

## WORLD HEALTH DAY

April 7 of each year is World Health Day. In 1969, the theme for the forthcoming event is *Health, Labour and Productivity*, in homage to the International Labour Organisation which is this year celebrating its 50th anniversary.

Dr. M. G. Candau, World Health Organization Director-General, in a message for World Health Day, stresses that many factors go to undermine the workers' fitness: dust, heat, noise, toxic substance, fatigue.

"The technocrat thinking only in terms of production may develop types of machinery which while brilliant in performance are detrimental to health. Paradoxically, also, ill-considered efforts to increase production can have the unintended effect of reducing output because of illness and absenteeism.

However, a properly planned health programme will deal with these and other hazards, and promote health in doing so.

Occupational health work entails the prevention of illness and accidents and the improvement of working conditions. Machinery can be adapted to man, rather than man to the machine. Fatigue can be diminished and monotony avoided. In another context, the worker can be specially selected for his job, and latent skills can be developed.

Doctors, nurses, social-workers, health engineers and architects can all contribute in maintaining the physical and mental well-being of the worker.

But in developed and developing countries alike—wherever industrialization is a potent factor in economic progress—much remains to be done."

Dr. Candau concludes his message:

"The diseases of occupation have long been of concern to the governments of many countries, but only after the First World War was it recognized that the problems of industry, like disease, know no frontiers and call for the setting up of international standards.

## MISCELLANEOUS

The International Labour Organisation was accordingly established in 1919 and, thus, will celebrate its fiftieth anniversary this year.

It has been WHO's privilege to be associated closely and fruitfully with ILO in many fields, where health and work share common or parallel interests.

A year ago WHO celebrated its twentieth birthday. It is therefore a great pleasure on the occasion of World Health Day this year to offer congratulations to an older member of the United Nations family on its fifty years of continuing achievement."

---