

Twenty-First Congress

Buenos Aires—1959

B. A. HOUSSAY, *President*



FIG. 1. Professor B. A. Houssay, President of the Congress.

The meetings of this congress took place in the School of Medicine of the University of Buenos Aires and in the Schools of Pharmacy and Dentistry, which are located in the same building.

The congress was attended by 1270 active members, 826 adherent members, and 256 associate members. The geographical distribution of the participants was as follows: Argentina 1279; 9 other countries of Latin America 321; North America 475; United Kingdom 45; France 40; USSR 31; 18 other European countries 128; 11 other countries 33.

The registration fees for active, adherent, and associate members were, respectively, 15, 12, and 10 US dollars. Only active members were entitled to present papers and participate in the discussions, but all three groups were entitled to attend meetings, and all received the publications of the congress, except the associate members who were the guests of the active members.

Opening Meeting

The congress was formally opened August 9 at 10 AM. Addresses were delivered by the President of the Congress, Dr. B. A. Houssay, and the President of the International Union of Physiological Sciences, Professor C. Heymans.

Scientific Sessions

Free communications were delivered in 17 simultaneous sessions from 9 to 11:30 AM, and reached a total number of 711; each communication was 10 minutes long with 5 minutes for discussion. Fifteen special lectures were delivered with a duration of 30 minutes and 20 additional minutes for discussion (from 11:45 AM to 12:45 PM). Twelve symposia were held in the afternoons, of 3 reports each, with a duration of 30 minutes and 15 additional minutes for discussion. The subjects selected for these symposia were: Physiology of the gravid uterus; Mechanism of adaptation to hypoxia; Synaptic transmission; Central inhibition; Vasoactive polypeptides; Hypo-

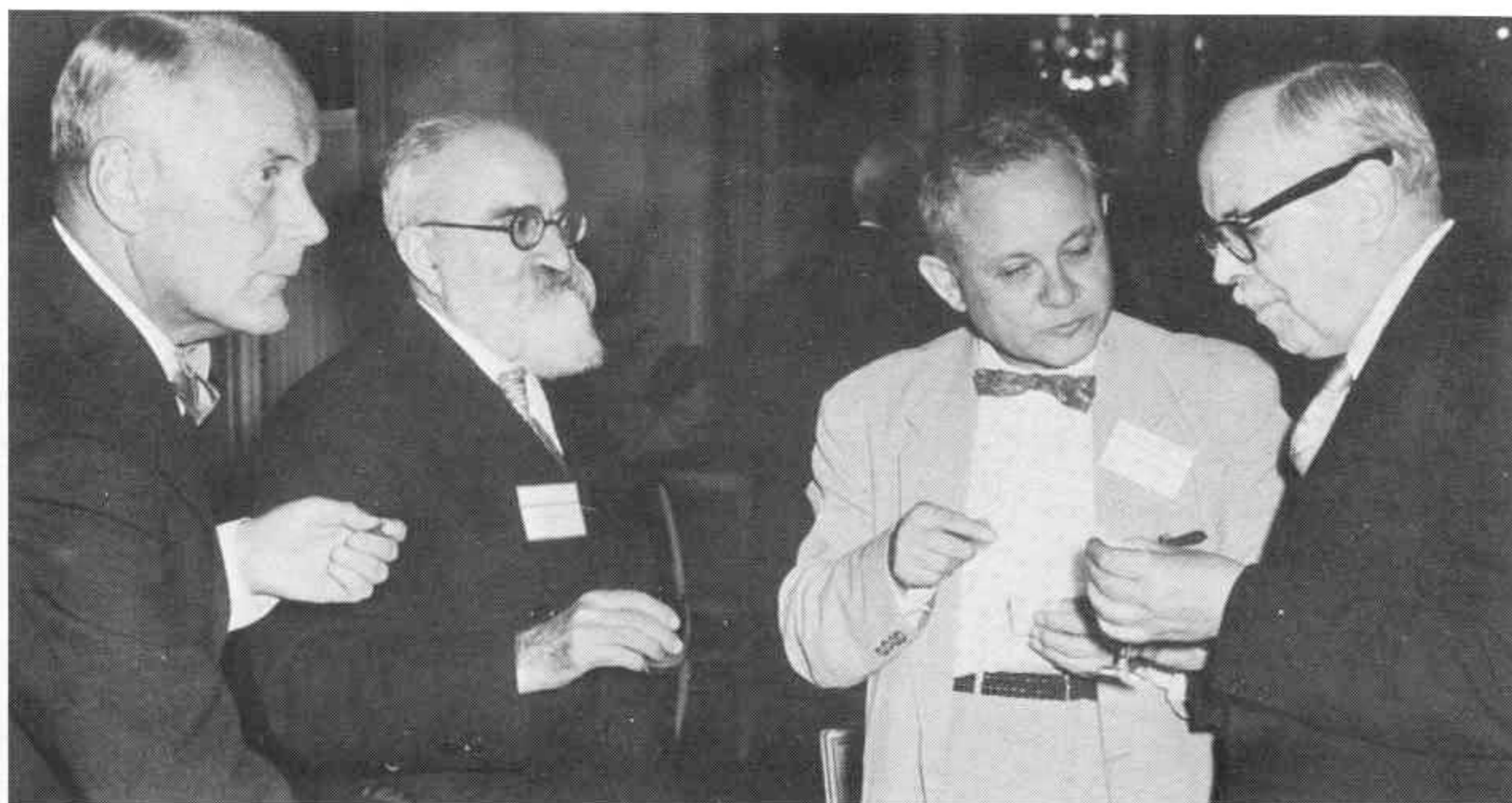


FIG. 2. President Houssay and, on his right, S. A. Corson (USA), I. G. Beritov (USSR), and R. Granit (Sweden).

thermia; Types of intraspinal connections; Radiation (protection and recuperation); Adrenaline and noradrenaline; Contribution to physiology of nervous system by study of drugs; Ionic transmission across membranes; Life in space.

