

directing council



PAN AMERICAN
HEALTH
ORGANIZATION

XIV Meeting

regional committee

WORLD
HEALTH
ORGANIZATION

XV Meeting



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NATIONAL CITIZENS COMMITTEES FOR HEALTH PROGRAMS

The 46th Executive Committee meeting held in Washington, D. C. in April 1962, decided in Resolution XIII:

"1. To invite the Director of the Bureau to use every means at his disposal to foster the organization of National Committees in the countries of the Americas, with the following objectives: (a) to arouse the interest of public opinion in health problems, and (b) to disseminate information about the importance of international cooperation, especially with regard to the activities of the Pan American Health Organization and the World Health Organization.

2. To invite the Director to report to the Governing Bodies in due course on the results of his efforts to that end."

The Director would like to report that national citizens committees for the World Health Organization are functioning in U.S.A. and Canada. In 1963 the National Citizens Committee of U.S.A. has organized its Third National Conference on World Health which will be held at the Mayflower Hotel in Washington, D.C., September 26-27 concurrent with the last days of the meeting of the Directing Council.

On May 2, 1963 a World Health Conference was held at the University of California, Los Angeles, as the result of which a Los Angeles Chapter of the National Citizens Committee for the World Health Organization was organized, a local affiliate of the National Committee.

The United Nations Association of Jamaica has organized a Jamaican Committee for the World Health Organization.

Since the active support of the citizens is essential to assure success of national health programs and since the objective of such committees is to assist in development of such citizen participation it is felt that all means possible to achieve this end should be utilized. Thus, in view of the program of development of national committees to stimulate and support the Alliance for Progress, the Task Force on

Health at the Ministerial Level which met in Washington, D.C., 15-20 April, recommended to the Organization of American States and the Governments of the Member States that, when establishing National Committees for the Alliance for Progress, they take into consideration the advisability of including representatives of the ministries of health in such committees.

It is felt that by establishing subcommittees on health of the National Commissions for the Alliance for Progress certain of the objective of the Executive Committee's resolution of April 1962 will be achieved in these countries involved. This can be considered a step toward developing a continent-wide series of national committees with specific health orientation.

The verbatim recommendation of the Task Force on Health at the Ministerial Level follows:

"C.4 National Committees for the Alliance for Progress

The Task Force on Health at the Ministerial Level, considering that in accordance with Resolution E of the Charter of Punta del Este the Organization of American States is carrying out a public information program aimed at promoting the interest of the peoples of the America in the Alliance for Progress; that one of the measures adopted is the establishment of National Committees for the Alliance for Progress in the countries of the Member States of the Organization of American States; and that the Charter of Punta del Este points out the intimate relationship and interdependence between economic and social development and the improvement of health conditions,

Recommends to the Organization of American States and the Governments of the Member States that, when establishing National Committees for the Alliance for Progress, they take into consideration the advisability of including representatives of the ministries of health in such committees."

The pertinent recommendation of the Special Meeting of the Inter-American Economic and Social Council at the Ministerial Level held in Punta del Este, Uruguay, 5-17 August 1961 established the basis for the commissions in the following terms:

"1. To recommend that the Council of the Organization of American States study the possibility of convoking, as soon as possible, a Special Meeting on Information Media, for the purpose of promoting the most appropriate action for informing public opinion on these development plans and mobilizing it in their favor.

2. To bring to the attention of the Council of the Organization of American States the necessity for having the Department

of Public Information of the Organization give preferential attention to the dissemination of information on the efforts to be undertaken and, with the collaboration of the Inter-American Development Bank and the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America, prepare a program whose main objectives would be:

- a. To promote the creation or development of information media, for cultural and educational purposes, in those regions of the Americas where they do not exist, or where they are insufficient, using the native languages where necessary, and particularly encouraging the activity of national information agencies;
 - b. To promote the distribution and circulation among member countries of all documents and other information materials that tend to emphasize the urgency of complying with the objectives of the Alliance for Progress; to publicize its democratic ideals and achievements; and to obtain increasing support from the peoples of the Hemisphere for its program particularly by strengthening the information services of regional offices of the inter-American organizations; and
 - c. To spread, among the peoples of the Americas, knowledge of each other and of the solutions they are finding to their problems, within the spirit of Operation Pan America and of the Alliance for Progress, promoting the exchange of persons at all social levels, especially of students and urban and rural workers.
3. To recommend that news agencies, the press, radio and television companies, and foundations direct and intensify their efforts toward ending the present ignorance on the part of the peoples of the Americas of each other and of the conditions prevailing in their countries.
4. To bring to the attention of governments and educators the need for educational centers to contribute to the dissemination of knowledge of the social and economic development inspired by the Alliance for Progress, and to provide those centers with adequate material for doing so.
5. To suggest to the Organization of American States and the governments of the member countries that they promote the holding of conferences, seminars, and round tables to report on and discuss the main economic and social problems of the Hemisphere and their possible solution within the framework of the Alliance for Progress.
6. To call upon the public opinion of the Hemisphere, and especially the trade unions, labor organizations, and student associations to become aware of the social implications of the Alliance for Progress and to take an active part in the dissemination of information on its objectives and in the discussion and execution of its programs."

In order to comply with this resolution the Pan American Union has so far organized national commissions in the following countries: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela.

The Pan American Union Offices in the member countries act as the secretariat of the national commissions. The objectives of these commissions are as follows:

- a. To inform the public on the objectives and achievements of the Alliance for Progress, in accordance with the Charter of Punta del Este.
- b. To stress on the people of the Western Hemisphere the importance of the efforts of the community in making the Alliance for Progress a success.
- c. To provide the means for publicizing the work of the Alliance for Progress.
- d. To provide the public with information on what the whole nation is doing towards making the Alliance for Progress a success.
- e. To promote the exchange of students, workers, and peasants among the countries of the Western Hemisphere, as well as the organization of meetings, seminars and round table discussions on the economic and social problems of the Hemisphere and how they can be solved within the framework of the Alliance for Progress.
- f. To cooperate with educational institutions in their attempt to publicize the economic and social advances under the Alliance for Progress.

In keeping with the sense of the Executive Committee resolution, steps have been taken to cooperate with existing committees and to continue providing support for national efforts to arouse public interest in and support of health programs. In this latter role the Organization has cooperated with the Pan American Union in promoting the interest in and support of health on the part of national committees for the Alliance for Progress.