

From the Office of
Senator Hubert H. Humphrey
1311 Senate Office Building
Washington 25, D. C.
Capitol 4-3121, Ext. 2424

FOR RELEASE: Saturday A. M.'s
May 9, 1959

SENATOR HUMPHREY: "COSTLIER TO TOLERATE AVOIDABLE DISEASE THAN TO ERADICATE IT"

Senator Hubert H. Humphrey (D., Minn.) told the National Citizens Committee for WHO last night in Washington that "from an economic standpoint alone, it is far costlier to the world to tolerate the existence of avoidable disease than it is to seek mass eradication of disease."

"Let us declare total war against disease," the Chairman of the Senate Study of International Health said. "Let us declare a war in which all the world will fight on the same side!"

"With a great cooperative effort in international health," Senator Humphrey said, "we can concoct a 'peace vaccine' -- to inject into the body politic of international relations."

"A truly unselfish and cooperative international health effort can be an important step," he said, "in helping to create a climate of relationships out of which political agreements between East and West may some day be reached."

Senator Humphrey told the group that a successful long-term assault on world disease can be built on six elements:

1. A sharp step-up in the budget of the World Health Organization, led by contributions from the industrialized Western Powers, including the Soviet Union.
2. Immediate planning for the mass eradication of such diseases as tuberculosis and several chronic African diseases.

Senator Humphrey announced that he is introducing new amendments to the Mutual Security Act by which the U. S. would contribute \$1 million to WHO for field trials, surveys, and demonstrations of technical feasibility for this purpose.

3. A positive mandate to the U. S. Public Health Service "to make available its technical know-how to the world on a more expanded basis."

Here again Senator Humphrey revealed he is offering a new amendment to the Mutual Security Act to express clear Congressional intent for this purpose.

4. Acceleration of the world programs against cancer and heart disease and others of the so-called "dread diseases."

A third Mutual Security amendment, Senator Humphrey said, would make available \$1 million for WHO research planning in the specific fields of cancer and cardiovascular ailments -- the first such funds which the U.S. will ever have designated to WHO for use specifically against these diseases.

Senator Humphrey also emphasized the importance of Senator Lister Hill's Senate Joint Resolution 41 -- the "Health for Peace Act," which would establish a National Institute for International Medical Research, with a hope for authorization of at least \$50 million per year. (Senator Humphrey pointed out that the entire WHO 1959 budget amounted only to \$26 million.)

5. A full and sustained effort under the International Public Health and Medical Research year beginning in June 1961.

As the sponsor of the Senate resolution under which the Senate approved the concept of such a Year, Senator Humphrey said that "What is important is not merely what is begun that year, but rather what is sustained and broadened and expanded thereafter."

6. Passage of Senator Humphrey's "Food for Peace Act," which would expand the usage of counterpart currencies generated by the sale and loan of surplus American food abroad for many constructive purposes -- including better schools, better sanitation systems, and better health facilities.

"We cannot consign the present generation to endless disease and disability," Senator Humphrey declared, "while talking about future plans."

D.C.
conference on
Western Economic Develop conf
✓ PH 4 Conference

000850

Dr. Judd
Mr. Judd
Julius Cohn

Speech
by
Senator Hubert H. Humphrey
before
National Citizen's Committee for W.H.O.
Statler Hotel
Washington, D. C.
Friday, May 8, 1959

It is a pleasure to appear before this dedicated assembly
of citizens in public and private life, seeking to strengthen
a great international body - the World Health Organization.

I am particularly happy to pay tribute to the ~~the~~ American
delegation which, commencing next Tuesday, will represent ~~our~~
Country ~~meeting~~ at the 12th World Health Assembly.

and, L It is a pleasure to share this evening with my friend, the
Chairman of the Board of the International Rescue Committee,
Leo Cherne. His outstanding work on behalf of "MEDICO" symbolizes
the enormous contributions made by voluntary organizations in our
country toward overseas well-being.

Soviet Challenge - total
Do what we need to do -
no need to get snap from party Communist

Contrast of Two Meetings in Geneva

L The scene in Geneva next week provides an historic commentary on two parallel developments of our time.

L At Geneva, the Foreign Ministers of the Great Powers will meet to attempt solution of the thorny West Berlin crisis and other major East-West issues. (*slow-careful*)

L Simultaneously, in Geneva, East and West, instead of disputing, will be joining in this other conference - on World Health.

