

EDITORIAL PREFACE

Activities of R.C.N.N.S. were of little importance during the first years of its existence. Foundation of the Committee took place during the Paris congress in 1980. One subsequent meeting during the "Geotagung" at Hamburg (F.R.G.) in 1984 was attended by two members only (see also the paper by Anderson & Janssen, elsewhere in this issue).

In 1985 the Subcommittee on Stratigraphy in The Netherlands (Commission for Geological Sciences, Royal Dutch Academy of Sciences) organized a workshop on Neogene stratigraphy of the Netherlands, which was very successful. It demonstrated a substantial interest in Neogene (and Paleogene!) stratigraphy among geologists and paleontologists. Encouraged by these results the Subcommittee invited R.C.N.N.S. to organize a meeting of more international character on bio- and chronostratigraphical correlations within the North Sea Basin.

After distribution of a questionnaire among its voting and corresponding members R.C.N.N.S. accepted this invitation and the third meeting of the Committee was organized in the Rijksmuseum van Geologie en Mineralogie at Leiden, The Netherlands, from 5 to 7 November 1986. Some 40 colleagues from four different countries participated in this Leiden meeting, where 13 lectures were presented (11 on Neogene, and 2 on Paleogene or mixed topics). One full day was scheduled for business matters and for discussions and proposals on stratigraphy.

Unfortunately this second subject turned out to be of little value, although initially it was considered to be the most important part of the meeting. This was predominantly caused by ignorance of R.C.N.N.S. objectives and insufficiently formulated proposals. It is obvious that in future meetings better results will only be possible if based on sharply outlined topics and strongly worded proposals, with complete and previously distributed information. In this respect the Leiden meeting was a valuable experience for both council and members of the Committee.

It is with great pleasure now that we can offer you these Proceedings, in which the complete texts of (almost) all papers read during the third meeting are included. Publication of these papers in this form was possible thanks to the kind cooperation of the "Werkgroep voor Tertiaire en Kwartaire Geologie", which offered two complete issues of its periodical for this purpose, and of the printer's, N.V. Boekhandel en Drukkerij v/h E.J. Brill at Leiden, who placed supplementary pages at our disposal, without any niggling restrictions as to text-figures, tables or plates. We thank Dr W. Backhuys, director of Brill's, for his generosity and kind mediation.

During the Leiden meeting the existing interest of most participants in Paleogene stratigraphy led to a proposal on the foundation of a sister-committee, the Regional Committee on Northern Paleogene Stratigraphy, which started its activities with colleagues C. King (Watford, U.K.) and J.W. Verbeek (Haarlem, The Netherlands), as chairman and secretary respectively. We welcome this committee with great pleasure and hope that the intended close cooperation between the two committees will be lasting and fruitful.

A.W. Janssen, *editor*.
secretary of R.C.N.N.S.