

World Confederation of Physical Therapy

Third International Congress Report

By MOLLY LEVY, M.C.S.P., Official Delegate S.A.S.P.

The Third International Congress of the World Confederation for Physical Therapy took place in Paris from the 6th—12th September.

The fifteen Member countries were all represented and there were over two thousand delegates present. These included physiotherapists from countries all over the world, as yet non-members of the World Confederation. Many countries, particularly those behind the Iron Curtain, have recently become very interested in the World Confederation, but have not yet submitted the necessary particulars to the Executive Committee for consideration. One received the impression, however, that, before the next Meeting of the World Confederation many new countries would be seeking permission to become members.

The South African Society of Physiotherapy had seven members present—an improvement on the number in New York but still not nearly enough if we are to get South African Physiotherapy on the map. To demonstrate how little is known about our country, Miss Blair was asked at one of the receptions whether she was the only physiotherapist in South Africa! We would like to add that the South African contingent was aided and abetted by Miss Lois Dyer, who never failed to seize an opportunity for furthering our cause.

The Congress was officially opened by M. Chenot the Minister of Public Health and Population, in the Unesco Building. This is a really magnificent building and we were extremely fortunate in being able to spend the first day of the Congress there. The opening lecture was given by Professor Seze, President of the Medical Committee and for his subject he chose the theme of the Congress, "Physical Therapy: Its importance in Human, Economic and Social Development". The French Organising Committee had arranged a very full programme, with several lecture sessions films and visits taking place at the same time. It was quite impossible to attend more than a fraction of these, but all the lectures will be made available at a later date. Two papers had been accepted from South Africa—one from Miss Blair and one from Mrs. Wenham. These were both extremely well received. Miss Blair's address was stimulating and provocative and judging by the number of questions she was asked during the rest of the week, one realised the interest that her lecture had aroused. Mrs. Wenham showed two very interesting films on baby gymnastics after which she was offered demonstration time at a later stage during the Congress. We can indeed be proud of our South African representatives.

Among the most interesting of the other lectures were demonstrations on the early treatments of severe hemiplegias by Great Britain and a film on connective tissue massage from West Germany. The Danish physiotherapists offered some new intriguing ideas by the use of horseback riding as part of rehabilitation. Home visiting by physiotherapists now plays a large part in the rehabilitation scheme and many countries have introduced it—part of the physiotherapist's duty being the adaption of the everyday household appliances to suit the patient's condition. A lecture of particular interest to us at the present time was one given by Great Britain on the Misconceptions about, and the Proper Uses of Manipulations. Great stress was laid on the ability to judge when manipulation was suitable and the avoidance of over-enthusiasm. Patients must be frequently examined by the Doctor. There was also an extremely interesting talk and film on Glosso-pharyngeal Breathing by the United States. Throughout the Congress emphasis was laid on the necessity of a complete rehabilitation programme for

all patients. A number of lectures were given by French medical men. These were not always easy to follow as the interpreters found it hard to keep pace with the rapid rate of delivery.

The Fourth General Meeting was held on Wednesday, 9th September. At this Meeting, a new Member organisation was welcomed—that of Colombia. In the reports that followed, great stress was laid on the need for a separate Secretariat as the volume of the work had increased beyond the capabilities of the present arrangements. The Articles of Association were accepted in their amended form as circularised, except that it was agreed that the retiring President should hold office until the end of the Congress and not till the end of the General Meeting. The financial position had been discussed at length by the Executive Committee and a specially appointed Financial Committee and the suggestion was made that Member countries be asked to pay a per capita subscription of 2/6d. per practising member and 1/6d. per non-practising member. This will probably come into effect from the next Congress. In the meanwhile, the annual subscription has been increased to £16 per annum as from the 1st July, 1960. It was also decided that the Congress should be held every four years. With regard to reciprocity, we were unfortunately not able to make any headway. The Australian Physiotherapy Association had put forward a resolution worded as follows:—

"That the World Confederation for Physical Therapy be asked to consider an acceptable minimum standard of training at graduation level, within the member countries, so that there may eventually be a reciprocal agreement for members working abroad."

The motion was lost because it was generally agreed among the delegates that the dangers of a minimum standard would be greater than the privileges gained in international reciprocity as a low training and graduation agreement would be retrogressive and not progressive. Our delegates were aware of the discussions that had taken place by the Executive Committee of the World Confederation and at the Meetings convened for teachers, the result of which was that a minimum standard would tend to jeopardise the professional status already attained in many of the countries. Whilst desiring reciprocity, this Society deprecates a lowering of its own status and therefore our delegate was forced to abstain from voting on this issue. Miss Blair and I had had previous private discussions with Miss Neilson on this subject and it was realised that as far as Great Britain was concerned our present position is the fairest that can be obtained.

