

Obituary

Hans Werner Pia

Professor Hans Werner Pia, Director of the University Neurosurgery Clinic in Giessen, Chief Editor of this journal, died of cancer quite suddenly on July 9, 1986, at the age of 66 years.

Prof. Pia was born in 1921 in Bochum, Westphalia. His medical studies which he had to interrupt in order to discharge his military service, were completed in Marburg in 1945. In 1946, after working under Prof. Kretschmar at the Neurology Clinic in Marburg, he found a position in Bochum-Langendreer under Prof. Tönnis, the founder of modern German Neurosurgery who had resumed his work in the Ruhr Region of Westphalia. It was thus that Hans Werner Pia became a co-pioneer in the development of neurosurgery in Germany. After a period of study with H. Olivecrona in Stockholm, in 1952 he followed Tönnis to the University Neurosurgery Clinic in Cologne. In 1953, at the age of 32 years, he took over the organization of the Neurosurgery Clinic at the Justus-Liebig University in Giessen, where he was appointed Director in 1961.

Hans Werner Pia was untiring in his efforts to provide outstanding care for his patients. His reputation as an imaginative and stimulating teacher and col-



league was known even to those who did not have the privilege to work with him directly. His exceptionally productive scientific activity was directed, above all, to investigations into brain stem damage by spaceoccupying lesions of the brain. This work was carried out in cooperation with the Max-Planck Institute for Brain Research in Giessen under H. Spatz and A. Hallervorden and the Kerckhoff Institute and Physiology Institute of the University of Giessen under H. Thauer. It was supported by funds from the German Research Council as a "Sonderforschungsbereich".

This generous support and the provision of facilities for scientific research attracted a team of enthusiastic colleagues from home and abroad to Pia's clinic. Thus it was possible to investigate and elucidate systematically clinical, neurophysiological, biochemical, radiological and morphological aspects of the symptoms and pathogenesis of brain damage associated with raised intracranial pressure as well as the associated disturbances of autonomic, motor and psychic functions.

The skillful and imaginative use of modern diagnostic and operative methods allowed the investigations

to be extended to include the acute treatment of severe brain injuries, cervical and lumbar disk lesions, anomalies of the cauda equina, occipital lobe infarcts, hematomas in infants as well as infantile hemiplegias. For this last disease, Pia developed a new treatment using a modification of hemispherectomy. Hans Werner Pia's fruitful investigations and great experience and skill in the diagnosis and operative treatment of spinal angiomas were recognized internationally.

With this wide spectrum of neurosurgical research and clinical interests and experience, Hans Werner Pia was able to make many valuable contributions to international discussions. Together with Riechert, he arranged that the Proceedings of the German Neurosurgical Congresses be published in English and thus disseminated internationally.

In 1982 his concern for international intellectual exchange led Pia to take over the editorship of the Neurosurgical Review which had been founded by Zülch as the successor of Tönnis' famous Zentralblatt für Neurochirurgie. He has been especially responsible for its development and its international reputation. His friendship with Japanese neurosurgeons led to cooperation with Keiji Sano as an Editor-in-Chief and other significant Japanese colleagues as Editors. The efforts of this team influenced the development of the journal.

Furthermore, the introduction of Current Topics gave this periodical additional notable international

impulses and furthered one of Pia's major interests, continuing education which he demanded not only of himself, but also of his entire work group. This interest in continuing education was also reflected in his tireless activity on behalf of the Training Congresses in Nauheim and his involvement from 1971 to 1979 as President of the Training Committee of the WFNS and finally, the founding of the European-Asiatic Academy of Neurosurgery together with Sano.

Hans Werner Pia's exciting, vigorous work style, his open friendliness and his experienced judgement attracted and encouraged many young neurosurgeons. These qualities made him a much sought after and respected academic lecturer at Universities all over the world. In recognition of his work, he was awarded numerous honors and honorary memberships.

Everywhere in the world, it was expected that Hans Werner Pia's energetic, enthusiastic activities would continue for many years when the tireless work of an exemplary neurosurgeon suddenly came to an end.

The editors and publishers of the Neurosurgical Review are greatly indebted to him for his commitment and for his compelling and imaginative ideas. We will strive to realize these ideas in the future.

Reinhold A. Frowein