

to be in harmony with the principles embodied... [in] the Statutes;

4. the Interim Committee shall declare the International Mathematical Union to be in existence as soon as it shall have received and accepted the adherences of ten countries and then, within a reasonable period of time thereafter, it shall convene the first General Assembly of the Union at such time and at such place as it may determine;

5. the Interim Committee shall determine its own internal organization...;

and be it further resolved that the said convention shall publish this resolution by copies certified by the signature of its secretary, Professor J.R. Kline....

The Interim Committee consisted of E. Bompiani (Italy), M. Brelot (France), W.V.D. Hodge (Great Britain), B. Jessen (Denmark), K. Kuratowski (Poland), M.H. Stone (USA), and D.D. Kosambi (India), who was appointed a couple of months later. By point 5 above, the Committee was free to decide about its internal organization. It elected Børge Jessen as Secretary (Fig. 4.2). In that capacity Jessen was in charge of the affairs of the Union until its first General Assembly.

Shortly after the New York Convention, Jessen initiated correspondence with representatives of ICSU and UNESCO. Assuring ICSU that the IMU would seek membership at the earliest possible occasion, he wished to secure a UNESCO contribution through ICSU, even before the Union was formally in existence [121]. A preliminary promise of UNESCO support was in fact received at an early stage; it facilitated subsequent planning and launching of the Union's activities.

In December 1950, the Statutes and By-Laws of the Union, which had been accepted at the constitutive meeting in New York, had received their final touch. Jessen approached potential members of the Union with a mailing containing three documents: an "Invitation to adhere to the International Mathematical Union," the Statutes and By-Laws of the IMU, and the Enabling Resolution of the New York convention. All correspondence with the Interim Committee was requested to be addressed to its Secretary, the Royal Danish Academy of Sciences, Copenhagen. Thus the Danish Academy was the first headquarters of the new IMU.

By point 4 of the Enabling Resolution, the Union was officially established as soon as ten countries had joined. On 10 September 1951, Jessen could announce to the National Adhering Organizations that this goal had been reached [122]. The IMU was officially in existence again. The 1932 decision could have been interpreted as a suspension of the activities of the IMU. However, the new Union preferred to forget its past. During the preparation of the new Statutes, no mention was ever made of the Statutes

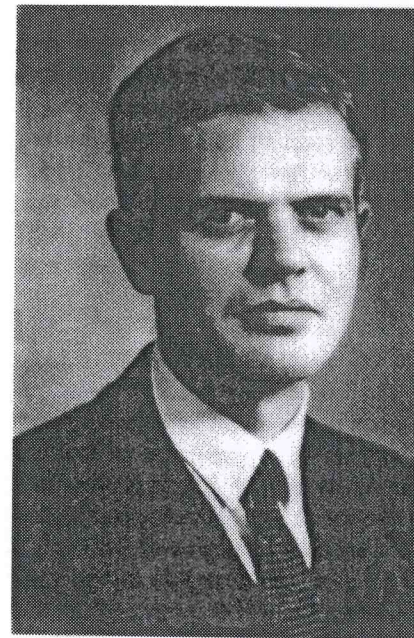


FIGURE 4.2. Børge Jessen (1907–1993). A representative of the Danish school of analysis. Secretary of the Interim Executive Committee of the IMU 1950–1952, he declared in September 1951 the official founding of the Union, with its first domicile in Copenhagen. Courtesy the Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters.

of the old IMU, even though there were many similarities. The relation between the two IMUs will be briefly discussed in Section 5.3.

The first ten member countries, in alphabetic order, were Austria, Denmark, France, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, and Norway. It is to be noted that the prime initiator, the USA, was not on this list. Fulfilling the formalities took its time, but in December 1951, Jessen announced that five more countries—Australia, Canada, Finland, Peru, and the USA—had joined the IMU [123].

It had been planned to hold the first General Assembly during 1951, but it soon became clear that membership was growing more slowly than had been estimated and that the original timetable could therefore not be adhered to. However, the postponement was not long: Simultaneously with the declaration of the formal existence of the IMU in September 1951, Jessen made the important announcement that the first General Assembly of the International Mathematical Union would be held in Rome on 6–8 March 1952. The agenda of the Assembly was sent to the members with Jessen's letter of December 1951.