

EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION GATHERS IN MILAN, ITALY FOR FIRST CONGRESS

The program distributed at the first meeting of the European Association of Nuclear Medicine (EANM) in Milan, Italy, in August sported the title, "European Nuclear Medicine Congress—1988." The lack of specificity was necessary, explained Congress President Gian Luigi Buraggi, MD, director of the nuclear medicine division of the National Cancer Institute in Milan, because at the time of the printing deadline last year it was not at all certain that the Society of Nuclear Medicine Europe and the European Nuclear Medicine Society could settle their differences and dissolve into a unified European entity.

In Milan one year later, such concerns seemed remote. At Centro Congressi Milanofiori, a modern convention center in a suburb of

Milan, roughly 2,300 attendees from 37 countries listened to lectures, studied posters and browsed the exhibits at the smoothly run meeting, which was held from August 29 through September 2. Sessions were conducted in English, the chosen language of the EANM, as they had been last year at the European Nuclear Medicine Congress in Budapest, Hungary. On the final day of last year's meeting, the definitive votes were cast to disband the established societies and to give full support to the fledgling EANM (see *Newsline*, Jan. 1988, pp. 7-9).

A unified EANM seems especially timely in light of the growing interest in European economic and political cooperation. The European Community, composed of Ireland, Great Britain, Denmark, the Netherlands, Por-

tugal, Spain, France, Belgium, Luxembourg, West Germany, Italy and Greece, is scheduled to lift all economic barriers among countries in 1992. The possibilities of a central bank and even a single European currency are being explored, and the Community has already approved a plan for mutual recognition of university degrees so that a physician trained in one country could practice elsewhere. These developments are welcomed by the European nuclear medicine community, according to Georg Riccabona, MD, professor of medicine at the University Klinik Nuclearmedizin, Innsbruck, Austria, and president of the EANM. He noted that a primary goal of the association is greater uniformity in nuclear medicine standards of practice, so that, for instance, a radiopharmaceutical approved in one country could be used in another.

949 Submissions

As Italy was the host country of this first congress, the meeting took place under the auspices of the Italian Federation of Nuclear Medicine. The evaluation and selection of 949 preferred papers from 37 countries was performed separately by each of the nine members of the International Scientific Committee, who graded the submissions anonymously. There were 222 oral presentations, 425 posters with discussion, 20 works in progress, six plenary sessions and one invited lecture. The largest category of scientific contributions was cardiology, vascular and white cell studies, at 22 percent, followed by oncology, which contributed 16 percent. In addition to the research presentations,

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The Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II, the center of Milanese social life, was designed by Mengoni in the form of a Latin cross crowned at the height of 47 meters with a glass cupola. Completed in 1877, it houses cafes, boutiques and book stores. (Photo by Karla Harby.)

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52 commercial booths covered 1,742 square meters of exhibit space.

During the opening ceremony, Drs. Buraggi and Riccabona greeted the attendees, and Italy's Harmonia Ensemble played famous Italian passages under the baton of conductor Giuseppe Grazioli. Luigi Donato, MD, of the Institute of Clinical Physiology, University of Pisa, Italy, winner of the Medal of the von Hevesy Foundation, presented the Memorial Lecture of New Trends in Nuclear Medicine. Dr. Donato had served as president of the Italian Society of Nuclear Medicine and Biology for seven years, and is best known for his work in cardiac nuclear medicine.

In his lecture, Dr. Donato recalled that "the relationship of nuclear medicine to medicine has never been particularly smooth and easy," adding that in the early days "we were considered strange, extravagant people struggling to do medicine." Dr. Donato pointed out some of the ways medicine has changed since he began practicing, and urged his audience to adapt to the public's increasing health consciousness and to promote better rapport between patients and physicians.

At the conclusion of the congress, Alain Bertrand, MD, of the Central Regional Hospital and University in Nancy, France, presented the scientific highlights of the meeting. (Dr. Bertrand has agreed to prepare his remarks for publication in *Newsline* at a later date.)

The EANM also introduced the *European Journal of Nuclear Medicine* as its official organ. Edited by Professor H. Hundeshagen of the Zentrum Radiologie, Med. Hochschule in Hanover, West Germany, the journal will publish the abstracts of all accepted papers from EANM congresses and contain regular newsletters. The journal can be obtained at a discount by EANM members. In January 1990, Peter J. Ell, MD, of the

Institute of Nuclear Medicine at the University College and Middlesex School of Medicine in London, will take over as editor.

To fulfill its emerging economic, political and scientific agenda, a number of task groups have been organized by the EANM covering such topics as education and training, radiopharmaceuticals, software and instrumentation, radiolabeled antibodies, radiotherapy, radiation effects, nuclear magnetic resonance, positron emission tomography, nuclear cardiology and pediatric nuclear medicine. Each group, which can consist of no more than 12 members, is to file an annual report that may be published in the association's journal. A person can be a member of only one task group at a time, and the chairs serve a three-year term that can be renewed only once.

Association Officers

The terms of members of the executive board have been extended beyond a single year to encourage continuity within the diverse organization, said Dr. Riccabona, who is serving a three-year term as association president. Other officers are the



Three key leaders of the European Association of Nuclear Medicine, from left to right: Jacques Y. Chambron, MD, the Congress President-Elect, who is heading next year's meeting in Strasbourg, France; Georg Riccabona, MD, President of the EANM; and Gian Luigi Buraggi, MD, Congress President for the meeting in Milan.

current Congress President, Dr. Buraggi; Congress President-Elect, Jacques Y. Chambron, MD, of Strasbourg, France; Secretary, Dr. Ell; Treasurer, Prof. Dr. H.A.E. Schmidt, Duisburg, West Germany; and Task Group Co-ordinator, Prof. Dr. med. Harald Deckart, Berlin-Buch, East Germany. One complexity the EANM is still struggling with concerns the difficulty Eastern Block countries have paying for goods and services because of currency export restrictions in those countries. The EANM has established accounts in those countries that can be used to finance meetings, mailings and other activities, Dr. Riccabona said.

While neither of the two parent societies conducted their congresses in English, the language was chosen by the EANM because it is the most common second tongue in Europe, Dr. Buraggi said. Dr. Riccabona also noted that, in the past, the societies would provide simultaneous translation, but that this practice has become prohibitively expensive.

Both Dr. Riccabona and Dr. Buraggi expressed interest in further interaction between the European and North American nuclear medicine communities. "We should have more exchanges of information; I find that many times when people come from the States they find perhaps that we are not so old in culture," said Dr. Buraggi. "We had an institute in Italy on monoclonal antibodies and it was very, very good, many Europeans and many Americans. . . . This is sort of a necessity, from our side and also from the States' side." The next EANM congress will take place in Strasbourg, France, from August 28 through September 1, 1989.

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