This issue of the Cleft Palate Journal is dedicated entirely to research either taking place in or related to countries outside the United States. This is, I think, an active demonstration of the American Cleft Palate Association’s interest in encouraging a closer liaison with professional persons concerned with craniofacial anomalies throughout the world. It represents also an excellent opportunity for us here in the United States to gain a greater insight into and appreciation of work taking place in other countries.

In 1973 the American Cleft Palate Association established the International Members Forum, a group of international members of the Association. At present, the Forum is composed of 26 members representing 24 countries. The Forum was created out of the Association’s desire to sample the opinions of some of its international members on at least three points: 1. What can the Association do to serve its international members more effectively? 2. What can the Association do to attract more international members? 3. What can the Association do to facilitate international goodwill and cooperation among professional persons working in the area of craniofacial anomalies?

The degree of interest and enthusiasm displayed by Forum members was gratifying. However, it soon became obvious that many of our international members were experiencing a feeling of remoteness from the Association even greater than the physical distance which separated our countries. They spoke of a felt need to improve and increase the dissemination of information concerned with craniofacial anomalies. They felt that such efforts would be more toward facilitating the development of an “international community” than any other single mechanism. It became obvious also that the Cleft Palate Journal could serve very well as one means to this end.

This “International Issue” of the Journal serves as a special invitation from the editor, the editorial staff, and the Association to our international colleagues to play an active role in the growth and development of the Cleft Palate Journal. We urge you to submit your manuscripts to the Editor for consideration for publication. Also, the “Announcements” section of the Journal has now become “News and Announcements.” This change reflects the Editor’s desire to include a broader range of items of professional interest. You are encouraged to forward to the Journal notices of your national and regional meetings, the formation of new societies or groups, and other news of professional interest. In addition, the Editor joins me in stressing the exciting potential for international communication through “Letters to the Editor.”

The Cleft Palate Journal has taken a significant step, I feel, toward bringing all of us closer together—toward creating an international community of professional persons working in the area of craniofacial anomalies. We invite our overseas friends, both members and non-members of the American Cleft Palate Association, to participate more fully in the development of the Journal, thus helping to make it truly “An International Journal of Craniofacial Anomalies.”

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Chairman
International Members Forum