L The contrast between the two meetings is clear.

In the political arena, we see, by and large, controversy, suspicion and fear. In the health forum, we see large-scale agreement, faith and eager anticipation for tomorrow's achievements.

L In world politics, we see discord; in world health, we see unity.

L I know that it is the hope of everyone in this audience tonight that the type of cordial atmosphere which will be represented at the W.H.O. meetings will be carried over, so to speak, into the

atmosphere of the Foreign Ministers Conference.

Herzfeld

~~atmosphere of the Foreign Ministers conference.~~

000852

Need For Coordinated Research on Fallout

And in at least one area, the World Health Organization has an unparalleled opportunity for leadership in a field which overflows the scientific into the political -- radioactive fallout. W.H.O. is uniquely qualified to play a far larger role than at present in securing a scientific "meeting of the minds" as to the effects on present and future generations of radioactive fallout.

Right now the limited scientific evidence on fallout is a maze of controversy, of charge and countercharge.

There is a multiplicity of national and inter-Governmental organizations at work on isolated aspects of the fallout problem.

Internationally there are for example: W.H.O., the International Atomic Energy Agency, the International Labor Organization (so far as occupational health problems are concerned), and the United Nations Committee on the Effects of Radiation.

Here in the United States, among the considerable number of interested agencies, are: The National Committee on Radiation Protection and Measurements, the Department of State, the Atomic Energy Commission, the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, and its Public Health Service, together with ^{the}~~the~~ Food and Drug Administration; in addition to the United States Weather Bureau, the Department of Defense, the Department of Agriculture, the Coast and Geodetic Survey, the Bureau of Mines, the National Science Foundation, the Department of Interior, the National Bureau of Standards, the National Academy of Sciences, and others.

The sheer number of these agencies, each with its separate pool of technical information and interest, makes it essential that there be coordination on both the national and international scene.

It should not be assumed that no coordination exists at present. Actually, the various staff members of the Division of Biology and Medicine of the Atomic Energy Commission alone have membership on 43 inter-agency Committees.

At the technical level scientists are striving earnestly. What is needed is top policy coordination and still more intensified research into genetic, leukemia and other problems.

Moreover, there must be more "coordinated interpretation as to the results of research.

We need an unadulterated atmosphere of search for scientific truth. This must be a search which does not bend the facts to some particular bias or preconceived idea, but rather a search which lets the facts fall as they may and which informs the public promptly and accurately.

Bold new bio-chemical discoveries are possible and indeed essential in the radiation field. ^{yes,} We may find it possible to counteract the harmful effects of radiation in the human body.

big menacing
Strontium 90, is a great but not insoluble question mark.

However, only coordinated research, preferably under W.H.O.

auspices can solve its riddles.

The World's Burden of Disease

But there are a vast range of ^{other} issues in which W.H.O. is
called to a high purpose.

The nature of that purpose is illustrated in a series of
factual publications which are, as most of this audience is aware,
being issued by the Subcommittee of the Government Operations
Committee, of which I am privileged to be Chairman.

Next week, this Subcommittee will issue a *report* ~~Committee Print~~,
exclusively devoted to the World Health Organization. This
publication will be based on my own ~~intensive~~ study of W.H.O..
It will commend W.H.O.'s great contributions to international
health within the 11 short years since its creation.

Many in this audience may have noted one of our previous Committee reports - "The Status of World Health." This chart book shows the appalling world-wide incidence of disease, confronting the family of man.

Among the figures cited in this chart book are the following:

250 million cases of malaria

250 million cases of filariasis

400 million cases of hookworm

150 million cases of schistosomiasis

400 million cases of trachoma and infectious conjunctivitis

50 million cases of yaws

The blight of these and other widespread and largely avoidable
diseases is a disgrace to the 20th Century.

It is a blot on the conscience of man.

It is a formidable barrier to a world of progress, peace
and plenty.

Disease Obstacles Bar World Progress

Far too often, the political leaders of the world, in their attempt to solve major problems have forgotten that in vast regions of the globe - in many areas of Africa, South Asia, the Middle East and, yes, Latin America - we are dealing with largely sick populations.

areas cannot be solved,
We cannot solve these ~~areas~~ ^{The} social and economic problems ^{of these} without solving their health problems. And we cannot solve

their health problems without coming to grips with their socio-economic problems.

