

INTERNATIONAL CHORAL BULLETIN

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INTRODUCTION

On March 8 and 9, 1981, a group of 23 leaders in choral music from throughout the world met in New Orleans, Louisiana, USA, following the National Convention of the American Choral Directors Association.

The purpose of their meeting was to continue the discussions begun several years earlier on international cooperation in choral music, with the eventual goal of creating an international structure to assist such cooperation.

Preliminary conferences had taken place in August, 1979, in Lucerne—during Europa Cantat 7 of the European Federation of Young Choirs—and in Paris in March, 1980. Represented at one or both of these meetings were the European Federation of Young Choirs, the Interamerican Association of Choral Directors, the All Japan Chorus League, and the American Choral Directors Association. At the end of the Paris meeting, the following statement was prepared: "On the weekend of the 22nd and 23rd of March, 1980, representatives of the European Federation of Young Choirs, of the American Choral Directors Association, and of the Interamerican Association of Choral Directors met to discuss the form of a future worldwide choral organization. The discussions had as a goal the undertaking of numerous projects in international cooperation suggested by the framework of the charter of the United Nations."

REPRESENTATION AT NEW ORLEANS

The New Orleans meetings in March, 1981, included even broader representation than that of the earlier conferences. In addition to the groups listed above, representatives of the following organizations and countries also were present:

The Association of Canadian Choral Conductors
The People's Republic of China
A Coeur Joie (France)

Accademia D'Arte Lirica E Corale (Italy)
The British Broadcasting Corporation Singers (England)
The Deutscher Sängerbund (Germany)
The Federation of Catalonian Choirs (Spain)
Stockholm University Chorus (Sweden)
Fundación Schola Cantorum de Caracas (Venezuela)
Swiss Federation of Young Choirs (Switzerland)
(A complete list of representatives appears at the end of this BULLETIN.)

THE NEW ORLEANS MEETINGS

The New Orleans meetings opened with the introduction of delegates, descriptions of the various organizations represented, and preliminary agreements on the topics to be dealt with during the succeeding two days.

At the conclusion of this session, two concepts were agreed upon by affirmative vote: 1.) There is a need for international exchange and communication in choral music; 2.) Those present wish to begin the process of organizing that exchange and communication.

In order to simplify matters, the group was then divided into four committees to address specific issues on the agenda. After these separate discussions, the body gathered again as a whole to receive the reports and recommendations of the committees. Summaries of these reports follow.

Recommendations of the Committees

Committee A: THE STRUCTURE OF AN INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR CHORAL MUSIC. The committee proposed several categories of membership in an international organization: 1.) National and international choral organizations; 2.) Choirs, conductors, and individuals; 3.) Institutions such as universities, businesses, libraries, etc. The committee agreed that a newsletter should be started as a vehicle for communi-

cation among the present group. It should appear approximately every two months until a more formal structure is in place, and all those present should submit material for publication. They also recommended that a questionnaire be prepared in several languages seeking information from throughout the world about the state of the choral art and about organizations active in choral music. Finally, the committee suggested that a subcommittee of six persons begin preparing a constitution for submission to the full group when it next meets.

Committee B: EDUCATION. This committee's discussion emphasized the essentials of learning through exchange and interchange of conductors and students, both for longer periods of sabbatical leaves and study, and shorter terms of workshops, clinics, and institutes. For students to be able to participate, however, some forms of financial support would be necessary. The need for academic credit as an added incentive was described. The committee also recommended that to facilitate exchange, an international bulletin should contain lists of persons, their special fields of expertise, and their availabilities.

Committee C: THE EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION AND MATERIALS. This committee discussed the need for a variety of international publications in choral music. They felt that the primary need is to develop a newsletter with timely items such as schedules for important choral festivals and seminars, unusual study and performance opportunities, and information on fellowships and scholarships available for students. They recommended that the newsletter be sent to the headquarters of each organization and that it be the responsibility of each organization to select and disseminate those items deemed important to their own constituents. The newsletter should be limited in size and scope and produced inexpensively.

