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PREFACE

The discovery and elucidation of the structure of gonadotropin releasing hormone (GnRH) in the laboratories of Dr A. V. Schally and Dr R. Guillemin in 1971 opened a new era in reproductive physiology. Numerous superactive agonist and antagonist analogs of GnRH have since been synthesized and have proven to have extensive applications in the treatment of several human disorders. Thus, hormone-dependent breast cancer and prostatic cancer have been treated successfully with GnRH analogs in several countries, and recent work has focused on the use of GnRH agonists for contraception in both males and females. Although time will tell about the applicability of GnRH agonists as contraceptives, their potential for enhancement of fertility has been amply demonstrated in humans and also by their notable application in fish-farming. An International Symposium was organized by the University of Hyderabad, India, during August 17–20, 1984 to discuss recent developments on the use of GnRH as a contraceptive, and current applications of GnRH analogs in the treatment of malignancy. Among the main topics covered at this meeting were: Mechanisms of action of GnRH; GnRH as a contraceptive; GnRH treatment in carcinoma; GnRH agonists and antagonists in clinical practice; and extra-pituitary actions of GnRH analogs.

We would like to express our gratitude to the several scientists who gave valuable advice and chaired various sessions: Professor B. S. Ramakrishna, Vice-Chancellor, and Professor P. S. Ramamurty, Dean, School of Life Sciences, University of Hyderabad; and members of the Organizing Committee who gave valuable support for the organization of this meeting, and for which we thank them sincerely.

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In particular, we wish to thank the many speakers who came from ten different countries and made this Symposium from a possibility into an exciting and productive exchange of ideas and new information. Thanks are also due to the staff of Hotel Banjara, the venue of this meeting, and to Mr Y. H. Mohan Rao (Hyderabad) and Mrs Jacqueline LaRocca (Bethesda), who gave invaluable secretarial and administrative assistance during the organization and publication of the proceedings of the Symposium. Dr J. R. Pasqualini, Editor-in-Chief, *Journal of Steroid Biochemistry* and the staff of Pergamon Press for their valuable help in bringing out the Proceedings of this Symposium.

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