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ORGANISATION MONDIALE DE LA SANTÉ

SEVENTH WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY

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Provisional agenda item: 6.9

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

CAMPAIGN AGAINST SMALLPOX

1. The Sixth World Health Assembly, having considered resolution EB11.R58 concerning a campaign against smallpox, requested the Executive Board to proceed with a detailed study of the means of implementing such a campaign and to report to the Seventh World Health Assembly.[1]

2. The Executive Board at its twelfth session requested the Director-General to consult with Member States, WHO regional committees and members of the relevant WHO expert advisory panels to obtain suggestions and information on which to base this study.[2] The Executive Board at its thirteenth session noted the results of the Director-General's consultations (annexed), and requested him to urge health administrations to conduct wherever possible campaigns against smallpox as an integral part of public-health programmes. It also requested him to include, where possible, additional studies on smallpox, both in its field and laboratory aspects, in his future programmes.[3]

3. As indicated in the report annexed (page 7), comparative laboratory tests of vaccines dried by divergent techniques are now nearing completion. These will be followed by a human field trial starting this year in a non-endemic area with the primary aim of establishing whether there is a correlation between the results of laboratory tests on vaccines and their protective value in man. The results of this and future trials, which are being considered, will enable the Organization to advise on:

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[1] Resolution WHA6.18 Off. Rec. Wld Hlth Org. 48

[2] Resolution EB12.R13 Off. Rec. Wld Hlth Org. 49

[3] Resolution EB13.R3 Off. Rec. Wld Hlth Org. 53

(a) the methods of preparation of dried vaccines;

(b) the laboratory tests to be used in the assay of vaccines, together with minimum potency requirements for their use;

(c) the degree of stability and optimum conditions of storage in hot climates and the methods of use of specific dried vaccines.

4. It is anticipated that these field trials cannot be completed in less than 3 years. Furthermore, since some countries will desire assistance, it is planned to obtain expert advice and to give guidance as to the minimum standards suitable for vaccine-producing laboratories so that improvements can be effected without undue delay. Guidance on other aspects of smallpox control, including the laboratory diagnosis of the disease and covering both laboratory techniques and their value to health officers, will also be offered.

5. The Director-General has published a study of health legislation in smallpox control in the International Digest of Health Legislation.[4] A study of smallpox endemicity in the world during 1936-1950 has also been published.[5]

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[4] Int. Dig. Hlth Legis. Vol. V, No. 2

[5] Epidem. vital Statist. Rep. 1953, Vol. VI, No. 9, p.227