

## OBITUARY

### A Tribute to the Memory of Dr. Ichio Honjo



Dr. Ichio Honjo, professor emeritus of Kyoto University, and professor emeritus and chairman of the board of directors of Kansai Medical University, passed away at 9:00 p.m. on December 27, 1987. An autopsy revealed the cause of death to be unresectable lung cancer with metastasis to the lymphnodes, spine and liver. He was 74 years and three months old at the time of his death. It is lamentable indeed that he passed away at this stage of life when he could still have been so active.

Dr. Honjo was born in Tokyo, on September 20, 1913. Immediately after graduating from Kyoto Imperial University School of Medicine in March, 1939, he joined the Department of Surgery at the same university spending a total of four years in internship and residency. During the following seven years he worked as a surgeon in various affiliated hospitals and devoted himself to community medical service. Of particular importance were the two years spent from May, 1948 to June, 1950 as chief of the surgical department at Kokura Memorial Hospital. He accomplished several major surgical achievements in this time, including a right lobectomy of the liver for metastasis of carcinoma of the colon, on March 7, 1949, and a total pancreatectomy for cancer of the pancreas on December 9 of the same year. At the young age of 36, he performed difficult and, in Japan, unprecedented operations using lumbar anesthesia and local Novocain injections, thereby forging a new chapter in the history of surgery in this country. The experience derived from these operations became the central theme of his research over the following decades.

In June, 1950, his achievements resulted in an invitation back to Kyoto University and the beginning of his academic career. He immediately initiated research on the pathophysiology after total pancreatectomy and shed light on various issues directly related to clinical problems. The results of this research were presented in special lectures at several scientific meetings in Japan and abroad, and he received the Japanese Medical Association Research Promotion Award in November, 1965. He was appointed professor of the 2nd Department of Surgery at Kanazawa University in May, 1959. In addition to the pathophysiology after total pancreatectomy, his research covered a wide range of topics on the liver, biliary tract and pancreas. After returning to Kyoto University in April, 1965, as professor of the 1st Department of Surgery, he continued both clinical and basic research penetrating more extensively and educating numerous talented surgeons, nine of whom became full-time professors. In January, 1977, he was appointed president of Kansai Medical University. After serving as president for eight years, he was elected chairman of the board of directors at the same institution.

He was involved with, and contributed to numerous medical societies, both in Japan and abroad. In 1967, he received a certificate of *Membre d'Honneur Etranger* from La Société de Chirurgie de Lyon. For his long-standing contributions to the International Biliary Association, he was rewarded with the Distinguished Service Medal from the association in May, 1986. In Japan, he served as vice president of the Japan Surgical Society, chairman of the scientific meeting of the Japanese Society of Gastroenterology and Congress President of the Japanese Society of Hepatology and was therefore an honorary member of all these associations. He was also a member of numerous other medical societies, but the one in which he was most deeply involved was Japan Pancreas Society. In March, 1981, when the Society was still called the Japanese Association for Research of Pancreatic Diseases, he was asked to assume the post of the president. After he became president, the number of members increased dramatically to exceed 2000. In May, 1985, when it was decided to inaugurate the Japan Pancreas Society and dissolve the Japanese Association for Research of Pancreatic Diseases, he was asked to continue in the position of the president.

While calling to mind the tremendous achievements of Dr. Ichio Honjo, we pledge our determination to carry on his cherished endeavors, and to work together for the further development of general surgery in our country. We extend our prayers for the repose of Dr. Honjo's soul and for the health and prosperity of his bereaved family.

Ryoichi TSUCHIYA

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