

F. Secler

December 29, 1976

Ing. M. Matejcek
Sandoz Ltd.
4002 Basel, Switzerland

Dear Matejcek,

I was pleased to receive the enclosed inquiry and as I answered the many questions, I became more enthusiastic; hence this letter. Many years ago, in 1968 and again in 1969, I organized meetings in my laboratory in New York. I remember a session at which Creuzfeldt came and argued very logically for more basic studies. At the time, I ignored his comments, but lately that need had become all the more apparent.

I know that some workers are occupied with the technical issues of electrodes, EEG reduction methods, etc. But these issues have been solved, to some extent, and what seems to be needed, are studies relating the EEG changes to behavior. The diagnostic use of EEG profiles to define new drugs has been successful; some applications to pharmacodynamics have been interesting; but we lack the understanding of the significance of fast waves for behavior for example. Fast waves increase after barbiturates (sedatives) and thymoleptics. Are the chemical changes in the brain the same or do these same rhythms reflect different chemistries? Or, as is also likely, we have not yet resolved the differences in the fast waves after barbiturates and thymoleptics? Further, of what predictive value for neurohumors are the EEG changes. We know that anticholinergic drugs elicit the same EEG effects as the thymoleptics. Does that mean that thymoleptics act via a reduction of acetylcholine in the brain? And so on.

We have struggled for years to have pharmaco-EEG recognized at major meetings. At the ACNP, for example, each of the early years was marked by an EEG symposium, but these became redundant and the members disinterested when we failed to show the scientific merit of the work. At times, the data has been presented at psychiatric and at EEG meetings, but these disciplines are interested mainly in the practical uses, and ever since psychiatrists decided to ignore the sedation threshold work of Shagass, Goldman and Itil, they have

ignored the new developments in EEG and drugs. I think that meetings should be held independent of the main societies, and related to them mainly for the convenience of timing and the reduction in expense. Surely, meetings should be organized alternately in the U.S. and Europe, perhaps in Asia when the opportunity presents. If a meeting can be held in a working laboratory, then it should be held there-- giving the participants a chance to see the facilities and ask questions regarding technical issues.

The Society should be organized formally, with rules and by-laws to provide some continuity and some dues which could be graduated.

The rest of the answers are on the form. Perhaps the first meeting could be held in Amsterdam at the International EEG in September 1977 ? With a visit to Paris at the time of the course in EEG to Evieyon, or to Basle ? ? ?

My best wishes for a healthy and a successful 1977 !

Sincerely yours,

Max Fink, M.D.
Professor of Psychiatry