

## **PRESS AND EMIGRATION**

### **Roundtable discussion, 1 October 1999**

**AEMI**

**The Association of European Migration Institutions Annual Meeting,  
Portorož, Slovenia, 29 September – 2 October 1999**

**KNUT DJUPEDAL** (The Norwegian Emigrant Museum, Ottestad, Norway; AEMI chairman): Ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to the second day of our meeting, and to this roundtable on the press and emigration. As long as we have had newspapers, the press has been interested in the phenomenon of emigration – not perhaps as history, but because emigration sold newspapers. Advertisements for emigration and letters from America published in newspapers lead people to go out and buy and read them. And of course, whoever wished to sell tickets or land in America to potential emigrants could use the press. Thus the press lived reasonably well on emigration. Today, the press is a source for historians who wish to study emigration, not only those seeking facts about the actual emigration itself, but also a source for those who wish to look at attitudes, feelings, and political ideas about the emigration. Take Norway, for example, where the press was utilized both to publish letters praising America, and to make jokes about returning migrants and to warn against emigration because it was bad for the home country if all those people left it.

**ADAM WALASZEK** (Polonia Institute, Krakow, Poland; roundtable moderator): What Knut was asking, basically, is what came first, the press or emigration, and of course I am wondering whether you will have the answer to that. There is much more, of course, to it; there are many more questions to be asked, and they have been asked and they are asked and they will be asked, as long as the ethnic press exists, as long as emigration exists, as long as historians live. And this is our agenda for today. The first presentation will be read by Irena Gantar Godina; this is the paper by Marjan Drnovšek from Ljubljana, from the Academy of

Sciences and Arts, who is unfortunately ill and cannot be with us, but many of you already know him. The title of the presentation is »Printed Material and the Mass Emigration of Slovenes.« Then we will have a presentation by Janja Žitnik; she is from the same institution, the Slovene Academy of Sciences and Arts, and she is the editor of the publication *Two Homelands* or *Dve Domovini*. She will speak about Slovene emigrant literature, periodicals and other publications, and the reading public in Slovenia. Then the floor will basically be yours, we will have time not for endless – there will be limits – but for a discussion, which hopefully will be very fruitful. So let us hear what Dr Drnovšek has to say. (Henceforward the moderation entrances will be omitted. Editor's note.)