

Editorial Commentary

ILAE President's Mid-Term Report

The highly successful Sydney Congress marked the midpoint in the current 4-year administrative cycle of the League and it is, therefore, appropriate to present a mid-term report.

GROWTH AND COMMUNICATION

In my inaugural address in Oslo in 1993 (*Epilepsia* 1994;35:713-714), I emphasized that in pursuing the constitutional objectives of the League, priority would be given to improving communication within the organization at a time of rapid growth of the League and to increasing worldwide interest in epilepsy.

In Oslo, the League admitted seven new chapters (Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, India, Russia, Slovenia, Taiwan, and Turkey) and in Sydney five more were admitted (Czech Republic, Ireland, Moldova, Romania, and Tunisia). This is a growth rate of 25% in 2 years, and the current total number of chapters stands at 52. Several other applications are in the pipeline.

SECRETARY-GENERAL'S OFFICE

For the first time in its 86-year interrupted history, the League has established a staffed office for the Secretary-General, Dr. Peter Wolf, in Bielefeld, Germany. The Secretary-General's office coordinates and administrates the activities of the League and is responsible for the organization and recording of official meetings, such as those of the Executive Committee, the Council, and the General Assembly. It deals with enquiries in four languages (English, German, French, and Spanish) and processes the application of new chapters. It has started preparing an Annual Report, the first of which was produced for the year 1994, another milestone in the history of the League.

PRESIDENT'S OFFICE

The President's office also receives many enquiries that can either be dealt with directly or referred on to the Secretary-General's office, when appropriate. The President is responsible for the establishment and administration of the Commissions and Subcommissions of the League, 17 of which I have set up. They are listed, together with their Chairpersons, in Table 1. Details of the objectives,

membership, and activities of the Commissions can be found in the Annual Report. The President works closely with the Treasurer, Dr. Jerome Engel, Jr., in processing annual reports and plans, as well as annual financial reports and budgets, which are considered by the Executive Committee each spring.

FINANCES

The finances of the League are in a healthy state and have been simplified and streamlined, thanks to the considerable efforts of the Treasurer, who has established new accounting systems, new procedures of collection and acknowledgment of chapter dues, and investment advice, as described in the Annual Report.

EPILEPSIA

Under our new editor, Dr. Timothy A. Pedley, *Epilepsia* became a monthly journal starting with the January 1995 issue, thus increasing its capacity. The speed of publication of accepted articles is improving. New editorial policies were described in the July 1994 issue of the journal. Questions relating to the cost and distribution of the journal are under active consideration by the Executive Committee. In order to bring its contents to a wider audience in the developing world, a pilot scheme for an *Epilepsia Digest* in India and neighboring countries is being launched in 1996.

EPIGRAPH

Communication within the League has also been improved by establishing for the first time the League's own newsletter, *Epigraph*, under the editorship of Dr. Simon Shorvon. The first issue appeared in the autumn of 1994 and two further issues have been published in the spring and autumn of 1995, the latter in time for the Sydney Congress. *Epigraph* serves to inform members of the wide-ranging and global activities of the League and serves as a vehicle for all members to exchange experience and opinions. Thanks to an educational grant from Marion Merrell Dow, it is sent free of charge to all members of the League. To receive *Epigraph*, you must be on the mailing list of your own chapter, which should be forwarded to the Sec-

retary-General's office and the editor's office for inclusion in the League's master registry. Currently we have a mailing list of over 8,000 members, but not all chapters have submitted their mailing lists.

ARCHIVES

For the first time an archives is being established to preserve League documents in Heemstede, The Netherlands, by Dr. Harry Meinardi, who is currently trying to locate and classify existing documents. Regrettably, many of the early records of the League have been lost because there was no preservation system, but the history of the League is to some extent documented in the three different series of our journal, *Epilepsia*. Anyone who has knowledge of, or access to, old documents or correspondence relating to the League should please contact Dr. Meinardi.

