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Introduction

The Dutch Society for Psychosomatic Research, founded in February 1968 at Amsterdam, decided to organize its first International Symposium on Psychosomatics in Essential Hypertension.

In the Netherlands work has been done in this field. The ground was broken by Berthold Stoknis in 1937, who developed a method of investigating automatically the blood pressure for a longer period during hypnosis. His spadework, unfortunately, did not receive the attention it deserved. After World War II original research was performed under the guidance of Juda Groen and Jacques Reisel, Jan Bastiaans and Jan Van Der Valk. The thesis of the Nimeguen psychologist Van Der Loo dates from 1952. The year 1966 saw the publication of the work of Treurniet and Wilde on the intra-arterial measurement of blood pressure during the interview.

In the United States work on hypertension has been done on a much larger scale. In 1966 we had the opportunity to work for some time in the research team of Morton Reiser and Herbert Weiner at the Albert Einstein Medical College, New York. They had conducted personal investigations into hypertension and we thought it of great use and importance to have them in Amsterdam for exchanging ideas and stimulating further ideas.
The rise of psychophysiology has greatly contributed to our knowledge. The Czechs should be honourably mentioned in this respect. In the near future we expect a great deal of this discipline. You will find a lot of information in this book. Nevertheless, we must say that fundamental data, and therefore a satisfactory theory on psychosomatics in essential hypertension, are still missing.

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Herman Musaph
President of the Dutch Society for Psychosomatic Research