

tainly nothing that can by any stretch of the imagination be termed a highlight came from Mexico. In theory, it is desirable and even essential in the long run; in practice, its application must be subject to a diversity of local conditions and to local constraints.

Well so much for a superficial and rapid survey of aspects of the week's work.

Where do we go from here?

I detect a note of sober, even somber, realism in the papers and sessions. We are learning more of the complexity of the leprosy organism and of the immune response to challenge. And the twin specters of drug resistance and persistently viable organisms dominate much of our thinking today. But I can also discern an excitement, an enthusiasm, as unforeseen and unimagined vistas of research are opening up to the research immunologist and microbiologist.

Coupled with the realism and excitement, can we not all see and welcome the increasing interest in the whole social environment of the sufferer from leprosy? He is a fellow human

being, a man (or woman) like unto ourselves, with hopes and frustrations, with family contacts, with needs for food, housing and employment, and the simple joys of life.

In this Congress, we met each other, and appreciated each other's work. And we are coming to realize, whatever our particular field of activity, that we need each other more than ever before as we face the common foe.

Highlights? Yes, a few. More importantly, a general intense glow of interest and cooperative effort, a warmth of mutual appreciation and understanding, and a realization of our interdependency in the One World, the global community. Coupled with all this, is the working together of the research scientist, the concerned therapist, and those deeply moved by the human plight of the sufferer from leprosy.

This spirit augurs well for the future — whatever the serious problems we may have to face. Let us put into practice what we already know, and strive after new knowledge that will help solve this intractable and challenging problem.

ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT-ELECT OF THE ILA, DR. MICHEL F. LECHAT

Muy distinguidos colegas y amigos,

En primer lugar, tengo que agradecerles la confianza que me mostraron eligiéndome presidente de nuestra Asociación. Es un honor inmensurable para mí suceder a leprólogos tan prestigiados como fueron mis predecesores en la presidencia: Marchoux, Wade, Fernández, Cochrane y Convit. Trataré de hacer lo más posible para continuar en la línea que ellos han marcado, y que resultó en un tan gran éxito para nuestra Asociación.

Especialmente debo rendir tributo al Dr. Jacinto Convit, quien con tanta ciencia y tanta humanidad, presidió nuestra Asociación durante los últimos diez años, es decir, desde el Congreso de Londres en 1968. Al mismo tiempo que el Dr. Convit fue electo Presidente, yo lo fui como miembro del Consejo Ejecutivo de la ILA, y durante diez años marcados por los Congresos de Bergen y de México, así como en muchas otras actividades involucradas con la Asociación, fue un placer trabajar junto a un presidente tan amable y tan experimentado; asimismo, junto con un secre-

tario general, tan dedicado y tan eficaz como es el Dr. Stanley Browne, y con los otros miembros del Consejo.

Dr. Convit, los contactos que hemos tenido durante estos diez años, y desde muchos años más que nos conocemos, seguramente me ayudarán mucho en este nuevo y difícil cargo que estoy desempeñando. El hecho de que usted vaya a permanecer como consejero de la ILA durante los cinco años próximos, será una garantía más de la continuación de su obra. I am also looking forward to the continuous assistance of our Secretary, Dr. Stanley G. Browne. Let me assure you, Stanley, that your experience will be immensely valuable in helping me to assume this new task. Thank you very much for having accepted.

This is a very important time for leprosy and for the ILA. During the last 45 years, the International Leprosy Association, through its congresses and through the publication of the *INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF LEPROSY*, has played a major role in promoting interest in leprosy, in circulating ideas, research and

results, and also in serving as a link between all categories of leprosy workers and scientists involved in leprosy research, in fact all those interested in leprosy around the world. It is to be expected that the dynamic role of the ILA will continue as in the past and whenever possible will increase. In this respect, I hope to keep the happy cooperation among the three language groups that we have experienced here in Mexico.

The world of leprosy is changing fast today. The everlasting game between the bacillus and the environment is playing new tricks which are severely challenging to well-established methods of leprosy control. Research is at a turning point. It might be that new fast-acting drugs or a vaccine will be developed. However, even if this is not for tomorrow or the day after tomorrow, what is quite new, most important, and most encouraging are the wide efforts made by a number of scientists, in many countries, most of them members of the ILA, to pool resources and expertise and pursue a cooperative research undertaking under WHO-TDR special program sponsorship, IMMLEP and THELEP.

In endemic countries, leprosy control is more and more becoming a national responsibility. Governments are concerned with the health of their peoples. This also means that leprosy has to be viewed in its proper context, as one important disease among others which equally require a fair share of the existing resources. It is also increasingly realized that leprosy is only a facet of the global problem of poverty faced by so many countries. Beyond purely medical measures, these problems require social and economic choices for their solution.

