Faculties of Sciences

Comparative and environmental physiology is being studied at science faculties. The first Institute of Animal Physiology in Czechoslovakia was founded in 1945 by Professor K. Wenig at the Faculty of Science at Charles University in Prague. Since 1958, that institute has been composed of two departments, the Department of Comparative and Environmental Physiology (head, L. Janský) and the Department of Cell Physiology (head, V. Kubišta). Problems currently studied in these departments involve physiological mechanisms responsible for adaptation to cold and light in mammals (hypothalamic control functions, nonshivering thermogenesis, vasomotor activity, gonadal activity, and production of hormones), thermoregulatory modification during fever and hibernation, mode of neuropeptide action on neural activity, muscle bioenergetics, and phosphoinositide signaling system and phospholipid metabolism.

International contacts have been established with institutes in Canada, Germany, and the USA. Three international symposia on cold adaptation and hibernation have been held in Prague. Activities of an international society, a Regional Thermoregulatory Group, are being organized by these departments.

Other departments of animal physiology were established at Masaryk University in Brno (head, V. Janda; insect physiology), and at the University of Olomouc (head, J. Bičík; ethology). In Slovakia, animal physiology is being taught at the Faculties of Science in Bratislava (M. Novacki) and Košice (I. Ahlers).

Altogether about 40 specialists in comparative physiology are graduated from the above departments every year. They present a thesis of original studies for the master's degree. Doctoral theses are submitted following three additional years of training. Two textbooks (L. Janský and I. Novotný: *Fysiologie živočichů a člověka*, Avicenum 1981; Š. Paulov: *Fyziológia živočichov a človeka*, Slov. ped. nakl. 1980) are used by students.

The summary mentioned above is not complete. For example, in the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic there are two universities of veterinary study, two institutes of animal physiology in the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences, and university chairs of physiology in three Universities of Agriculture. Also not included are physiological laboratories in the health sphere, university chairs in physical training and sport physiology, and some specialized institutes and laboratories. Also there are institutes of pathological physiology in all 10 medical faculties in the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic where both teaching and research are conducted. However, since our summary includes the main research facilities and their professional programs, we believe that it will serve as a good orientation about activities of Czechoslovak physiologists.

European Physiologists Unite: Federation of European Physiological Societies (FEPS) Founded

S. Silbernagl

Europe comprises more than 30 countries with a wide variety of languages and life-styles. It is no surprise that more than 20 Physiological Societies exist in Europe, each with individual traditions regarding meetings, publishing, and teaching. Over the past decade, interest has been growing among the European physiologists in drawing closer together. With the aim of facilitating communication between scientists from various countries and regions of Europe and its neighbours, the idea of establishing a supranational Federation of European Physiological Societies (FEPS) was born. This would serve the purpose of not only uniting physiologists but, under the umbrella of the European Union of Societies of Experimental Biology (EUSEB), also uniting with other European federations and organizations in the biological and biomedical sciences.

After the initiative of Professor K. J. Ullrich, Director of the Max-Planck-Institut für Biophysik in Frankfurt, I had the pleasure of inviting representatives from European national and regional physiological societies to an exploratory meeting in Würzburg on April 28, 1989, to discuss these concepts in detail and to draft statutes for consideration by the individual societies. Representatives of 17 societies attended this meeting, which was sponsored by grants from the Commission of the European Community, Brussels, and the Deutsche Physiologische Gesellschaft.

The participants agreed unanimously that the following should be the aims of FEPS: *1*) to promote and foster the exchange and diffusion of concepts and information between physiologists and the societies of physiology in the European region, *2*) to facilitate the dissemination of information concerning the activities of the member societies, *3*) to encourage joint meetings of two or more member societies, *4*) to facilitate the exchange of invitations between member societies to national or regional meetings, *5*) to advance knowledge in the scientific disciplines relating to physiology by supporting and providing suitable mechanisms for training programs in physiology, *6*) to advance the exchange of graduate students and scientists within Europe and on an international scale, and *7*) to stimulate international scientific research projects in Europe.

The participants also agreed unanimously that FEPS and its member societies should adhere to the principles of the International Union of Physiological Societies (IUPS) and the International Council of Scientific Unions (ISCU).

To proceed with the foundation of FEPS, the participants appointed a Steering Committee (D. Cotterell, UK; P. Laurent, France; R. S. Reneman, The Netherlands; K. Thurau, ICSU; chairman: S. Silbernagl, FRG), which was given the task of formulating draft statutes for FEPS. The draft statutes have subsequently been sent to all physiological societies in the European region for consideration. By October 12, 1990, 15 societies had ratified these statutes, thereby becoming constituent Members of FEPS.

On the invitation of Professor Laurent, the first regular Council Meeting of FEPS was convened in Strasbourg, France, on

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October 12, 1990. It was sponsored by the Commission of the European Community and by the Association des Physiologistes. Delegates of 12 constituent members and four observers participated. Among other items, the Council *1*) approved the statutes of FEPS, as published in the *European Journal of Physiology/Pfluegers Arch.* 417: 553–557, 1991; *2*) formed a nominating committee to prepare the election of officers of FEPS. The committee members are N. Gökhan, Turkey; H. Hultborn, Denmark; J. Jack, UK; I. Leüsen, Belgium; A. Kafka-Lützow, Austria; M. Papasova, Bulgaria; R. Rahamimoff, Israel; B. Ribas-Ozonas, Spain; and K. Thurau, FRG (Chairman); *3*) decided that the steering committee should act as an executive board until the election of the first regular executive committee during the 1991 Council Meeting in Prague; *4*) decided to seek membership in EUSEB; *5*) unanimously expressed the wish to adhere to IUPS, keeping in mind that the national physiological societies are independent, direct members of IUPS; *6*) proposed to issue a list of physiological laboratories and institutes prepared to train young scientists; *7*) made plans to form a committee on animal legislation; *8*) proposed the following locations and dates for further annual Council Meetings of FEPS: 1991, Prague, CSFR, 1 July, during Regional IUPS Meeting; 1992, Düsseldorf, FRG, during the joint meeting of the Dutch and German physiological societies; and 1993, Glasgow, UK, during IUPS Congress (1–6 August).

The founders of FEPS hope that this federation will be able to promote constructive and productive interaction among investigators in the physiological sciences and to strengthen research and education both in the European region and internationally.

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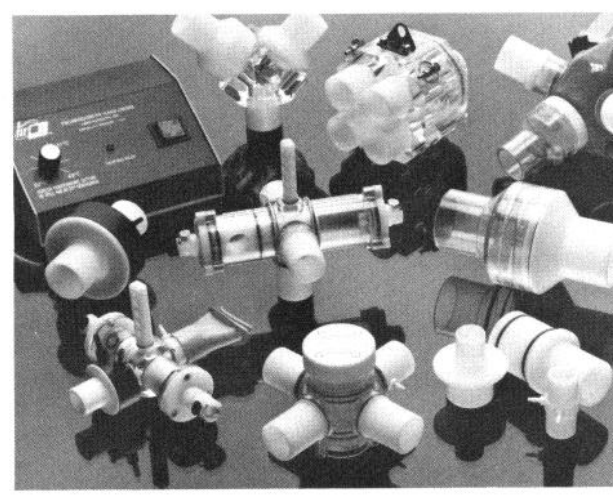

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