

Tenth International Leprosy Congress

Program

Opening Ceremony and Ceremony at Armauer Hansen's Bust

Monday, 13 August 1973

Opening and commemoration ceremony, Konsertpaleet (Concert Hall) 0925

- "Be silent now," hymn sung at Armauer Hansen's funeral.
Music: Edvard Grieg. *Words:* Johan Bøgh.
Fana Men's Choir, Conductor: Sigmund Skage.
(*Translation into English in this program*).
- Speeches by:
The Chairman of the Organizing Committee, Dr. E. Waaler
The Minister of Social Affairs, Mrs. Bergfrid Fjose
The Mayor of Bergen, Professor Ole Myrvoll
The Chief Medical Officer, Leprosy, WHO, Dr. H. Sansarricq
The President of the International Leprosy Association, Dr. J. Convit
—Opening of the Congress.
(*All speeches in English in this program*).
- "Evening in the Mountains," from Lyric pieces by Edvard Grieg.
Jan Henrik Kayser, *piano*.
- "Armauer Hansen—the man and his work". Dr. M. Harboe.
- "Ballad of Revolt" by Harald Saeverud. Jan Henrik Kayser, *piano*.

Ceremony at Armauer Hansen's bust, Botanical Garden, 1130

- "Grand Polonaise" by Johan Svendsen. Bergen Division Military Band.
- H.M. King Olav V will arrive.
- "Integer Vitae" by Ferdinand Fleming.
- Speeches by:
Rector of the University of Bergen, Professor A.J. Henrichsen,
(see Editorial, IJL 42, No 2)
Secretary-Treasurer, ILA, Dr. S. G. Browne, O.B.E.
- "Triumphal March from Sigurd Jorsalfar" by Edvard Grieg.
Bergen Division Military Band.

Hymn sung at Dr. G. Armauer Hansen's funeral, February 17, 1912.

Be silent now!
In peace the master sleeps
he whom the wide world keeps
within its heart.
In peace of death he lies
now closed his seeking eyes
for ever now!

Upright and strong
—beneath the shaded light
or in the thick of strife
Ever upright!
Where'er his mind did seek
he faith and trust did keep
so straight and strong!

Now on this day
the men of distant lands
stretch out their grateful hands
in thanks to him.
Thanks for the hope he sought
the health his lifework brought
—his lifework long!

O softly now!
as he among us went,
so quiet, so mild, he lent
his strength to us!
His fame in science lay
but first, in every way
he was a man!



Photo Credit: Gene Phillips

Professor Erik Waaler, Chairman, Organizing Committee.

It is indeed a great pleasure and honor for me, on behalf of the Organizing Committee, to wish you all a hearty welcome to this combined commemorative and opening ceremony. We are particularly glad that it has been possible for Your Majesty to honor the Congress with your presence and thereby follow the example given by Your Majesty's father, King Haakon VII, in 1909 at the 2nd Leprosy Congress here in Bergen. We have records of how delighted the members of the 2nd Congress were to see His Majesty King Haakon at some of the gatherings.

We have the pleasure of seeing Armauer Hansen's two grandchildren in the audience today. We are very glad that it has been possible for you to come to Norway in order to attend this commemorative session.

On behalf of the Organizing Committee I

wish to convey our thanks to the International Leprosy Association for the initiative some of its prominent members took five years ago. They wished to combine the Tenth Congress with the Armauer Hansen centenary, and suggested that the meeting should take place in Bergen. We Norwegians are naturally happy that present day prominent leprologists wish to honor Armauer Hansen, a son of this city.

The Organizing Committee is also very glad that the Norwegian Government responded positively upon the initiative from the International Leprosy Association, and I personally had the pleasure of presenting the government's invitation in London five years ago.

I want to stress that the local arrangements are the responsibility of the Organizing Committee. The International Leprosy Association is responsible for the scientific

program, for dividing into sessions, selection of the papers to be read, and to be read by title only.

Leprosy is not a medical or social problem in Norway today, and Bergen is not a center for leprosy research as it was 100 years ago. Thus, the city of Bergen is not in any way a place particularly earmarked for a leprosy congress. It is only thanks to Armauer Hansen's discovery that Bergen has been honored by having you as guests, and having a leprosy congress for the second time. However, Norway is, at the present not completely without research workers interested in leprosy and related problems. Small groups of workers are found in Bergen, Oslo and particularly in Addis Ababa, at The Armauer Hansen Research

Institute, affiliated with the University of Bergen. I hope that the papers read by some of these workers will justify our right to take part in discussions on leprosy problems at an international level.

The members of this Congress are from many countries, and most of you have traveled for long distances in order to meet in this corner of the world. You will be seeing old friends and making some new ones, and have a chance to discuss your problems and difficulties with colleagues sharing your own interests. It is my sincere hope that all the participants will be able to profit professionally to a great extent, and also to collect many happy memories from this Congress.

