

Chapter 7

1969–1973

President: C. Ajmone Marsan

The Federation continued its progress in representing clinical neurophysiology worldwide and sponsoring publications under the capable leadership of President Cosimo Ajmone Marsan (Fig. 7.1). The Executive Committee continued to include one Member-at-Large, in this term David Ingvar of Sweden (Fig. 7.2). Fritz Buchthal, founding Chairman of the EMG Commission in the previous decade, returned for an encore performance in that role.

Taking advantage of the change in the Statutes permitting two society members from the same country, the Belgian Society of EMG and Clinical Neurophysiology applied for membership and was accepted in 1971. The Finnish Society of Clinical Neurophysiology was accepted a little later, bringing the total of members to 37.

A change in the Bye-Laws concerned the sponsorship of meetings other than the Congress, as a result of which the Federation took a much more active part in the organization of the 4th International Congress of EMG, which was held in Brussels in September 1971. In fact, the credit for this successful meeting goes to its President, Jean Desmedt and his team, but future EMG congresses would be organized in exactly the same way as the Federation's major congress, that is, by a collaboration of designated members of the Executive Committee with the local organizers.

The Federation had had for a number of years an anomalous relationship with the Pavia Committee of EMG workers, which was already in existence when the EMG Commission was set

up. Now, at the instigation of the chairman of the latter, Fritz Buchthal, a liaison group of 11 members, proposed by the Delegates, was set up. If its composition was very similar to that of the Pavia Committee that it replaced, it had gained in acceptability by being chosen from within the Federation.

The financial situation of the Federation at the end of the period seemed doubtful, though not yet alarming. The dollar, in which most of the Federation's affairs, including the collection of dues, were conducted, had been devalued; the new contract with Elsevier, mentioned later, was wrongly thought by some to be likely to reduce the income from the Journal; expenses had been greater than expected, particularly for financing the Handbook project; above all were the unpredictable effects of inflation over the coming 4 years.

A "Committee on Terminology" had been set up to update the "Proposal for an EEG Terminology" (Journal, 1966, 20: 306). Some of its proposals were controversial but none more so than that to substitute Hertz for the familiar c/s or cps. The two Editors, Brazier and Cobb, fought hard against the change, but without success. The report of this and other committees is published with the Proceedings of the General Assembly (Journal, 1974, 37: 521).

The election of the next Executive Committee was conducted as on the last occasion, that is, of the President first, the rest later. The result was: President, W.A. Cobb; Secretary, R.J. Ellingson (for the second time); Treasurer, Max Dondey (who had shown his competence as a member of



Fig. 7.1. From left to right:

- Lennart Widén, of Karolinska Institute, Stockholm. Editor of Supplement 25, *Recent Advances in Clinical Neurophysiology*, 1967.
- Arne Lundervold of Oslo. Norwegian Delegate.
- Gillian Dunkley, assistant of Cobb in London and Rémond in Paris. Much involved in the publication of *Trace*, the organization of the scientific program for San Diego and the early stages of the Handbook.
- Cosimo Ajmone Marsan of Bethesda, MD, American Editor 1960–1969, President 1969–1973.
- Dominick Purpura, a much-used Consulting Editor.
- Gabrielle Lairy of Paris, Secretary of the 1973 (Marseilles) Congress. For many years a translator of summaries for the Journal's research reports.



Fig. 7.2. David Ingvar of Lund, Sweden, Member-at-Large 1969–1973.

the Organizing Committee of the Congress); Chairman of the EMG Commission, A. Struppler of Munich; Member-at-Large, Helmuth Petsche of Vienna. The other members of the Executive Committee were C. Ajmone Marsan, the Past-President, and Mary Brazier, successor to Peter Kellaway, for whom the post of Editor-in-Chief was revived. The members of the EMG Commission were Jean Desmedt and Robin Willison.

1. The EEG Journal

Toward the end of the last Fiscal Period the new contract with Elsevier had given the Journal 1400 pages a year, which it seemed to need, yet very soon in the new period a falling off in the number of submissions, mainly to the American office, became apparent. By the end of 1970 the situation was so bad that one number contained only 76 pages, instead of 120, after everything available had been put into it. The reason for this remarkable swing was never clear, though less dramatic changes, both up and down, had occurred before; by the end of this period the pendulum had again swung the other way and there was so much available material that several oversize issues were necessary to reduce the surplus and the publishers suggested an increase in the total pages. Experience of the previous fluctuations, however, urged caution and nothing was done, which time showed to have been the decision.

