2. Society News

Louis Chen at the General Assembly of the Bernoulli Society in Helsinki

"It has been four years since I became a member of the Executive Committee of the Bernoulli Society, first as President-Elect and then as President. This is a long period of involvement, and it has given me an opportunity to see the Society grow in strength, understand its working and develop a deep attachment to it. I have been impressed by the dedication of many of the officers and those working for the Society, and by the professionalism with which they performed their tasks and discharged their responsibilities. This has been an eye-opening and enriching experience for me.

As I look back, two events and the consequences they have brought upon the Society left a deep impression on me. These were events beyond our control, but in the process of grappling with their implications, we have either instituted measures which in the long run would be beneficial to the Society or else we have become even more determined to overcome the difficulties.

The first event was the acquisition of Chapman & Hall by Kluwer, which came to our knowledge suddenly in 1998. The resulting concern over the prospect of a sharp price increase of the BERNOULLI journal led to a take-over of the publication of the journal from the commercial publishers by ISI and the Society. The passage leading to this outcome has not been an easy one. But it was in a right direction, and is beginning to have wider repercussions.

The second event was the sudden onset of the financial crisis in East Asia, not long after a new East Asian and Pacific Regional Committee was formed in Istanbul in August 1997. The crisis brought tremendous hardship to the organizers of the conferences in Taejon, Korea and Hanoi, Vietnam, which had been planned for April 1998 and June 1999 respectively. But it did not affect their efforts or determination, nor did it in any way dent the enthusiasm of the statistical community in the East Asia-Pacific Region. In the end, the conferences took place as planned and were a great success. Encouraged by the success, probabilists and statisticians in the region look forward to more conferences and continuing activities of the East Asian and Pacific Regional Committee.

The above developments are signs of strengthening and maturing of the Bernoulli Society, and they augur well for the Society as it moves into the twenty-first century.

It now remains for me to thank all those who have in one way or another served and contributed to the Society during my term as President. Specifically, I would like to thank all the conference organizers, chairs of committees and programmes, editors of journals and newsletter, and council members, for their valuable service and contributions. It is not possible for me to provide a list of names here, as such a list would be enormous. But I would like to mention Claudia Klüppelberg, the founding editor of the "Bernoulli News", and her successor Angelika May, since I have not thanked them formally after the changing of editors.

Finally, I would like to thank past President Jef Teugels for his valuable advice from time to time, and the members of the Executive Committee, in particular, the Scientific Secretary Wilfrid Kendall, for their constant support, cooperation and assistance.

It is now my great pleasure to present to you the new President of the Bernoulli Society, David Oliver Siegmund. David ..."

Louis Chen, outgoing President

D. Siegmund, V. Mammitzsch, L. Chen, A. Gut and W. Kendall