

# INTERNATIONAL LEPROSY ASSOCIATION

## General Meeting of Members

A General Meeting of Members of the International Leprosy Association was held on Saturday, 18 November 1978, at 0900 hours, during the XI International Leprosy Congress in Mexico City.

**Welcome.** The President, Dr. J. Convit, called the meeting to order, and welcomed Members of the Association who were present (125 Members had requested, and had been supplied with, copies of the draft revised Constitution).

**Greetings to Honorary Office-Holders.** The meeting approved the suggestion of the President that letters of greeting should be sent by the Secretary-Treasurer to the Honorary Office-Holders of the Association. Dr. Robert Cochrane, President Emeritus, had sent a letter of good wishes for the success of the present Congress.

Letters would therefore be sent to: Dr. R. G. Cochrane, President Emeritus; Dr. K. Kitamura, Honorary Vice-President; Dr. F. Contreras, Honorary Vice-President; and also to Dr. J. N. Rodriguez, Vice-President.

**Greetings and thanks to former Councillors.** The President referred to the distinguished services rendered to the cause of leprosy by those Councillors who were not

able to participate in the present Congress. All three had indicated that they would not wish to be nominated again for the office. The meeting agreed that letters of thanks for past services and good wishes should be sent to: Dr. O. W. Hasselblad, Dr. B. D. Molesworth, and Dr. Y. Yoshie.

In addition to his service as Councillor, Dr. Hasselblad had also placed the Association in his debt by acting as Executive Officer of the JOURNAL. The members wished to record their indebtedness to Dr. Hasselblad.

**Deaths of former Members of the Association.** The President asked the Secretary-Treasurer to read out the names of former members who had died since the last Congress (in Bergen 1973). The following names were read: **Office-Holders**, Ernest Muir and E. Agricola; **Members**, A. Agius-Ferrante, Vincent Barry, A. G. Bulle, E. R. Davison, Rae Dungan, R. Melsom, A. C. Pereira-Filho and N. R. Sloan.

On the President's suggestion, the names of certain distinguished colleagues (not members of the Association) who had passed away since 1973 were also read, these included: L. P. Aujoulat, Albert Dubois, Raoul Follereau, Yoshinobu Hayashi, V. R. Khanolkar, L. R.

Labusquiere, and N. A. Torsuev.

The Members stood in silent tribute to their memory.

**Election of Office-Bearers.** The names of the following Members recommended by the Council to assume office at the close of the present Congress were read out, and approved: **President**, M. F. Lechat; **Vice-Presidents**, J. H. Hanks (Americas), J. Languillon (Europe and Africa), K. Ramanujam (Asia and Far East); **Councillors: Americas**, L. M. Balina, L. M. Bechelli, F. E. A. Rabello, W. M. Meyers, C. C. Shepard; **Europe and Africa**, J. Terencio de las Aguas, K. F. Schaller, R. J. W. Rees, M. F. R. Waters, Cheik Sow; **Asia and Far East**, K. V. Desikan, R. S. Guinto, C. K. Job, M. Namba.

**Editor.** The meeting approved the appointment of Dr. Robert Hastings as Editor of the JOURNAL, and wished him well as he accepted the onerous duties and responsibilities of the office.

The President called upon Dr. R. J. W. Rees to propose a motion of thanks to the retiring Editor, Dr. Olaf K. Skinsnes. Dr. Rees referred to the competence and capacity for hard work that Dr. Skinsnes had brought to the task, and especially to the publication of the *Festschrift* and the Cumulative Index (which, incidentally, included an Index of Abstracts - a most useful addition). The Members showed their appreciation of Dr. Skinsnes' tenure of the office of Editor, and wished him well as he laid down his task. They were especially grateful to Dr. Skinsnes for his promise to assist in any way possible the incoming Editor so as to ensure the continuity of publication of the JOURNAL.

**Secretary-Treasurer.** The President informed the meeting that he would defer the discussion of the post of Secretary-Treasurer until after the Members had approved the revised Constitution, which included the provision that the office of Secretary-Treasurer should be divided and that the functions of Secretary and those of Treasurer should henceforth be distinct.

**Membership dues.** The meeting approved retrospectively the action taken by the Board of Directors of the JOURNAL in recommending to the Council that the annual subscription for membership of the Association (which included the receipt of the JOURNAL as published) should be raised to US \$40 and that the

subscription to the JOURNAL (for non-members) should be raised to US \$50.

