

14TH MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
Washington, D. C.
20-22 September 1951

TOPIC 13: FIRST INTER-AMERICAN CONGRESS OF PUBLIC HEALTH
Report of the Representative of the Government of Cuba

Havana, 10 September 1951

Sir:

In compliance with your request, I take pleasure in submitting a report on the activities undertaken to implement the resolution adopted by the XIII Pan American Sanitary Conference, and the more recent resolution approved by the Executive Committee during its meeting in April 1951.

1.- Following a decision of the Cabinet, the Government of Cuba promulgated a decree expressing its satisfaction and appreciation in regard to the resolution adopted by the Conference whereby the First Inter-American Congress of Public Health will be held in the city of Havana to celebrate the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Pan American Sanitary Organization and, at the same time, to pay continental homage to Carlos J. Finlay.

The Cabinet has appointed a Committee to represent the Government of Cuba in matters pertaining to the Congress, comprising the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Public Health and Welfare, the Assistant Secretary of State, the Director of Public Health, the Chief of the Chancellery, and the Permanent Delegate of the Cuban Government to Public Health Organizations. The Cabinet also instructed the Minister of Public Health and Welfare to appoint a technical committee for the purpose of implementing general decisions agreed upon in Washington.

Dr. José R. Andreu, the Minister of Public Health and Welfare, has organized the technical subcommittee with the following members: Dr. Antonio Maceo, Assistant Secretary of Public Health (Chairman); Dr. Luis Espinosa, Director of Public Health; Dr. Alberto Oteiza, Director of the Leprosy Foundation; Dr. Gustavo Cabarroú, Director of the Finlay Institute; Dr. Guillermo Lage, Director of the School of Public Health; Dr. Guillermo Barrientos, Chief of Public Health in Havana; Dr. Pedro Nogueira, Director of the Health Unit at Mariano; Dr. Alberto Recio, Epidemiologist; Dr. Alejandro Casuso, Professor of

Hygiene at the School of Medicine; Dr. Arturo Curbelo, Professor of Bacteriology; Mr. César Rodríguez Expósito, Historian of the Ministry of Public Health, and Dr. Félix Hurtado, who will act as coordinator.

2. The aforementioned Technical Committee has proposed to the Minister and the latter has agreed, to instruct the official representative of the Cuban Government to submit the following preliminary plan to the consideration of the Executive Committee of the Pan American Sanitary Organization:

a.- The Ministry of Public Health of Cuba thanks the Executive Committee of the Pan American Sanitary Organization for entrusting it with the selection of the three official topics to be considered by the Inter-American Congress of Public Health. However, the Ministry has decided to select only one of these subjects, "Rural Sanitation", which will be the official topic assigned to the Ministry of Public Health of Cuba. The Ministry has selected Dr. J. Ortega, Dr. A. Barrientos and Dr. R. Calvo, assisted by Engr. J. Radelat, to act as rapporteurs.

b.- The Technical Committee requests the Executive Committee to select the remaining two central topics of the Congress, and also to invite experts from other countries which it selects to develop these subjects.

c.- A Symposium on Yellow Fever will also be organized. This will be developed by a round table of 21 experts, one from each of the American Republics. Cuba has appointed Prof. Alberto Recio y Fornas as its representative. We suggest that the Executive Committee recommend to each of the Member Countries of the Pan American Sanitary Organization that it appoint one expert to participate in the round table.

Dr. Recio will open the Symposium on Yellow Fever with a paper entitled "The Finlay Doctrine and his Research in the Light of Present Developments". Dr. Félix Hurtado, Representative of the Cuban Government to Public Health Organizations, has specific instructions from the Minister of Public Health to plan with the Executive Committee of the PASO a secondary program covering five aspects of the yellow fever question, which will be developed by yellow fever experts from countries of the Americas, and in this connection the Government of Cuba naturally wishes to extend a special invitation to Dr. Fred L. Soper to participate in this group.

3.- Another Symposium will be held on Health Education, to be attended by the directors of schools of public health. Dr. Guillermo Lage, Director of the School of Public Health of Cuba, will represent the Cuban Government at this round table.