Improving health in the emerging areas means that population will increase, often spectacularly. This means that food and industrial productivity, must simultaneously increase, lest the good effects of better health be cruelly wiped out by mass hunger and unemployment.

Examples of Health Problem in India

Here in Washington, this past week the Committee for International Economic Growth held a very important conference on the subject of the future of one great country, India. It was my pleasure to participate in this conference.

I know, however, that everyone interested in that Nation is well aware that disease and disability are part and parcel of the fundamental problems faced by India today.

In India, life expectancy is only 32 years on the average. This is the second lowest rate in the world. (In Northern Rhodesia, life expectancy at birth is still lower, 28.)

India is plagued with malnutrition. In India, 48 kilograms of animal protein are consumed per person, per year (milk, meat, fish). This is estimated to be the lowest rate in the world. (Compare this to the 384 kilograms per person in Norway, the highest in the world.)

Our food abundance can help

The Vicious Cycle

Malnutrition breeds disease.

Disease breeds poverty.

Poverty breeds malnutrition and disease! Somehow the

vicious cycle must be broken with VISION - with BOLDNESS - and
with DETERMINATION AND ACTION.

The fact of the matter is that as great as achievements
in world health have been in the past, they have not made more
than a slight dent in the backlog of disease which has
accumulated over the centuries.

At the slow rate mankind is coming to grips with certain
mass maladies, it will be at best, 10, 20, 30, or 50 years before
whole populations will have been relieved of the burden of
avoidable diseases.

CONSIGNING PRESENT GENERATION TO ILLNESS 000860

The question is: What do we propose to do about it, starting now.

A half-hearted, ^{effort} half-hearted answer will not suffice.

Tens of millions of innocent people are sick and hungry today -
at this moment - in India and hundreds of millions elsewhere.

We cannot say to them, "Sorry, we can't help very much. But
never mind, the world may be better for your children and your children's
children!"

We cannot consign the present generation to endless disease and
disability. We cannot fold our hands in resignation and pretend that
the problem is insoluble within present lifetimes.

The fact is, that from an economic standpoint alone, it is
FAR COSTLIER to the world to tolerate the existence of avoidable
disease than it is to seek mass eradication of disease.

Our experience in combatting malaria has proven that.

Mere malaria CONTROL is infinitely costlier over a long period of
time than is an intensified effort to ERADICATE malaria absolutely.

But if we are to deal effectively with these problems, we must have a long-range program, and we must begin to put it into effect today.

NEED FOR LONG-RANGE PROGRAM

∠ A doctor cannot be trained overnight. The world's acute medical shortage is so severe that nothing short of a bold 10-20-30 year program will solve it.

∠ And the same is true in the case of the shortage of other categories of crucial health manpower - nurses, dentists, pharmacists, sanitariums, and various medical auxiliaries.

6 POINT CONQUEST OF DISEASE PROGRAM

I have said that we need a program. Let me now suggest a half-dozen elements in that program.

1) First and foremost, the 88 members of the World Health Organization should endeavor to "break through" to a higher level of contributions to that organization.

The overall World Health Organization 1959 budget represented total resources of only around 26 million dollars.

000862

That included \$15 million for the regular budget, \$6 million for the Malaria Eradication Special Account, and \$5 million from the Expanded Program of Technical Assistance.

Everyone who has studied the financial problem is aware that particularly in today's inflationary situation, \$26 million is grossly insufficient to cope with the problems of world health.

I am well aware that many of the emerging nations are already strained to meet even their present assessed contributions. It seems to me, therefore, that those ^{more fortunate} ~~better endowed~~ nations which have larger financial capacity, particularly the industrialized Western Powers, including the Soviet Union, have a special responsibility to help provide larger financial resources for the World Health Organization.

\$1 MILLION AMENDMENT FOR ERADICATION SURVEY

2) Secondly, the program of mass eradication of selected diseases must proceed full speed ahead.

The present anti-malaria program must be pursued to final success, particularly in Africa where only a small area has been covered to date.

000863

But, we must begin to lay plans for mass eradication of other diseases with which the world has lived far too long.