The President explained that at this price to non-members subscribers were getting the JOURNAL below the cost of production. The meeting agreed that as from January 1979 the price of the JOURNAL to non-members be raised to US \$60 annually.

**Congress 1983.** The President announced that it was the unanimous recommendation of the Council that the 1983 Congress be held in India. Since the General Meeting of Members was the final authority in the Association, the President invited a Member from Iran (Dr. Assefi) and a Member from Israel (Prof. Sheskin) to convey official invitations from those countries, and then called upon the Secretary-Treasurer (in the absence of a Member from Thailand) to speak on behalf of that country which had sent an official invitation. On a show of hands, it was apparent that the overwhelming majority of Members desired that the next Congress should be held in India. The President then called upon Dr. Dharmendra, an Honorary Vice-President of the Association, to address the meeting. Dr. Dharmendra conveyed the warm invitation of the Indian Government, through the Hind Kusht Navaran Sangh, that the Association should hold its next (1983) Congress in India (New Delhi). His country had a big leprosy problem, which was at present being tackled by no fewer than 2,600 professional workers and 10,000 field workers; it had several leprosy research centers of universal reputation. He was sure that the holding of the next Congress of the Association in India would not only be of great interest and benefit to the Members, but would afford a tremendous encouragement and stimulus to those working for the control of leprosy in India. The Members applauded this intervention of Dr. Dharmendra, showing that they were wholly in favor of the choice of India as the venue for the next Congress.

**Revision of the Constitution.** The Members having received due notice (of at least 24 hours) of this meeting at which amendments to the Constitution would be discussed, and each having received a copy of the amendments proposed by the Council, the President threw the meeting open for comments. He reviewed the reasons that had impelled the Council to undertake the revision of the Constitution, initiated ten years ago.

**Bye-law 5(e).** A Member declared that this bye-law which reads as follows: "All addresses and scientific papers read before a meeting of the Association as such shall be the property of the Association, and shall be forwarded by the Secretary concerned to the JOURNAL of the Association to be considered for publication. If, however, notice has not been received by the authors within three months from the date of receipt by the Editor that the papers have been accepted and will appear in the JOURNAL in the near future, the authors will be permitted to withdraw them and offer them for publication elsewhere," is both unreasonable and unenforceable, and proposed that it should be deleted entirely. (The article in question has been in the Constitution for many years, and has never proved vexatious or restrictive, given an Editor who is reasonable and understanding.)

Another Member suggested that the words "in principle" be inserted as follows: "All addresses and scientific papers read before a meeting of the Association as such shall be in principle the property of the Association, . . ."

After some discussion, the Members approved by a large majority the deletion of the said Article.

All the changes in the existing Constitution, and the new sections introduced, were approved by the Members.

**Article 4(a) and Bye-law 3(c).**

**Secretary.** Since the offices of Secretary and Treasurer had not been approved by the Members as distinct and separate, the President proceeded to put before the Members the unanimous recommendations of the Council in respect of the holders of these two offices.

The President intimated the satisfaction he shared with the Council that Dr. S. G. Browne had consented to assume the office of Secretary, relinquishing the office of Secretary-

Treasurer which he had held for 13 years. The Members expressed their agreement with the recommendation of the Council.

**Treasurer.** The President having put before the meeting the recommendation of the Council that Dr. W. Felton Ross be appointed Treasurer of the Association, the Members signified their approval. As Executive Officer of the JOURNAL, Dr. Ross already had considerable financial responsibilities, and would be able to correlate these related duties.

**Address from the incoming President.** The President then called upon Professor M. F. Lechat, the newly installed President-Elect of the Association, who would assume office at the close of the Congress, to address the Members.

Professor Lechat was conscious of the honor done to him by his election to the high office of President of the International Leprosy Association, and assured the Members that he would do all in his power to further the interests of the Association. He had assumed office at a critical time for leprosy: the old simplicities had gone, and new complexities and uncertainties were now confronting us. In immunology, in microbiology, in epidemiology, and in treatment, we were facing the curious admixture of much greater knowledge of leprosy and an apparent impotence to limit its ravages. It would be his privilege to stimulate research in all fields and to encourage the application of research findings to the problems of the sufferer from leprosy.

After thanking Professor Lechat, the President declared the meeting closed, there being no other business.

—M. F. LECHAT, *President*  
J. C. CONVIT, *Immediate Past President*  
S. G. BROWNE, *Secretary*