The committee proposed that the second step in a publications program should be the development of a full journal to deal with choral subjects in greater depth. It could include original articles, reviews of recent publications of music and books, reports of current research, articles reprinted from national journals, and other such materials of interest to choral musicians.

A number of methods for exchange of music were discussed. The committee recommended the establishment of a service to which members could subscribe on a voluntary basis. Once such a structure were established, it could be used for the distribution of books, recordings, and period-

icals as well.

Committee D: INTERNATIONAL TOURING BY CHOIRS. This committee discussed at length the difficult problem of touring choirs which do not represent their country's highest quality of performance and repertoire. The committee recommended the adoption of a standard information sheet to be completed by each choir which wishes to perform at a festival in another country. The information sheet would be submitted to a national authority in the choir's own country, and that authority would attach recommendations and comments concerning the choir's suitability for the proposed festivals. The information sheet would then be forwarded to the inviting authority in the other country which would be free to issue an invitation to the choir, or not, as it chose. In return, the inviting authority would stand ready to provide the invited choir with contacts through which it might arrange its own concert tour. It was emphasized that most choral organizations would not themselves be in a position to arrange tours for foreign choirs.

Final Agreements

After lengthy discussion of the committee recommendations by the whole group, the following general agreements were reached.

1.) An inexpensive newsletter called THE INTERNATIONAL CHORAL BULLETIN should be established immediately. It should be sent to all those present at this meeting and to those receiving the international questionnaire. The American Choral Directors Association agreed to take responsibility for producing and distributing such a newsletter. All present agreed to submit materials for publication to the editor.

2.) An international organization for choral music should have three types of membership:

- a. National and international choral organizations
- b. Choirs, conductors, and individuals
- c. Industrial and institutional entities (businesses, universities, libraries, cultural centers, etc.)

3.) A questionnaire should be prepared and circulated throughout the world for the purpose of collecting information about choral music and choral organizations. Royce Saltzman (ACDA) agreed to take responsibility for distributing the questionnaire within the next few weeks. All present agreed to send names and addresses of organizations and people in their own and other countries to whom the questionnaire should be sent.

4.) An Interim Committee of six members was established consisting of Royce Saltzman (USA), Chairman; Claude Tagger (France), Co-chairman; Waldo Aranguiz (Chile), Eskil Hemberg (Sweden), Walter Weidmann (Germany), and a representative of the All Japan Chorus League to be named later.

The Interim Committee was charged with the responsibility of carrying on the work of this conference, preparing an agenda for the next full meeting, and developing a proposal for a constitution for an international organization. A number of questions which the Committee should address also were presented. The Committee is to submit this material to the whole body by April, 1982.

The Interim Committee will meet at the EFJC Singing Week in Loughborough, England, from July 27 to 29, 1981. Observers will be welcome to participate on a nonvoting basis.

5.) The next meeting of the entire body will be held August 8 and 9, 1982, during the EFJC's Europa Cantat 8 in Namur, Belgium.

The meeting adjourned with the singing of the canon DONA NOBIS PACEM by all present.

Editor's Note

If this BULLETIN is to be successful, materials of international interest must be sent to the Editor promptly and regularly. The following items are requested:

1. Notices of festivals, seminars, workshops, activities, and performance opportunities.
2. Opportunities for international exchange of choirs, conductors, and students, including fellowship and scholarship information.
3. Names and addresses of organizations and persons to whom the questionnaire and newsletter should be sent.
4. News items of organizational activities.
5. Information about publications of important choral music and books.
6. Announcements of sources of information for choral conductors.
7. Proposals for the future organization, its structure, and its responsibilities.
8. Copies of choral newsletters and journals with English translations (if possible) of items deemed worthy of republication in the BULLETIN.
9. Other items of interest to the international choral community.

PERSONS ATTENDING THE INTERNATIONAL MEETING, NEW ORLEANS, MARCH 8-9, 1981

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