For that reason, I am introducing new amendments to the Mutual Security Act of 1959, S. 1451, under which the United States would contribute to the World Health Organization a sum of one million dollars for field trials, surveys, and demonstrations as to the technical feasibility of mass eradication of such diseases as tuberculosis, and of several chronic African diseases. In that way, we will test whether cure and prevention of such diseases can be placed on an inexpensive, effective, and relatively permanent basis through mass application.

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE LEADERSHIP

3) A third essential point is to flash the green light for the United States Public Health Service to make available its technical know-how to the world on a more expanded basis than at present.

Toward that end, another amendment which I am introducing to the Mutual Security Bill, would, for the first time on the statute books

000864

~~of our nation~~, make unmistakably clear the right of, yes, the
mandate to the Surgeon General of the United States Public Health
Service to join ^{+ partnership} ~~together~~ in the prevention and conquest of disease
throughout the world.

✓ The Surgeon General would, of course, exercise this function
through the President of the United States and the basic organ of
foreign policy, the Department of State.

And the Public Health Service would work in a manner which
would complement, and in no way duplicate, the work of the International
Cooperation Administration.

FINDING ANSWERS TO CANCER, HEART DISEASE

4) A further element in the program is to accelerate man's
search for answers to the riddles of baffling diseases which still
exact a terrible toll throughout the world.

Most important among these diseases are, of course, cancer and
heart disease.

During World War II, 1.9 million people died in the United States of the diseases of the heart and the circulatory system. That represented eight times the loss of life in the Armed Forces.

Cancer in turn killed over twice as many as lost their lives in that war.

Khrushchev / When I was in the Soviet Union, I pointed out to Premier Khrushchev that, last year, a quarter of a million Americans ~~died~~ of cancer (which is one every two minutes) and a quarter of a million Russians died as well. I said: let us join hands - bilaterally and through WHO - in warring against cancer. Premier Khrushchev agreed. WHO can, therefore, play an indispensable part in coordinating East-West research toward the conquest of that dread disease.

1 1/2 hrs on health

↳ Toward this end, too, still another amendment which I am introducing would make available one million dollars for WHO research planning in the specific fields of cancer and cardio-vascular ailments.

This would be the first such money, the only such money, which the United States has ever designated to the World Health Organization for specific application against these two most universal killers.

000866

And, I might point out, this would SUPPLEMENT the one million dollars which the Executive Branch already proposes for research planning "across the board" against a vast spectrum of literally dozens of diseases.

Still another element in this program is the passage of legislation which I regard as indispensable on the research front. This is Senate Joint Resolution 41, the "Health for Peace" Act, introduced by Senator Lister Hill and co-sponsored by 58 other Senators, including myself. Under this Bill, there will be established

a National Institute for International Medical Research with,
we hope, an authorization of not less than \$50 million per year.

This Institute would become the channel for research
grants overseas, for the support of international medical
organizations, exchange of medical information, and other
essential purposes.

FULL EFFORT UNDER THE INTERNATIONAL HEALTH YEAR

5. You are all aware that at the ^{WHO} Assembly

opening next Tuesday, one of the very important items on the
agenda is the International Public Health and Medical Research
Year.

This Year, which could commence in June 1961,
could witness the greatest effort against disease ever waged
in the history of man. It could break through to higher
levels of governmental and world-wide health activity.

As the sponsor of the Resolution under which the
Senate unanimously approved the concept of such a Year, I feel

that all possible resources should be mobilized for the success of the Year.

Of course, a 12 month or 18 month period would simply be a beginning. But it could mark a bolder beginning than men have heretofore visualized. What is important is not merely what is BEGUN that year, but rather what is sustained and broadened and expanded THEREAFTER.

PASS "FOOD FOR PEACE" ACT

6. Finally, I suggest that we use one of the greatest assets in the world today, America's food, for the health of mankind.

Food saves lives, restores lives, enriches lives.

American food sold abroad generates counterpart currencies which can then be reloaned for a wide variety of constructive purposes, including higher industrial and agricultural productivity, better schools, better sanitation systems, better health facilities.

This is why I have introduced the "Food for Peace"

Act, and it is why ^{we} ~~it~~ shall strive for its passage,

TOTAL WAR AGAINST DISEASE

These six points are but a few elements of an overall program. They add up to one key theme. Let us declare total war against disease. Let us declare a war in which all the world ^{can} ~~will~~ fight on the same side.