Last but not least, I want to mention the increasing importance of voluntary agencies both in the fight against leprosy as well as for the relief of sufferers of the disease. These agencies are making and will, we hope, continue to bring a significant contribution to leprosy, not only in terms of providing money and services but also in terms of taking new initiatives, extending moral support, changing current approaches and educating the public at large. It calls for a close cooperation with WHO, of which, may I remind you, the International Leprosy Association is a recognized affiliated non-governmental organization and with WHO regional offices. It calls for a strengthening and enlightened coopera-

tion with voluntary agencies concerned with leprosy, especially ILEP, the Federation of antileprosy associations and also with national leprosy associations in endemic countries; these could possibly require exploring some new type of relation. In my opinion, strengthening the links with national associations against leprosy or stimulating their creation where they do not yet exist could facilitate the cooperation already existing between the various organizations and increase the efficiency of their action.

In this respect, I am looking forward to a close cooperation with the Indian Leprosy Association, Hind Kusht Nivaran Sangh, for the preparation of the next congress in New Delhi. It seems particularly timely that this congress, which will make the fiftieth anniversary of the creation of the International Leprosy Association, will be held in a country where leprosy remains a great challenge. We shall do our best to make this congress a new success, with the help of the Indian Local Organizing Committee, and with the guidance of the Presidential Advisory Committee for the Twelfth International Congress.

Puisque nous parlons des orientations futures de l'Association Internationale Contre la Lèpre, dans la ligne de la grande tradition inaugurée voici 45 ans par Marchoux, il est un autre point sur lequel je voudrais insister. Le malade de la lèpre, avec sa détresse, ses angoisses, son abandon, toujours fut présent à l'esprit, non seulement de ceux qui oeuvrent et se dévouent sur le terrain, mais aussi des chercheurs qui dans leur anonymat de leurs laboratoires s'efforçaient de mettre au point de nouveaux outils pour lutter contre la maladie. Aujourd'hui cependant, on prend de plus en plus conscience qu'il n'est point possible de vaincre la lèpre sans considérer le problème dans son entièreté, dans la complexité de ses répercussions sociales et économiques, dans ses aspects humains avec toutes les ramifications que ceci comporte. Ce Congrès a accordé une grande importance aux aspects sociaux de la lèpre. Un Atelier, fut spécialement consacré à étudier les aspects humains du traitement des malades. Souhaitons que les recommandations qui furent émises aident chacune d'entre nous à promouvoir dans les conditions diverses rencontrées dans nos différents pays, une lutte contre la lèpre adaptée au contexte local. Ce qui sera un gage de succès.

N'oublions jamais toutefois que la lèpre, problème douloureux s'il en est, et atteint des millions d'hommes et de femmes, n'est dans biens des pays qu'un problème de santé parmi d'autres: malaria, et autres affections tropicales majeures, tuberculose, mortalité infantile, cécité, et surtout malnutrition, parfois famine. N'oublions pas de même que la santé ou la maladie n'est qu'un problème, parmi les problèmes multiples posés par le sous-développement. Comme le disait Raoul Folle-reau: "A travers la lèpre, soigner toutes les lèpres."

La lutte contre la lèpre, pour devenir un succès, doit être menée en harmonie avec l'ensemble des autres activités de santé. Ceci vaut également pour la recherche, où nous avons tout à gagner de l'apport d'autres disciplines.

Enfin, avant de conclure, je voudrais exprimer toute mon admiration et mes sentiments d'affection à l'organisateur de ce Congrès, à celui qui nous a convié ici, à Mexico, dans ce prestigieux pays où se rencontrent trois civilisations, à l'ami: Professor Latapi - il ne m'est nul besoin de recourir à l'espagnol pour m'adresser à vous, car vous parlez le français comme votre langue - je voudrais vous répéter combien nous vous sommes reconnaissants de votre accueil, vous dire merci, et vous demander de partager nos sentiments de gratitude avec tous nos collègues mexicains, et particulièrement avec les membres du Comité Organisateur Local, pour le merveilleux travail qu'ils ont accompli et qui ont permis de faire de ce Congrès un réel succès. Muchas gracias a todos. A tous, bonne chance. Till New Delhi, 1983.

DECLARATORIA DE CLAUSURA

Dr. Fernando Latapi
Presidente del Congreso

Después de agradecer una vez más a todos los participantes, de acuerdo con el programa me corresponde como Presidente del Congreso hacer la declaratoria de clausura de este evento que nos dejará recuerdos imborrables, hoy, 18 de noviembre de 1978.

CLOSING STATEMENT

Dr. Fernando Latapi
President of the Congress

After expressing thanks once again to all of the participants, in accordance with the program, it is my duty as the President of the Congress to announce today, November 18, 1978, the closing of this event which will leave us with indelible memories.

LA DÉCLARATION DE CONCLUSION

Dr. Fernando Latapi
President du Congrès

Après avoir exprimé les remerciements de nouveau à tous les participants, selon le programme, il me faut comme Président du Congrès annoncer, aujourd'hui le 18 novembre 1978, la fin de cet événement qui va nous laisser des mémoires ineffaçables.