



directing council

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VII Meeting

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HEALTH
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REMARKS OF THE HONORABLE JOHN M. CABOT, ASSISTANT
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS, AT
THE SIXTH PLENARY SESSION OF THE VII MEETING OF
THE DIRECTING COUNCIL OF THE PAN AMERICAN SANITARY
ORGANIZATION, HELD ON 14 OCTOBER 1953

Mr. Chairman, and delegates to the Directing Council, I appreciate the opportunity you have given me to come here during one of your regular sessions to make a few remarks to you. I will not interrupt your labors for more than a few moments. The Department of State is happy to have this important technical meeting again take place in Washington and to make available for this purpose this Conference Suite. My Government takes special pride in the location in this country of the headquarters of this Inter-American Organization which also serves as Regional Committee of WHO. The Pan American Sanitary Bureau, founded in 1902, has a long record of accomplishments to its credit and the Bureau is to be congratulated on its present successful efforts. These advances, attributable to the international program of the Bureau, together with the increasing amounts devoted to public health in the national budgets of each country, are tangible evidence of the practical results for which you are all working. In my work, I am constantly reminded of the essential role of health programs in establishing the social basis of international understanding and tolerance—a powerful influence in preserving the peace of the world.

In speaking of these advances, I am fully aware that the Pan American Sanitary Organization has two basic contributions to make: it is, first, an important means of promoting public health throughout the Hemisphere, and, at the same time, a significant element in the maintenance of friendly inter-American relations. Neither aspect of the Organization can be lost to sight in the discussion of this Council and in the work of the

Organization as a whole. The major tasks of coordinating and stimulating the public health efforts of so many separate administrations can only continue to prosper on the basis of sound organizational relationships. On the other hand, an organizational structure alone -a political entity- will neither kill any mosquitoes nor immunize any children.

In this connection, I am informed that your meetings have given considerable attention in the past to the question of the extent to which the areas of this Hemisphere not pertaining to an American Republic should participate in the Organization. In the resolution of this question, the United States has favored an equilibrium, a proper balance, between the two aspects of your Organization that I have just mentioned. Such a balance has, we believe, been achieved by the arrangements decided upon two years ago which admit all of the areas of the Hemisphere whose cooperation in the programs of the Bureau is indispensable to participation in the technical work of the organization. In our view -and I wish to emphasize this- that decision was essential to the progressive development of health and in no wise disturbed the composition of the Organization as one of the principal Inter-American technical organizations. My purpose in referring to this subject is to assure you that our Delegation, headed by the Surgeon General, Dr. Scheele, is giving constant attention to all aspects of this question and that the United States will exert its best efforts towards a satisfactory solution in the interests of all the peoples of the American region.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and to all of you, Bienvenida a Washington y el mayor éxito en sus importantes labores: Esta es su casa!