

Opening speech of Mr. L. A. de Lange

President of OSTIV

Your Excellencies, Mr. President,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is almost ten years — minus one week to be precise — since we met in the town of Leszno to open the 7th OSTIV Congress.

After Cologne, Junin and South Cerney we are here once more in these familiar surroundings and among these friendly and hospitable people. For the opening of the XIth OSTIV Congress, however, we have exchanged the fine hall in the town for this festive room in the new block of buildings at Leszno airport.

I think we might well regard this as a symbol of a favourable development. OSTIV does not ask the soaring pilots to come and meet it, but it is endeavouring more and more to approach the soaring pilots community, making OSTIV's scientific and technical potential available to offer them new opportunities in the sport which unites them. This is precisely OSTIV's particular character, which in general differs so fundamentally from that of a purely scientific and technical organisation. The study and testing of new shapes, new types of construction and new materials for sailplanes, as well as atmospheric research by means of sailplanes which soar even into the stratosphere, is aimed chiefly at finding new opportunities for the practice of soaring. Conversely, the practical exercise of soaring — notably in the upper strata of the atmosphere — may yield important information for science and technology, which in turn may benefit aviation in general.

Close cooperation between the soaring pilots community and the organisation of scientists and technologists is therefore a 'sine qua non' for attaining optimum results. There is no other sport in which such an ideal combination of science and technology is pos-

sible and which covers such a wide field of science and technology. Considering only the period Leszno 1958—Leszno 1968, we have seen the exceptional results of the research carried out by the OSTIV experts Prof. Dr. Eppler and Prof. Dr. Ing. Wortmann on wing sections, applied in practice to sailplanes, and we have profited in this period by the wide knowledge and experience in the field of synthetic materials reinforced by fibreglass, which have been acquired in the construction and use of sailplanes, as a result of which surface deformations of wing, fuselage and other parts virtually no longer occur and a very smooth aircraft shell has been obtained.

If the aircraft parts which are exposed to air flow show a suitable continuous contour and are covered by a very smooth, form-retaining shell, the boundary layer will remain laminar over a larger area than it otherwise would, thus helping to reduce the sailplane drag to a minimum.

The fact that sailplanes like the 'Phönix' and 'Diamant' could be made entirely of synthetic materials — including the lifting parts — is something which is bound to have great effect on the development of light engine-propelled aircraft.

Finally — and this applies notably to recent years and certainly to the future — the cooperation between weather satellites, meteorologists and soaring pilots will open great new opportunities for soaring in the jetstream, with results that were still unthinkable only a few years ago. It was especially the meteorologist Lindsay who pointed to this possibility in a highly interesting lecture delivered at the OSTIV Congress in South Cerney, for which merit

he will presently be awarded an OSTIV honour. On the other hand, soaring on the currents toward, near and in the jetstream will acquaint the meteorologists with secrets of the lee wave flow, clear air turbulence and jetstream, which will be of immeasurable significance for both science and aviation in general.

Your Excellencies, Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen, I wonder whether it would be possible and useful in this connection if — stimulated by OSTIV — students of aircraft construction, under guidance of their professors, were to embark on international cooperation with the aim of designing a specific strato-sailplane, which would not only carry instruments, but be an instrument itself for exploring the currents in the upper atmospheric strata, of which we still know comparatively little. Such international cooperation between young people interested in soaring and looking forward to a career in aviation or space travel, will in addition strengthen the ties of friendship between these technicians of the coming generation in various countries, thus attaining aims even beyond the immediate goal.

Before opening the Congress, I wish to thank those who have spoken before me for their kind words and good wishes addressed to our organisation. Your Excellencies, Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen, what I have told you about the cooperation between OSTIV and the soaring pilots community and what I have said about the great opportunities still in store for our beloved sport, was merely introductory to the act I am going to perform now.

With this gavel blow I open the XIth OSTIV Congress.