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May 27, 1966

Richard L. DeSaussure, Jr., M.D.
Semmes-Murphy Clinic
20 South Dudley,
Memphis, Tennessee 38103

Dear Doctor DeSaussure:

Thank you for your letter of 20 May 1966. I can only urge you to keep pressing all of the past-presidents for the information before this slips away forever.

I am enclosing a copy of some material Gordon van den Noort sent me. You may have read this before.

Sincerely yours,



Henry R. Liss, M.D.

HRL:k

As the young neurosurgeon progresses in his residency, and in the early days of his practice, he is increasingly anxious to meet and know other men in his chosen area of work. He sincerely feels the need for exchange of ideas and sometimes just a word of encouragement or re-enforcement that he is going in the right direction from a respected senior. Often, he is in awe or ill at ease in the presence of the older and more experienced neurosurgeon and is, therefore, hesitant to ask questions. Upon completion of his training, he is usually anxious to become a member of a neurosurgical society and take an active part in its growth. Although he is always welcome as an invited guest, it is often not possible for him to become a member until society constitutional requirements have been met. There seemed to exist a void for the new neurosurgeon before he becomes Board qualified and sufficiently experienced to become a desirable candidate to more senior organizations. This void was probably most noticed by men who practiced largely outside of academic centers. They often experienced a real need for continuing education at a clinical level, a need for the opportunity to ask questions and obtain answers to many problems which they encountered, and a need for a permanent record of these clinical subjects in book form by the respected authorities of neurological surgery.

The resident, usually hard working and appreciated locally, became the forgotten man at meeting times. There were no organizations, other than at a local level, where the meeting was partially directed at him, where he was made a part of the meeting and encouraged to plan on becoming an active participating member upon completion of residency training. He needed a training ground for future organizational work. As more neurosurgeons completed training, this gulf became wider and deeper. The Congress has been an out-growth of this need to fill the gap between the resident and the respected senior neurosurgical societies.

Fortunately, the founding fathers of the Congress of Neurological Surgeons were far-sighted men who set up a structure but allowed a certain amount of flexibility so that as new needs arose and were recognized, newer areas could be developed. They established the principle of honoring a distinguished guest at each clinical meeting, making his valuable contributions of acquired knowledge and skills an important portion of the meeting. This clinical meeting was strengthened by the invitation of speakers, foreign and domestic, who were considered outstanding in their fields and areas of contribution. The clinical meeting was then carefully edited and published by the Congress of Neurological Surgeons in volume form as "Clinical Neurosurgery." The interest of the Congress in the resident has always been

great and increasing efforts have been made to encourage and make it easier for him to attend the meetings. This interest has been reflected by the ever-growing resident response with from 90 to 100 residents attending recent meetings and by their usually immediate interest in becoming working members and committee workers of the Congress upon completion of training. To further facilitate learning, the organization of Regional Meeting Clubs from within the organization has been strongly encouraged.

A directory of neurological surgeons in the United States is revised and published yearly. In order to assist practicing neurosurgeons who seek associates or younger men finishing training who desire an association, the Congress makes available this information through its Placement Committee.

The need for foreign service has been increasingly appreciated by the members of the Congress of Neurological Surgeons and increasing activity in the areas of foreign service and physician training are rapidly being entered and expanded.

From the original visions of 22 men who held a formation meeting in Saint Louis, Missouri, May 11, 1951, the Society quickly grew to a membership of 121 by November, 1951, holding its first Annual Meeting in Memphis, Tennessee, November, 1951. From this start, the Congress has grown to an organization of 775 members who are aware of their heritage and increasing responsibilities.

*Written 2-11-65
Paul Steady
in 1965*

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