rig aan Mnr. Joubert wat ingestem het om mede-beskermheer van die Vereniging te word saam met Prof. Jackson en Dr. Naudé. Ongelukkig was dit nie moontlik vir Mnr. Joubert op die geleentheid aanwesig te wees nie en hy het sy verskonings aan die Vereniging oorgedra.

Die seremoniemeester het die volgende boodskap van Mnr. Danie Joubert, leier van SANAE 9 gelees: ‚By geleentheid van midwinter 1968, dra die lede van negende Suid-Afrikaanse Nasionale Antarktiese Ekspedisie hulle beste wense oor aan die bestuur en lede van die S.A.A.V.'

Afgesien van die uitstekende ete wat voorgesit is, was die hoogtepunt van die aand die geleentheidstoespraak deur Dr. Hewitt en die oorhandiging van die S.A. Antarktiese Medalje aan Mnr. Dirk Neethling. Dr. D. Torr, wat voorsitter van die Medalje-komitee was, het die motivering vir die toekenning van die medalje aan Mnr. Neethling voorgelees, waarna Mnr. Baker die medalje oorhandig het.

Dr. André van der Merwe het die geleentheid afgerond deur Dr. Hewitt te bedank vir sy interessante en leersame toespraak, en die ander persone wat behulpsaam was met die organisasie van die dinee geluk te wens met die uitstekende sukses van die geleentheid. Hy het verwys na die belangrike aanmoediging wat BP maak vir Antarktiese Navorsing deur 'n medalje beskikbaar te stel.

SITAAT: ANTARKTIKAMEDALJE

Mnr. O. Baker, Streeksbestuurder van BP Suidelike Afrika oorhandig die Antarktiese medalje aan Mnr. Dirk Neethling. Regs is Mev. Baker.

Foto: R. van Heerden

Die sitaat vir die toekenning van die medalje deur Dr. D.G. Torr, Voorsitter van die medaljekomitee van hierdie vereniging, was as volg :

‚Mnr. D.C. Neethling het die B.Sc. en B.Sc-Honneurs grade in Geologie aan die Universiteite van Stellenbosch (1954) en Pretoria (1966) behaal. Tans is hy ingeskryf vir die Doktors-graad aan die Universiteit van Natal. Sy proefskrif handel oor die Geologiese en Gletserkundige navorsing van die Suid-Afrikaanse Ekspedisies in Antarktika.

Voor sy vertrek in 1962 saam met die derde Ekspedisie na Antarktika was Mnr. Neethling reeds 'n erkende geoloog met wye ondervinding in Suid-Afrika en Noord en Suid-Rhodesië. Gedurende sy oorwintering te SANAE was hy verantwoordelik vir die uitvoering van die geologiese, gletserkundige en veldgeofisiese programme. 'n Taak wat hy met groot ywer en inisiatief aangepak en tot uitvoering gebring het. Die huidige langtermyn gletserkundige program te SANAE is hoofsaaklik aansy toedoen te danke.

Na sy terugkeer vanaf Antarktika is hy in 1963 aangestel as koördinerende geoloog vir Antarktiese Navorsing aan die Geologiese Opname. Tans is hy hoofgeoloog en programdirekteur en verantwoordelik vir die beplanning bestuur en koördinasie van die geologiese en verwante programme in Antarktika.

Hy het reeds Suid-Afrika op verskillende internasionale simposia oor Antarktiese navorsing verteenwoordig. In 1965 is hy aangestel as Suid-Afrikaanse lid van die Werkgroep vir Gletserkunde van SCAR en by die veertiende Algemene vergadering van die Internasionale Unie vir Geodesie en Geofisika wat in 1967 in Switserland gehou is, is hy aangestel as sameroeper-sekretaris van 'n spesiale subkomitee van SCAR vir ysbankstudies.

Sy menige publikasies sluit o.a. bydraes in oor die geologie van die Ahlmannberge in westelike Koningin Maudland en 'n oorsig oor die Suid-Afrikaanse Gletserkundige navorsing op die Fimbulysbank. Van hierdie referate is o.a. voorgedra by internasionale simposia oor Antarktiese navorsing in Suid-Afrika, Suid-Amerika en die Verenigde State van Amerika.

In 1965 was hy Suid-Afrikaanse waarnemer en uitruilwetenskaplike op die V.S.A. 'Deep Freeze' Ekspedisie. Daarbenewens was hy op twee verkenningekspedisies na Bouveteiland en leier van die Suid-Afrikaanse gedeelte van die S.A.-Belgiese somerekspedisie van 1968.

