

International Glaucoma Symposium

Nara/Japan, May 7–11, 1978

President: W. Leydhecker

Organizers: W. Leydhecker, S. Mishima, Y. Kitazawa
in cooperation with: Japanese Glaucoma Club

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Participants of the Nara-Symposium

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Foreword

The International Council of Ophthalmology agreed to the creation of an International Glaucoma Committee, which should have a limited number of members, 40 at a maximum. This committee will hold a closed meeting every 4 years on the occasion of the International Congress of Ophthalmology and will report to the International Council on the practical and clinical advances in glaucoma detection and treatment. This report will be published in the proceedings of the International Congress. The committee will advise and direct the activities of the International Glaucoma Society, which will hold a glaucoma symposium prior to each International Congress of Ophthalmology and which will be open to anyone interested in glaucoma.

This is now the first meeting of the committee. When I look at the program and the names of the speakers, I am convinced that it will be very fruitful. This is my most sincere wish.

I should like to thank very warmly Prof. Leydhecker for preparing the organization of this group and the scientific program and Prof. Mishima, Prof. Kitazawa, and all of their staff for having so beautifully organized this symposium, which will be very successful, and for having received us with such generous hospitality.

I am very grateful to each of the members of the International Glaucoma Committee and to each of our Japanese friends involved in this symposium.

Prof. Dr. Jules François
President of the International Council of Ophthalmology

The first meeting of the International Glaucoma Committee was held at Nara, the ancient capital of Japan. The symposium continued the tradition of similar meetings preceding the International Congress of Ophthalmology: St. Marguerithe (1954), Liège (1958), Tutzing (1966), Albi (1974). Why did all participants decide to continue such meetings in the future? There are several reasons:

We need an international forum for the discussion of a disease that still continues its sinister role in all countries, in spite of the world-wide efforts to fight it. A discussion of experts from different regions of the world will show new facets of the disease, since ophthalmological traditions, research interests, and clinical decisions differ from country to country. The discussions show to what extent differences are based on facts and to what extent on beliefs and how much they are possibly influenced by a different structure of research and of clinical medicine. Only a meeting that allots more time to discussions than it does to papers will give more opportunity for criticism than a journal or a meeting of the traditional type could do. Discussions will necessarily have an open end character, which is not pleasing to anyone who hopes for thumb rules. At our symposium, all papers were precirculated to each member, and at the meeting only a short introduction was required for each contribution, so that most of the time was free for discussions. Further advantages of this type of meeting are that: (1) very recent work can be presented and criticized before publication; (2) it is possible to discuss research that gave unsatisfactory results and that one would not easily bring to the attention of a large audience; (3) prospects of research can be discussed; (4) it becomes clearer to each research worker where he will work at his best, basically or clinically; (5) the program can be kept very flexible; and (6) hopefully, efforts of different centres or individuals might be combined. By meeting each other, by talking and listening to each other, both inside and outside the lecture hall, we will succeed in understanding each other. This requires a small number of participants who live under the same roof for a few days, if possible in an area remote from the noise and distractions of a large city. This was or-

ganized at its best by Dr. Kitazawa, who did a marvelous job together with his residents and secretaries to make the meeting a full success. The thanks of all participants are also due the commercial companies who gave financial support to the meeting.

Finally, the thanks of the editors are due Springer Publishers for their co-operation in preparing this volume.

Würzburg, 12.7.78

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