Discussion

Chairman: PROFESSOR H. E. DE WARDENER

DR V. ARROYO (Barcelona): We did a study on the incidence and possible mechanism of hyponatraemia in fifty-five cirrhotic patients with ascites. Thirty-one patients had a normal plasma sodium concentration (> 130 mEq/l) and were considered a control group. The twenty-four patients with hyponatraemia could be divided into two separate groups. One group had a very low renal capacity to excrete free water with values for free water clearance less than 1 ml/min and in these patients the

hyponatraemia could be explained on the basis of over hydration. However, the other group with hyponatraemia had a similar capacity to excrete free water as the control group. In this group there must be another mechanism, e.g. a shift of sodium from extra-cellular to intracellular spaces.

DR H. RING-LARSEN: Yes, I know your work, but in my experience it is rare to find a patient with severe hyponatraemia and a normal free water clearance.