



IVAR ALVIK
1905 – 1971

IN MEMORIAM

Professor Ivar Alvik M.D. died of cancer pancreatis on November 27th, last year, at the age of 66. He had probably been ailing from this disease for some years. With his death, Norwegian orthopedic surgery has lost an outstanding leader and Scandinavian orthopedics one of its most devoted and fervent exponents.

Ivar Alvik graduated from Oslo Medical School in 1934, and with his work *Tuberculosis of the Spine* he was awarded the degree of Doctor of Medicine at the same University. When appointed Senior Physician at the Sophies Minde Orthopedic Hospital in 1953, he had acquired a broad knowledge in general and orthopedic surgery. He became Associate Professor at Oslo University the same year, and in 1958 Professor.

Ivar Alvik worked untiringly and with determination in order to expand the clinical activities of Sophies Minde, which was originally an institution for the crippled and disabled. It cost him much struggle and many a sleepless night, guiding this Orthopedic Hospital to a

capacity and position nobody would have thought possible 15–20 years earlier.

In his views on orthopedic surgery, Ivar Alvik was modern in the true sense of the word. During his long practice of orthopedics, he supplied the profession with new, sometimes radical, points of view, and this “face lifting” has been of enormous importance to present day Norwegian orthopedic surgery.

Ivar Alvik became a member of the Scandinavian Orthopedic Association as early as 1946. The management and consolidation of this Association became one of his special interests to the last. As appointed member of the Board of Directors and its acclaimed President for the period 1960–1962, he was elected Chairman of the 30th congress held by the Association in Oslo.

For many years he was consultant and co-editor of *Acta Orthopaedica Scandinavica*.

Outside the Scandinavian countries, Ivar Alvik had many connections. He participated as contributor at many meetings and congresses in England and other European countries, as well as in the U.S.A.—everywhere respected as a prominent representative of Norwegian and Scandinavian orthopedics.

Ivar Alvik had an enormous working capacity and could get things done almost unbelievably quickly. Numerous societies and associations, both medical and para-medical, benefited from his vast experience and pioneering spirit. To mention a few: He was chairman of the Surgical Association in Oslo and also of the Norwegian Orthopedic Association, was elected honorary member of the Norwegian Surgical Association, the Norwegian Orthopedic Association, The British Orthopaedic Association, and corresponding member of the American Orthopaedic Association.

In addition to the many committee activities, Ivar Alvik found time for a number of scientific publications and published about 60 major and minor papers, which have appeared in domestic and foreign journals. He wrote a textbook on orthopedic surgery, and contributed to Scandinavian manuals and textbooks on the subject.

The number of lectures he gave through the years was enormous. His answer to a request was never “No”, even when it meant travels and tasks outside Norway. During his last years this became an increasing burden to him. In spite of this, he did what he considered a duty as a representative of the profession.

Ivar Alvik was a dynamic personality. He had the courage of his

convictions and never compromised. During discussions he could appear to be headstrong and robust, but sensitive as he really was, he took opposition very much to heart, more so than most people realized.

He was engaged in surgical activities at the hospital until his last days, and even after he was taken ill his thoughts were with the patients and how they were faring. This is, perhaps, one of the most distinct characteristics of Ivar Alvik—that he, to the last, with full knowledge of what was coming to himself, lived with and for his patients and for his profession.

And thus it is that for generations to come he will stand as a shining example for all disciples of Norwegian and Scandinavian orthopedic surgery.

M. Foss Hauge