

By R. Björklund*

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Conditions in the ferro-alloy industry could certainly have been better at a time like this. The Organizing Committee apologizes for this failure. On the other hand I believe one has to learn to like a situation, be it good or bad. To wish that the situation you are in had been different is useless and also inadvisable. It just cramps your style.

As many of you are aware the idea of an International Ferro-Alloy Congress was conceived at the South African National Institute for Metallurgy (NIM). I believe this was already in 1969. In cooperation with the South African Institute of Mining and Metallurgy as well as the Ferro Alloy Producers' Association "INFACON" 74 was arranged in Johannesburg. The congress was a great success with interesting technical sessions, a full social programme, technical visits and, last but not least, the Kruger National Park.

During "INFACON" 74 an International Committee on Ferro-Alloys was formed and met to discuss the future of the "INFACON" idea. A timetable for congresses every third year was set up but could for various reasons not be adhered to. In the meantime Mr. J. Gall and myself kept in touch with Mr. L.F. Haughton of NIM, Secretary of the International Committee, who had been Congress Manager of "INFACON" 74. I believe it was in 1976 that I brought up the idea that "IPFEO" would host "INFACON" and the result is "INFACON" 80. You will have noticed that in both cases, "INFACON" 74 and 80, the travail and teething troubles have been considerable. But now, as a friend of mine used to say "Kann es sich nur um Sekunden handeln" - Now it can only be a matter of seconds - until I declare this congress open.

Before I do so, however, I believe it would be appropriate to say a few words about our "IPFEO" organization. The name stands for Institut des Producteurs de Ferro-Alliages d'Europe Occidentale or Western European Ferro-Alloy Producers' Institute. It was organized and founded in 1970 and practically all of the current 46 company members were charter members. The Institute is registered in Lausanne, Switzerland, and we retain a permanent secretary, a legal adviser plus an auditing firm to audit our accounts annually. We are in compliance with EEC regulations.

The objectives of "IPFEO" are to promote and encourage our member companies to participate actively in the various programmes and committees for the common good of all. The Institute's management is composed of a President and a

* Ferrolegeringar Trollhätteverken AB, Sweden

Vice-President elected for a two year term, plus an Executive Committee of five members. We have communicated with other world ferro-alloy organizations and have invited them to be represented at our annual general meeting.

Thanks to the indefatigable work of our Secretary, Miss D. Chastellain, and her crew and the valuable assistance of Mr. George Barrow, the father of "IPFEO", M. P. Lugagne and Mr. S. Oleinikoff and last but not least the patience and support of all IPFEO members, I am now at long last able to proclaim as the Maire of Lake Placid at the latest Olympic Winter Games "Welcome World, we are ready" and with these words I declare the Second International Ferro-Alloys Congress, "INFACON" 80, officially open.