

**Prof. Gottfried Konecny**

Former President, ISPRS (1984-1988)

PROFESSIONAL TO THE CORE

During my studies of Geodetic Engineering at the Technical University of Munich, one of my teachers, Walter Hofmann attended the ISP Congress 1952 in Washington, where Germany was re-admitted into the Society after World War II. During a presentation, Hofmann painted the future of photogrammetry, as seen during that Congress, in bright colours.

My colleague Gerhard Winkelmann from Munich and I entered the graduate school of Ohio State University in 1954. Bertil Hallert, ISP Congress Director of 1956 in Stockholm was my teacher there along with Fred Doyle. Fred, in preparing a paper on digital photogrammetry for the 1956 Stockholm ISP Congress, took me to Dayton, Ohio, where the Wright-Patterson Air Force Base held a new digital image coordinate measuring device on which we did the measurements. In 1959 I joined the University of New Brunswick in Canada, starting a surveying engineering degree program with the help of Sam Gamble, the Canadian Director of Surveys and Mapping, who later became ISP President. I made it to the 1964 Lisbon ISP Congress, where I reported on our UNB efforts in photogrammetric education while Prof. Burkhardt from Berlin was ISP Commission VI president.



Hamburg- The Congress Director and the incoming Secretary General Prof. Konecny

At the 1968 ISP Congress in Lausanne, Sam Gamble became ISP Congress Director for 1972 and Kurt Schwidersky of Karlsruhe ISP Commission II President. At UNB we had acquired the first programmable analytical plotter, the OMI-AP/C. Schwidersky invited me to present the experiences at the Photogrammetric Week 1969 in Karlsruhe. At this meeting I got an invitation to come to Hanover, which I finally did in 1971.

At Hanover, I was able to pass on Duane Brown's paper on bundle block adjustment with additional parameters to Dr. Bauer, who had just completed his dissertation with my predecessor Gerhard Lehmann on bundle block aerial triangulation. Bauer applied the methodology and was able to produce

unbelievably accurate results for bundle block adjustments based on German accurate test fields. He presented this in a paper to the 1972 ISP Ottawa Congress.

During the Ottawa Congress, Landsat was successfully launched, and it brought photogrammetry into a new direction, remote sensing and space photogrammetry. Already during my last year at UNB I was able to participate in the Canadian assessment of this technology and I had defence connected projects using line scanners, which prompted ISP Commission IV President Van der

Weele to entrust me and Franz Leberl with an ISP working group on geometry of remote sensing systems with Franz Leberl covering the radar part.. In Hanover we had the chance to cooperate in the German Space Agency (DLR) managed remote sensing program with first results presented at the 1976 ISP Congress in Helsinki.

In 1975 I had applied for the vacant professorship in photogrammetry in Munich, but the appointment committee favoured to appoint H.K. Meier who did not accept the position due to his engagements at Carl Zeiss and Heinrich Ebner in the second place and me in the third place. My challenge was clear: Let's do something for photogrammetry in the north of Germany instead. With the help of the newly established Congress Center organisation in Hamburg and the German Society for Photogrammetry (I had become President in 1972 on suggestion of K. Schwidofsky), I applied in the name of the German Society at the ISP General Assembly for the 1980 ISP Congress to be held in Hamburg, and we won.

There was hardly a photogrammetrist in Hamburg. Therefore we organised the Congress by a joint German effort, with two University Institutes for Photogrammetry carrying the main burden: our Institute in Hannover and the Institute of Fritz Ackermann in Stuttgart. Fritz had become my successor as president of the German society, shortly after we changed the name of German Society for Photogrammetry into German Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing. In Hamburg we were able to change the name of the International Society for Photogrammetry (ISP) into International Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing (ISPRS) as well.

For us it was important to open relations to nations, for which political boundaries blocked international cooperation in our disciplines. We especially invited scientists and

engineers of the Soviet Union and its neighbours to our Congress, as well as those from China. In preparation for this I was invited to travel to China in 1979, and we prepared the membership of the Chinese

Society into ISPRS. Together with President Jean Cruset and Secretary General Fred Doyle we managed long negotiations, so that after a change of our statutes "Countries and Regions thereof, which have an independent budget" could become members of ISPRS, which meant that China could be admitted despite the fact that Taiwan was already a member. One statute change also permitted another - after 1980 as Congress Director I could become Secretary General of ISPRS during the 1980-1984 period, while my revered teacher Fred Doyle could be president of ISPRS

during the 1980-1984 period. This Council period was very constructive and worked beyond political boundaries with Ivan Antipov from the USSR and George Zarzycki being Vice Presidents. Zarzycki as former Polish citizen was not permitted to go to the Eastern block, so we had a Council meeting in West Berlin in 1983 which could be attended by Zarzycki but not by Antipov. Instead we arranged a second Council Meeting in Minsk in the Soviet Union at which Antipov could attend, but not Zarzycki.

The 1984 ISPRS Congress in Rio de Janeiro was the first Congress outside of Europe and North America and it brought home to photogrammetrists and remote sensing experts that we are global disciplines.

In Rio I was elected President of the Society, and it became a challenge to personally visit 40 ISPRS member countries on official missions, extending from Cuba to Latin America, Africa, Australia and Japan.

At the Kyoto ISPRS Congress in 1988, Washington in 1992 and Vienna in 1996 I was very happy that this tradition was followed by my able and dedicated successors Kennert Torlegard and Shunji Murai with others to follow. After Amsterdam 2000, Istanbul 2004 and Beijing 2008, ISPRS is a forward looking professional society meeting the demands of our changing globalised world. It has been a privilege to have been part of this effort. ■

