

In Memory of Prof. Bakker



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At 12.30 a.m. on Thursday 25 July, members of CERN gathered in the library to remember our former Director-general, the late Prof. C. J. Bakker, and to witness the unveiling of a bust created — from memory — by one of us, Paul Theurillat, photolithographer in the Scientific Information Service.

There also were Mrs. Bakker, Mr. J. H. Bannier, Netherlands delegate and Vice-president of CERN Council, Mrs. Bannier, and Mrs. Dakin. The unveiling was performed by S. A. ff. Dakin, CERN's Directorate Member for Administration, deputizing for the Director-general, Prof. Weisskopf, who was unable after all to be present.

Mr. Dakin recalled Prof. Bakker as the chief of the few devoted men who built up the framework of the Organization, forming the living structure to express the ideals for which it was created :

'Very happily, he saw the synchro-cyclotron come into most successful operation, and the first of the many first-class research results to come from it, the harvest of so many years of his work, as Leader of the Synchro-cyclotron Group before CERN existed, as Director of the SC Division and as Director-general. We must be happy that he saw also the operation and the inauguration of the proton synchrotron.'

Continuing, Mr. Dakin reminded us that : 'Prof. Bakker saw CERN through the first of its growing pains, when the Member states had to be gradually, and painfully, convinced that the original estimates of our size and cost, drawn up with the innocence of people who were trying to do something that had never been done before, had proved grossly insufficient... CERN is now going through another such period ; without the work and effort which Prof. Bakker devoted to it a few years ago, CERN would now be barely alive enough to grow.'

Of the bust, Mr. Dakin said : 'It seems to be particularly fitting that (it) is the work of a member of the CERN staff... This makes it peculiarly a CERN family occasion, and it is good that this bust should be placed in the library, not in a public place, but in the very heart of CERN itself.'

Mr. Bannier, speaking, as he said, on behalf of Mrs. Bakker and her family, for himself, and as Netherlands representative on the Council, remembered Prof. Bakker firstly as a scientist, who had put all his enthusiasm into building up the scientific organization that is CERN. It was fitting that his image should be in the library, where all the results of CERN's work are stored in printed form and where inspiration for further progress is to be found.

But Prof. Bakker was also more than a scientist ; he had a scientist's vision for international co-operation and better understanding between peoples. From the very earliest days he had imagined, and worked for CERN not as just another important scientific institution, but as something of very great human value. It was good that in the future those who worked here, and those who came to CERN as visitors from all over the world, should find him here also as the spirit of the international co-operation that he had so much at heart●

FAREWELL T

MEYRIN, APRIL 29

On April 29 the staff of CERN, together with members of the family of the late Director-General, Prof. Cornelis Jan Bakker, and his friends from Geneva, gathered in the main auditorium to pay tribute to his memory.

Mr. J. B. Adams, speaking on behalf of CERN, said:

"We are assembled here today to pay tribute to the memory of Prof. Bakker. We are the people with whom he lived and worked during the years that he was Director-General of CERN; the members of his family, his friends and scientific colleagues from other laboratories and the staff of this Organization. It is as one large family that we mourn his sudden and most tragic death. Today several of his friends and colleagues, reflecting the different aspects of his life, will, in their own fashion, pay tribute to his work."

"Mrs. Bakker felt, and we agree, that he would have preferred a simple ceremony in this Conference Room where he so often presided over our scientific meetings, and I sincerely hope that in listening to our tributes today she will take comfort in her sorrow in knowing just how very much her husband was appreciated by all of us."

"Here at CERN Prof. Bakker left his mark for all to see and for the whole scientific world to applaud. I wonder how many of us, working in this Laboratory, realize how much he sacrificed in accepting to be our Director-General. Like most of us he left his country and his friends. But, unlike most of us, he knew that he would not be able to take a personal part in any particular experiment. He knew that he would have to stand by while others experienced the joys of discovery that had once been his. His task was to steer this Organization through the early years of its existence and his heavy responsibility was for the whole Organization. All this he knew and all this he accepted for CERN."

"Men use their lives in diverse ways but particularly to be admired are those who in a life of honourable service try by their works to leave the world in some way a better place. Prof. Bakker was such a man. His satisfaction, his joy was in the whole of CERN. He lived and cared for this Organization and there can be no memorial to him more fitting and more permanent than this Laboratory."

