

EDITORIAL

The Annual Scientific Meeting of the International Medical Society of Paraplegia, 1-5 July 1980, at Troelstra-Oord, Beekbergen, Holland.

THE 1980 Meeting of the International Medical Society of Paraplegia was, like the Meetings in previous years, a very successful one. This was due to the excellent organisation of Dr G. M. Pool and his Committee, in association with Professor Paeslack, the President, Dr Frankel, the Honorary Secretary, and Dr Nuseibeh, the Honorary Treasurer of the International Medical Society of Paraplegia; and to the high quality of the scientific communications. Her Royal Highness, Princess Margriët, the lovely young sister of the Queen of the Netherlands, opened the Meeting, and this ceremony was followed by tributes to the late Sir Ludwig Guttmann by Professor Paeslack, Professor Rossier, Dr Dollfuss and Mr Griffiths.

The main subjects for the Meeting were: Post-traumatic cystic degeneration of the cord; Non-traumatic acquired paraplegia; Neuro-physiological assessment of spinal cord function.

The clinical appreciation of delayed spinal neurological symptoms and signs subsequent to spinal trauma due to post-traumatic suspected degeneration of the cord (syringomyelia) is a clinico-pathological condition which is as yet little understood and not well appreciated. The papers on this important topic included in this issue of *Paraplegia* are three of several that were given at the Meeting, and it is hoped that others from the Meeting may be published in the future. They do bring out some of the most important points concerning a condition which must,



Photograph taken at the Opening Ceremony of the 1980 Annual Scientific Meeting of the International Medical Society of Paraplegia. (Note the symbolic 'empty chair' in memory of the late Sir Ludwig Guttmann, between H.R.H. Princess Margriët and Dr G. M. Pool.)

in fact, be fairly common, and will, I feel, now be assiduously sought in all patients who have sustained spinal cord injury.

Proffered papers included several other aspects of 'paraplegia', such as clinical neurological, urological, sexual, orthopaedic, radiological, and rehabilitation. Some of the papers are published in this issue of *Paraplegia*, and it is the intention to complete the publications from that Meeting in the June and August numbers.

There were visits to Rehabilitation Centres in Holland, including the famous 'Het Dorp' ('The Village' for the disabled); and in association with the Scientific Meeting, the Second Olympiad for the Disabled was held at Arnhem.

This year the Meeting of the International Medical Society of Paraplegia will be held at Stoke Mandeville Hospital, Aylesbury, England, from the 28th to the 31st July, and the main subjects are: Prevention of spinal cord injuries; Spinal stenosis; Life expectancy following spinal cord injury; Social situation of paraplegics and tetraplegics. Doctors involved in any of the specialties concerned with 'paraplegia' have a day to day involvement with the disabled, and the topics and format of the Annual Scientific Meetings of the International Medical Society of Paraplegia illustrate this very well. For us, every year is a 'year for the disabled', but 1981 has been designated by the United Nations to be THE Year for Disabled Persons.

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