

DOV CHEVION

Born April 16, 1917, Lodz, Poland, died October 5, 1983, Jerusalem, Israel, Israeli educator and pioneer computer scientist. Dov Chevion was a giant among his fellow men and women. He was respected for his strength of leadership, for his commitment toward worthy goals, and as the spokesman in the computer field for Israel for over two decades. He was particularly concerned with education, an area in which he made major contributions.

Dov was born on April 16, 1917, in Lodz, Poland. He was educated in the gymnasium in Lodz and immigrated to Palestine in 1935. He attended the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, where he studied philosophy, mathematics, and physics. His student days were interrupted by World War II, after which he worked in the field of statistics for the British government. He became active in the computer field in the late 1950s and, with Aaron Gertz, was responsible for teaching and training hundreds of computer and communication systems designers, computer analysts, and programmers who now hold senior positions throughout Israel. He left his mark of accomplishment on the computer user community of his country and those other countries that were privileged to benefit from his teaching.

IPA Contribution

In the early 1960s Chevion, together with some professors of the Weizmann Institute and Aaron Gertz, planned and founded the Information Processing Association of Israel (IPA). He served as chairman of the board from 1966 to 1976 and president from 1976 to 1982. Early in 1983 he was given the title of Honorable President of IPA for life.

He helped create the first International Jerusalem Conference on Information Technology (UCIT) in 1971 and was deeply involved in those that followed in 1974 and 1978. He was an active advisor for JCIT IV, held in May 1984, until his death in October 1983. Just before his death, he was awarded the IPA Certificate for his lifelong efforts for the development of computing in Israel. The Israeli government awarded Chevion the Kaplan Prize in 1972 and 1973 for teaching the blind to work with computers. He always employed blind people in his computing center.

IFIP Participation

IPA became a member of the International Federation for Information Processing (IFIP) in January 1964, and Chevion was its first representative. He served until 1978, when he was elected an individual member for a 3-year term. He was an IFIP trustee in the periods 1965-1967, 1970-1973, and 1973-1976, and a vice president from 1967-1970. As the chairman of the Future Policy Committee from 1967-1969 and a member of that committee from 1979-1981, he helped focus attention on the development of IFIP as the most important international federation in the computer field. He served as a member of the following IFIP committees: Tenth Anniversary Committee 1969-1970, Statutes and Bylaws Committee 1969-1981, IFIP Committee for International Liaison 1969-1983, Technical Committee 3 (Education) 1971-1979, Education Policy Committee 1973-1974, Activities Planning Committee 1975-1981, and Committee for Liaison with SEARCC 1976-1981

Chevion was chairman of Working Group 3.1 (Informatics Education at the Secondary Education Level) from 1966-1968 and chairman of a Nominations Committee for IMP trustees. In 1974 he received the Silver Core award for services rendered to IFIP.

Chevion was a personal contributor as well as an active IFIP proponent of each of the World Conferences on Computer Education and was chairman from 1973 of the steering committee for the Second World Conference on Computers in Education, which took place in 1975. In addition, he organized, participated in, and led Israeli lecture teams on computer education to many countries in Central and South America. In recognition of his singular contribution he was appointed honorary professor of computer science by the University of Sao. Paulo in Brazil.

Obviously, Chevion was one of IFIP's most active contributors and an outstanding organizer of many important IFIP activities, reflecting, in particular, his devotion and dedication to education about computing and information processing. He was responsible for developing computer curricula for schools, teacher training, and information booklets. These efforts, plus his ability to get people to work together, will be acknowledged for a long time.

IPA Fellowship Program

In November 1965 Chevion suggested a joint fellowship program between one of the Auerbach corporations and IPA to increase the knowledge, experience, and productivity of the people working in the field of computer technology in Israel. Young computer professionals agreed to accept a position for one year in the US so they could gain technical experience, after which they would return to Israel to share their knowledge.

After providing the success of the fellowship program, IPA was able to expand the program to five other US companies in the data processing field. A total of 30 fellows have participated in the program to date.

Final Days

In 1977 Chevion stimulated the General Assembly's interest in governmental and municipal data processing to the extent that he was named chairman of an IFIP task group to investigate the topic. The first IMP conference on the Impact of New Technologies on Information Systems in Public Administration in the 1980s was held in Vienna in February 1983. Chevion presented a paper entitled "International Cooperation as a Vehicle of Information Technology in Public Administration." He returned home from the conference and underwent major surgery in March. He died in Hadassah Hospital on October 5, 1983, with his family present.¹

BIBLIOGRAPHY

¹From Auerbach 1985.

Biographical

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UPDATES