

## PREFACE

The classical definition of hormone as a blood-borne factor is being, or has been, replaced by terms such as endocrine, autocrine and paracrine agents that better describe the properties of the ever increasing list of compounds that influence tissue function. The word hormone remains, nevertheless, a useful one, albeit in a wider context than originally defined, and rightly was the prime noun to be linked with cancer in the title of the *Fourth International Congress on Hormones and Cancer*, held in Amsterdam, The Netherlands, in September 1991. This volume represents the proceedings of that congress.

Growth factors and growth control were major topics discussed. These congresses attempt to link the basic and clinical sciences, which accounts for the blending of topics within a single symposium. Thus, the session on Breast Cancer contained talks ranging from oncogenes through steroid receptors to clinical applications. Likewise, the symposium dealing with New Clinical Approaches encompassed two presentations on new steroidal agents, one that highlighted the potentially exciting topic of differentiation therapy and one each on applications of nuclear magnetic resonance and pituitary peptides to counteract drug toxicity. One symposium was devoted to aromatase inhibitors in various settings and both oncogenes and receptors were the subject of several presentations.

THE EDITORS