4.- It is recommended that consideration be given to the importance of public health subjects such as rabies, rickettsial diseases, brucellosis, tuberculosis, maternal and child health problems, and the question of

legal adjustments necessitated by the new [sanitary] regulations adopted at the recent meeting in Geneva.

5.- The program, which will be circulated to all Member Countries by the PASB, will take into consideration the desirability of presenting topics in such manner as to permit representatives of all countries to submit comments if they wish to do so.

With regard to the homage to Carlos J. Finlay, the Supreme Council and the General Assembly of the Order of Finaly will participate in these scientific meetings by organizing a solemn ceremony entitled "Oración Finlay". Only three addresses will be given on this occasion, namely those by the Chairman of the Inter-American Congress of Public Health, a delegate speaking on behalf of all the Delegations, and the President of the Republic of Cuba.

The Government of Cuba is pleased to note that other scientific institutions closely connected with public health, such as the American Society of Tropical Medicine and the National Malaria Society, are holding their 1952 annual meetings in Havana during the same period as the First Inter-American Congress of Public Health. Cuba is highly honored to be able to offer its capital city as a site for meetings of such importance as those of the Executive Committee and Directing Council of the PASO, the WHO Regional Committee for the Americas, the First Inter-American Congress of Public Health, and other scientific congresses which are related to this field.

The Government of Cuba will provide the funds to cover local facilities for the Congress of Public Health, and although this meeting is an official congress of the PASO and is thus being conducted by the Executive Committee, the Government of Cuba, as host government, and through its Chancellery, will arrange to send official invitations to all Governments of the Americas.

This preliminary program has been discussed with the Technical Committee of the Ministry of Public Health and approved by the Minister, Dr. José R. Andreu. Through the official representative of the Government of Cuba, Dr. Félix Hurtado, it is submitted for final approval to the Executive Committee of the PASO at its meeting on 20 September. Dr. Hurtado has been instructed and duly authorized by the Ministers of State and Public Health to reach agreement on the final program of this Congress.

The present report may be mimeographed and translated into English by the Secretariat for reference during the meetings.

Cordially yours,

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Addendum

The Director of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau, in order to comply with Item 3 of Resolution XX of the Executive Committee at its 13th Meeting, and in view of the Report of the Representative of the Government of Cuba, proposes the following subjects as a preliminary program for the First Inter-American Congress of Public Health:

PLENARY SESSIONS

Official Topics

1. Rural Sanitation

Official Chairmen: Dr. J. Ortega
Dr. A. Barrientos
Dr. R. Calvo
Engr. J. Radelat

2. and 3. The Government of Cuba proposes that the Executive Committee select topics 2 and 3 and invite the rapporteurs to develop them.

SYMPOSIUMS

First General Topic: Yellow Fever

Official Proposal: "The Finlay Doctrine and His Research in the Light of Present Developments", assigned to Dr. Alberto Recio y Forns.

Five additional aspects of yellow fever, which will be assigned to specialists on the subject, among whom the Government of Cuba wishes particularly to invite Dr. Fred L. Soper.

Second Topic: Health Education

Rapporteur designated by Cuba: Dr. Guillermo Lage, Director of the School of Public Health of Cuba. The directors of schools of public health in the Americas will be invited to take part.

Third Topic: Zoonosis, especially: rabies, brucellosis and rickettsial diseases.

Fourth Topic: Tuberculosis. The Representative of El Salvador proposes BCG as a special topic.

Fifth Topic: Maternal and Child Care

Sixth Topic: International Sanitary Regulations

ROUND TABLES

In connection with the Meeting of the American Society of Tropical Medicine and the National Malaria Society

First Round Table - Malaria
Second Round Table - Chagas Disease
Third Round Table - Schistosomiasis
Fourth Round Table - Onchocercosis

The round tables will have a Chairman appointed by agreement between the Government of Cuba and the Pan American Sanitary Bureau and they may meet simultaneously.

Details of the program will be assigned to the special committee appointed by Cuba and to the Pan American Sanitary Bureau.