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DR. LADISLAO OLIVARES LARRAGUÍVEL IN MEMORIAM

Dr. Ladislao Olivares Larraguível left unexpectedly on April 26, 2018, just over a month after his 87th birthday. The news were of great impact to all who knew him and especially to his family (he was the oldest of 5 siblings), his four children and six grandchildren. It is difficult to find where to start talking about a character who was a legend in the National Institute of Neurology and the National Medical Center "CMN 20 de Noviembre", where after many years of not being active in either of the two places, people is still talking about him. Dr. Olivares made his specialty in the United States and in England, at a time when there was no Neurology residency in our country. Like other masters of that time who were trained abroad, he returned to Mexico as a new specialist, already married since 1956 during his stay in England, with Mrs. Jean Walker, with whom he formed a beautiful family of 4 children. Upon his return, he was placed in the Hospital 20 de Noviembre, founded in 1961 and in the National Institute of Neurology (INN), founded in 1964.

I met Dr. Olivares on my first day of undergraduate rotation at the National Institute of Neurology in 1973. At that time, Dr. Olivares was a case reviewer in the Pediatric Neurology department, which the INN had, since the specialty in our country had not been divided and neurologists were trained for all age groups. His penetrating gaze and inquisitive attitude were intimidating, but our first meeting followed up with an excellent relationship. There I noticed his acute intelligence and great clinical capacity that I never stopped learning from. By the 70s he wrote with Milton Alter in Archives of Neurology, his widely cited Multiple Sclerosis epidemiology papers, reporting a prevalence of 1.6 per 100,000 from patients seen at the Hospital Center November 20. Shortly after that, in 1975, he made a report on the clinical manifestations of neurocysticercosis with Tomás Alarcón (a distinguished neurologist from Guayaquil trained at the INN), published in the Journal of Clinical Research, both reasons for his great satisfaction as essential contributions to knowledge. When I arrived at the Hospital 20 de Noviembre in 1975 as a rotating resident, I met the Neurology service, where Dr. Olivares demanded all his members the most considerable effort and clearly stated what he thought when the expectation was not met, a situation that not everyone easily tolerates.

The Neurology service was an innovative world, where patient records were indispensable and without computers, high-value databases were made. At that time, Neurology treated patients of all ages in the outpatient clinic and as an interconsultant in hospitalization, since it did not have a section under its responsibility. Interaction with other hospital services was constant, especially with Pediatrics and Internal Medicine. The neurological patients were detected and registered in a service census so that the neurologists participated in their care and the residents could learn from them in their postgraduate course, existing since 1961. At the end of my residency in 1980, I received from Dr. Olivares the invitation to work in the Neurology service, where I continue till today.

During the following nine years I continued to learn from him, seeing how he approached and solved the medical problems, the organizational problems and also implemented rules for the benefit of patients, who received better care in all aspects. He had introduced an information program to the community, which we had to do to the neurologists on Saturdays so that our patients of various neurological diseases could learn to face them, and we as doctors learned to explain to patients their illnesses, talking to them in an accessible language. This situation led to the founding of a formal self-help group (Group Acceptance of Epilepsy) for people with epilepsy in 1991, which exists till today. Meanwhile, Dr. Olivares continued in charge of the training of new neurologists by teaching them a methodology to identify and solve problems, which is applicable not only to medicine but all aspects of life. He worked tirelessly to improve the world that he did not understand because he was years ahead of what was happening, and for that reason, he was considered a particular person, different and challenging, I would say a misunderstood genius. He entered the National Academy of Medicine with analytical and philosophical work on aphasia, wrote the books *Diagram Decisions in Medicine*, *Analysis of Decisions in Medicine* and *Practical Neurology*, this one addressed to the medical students that we had periodically in the Service and who understood even less the good intentions of Dr. Olivares. In the 80s, there was no training of neuropediatricians in our hospital, and with his visionary approach, in addition to continuing with the Adult Neurology residency, he began his residency in Pediatric Neurology, a very natural situation, given that the Neurology service attended to the patients of all ages.

From 1985, a section in hospitalization for the direct attention of patients was granted to various specialties, including Neurology, which greatly facilitated the organization and teaching. Due to the small number of residents, the guards were very heavy and were personally supervised by Dr. Olivares, who could appear in the hospital in the early hours at random. Always; very early every morning before the academic sessions, came to supervise that the vascular patients, who at that time were the first cause of neurological hospitalization, were sitting in the armchair with their lower limbs bandage and mattress and water donut, always with a next of kin, who was part of the care team for the sick, thus favoring a better evolution.

Towards the end of the 1980s, he was named Deputy Director of Regulations of the ISSSTE, where he ventured to propose plans and programs, which unfortunately did not have the echo they deserved, ending that assignment at the end of 1990, with his retirement from the institution. His last generation of residents as full professor ended in 1991 when having no clinical field, he had to leave this activity, which made him leave the hospital for years, but the service he formed remains as his most valuable legacy with all innovations that he made. Out of the "20 de Noviembre" Hospital and years before the National Institute of Neurology, he continued his clinical work in his private practice in the Hospital Médica Sur, where he was active from 1985 until the

end of 2017. Another significant aspect, closely related to his innovative vision, was the foundation of the Mexican Academy of Neurology. The few neurologists who had recognized themselves as such upon the founding of the Mexican Council of Neurology in 1971, had only the recognition mentioned above of their specialty, but in developed countries, there were already academic associations such as the American Academy of Neurology, founded in 1948.

Thus, Dr. Olivares organized a meeting in Querétaro, which he called on the existing neurologists in 1976 to organize an association, which resulted in the founding of the Mexican Academy of Neurology that year. According to Dr. Olivares; much controversies were created on the matter, but in the end, Dr. Recaredo Rodríguez López was accepted and elected, with periods initially of one year and later of two, being Dr. Olivares the second president of this Academy, one which was born from his visionary ideas. His participation in the academic activities was legendary, as he always questioned and frequently made devastating comments about what the speakers and coordinators said, and for that reason, he was very feared, as well as a synod of the certification exams of the Mexican Council of Neurology. Over the years he also retired from these activities, frequently attending the Annual Meetings of the Mexican Academy of Neurology, where he was invited as an ex-president and where he was the subject of several recognitions, such as being named member emeritus of the AMN and received a tribute with other teachers of Neurology, carried out in 2014.

The last years of his life, widowed since 2010, he faced some health problems, but especially being absent from the academic and teaching activities he enjoyed so much. His last loss was to close his private practice and retire from his favorite clinical activity entirely since last year, but always trying to keep his mind active, he then started learning something new, like playing the piano. I can not omit some of his famous phrases, which we do not stop remembering in the Service when they come to the case, which happens very frequently: "I have a pact with the devil", he said this when he detected any failure in the processes, for which he had a huge talent. "Forgive me for speaking while you interrupt me," he did not tolerate that his interlocutors stopped following the conversation and introduced distractors. "We do not have answers for questions we have not asked ourselves":

He advocated analyze the situations and not collect information without order or meaning, which in the end also constituted a distraction in the clinical approach.

Dr. Olivares left in his way many students who admired and loved him very much, as well as some who once held some resentment, but all of us who had the fortune of knowing him and learning from him, we recognize him and thank him for his many valuable contributions and teachings.

Rest in peace.

Dra. Lilia Núñez Orozco

Head of the Neurology Service of CMN November 20, ISSSTE.
President of the Mexican Society of Neurology and Psychiatry.
One of the students of Dr. Ladislao Olivares Larraguível.

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