

News and Notes

XI INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF LEPROSY MEXICO CITY, MEXICO 11-18 NOVEMBER 1978

The attention of all our readers is drawn to this important Congress. There is still time to register for it. Registrations, hotel reservations, social events, tours and in general all administrative matters concerning this Congress will be handled by the Local National Committee. Please address to: *XI International Congress of Leprosy, Asociacion Mexicana de Accion Contra La Lepra A.C., Dr Vertiz 464 Mexico 7. D.F. Mexico.*

THE EAST AFRICAN LEPROSY BULLETIN, MARCH 1978, v. 6, No 1

It is encouraging to see another issue of this Bulletin, thanks to financial support from the Netherlands Leprosy Relief Association. The Editorial Board comprises Drs Anderson, Chum and Broekman (Kenya) and Dr Nsibambi (Uganda). This issue is mainly concerned with (1) Abstracts from the WHO Fifth Report, Expert Committee on Leprosy, Technical Report Series, 607, (2) a summary of the recommendations of the 1st International Workshop on Chemotherapy of Leprosy in Asia, Philippines. January, 1977, (3) a summary of the WHO Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases (this is an excellent short account of the Programme, for those not already familiar with it), and (4) a circular letter from the All Africa Leprosy and Rehabilitation Training Centre, (ALERT), P.O. Box 165, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The latter summarizes some of the research findings at ALERT and their consequences for field work, and it is unfortunate that the third page of this potentially important letter (page 22) is a printing/typing error, reproducing page 21. Perhaps this could be remedied in the next issue. The Editorial Board of Leprosy Review wishes to record its interest and good wishes for the future production of this Bulletin, from an area of Africa where leprosy is obviously still a major problem.

A. C. McDOUGALL

INTERNATIONAL YEAR FOR DISABLED PERSONS — 1981

Just as they are all more or less directly concerned with the International Year of the Child (1979), in the same way governments and voluntary agencies connected with leprosy programmes throughout the world will wish to share in the activities that will be organized during the year 1981 — designated by the

United Nations as the International Year for Disabled Persons. While the statutory bodies of the United Nations will naturally assume the major role in the central organization of action to be taken at government level, much of the success of the local activities in the various countries will depend upon the initiative and enthusiasm of members of voluntary agencies. It is here that the anti-leprosy associations, especially those working together under the aegis of ILEP, will be able to offer their expert knowledge of the local situation concerning those whose handicap is due to leprosy, and to help organize national activities in favour of the handicapped. The social discrimination and disabilities under which leprosy victims still suffer should not be lost sight of in any action organized for this purpose.

The Council of World Organizations Interested in the Handicapped has been asked, through its Executive Committee, to prepare a protocol for the voluntary agencies whose activities it represents. Leprosy has a voice on this Council, through the International Leprosy Association, which is one of its founder-members; its Secretary-Treasurer (Dr S. G. Browne) represents the Association both on the Council and on the Executive Committee. At its meeting in Paris on 3 April 1978, the Executive Committee made suggestions for a draft protocol to be submitted to the United Nations, stressing the following points:

- the need to organize activities appropriate to the local situation in different countries;
- the prevention of deforming conditions and diseases (leprosy is obviously an example of these);
- the provision of services in rural areas;
- the importance of reducing the stigma still attaching to physical handicaps (especially, we might add, those due to neglected leprosy);
- the need for suitable teaching materials for medical students, doctors, auxiliary medical workers and all engaged in any way with the care of those suffering from some kind of physical or mental disability.

CONGRESS IN CAIRO

The "Cairo Second International Leprosy and Tropical Dermatology Congress" which was held in Cairo on 20 and 21 March 1978 attracted about 300 participants from 8 near-east countries and 4 from outside the Arab world. The joint organizers were Dr S. G. Browne (London) and Professor M. El Zawahry (Cairo).

Most of the papers on leprosy were presented by dermatologists working in one or other of the University hospitals in Egypt. They were of high order and gave evidence of the continuing interest of dermatologists of all degrees of seniority in one of the intractable problems of this part of the world.

Among the papers on tropical dermatology, those on cutaneous leishmaniasis and cutaneous bilharzia attracted considerable attention.

The Congress followed a Memorial Congress held to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the founding of the Kasr el Aini School of Medicine, the oldest and most prestigious of Egypt's Medical Schools.

S. G. BROWNE

**WHO SETS NEW SERVICE FOR READERS OF ITS "BULLETIN":
WHO PRESS RELEASE WHO/19 OF 25 APRIL 1978**

*Publication to stress "Information of Immediate Use"
for Health Workers*

The World Health Organization has redesigned its oldest scientific journal, the internationally esteemed *Bulletin*, around a new service for readers.

The change centres on a section called "Update", created by the editors to carry current, "state of the art", reports on scientific aspects of public health problems written by leading experts around the world.

The publication's change in style stems from a policy shift in editorial emphasis and begins with the current issue.*

In a statement explaining the changes, Dr Halfdan Mahler, WHO Director-General, says that the 30-year-old *Bulletin's* "sole function" will no longer be the publishing of original articles of research.

