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**VI Meeting
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Committee**



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Topic 9: ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE

(Presented by Dr. Gerardo Segura, Chairman of the 22nd Meeting of the Executive Committee, at the Second Plenary Session, 8 October 1954)

I am honored to report to this most important Pan American Sanitary Conference, on behalf of the Executive Committee of the Organization, on the work accomplished by the Committee at its 21st and 22nd Meetings held in Washington, D.C., and at its 23rd Meeting held just a few days ago here in this hospitable city of Santiago. Following the decision of the XIII Conference, this is the first time the Directing Council has not met at the time of the meeting of the Pan American Sanitary Conference, and is also the first time that the Chairman of the Executive Committee has made his annual report to the full Conference.

In summarizing the work of the Committee, I wish to point out it has examined the budget presented by the Director of the Bureau for 1955, and, after a careful study was made by a subcommittee, it was agreed to limit the total amount of the budget to that voted for the preceding year. The programs were distributed in such a way as to keep a balance between the most urgent requirements of the national public health services and those of over-all Pan American public health. This budget is now to be studied by the committees named by the Conference, which will decide if any changes are to be made, as it deems advisable.

Mention should be made of certain points of particular interest. Our Organization has now paid off, in advance, the loans extended by the Kellogg and the Rockefeller Foundations for the purchase of the headquarters buildings in Washington.

With the payment by some governments of quota contributions in arrears, a surplus was created in the amount of some 144,000 dollars, the utilization of which is to be studied on the basis of the recommendation of the Director. This topic has been included on the Conference agenda for consideration.

A similar question will be considered with respect to the sum of 400,000 dollars received with the payment of all the outstanding quota contributions of Argentina, and also the amount of 1,500,000 pesos made available to the Organization in fulfillment of the pledge made by General Juan Perón, President of Argentina.

Your opinion will be requested on a matter of the utmost importance, which in successive resolutions has been left to the Conference for final decision: I refer to the revision of the Constitution of the Pan American Sanitary Organization. The significance of this topic is self-evident.

A study was made also of the reports of the Permanent Subcommittee on Buildings and Installations, and of the preliminary report on Unification of Action in Public Health Programs in the Americas. Topics were selected for the Technical Discussions that will take place during these meetings.

The Committee has deemed it advisable to encourage a study with a view to increasing the stipends paid to fellowship students, so as to improve their standard of living during their stay abroad.

The Conference is to elect two new Members of the Executive Committee. It is also to elect the Director of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau for a four-year term. In addition, it will select the seat of the XV Pan American Sanitary Conference.

It should be pointed out that, at its 22nd Meeting in April 1954, the Executive Committee requested that the authorities of international sanitary organizations endeavor to give greater publicity to the activities they carry out at the wishes of their governments, since it is the public that, in the final analysis, supports these activities. Ninety per cent of the public is uninformed of this work and of its influence in the field of health.

How is it possible, under such conditions, to ask these people to increase their contributions? Standing still can mean only a step backward for progressive organizations that must follow a course of logical expansion.

In a television broadcast in Buenos Aires last September, officials of the United Nations stated that it was absolutely essential to inform the public of their activities in all fields and suggested making use of documentary films, among other media. This is exactly what was proposed in Washington last April.

In my opinion, the Members of the Executive Committee have a great responsibility. When the Member Governments of this Organization delegate to them the task of studying and solving public health problems in the Hemisphere, with all the means available, the effectiveness of the work of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau depends on their ability to act wisely and their interest in the work. This is true, since it provides stimulus to the technical directors of the Bureau, who, in turn, both at Headquarters and in the Zones, work conscientiously in the assurance that their efforts are recognized; and those of us in constant contact with them can appreciate their valuable work.

It is apparent, therefore, that the appointment of Members of the Committee is of the utmost importance, and those receiving this honor should recognize the seriousness of their mission and be willing to work unceasingly on its behalf.

This Organization, which has been in existence for 52 years, operates with ever-widening cooperation among the American countries, since its guidance and direction have been the product of successive meetings of the Conference, the Directing Council, and the Executive Committee. It has the collaboration of a growing number of technical personnel and experts from all the countries, and its future could not be more promising.

More and more, this Organization will become for American public health workers the forum wherein sound policies will be adopted. When the Governments recognize its true value, it will be easier to obtain more funds. With them, we shall be able to eliminate from the Americas those diseases for which preventive medicine has provided the means of eradication, which, if applied intelligently and resolutely, can accomplish this final aim.