

PII: S0959-8049(96)00220-1

Message from the Editor-in-Chief

WHEN NEW political leaders are elected, they are usually granted 100 days grace, but following this, they are judged on their own performance and achievements. When new business managers are elected, they are allowed some 6–12 months before their performance is evaluated. When senior scientific researchers take up a new position, it takes 12 months before they become established and are able to demonstrate productivity by publishing papers again.

However, it takes even longer for an Editor of a Scientific Journal to become established and gain recognition. This is due to the time it takes a paper to go through the editorial and production process, and, because of the method of calculating the Impact Factor, it is a further 2 years before it is a reflection of the papers published under his new leadership.

The first year of my position as Editor-in-Chief of the *European Journal of Cancer* has been a great challenge. Nearly 1000 manuscripts have been processed of which approximately 500 were published (supplement papers included). The rejection rate continues to increase and is currently around 50%. The Editorial Board and the large database of peer reviewers has been revised and restructured. Thanks to the conscientious efforts of the Editorial Office Team, and with the support from our 800 referees, reviewing times have been drastically reduced during the second half of 1995: first decisions are achieved within 5–6 weeks on average, and we are working towards an average publication time of 6–8 months.

Our London based Editorial Office relocated at the end of

April to the Royal College of Surgeons at Lincoln's Inn Fields, and we hope this may stimulate more submissions to the journal in the field of Surgical Oncology. We would like to improve the balance of the content in the journal between clinical, paediatric, epidemiological and experimental oncology sections, and will consider adding new subsections as required by the readership and authorship.

The *EJC* has now become established as the premier comprehensive and interdisciplinary European oncology periodical and we are working hard to expand its transcontinental reach. We have even survived the publication of a completely incorrect impact factor in Autumn 1995, calculated by ISI as drastically dropping to 0.7 and then subsequently corrected to 2.14. Such an episode is not the type of publicity which is welcomed, and its nearly impossible correction in the mind of peers remains a painful and time-consuming exercise.

Having introduced a News Section into the journal in Autumn 1995, from this issue the quality of this section will improve due to the appointment of a professional News Editor. London based medical journalist Robert Short, has taken office with the *EJC* News Committee, and we are certain with his input, that this section will progress through various development stages. More innovative changes of sections in the *EJC* are yet to come and we will announce these later in the year.

Professor Hans-Jörg Senn
Editor-in-Chief