

**ADDRESS FOR AUA
BALTIMORE, MD
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AS SOME OF YOU MAY ALREADY KNOW, I HAVE, IN WHAT IS EUPHEMISTICALLY KNOWN AS MY "**SPARE TIME**", ATTEMPTED TO DELVE INTO A STUDY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE. A GOOD PART OF MY MOTIVATION FOR THIS WORK WAS STIMULATED, IF NOT PROVOKED, BY DICK KITZ, MY WARM AND LASTING FRIEND AND BY ERIK NIELSEN OF SWEDEN, WHOM I GREATLY RESPECT AND ADMIRE. ONE OF THE ASSOCIATED BY PRODUCTS OF THIS ENDEAVOR IS AN ATTEMPT, SOMETIMES QUITE FRUSTRATING, TO UNDERSTAND MODERN LITERARY CRITICISM.

A WELL KNOWN AND REVERED THINKER IN THIS FIELD IS THE FRENCH ANALYST JACQUES LACAN WHO HAS MADE A DEEP IMPRINT ON THE PSYCHOANALYTIC INTERPRETATION OF LITERATURE AND THE ARTS. SOME YEARS AGO (1966), HE WAS INVITED TO ADDRESS A MEETING OF LITERATEURS IN BALTIMORE. HE LOOKED THROUGH HIS HOTEL WINDOW EARLY IN THE MORNING AND WAS DEEPLY IMPRESSED BY WHAT HE SAW. HE SAID: "**THE BEST IMAGE TO SUM UP THE UNCONSCIOUS IS EXACTLY BALTIMORE IN THE EARLY MORNING.**" I HAVE USED HIS DELIGHTFUL IMAGE OF BOTH BALTIMORE AND THE UNCONSCIOUS TO REVISE MY TALK TO YOU TONIGHT — TO DREDGE IMAGES FROM MY UNCONSCIOUS — AND TO DO IT IN BALTIMORE — ABOUT THE EARLIEST, NON-RECORDED DAYS OF AUA.

THE GREAT ENGLISH POET JOHN MILTON WROTE, "WHERE THERE IS MUCH DESIRE TO LEARN, THERE OF NECESSITY WILL BE MUCH ARGUING, MUCH WRITING, MANY OPINIONS - FOR OPINION IN GOOD MEN IS BUT KNOWLEDGE IN THE MAKING."

A SMALL GROUP OF DIVERSE, ACADEMIC ANESTHESIOLOGISTS GATHERED TOGETHER TO DISCUSS AND TO PLAN FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A FUNCTIONAL STRUCTURE TO AID THE CREATION AND DISSEMINATION OF NEW KNOWLEDGE IN THE INTELLECTUALLY DRIVEN ASPECTS OF ANAESTHESIA. THEY MET OFTEN IN 1950 AND 1951, USUALLY IN PHILADELPHIA; CORRESPONDED REGULARLY AND THEY ARGUED VIGOROUSLY, AGREED OFTEN BUT FAR FROM ALWAYS, AND WERE POWERED BY FORCES WHICH RANGED FROM HEADY OPTIMISM TO ZENOPHOBIC SELF PROTECTION AGAINST PUTATIVE AND PERHAPS ACTUAL ENEMIES. THEY ALL WANTED TO "DO SOMETHING" IMPORTANT, BUT DIFFERED ON WHAT WAS IMPORTANT. THEY WERE BEECHER, DRIPPS, ETSTEN, FAULCONER, LAMONT, ORTH, PAPPER AND ROBBINS. THEIR OFFICIAL SCRIBE WAS LAMONT, WHOSE COMPLETE AND BEAUTIFUL PROSE RECORDING OF MOST OF THOSE EVENTS IS IN PERPETUAL KEEPING OF THE SECRETARY OF WHAT HAS SINCE BECOME THE **ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY ANESTHETISTS**. A COPY SHOULD EXIST IN THE WOOD-LIBRARY AND MUSEUM. I AM THE SOLE SURVIVOR OF THIS GROUP AND WAS YOUR FIRST PRESIDENT. I HAVE THE GREAT PRIVILEGE OF HELPING YOU NOTE AND CELEBRATE OUR 35th ANNIVERSARY TONIGHT.