Instead, it will be edited to carry "information of immediate use in health development", and to appeal to a wider audience. Aimed at particularly are the generally over-burdened scientist and "health manager" who are hard-pressed for time but who need accurate information speedily.

As much as better health relies on antibiotics, vaccines and other medical developments, so too is it equally dependent on the spread and application of technical knowledge. Thus, as put by Dr Mahler: "Each 'Update' article will provide a concise and authoritative account of the current state of the art being written about, with particular emphasis on information of immediate use in health developments.

"For this reason, unlike conventional review articles, they do not contain a detailed historical survey of all aspects of the subject, and a long list of biographical references."

Instituted to meet new worldwide health priorities, the editorial shift, he says, will "ensure that the best current knowledge is available to and applied by those in a position to make use of it".

These 'Update' articles launch the new readers' service:

- "The Three Types of Human Viral Hepatitis", by Professor A. J. Zuckermann, University of London, U.K.
- "Advantages and Disadvantages of Killed and Live Poliomyelitis Vaccines", by Professor Joseph L. Melnick, Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, Texas, U.S.A.
- "Le Rôle du Laboratoire de Virologie dans un Pays en Développement", by Professor R. Sohler, Université de Lyon, and Professor O. G. Gaudin, Université de Saint-Etienne,
- "Species Complexes in the Simuliidae", a summary of what is known about species of the African blackfly, the transmitter of river blindness. It is by six experts.
- "Ocular Onchocerciasis", or river blindness, by Dr B. Thylefors, a WHO consultant. The disease affects some 20 million throughout the world, blinding up to half a million.

* Bulletin of the World Health Organization, Vol. 56, No. 1, 1978.

Despite the editorial shift, the *Bulletin* still publishes articles on research. Eight are carried in the current issue, including a combined Spanish-Scottish study on illness that affects travellers taking package tours.

Bulletin articles are in either English or French. An article in one language is accompanied by a detailed summary in the other. There is also a Russian edition of the *Bulletin* published in Moscow.

OLD ISSUES OF *LEPROSY REVIEW*

Requests are being received, especially from developing libraries in countries where leprosy is endemic, for old issues of *Leprosy Review*, especially Volumes 1–30. It will be appreciated if anyone able to spare any of these will contact The Director, Lepra, Fairfax House, Causton Road, Colchester CO 1 1PU.

NOTICE TO AUTHORS

With the completion of Volume 49, Dr Davey will be retiring as Editor of this Journal. Prospective authors are advised that original papers and other material offered for publication in Volume 50 No. 1 should be sent to Dr Colin McDougall, The Slade Hospital, Headington, Oxford OX3 7JH. This change of address becomes operative from 1st September 1978.

SURGICAL CONGRESS, NAIROBI 5–6 DECEMBER 1978

We have been asked to draw the attention of our readers to this Congress, held in conjunction with the Association of Surgeons of East Africa, the International Federation of Surgical Colleges, and the International Society for Burns Injuries. In addition to Symposia there will be opportunity for free papers including burn injuries. The Secretary of the Congress is Mr I. J. P. Loeffler, PO Box 47934, Nairobi, Kenya.

PERSONAL

Dr Ruth Pfau Honoured

Dr Ruth Pfau's work for leprosy sufferers in Pakistan, based on the Marie Adelaide Leprosy Centre in Karachi, and reaching out to the whole country has recently received well-merited recognition. She has been invested with the Commanders Cross Order of Merit — the highest award granted to civilians — by the Federal Republic of Germany. The Government of Pakistan has also decorated her with its highest civilian award — "HILAL-i-IMTIAZ" (the Crescent of Achievements).

We add our own congratulations to those that Dr Pfau has already received.

S. G. BROWNE

Dr S. G. Browne

During a recent visit to India (27 January to 11 February), Dr S. G. Browne delivered an address entitled "India's future role in the fight against leprosy" at a meeting in New Delhi organized around the launching of a book "A Window on Leprosy" edited by Dr B. R. Chatterjee. In the presence of the Prime Minister of India and other notabilities, the Vice-President of India officially launched the volume, which is published to mark the Silver Jubilee of the Gandhi Memorial Leprosy Foundation. The occasion coincided with the observance of the 30th anniversary of the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi and of World Leprosy Day. The Hind Kusht Nivaran Sangh, offshoot of BELRA (now LEPRO), also celebrates at this time its 50th anniversary.

In addition to lecturing in various centres in India (notably New Delhi, Calcutta, Madras, Karigiri, Bombay and Wardha), Dr Browne conducted a seminar in Calcutta for the Sisters and Brothers of Mother Teresa's Missionaries of Charity who are engaged in caring for leprosy sufferers, and recommended that their socially exemplary activities should be medically improved and integrated into the Greater Calcutta Leprosy Control Programme and in other towns where they are at work.

While in Calcutta, Dr Browne was presented with the J. N. Chowdhury Medal for his contributions to tropical medicine, and asked to deliver the J. N. Chowdhury Memorial Oration on "Some Growing Points of Leprosy Research" at the School of Tropical Medicine.