

AIDA WORLD CONGRESS 1982

The Committee of BILA are delighted that the Presidential Council of AIDA have accepted our invitation to hold its 6th Quadrennial Congress in London in 1982.

Some members of BILA may be unaware of the existence of AIDA (Association Internationale De Droit De L'Assurance) even though we state that we are its British Chapter in our letterheading. The Association brings together insurance lawyers from most nations of the World - over fifty-three countries were represented at the 1978 World Congress in Madrid - and provides a forum in which legal problems can be debated at the highest level.

It is not often appreciated in the U.K. that lawyers play a much more important role in insurance in most other lands than they do here. In some countries, indeed, the top echelons of insurance general management stem almost exclusively from the ranks of lawyers and mathematicians, while academic lawyers abroad often have much closer contacts with the practical insurance business than in Great Britain.

It is hardly surprising, therefore, that in the world as a whole the publications, reports and proceedings of AIDA are widely respected; nor that AIDA functions are conducted with a mixture of academic and practical skills that makes them of consuming interest and value.

Thus the quadrennial world congress of the Association are important, prestigious and well-attended events that many countries are anxious to host.

Up to now, BILA has refrained from seeking this honour largely because of the cost and administrative burden that would fall upon our small organisation. This time, however, we have been given significant financial support from the British market who recognise the benefits of bringing so many influential insurance men and women to London. In addition, Gordon Shaw, one of our Vice-Presidents, has retired and though still leading a very active life has agreed to take on the responsibilities of Conference Director. On this basis and with the help of some willing hands from our membership, we have accepted the challenge.

And challenge it is! At the last Congress in Madrid there were more than 1500 delegates; scores of national reports on the main themes; translation into six languages; several subsidiary meetings and working groups, plus a sophisticated social programme. All this we have to match if the London Congress is to meet the standards set in the past.

One thing that would help enormously would be for there to be a strong U.K. contingent at the Congress. 500 Spaniards swelled the throng in 1978 and though a similar number would perhaps be too much to hope for in London, we ought to be able to muster 200 or more if we are all really concerned to make it a success.

Soon we shall be announcing the dates, costs and other details of the Congress. Please look out for them, keep the dates firmly booked in your diaries and make every effort to attend with as many of your colleagues as you can persuade to come. They should not take too much persuading in view of the important issues of 'liabilities of providers of services' and the 'law of insurance of persons' that are to be considered and the opportunity to meet so many leading overseas insurance officials.

Pat Saxton
Vice-Chairman