IT WILL BE MY PURPOSE TO TRY TO CONVEY SOME OF THE FLAVOR OF AUA'S BEGINNINGS THAT ARE NOT PART OF LAMONT'S RECORDS AND MINUTES. THE FACT THAT I ADDRESS YOU AT ALL OUTSIDE OF THE PROGRAM IS PART OF THE EARLY LEGEND. AMERICANS SEEM TO THRIVE ON WRITTEN CONSTITUTIONS AND BY-LAWS SINCE THE AUGUSTAN AGE OF ENLIGHTENMENT WHEN OUR COUNTRY WAS FOUNDED. THOSE FOUNDERS IGNORED OUR ANCESTRAL BRITISH ORAL TRADITIONS TO ADOPT A WRITTEN, ESSENTIALLY CONTINENTAL EUROPEAN CONSTITUTION, BUT THEY DID INCORPORATE THE IDEALS OF THE ENGLISH PHILOSOPHERS AND THE TRADITION OF THE RIGHTS OF FREE ENGLISHMEN IN THEIR WRITEN DOCUMENT. SIMILARLY, WE USED AS A MODEL, THE

DOCUMENT OF THE **SOCIETY OF UNIVERSITY SURGEONS**. LIKE OUR ANCESTORS, WE HAD HEADY NOTIONS OF OUR OWN IMPORTANCE. WE CHANGED **SOCIETY TO ASSOCIATION** (IMPLYING FREEDOM) AND WE SPECIFICALLY ALTERED, AMONG OTHER MATTERS THE PROVISION ABOUT A PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS AT THE ANNUAL MEETING. THE **SOCIETY OF UNIVERSITY SURGEONS** PROVIDED IN ARTICLE VI OF THEIR BY-LAWS THAT THE PRESIDENT SHALL DELIVER AN ADDRESS AT THE ANNUAL MEETING. THAT PROVISION WAS SPECIFICALLY AND KNOWINGLY REVERSED. IF THE ACADEMIC SURGEONS HAD A PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS, WE WOULD NOT! WE SPECIFICALLY PROHIBITED AN ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OR ANY OF HIS FRIENDS. IN A SENSE, I WAS INVITED TO TALK TO YOU IN VIOLATION OF THAT PROVISION! OUR PRESIDENT SUGGESTED THAT I MIGHT, IF I WISH, VIEW MYSELF AS A TEMPORARY ENEMY OF HIS, BECAUSE ONLY HE AND HIS FRIENDS MAY NOT SPEAK! I INTEND, INSTEAD, TO PLEAD GUILTY TO A MISDEMEANOR RATHER THAN ENMITY TO THE PRESIDENT WHICH IS NOT PRECEDENT SETTING FOR FUTURE MEETINGS!

I WANT TO TELL YOU SOMETHING OF OUR EARLY STRUGGLES FOR IDENTITY AND THEN TO CONCLUDE THIS BRIEF TALK WITH A VIGNETTE DESCRIBING A CRUCIAL BUT AMUSING EVENT THAT MADE POSSIBLE OUR FORMATION AS AN ORGANIZATION.

ONE OF THE POSSIBLE EXPRESSIONS OF OUR PURPOSES WAS THE ESTABLISHMENT OF RESEARCH ORIENTED MEETINGS TO TAKE PLACE ANNUALLY AT THE MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL HOSPITAL, THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA, AND AT THE COLUMBIA-PRESBYTERIAN MEDICAL CENTER. THIS IDEA OCCURRED ONLY WHEN BEECHER, DRIPPS, LAMONT AND PAPPER WERE "**MEMBERS**". IN THOSE DAYS, CORRECTLY OR NOT, SOME OF US VIEWED THESE INSTITUTIONS AS THE LOCI OF MUCH OF THE IMPORTANT ORIGINAL RESEARCH OF THE TIMES. TENTATIVELY, BUT NOT OVERPOWERINGLY, DRIPPS, LAMONT AND, TO A LESSER EXTENT, BEECHER SUPPORTED THIS VIEW. IT IS OBVIOUS THAT SUCH A DECISION

