

News and Notes

EUROPEAN LEPROSY SYMPOSIUM, 1–3 MAY 1981

Under the auspices of the Italian Leprosy Relief Organization 'Amici di R Follereau', and with the participation of WHO and ILEP, a Symposium on leprosy in light-skinned people was held in Santa Margherita Ligure, near Genoa, Italy, on 1–3 May 1981. The objectives of the Symposium were two-fold: first, to give up-to-date information about the most important aspects of leprosy, with emphasis on clinical presentation as seen in Europe, and secondly, to publish the proceedings together with an atlas of clinical manifestations of leprosy in patients with light skins. Five thousand copies of these proceedings are to be sent to dermatology and infectious diseases departments of hospitals in Europe and the USA.

During the first two days of the Symposium papers were given by F Cottenot (France) on symptomatology and clinical diagnosis, KF Schaller (ILEP Medical Commission) on differential diagnosis, J Terencio de las Aguas (Spain) on laboratory procedures, SR Pattyn (Belgium) on culture of *Mycobacteria leprae*, MF Lechat (Belgium) on epidemiology, ADM Bryceson (Kenya) on immunology, RH Cormane (Netherlands) on immunocomplexes and auto-antibodies, J Convit (Venezuela) on immunotherapy and immunoprophylaxis, WH Jopling (UK) on clinical classification, J Boddington (Netherlands) on mechanisms of nerve damage, MFR Waters (UK) on leprosy reactions and their management, P Brand (USA) on neuropathic ulceration, Margaret Brand (USA) on eye problems, HN Krenzien (W Germany) on chemotherapy of mycobacterial diseases, SR Pattyn (Belgium) on resistance and persistence of *M. leprae*, G Acocella (Lepetit Research Laboratories) on rifampicin, R Mohareb (Egypt) on preliminary results of Abu Zaabal trial, DL Leiker (Netherlands) on clofazimine, H Huikeshoven (Netherlands) on patient compliance with treatment, and SK Noordeen (WHO, Geneva) on chemoprophylaxis. The third day was devoted to short case histories, illustrated by colour transparencies, in which 20 speakers took part; a selection of these will be reproduced in an atlas.

The organizers are to be congratulated on the success of this well attended Symposium held in one of Italy's beauty spots, and a debt of gratitude is owed to Lepetit Pharmaceuticals Ltd for financial backing and for providing a memorable Dinner on 2 May for participants and guests.

WH JOPLING

SASAKAWA MEMORIAL HEALTH FOUNDATION, TOKYO, JAPAN

We gratefully acknowledge receipt of two important booklets from Mr Suminori Tsurusaki, the General Secretary of SMHF.

1. *The Way Toward Eradication of Hansen's Disease*. This is the text of an address delivered by Professor Michel Lechat (Belgium) on the occasion of a special meeting held in Tokyo in September 1980, under the theme 'Health and Peace'.

2. *Health for All by the Year 2000*. Text of an address delivered by Dr H Mahler, Director General of WHO, who was another main speaker at the above meeting. (It is of particular interest since it has a section dealing specifically with leprosy and primary health care.)

ROYAL IRISH ACADEMY: IRISH SCIENTISTS WIN THE 1980 UNESCO SCIENCE PRIZE

The UNESCO Science Prize for 1980 has been awarded jointly to a group from the Laboratories of the Medical Research Council of Ireland, Dr JG Belton, MRIA, Dr ML Conalty, MRIA, Dr JF O'Sullivan and Dr D Twomey, MRIA, for the discovery of the anti-leprosy agent clofazimine, and to Dr L Mata of Costa Rica for his work on malnutrition and infection.

The Prize, which was presented at UNESCO House in Paris at the end of May, is awarded biennially to an individual or group to acknowledge 'an outstanding contribution, through the application of science and technology, to the development of a developing Member State or region'. It is open to all Member States of the United Nations Organization, each government being entitled to nominate one candidate. This is the first occasion an Irish nomination has been made.

In 1944 a Medical Research Council of Ireland team, headed by the late Dr Vincent C Barry, was set up to develop new antituberculosis agents and, since then, has also been engaged in the development of compounds for other bacterial diseases and for the treatment of cancer.

In the course of their investigations a series of compounds (rimino-phenazines) was discovered, many of which were found to be active against tuberculosis in experimental animals. Because it was observed that these agents concentrated within cells of a type in which leprosy bacilli were known to develop, arrangements were made for a clinical trial of the most active compound, B663 (clofazimine), in leprosy, by Drs SG Browne and LM Hogerzeil in Nigeria. This and other extensive trials established clofazimine as a first line drug in the treatment of leprosy. In this way the group's efforts have contributed to the health of people living in all developing regions where leprosy is endemic and it is hoped it will play a major role in the eventual eradication of this disease.

