

CLOSING REMARKS BY R. HANBURY BROWN, PRESIDENT OF THE IAU

I'll keep you only for a moment away from the fresh air. You have to come to Italy to know what "al fresco" really means! Last night we thanked the Local Organizing Committee, and Dr. Laura Pasinetti, its Chairman. My job now is to thank the Scientific Organizing Committee. I've enjoyed attending a meeting at which the "nuts and bolts" of astronomy were discussed. As a radio astronomer, a meeting for me is not a meeting unless someone gets up and tells us the purpose and origin of the Universe. Nobody, so far, has done that, thank goodness. In point of fact, Dr. Gustafsson has completely misinterpreted the picture on the ceiling above us (see p.328), because, of course, he is an optical astronomer. It actually represents a group of radio astronomers - you can see them holding their antennas - explaining to the granting agency, which is in the purple coat, the purpose and origin of the Universe, which is pictured above. As far as the Scientific Organizing Committee is concerned, their best thanks will not be anything that I may say; their best thanks can only be the success of the meeting. And its not, of course, the success of the meeting that we have attended here, but it is the success of the influence of the meeting, in the future, which will be extended through the medium of its publication. And, certainly, on behalf of the Executive of the IAU, I can't overemphasize the importance of that. We help fund these meetings partly because we are interested in their being published so that their influence will extend beyond the rather small group that actually attended the meeting. And I think that part of your thanks will come from the subsequent success and the influence of this meeting through its publication. Nevertheless, for us as a group here, I would like to extend our thanks to the Scientific Organizing Committee for organizing this Symposium.