Up to this time the agreement with Elsevier had allowed the Editorial Board to exercise some measure of control over the price of the Journal, which we had tried to keep down in the interest of the subscribers. In fact, Elsevier always had the last word, rightly, since they were the experts and bore the financial risks. It came as a complete surprise, therefore, when, at an Editorial Board meeting in Paris in November 1970, Elsevier abruptly announced that they wished to terminate the contract and draw up a new one. After a long delay a new draft contract was produced which made a number of totally unacceptable financial demands. The correspondence which followed was hampered by a prolonged postal strike in England that left the Managing Editor out of touch with his colleagues for long periods. Among other solutions that they proposed were returning to the amateur production of the Montreal days (no one offered to take on the job) and giving the Journal to another publishing house; in fact at this time, with a minimum of publishable papers, our bargaining position to do so was very weak.

Eventually, however, a new agreement was reached with Elsevier which differed little from the original though one member of the Executive Committee thought that “it means the almost inevitable loss of any future profits which the Federation might have realized from the Journal”, a view shared by others though not by the Managing Editor. In fact, during the next Fiscal Period, when the effect of the new agreement was fully felt, the income from the Journal was nearly \$67,000. It should be said that this was the only occasion on which we have had serious differences with Elsevier in many years association and this was due more to some clumsiness than to anything else.

These discussions evidently added to the uneasiness which Peter Kellaway felt in his work and other pressures led him to resign at the end of 1971. Fortunately Mary Brazier was persuaded to take on the task of American Editor, adding one more to her many services to the Federation; unfortunately, for her, her appointment coincided

with the upsurge in submitted papers mentioned above, but she survived it with enthusiasm.

Toward the end of the period the election of Cobb as the next president led to his resignation as Editor. Once again our first choice of a replacement accepted and Pierre Buser of Paris became the European Editor from the beginning of 1973.

The computerized Index of Current Literature had developed well, growing to 48 pages per volume. From this material a new “KWIC” Index was produced, covering 1966–1969, as *Supplement 29* and then a further *Supplement 30* filled the gap from 1964 to 1966. These two, together with Brazier’s original Bibliography and Bickford’s KWIC Index, covered the entire field for the period of 94 years since Caton’s first paper of 1875.

The demise of the “Trace” news announcement left a serious gap in communications, which the Editorial Board was loath to fill by using Journal pages. A solution came when Elsevier offered to include in each number a two-page insert, provided that the material was in the form of camera-ready copy. “News and Notes” was produced, for the first time in August 1970, by the Secretary, Bob Ellingson, and continued to provide a valuable link. Because it was printed on distinctive “Blue Pages” that was what it is usually called. It changed later to the Yellow Pages of the journal, and eventually to an on-line news section when the Federation evolved into the 21st Century.

The Handbook project was proving to be an even larger task than had been anticipated, mainly because of the difficulty of keeping the enormous team of over 200 authors up to their deadlines. At the time of the Congress only 13 parts had been published, out of a projected 48, and eight more were in press. The delay naturally increased the expenses, at first covered by advances from Elsevier and later by the Federation.

2. The Eighth International Congress, Marseilles

The Congress was held in the Faculté de Médecine in September 1973, under the Presidency of

Henri Gastaut, very much on his own ground. It was organized most imaginatively by Gabrielle Lairy, Jean Courjon and many others. Because of illness it was not intended that Robert Naquet, with the expertise of many Colloques de Marseille behind him, should have any role; in the event, as always, he became a major link in the organization.

Among the many successful ideas which were introduced the following are memorable: the highly entertaining logo which appeared on all the Congress documents; the grouping of free communications according to their related topics; simultaneous translation by scientific colleagues, under the leadership of Georges Muller of Luxembourg; the cost of this translation had become a major burden on previous congresses and the amateurs were far more effective than the professionals because they understood the topics and were familiar with the specialized vocabulary; a team of young men and girls, students and relatives of the organizers, was recruited to man the information desk, print and distribute a daily news bulletin and the didactic lectures and provide a hundred and one other useful services with, as the secretary of the Congress wrote afterwards "enfin et surtout le sourire malgré la fatigue".

A personal memory is of returning to the Faculté on the morning after the Congress and finding a number of these young girls sitting

on the steps crying valedictory tears of utter exhaustion.

The Chairmen of all the committees were required to write reports of their activities; this proved most valuable to the organizers of the next congress and has been adopted as normal practice.

At the General Assembly it was agreed to consolidate the annual subscription and the contribution to the costs of the Congress, which had previously been collected separately by the Treasurer and the Treasurer of the Congress. Dues were also raised to \$10/decade of members.

Some minor changes in the Statutes and Bye-Laws were made but, for the second time, the General Assembly rejected any form of proportional representation in the Council, proposed by one of the Member Societies.

A number of unusual entertainments were provided but it is the official banquet that stood out as something quite exceptional. It was held in the 14th century banqueting hall of the Palais des Papes in Avignon and commenced with the entry of a procession of medieval serving men and wenches, led by a rider on a white horse, skilfully descending the steep flight of stone stairs. Throughout the meal we were entertained by acrobats, jugglers, flame swallowers and the like, moving from table to table and all in appropriate costume. A pretentious entertainment, no doubt, but memorable nevertheless.