

## EDITORIAL

### 1969-1989: TWENTY YEARS OF LIFE OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF PSYCHONEUROENDOCRINOLOGY

August 1968: It was a beautiful summer morning, and I was visiting Professor Max Reiss at the Research Institute of Willowbrook State School Hospital in Staten Island, New York. We had a long talk about similar studies we were doing on the relationship between hormones and the brain in neurologic and psychiatric disorders, a subject which fascinated both of us. At the end of our meeting, Max started to talk about a dream that he held for many years: the creation of a society which would bring together all the scientists working on the effects of hormones on brain function in all the possible fields of investigation, including anatomy, physiology, biochemistry, genetics, neurology, psychiatry, and psychology. At that time, he had not yet thought specifically of a society, just of the possibility to build a group which would share a common language, common programs, common methods of research, and fundamentally the common goal of a better understanding of brain function. In short, a group which could interrelate endocrinology and neurosciences into a functional unit.

For more than 30 years, first in Austria, then in England and finally in the United States, Max Reiss had been studying the relationship between hormones and the brain. Not only was he a dreamer, he also was the most splendid builder and leader, and I was immediately overwhelmed by his geniality and enthusiasm. So, I agreed to his request to inquire of scientists working in this field all over the world about the feasibility of his idea. Probably I did not know what I was agreeing to do that summer morning, because I spent all my free time (which was not much) during the next five months writing more than 450 letters to people some of whom did not know who I was, what I was talking about, and what I wanted. Curiosity, interest and also diffidence were aroused, and many scientists answered, positively or negatively.

Thus, in the early spring of 1969 Max Reiss and I met again in Staten Island, and Donald Ford, of Downstate Medical Center, State University of New York, joined us. We were all excited and full of hope for our infant society, which seemed ready to be born full of promise. We decided to call a meeting of a group of scientists selected from those who had shown interest in our project. Milano, Italy was chosen as the site for our first meeting, on 1 September 1969, under the sponsorship of Professor Carlo Lorenzo Cazzullo, Chairman of the Department of Psychiatry, Milano University. The attendees were Caviezel (Italy), Cazzullo (Italy), Chatterjee (India), Endroczi (Hungary), Ford (USA), Frascini (Italy), Friedhoff (USA), Geel (USA), Gjessing (Norway), Hatotani (Japan), Klenk (West Germany), Mangoni (Italy), Martini (Italy), McClure (Canada), Meites (USA), Motta (Italy), Paoletti (Italy), Piotti (Italy), Reiss (USA), Silvestrini (Italy), Smythies (England), Wollesen (Denmark), Yamamoto (Japan) and myself. The International Society of Psychoneuroendocrinology (ISPNE) was born! Since then, the number of people who have joined in addition to the original 180 members has been steadily increasing, now numbering almost 600 and representing 38 countries. Since 1970, we have organized annual international congresses (see Table I), and we sponsored many symposia in America, Europe and Japan. Both well-known scientists and young researchers have participated in every meeting, establishing a solid basis for the accomplishment of our mutual goal.

TABLE I. ISPNE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESSES AND OFFICERS SINCE INCEPTION OF THE SOCIETY.

Congresses			
1969	Milano, Italy: Founding of the Society.		
1970	New York, USA: Organizer, D. Ford.		
1971	Budapest, Hungary: Organizers, K. Lissak & E. Endroczi.		
1972	London, United Kingdom: Organizer, R. Michael.		
1973	Berkeley, USA: Organizer, P. Timiras.		
1974	Utrecht, Netherlands: Organizer, D. De Wied.		
1975	Aspen, USA: Organizer, A. Vernadakis.		
1976	Strasbourg, France: Organizer, P. Mandel.		
1977	Atlanta, USA: Organizer, R. Michael.		
1978	Dublin, Ireland: Organizer, A. Darragh.		
1979	Park City, USA: Organizer, B. Grosser.		
1980	Florence, Italy: Organizers, R. Paoletti, G. Racagni & F. Brambilla.		
1981	Montreal, Canada: Organizer, R. Collu.		
1982	Tübingen, West Germany: Organizer, D. Gupta.		
1983	New York, USA: Organizers, D. Ford & F. Strand.		
1984	Vienna, Austria: Organizer, G. Langer.		
1985	Kyoto, Japan: Organizers, N. Hatotani, S. Takahasi & J. Nomura.		
1986	Bergen, Norway: Organizers, H. Ursin & R. Murison.		
1987	Chapel Hill, USA: Organizers, A. Prange & C. Nemeroff.		
1988	Groningen, Netherlands: Organizer, B. Bohus.		
Presidents			
1969-1970	M. Reiss, USA	1978-1981	D. De Wied, Netherlands
1971-1972	D. Ford, USA	1981-1984	P. Timiras, USA
1972-1975	J. Smythies, United Kingdom	1984-1987	R. Rubin, USA
1975-1978	R. Michael, USA	1987-1990	F. Brambilla, Italy
Secretaries			
1969-1978	F. Brambilla, Italy	1983-1987	G. Langer, Austria
1978-1982	F. Strand, USA	1987-1990	J.-J. Legros, Belgium
Treasurers			
1969-1970	D. Ford, USA	1974-1988	B. Grosser, USA
1971-1974	R. Relchin, USA	1988-1991	R. Murison, Norway

In 1975, we started the publication of a journal, *Psychoneuroendocrinology*, which is affiliated with the society. The purpose of the journal is to be a forum where all the scientific interests of our group can be represented in publications. The first editors were Richard Michael (Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia, USA), Bernard Carroll (University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, USA) and Donald Ford (Downstate Medical Center, State University of New York, USA). In 1981, Richard Michael was replaced by the present editor, Robert Rubin (Harbor-U.C.L.A. Medical Center, Torrance, California, USA); in 1985, associate editors Drs. Carroll and Ford were replaced by Dr. Harvey Feder (Rutgers University, Newark, New Jersey, USA).

In 1983, we started publishing a bulletin of the Society, the Members' Forum, edited by the then-secretary of ISPNE, Dr. Gerhard Langer (Vienna University, Austria), which appears twice a year. The purpose of the Forum is to keep all the members informed of our annual congresses and symposia, of all other congresses related to our field of interest, of the up-to-date list of our members, and of our activities and interests in general.

We can say that we have done rather well in these 20 years. Our Society, even though relatively small, has consolidated its membership base; its name is known and its congresses always attract a good number of actively working participants. We should, therefore, be satisfied.

But we should not be complacent; much important work still must be done. We need to enlarge the list of active members, we should develop teams of scientists working on specific areas in multi-center research, and we need to contact other societies and groups related to our field of interest to share our experiences. We also need to develop new strategies for investigation. Psychoneuroendocrinology has yielded extremely useful information on brain biochemistry and function, but at the moment it appears to be exhausting its possibilities and perspectives. In fact, neuroendocrine investigation may offer significant data on the function of certain brain areas, mainly the hypothalamus, but not of higher centers which are more deeply involved in cognition, affect, and behavior. Thus, we must develop new tools for investigation which can clarify the activity of these other neuronal systems in relation to neuroendocrine function. Only studies which include multifactorial approaches will significantly advance our understanding of the mystery which is brain function.

Toward this end, we are open to all suggestions and to the "infusion of new blood" into our Society, with the hope that our past work will be used by the new generation of scientists as a solid basis for future research.

Francesca Brambilla  
ISPNE President