

Newsletter August 1998

As you may know, the General Assembly of the International Economic History Association last month in Madrid has elected me as the new Secretary general to continue the work of Joseph Goy, who is stepping down after twelve years of dedicated service. The records that have been transferred to me show you as the contact person for your association. If you no longer have this responsibility, I hope that you might bring it to the attention of the appropriate individual.

At our recent meeting in Madrid, the general assembly unanimously created a Commission on Reform to recommend to the Executive Committee and the General Assembly any revisions in the Statutes of the Association and any reforms in the policies and practices of the Association that might seem desirable. The commission is chaired by Richard Sutch and I will serve as its secretary. [The members of the Commission on Reform are: Richard Sutch, Riitta Hjerppe, Peter Solar, Gilles Postel-Vinay, Leandro Prados de la Escosura, Pat Thane, Jan Luiten van Zanden (secretary)]. The timetable for its deliberations is also enclosed.

We would like to ask you and your organization to help the commission by taking the following actions:

First the reform committee would like to ask you to identify an individual who can act as a "corresponding representative" to the Commission. This person should be willing to convey the views of your association, answer questions from the commission and comment on its proposals. Given the tight timetable for our deliberations it is essential that your representative can communicate by e-mail. It would be convenient if the designated correspondent notified the commission by sending an e-mail.

Second, we ask you to inform the individual members of your association about the existence of the Reform Commission. We are very interested to receive comments, suggestions and proposals. These messages can be conveyed to the committee members by e-mail or by post to the abovementioned adress.

Third, we invite your organization to prepare a formal set of proposals for the consideration of the Commission, both about the organization

of the next Congress and the reform of the IEHA. Suggestions that might effect the organization of the XIII World Congress of Economic History scheduled for Buenos Aires in August 2002, should be received by October 30, since a report on these matters is due in December. Among the issues which your association and its members may want to address are: the number of sessions to be held, the types of sessions to be organized (length, requirements for meetings before the congress, lead times for applications by session organizers), the role of the Executive Committee in selecting and shaping sessions, the languages of the congress, the congress publications, the social programme, the role of the organizers in securing accommodation for participants, congress facilities and registration fees.

Any comments, suggestions or formal proposals for changes in the IEHA's statutes and procedures should reach the Commission by February 15, 1999. A copy of the statutes is enclosed. The reform commission will circulate to member organizations a draft of its recommendations concerning the statutes and procedures in mid-April 1999. The Executive Committee of the Association will meet in May 1999 to consider the commission's recommendation and any reactions from the member associations.

I can assure you that all proposals and suggestions received will be given careful consideration and that your corresponding representative will be kept informed of proposals under consideration and of the progress of the reform process as it proceeds over the next nine months.

Jan Luiten van Zanden, Secretary General