

PREFACE

The proposal for a joint meeting of the French and British Sections of IUSSI was made first at the IX International Congress of the Union, at Boulder, Colorado. Our French colleagues offered to host this social insect version of the '*entente cordiale*', but, as it turned out, the meeting was not far short of a full international conference.

We were particularly fortunate that Prof. Bill Gotwald Jr. was present to give the introductory lecture, in honour of Prof. J K A van Boven's retirement. Bill's clear and enthusiastic lecturing style really set the tone for the meeting. Despite everyone's reservations about a possible 'language barrier', it is apparent that both native English and French speakers understand far more of each other's language than they care to pretend!

The success of any meeting is 90% dependent on careful organisation. The French Section was lucky to have as an organiser Johan Billen, whose attention to detail ensured a carefree participation by all. We all are very grateful to him.

My own feelings, and the opinion of my British colleagues who participated in the meeting, are that the whole event was a great success, both at the academic and the social levels. For, as social biologists, we can have no hesitation in saying that cooperation begins with individual contact. It is my hope that in a few years' time the British Section can return the invitation to the French Section to join with us in a meeting, possibly in London. Perhaps this might be widened to include our German colleagues, so that we hold a European Congress interpolated between the quaterennial international meetings.

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