

NEWS

"Hansen's Disease Center" In The U.S.

"National Hansen's Disease Center" is the new name for the U.S. Public Health Service Hospital, at Carville, Louisiana. Dr. John R. Trautman, who was recently promoted to the rank of

Assistant Surgeon General, U.S. Public Health Service, will remain at Carville, as Director of the "National Hansen's Disease Center".

"Hansen's Disease Control Unit" In Trinidad & Tobago

Commenting on the epidemiological aspects of hanseniasis in Trinidad and Tobago, Emmanuel Faria (*The "Star"* 39 (5) p. 12, 1980) refers to the "1979 Annual Report of the Trinidad and Tobago Hansen's Disease Control Unit". This is the new name of the agency. The list of countries that have officially rejected the term "leprosy"

is growing: Italy, Brazil, Portugal, Bolivia, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago. The U.S. seems to be following suit (*Vide* news about the U.S. "National Hansen's Disease Center").

Incidentally we beg our readers to report, please, any changes of the word "leprosy" occurring in their countries.

Italian "Friends of Raoul Follereau" Banish The Word "Lebbra" And Derivatives

The former "Associazione Italiana Amici dei Lebbrosi" has changed its name to "Associazione Italiana Amici di Raoul Follereau". In a letter to Father Umberto Guidotti, Mr. Bruno Bovina, President of the Association, writes that "Raoul Follereau has worked all his life to eradicate the terror and malignant effects that the name of the disease still inflicts on patients and especially on the society that ought to cure them".

Accordingly, the by-laws of the Association have replaced the words

"Lbbra" and "lebbroso", with "Morbo di Hansen" and "Hanseniani". Continues Mr. Bovina : "With this action we intend to present a disease like the others, breaking down the barriers of prejudice and superstitions which emerge from biblical texts. We have no illusion about eradicating the disease by changing its name, but, if it helps in removing prejudices, it would be a large step forward. It is desirable that a World Congress banishes the word "leprosy" without ,abandonning the patients who are so much in need".

Italy, The First Country to Banish The Word "Leprosy"

A law was approved by the House of Representatives and the Senate, and signed by President Leone on January 12, 1974, by which the terms "lebbra", "lebbroso", "lebbrosario" and derivatives were forbidden in official papers and documents of the Italian government as well as in Italian public entities and institutions.

This news never received enough publicity and surprized the editors of this periodical and all who thought that Brazil was the first country to banish those stigmatizing terms. In Brazil, only a few states preceded the Italian action, from 1967 on.

"Time" Magazine Reinforces Leprostigma

In an article under the caption "Herpes simple: the new sexual leprosy", "Time" magazine (July 28, 1980) spreads false and stigmatizing notions about "leprosy". A letter with two short paragraphs was sent by "Hansenologia Internationalis" to "Time", in a frustrated attempt to enlighten its readers about the low degree of contagiousness of the disease, the end of

compulsory isolation and the heavy burden that leprostigma imposes on developing countries. That letter was not published.

"Hansenologia Internationalis" insists in stating that with the term "leprosy" there is absolutely no way of competing with the powerful communication media.

Professor João de Aguiar Pupo Passes on

The manuscripts of this number were in press, on August 23, 1980, when Professor João de Aguiar Pupo, the dean of Brazilian dermatologists and hansenologists and Scientific Director of this magazine, passed on at the age of 90 years. His last work was published by in "Hansenologia Inter-

nationalis" (4(2) : 93, 1979). A few days before his death he was seen at the library of the "Instituto de Saude", actively collecting data for a new article.

"Hansenologia Internationalis" regrets the loss of Prof. Pupo and sympathizes with his bereaved family.

The Transmissibility of Hanseniasis Focused in Argentina

Several articles appeared in important Argentine newspapers in September 1980, which do not consider hanseniasis an infectious disease but rather a metabolic condition' upon which Hansen's bacilli act secondarily. These articles were signed by Dr. Meny Bergel, whose views have been opposed by the Argentine hansenologists, including Dr. Enrique D. L. Jonquières, our correspondent in Argentina.

In response to a question by Dr. Jonquières about the possibility that "Hansenologia Internationalis" takes this subject into consideration, this periodical affirms that hanseniasis is an infectious disease caused by the mycobacteria discovered by Hansen, in 1973, as proved by epidemiological and immunological studies, confirmed by experimental transmission to animals and accidental infection of persons.