

NEWS and NOTES

This department furnishes information concerning institutions, organizations, and individuals engaged in work on leprosy and other mycobacterial diseases, and makes note of scientific meetings and other matters of interest.

Ethiopia. ALERT holds second post-graduate course. Twenty-one doctors and two directors of national leprosy control programs working in 14 countries in Africa, Asia and the Americas, attended the second post-graduate course for doctors at the All-Africa Leprosy and Rehabilitation Training Center (ALERT). Held last October, the course included leprosy control, histopathology, immunology, clinical leprology, rehabilitation, training and administrative problems, health education and medico-social aspects of leprosy.

In addition to the ALERT staff and outstanding specialists in Ethiopia, the faculty included such internationally recognized leprologists as Dr. L. M. Bechelli of Brazil; Dr. Mortem Harboe of Oslo, Norway; Dr. A. B. A. Karat of Bangalore, India; Le Medecin General J. Languillon of Dakar, Senegal; Professor K. F. Schaller of Coblenz, West Germany.

Five of the participating doctors are continuing at ALERT for periods of one to three additional months of leprosy training before taking over their leprosy assignments in other countries. —(NEWS FROM ALM, Winter, 1973)

Gift of Landrover. Recently a Landrover was given to ALERT for the Rehabilitation Department. It is interesting to know who was behind this gift. In Berne, a customs officer, Mr. Willie Monnier became vitally interested in the problem of leprosy and has dedicated himself to the cause by organizing concerts, special shows, etc., to collect funds to help many leprosy centers with Landrovers, or by supporting other aspects of the work. He has had the famous violinist, Yehudi Menuhin; the pianist, Rubenstein; and others to give concerts and the proceeds have resulted in the "Menuhin Landrover" or the "Rubenstein Landrover" for some centers. He has also recruited groups of civil servants from different Cantons to give donations for leprosy

work. This Landrover is from the money he got from the civil servants of the Swiss Government, especially from the Canton of Berne. This great philanthropist has recently been honored with a doctorate from the University of Basel, for all he has done to help a cause such as leprosy. This is the story behind the white Landrover.—(ALERT NEWS, February, 1973)

Post-graduate courses in ALERT. The following post-graduate courses and seminars for doctors are planned by ALERT for the following months of 1973:

1. Surgery of the Infected Hand (21-25 May). Dr. Ernest Fritschi, orthopedic surgeon, will lead this course with the assistance of Mr. Guy Pulvertaft, formerly hand surgeon at Derby Royal Infirmary, England.

2. Seminar on Neurology and Ophthalmology in Leprosy (27-31 August). The sessions on neurology will be led by Dr. John Pearson of the M.R.C. research team and on ophthalmology by Dr. Margaret Brand.

3. Clinical Leprology (1-27 October). The course will be run by ALERT senior staff, including Dr. John Pearson, Dr. Harold Wheate, Dr. Ernest Fritschi, Dr. Cap and Dr. Felton Ross, with the assistance of Professor Michel Lechat and Le Medecin General Languillon.

4. Management of Medical Care Programs (30 October-4 November). Dr. E. J. Cummins will direct this course with the assistance of staff from the Centre for Ethiopian Management and ALERT.

For further information please write to the Director of Training, ALERT, P.O. Box 165, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Visit of the royal couple from Belgium. The highlight of the last half year was the visit in November of King Baudouin and Queen Fabiola of Belgium. They spent two hours seeing various aspects of the work of ALERT and AHRI. They evinced deep concern for outpatients and interest in the

work being done there. They were accompanied by H. E. Count P. de Liedekerke, Ambassador of Belgium, and his wife Princess Aida Desta, and representatives of the Ethiopian Ministry of Public Health and other officials. At a short reception the King announced that a grant from the Belgian Government was to be given towards the leprosy control unit of ALERT, and at the same occasion a generous donation was given to ALERT by a representative of the Belgian organization, "Les Amis du Pere Damien."—(*Adapted from* ALERT "NEWS-IN-A-NUTSHELL," December, 1972)

Germany. *Reference library for leprosy.* Plans are in the making for the creation of a center in Germany that will act as a clearing house or reference library on leprosy. Professor K. F. Schaller will be responsible, as director, for the organization of the center which is being financed generously by the German Leprosy Relief Association (*Deutsches Aussätzigen Hilfswerk*) with an annual grant of about 30,000 D.M. It is hoped that the center will be in full operation in 18 months.

The center will serve as an abstracting service, covering some 2,700 periodicals in many languages, and will be able to furnish references in the literature, to answer questions on aspects of leprosy, and to offer disinterested advice to enquirers on research projects. Bibliographical resources will be drawn from the Ernst-Rodenwalt Institute, which has a scientific library and research laboratories in the same complex, with 30 research workers and 150 technical assistants. Special services which will be available to leprosy workers are as follows: (a) the present position of research in leprosy; b) epidemiology; c) prevention, treatment and rehabilitation; d) all related branches of science that deal with the study of tissues and *M. leprae*; e) the present state of the world-wide leprosy campaign; f) a repertoire of photographs and films relating to all aspects of leprosy.

