

Editorial

The picturesque, cosmopolitan city of Basel was once again the setting for a European Workshop on Inflammation, representing a return to the site of the first EWI which took place in 1979. This time, for the 8th EWI, our hosts were Dr. Mike Bray and Dr. Ulrich Feige who succeeded in organising a close, informal workshop in a good environment for discussion and communication. Even the thunderstorms held off briefly so that we were able to enjoy a Swiss evening in the shelter of a traditional restaurant.

After the stress of a number of huge international congresses, it was refreshing to enjoy the cosier, more personal atmosphere of the EWI. Thanks to the organisers, an excellent interdisciplinary programme resulted in an all-too-rare exchange of information between pharmacologists, immunologists and molecular biologists on the twin themes of T cells in chronic inflammation and immune and tissue destructive mechanisms in experimental models of autoimmunity.

The rapid advances in our understanding of the genetic and immunochemical background to autoimmune processes are continually opening new doors to the diagnosis and therapy of chronic

inflammation. One of the most important prospects for the near future is that of being able to define the immune parameters (cellular and humoral) likely to be the most amenable to therapy and/or to disease diagnosis. In parallel to this research, the definition of the immunogenetic background to experimental models of immunity will offer the possibility of developing more specific models for drug testing. In this respect, immunopharmacologists will probably need help from molecular biologists in translating information from the molecular level to that of the whole animal.

The exchange of information on all levels, molecular, cellular, experimental and clinical, at this workshop succeeded well, offering new ideas to specialists in each area. One can only hope that this strong interdisciplinary participation, particularly with regard to contacts between immunologists and pharmacologists, will be encouraged and extended by future EWIs. Our thanks go to Dr. Bray and Dr. Feige for showing us the way.

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