European Nuclear Medicine Congress 1987, Budapest, Hungary

SNME AND ENMS DISBAND TO SUPPORT EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION OF NUCLEAR MEDICINE

Last year, during the 25th anniversary of the Society of Nuclear Medicine—Europe (SNME) and the 10th anniversary of the European Nuclear Medicine Society (ENMS), members of both societies voted to disband their organizations and give full support to the European Association of Nuclear Medicine (EANM). The unprecedented event took place at the European Nuclear Medicine Congress 1987, which attracted close to 3,000 attendees to Budapest, Hungary, on August 24–28, 1987.

EANM Officers

Six officers were elected to the EANM Executive Board: President, Prof. Dr. med. Georg Riccabona, Innsbruck, Austria; Secretary, Prof. Peter J. Ell, MD, London, England; Treasurer, Prof. Dr. H.A.E. Schmidt, Duisburg, Federal Republic of Germany (FRG); Task Group Coordinator, Prof. Dr. med. Harald Deckart, Berlin-Buch, German Democratic Republic (GDR); Congress President, Prof. Gian L. Buraggi, MD, Milan, Italy; and Congress President-Elect, Jacques Chambron, MD, Strasbourg, France. The EANM Delegates Assembly (comprising representatives from more than 20 nations) nominated the president, secretary, and task group coordinator; the EANM Members Assembly (which includes all EANM members) nominated the treasurer, congress president, and congress president-elect.

"One of the most positive outcomes of a unified association in Europe is that over 800 nuclear medicine professionals have joined the EANM, more than double the memberships of the SNME and ENMS," said Prof. Ell, of the University College and Middlesex School of Medicien, London, England. Many congress attendees joined the EANM during the Budapest meeting, which should bring the total to more than 1,000, he noted.

The EANM is examining the possibility of offering a peer-reviewed journal to its members, said Prof. Ell,

(continued on page 8)

The Chain Bridge, connecting the Hungarian cities of Buda and Pest, which are divided by the Danube River. The National ***Gallery (formerly the Royal Palace) in the background was the site of a festive reception hosted by the president of the Municipal Council of Budapest for attendees of the European Nuclear Medicine Congress 1987. Other social events included: the traditional formal dinner-dance; a concert in the Matthias Church, built in the 13th Century; and the First European Nuclear Medicine Tennis Championships.*** **(Courtesy of IBUSZ Hungarian Travel Company)**

(continued from page 7)
and the association will actively pursue its goal of making nuclear medicine a recognized medical specialty in all European countries (see *Newsline*, Nov. 1986, pp. 1662–1665).

Efforts to enable the European nuclear medicine community to speak with one voice began with the first conjoint congress of the SNME and ENMS in 1984 in Helsinki, Finland. At the London congress in 1985, leaders of the SNME and ENMS agreed to establish the new association (see *Newsline*: Oct. 1985, pp. 1105–1106; Nov. 1985, p. 1229). Bylaws of the EANM were approved during the European Nuclear Medicine Congress 1986 in Goslar, FRG, after which the EANM was officially registered in Innsbruck, Austria. The final step was taken at the Budapest congress in 1987 with the dissolution of the SNME and ENMS.

Prof. László Csernay, MD, DSc, president of the European Nuclear Medicine Congress 1987, urged the nuclear medicine community to support the EANM. "Let us do our best to stimulate the creation of a strong and viable EANM here in Budapest, the city where the founder of our profession, György Hevesy, was born 102 years ago, and which was always so close to his heart," said Prof. Csernay, director of the Institute of Nuclear Medicine, University Medical School in Szeged, Hungary, and president of the Hungarian Society of Nuclear Medicine. [Nobel Laureate Georg Charles de Hevesy, PhD, DcSci, MD (1885–1966), a Hungarian chemist, developed the radiotracer method.]

Hevesy Lecture Medal

Prof. Csernay, who was then president of the SNME, and Prof. Jan Van der Schoot, MD, president of the ENMS, opened the congress with welcoming addresses, followed by a concert featuring the Liszt Ferenc Chamber Orchestra. Prof. Dr. med. Wolfgang Horst, of the Hevesy Foundation in Zurich, Switzerland, then presented the Hevesy Lecture Medal to Steven M. Larson, MD, of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in Bethesda, Maryland, United States (US).

In his lecture, "Radiolabeled Monoclonal Antibodies for Tumor-Directed Diagnosis and Therapy: A New Frontier," Dr. Larson noted that three antibodies show promise: B72.3, an antibody against colon cancer that, when administered intraperitoneally, "identifies disease that cannot be detected by other methods"; T101, an antibody against lymphocytic malignancies, such as cutaneous T-cell lymphoma, is also useful for showing the distribution of malignant lymphocytes in chronic lymphocytic leukemia and cutaneous T-cell lymphoma; and 28A32, a human monoclonal antibody useful in patients with colon cancer, results in a reduced immune response compared with other antibodies and exhibits more appropriate binding to antigens *in vivo*.

"At this congress, a very significant development—a quantitative autoradiographic method for directly measuring the antigen content of tumors—will be reported for the first time in Dr. Silvana Del Vecchio's presentation (*1*)," said Dr. Larson. "Quantitative autoradiography, an extremely powerful tool, will solve some of the mysteries about why certain antibodies are taken up in tumors and others are not," he explained.

