

Leprosy Committee of the International Society for Rehabilitation of the Disabled

Chairman: Dr. Paul W. Brand

The World Committee for Leprosy Rehabilitation is a subcommittee of the International Society for Rehabilitation of the Disabled. A meeting of this committee was held in London during the Ninth International Congress, on 19 September 1968.

The chairman reported progress in the new All-Africa Leprosy & Rehabilitation Training Centre "ALERT" at Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The Training Centre, first conceived and planned by this committee, is making good progress. A number of teaching staff members have been recruited from many countries. African trainees are currently in training from Zambia, Liberia, Camerons and Uganda, and others are expected. Support for the program has been received from Norway and Sweden, Switzerland, Britain and the U.S.A., and from Holland, Belgium and Germany.

Miss Nielson, of the International Confederation of Physical Therapy, placed on the table a booklet on training syllabuses for physical therapists. The booklet had been produced at the request of this committee, and represented the results of the cooperation of several of its members and others. It contained a suggested syllabus on

leprosy physiotherapy for physical therapy schools in countries where leprosy is endemic, and also a shorter one for use in P.T. schools in countries where leprosy is no longer a significant problem.

In discussions on future programs for the committee, it was emphasized that the special value of the committee was that it was a forum and meeting place of those whose interest was primarily in leprosy, and those who had special professional skills and connections that should be used for leprosy, but which have been neglected in the past because of the traditional isolation of this disease.

For the future, therefore, the committee should concentrate on the production of teaching and training aids in the neglected fields of prosthetics and orthotics, physiotherapy and occupational therapy, health education and prevocational training. In all cases the emphasis should be on teaching material suitable for use in the conditions of the countries where leprosy is a problem, and should stress the integration of leprosy rehabilitation facilities with those available for rehabilitation from other similarly crippling conditions.—PAUL W. BRAND