Then, the following spoke of other aspects of the life and work of Prof. Bakker :

- * Mr. Albert Picot speaking on behalf of the Geneva Authorities.
- * Prof. G. Bernardini speaking on behalf of the CERN physicists.
- * Prof. S.A. Wouthuysen speaking on behalf of European visiting scientists and Dutch Staff members.
- * Dr. S.J. Lindenbaum speaking on behalf of Brookhaven and Berkeley Laboratories.
- * Mr. A. Decae speaking on behalf of the Staff of CERN.

At the end of the ceremony those present in the auditorium paid a final tribute to the memory of the late Director-General by standing in silence for a minute.

O PROF. BAKKER

DRIEHUIZEN, MAY 3

On a clear morning of May, Professor Bakker's ashes were brought back to the Netherlands. A CERN delegation took part in the last public tribute paid to the Director-General of the Organization at the Driehuizen cemetery, near Ijmuiden, a few miles from the sea.

Speaking on behalf of the Dutch Government, H. E. Mr. J. M. Cals, Minister of Public Education, Arts and Science, said how much the personality of Prof. Bakker had helped to consolidate the unity of the international organization which is CERN and how much Prof. Bakker wanted CERN to be a symbol of international scientific co-operation. "In Holland", said Mr. Cals, "science is much indebted to Prof. Bakker for his collaboration with the Dutch Organizations for nuclear physics and fundamental research".

Turning then to Mrs. Bakker, the Minister told her how much the Netherlands, CERN and international science sympathized with her in her sad loss. He then made the following statement: "By Royal decree, dated April 11th, H. M. the Queen of the Netherlands, expressed the great appreciation of the scientific and personal qualities of Prof. Bakker: she bestowed upon him the title of Knight of the Order of the Dutch Lion. According to the customs of our country, this nomination should have been made public on H. M. the Queen's birthday, last Saturday. Since I am unable to hand this decoration to Prof. Bakker, I would like—with the Queen's permission—to speak about the award of this honour. We wish it to be the ultimate sign of the Dutch Government's desire to preserve the memory of this outstanding man."

On behalf of CERN, Mr. F. de Rose, President of the Council, underlined the part played by Prof. Bakker in the success of CERN in the field of science and international co-operation. "We all know", he said, "that a team is as good as its leader". Mr. de Rose was very closely acquainted with the problems which the Director-General had to face and knew that the confidence he inspired usually led the Council to share his opinion. This confidence was the reason why the Council had unanimously requested Prof. Bakker to remain in office during the new phase of the scientific exploitation of CERN's research equipment.

"A man like Cornelis Jan Bakker", added Mr. de Rose, "never dies entirely. Prof. Bakker leaves a powerful, efficient organization. In the difficult circumstances now facing CERN, it can draw the necessary strength to carry on its task from the large reserve of faith, enthusiasm and wisdom built up by Prof. Bakker."

"I am also sure that the success met by CERN under Bakker's leadership goes far beyond mere research in high energy physics. Nowadays scientists assume responsibilities which extend well outside their laboratory work. In building up CERN as a strong centre of culture in this century, in making CERN a striking example of the virtues of peaceful, collective effort, Prof. Bakker helped to illustrate the beneficent character of science and the will of the research workers, who devote their lives to it, to create international co-operation and a better understanding among men."

"Prof. Bakker", concluded Mr. de Rose, "will remain alive in our memories and hearts. His task will be carried on. This is the best tribute we can pay him."

Prof. J. de Boer, President of the CERN Committee in the Netherlands, spoke on behalf of the Dutch scientific organizations and institutions, of the Academy of Science, of the University of Amsterdam, and of a great number of friends, colleagues and students of Prof. Bakker. He briefly recalled the life of our late Director-General, from the time when, as a pupil of Prof. Zeeman, he was experimenting on atomic structure and spectra, until his departure for Washington where he was to speak to the American Physical Society on the work done at CERN.

Prof. de Boer then told Mrs. Bakker once more, how all those who knew her husband shared in her sorrow.

"All of us wish to help you now and in the future", he said before concluding, "I hope that it will help you at this sad moment to know what respect and gratitude we all have for the work done by Cornelis."