

## PRESENTATION

During the VII Annual Symposium of The Academia de Ciências do Estado de São Paulo (ACIESP) on Proteinous Toxins, which was held in April of 1988 at the Universidade de Campinas (UNICAMP), a group of scientists decided to found a society that would bring together biochemists, pharmacologists, immunologists and pathologists interested in investigations concerning toxins of animal, plant or microbial origin, as well as clinicians engaged in studies of accidents caused by venomous animals. The Brazilian Toxinology Society was inaugurated in November of that year, and now held its first Symposium. The aim of the Organizing Committee was to allow the integration at this meeting of the advances made in the past few years in the knowledge of basic aspects of venom and their toxins, especially of Brazilian species, and those acquired in the clinical area of accidents caused by venomous snakes, scorpions and spiders. Scientists and clinicians participating in the Symposium have much gained, I believe, from this association of presentation of knowledge in basic and clinical areas. The committee decided to reserve a time for the discussion of the themes at the end of each group of presentations, making it possible for any member of the Symposium to comment the lectures, to request clarifications, and eventually to present his or her experimental or clinical contributions to the theme being discussed. At the suggestion of some members, a session for the presentation of posters was created. We note with satisfaction, the presentation of more than forty communications in the form of posters demonstrating the considerable activity of various research groups in our country in the field of toxinology.

In July of the current year, everyone who knew him personally, or through his publications, received the distressing news of the death of Gastão Rosenfeld. In view of his important experimental and clinical contributions to Brazilian toxinology, the Organizing Committee decided to honor him posthumously by dedicating the First Symposium of the Brazilian Toxinology Society to his memory.

In this issue of the Memórias do Instituto Butantan, two full-length papers and twenty abstracts of invited presentations are published as well as forty nine abstracts of poster communications. I hope the reader will appreciate this volume which is being published thanks to the cooperation of the authors, the agreement of Professor Willy Beçak, Director of Instituto Butantan and Dr. Henrique Moisés Canter, Chief Editor of the Mem. Inst. Butantan, as well as the financial support of the Fundação de Amparo à Pesquisa do Estado de São Paulo (FAPESP). I am deeply grateful to all of them.

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