

# INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY OF LEGAL MEDICINE AND SOCIAL MEDICINE

## Plenary Assembly of the Academy

The following resolutions were unanimously approved at the second Plenary Assembly held on the 28th September 1973, during the IX Congress held in Rome.

“The International Academy of Legal Medicine and Social Medicine recommends to the Governments of all countries to include the teaching of social medicine in the Medical Schools with courses organised both for undergraduates and for post graduates in order to establish the basis for safeguarding the public health according to the prevailing needs of the communities.”

“The International Academy of Legal Medicine and Social Medicine requests all Governments to inform their Ministries of Justice and Education of the following resolution:

1. The teaching of legal medicine cannot be eliminated from the course of studies of the Medical Schools, but on the contrary an examination in the subject must be compulsory; such an examination should equally be held in the Faculties of Law.

2. The teaching of legal medicine has among its other purposes, the scope of providing future physicians with the fundamentals of deontology, which also include the problems arising from professional responsibility, and with training them for those tasks which society expects of them.

3. The International Academy of Legal Medicine and Social Medicine will oppose any plan aimed at the abolition of the teaching of legal medicine from the medical and the law curricula, and will make known to the proposers of such a plan the resolutions taken during its 9th Congress.”

The participants at the Round Table on the “Medico-Legal methodology for the evaluation of damage to persons” affirm the following:

1. The evaluation of the damage must be made according to the medico-legal method in order to express a correct judgement on the functional damage resulting from accidents.

2. The first parameter of evaluation is validity, which should take into account the psycho-physical efficiency both occupational and extra-occupational.

3. The second parameter is based on the effects on the occupational activities of the subject.

4. The economic value of the person is not solely related to his capability of carrying out his normal professional activity, but it depends also on his upbringing, and on his instruction and training, since he is the depository of patrimonial values which the community has invested in him.

5. The two indices which determine

the financial award for damage are the degree of invalidity itself and the effects of this invalidity on his professional activities, both being elements of definite medico-legal evaluation."

"The participants at the 9th Congress of the International Academy of Legal Medicine and Social Medicine have pointed out that the ever more advanced exigencies of contemporary society are necessarily reflected also in the organisation of the hospitals.

The presence of legal medicine at this level is particularly felt and requested; therefore it is necessary that legal medicine itself should be able to conform immediately to meet these new demands.

In fact, it should be realized that the functions of a modern hospital are more complex than in the past, amongst other reasons because there is now a clear tendency to refer to hospital not only strictly clinical cases, but also medico-legal ones like cases of intoxication which have made it necessary to establish toxicological centres and the provision of a medico-legal service.

The principle that the laboratory for chemical and toxicological analysis for medico-legal purposes should be under the direction of the Director of the Institute of legal medicine is confirmed, but it should be clearly understood that the medicologist is not to assume any clinical or therapeutic responsibility.

"The International Academy of Legal and Social Medicine after having noted the contributions on the subject "Outlines of a maritime legal medicine"

solicits an active collaboration between countries in order to study better standards of prevention, both technical and individual;

hopes that such co-operation will lead to better mutual assistance;

believes that it is necessary to unify international legislation on standards and criteria of suitability of seamen, so that such measures would safeguard the health of these workers."

"The participants at the Round Table on "The Medico-legal and medico-social

problems of abortion and birth control", pointed out that the increase in population with its economic, social and public health consequences, must be taken into serious consideration, and acknowledge the necessity of limiting births according to a well-balanced demographic policy.

Under the circumstances since the use of contraceptives raises only problems of education and of organisation, the extreme measure of abortion should only be accepted by the doctor in exceptional and well specified cases; in fact, the aim of medicine is to protect life from the moment of conception to the time of death.

Women should have the right to choose between procreating or not, but such a right must be exercised before conception by the use of contraceptives and not later by resorting to abortion."

The participants to the Round Table on "The ascertainment of paternity" affirm:

1. In the investigation of cases of disputed paternity, characters with dominant heredity such as the blood groups and the serum and enzyme types, are of primary importance.

2. Pathological characteristics, with or without a disease state, may be used when it can be shown that they are dominant; nevertheless characters associated with the X chromosome and recessive traits may also assume considerable importance.

3. When the child is very similar to the mother, the normal characteristics must be used statistically with caution.

4. In doubtful cases, the evidence of witnesses and the duration of pregnancy must be taken into account.

5. The systems that are yet not well tried, such as the C3 and the HL-A, must be applied with great caution.

The participants at the Round Table on "The ascertainment of the moment of death" after a long discussion on the clinical signs on which a certain diagnosis of death can be based, and which is valid for all purposes,

unanimously believe that in the present stage of medical knowledge, in patients under re-animation, irreversible

brain damage should be considered to have occurred when the clinical and electro encephalographic pattern remains unchanged for 12 hours in cases where the cerebral damage is primary, and when it remains unchanged for 48 hours when the damage to the brain is secondary.

The participants indicated the necessity for the Academy to follow closely progress in this field, and suggested that the Academy should set up a permanent commission to study the ascertainment of the moment of death."

The participants at the Round Table on "The technical organization for the identification of victims of catastrophes", after having reconfirmed that among the techniques for identification a prominent place should be given to the radiological and stomatological investigation with the help of all modern methods offered by clinical medicine and technical progress,

believe it is indispensable that such investigations be performed by groups of specialists in co-operation so that such investigations be concluded in the best and most complete way, and in the shortest time possible.

Furthermore, the participants consider

the work of identification as usually extremely complex due to the various problems that have to be faced and to the intrinsic difficulties due to the variety of disasters and the number of related victims, the environmental conditions, and those due to the social and technological developments. They expressed the wish that all researchers in this field, each in his own special field, persevere with their investigations and research in a spirit of collaboration, with the view of establishing an international committee of experts.

They consider that at present there is no international organisation capable of fulfilling such multifarious duties, and they believe that the International Academy of Legal Medicine and Social Medicine may represent the ideal centre of such a group of experts chosen from among specialists in medical, legal and social sciences which have an eminently scientific function; it would then be possible that operational activities would have their natural centre within an already existing international organisation, such as the International Red Cross, or within another one yet to be formed as, for example, within the U.N.O.

## INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY OF LEGAL MEDICINE AND SOCIAL MEDICINE 1974 International Meeting

The 1974 Meeting of the Academy will be held at the Grand Hotel Verdala, Malta between the 5th and 7th December 1974. The Meeting will be presided by the President of the Academy, Professor Cesare Gerin, Director of the Medico Legal Institute of the University of Rome.

The principal themes for discussion will be:

1. The importance of the teaching of forensic medicine in medical education.
2. Recent advances relating to wounds produced by fire-arms.

It is proposed to devote a session to free contributions.

The Collegium Europeum for the Study of the Evaluation of Physical Injury will also meet in Malta at the same time.

It is proposed to offer favourable arrangements for travel by air and for hotel accomodation.

All correspondence is to be addressed to the President of the Organising Committee, Dr. Joseph L. Grech, Malta Federation of Professional Bodies, Paceville, Malta. Telephone 38851.