geophysical Congress, which were held concurrently, provided an additional opportunity for discussion and exchange of ideas and experiences.

Individual sessions were devoted to Remote Sensing, Geophysics, Geochemistry, and particularly to Environmental Impact and Exploration Strategies where participants addressed themselves to the question of how to develop exploration programmes in the extreme conditions that exist in rain forest regions. While no genuine consensus of opinion was achieved or even expected, the nearly 70 case histories provided much food for thought.

The training course that followed was attended by some 30 young geoscientists from Asia, Africa and Latin America, who had participated in the conference. The first four days in Caracas concentrated on remote sensing techniques as applied in Venezuela. This was followed by an extended field tour to rain forest regions in the Venezuelan Andes and in the flatlands of the Guyana Shield. Here participants visited several mining properties which had been discovered using modern geophysical, geochemical and remote sensing techniques. The opportunity to see at first hand other rain forest regions and to discuss with Venezuelans appropriate exploration methods was clearly of great value.

A 25 page Preliminary Record of the meeting is now being distributed, and work has already started on editing the background papers and the discussions for a final publication. This should be available sometime this year and will undoubtedly make a major contribution to our understanding of mineral exploration in tropical rain forests.

Those wishing to be notified when the final report is published should write to:

AGID Secretariat
Department of Geology
Memorial University
St. John's, Nfld.
Canada, A1B 3X5

MONUMENT MARKS WORLD STANDARD FOR SILURIAN/DEVONIAN BOUNDARY

During a Field Conference held in Czechoslovakia by the IUGS Subcommittee on Devonian Stratigraphy last October, a monument was unveiled at Klonk by the people of the nearby village of Suchomasty, southwest of Prague. The monument, approximately three meters in height, carries three metal plates marking the importance of the section at Klonk as "the world standard for the Silurian/Devonian boundary". Depicted in three languages – Czechoslovakian, Russian and English, it is, to the best of our knowledge, the only internationally agreed stratotype which has been so marked.

Standing beside the monument at Klonk is Dr. Ivo Chlupac, a leading Czech Devonian stratigrapher and a member of the Subcommittee on Devonian Stratigraphy. The slope in the background contains the section of the Silurian/Devonian boundary stratotype. (Photograph by Professor W. Ziegler, Chairman of the Subcommittee on Devonian Stratigraphy).

UPDATE ON 26TH INTERNATIONAL GEOLOGICAL CONGRESS

Those who have not as yet received the First Circular on the 26th International Geological Congress to be held in Paris in 1980, may obtain copies from:

SECRETARIAT GENERAL DU 26^e C.G.I.
Maison de la Géologie
77-79 rue Claude-Bernard
75005 Paris
France

Please note that the deadline for the return of the questionnaires contained in the First Circular has been extended to May 15, 1978. It is important, however, for all replies to be in by that date to allow the Organizing Committee enough time to make the necessary decisions regarding the scheduling of field trips and other events.

An all day "preparatory" meeting between representatives of IUGS and IGC took place in Paris on the 20th of February, 1978. It provided an excellent opportunity for delegates of IUGS and its Affiliated Organizations to discuss the content and scheduling of the scientific program of the Congress with the members of the Organizing Committee.