All enquiries should be addressed to: Professor Dr. K. F. Schaller, Ernst-Rodenwalt Institute, Viktoriastrasse 11-13, Coblenz, Germany.—S. G. Browne

Korea. *Seminar on Tropical Medicine.* The Twelfth Southeast Asian Regional Seminar on Tropical Medicine and Public Health and the Fourth Seminar on Tropical Medicine, Seoul, will be held in Seoul, Korea, from 29 May to 2 June, 1973. The Seminar will consist of the presentation of review papers and original free papers with discussions, a session of Panel Discussion and a laboratory demonstration. Topics of the Seminar will be divided into five main groups: Biology, Immunology (and Epidemiology), Treatment, Panel Discussion on "immuno-diagnosis of helminthic diseases in laboratories and in the field," and Laboratory Demonstration.

In the section on Treatment there will be an opportunity for contributions on the treatment of bacterial infections, including leprosy. The time allotted for individual presentations is 15 minutes, to be followed by 5-10 minutes of discussion. The chairman of the organizing committee is Professor Chin Thack Soh.

Mwanza. *Change of address for Mwanza Program, Ministry of Health.* On 1 March 1973, the office of the Mwanza Program, Ministry of Health, will move to the new Mwanza Hospital. The correct address is as follows: Drs. J. G. F. Anten and G. M. van Etten, Mwanza Program, Ministry of Health, Mwanza Regional Consultant and Teaching Hospital, P.O. Box 1370, Mwanza.

Vietnam. *Public health problems of leprosy in Vietnam.* Despite the overwhelming stresses of war in Vietnam, health officials are making great progress in their efforts to control the serious public health problem of leprosy in that country.

This is the opinion of Oliver W. Hasselblad, M.D., president of American Leprosy Missions, who since 1970 has spent a total of six months in varying periods of work in Vietnam helping to develop a nationwide control program.

There are more than 25,000 registered

cases of leprosy in the country, though the prevalence rate varies widely. In some areas it is as high as 50 per 1,000.

One of the encouraging advances in the Vietnam control program, Dr. Hasselblad said in a report on his work there, is the trend toward integrating leprosy into the public health services. The leprosy program of the Health Ministry's Four Year Health Plan (1971-75) calls for integration of leprosy control into general health services, first at the level of provincial hospitals and gradually extending to district health services.

Regional health inspectors, province medicine chiefs and hospital directors, Dr. Hasselblad noted, are cooperating with the new leprosy program, and a number of provincial hospitals have already set up leprosy outpatient clinics.

In Saigon the large government institution, Cho-Quon Hospital, has transformed its leprosy outpatient department into a skin clinic in which all skin diseases including leprosy are diagnosed and treated. Some 6,000 leprosy cases are registered at the clinic.

The trend toward accepting leprosy as an integral part of medical science is also apparent in teaching institutions. Both the University of Saigon School of Medicine and the National Institute of Public Health have indicated they will include leprosy as a part of multi-disciplinary training for their students. In May 1972, Dr. Olaf K. Skinsnes, director of the American Leprosy Missions Atelier, a newly established research and training center at the University of Hawaii, gave the second of an annual lecture series on all aspects of leprosy at the Saigon Medical School. He also lectured, led seminars and clinical demonstrations for a specially chosen group of regional, provincial and military personnel.

Nurses and health technicians in hospitals and clinics in the provinces are getting basic orientation about leprosy in courses of two six-week periods at the Cho-Quon Hospital. After the first six weeks the trainee returns to his work in the provincial area for six months, then back to Cho-Quon for the final six weeks of training.

One of the gravest problems of the civil-

ian health services, especially in the leprosy control program, said Dr. Hasselblad, is the shortage of qualified personnel. To help provide the needed additional manpower, a plan to train former leprosy patients as auxiliary workers is under consideration in some areas. Such training, he said, would not only fill an urgent need, it would also serve to rehabilitate unemployed ex-patients.

In addition to working with the Health Ministry on plans to implement the recommendations he made after his 1970 survey, Dr. Hasselblad visited the major leprosy centers, government hospitals and clinics over the country. Though security is uncertain in many areas of the country, it was still possible to reach all four regions and many of the provinces where leprosy work exists.

He also visited many patients in their homes. Home visits in Ba-Xuyen Province with Dr. Tran-Tuy-Nhu, director of the Leprosy Control Program, and Province Medicine Chief Dr. Dieu provided epidemiological data for a pilot project of leprosy control in that area. The project is designed to demonstrate that leprosy can be effectively controlled through cooperative efforts of all health agencies in a given area.

Another encouraging development in leprosy control, Dr. Hasselblad said, is the increasing cooperation of voluntary and mission agencies with the government's control program. He praised as especially noteworthy the work of the Evangelical Church of Vietnam (Tin-Lanh) and the Christian and Missionary Alliance in Ban-methuot and Pleiku.

American Leprosy Missions, besides providing Dr. Hasselblad's services to the government program, has also given grants for a specialized footwear project and for training of personnel, has aided the mobile clinic program and sent medicines. It has also provided badly needed office equipment and educational literature used in training courses.

Also sponsoring Dr. Hasselblad's work in Vietnam is the Volunteer Physicians Program of the American Medical Association.—(From American Leprosy Missions)