Dr. J. Convit, President, International Leprosy Association.

In the name of the International Leprosy Association, an organization that groups the majority of the leprologists of the world, and that is cosponsoring as well as coorganizing this Congress, I wish to express to you our welcome greetings. It is for us a marvellous opportunity to meet in Bergen, the cradle of the discovery of greatest transcendancy in the field of leprosy, that of the *Mycobacterium leprae* by Armauer Hansen, clarifying once for all the infectious-contagious nature of the disease.

The International Leprosy Association has had as main functions, besides stimulating scientific investigation in the field of leprosy, to cosponsor international congresses, as well as to support the INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF LEPROSY as the divulging medium of the scientific leprologic knowledge, having recently widened its range with the inclusion of other diseases by mycobacteria.

This is officially the Tenth International Leprosy Congress and we are concerned with the realization of it in a time of notable expansion of the scientific knowledge on the disease.

Since the Ninth Congress in London,

new discoveries, among them the discovery of the armadillo as an experimental model, will surely come to solve numerous unknowns that still exist in the field of the scientific knowledge of leprosy.

The realization of the Congress that starts today will be a magnificent contribution, not only for the interchange of opinions among scientists devoted, in different parts of the world, to a discipline that imposes upon them innumerable efforts and sacrifices, but also because we are sure that the event will have an administrative organization of a level such as that of the scientific contribution that will be on display here.

It is thanks to the tenacious work of the Organizing Committee of this country, that working with clear vision and discipline, has done an extraordinary task in the organization of the event that starts today.

Before concluding, I wish to express our deep gratefulness to the Norwegian Government for making feasible the realization of the Tenth International Leprosy Congress in this extraordinary country. Hereby I have the honor of opening the Tenth International Leprosy Congress.

Mrs. Bergfrid Fjose, Minister, Social Affairs.

History shows that leprosy has been, and still is, a disease of an exceptional character. As far as I know, this is the oldest of the prevailing communicable diseases. For thousands of years leprosy has been a tragedy for the individual and his family. At the same time the disease has been a challenge to the community and to the solidarity of its members.

Today many countries are in the fortunate position that leprosy has been eradicated. In these wealthy countries leprosy is only an important and interesting part of the history of medicine showing the close interaction between health and socio-economic conditions. On the other side leprosy still is a major health problem in many parts of the world.

Thanks to modern methods of treatment, the majority of individuals suffering from leprosy have a real chance of becoming noninfectious if adequate treatment can be given. However, we still have to admit that much remains to be done to utilize these methods of treatment, and it is up to us to accept this challenge.

Modern methods of treatment have made possible that noncontagious cases in an endemic country now can be treated as ordinary outpatients and in this way the authorities are able to use the scarce resources in a more efficient way. But in spite of this, the treatment usually is an exacting and long-lasting task. Systematic treatment for a number of years is extremely difficult to carry out in communities where the patients usually are the poorest among the poor. Therefore our efforts to improve the treatment are closely linked to the raising of living standards and to education.

So far the most efficient means to control leprosy has been adequate treatment as early as possible. But even though great results have been achieved in this way, our aim must be to prevent the disease. It is an encouraging fact that research in leprosy now has a come-back after being in a backwater for many years after the disease had

disappeared from the rich countries. Today the most advanced are sophisticated methods and technics used in the efforts to investigate the various aspects of leprosy. Armauer Hansen laid the foundation of modern leprosy research when he 100 years ago discovered the bacillus, now usually called Hansen's bacillus. It is our hope that his monumental work will be supplemented by methods for cultivating the bacillus, so that in the future it will be possible to produce an effective vaccine.

More knowledge is the basic condition for the control of leprosy, but more qualified manpower and financial resources are also needed. Today we also know that the prevalence of diseases in a community to a great extent depends on a variety of factors determining the interaction between man and his environment. In particular, in leprosy, socio-economic conditions are of enormous importance. Any advance in general hygiene will be reflected in leprosy incidence. An eradication program is also a major organizational task.

It is now generally recognized that each nation cannot fight out this campaign alone. To succeed, comprehensive international teamwork is necessary, and such teamwork is also already established through the World Health Organization and other international organizations. In this collaboration the small nations have been able to contribute in an efficient way.

In many ways Armauer Hansen was in advance of his age. His discovery shows in an impressive way how it is possible to obtain great achievement without the sophisticated equipment available today. By his open mind, his skill and a strong will to solve the problem, Armauer Hansen still can set a good example, giving hope for the future work to bring health and happiness to mankind. This being our objective my hope is that the Tenth International Leprosy Congress 1973 will indicate that the final fight to beat leprosy has started.

Professor Ole Myrvoll, Mayor, Bergen.

Half a year ago we had the pleasure here in Bergen to be gathered to commemorate the epoch-making discovery made by Dr. Gerhard Armauer Hansen a hundred years ago—in 1873. His laborious efforts to find the cause of leprosy became a mighty inspiration for a whole generation. It was indeed possible to engage in the fight against that suffering which had turned the life of young and old into a continuous tragedy from time immemorial.