Mnr. Neethling het nie net 'n intense belangstelling in sy vak en navorsingsrigting nie, maar was ook by verskeie geleenthede lid van die komitees van die Suid-Afrikaanse Antarktiese Vereniging en die Suid-Afrikaanse Antarktiese Klub. Vanjaar is hy nie net alleen verkies as Voorsitter van die vereniging nie maar tree ook as mede-redakteur van die Antarktiese Bulletin op.

Tydens sy oorwintering in 1962 het hy durf en leierskap aan die dag gelê, sy lojaliteit was onverdeeld en sy aangename persoonlikheid het baie daartoe bygedra om die moraal van die ekspedisie hoog te hou.'

BEDANKING VAN MNR. D. NEETHLING OP OORHANDIGING VAN MEDALJE

,Dit is vir my 'n besondere eer om vanaand hierdie medalje van die Suid-Afrikaanse Antarktiese Vereniging in ontvangs te kan neem. Dankie vir die mooi woorde, Dr. Torr as voorsitter van die medaljekomitee en Mnr. Baker as offisiële verteenwoordiger van B P. Suidelike Afrika.

Daar is baie wat deel in hierdie medalje, graag wil ek hulle uitsonder. My vrou Marie, want sonder haar volgehoue ondersteuning van wat vir my belangrik was sou ek sekerlik nie vanaand die voorreg gehad het om hierdie bedanking te kon doen en ons medalje in ontvangs te kon neem nie. My innige dank ook aan my Vader en Moeder en aan Hom vir die voorreg om hulle albei vanaand hier by ons te kan hê.

En dan die derde Suid-Afrikaanse Nasionale Antarktiese Ekspedisie - Marten du Preez en ons dertien daar saam in die koue en in die wit en sneeu van daardie land wat ons almal hier vanaand in 'n gemeensame band snoer. My dank aan die Geologiese Opname en die Departement van Mynwese, in besonder aan Dr. O.R. van Eeden, die huidige direkteur, en die nou-afgestorwe Dr. F.C. Truter, vir die ondersteuning en vertroue wat hulle in my en in die toekoms van ons program in Antarktika gestel het. Aan die geoloë van die ekspedisies, Victor von Brunn, Barry Butt, Otto Langenegger, André du Plessis, Wolfgang Pollak, Eddie de Ridder, Horst Bastin, Charles Kingsley, Kobus Retief, Brian Watters en Anton Aucamp - aan hulle almal, baie dankie want sonder hulle belangstelling en geesdrif sou ons geen program gehad het nie.

I am also grateful to the Scientific Committee for Antarctic Research, in particular to the secretary of SASCAR for the close and friendly relationship maintained during the past six years. I am indebted to the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research for the most generous sponsorship of my participation in international SCAR Working Group Meetings, participation in the U.S. Deep Freeze Expedition 64/65, XIVth General Assembly of the International Union for Geodesy and Geophysics 1967 and the forthcoming Symposium on Antarctic Glaciology to be held in the United States during December of this year. These Symposia and visits to foreign antarctic institutes have provided me with a most useful background in Antarctic Science and exploration for which I am most grateful.

My sincere appreciation to the Department of Transport which has provided the logistic support both in funds and personnel so vital for the execution of our field programme in Antarctica. The willing and friendly co-operation of the secretariat and officials of this department is gratefully acknowledged.

In conclusion, I would like to wish the South African Antarctic Association everything of the best for the future. We are indeed fortunate to be members of an association which has set itself the task of bringing Antarctica to the nation and we are even more fortunate to bear witness in our age of this fascinating exploration of the last unknown continent on planet earth, a continent of which that famous navigator Captain Cook many years ago said that : 'it is condemned to everlasting rigidity . . . . . for whose wild and desolate spirit I have no words . . . . . and I make bold to declare the world shall derive no benefit from it'.

We know that Cook was wrong, at least in the sense that we know so much more now and in that we sincerely believe in a vital role for Antarctica in the future existence of man on earth, however, we must associate ourselves too with the words of another famour Antarctic explorer Admiral Richard E. Byrd who proclaimed that : 'Antarctica will never be conquered. At best we will tear aside a little of the veil which conceals its secrets'.

Obviously he would have included the ionosphere and cosmic rays if these phenomena had been known at the time! Weyprecht died before the International Polar Conference was convened in 1879, to deliberate on his plan for orderly and scientific examination of the polar regions; but this conference in fact set out the goals not only of the First International Polar Year of 1882/83 but also, unwittingly, of the second Polar Year of 1932/22 and even of the I.G.Y. - to the very great credit of the naval officer in question and the scientists attending the conference.