Let us wage this war with the same dedication, the same spirit of self-sacrifice, ~~is~~, the same spirit of doing the impossible, as we ~~have~~ developed in time of military conflict. *Let us demand unconditional surrender,*

The enemy of disease is not simply present in Africa, South Asia, and the Middle East. The enemy is here in the whole world, the bacteria, the viruses, the accidents, which kill and cripple man.

Here in the United States, there are an estimated 23 million partially or totally handicapped persons, including

14 million with diseases of the heart and arteries, another 14 million with some type of mental problem, 11 million with arthritis and rheumatism.

↳ We Americans would not today think of tolerating such former foes as small pox, typhoid fever, plague, or pellagra.

↳ So, too, there is no reason why we should adopt an attitude of helplessness in the face of the other types of diseases I have mentioned which now scourge so many of our own and other people.

↳ And so next week, as the statesmen of the Great Powers meet in an attempt to find a way out of nuclear war, let a different type of war be declared by the World Health Organization.

↳ Let it be a war against the only enemy mankind seeks -- the enemy which limits him, deprives him of his birth-right, cuts him down prematurely -- disease and disability.

000871

And, let this war be an integral part of an
even broader war against poverty, indignity, malnutrition,
unemployment, ignorance and hopelessness.

This war can be won for the first time in recorded
history. Mankind can at last gain an upper hand in conquering
the foes which have blighted him since he first appeared on
this earth.

↳ In winning the war against this enemy, we may
help to win against World War III.

With a great cooperative effort in international
health, we might concoct a "peace vaccine" ^{with which to vaccinate} ~~to inject into~~
the body politic of international relations,

↳ A truly unselfish and cooperative international
health effort can be an important step in helping to create
a climate of relationships out of which political agreements
between East and West may some day be reached.

That, above all, is what we most earnestly seek.

Let us dare to Try!

COPY

Speech
by
Senator Hubert H. Humphrey
before
National Citizen's Committee for W.H.O.
Statler Hotel
Washington, D. C.
Friday, May 8, 1959

It is a pleasure to appear before this dedicated assembly
of citizens in public and private life, seeking to strengthen
a great international body - the World Health Organization.

I am particularly happy to pay tribute to the fine American
delegation which, commencing next Tuesday, will represent this
nation at the 12th World Health Assembly.

It is a pleasure to share this evening with my friend, the
Chairman of the Board of the International Rescue Committee,
Leo Cherne. His outstanding work on behalf of "MEDICO" symbolizes
the enormous contributions made by voluntary organizations in our
country toward overseas well-being.

Contrast of Two Meetings in Geneva

COPY

The scene in Geneva next week provides an historic commentary on two parallel developments of our time.

At Geneva, the Foreign Ministers of the Great Powers will meet to attempt solution of the thorny West Berlin crisis and other major East-West issues.

Simultaneously, in Geneva, East and West, instead of disputing, will be joining in this other conference - on World Health.

The contrast between the two meetings is clear.

In the political arena, we see, by and large, controversy, suspicion and fear. In the health forum, we see large-scale agreement, faith and eager anticipation for tomorrow's achievements.

In world politics, we see discord; in world health, we see unity.

I know that it is the hope of everyone in this audience tonight that the type of cordial atmosphere which will be represented at the W.H.O. meetings will be carried over, so to speak, into the

atmosphere of the Foreign Ministers conference.

Need For Coordinated Research on Fallout

And in at least one area, the World Health Organization has an unparalleled opportunity for leadership in a field which overflows the scientific into the political -- radioactive fallout. W.H.O. is uniquely qualified to play a far larger role than at present in securing a scientific "meeting of the minds" as to the effects on present and future generations of radioactive fallout.

Right now the limited scientific evidence on fallout is a maze of controversy, of charge and countercharge.

There is a multiplicity of national and inter-Governmental organizations at work on isolated aspects of the fallout problem.

Internationally there are for example: W.H.O., the International Atomic Energy Agency, the International Labor Organization (so far as occupational health problems are concerned), the United Nations Committee on the Effects of Radiation.

COPY

Here in the United States, among the considerable number of interested agencies, are: The National Committee on Radiation Protection and Measurements, the Department of State, the Atomic Energy Commission, the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare and its Public Health Service, together with its Food and Drug Administration; in addition to the United States Weather Bureau, the Department of Defense, the Department of Agriculture, the Coast and Geodetic Survey, the Bureau of Mines, the National Science Foundation, the Department of Interior, the National Bureau of Standards, the National Academy of Sciences, and others.

