Today we honour a man who, more than anybody else, has advanced logopedics and phoniatrics as a medical speech and voice pathologist. As early as 1932 in Vienna, as pupil of Froeschels, the old master of speech and voice science, Weiss, due to his significant critical report on laryngo-stroboscopy, stood out. Already at that time, he recognized that immobility of a vocal cord constitutes an optical illusion, because of the fact that this vocal cord swings only in a different frequency. Weiss defended his findings in many discussions and writings. With regard to the unreliability of mechanical stroboscopes, he pointed out early the significant development of the first electro-stroboscopes (Polak-Rudin, 1932 and Kallen, 1936). The same year he added his ingenious experiment which produced a certain acoustical phenomenon: If, during singing, a rigid resonating cavity is held before the mouth, this will produce – in the ascending chromatic scale – certain phenomena of coupling which Weiss related to the breaking points in the register of the human voice.

In the next years, a second important direction in research became apparent. At the same time as Freund, yet independent from the latter researcher, the jubilee began to occupy himself...
intensively with cluttering and the pertinent question as to whether and to what extent cluttering could be considered to be the root of stuttering (1937).

The great crisis of the Hitler era caused a heavy interruption in the creative productivity of the large Vienna centre. Weiss’ next refuge was Cuba, where he became chief of the speech- and voice clinic of the Mazorra Hospital, and lectured at the University of Havana. Later he succeeded in establishing himself, in New York, as a speech and voice doctor and successful practitioner.

Anyone who is aware of the difficulties of adaptation to American circumstances, will be able to appreciate the problems of a European. For 4 years, Weiss worked as Assistant of Neurology at the Columbia Presbyterian Medical Centre.

I visited the US., e.g. New York and Chicago, right after the second World War, in 1948. Of course, I did not fail to look up – besides other friends – the jubilee whom I value so highly. My first encounter with him in a New York coffee shop has remained a fond memory. After some short discussion about stuttering and cluttering, he and I each for himself drew a «speech scheme» which then appeared to be surprisingly similar. Since that time the relation with my friend, Deso Weiss, has never been interrupted. From that period also dates his active cooperation in the editorial board of the «Folia Phoniatrica» which has resulted in a productive collaboration between the New and the Old World and a fruitful development of the science and practice in the field of speech and voice.

In subsequent writings, this indefatiguable worker clarified cluttering as a hereditary disturbance, with a certain organic component, which can affect all channels of communication. As is well known, he has called this general disturbance «Central Language Imbalance». The extensive results of numerous later writings as well as of his own, he described in a constructive book, called Cluttering (1964). Together with //. Beebe, he also published a thorough presen-

Deso A. Weiss, 70 years
of his seventieth birth day, and at the same time extend our wishes
to him for a happy «ad multos annos». R. Luchsinger (Zurich).
Although Dr. Weiss was born in 1901, there was such a warm response to the request for papers
for this ‘Festschrift’ which came in so promptly that we have decided to compile the
contributions and publish them somewhat in advance of the birthday of the celebrant.
We, personally, are particularly happy that the participation in
honouring Dr. Weiss with this anniversary volume should be so large
and we join the contributors in offering him my heartiest congratula
tions. Thomas Karger
Fritz Karger

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