Three members of the group (Dr ML Conalty, Dr JF O'Sullivan and Dr D Twomey) visited India in March/April 1980 under the auspices of the Department of Foreign Affairs, to advise on the manufacture of clofazimine by IDL Chemicals Ltd, of Hyderabad and Bangalore, who, in collaboration with the Central Drug Research Institute of the Indian Government, are to undertake the production of clofazimine for sale in India on a non-profit basis.

In addition to the foregoing, Drs O'Sullivan and Conalty, in collaboration with Dr NE Morrison of Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, USA, are now in the fourth year of a project, funded in part by the World Health Organization, to develop new analogues of clofazimine which would be active against clofazimine-resistant strains of *Mycobacterium leprae*, should these emerge.

The members of the Irish research team, who were presented with the Prize at 5.00 p.m. on 25 May 1981, during the 112th session of the Executive Board of UNESCO, were nominated to UNESCO by the Irish Government in consultation with the Irish National Commission and on the advice of the Royal Irish Academy.

THE ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE ENCOURAGEMENT OF ARTS, MANUFACTURES AND COMMERCE, LONDON, LECTURE BY DR RJW REES 'THE APPRAISAL OF MEDICAL RESEARCH IN THE TREATMENT AND CONTROL OF LEPROSY'

This lecture was delivered in London on 24 March 1981 by Dr RJW Rees, Head of the Laboratory for Leprosy and Mycobacterial Research, the National Institute for Medical Research and Chairman, Medical Advisory Board of LEPROA. The meeting was chaired by the Dean of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, Professor CE Gordon Smith and attended by a distinguished audience of medical and scientific workers, mainly from the London area.

THE INTERNATIONAL UNION AGAINST TUBERCULOSIS: XXVth WORLD CONFERENCE, BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINE REPUBLIC, 21–24 APRIL 1982

Programme: 1982 is the centenary of the discovery of the tubercle bacillus by Robert Koch. In view of the significance of the year 1982 for tuberculosis and renewed efforts against this disease, an important session will be that in which the WHO and the IUAT will express their views on the antituberculosis campaign in the next two decades and their own part in it. Presentations will also be made on recent progress and future prospects in epidemiology, bacteriology, chemotherapy and prevention of tuberculosis.

Other sessions will combine tuberculosis and non-tuberculosis respiratory disease, with special reference to immunology and the problems of diagnosis, treatment and prevention of tuberculosis and acute respiratory disease in children.

They will also include clinical, diagnostic and therapeutic advances in tuberculosis, respiratory disease and leprosy, simplified standardized techniques and their efficacy, the delivery of services and the application of control programmes at community level, criteria for defining cases and examination norms, epidemiological procedures, data gathering and forecasting and evaluation procedures and surveillance and their significance.

All enquiries to: International Union Against Tuberculosis, 3 rue Georges Ville, 75116 Paris, France.

EDITORIAL NOTE: PLANS FOR THE JOURNAL IN 1982

It was our original intention to publish a special number or a supplement with Number 4 of this volume (1981) on the subject of 'Leprosy and Primary Health Care'. Despite a great deal of correspondence with many experts in the field of leprosy in different parts of the world, it has, however, become clear that most of those who are most likely to contribute original material will need longer for its preparation. Taken with our decision to issue a supplement on the papers given at the International Symposium on the Epidemiology of Leprosy in Oslo, Norway, September 1981, we have therefore decided to postpone further publication on the subject of leprosy in relation to primary health care until 1982. Meanwhile we would greatly appreciate original papers or correspondence on this subject.

During 1982, we plan to publish editorials from invited contributors on the subjects of rifampicin, steroids, thalidomide and teaching and training in leprosy. Here again, related material in the form of original articles or correspondence will be welcome.

LEPROSY REVIEW: CIRCULATION GOES OVER 1,000 IN 1981

We record with pleasure that the fact that the circulation of this journal is now well over 1,000, and steadily increasing. It is issued to 108 different countries with a wide distribution over the leprosy-endemic world. Thanks to the packaging and posting direct from the LEPRO office in Colchester, it is clear that delivery has greatly improved, with concomitant reduction in previous misunderstandings about subscriptions and payment.

ARMAUER HANSEN RESEARCH INSTITUTE, PO BOX 1005, ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA. CONFERENCE ON IMMUNOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF LEPROSY, TUBERCULOSIS AND LEISHMANIASIS, 27–30 OCTOBER 1980, ADDIS ABABA

In drawing attention to this conference in *Leprosy Review*, 52 (1981) we apologise for the completely wrong list of papers, 1–10. The main subject headings were in fact as follow: Basic Immunology; Antigenic Structure of Mycobacteria; Mycobacteria and Leishmania; Clinical and Immunological Aspects; Mechanisms of Tissue Damage; Effector and Escape Mechanisms; Experimental Aspects of Leprosy, Tuberculosis and Leishmaniasis; Immunogenetics and Epidemiology; Vaccines; Present and Future. *Editor*