

Indian ~~State~~ ^{SEP} Workers - Delhi - (1967)
INDIA Sept. - 1967

One year ago - WHA carefully considered the ^{States} question of smallpox and SE and voted unanimously to initiate in 1967 a ^{10 year} global eradication to be financed program to be executed by funds provided in the regular WHO budget. This decision was considered carefully and with the full realization that a concerted effort would have to be made by the endemic countries and, further, that substantial ~~additional~~ ^{additional} ~~bilateral~~ ^{support} would need to be voluntarily offered by the member governments. The Government of India participated actively in these deliberations and joined with the more than 120 governments represented to make this unanimous decision.

I am happy to inform you that ^{during the first year of the program} ~~the commitments to the program has been made~~ ^{has been} ~~made~~ ^{made} ~~seriously~~ ^{made} ~~the~~ ^{most} ~~governments~~ ^{governments} have clearly demonstrated that the commitments ^{made} ~~made~~ ^{at} ~~the~~ ^{Assembly} were they intend to honor fully the commitments made at the Assembly.

As you know, smallpox is now confined to a few countries in South America; to Africa south of the Sahara and to 6 countries in Asia. Based on the reported incidence of disease, India accounts for fully 2/3 of all cases of smallpox - although last year, higher rates of smallpox were recorded by 7 African countries.

During 1967, plans were developed and initiated in the Americas for a five year ^{continent-wide} ~~program~~ eradication effort. With assistance from the United States, ^{about 1/3} 119 countries of West and Central Africa initiated full-scale eradication program - as of a month ago, ~~fully~~ ^{fully} over 10 million had already ~~been~~ ^{been} vaccinated. Sudan and the Congo have just initiated programs and at least 4 other ^{countries in East Africa} will be operative by the end of 1967. In Asia, Burma in its third year of activity, reports no cases ^{yet} this year; a program in East Pakistan should be underway by the end of the year; programs in Nepal and Afghanistan are presently in operation.

Major ^{or} assistance to the program is being provided by the Soviet Union in the form of vaccine given to India and to the organization for use in other countries. Donations from at least 15 other countries have been received.

India has ^{been conducting over the} ~~already conducted~~ a major or past several years a major vaccination program.

Despite substantial effort to date, reported cases of smallpox ~~has~~ this year have once again increased to record levels. This is of concern I know to you; it is of concern to WHO; and it is of concern to all nations throughout the world. That there are deficiencies in the program is clear. ^{The Soviet Union has} ~~commented to you~~ produced an outstanding document for this meeting which ~~boldly & far truthfully and candidly~~ defines the status of the program to date. ^{I have} read with considerable interest. ~~To this, I can add but little. I should appreciate just a moment to underline a few key things which it was discussed in this important document.~~

Appendix

3. Supervision is highlighted as a ~~major~~ ^{principle} concern, perhaps the most important problem in any program and the one most difficult to remedy by any simple straightforward measures/formula. From the highest level down, interest, determination, a belief in the program and a concern that the job be done well must be transmitted through each administrative level. This ~~objective~~ can only be done effectively by ~~constant~~ ^{continuous} on-the-spot checking, rechecking, training, ~~and~~ ^{advising}, etc. I might note in passing that every unsuccessful program with which I am acquainted has been characterized by supervisory staff who spend ~~the major part of~~ ^{at least 1/2 to 3/4 of} their time in the field on this activity.
2. Freeze-dried vaccine is an absolute requirement, deterioration of liquid vaccine is so rapid that under field conditions, water may as well be used.
3. The rotary lancet must be relegated to history. Extraordinarily wasteful of vaccine and painful, ~~its use has been~~ ^{the Expert Committee} on smallpox as well as ~~the~~ Indian Expert Group have urged it be abandoned promptly.
4. The present family Registrar system, I hope you will reconsider. ~~It is used only in the part of the world.~~ ^{and its shortcomings} The problems of maintenance of ~~it are~~ ^{it are} well known to you - the demands the expenditures of manpower required to ~~maintain~~ ^{maintain} it are prodigious. Many simpler systems have been used ~~in various eradication programs.~~ ^{in various eradication programs.} Most important, of course, in this program is the ~~emerald is~~ ^{emerald is} best but not best.

1. As noted in ~~the~~ ^{this} document ~~presented~~ ^{presented} ~~you~~ ^{you}, the ~~ultimate~~ ^{principle} objective of ~~the~~ ^{the} program ~~throughout~~ ^{in India and} the world is to reduce smallpox incidence to '0'. However many vaccinations are performed the program is a failure of smallpox countries. The reservoir of disease is man and its persistence depends on his ~~capability to~~ ^{transmission of the} ~~transmit~~ ^{transmit} the disease. At least 1/2 the efforts in any program should be focused on ~~preventing~~ ^{insuring prompt} reporting and the initiation of containment measures. If the chain of transmission ~~is~~ ^{is} interrupted, the disease cannot persist however poor the immunity status of the population.
3. The exclusive use of freeze-dried vaccine is emphasized in this document, and a recommendation I heartily second and one which the W-H-A ~~particularly~~ ^{itself} noted. The need to abandon the rotary lancet, so ~~wasteful~~ ^{an instrument unique to the part of the world} of vaccine, so painful, ~~is~~ ^{is} stressed by the Directorate with the full backing of the WHO Expert Com. on smallpox and every other advisory body which has considered this question. Here points deserve particular attention and are well elucidated in this document.

~~Most~~ ^{This meeting} ~~will~~ ^{will} be one of signal importance to the Indian program. It is not a program which can be undertaken by one ~~state~~ ^{state} city or one state or one country. It demands a concert, coordinated national and global effort. Failure of one state to carry out its responsibilities spells doom to the efforts of others. I ~~am~~ ^{am} with others of the WHO staff are delighted and honored

to be invited to participate in this meeting. ~~The program~~ We are all part of the same effort and must in every way assist each other in consummating this global commitment. We look forward to the ~~discussion~~ ^{deliberation} during these next two days and your advice, counsel and guidance as to how best we may get on with the great task set before us.