Remembering that this conference met over the years 1879/81 it is perhaps permissable for me to read the precedents then established.

These precedents were :

(a) The principle of international collaboration and co-operation in geophysics.
(b) An emphasis on geophysical studies in both polar regions combined with strong support in temperate zones.
(c) The hope for a continued existence of some of the stations expressly established for the International Polar Year.
(d) The adoption of the principle of strong support by military and naval forces of participating countries.
(e) The use by co-operating nations of both governmental and private funds to finance International Year operations.
(f) A study of the planet in as many geophysical fields as technology and interest permit.
(g) The principle of standardised instruments, common techniques and synoptic observations, where necessary.
(h) The definition of intensified periods of observations i.e. 'term days, international days', etc.
(i) The extensions of observations to mobile craft (e.g. merchant and naval vessels).
(j) The principle of common interchange of data.
(k) The principle of publication of results within reasonable time periods after the conclusion of the International Year.

It is amusing to note that the authorities even then had difficulty in persuading participants to work up their results for publication - as we still have today; but is it not remarkable that in the 1880's, bearing in mind the problems of transport and telecommunications, these precedents, which are so apt even today, should have been drawn up even before the first international programme had taken place.

Although the First Polar Year is generally associated with the Arctic, of the fifteen expeditions inspired by it, three were intended for the Antarctic.

The Second Polar Year of 1932/33 was broadened by the advance in knowledge over the intervening half century and was more critical and more scientific. Apart from collecting data it was also more concerned with describing the physics of the events observed. It was the intension that special attention should be paid to work in the Southern Hemisphere, though the originally intended effort in Antarctica did not materialise through fund limitations. (Another precedent which still seems applicable today!) It is interesting to note that some stations were proposed not solely for observing and studying Polar phenomena but primarily to allow an integrated examination of polar and global processes - a considerable step forward from the First Polar Year.

During the Second Polar Year 22 nations despatched expeditions or implemented studies beyond their borders, data were collected in equatorial regions for use in studies of the general atmosphere circulation and various Southern Hemisphere stations were instituted. The Magnetic Observatory at Hermanus dates from this period. In all, 44 countries participated.

The I.G.Y. itself is, I am sure, more familiar to you all. It set the pattern for international science on a scale never realised or perhaps even envisaged before. Not only did active participation by South Africa in the I.G.Y. pave the way to South Africa being invited by I.C.S.U. to become one of the permanent members of SCAR, but the theme of international co-operation had a significant impact on our programme and has certainly been one of the reasons for increased emphasis on those activities, such as upper atmospheric physics which may be regarded as part of a world-wide synoptic programme. The I.G.Y. was remarkable, specifically for the scale of international endeavour with 66 nations taking part involving some 4,000 professional observing stations and some 30,000 scientists and engineers. The similarity in nature, if not in size, between the I.G.Y. and the two Polar Years is quite remarkable in view of the tremendous strides made by technology even between the second Polar Year and the I.G.Y. Developments in electronics had made possible radio astronomy, radio meteorology and radar auroral studies. Rocket developments had made possible direct observation of the upper atmosphere, and during the I.G.Y. were to introduce the artificial earth satellite - the most international observing station of them all, circumnavigating the world in some 90 minutes. Quite apart from measuring techniques, the supporting sciences of physical and tele-communications, both now looked upon as so essential to international programmes, were revolutionised between these two events.

If we now look at the way the South African Scientific programme has crystallised in the course of the first five years, we find that from initial emphasis on programmes in the main restricted to the Antarctic base proper with some emphasis on the study of transient phenomena, but otherwise a rather wider coverage than perhaps was desirable in view of limitations of resources, the Scientific Committee has now for the recent five-year programme recognised five core programmes, namely :

Geology, Glaciology and Seismology
Cartography and Geodesy
Geomagnetism and Aurora
Cosmic Rays
and the Ionosphere.

These fall broadly into two classes, the first two programmes being exploratory in nature and by no means restricted to the base, whilst the last three reveal the increased recognition that is being given to those programmes which contribute to the 'integrated examination of polar and global processes' - to use the phrase coined some thirty-five years ago.

These research programmes relate of course to the Antarctic proper. The question of biological studies of the sub-Antarctic Islands, possible oceanographic studies in the southern oceans and the possibility of a co-ordinated meteorological research effort are under consideration or have been proposed by the Scientific Committee in addition, and of course it must not be forgotton that it is the meteorological observing functions of the base that provides the backbone of the South African expeditions.

I would also like to make a few remarks on managerial aspects,

(Continued on page 41)