Those of us who were fortunate enough to experience Saul’s arrival as Chairman of the newly established Division of Neurology of the Department of Internal Medicine were introduced to one of the most dynamic figures in the rapidly expanding area of Clinical Neurology and to Saul’s unique role in the emerging area of Multidisciplinary Neurobiological Research that by the late 1980s became the nascent field of Neuroscience. Saul’s research interests included not only his own lipid neurochemistry research, but extended to the emerging area of cognitive neuroscience. Saul believed that neurobiological research should include Freudian psychoanalysis, the biological basis of which Saul was a firm supporter. Along with psychiatry chairman, Milt Rosenbaum and the prototypic psychobiologist Mort Reiser, Saul initiated the first interdisciplinary program in neurology and behavior, the so-called “ID Program.” Many ID fellows, including myself, contributed to the foundation of modern neuroscience in their later careers. Saul’s clinical prowess was legendary, combining hands-on patient evaluation with an unshakeable belief in the potential of neurological therapies to combat even the most profound neurological damage due to stroke. He was an early advocate of anticoagulant therapy of ischemic stroke, and the application of hypothermia to treat brain swelling.

Saul Korey’s most remarkable characteristic was his extraordinary presence. Only a brief contact with him was required to sense the enormous vitality of his thinking, backed up with a seemingly endless reservoir of energy that drove even his most sweeping visions to reality. Saul was the main initiator and motive power behind the development of Einstein’s first new facility mainly devoted to research laboratories – the Ullmann building, whose octagonal design provided innovative laboratory configurations.
and challenged the navigation of its inner maze-like corridors. Despite its unusual configuration, the Ullman building provided a much-needed expansion of laboratory and departmental space.

My favorite recollection of Saul’s personal decision process was his inability to say “no” to proposals that were repeatedly delivered to him if they had underlying merit. Persistence and logical argument rarely failed to yield ultimate approval of meritorious proposals.

One of Saul’s creative enterprises as Chairman was his support of six-month research sabbaticals for his newly recruited faculty. In my case, this enabled me to devote a solid six months to set up an independent laboratory and to initiate my basic research on human visual electrophysiology with the support Professor Hans Lucas Teuber, the newly appointment chairman of the Department of Psychology at MIT.

The last months of Saul’s brief 45 years were principally marked by extraordinary sadness and grief over his premature terminal illness and passing. Those of us who had the privilege of knowing and working with Saul are forever indebted to him and will never forget him.

November 2008

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