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Closing Session

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The interest of the participants and the enthusiasm of the contributors who took part in this Symposium (340 persons from 38 countries) show the timeliness and importance of the subject of how to take good care of the world's investment in bridges. The topics and the discussion ranged from the tiny fatigue crack, or spot of corrosion, to the planning of the bridge maintenance program for an entire country. The presentation ranged from the purely technical aspects to the broad topics of social and financial conditions. Not only must we think of the overriding need to preserve public safety, but also of the economic consequences of decisions relating to repair, maintenance and rehabilitation. The Symposium could not hope to deal with all the possible problems, nor could it go deeply into any one aspect of solution. However, it focussed on the enormous scope, on a worldwide basis, of the need to take good care of what we have, to plan intelligently the best use of our resources, and to take into consideration already in the design stage the eventual needs of efficient inspection, good maintenance and possible repair of new bridges. No final and definitive solutions to any of the major problems were formulated in the Symposium, but many problems were defined, possible solutions were recommended, and an optimistic hope was projected that in this area the world's engineers are working diligently and are providing mankind an alleviation of a real need.

As chairman of the Scientific Committee of this Symposium I want to express my sincere thanks: for the enthusiastic work of the members of the Scientific Committee; for the excellent performance of the speakers; to the US Organizing Committee of IABSE, especially its leader Mr. Fred Sterbenz, who provided to congenial atmosphere within which the conference flourished; and to the IABSE staff so able led by Mr. Golay.

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