TABLE 1. *Commissions/subcommissions of the ILAE*

Commission on Antiepileptic Drugs Chairman: Professor David Chadwick, U.K.
Commission on Classification and Terminology Chairman: Dr. Frederick Andermann, Canada
Commission on Constitutional Affairs Chairman: Dr. Fritz Dreifuss, U.S.A.
Commission on Developing Countries Chairman: Dr. Pierre Jallon, Switzerland
Commission on Economic Aspects of Epilepsy Chairman: Dr. Christoph Pachlatko, Switzerland
Commission on Education Chairman: Dr. Timothy A. Pedley, U.S.A.
Commission on Epidemiology and Prognosis Chairman: Dr. Nadir Bharucha, India
Commission on European Affairs Chairman: Dr. Simon Shorvon, U.K.
Commission on Genetics, Pregnancy, and the Child Chairman: Professor Dick Lindhout, The Netherlands
Commission on Neurobiology Chairman: Professor Giuliano Avanzini, Italy
Commission on Neuroimaging Chairman: Dr. Sam Berkovic, Australia
Commission on Neurosurgery Chairman: Mr. Charles Polkey and Dr. Colin Binnie, U.K.
Commission on Outcome Measurement Chairman: Professor Harry Meinardi, The Netherlands
Commission on Pediatrics Chairman: Professor Olivier Dulac, France
Commission on Tropical Diseases Chairman: Professor Paulo de Bittencourt, Brazil
Subcommission on Pediatric Classification and Terminology Chairperson: Dr. Charlotte Dravet, France
Subcommission on a Video Atlas of Seizures Chairman: Dr. Arthur Sonnen, The Netherlands

LONG-TERM PLANNING

The long-term future of the League is regularly reviewed by the Executive Committee, which now meets twice a year, and also by the Long Range Planning Committee (LRPC), which consists of the Executive Committee, together with the Chairpersons of all Commissions/Subcommissions. The LRPC had an all-day meeting in London in November 1994, and hopes to have a similar meeting in 1996.

CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES

The constitution of the League is being reviewed by the Commission on Constitutional Affairs, chaired by Dr. Fritz E. Dreifuss. For example, there appears to be wide-spread support for a proposal to hold General Assemblies of the League every 2 years instead of every 4 years, as is done at present. Any changes to the current arrangements, however, would first have to be approved by the General Assembly.

DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

The interests of developing countries are being addressed by the Executive Committee, the Long Range Planning Commission, the Commission on Developing Countries, chaired by Dr. Pierre Jallon, and the Commission on Education, chaired by Dr. Pedley. Dr. Jallon is based in Geneva, which brings him into close contact with the WHO, to which the League is affiliated. The *Epilepsia Digest* for developing countries is a product of these deliberations. A Symposium on issues related to Developing Countries is being planned for 1996 by the Commission in collaboration with other relevant commissions and the WHO.

REGIONAL ISSUES

Regional developments include the first European Congress of the League in Oporto in September 1994, and the first Asian and Oceanic Congress of the League, which will be held in Seoul in September 1996. Latin American Congresses are already well established, the most recent in Cuba in January 1995. A possible model of regional cooperation has been set up in Europe by the development of a European Advisory Council, consisting of one delegate from each European Chapter, which meets annually and advises the Commission on European Affairs, and is partly elected by the Council and partly appointed by the President. This Commission is the executive arm for European initiatives and cooperation and reports to the League's Executive

Committee, which has ultimate responsibility, and also to the European Advisory Council. We hope to establish an Asian and Oceanic Commission in the near future and our Treasurer, Dr. Engel, has also been encouraging collaboration between Pacific Rim Chapters and countries.

IBE

Finally, relations between the professional League and the lay Bureau are excellent at the international level. Although they are separate organizations, they cooperate closely on many issues, not the least of which is the joint international Congress that takes place every 2 years. The next Congress will be held June 29th to July 6th, 1997, in Dublin, which will mark the end of the current administrative cycle of the League. Elections for the 1997-2001 officers of the League will begin in 1996. Currently the League and the Bureau are examining issues of common interest, for example, their relation to the pharmaceutical industry, public relations, and interactions with governments to improve services. It is the policy of both organizations that there should be League and Bureau chapters in each country. The Executive Committee and I are grateful to Hanneke de Boer and Michael Hills, the President and Secretary-General of the Bureau, respectively, for their support. On your behalf, I am also very grateful for the support and commitment

of the Executive Committee and the Commissions/Subcommissions.

E. H. Reynolds
President

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Copies of the Annual Report for 1994 (and, in due course, 1995) can be obtained from the Secretary-General's Office:

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