Quantitative Autoradiography

James C. Reynolds, MD, also of NIH, explained that quantitative autoradiography allows investigators to calculate the amount of specific and nonspecific binding in picomoles per gram. "We felt that the standard immunocytochemical techniques were inadequate to provide numerical data that could be used for modeling, and that this new method could provide a real in-depth understanding of the effects that antigen concentration has on monoclonal antibody targeting," said Dr. Reynolds. It is possible that patients could be selected for certain antibody therapies according to their antigen concentrations, he noted. Quantitative autoradiography could also allow investigators to assess the cross-reactivity of normal tissues.

The congress scientific program included 250 oral presentations, 140 posters with discussion, and 240 posters without discussion. Prof. Dr. med. Dr. rer. nat. Otmar Schober, of the Medical School of Hannover, FRG, gave the traditional scientific highlights lecture just before the closing ceremony (see *Newsline*, Dec. 1987, pp. 1795–1805). About 50 companies participated in the exhibition, organized by Győző A. Jánoki, PhD, of the National FJC Research Institute for Radiobiology and Radiohygiene in Budapest.

Five plenary sessions were devoted to instrumentation, cardiology, endocrinology, neurology, and radiopharmacology.

Andrew Todd-Pokropek, PhD, of the University College and Middlesex School of Medicine, London, England, discussed various advances in instrumentation that improve resolution. He pointed out, however, that many of these advances are not being developed commercially. "Perhaps the prices charged for nuclear medicine equipment are so low that manufacturers do not have the resources to invest in the developments on the horizon, which are now only available to research labs," said Dr. Todd-Pokropek.

During the cardiology plenary session, Roland Itti, MD, of the Hôpital Trousseau in Tours, France, lent some historical perspective to his lecture by comparing today's technetium-99m-labeled heart agents to the cardiac imaging techniques of 50

At the closing ceremony of the European Nuclear Medicine Congress 1987, the banner of the newly formed European Association of Nuclear Medicine (EANM) was ***held up by the six elected officers: (left to right) J. Chambron, Congress President-Elect; G.L. Buraggi, Congress President; H.A.E. Schmidt, Treasurer; G. Riccabona, President; P.J. Ell, Secretary; H. Deckart, Task Group Coordinator.***

years ago when cesium-131 was used for myocardial imaging and indium-113m was used as a blood pool agent. "There is still much work to be done. Nuclear cardiology must offer more than its noninvasive nature. In our present economic climate, no medical procedure will survive unless it gives clinically relevant information," said Dr. Itti.

Prof. Dr. med. Georg Riccabona, of the Universitätsklinik für Nuklearmedizin in Innsbruck, Austria, reported that the future of nuclear medicine in endocrinology will include thyroid imaging with positron emission tomography (PET) and single-photon emission computed tomography (SPECT) using receptor-based tracers for thyroid diseases. Immunoscintigraphy will also play a role in thyroid studies, he added.

Clinical applications of brain imaging with iodine-123 iodoamphetamine (IMP) and technetium-99m hexamethylpropyleneamine oxime (HM-PAO) were discussed by Ivo Podreka, MD, of Neurologische Universitätsklinik Wien in Vienna, Austria.

Alfred P. Wolf, PhD, of Brookhaven National Laboratory, Upton, New York, US, gave an overview of radiotracers being developed for PET. Dr. Wolf cited Hevesy's first paper introducing the radiotracer principle in 1913, and his application of the method in plants (1923) and animals (1935). "That was really a very short time ago. We've come a long way since then, and we owe this man a debt of gratitude for his insight and genius. Hevesy not only developed the tracer method, but he also saw how it could be used," he said.

Nuclear Medicine History in European Countries

As a backdrop to the future trends in nuclear medicine presented during scientific sessions, the European history of the discipline was portrayed in a small museum, designed by Mallinckrodt Diagnostica and erected in the exhibition hall. Pieces of equipment used in the early days of nuclear medicine—including ratemeter-scalers for Geiger-Müller counters and home-made collimators—were displayed, as well as photographs depicting imaging procedures used in the 1940s and 1950s.

An intragastric Geiger-Müller counter (1954) could be viewed in one showcase with this explanation: "The Geiger counter was made in the form of a copper tube, 4 cm in length, 8 mm in diameter, the two connecting leads being enclosed in a rubber tube attached to one end of the counter, which could be swallowed with little difficulty or discomfort."

Brief essays mounted throughout the exhibit described landmark events and colorful anecdotes, such as the difficulties Prof. Cuno Winkler encountered in 1948 when he used his motorcycle to transport the first shipment of a radionuclide (iodine-131) received in Aachen, FRG, from the train station to Luisen Hospital. That shipment came from the Graphite Low-Energy Experimental Pile (GLEEP), Europe's first nuclear reactor, which went into operation in August 1947 in Harwell, England. One month later, it began shipping radionuclides to hospitals. Other essays told the stories of how the first French medical isotope departments were created and how nuclear medicine was established in Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Austria, Sweden, and other countries.

The Hevesy Memorial Exhibit told the story of this man's life and accomplishments through photographs, documents, and awards, including his Atoms for Peace Award of 1959 from the Rockefeller Institute. A filmed interview with Prof. Hevesy brought to life his presence even more.

[For more information on the EANM, contact: Peter J. Ell, MD, Institute of Nuclear Medicine, University College and Middlesex School of Medicine, Mortimer St., London W1N 8AA, England.]

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Reference

1. Del Vecchio S, Reynolds JC, Blasberg RG, et al: A method for determination of antigen concentration in human melanoma by quantitative autoradiography. *Nuklearmedizin* 1987;26:24.