

## IN MEMORIAM

### HANS AMMETER

29th August 1912–10th March 1986

Hans Ammeter left us on March 10th, 1986. A great actuary and an extraordinarily powerful personality has passed away.

As a member of a large family who lost the father very early, Hans Ammeter had a youth characterized by economic hardship and hard work. The lack of finances also impeded him from going through regular university studies. So already at the age of 20 he joined his company “Rentenanstalt” in Zürich, which he served for 46 years.

Hans Ammeter was a man who almost never gave up. As he did not have the opportunity to take mathematics courses at university, he studied the subject by himself in his spare time while working a 48 hour week. In the early fifties the international actuarial community suddenly discovered with excitement the publications of an almost unknown Swiss actuary—Hans Ammeter. He had generalized the collective theory of risk for the case of varying basic probabilities, which rendered this theory much more apt for practical applications. Almost immediately he became an actuary of world fame. In particular, the Swedish school—the



The photograph shows Hans Ammeter at the opening meeting of the ICA 1980 in Zurich chatting with the Swiss Minister of Justice, Dr Kurt Furgler

centre of research in collective risk theory at that time—applauded his contributions. Since then Hans Ammeter retained a very special sympathy for this school. I remember his expressing his great joy when one of his grandsons was baptized by the name of Harald.

Hans Ammeter was one the prominent founding members of ASTIN. The basic paper at the inaugural meeting of ASTIN during the 1957 International Congress in New York was written by him jointly with Depoid and de Finetti: “L’Etude Mathématique des Assurances non Viagères dans l’Europe Continentale Occidentale”. He became Editor of the *ASTIN BULLETIN* in 1960 and as such joined the ASTIN Committee. In 1965/1966 he was Chairman of ASTIN.

We all remember Hans Ammeter as the great promoter and organizer of the 1980 ICA Congress in Zürich and Lausanne. This congress also was the high point of his career as an internationally renowned scientist and one of the world’s leading actuaries.

In spite of all this professional success Hans Ammeter always made it clear that the most appreciated honour bestowed on him was the honorary doctor’s degree in mathematics which he received from the ETH Zürich in 1964. This brought him, who never had the chance of a regular university training, the official recognition by and integration into the academic world. How well this suited Hans Ammeter’s personality, which always strove for the discovery and recognition of truth.

HANS BÜHLMANN