

THIRD INTER-AMERICAN CONGRESS ON BRUCELLOSIS

(Washington, D. C., November 6-10, 1950)

Since the Twelfth Pan American Sanitary Conference in Caracas in January 1947, and the Second Inter-American Brucellosis Congress in Mendoza and Buenos Aires, Argentina, 1948, considerable progress has been made in the international campaign against brucellosis. An Inter-American committee and 13 national committees on brucellosis are now in existence, and on the basis of recommendations from the II Inter-American Congress, the Pan American Sanitary Bureau has had a very active part in fighting this problem. A program of research was commenced at the University of Minnesota on the standardization of diagnostic materials and procedures, and a comparative study of *Brucella* antigens in regular use at twenty-seven laboratories, in seventeen different countries, has already been accomplished. The Bureau has also facilitated the interchange of scientific material among brucellosis workers in the Americas.

The Third Inter-American Congress on Brucellosis took place in Washington at the Interdepartmental Auditorium from November 6 through 10, 1950. This Congress was held under the joint sponsorship of the Inter-American Committee on Brucellosis, the United States Committee on Brucellosis and the Pan American Sanitary Bureau. Dr. Wesley W. Spink, Professor of Medicine at the University of Minnesota Medical School, and Chairman of the United States Committee on Brucellosis, was elected President. About 200 delegates and observers from 22 countries, including ten countries from Latin America, workers from all over the United States and representatives from the World Health Organization and the Food and Agriculture Organization, were present among the 400 persons who attended the Congress.

Dr. Alice C. Evans, President of the Inter-American Committee on Brucellosis, opened the proceedings with a welcoming address to the delegates. It will be remembered that Dr. Evans was the first to record that human undulant fever was the same disease as brucellosis in cattle, goats and swine and that it was transmitted by the latter to humans.

During the sessions, thirty-three scientific papers were presented which gave valuable information on the recent developments in various aspects of brucellosis. In addition, visits were arranged to the Beltsville Laboratory of the U. S. Bureau of Animal Industry, and to the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland.

The closing session of the Congress dealt with business matters and it was decided that the Inter-American Committee on Brucellosis (of which Dr. Alice Evans is President and Dr. Ruiz Castañeda is Secre-

tary) would continue in force with Dr. Benjamín Lucas Morán, elected to fill a vacant position on the Committee.

There was considerable talk concerning the difficulties encountered by brucellosis workers in the interchange of material and it was agreed that the Bureau would continue to publish original articles and some excerpts on brucellosis, and that reprints and other material on brucellosis developments would be distributed to workers in this field in the Americas provided the workers themselves send material to the Bureau. Among the resolutions adopted, specific recommendations were made concerning diagnostic techniques in the Americas. It was recommended:

(1) that countries in the Americas use, insofar as practicable, similar antigens and methods for the performance of sero-agglutination tests for the diagnosis of brucellosis in both human beings and lower animals;

(2) that the Pan American Sanitary Bureau (Regional Office of the World Health Organization) arrange for the designation of a laboratory within the Americas for the purpose of facilitating the standardization of such methods, and for making periodic comparative studies of the materials and techniques employed therein;

(3) that each country of the Americas arrange for the designation of centralized authority to be made nationally responsible for unification and standardization of materials and techniques used in the sero-agglutination tests for brucellosis;

(4) that the Pan American Sanitary Bureau (Regional Office of the World Health Organization) arrange for the periodic distribution to the national authority mentioned in part three (above) of selected serum samples (to include the OIE standard dried serum) for check test purposes;

(5) that in the diagnosis of bovine brucellosis, the minimum positive titer should be between 1/10 and 1/12 of the titer obtained when the OIE standard serum is tested with the antigen and by methods of the country concerned; (It is already known that these criteria and those most commonly used in the Americas are in alignment.);

(6) that the titer for diagnosis of brucellosis in man and lower animals other than bovine, having not yet been agreed upon, should be the subject of study by the international agencies concerned;

(7) that the materials and methods used for the rapid plate agglutination test be adjusted to give results in accordance with those of the tube test;

(8) that published papers including data based on brucellosis sero-agglutination tests should always indicate the titer obtained when the antigen and method employed are tested by the OIE standard serum. This last information would normally be supplied by the laboratory producing the antigen.

The Congress adjourned Friday, November 10, without making any recommendations as to the time and place of the next Inter-American Congress on Brucellosis, deferring this decision until such time as the cooperating groups feel that progress in the brucella field warrants further meeting. The PASB has undertaken to publish the complete proceedings of the Congress as soon as possible.