

## FOURTH CONGRESS of the WORLD CONFEDERATION of PHYSIOTHERAPY

The Fourth Congress of the World Confederation of Physical Therapy has come and gone. The long-awaited date in the middle of June greeted 1,700 physical therapists from all over the world who assembled in Copenhagen for ten happy, busy and instructive days.

The focal point of the Congress was the Falkoner Centret, a modern congress building with a large auditorium from which simultaneous translations could be given, large reception rooms and smaller rooms for sub-committee meetings. In the adjoining building there is a large cinema which was used for the showing of some very excellent films and slides. The stage of the auditorium was decorated with the famous Badge of the W.C.P.T. below which shone the symbolic globe the light of which was switched on at the opening session and only switched off at the end of the impressive closing session on 22nd June. Below the stage hung the flags of the member nations giving a patch of colour to the scene.

The main entrance hall of the building housed stands manned by all the physiotherapy associations where information and publicity could be obtained about the different countries, both from the physical therapy point of view and from the general interest angle. The South African Society of Physiotherapy had a stall, ably organised by Miss A. Bodoano and Mr. J. Moot, on which were exhibited pictures and pamphlets depicting life and work in South Africa and in the hospitals, especially Pretoria General Hospital and the Ernest Oppenheimer Hospital, Welkom. A series of coloured slides of South African scenes were projected at intervals during the day. Photographs on display showed different aspects of Physiotherapy training in the three South African training schools.

Prior to the main Congress week, three days were devoted to hospital and institution visits and Special Session lectures. About 25 different hospitals were open and each physiotherapist had the opportunity of going on at least three different visits. In many, demonstrations were given in the Physiotherapy departments by the staff and tours of the whole hospital or institution were arranged in other places.

The Special Sessions were on Multiple Sclerosis, a condition so prevalent in Europe and America, but happily rare in South Africa, Cerebral Palsy and finally on Poliomyelitis. Experts from various countries as well as from Denmark gave lectures and showed films on various aspects of these three important subjects.

The following week was devoted to the main theme of the Congress with lectures and films going on all day. A vast variety of subjects was embraced and it was a full programme. South Africa was represented by Miss A. Savin from the Pretoria College of Physiotherapy who read an interesting and constructive paper on Geriatrics entitled "A Concise Guide to the Assessment of the Geriatric Patient and the Approach to the Treatment on the Road to Independence". This paper covered geriatrics as a whole and in South Africa in particular and aroused a good deal of outside interest.

Miss Agnes Wenham of Johannesburg showed a film "Orthotics in Clinic, School and Home in South Africa" and this again stimulated interest among many overseas visitors. These two South Africans were good ambassadors for our country and the South African Society of Physiotherapy.

The opening session was honoured by the presence of two of the Royal Danish Princesses and the impressive ceremony consisted of the lighting of the Congress Symbol by Mrs. R. Agersnap, President of the W.C.P.T. followed by singing by a fine choir.

During the week the General Meeting was held and South Africa who is one of the founder members was elected to the Executive Council for the next eight years. This will

mean that our representative, Miss Jean Blair, will have to attend interim meetings of this Council when they are called, before the next Congress which is scheduled for Australia in 1967.

Mrs. M. Levy, Honorary General Secretary of the S.A.S.P. was our voting delegate at the Congress, and attended all the special executive meetings as well as the General Meeting in her official capacity.

Five new members, namely Switzerland, Iceland, Guatemala, Portugal and Brazil were admitted to the Confederation and during the General Meeting were formally welcomed and their flags added to the already impressive array.

Besides general lectures, special meetings were called to enable various groups to get together and discuss their own special problems.

The Teachers and Superintendent Physical Therapists met in groups, as did the Physical Therapists in Industry and in Private Practice, and much of interest came out of these discussions.

Social activities were also in great evidence. Several official receptions had been arranged and very well organised by the Danish Physiotherapy Association and the World Confederation Committee. The first of these was at the well-known Nimb Restaurant in the famous Tivoli Gardens where members had free admission for the whole of the Congress week. This was followed by the Congress Banquet in the same Restaurant later in the week. Both these functions enabled members to really get together and meet old friends and make new ones. A civic reception was also held at the Copenhagen Town Hall and at the adjoining Municipality of Fredericksberg, the members being divided into two groups for this function. Here following a formal welcoming speech by the respective mayors, visitors were introduced to the famous Danish hospitality and invited to sample Danish fare and drink Danish beer.

One of the highlights of the social activities was a visit to the home of a Danish physiotherapist which was arranged for most of the overseas members.

An afternoon tour was arranged through the delightful Danish countryside when visits were made to some of the famous castles of that part of North Zealand.

Denmark and Copenhagen in particular, went out of their way to provide entertainment, information and good weather for the members of the World Confederation of Physical Therapy and many have returned to their homes in the far corners of the globe with their minds refreshed and vivid memories of happy and instructive days in a happy land. Attending a World Congress is a wonderful experience and something never to be forgotten. It is not merely this new knowledge that one gains by attending lectures, but making contact with people from far afield with similar interests that is so valuable and stimulating.

From time to time it is hoped to report on some of the most interesting lectures that were given at the Congress, and every effort will be made to do this.

On behalf of all those 19 South African physiotherapists who attended the Fourth World Congress, we extend our grateful thanks to the officials of the W.C.P.T. and the Danish Physiotherapy Association who worked so hard and did so much to make the Congress the great success that it was.

### PUBLICATION OF PROCEEDINGS

It is hoped that the Proceedings of W.C.P.T.'s Congress in Copenhagen will be published before the end of 1963.

Copies at a price of 32.00 Danish kroner post free may be ordered from Danske Fysioterapeuter, Vesterport 455, 4 Trommesalen Copenhagen V., Denmark.

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