AFTER FAULCONER, ETSTEN, ORTH AND ROBBINS WERE ADDED TO THE GROUP LEFT THEM UNENTHUSIASTIC EVEN THOUGH THEY WERE ASKED TO ATTEND AS "**ASSOCIATES.**"

ANOTHER THOUGHT, PROPOSED BY BEECHER, WAS TO ACCEPT THE INVITATION OF THE AMERICAN COLLEGE OF SURGEONS TO JOIN THEM FOR OUR ACADEMIC PURPOSES AS A SEPARATE SECTION. THE MOTIVATION FOR THIS VIEW WAS THE EXTRAORDINARY BUT REAL SPLIT BETWEEN PRACTITIONERS AND ACADEMIC PEOPLE IN ANESTHESIOLOGY AT THE TIME. THE ASA, WITH STRONG SUPPORT OF THE ABA, WAS STRUGGLING FOR RECOGNITION OF OUR SPECIALTY IN ORGANIZED MEDICINE AND WITH HOSPITAL MANAGERMENTS. ONE OF THEIR CONVICTIONS, ABOUT 1950, WAS THE BELIEF THAT ONLY FEE FOR SERVICE PRACTICE WAS ACCEPTABLE. SO STRONG WAS THIS FACTOR, THAT UNIVERSITY PEOPLE WERE THREATENED WITH A LOSS OF THEIR **BOARD** CERTIFICATES IF THEY WERE PAID A SALARY. SIMULTANEOUSLY, TEMPER SANK SO HIGH THAT SOME UNIVERSITY ANESTHESIOLOGISTS THREATENED TO RENOUNCE THEIR BOARD CERTIFICATION AND BOYCOTT ITS ACTIVITIES. EVENTUALLY, COMPROMISE AND COMMON SENSE PREVAILED AFTER MUCH TRAVAIL, AND BOTH EXTREME POSITIONS WERE GIVEN UP AND EVENTUALLY THE PRESENT CORDIAL RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN ACADEMICIANS AND PRACTITIONERS WERE FORGED AND OUR "FLIGHT" TO THE SURGICAL GROUPS WAS ABANDONED. THE WHOLE STICKY MESS TAUGHT MANY LESSONS, A FEW OF WHICH, HAPPILY, HAVE BEEN REMEMBERED. WE WERE ALSO INVITED TO BECOME A SECTION IN THE **AMERICAN COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS.** WE ACCEPTED THIS INVITATION BUT NEVER BECAME INTERNISTS.

SINCE THESE TWO RATHER EXTREME POSTURES OF PURPOSE WERE NO LONGER ENTERTAINED, THE ESTABLISHMENT OF IDENTITY ASSUMED MORE LOGICAL AND MORE REASONABLE DIRECTIONS. AFTER ABOUT A YEAR OF ARGUMENT AND THINKING, WE

DECIDED TO "GO NATIONAL" — AND THEN THE REAL PROBLEMS HAD TO BE FACED AND SOLVED. FAULCONER, ORTH, ROBBINS, ETSTEN AND I FELT THAT WE NEEDED TO SECURE THE ENTRY AND THE COMMITMENT TO OUR ORIGINAL PURPOSES OF RESEARCH AND EDUCATION INFORMATION EXCHANGE BY THE RECOGNIZED LEADERS AND ANESTHESIOLOGY SCIENTISTS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY. WE DEBATED AND COULD NOT AGREE UPON CRITERIA FOR FUTURE MEMBERSHIP — AND FINALLY DEVELOPED THE COMPROMISE THAT WE WOULD INVITE SOME 29 ACADEMIC ANESTHESIOLOGISTS TO A PROPOSED FOUNDING MEETING PROVIDED AT LEAST 6 OF OUR 8 AGREED UPON EACH PERSON TO BE INVITED. WE FACED THE FAIRLY OBVIOUS DIFFICULTIES THAT MANY WOULD BE SUSPICIOUS OF THE EASTERN ESTABLISHMENT, OF ELITISM (WHICH THE EASTENERS PROBABLY WANTED), AND OF CONCERNS PROPAGATED BY THE TURBULENCE OF THE TIMES TO WHICH I ALLUDED EARLIER.