It had also been suggested that the regional zoning of member countries be considered with a Vice-President elected from each zone, but the general opinion was that we were not ready for such a step yet. The South African Society of Physiotherapy was in favour of an increased representation of member countries on the Executive Committee but this motion was also lost.

As a result of the Delegates' meetings that were held prior to the General Meeting, it was noted that Member countries were given little opportunity to discuss their own countries policies before the voting took place at the General Meeting. Our delegates had been asked to raise certain issues at the General Meeting under "General"—but we were informed that this was impossible as all the items on the Agenda had to be circulated at least six months prior to the Congress. It was, in fact, evident that the General Meeting was merely a formality.

NEUROMUSCULAR FACILITATION TECHNIQUES

The Boston University Sargent College, Department of Physical Therapy announces an Introductory Course in Neuromuscular Facilitation Techniques to be given under the direction of Miss Margaret Knott, Physical Therapy Director, California Rehabilitation Centre, from June 13 to June 24, 1960.

The course will include instruction in the theory and practice of technics, and an analysis of muscle function in patterns of facilitation. Opportunity will be given for practice under supervision and observation of treatment procedures. The course may be taken for three semester hours credit at a cost of \$75.00. Rooms will be available in a Boston University Dormitory for a minimum of \$15.00 a week.

The closing registration date will be June 1, 1960. Registration will be limited to thirty (30) qualified physical therapists who are members of the American Physical Therapy Association, or of member associations of the World Confederation for Physical Therapy. Students will be selected as applications are received, but the right to select students on a geographical basis is reserved.

Those interested should apply to Professor Adelaide L. McGarrett, Physical Therapy Director, Boston University Sargent College, University Road, Boston 15, Massachusetts. Please indicate whether a room is desired.

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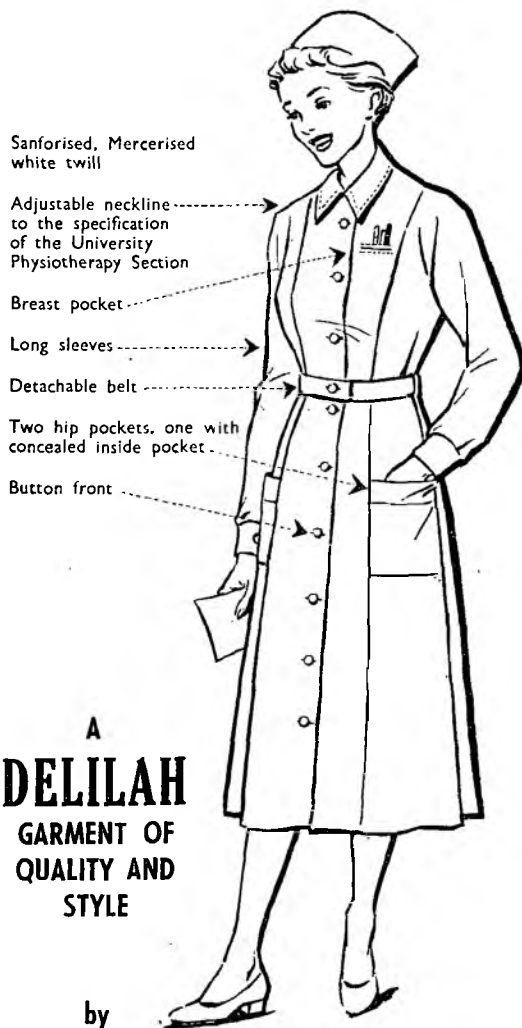
The following Office Bearers were elected:—

- President:* Denmark (Mrs. Agersnap).
1st Vice-President: Canada (Miss Gower-Rees).
2nd Vice-President: Australia (Miss Mack).
3rd Vice-President: Finland (Miss Honke).
Executive Committee Members: Sweden, U.S.A., Great Britain, West Germany.

Apart from the lectures and the meetings, the delegates were subjected to a rigorous entertainment programme which included a visit to the illuminated galleries at the Louvre followed by a reception, an elaborate Banquet at the Palais de Chaillot, a reception and address by the Vice-President of France at the Hotel de Ville, followed by a visit to the Opera. All this took place during one of the hottest weeks of the summer.

We would like to take this opportunity of thanking the South African Society of Physiotherapy for the help given enabling us to attend the Congress. It was an unforgettable experience and it made us realise how important it is for us to be part of the World Confederation and to aim at gaining recognition in the world of physiotherapy. As it seems almost impossible to hold a Congress in South Africa, it was suggested that perhaps we may be able to have an Executive Committee Meeting here sometime. We feel that this should be our aim and that as many members of our Society as possible should try to go to Copenhagen in 1963, the next meeting of the World Confederation for Physical Therapy.

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