The sheer number of these agencies, each with its separate pool of technical information and interest, makes it essential that there be coordination on both the national and international scene.

COPY

It should not be assumed that no coordination exists at present. Actually, the various staff members of the Division of Biology and Medicine of the Atomic Energy Commission alone have membership on 43 inter-agency Committees.

At the technical level scientists are striving earnestly. What is needed is top policy coordination and still more intensified research into genetic, leukemia and other problems.

Moreover, there must be more coordinated interpretation as to the results of research.

We need an unadulterated atmosphere of search for scientific truth. This must be a search which does not bend the facts to suit some particular bias or preconceived idea, but rather a search which lets the facts fall as they may and which informs the public promptly and accurately.

Bold new bio-chemical discoveries are possible and indeed essential in the radiation field. We may find it possible to counteract the harmful effects of radiation in the human body.

COPY

Strontium 90, is a great but not insoluble question mark.

However, only coordinated research, preferably under W.H.O.

auspices can solve its riddles.

The World's Burden of Disease

But there are a vast range of ^{other} issues in which W.H.O. is called to a high purpose.

The nature of that purpose is illustrated in a series of factual publications which are, as most of this audience is aware, being issued by the Subcommittee of the Government Operations Committee, of which I am privileged to be Chairman.

Next week, this Subcommittee will issue a Committee Print, exclusively devoted to the World Health Organization. This publication will be based on my own intensive study of W.H.O.. It will commend W.H.O.'s great contributions to international health within the 11 short years since its creation.

COPY

Many in this audience may have noted one of our previous Committee reports - "The Status of World Health." This chart book shows the appalling world-wide incidence of disease, confronting the family of man.

Among the figures cited in this chart book are the following:

250 million cases of malaria

250 million cases of filariasis

400 million cases of hookworm

150 million cases of schistosomiasis

400 million cases of trachoma and infectious conjunctivitis

50 million cases of yaws

The blight of these and other widespread and largely avoidable diseases is a disgrace to the 20th Century.

It is a blot on the conscience of man.

It is a formidable barrier to a world of progress, peace and plenty.

Disease Obstacles Bar World Progress

COPY

Far too often, the political leaders of the world, in their attempt to solve major problems have forgotten that in vast regions of the globe - in many areas of Africa, South Asia, the Middle East and, yes, Latin America - we are dealing with largely sick populations.

We cannot solve these area's social and economic problems, without solving their health problems. And we cannot solve their health problems without coming to grips with their socio-economic problems.

Improving health in the emerging areas means that population will increase, often spectacularly. This means that food and industrial productivity, must simultaneously increase, lest the good effects of better health be cruelly wiped out by mass hunger and unemployment.

Examples of Health Problem in India

Here in Washington, this past week the Committee for International Economic Growth held a very important conference on the subject of the future of one great country, India. It was my pleasure to participate in this conference.

I know, however, that everyone interested in that Nation is well aware that disease and disability are part and parcel of the fundamental problems faced by India today.

In India, life expectancy is only 32 years on the average. This is the second lowest rate in the world. (In Northern Rhodesia, life expectancy at birth is still lower, 28.)

India is plagued with malnutrition. In India, 48 kilograms of animal protein are consumed per person, per year (milk, meat, fish). This is estimated to be the lowest rate in the world. (Compare this to the 384 kilograms per person in Norway, the highest in the world.)

COPY

The Vicious Cycle

Malnutrition breeds disease.

Disease breeds poverty.

Poverty breeds malnutrition and disease! Somehow the

vicious cycle must be broken with VISION - with BOLDNESS - and
with DETERMINATION AND ACTION.

The fact of the matter is that as great as achievements
in world health have been in the past, they have not made more
than a slight dent in the backlog of diseases which has
accumulated over the centuries.

At the slow rate mankind is coming to grips with certain
mass maladies, it will be at best, 10, 20, 30, or 50 years before
whole populations will have been relieved of the burden of
avoidable diseases.

~~COPY~~
CONSIGNING PRESENT GENERATION TO ILLNESS

The question is: What do we propose to do about it, starting now.