Both for the special lectures and for the symposia there was simultaneous translation into English of all the reports presented in other languages in the three lecture rooms, with individual earphones.

Memorial Lecture

A memorial lecture in honor of Eduardo Braun Menendez was given on August 10th by Professor C. Heymans of Belgium. Dr. Eduardo Braun Menendez, who had been appointed President of the Organizing Committee of the Congress, died in an air crash on January 16, 1959. On this occasion a certificate of Honorary Membership in the American Physiological Society for Dr. Braun Menendez was presented to his widow by Dr. Robert F. Pitts, the President of the society at that time. He had been elected to honorary membership prior to his untimely death.

General Assembly of IUPS

Two meetings of IUPS were held: August 9th at 6 PM and August 12th.

General Assembly of ALACF

In the afternoon of August 14th, the members of the Latin American Association of Physiological Sciences celebrated their meeting.

Expenditures

Funds were received in the amount of \$92,523; from this total, \$57,372 was used for travel and transportation and \$35,151 for general expenses. Contributions were granted by IUPS, ICSU, NIH, CIOMS, the Argentine Government, the University of Buenos Aires, and the National Research Council of Argentina.

Air tickets could be ordered in Buenos Aires by Aerolíneas Argentinas at a reduced fare of 50%; the difference in the price of the tickets was covered by the congress.

Social Events

On August 9th, after the opening meeting, a lunch was offered at the Sociedad Rural Argentina, and later participants were invited to the horse races in Palermo where a special prize carried the name of the International Congress.

On August 12th participants were invited to a ballet performance at the Opera House (Colon Theater of Buenos Aires) as guests of the Mayor and City Council of Buenos Aires.

On August 14th a dinner was offered by the congress with a show of Argentine folk dances.

In addition to the official program, some diplomatic and private dinners and cocktail parties were offered to different groups of participants.

Closing Meeting

The closing session was held on the morning of August 15th; there it was announced that the next international congress would be celebrated in 1962 in Leiden, Netherlands. Short speeches were delivered by representatives of certain national groups and some newly elected officers of IUPS.

Congress Organization

The persons engaged in the organization of the congress were: President of the Congress, B. A. Houssay; President of the Organizing Committee, V. G. Foglia; Secretary, A. O. M. Stoppani; Treasurer, E. Strajman. Members of the Committee: M. H. Burgos, H. Chiodi, T. Combes, E. D. P. De Robertis, J. C. Fasciolo, E. Hug, A. Lanari, L. F. Leloir, J. T. Lewis, R. E. Mancini, E. Moisset de Espanés, S. L. Rabasa, L. M. Rinaldini, R. R. Rodríguez, J. R. Suarez, S. Taleisnik, A. C. Taquini, and M. E. Varela.



FIG. 3. Three postage stamps of Argentina in honor of the Congress and representing William Harvey, Claude Bernard and Ivan Pavlov.

Strict punctuality was observed in all the sessions. Foreign participants were received on their arrival at the airport of Buenos Aires by members of the reception committee, who gave them help and advice. Post office, money exchange, telegraph, and interpreters were at the disposal of the congress participants. Thirty buses collected them every day at their hotels and returned them at the end of the meetings.

In the cinematographic sessions, 35 films were exhibited in addition to those related to special lectures and symposia.

On the occasion of the congress, three commemorative postal stamps were issued by the Argentine Ministry of Communications, bearing the images of William Harvey, Claude Bernard, and Ivan Pavlov.

Before and after the Buenos Aires Physiological Congress different scientific meetings were organized in Buenos Aires and other cities: a symposium on "Cold Acclimatization" held in the Argentine Antarctic Institute, Buenos Aires, and published in *Federation Proceedings*; a symposium on "Hormones of Pituitary Anterior Lobe" organized and published in a volume by the Ciba Foundation, London, and held in the City Hotel, Buenos Aires; a symposium on "Ocitocin" held in Montevideo and published in book form; other meetings were organized in Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Santiago de Chile, and Caracas. In this way, many South American countries profited from the occasion by receiving the visit of a large and important group of scientists from all over the world.

EDITOR'S NOTE

This was the first meeting of the congress in the southern hemisphere and the first at a location so far removed from the homes of most physiologists. In spite of the distance, the representation from abroad was surprisingly good. For many of the participants, this was their first visit to South America, and they took full advantage of the opportunity for sight-seeing or professional visits in various countries on that continent. Indeed, it was hardly possible to take a tourist trip anywhere in South America, during the days before and after the congress, without meeting one or more physiologists.

The congress was very well organized and all the arrangements were excellent. The program of symposia and invited lectures was well chosen. The schedules were full, but not too crowded, and the entertainment features were pleasantly arranged, informative, and relaxing. The meeting was dominated throughout by the pervading and pleasant personality of its distinguished President, Professor Houssay, who seemed to have all details under suitable control. After the congress, he was elected President of the International Union of Physiological Sciences, by the General Assembly of that Union, in recognition of his important contributions to physiology and his success in organizing the congress.