FINALLY, A MEETING OF THE 8 PLUS THE 29 INVITEES WAS DECIDED UPON TO BE HELD AT THE ETHER DOME OF THE MGH, HOPING, I SUPPOSE, TO HAVE THAT INTELLECTUAL AND SENTIMENTAL ENVIRONMENT FOR ANESTHETISTS TO SUPPORT THE SUCCESSFUL ESTABLISHMENT OF A NATIONAL ASSOCIATION. MUCH TO OUR DELIGHT, EVERYONE INVITED CAME ONE BLISTERY JANUARY WEEKEND TO THE MEETING IN BOSTON. I IMAGINE THERE WAS CURIOSITY ABOUT THE NEW ORGANIZATION PLUS CONCERN ABOUT BEING LEFT OUT! THE SUCCESSFUL FOUNDING WAS HIGHLY PRECARIOUS — AND THE IMPORTANT EVENTS LEADING TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AUA OCCURRED IN HOTEL ROOMS, BEHIND THE SCENES, WITH A LARGE AMOUNT OF ELBOW AND ARM TWISTING.

AT THE NIGHT AFTER THE FIRST MEETING FOR DRINKS BEFORE DINNER IN A LARGE PRIVATE HOTEL ROOM, THINGS WERE NOT GOING WELL. THE INVITEES WERE DUBIOUS, THE ATMOSPHERE WAS CHARGED WITH SUSPICION AND THE BEST AND THE WORST ASPECTS OF

HUMAN NATURE WERE EXHIBITED. FOR AWHILE, ALL SEEMED LOST, AT LEAST TO ME. THEN CAME A SCENE I SHALL NEVER FORGET —AND IT PROBABLY HAD MUCH TO DO WITH THE FACT THAT WE GOT OFF THE GROUND AND THAT YOU ARE HERE TO CELEBRATE OUR **35th ANNIVERSARY** TODAY. THE PEOPLE FROM THE MIDWEST, WEST, AND SOUTH SEEMED DISSATISFIED AND THEY BELIEVED **AUA** WOULD REALLY BE AN EASTERN ESTABLISHMENT SHOW. BOB DRIPPS WAS DEEPLY DISCOURAGED AND WAS ON THE VERGE OF LEAVING THE RECEPTION, DRESSED IN HAT AND COAT. FAULCONER AND I URGED HIM, AS OUR BEST SPOKEN AND PROBABLY OUR MOST CHARISMATIC PERSON TO TRY AGAIN. AND HE DID. AS HE TALKED, HE SAT DOWN ON A CHAIR, FULLY CLOTHED, THEN ON THE FLOOR, AIDED NO DOUBT BY HIS LAST DRINK, HE TOOK HIS SHOES OFF — BUT NOT HIS HAT NOR COAT. HE GOT EVERYBODY'S ATTENTION — AND HE WON ALL OF THE INVITEES OVER. WE DECIDED, THEN AND THERE TO HAVE A NATIONAL ASSOCIATION. NOBODY DEFECTED. THE NEXT DAY RON STEPHEN INVITED US TO DUKE FOR THE NEXT AND FIRST OFFICIAL MEETING — AND THE MEETINGS HAVE GONE ON WITHOUT INTERRUPTION EVER SINCE. I HAD THE PRIVILEGE OF PRESIDING OVER THE FIRST MEETING AT DUKE — A FACT OF ENORMOUS PRIDE TO ME, ALTHOUGH PROBABLY POWERED BY THE IDEA THAT I WAS THE YOUNGEST AND PERHAPS LEAST CONTROVERSIAL OF THE EASTENERS WHO GOT THINGS STARTED!

W. R. JOHNSON, THE NOTED LITERARY CRITIC WROTE IN ANOTHER CONNECTION: "THE ONLY WAY TO PRESERVE TRADITION IS TO CHANGE IT EXCEPT IN THE PLEASANT FORMALITIES."

I HOPE YOU WILL TAKE **AUA** INTO THE FUTURE, HEEDING HIS ADVICE.