Circulating Regulatory Factors & Neuroendocrine Function

CIRCULATING REGULATORY FACTORS AND NEUROENDOCRINE FUNCTION

Edited by

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Preface

During the past several decades, much research effort has gone into the elucidation of the role of neuroendocrine systems as secretory and metabolic regulators of cells of a variety of organs and structures, including the testes, ovaries, adrenals, thyroid, pituitary gland, and mammary glands. However, the role of cells comprising such organs and structures in the modulation of neuroendocrine processes has received considerably less attention and is generally less well appreciated.

Nonetheless, it is important that we understand the actions on neuroendocrine systems of substances that reach the brain by way of the vasculature, including hormones, cytokines, toxins, amino acids, drugs, and similar agents. In order to analyze the present state of knowledge on this topic, experimental scientists and clinicians, whose shared interests include actions of circulating agents on the brain, met at a satellite symposium of the XXXI International Congress of Physiological Sciences. This symposium, entitled *Circulating Regulatory Factors and Neuroendocrine Function*, was held in Smolenice Castle, Czechoslovakia, June 26-July 1, 1989, and reviews delivered at this symposium as invited presentations are published in this volume. Presentations given as free communications have been published separately and are available in *Endocrinologia Experimentalis* 24: 1-273, 1990.

The success of the meeting was attributable in large part to two factors: first, the participation of scientists working in various fields in disparate countries who would not otherwise have had the opportunity to establish personal collaborations, and second, the excellent organization of every aspect of the program that took place in the charming atmosphere of the 14th century castle, Smolenice. The Castle is situated in a beautiful pastoral setting amidst the Carpathian mountains, not far from the historic cities of Bratislava and Vienna. After World War II, and after a long and colorful history, Smolenice Castle became the property of the Slovak Academy of Sciences who graciously provided the setting for this forum.

We wish to use this opportunity to thank the Slovak Academy of Sciences and the Institute of Experimental Endocrinology, especially the Institute's Director, Professor L. Macho, for providing such excellent circumstances in which to conduct the meeting and for their generous financial support. The importance of the topics discussed at the symposium was also acknowledged by the National Science Foundation, U.S.A., and by the Czechoslovak Medical Society. Their assistance helped bring together several renown scientists. We are indebted to these organizations.

The Chairmen of the symposium (Professor J.C. Porter, Dallas, and Professor M. Vigaš, Bratislava) and the Secretary General (Dr. D. Ježová, Bratislava) appreciate the collaboration of the Executive Secretaries: Professor C. Oliver, Marseille; Professor F.J.H. Tilders, Amsterdam; and Professor C. Rivier, San Diego, whose combined efforts greatly contributed to the high scientific value of the symposium. We also recognize the assistance of the members of the International Organizing Committee, particularly Drs. J.M. Saavedra and J. Farah. The successful evolution of the symposium was due to the excellent work of the Local Organizing Committee, consisting of the non-professional yet enthusiastic staff of the Institute of Experimental Endocrinology. To each contributor we extend a warm thank you.

We also wish to acknowledge the generous contributions of the following organizations: Bachem Company (U.S.A.), Boehringer Mannheim (GmbH, Austria), Duphar, B.V. (The Netherlands), Flamingo Fisch (FRG), Koospol (Czechoslovakia), Nippon Zoki (Japan), Searle (U.S.A.), and Servier (France).

The symposium was made memorable by the congeniality and camaraderie of the participants. Their enthusiasm has stimulated the organizers to consider holding a similar meeting in 1993.

In conclusion, the Editors wish to applaud the extraordinary contributions of Kay Stanley during the planning phases of the symposium and in the preparation of the manuscripts for publication. Her dedication and commitment to these tasks have not deviated. Her contributions from beginning to end were beyond value. To Kay, the Editors express sincere gratitude.

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January 31, 1990

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