His discovery was one of the many forward steps originated at that time. Looking back today we may sometimes be tempted to believe that during the preceding century man let himself be intoxicated by the great progress made. Nothing was impossible, man had become powerful. Society was structurally changed. Cities emerged all over the world, continents were conquered and laid under the plough. An entire generation was engaged in what may be termed as a semi-feverish activity.

The development came perhaps too quickly. In many ways man and resources were subjected to severe exploitation, close neighborhood relations were broken, social conflicts emerged and the strong energy and expansive force ended much too often in tragic and bellicose conflicts between states as well as between men. It was once more the old truth about the sorcerer's apprentice: man had liberated the forces without knowledge of how to govern them.

Today we are concentrating on the problems of our own generation and how to meet that challenge. We have during this centenary had the opportunity in more than one way to be reminded of the burden of leprosy still existing for millions of people round the world. Especially we who live in a country where leprosy for long has been considered to belong to history may feel a

shock to be reminded that this terrible disease day after day destroys our fellow man living on the same planet.

This conference will be a very important source of information with respect to the fight against leprosy—about victories and defeats. It will also be able to give us a report of what chances are left for a decisive victory and—what is the most important—what *we* must be willing to sacrifice to reach that goal.

We have today the pleasure to offer a greeting of welcome to a representative conference of those who are engaged in carrying on the fight that originated in a primitive scientific laboratory in Bergen one hundred years ago.

We hope you will be able to see the historic framework of the work coming from this city. A few years ago the Museum of Leprosy was opened in the quarters which once was the first leprosy hospital. The *second* leprosy hospital has been rebuilt into a center for rehabilitation of the handicapped.

I believe that those two institutions represent something both valuable and symbolic: that the disease is a human tragedy and that our first and foremost task not only is to cure, but also to mark the road for a new happiness for the individual.

Permit me, in conclusion, to express the hope that the members of the conference will return from Bergen also with the memory of a city which we believe is beautiful and which has a characteristic atmosphere difficult to define.

I am happy to say that we are very proud of the fact that this conference has been located in Bergen and on behalf of the city and the municipality of Bergen, I wish you all the best with the conference and the stay here.

Dr. H. Sansarricq, Chief Medical Officer, Leprosy, WHO.

I should like in the first place, on behalf of the Director-General of the World Health Organization, to let the government of the Kingdom of Norway know how grateful WHO is for its having been so kind as to invite us to attend this Congress and this commemorative ceremony. A great debt of gratitude is due to this country's government for having availed itself of the opportunity provided by the centenary of the discovery of the leprosy bacillus by Armauer Hansen to propose that the Tenth International Leprosy Congress could be held in the city where that discovery took place.

I should also like to thank the Organizing Committee: I am sure that, as a result of all it has done, the Congress will be a great success.

WHO is also grateful to the International Leprosy Association, under whose auspices the Congress is taking place. The International Leprosy Association is constantly to the fore in the struggle against leprosy. It should be recalled that the ILA was one of the first nongovernmental organizations to establish official relations with WHO, and since that time it has maintained the closest of links and engaged in most fruitful exchanges with our organization.

The presence of so many eminent delegates from such a large number of countries is unmistakable evidence of the importance attached to leprosy all over the world. I am pleased to see among the delegates many WHO leprosy experts.

Several United Nations specialized agencies, the United Nations Children's Fund and governmental and nongovernmental organizations are also represented here. We all know how valuable their support is to the work done by governments.

The last decade has been marked by sub-

stantial advances in our knowledge of leprosy, particularly in regard to bacteriology, the experimental disease—a field in which particularly extensive research has been done—and immunology. But neither drug trials, though many have been made, nor attempts at prevention by BCG vaccination has provided us with a particularly effective weapon against the disease.

In the field, the reported results after use of the available means of control for over ten years are still contradictory. Consequently, we must now try to make an objective evaluation of the results to find out just how valuable the weapons we have are.

Whatever happens it is still—and this is the position adopted by WHO—necessary to encourage research, stimulating first of all research likely to lead to speedy improvement of control methods. This will mean not only doing work in the laboratory, but also exploring all the avenues thrown open by new epidemiological investigations.

It is also necessary to employ the methods of operational research to perfect procedures, at once simple and effective, for planning, programming, implementing and evaluating antileprosy activities. Those activities should be extended to all endemic areas in each country and integrated into the activities of the general health services, not with any undue haste but as and when it seems opportune and beneficial to do so.

At this Tenth International Leprosy Congress, as at the previous congresses, exchanges of ideas are sure to take place that will lead to substantial advances being made in our methods of controlling the disease.

It gives WHO great pleasure to be taking part in this Congress, held at this historic spot, to improve the health, well-being and happiness of mankind.