A half-hearted, half-baked answer will not suffice.

Tens of millions of innocent people are sick and hungry today -
at this moment - in India and hundreds of millions elsewhere.

We cannot say to them, "Sorry, we can't help very much. But
never mind, the world may be better for your children and your children's
children!"

We cannot consign the present generation to endless disease and
disability. We cannot fold our hands in resignation and pretend that
the problem is insoluble within present lifetimes.

The fact is, that from an economic standpoint alone, it is
FAR COSTLIER to the world to tolerate the existence of avoidable
disease than it is to seek mass eradication of disease.

Our experience in combatting malaria has proven that.

Mere malaria CONTROL is infinitely costlier over a long period of
time than is an intensified effort to ERADICATE malaria absolutely.

COPY

But if we are to deal effectively with these problems, we must have a long-range program, and we must begin to put it into effect today.

NEED FOR LONG-RANGE PROGRAM

A doctor cannot be trained overnight. The world's acute medical shortage is so severe that nothing short of a bold 10-20-30 year program will solve it.

And the same is true in the case of the shortage of other categories of crucial health manpower - nurses, dentists, pharmacists, sanitariums, and various medical auxiliaries.

6 POINT CONQUEST OF DISEASE PROGRAM

I have said that we need a program. Let me now suggest a half-dozen elements in that program.

1) First and foremost, the 88 members of the World Health Organization should endeavor to "break through" to a higher level of contributions to that organization.

The overall World Health Organization 1959 budget represented total resources of only around 26 million dollars.

That included \$15 million for the regular budget, \$6 million for the Malaria Eradication Special Account, and \$5 million from the Expanded Program of Technical Assistance.

Everyone who has studied the financial problem is aware that particularly in today's inflationary situation, \$26 million is grossly insufficient to cope with the problems of world health.

I am well aware that many of the emerging nations are already strained to meet even their present assessed contributions. It seems to me, therefore, that those better endowed nations which have larger financial capacity, particularly the industrialized Western Powers, including the Soviet Union, have a special responsibility to help provide larger financial resources for the World Health Organization.

\$1 MILLION AMENDMENT FOR ERADICATION SURVEY

2) Secondly, the program of mass eradication of selected diseases must proceed full speed ahead.

The present anti-malaria program must be pursued to final success, particularly in Africa where only a small area has been covered to date.

COPY

But, we must begin to lay plans for mass eradication of other diseases with which the world has lived far too long.

For that reason, I am introducing new amendments to the Mutual Security Act of 1959, S. 1451, under which the United States would contribute to the World Health Organization a sum of one million dollars for field trials, surveys, and demonstrations as to the technical feasibility of mass eradication of such diseases as tuberculosis, and of several chronic African diseases. In that way, we will test whether cure and prevention of such diseases can be placed on an inexpensive, effective, and relatively permanent basis through mass application.

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE LEADERSHIP

3) A third essential point is to flash the green light for the United States Public Health Service to make available its technical know-how to the world on a more expanded basis than at present.

Toward that end, another amendment which I am introducing to the Mutual Security Bill would, for the first time on the statute books

COPY

of our nation, make unmistakably clear the right of, yes, the mandate to the Surgeon General of the United States Public Health Service to join further in the prevention and conquest of disease throughout the world.

The Surgeon General would, of course, exercise this function through the President of the United States and the basic organ of foreign policy, the Department of State.

And the Public Health Service would work in a manner which would complement, and in no way duplicate, the work of the International Cooperation Administration.

FINDING ANSWERS TO CANCER, HEART DISEASE

4) A further element in the program is to accelerate man's search for answers to the riddles of baffling diseases which still exact a terrible toll throughout the world.

Most important among these diseases are, of course, cancer and heart disease.

COPY

During World War II, 1.9 million people died in the United States of the diseases of the heart and the circulatory system.

That represented eight times the loss of life in the Armed Forces.

Cancer in turn killed over twice as many as lost their lives in that war.

When I was in the Soviet Union, I pointed out to Premier Khrushchev that, last year, a quarter of a million Americans died of cancer (which is one every two minutes) and a quarter of a million Russians died as well. I said: let us join hands - bilaterally and through WHO - in warring against cancer. Premier Khrushchev agreed. WHO can, therefore, play an indispensable part in coordinating East-West research toward the conquest of that dread disease.

