

# ISA AND THE REST OF THE WORLD<sup>1</sup>

## Part I

by Niels Hvass

Our organization is international. In the 1970 yearbook, the year I joined as the first Scandinavian, the ISA had 1,808 members. Seven countries outside the USA and Canada were represented with a total of 19 members.

Today, 1985, the grand total of members is 4,095. The number of foreign countries is 24 with a total of 119 members. This is more than twice as many countries and six times as many members from countries outside the USA and Canada within a period of 15 years.

This is very good, but the question is whether these members abroad get a reasonable service from their membership. From my point of view and many others with an ability to read, speak, and write English the answer is Yes. From a lot of other members who are not so familiar with the English language the answer is No.

The difference in language is the major problem. Besides English we have ISA members who speak German, French, Italian, Dutch, Portuguese, Swedish, Danish, Spanish, Jewish, Japanese, and Polish. We also must realize that most of the members from the world outside North America seldom or never come to the annual conference. They are members because they are tree people and want to receive the *Journal of Arboriculture*.

The ISA must realize that for the \$45 per year which they pay as members they get 12 copies of a magazine plus a yearbook. The *Journal of Arboriculture* is a good magazine but here again you must realize that some of the articles refer to subjects of specific American interest and hardly have any meaning in other countries. Let me, for instance, mention the gypsy moth and how you fight them. I never saw one before coming to the USA.

Another problem is financial. The U.S. dollar has doubled its value within five years compared to most other currencies. For some members it means that they have to think twice before staying

as members or deciding to become members.

A European chapter of the ISA has been under formation lately. The initiative has come from Germany, and my co-speaker Phillip Dienst will bring you more information about this. The reason why the idea of a European chapter started in Germany is basically the demand for information about up-to-date tree care.

A younger generation of tree people is now beginning to understand that the traditional tree surgery with cavity work, etc. is not as good for the trees as their elder fellows believe. Some of them have heard about the outstanding research done by Dr. Shigo, Dr. Shortle, and others, telling that the tree has a defense system that should be understood and respected before and when tree care is done. Very little has been written in the German language about this subject. Reading the *Journal of Arboriculture* is the best way to get the information, but it is difficult to understand the text if you are not in constant contact with the English language.

The title of this speech is: ISA and the rest of the world. This is an exaggeration as I do not know the rest of the world. However, it is a fact that interest for the environment is increasing almost everywhere. There is more money being spent on state budgets for fighting acid rain, forest death, and growing deserts than ever before. Among local authorities it has become quite clear that street trees do not grow at will, and that it needs a lot of skill to maintain a green city.

The need for know-how about trees is great all over the world, and people who want to be professional seek membership in organizations with good informative magazines. The Arboricultural Association in England has reached 1,072 members with a fast rate of growth for the last couple of years. In Holland the new similar organization, KPG, has reached 150 members. I have no knowledge of other national arboricultural

1. Presented at the annual conference of the International Society of Arboriculture in Milwaukee in August 1985. In August 1985.

associations. There is much work left for the ISA.

It is difficult right now to give advice to the leaders of the ISA about how this international organization can better serve their members outside the English-speaking countries. It is predictable that some present and future members will ask for more than the Journal of Arboriculture and the membership book. This could be done in many ways and should be carefully discussed in the near future. The ISA is well organized, and with a comparatively small effort could make the first letter "I" truly stand for international.

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## Part II

by **Philipp G. Dienst**

My intention is to bring to the group a report on the situation for arboriculture in Germany. There have been many new and exciting developments in the past year.

The groups who have an interest in tree care practices are presently landscapers, foresters, urban foresters, and consultants. The *landscapers* wish to regulate all practices related to plants and their maintenance. But they have not established tree care as a special field, and they have no specific education concerning tree care. Tree care is not related to forestry in our country. Presently there is a strong tradition of separation of forestry practices and research and administration from urban tree care. Some *cities* have made the effort to educate their tree care workers by sending them to the special three-week training sessions of the LVG in Heidelberg. Public opinion is forcing them to improve the maintenance of the trees in their care.

There are some agricultural and gardening *consultants* who work with tree problems: sometimes to the benefit or detriment of the trees. Of all these groups, not one of them is working exclusively in the area of tree care. Our new ISA group wants to remedy this situation. Education

will be the key. Some other groups have attempted to run seminars in tree surgery. In some instances, they have been influenced by special interests. These seminars are not accepted by the government. The only government supported special education over the last 10 years has been offered by the LVG in Heidelberg, with whom we are connected. They offer a special examination and certification to be an Staatliche Geprüfter Baumpfleger.

At the moment, the best public information comes from the tree departments of some cities. The government does not provide educational information on trees as you do, in cooperative extension programs. Some gardening journals report from time to time on special interests. We are seeing more frequently articles on trees. One journal, "Die Baumzeitung" with Dr. Bernatzky as Editor, reported only about trees for many years; however, within the last two years, the magazine has been sold to the Scheidler Company.

In general, when people have problems with their trees, they consult their local nurseryman, landscaper, or fruit tree grower. These are not always the best resources for up-to-date information.

In Germany, tree care depends more and more on public interest in the environment and nature. Our people have a strong emotional connection to the German forest. Forestry science has shown them the increasing damage to forest trees. The result is that the people also now worry more about the proper care of trees along roadsides, in gardens, and in parks. They demand better protection and maintenance of their trees. Unfortunately, because of the low level of good information, these demands are based mostly on emotions.

The greatest pressure for proper tree care will come from the public sector. The Green Party is a political trend setter for environmental protection and maintenance. Other political parties and their government have started to follow their lead as their popularity rises.

In our special field, we wish to create the demand for high quality work. In this way, the green industry can make the greatest profit—for the trees, the customers, and the companies. All of this depends on good education and on strong,