

# Round Table Discussions

## CROATIAN PRODUCTS AND MANUFACTURING

### The Idea

Since beginning of the nineties, the Croatian economy has been passing through a very complex period. First, the privatisation of industry has caused big changes and widespread disorientation. This has been made worse by huge war expenses and vast destructions, as well as by migration of inhabitants and an influx of refugees. Further, traditional markets have been lost, and new market's have not yet been established. Much of the industrial sectors were ruined, premises were devastated, productivity has decreased dramatically, and competition in the market-place has weakened. Massive unemployment has followed. In spite of all these circumstances and in addition to a rather hostile political environment, we have survived the most difficult shocks. Now, the Croatian economy is challenged by new situations. On the western border we have the new megastate, the European Union, and on the eastern border, there is a turbulent Balkan. There is the need for the entire organization of a modern state, with an economic infrastructure adapted to those of the European Union, and encompassing the development of the possibility total co-operation. Because of the influence of globalization and the Information Society, the central question for the engineering community, which has substantial potential of knowledge and skill, and which has been a real support to Croatian viability is the following: What will be the source of life for Croatia and what will we produce? This motivated the Academy to initiate the Round Table Discussions under the title: CROATIAN PRODUCTS AND MANUFACTURING, as an examination of the existing working potential and power of action and the likely outcome of the changes in the world economy and strategies. The first series of six Round Table Discussions in 1998 will be followed by the Second series of ten Discussions in 1999.

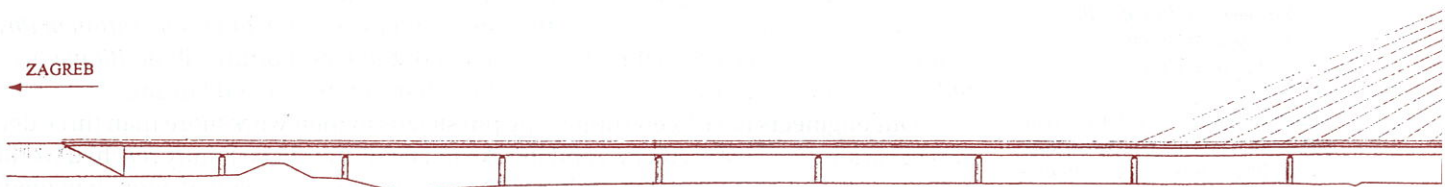
### The First Round Table Discussion "What Will Be the Source of Life in Croatia"

considered an exchange of views on the project itself, on the Croatian industrial policy and industry, but also had the aim to motivate the cooperation of engineers and economists to undertake the task of thinking together about the future. Croatia is very dependent on multinational companies and the progress of the Croatia economy will be linked very closely to the goals and strategies of these companies. On the other hand the "well-being" of Croatian corporations is equally important, because they influence the development of the small and medium enterprises which could create new jobs and help Croatia to develop a competitive position on the world market. However, meeting this challenge requires the renewal of industry and trade, particularly making better use of knowledge and human skills and cultivating the climate for innovation. The engineering community advocates that the way forward for Croatia must be to compete through knowledge and professional skills, rather than through low wages. So, the transformation of Croatia from an industrial economy characterised by a very intensive use of knowledge, should be stimulated by improving human skills, by developing excellent leadership, and by promoting entrepreneurship and an innovative culture.

Side views of two awarded designs are shown.



*The First Award — Authors: Rajka Veverka and Martina Balić from the Croatian Institute for Bridges and Constructions*



*The Second Award — Authors: Zvonimir Marić, Petar Sesar, Darinko Velem and Vlado Rubetić from the Civil Engineering Institute of Croatia*



## The Second Round Table Discussion “Manufacturing of Equipment for Energy Processing”

took the form of a debate on the competitive position and possibilities of future development of the manufacture of **equipment for energy processing and electrical power generation**. Nearly one hundred experts participated in the discussion and contributed to a better understanding of this well-recognized sector of the international market. However, the goals and strategy of development of this industry does not only depend on the will and knowledge of engineers, but even more especially on political decisions. It was shown that Croatian engineers have the potential and the competitive power, by the proper conduct of the top management, and that they are ready to offer engineering services for the building of hydro-electric power plants and other large-scale projects on the international market.

## The Third Round Table Discussion on Shipbuilding

considered the future development of **shipyards and shipbuilding**. Their revitalisation as competitive and highly productive business ventures attracted particular attention. The recent merger of four leading enterprises into one organization, initiated a very interesting debate. The questions of manpower, innovations, new technologies and relations with SMEs were emphasised as important subjects which require much attention.

## The Fourth Round Table Discussion on Food-processing

gathered well-recognized experts in food-processing who exchanged experiences and views on the food-processing industry, the current position of the industry and challenges in the market place, on globalisation and on new technologies available in the industry. Debate on research and development was particularly lively. Successful food-processors presented some of their positive experiences. Co-operation with agriculture sector.

## The Fifth Round Table Discussion on Building of Bridges

will be a particularly interesting gathering of designers, construction engineers and builders, who specialize in bridges building. It is a field with a long tradition in Zagreb and therefore many highly-qualified experts compete in response to tenders in Croatia. At this time, the competition for the bridge to be built over the River Sava is encouraging fresh ideas, while the construction of the new bridge near Dubrovnik has just begun. However, the central question is the approach to the international market, which prefer stainless steel constructions, while in Croatian practice reinforced concrete dominates.

The recent contest for new multi-functional bridge over the River Sava in Zagreb will attract discussion on the contemporary approach to the design.

