

The Fifth Interbor Congress

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INTERBOR, the international Association of Orthotic and Prosthetic National Associations, held its Fifth Congress in Paris during the period April 26-28, 1972. The meeting was sponsored by the French Association.

The American Orthotic and Prosthetic Association joined the international organization in 1970 on the recommendation of its Board of Directors which was unanimously approved by the voting members at their Annual Meeting in Portland, Oregon. In the two years of its membership, the American Association has been represented by its Presidents and the writer. President Roy Snelson attended the Fourth Congress in Bonn, and President Mary S. Dorsch the one this year. Additionally, Mrs. Siegfried Paul, Vice President of the AOPA Women's Auxiliary, participated in the Paris meeting.

The organization of the Fifth Congress was managed by a Committee composed of Mr. Gilbert Pierron, Chairman; Mr. Marcel Ob-

let, President of the French Association; and Mr. Robert Neut, Congress Treasurer. The meeting, for which more than 600 persons registered, was held at the International Congress Center of Paris. Forty-three lecturers, representing Austria, Belgium, Denmark, England, France, Germany, Holland, Italy, Japan, Russia (USSR), Spain, Switzerland, Tunisia, and the United States of America, participated in the technical program. The lecture program was organized into related subject groupings followed by active question and answer periods, and simultaneous translation of the whole program into English, French, German, and Italian was provided. Thirty-one supplier companies from five countries including the United States presented outstanding exhibits of their products.

Among the papers that were presented those of particular interest dealt with Evaluation Tests for Upper Extremity Prostheses; CO-2 Powered Prosthesis for the Upper Extremity; The 4-P Waseda Hand;

A. Prosthesis with Myoelectric Control; The New Austrian Myoelectric Prosthesis; The Practicality of Externally Powered Above-Knee Prostheses; Orthotics and Prosthetics in Africa; Wheelchair Modifications for the Paraplegic; Orthotic Treatment of Spinal Fractures; Bracing in Myelomeningocele; Prosthetics and Orthotics in the USSR and Related Scientific Research; New Aspects on the Meccano Genesis of Scoliosis; and New Means of Ambulatory Traction in the Treatment of Scoliosis.

A number of field trips were included in the Congress program. Among the most interesting was a visit to the Centre de Reeducation et d'Appareillage. Located in the environs of Paris, the extremely modern facility is government financed and offers an interesting rehabilitation concept. Newly amputated patients referred to the facility are provided with temporary prostheses fabricated on the premises by unskilled personnel under the supervision of physical therapists. The permanent prostheses are assembled in much the same fashion, although great emphasis is put on the fact that a "private" facility will finish the prosthesis.

A full social program included a cocktail reception sponsored by the French Association, a boat ride on the Seine River with dinner served aboard, and the concluding banquet being held atop the Eiffel Tower. Among the activities provided for the ladies at the Congress were a bus sightseeing tour, a shopping trip to a Parisian department store, a visit to a porcelain manufacturing

plant, a fashion show, and a tour of Versailles Palace.

Mrs. Mary Dorsch, President, The American Orthotic and Prosthetic Association, addressed the meeting. In announcing that the Association's quarterly journal, *Orthotics and Prosthetics*, is an affiliated publication of INTERBOR, she also advised that it had combined with *Artificial Limbs*, the publication of the Committee on Prosthetic Research and Development, National Research Council. Mrs. Dorsch extended the invitation to the member associations of INTERBOR to utilize the journal by providing manuscripts for publication as an effective way to increase communication among the member organizations.

Mrs. Dorsch pointed out that her participation in the Fifth INTERBOR Congress had emphasized that its members in Europe had the same problems and goals as the members of the United States association. She stressed the need for improved communication and unification of efforts to expand the educational opportunities for practitioners and to increase their professional stature in order to continually improve orthotic-prosthetic patient management.

At the conclusion of her remarks, President Dorsch extended an invitation to the representatives of the European members of INTERBOR to attend the American Orthotic and Prosthetic Association 1972 National Assembly and for INTERBOR to send an official representative to the convention. Mrs. Dorsch also invited INTERBOR to hold its Sixth Congress in the United States in 1976.