Toward this end, too, still another amendment which I am introducing would make available one million dollars for WHO research planning in the specific fields of cancer and cardio-vascular ailments.

This would be the first such money, the only such money, which the United States has ever designated to the World Health Organization for specific application against these two most universal killers.

COPY

And, I might point out, this would SUPPLEMENT the one million dollars which the Executive Branch already proposes for research planning "across the board" against a vast spectrum of literally dozens of diseases.

Still another element in this program is the passage of legislation which I regard as indispensable on the research front. This is Senate Joint Resolution 41, the "Health for Peace" Act, introduced by Senator Lister Hill and co-sponsored by 58 other Senators, including myself. Under this Bill, there will be established

- 18 -
COPY

a National Institute for International Medical Research with, we hope, an authorization of not less than \$50 million per year.

This Institute would become the channel for research grants overseas, for the support of international medical organizations, exchange of medical information, and other essential purposes.

FULL EFFORT UNDER THE INTERNATIONAL HEALTH YEAR

5. You are all aware that at the Assembly opening next Tuesday, one of the very important items on the agenda is the International Public Health and Medical Research Year.

This Year, which could commence in June 1961, could witness the greatest effort against disease ever waged in the history of man. It could break through to higher levels of governmental and world-wide health activity.

As the Sponsor of the Resolution under which the Senate unanimously approved the concept of such a Year, I feel

COPY

that all possible resources should be mobilized for the success of the Year.

Of course, a 12 month or 18 month period would simply be a beginning. But it could mark a bolder beginning than men have heretofore visualized. What is important is not merely what is BEGUN that year, but rather what is sustained and broadened and expanded THEREAFTER.

PASS "FOOD FOR PEACE" ACT

6. Finally, I suggest that we use one of the greatest assets in the world today, America's food, for the health of mankind.

Food saves lives, restores lives, enriches lives.

American food sold abroad generates counterpart currencies which can then be reloaned for a wide variety of constructive purposes, including higher industrial and agricultural productivity, better schools, better sanitation systems, better health facilities.

COPY -20-

This is why I have introduced the "Food for Peace"

Act, and it is why I shall strive for its passage.

TOTAL WAR AGAINST DISEASE

These six points are but a few elements of an overall program. They add up to one key theme. Let us declare total war against disease. Let us declare a war in which all the world will fight on the same side.

Let us wage this war with the same dedication, the same spirit of self-sacrifice, if need be, the same spirit of doing the impossible , as we have developed in time of military conflict.

The enemy of disease is not simply present in Africa, South Asia, and the Middle East. The enemy is here in the whole world - the bacteria, the viruses, the accidents, which kill and cripple man.

Here in the United States, there are an estimated 23 million partially or totally handicapped persons, including

COPY 21

14 million with diseases of the heart and arteries, another 14 million with some type of mental problem, 11 million with arthritis and rheumatism.

We Americans would not today think of tolerating such former foes as small pox, typhoid fever, plague, or pellagra.

So, too, there is no reason why we should adopt an attitude of helplessness in the face of the other types of diseases I have mentioned which now scourge so many of our own and other people.

And so next week, as the statesmen of the Great Powers meet in an attempt to find a way out of nuclear war, let a different type of war be declared by the World Health Organization.

Let it be a war against the only enemy mankind seeks -- the enemy which limits him, deprives him of his birth-right, cuts him down prematurely -- disease and disability.

COPY

And, let this war be an integral part of an even broader war against poverty, indignity, malnutrition, unemployment, ignorance and hopelessness.

This war can be won for the first time in recorded history. Mankind can at last gain an upper hand in conquering the foes which have blighted him since he first appeared on this earth.

In winning the war against this enemy, we may help to win against World War III.

With a great cooperative effort in international health, we might concoct a "peace vaccine" -- to inject into the body politic of international relations.

A truly unselfish and cooperative international health effort can be an important step in helping to create a climate of relationships out of which political agreements between East and West may some day be reached.

That, above all, is what we most earnestly seek.



Minnesota Historical Society

Copyright in this digital version belongs to the Minnesota Historical Society and its content may not be copied without the copyright holder's express written permission. Users may print, download, link to, or email content, however, for individual use.

To request permission for commercial or educational use, please contact the Minnesota Historical Society.



www.mnhs.org