

M I S C E L L A N E O U S

WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY

The World Health Assembly, the supreme organ of the World Health Organization (WHO) met this year for the 17th time and the ICRC was represented by an observer. The meeting, from March 3 to 20, 1964, in Geneva, was attended by delegates from 120 member States and associate members. Four countries were elected to associate membership of the Organization: Northern Rhodesia, Nyasaland, Malta and Qatar, thus bringing the WHO membership nearer to universality.

The Assembly considered and approved the Director-General's report on the work of WHO in 1963. It also adopted the programme and the budget for 1965 which are considerably greater than those of 1963. Three main problems were discussed in the course of the proceedings, namely: the eradication of malaria, the eradication of smallpox, the setting up of new institutions within the framework of or with the assistance of WHO.

Eradication of malaria: The Assembly observed that out of 142 countries, 48 have succeeded in completely or partly eradicating this scourge, although there are still regions where eradication is more difficult due to the fact that the carriers of the disease have developed resistance to insecticides. Furthermore, 39 countries take no part in the anti-malaria campaign.

The Assembly insisted on the necessity of intensifying efforts; for example, by research on resistance to insecticides. Such efforts by WHO aiming at wiping out this disease should be supported by the governments.

Eradication of smallpox: The Director-General's report mentioned a slight increase in the number of cases of smallpox and in the number of deaths from this disease in 1963. Once again the

Assembly insisted that the organization's efforts should be intensified.

New institutions within the framework of or with the assistance of WHO: The Director-General stated that a group of scientific experts had suggested setting up within the framework of the Organization a World Health Research Centre. Scientists from various countries would meet for the purpose of carrying out joint research in this field. The Assembly invited Dr. Candau to continue his studies with a view to the establishment of such a Centre and it authorised him to negotiate with some States for the establishment of a World Cancer Research Centre in which WHO would participate.

Technical discussions took place covering "the influence of public water supply programmes on the development of health and welfare". Water-borne diseases affect some 500 million people in the developing countries, and even in other countries this is a problem to some extent. For this reason, the Assembly recommended member States to give greater consideration to safe and adequate water supply and if necessary to take advantage of the assistance offered in this field by governments or international organizations.

WRITERS AND SCIENTISTS PAY TRIBUTE TO THE RED CROSS

The *International Review* has published in this same number an article on the events which were organized recently on the occasion of the Red Cross Centenary at Meaux by the local Committee of the French Red Cross. That Committee had the idea of asking several leading personalities in the world of letters and science in France to give their views on the position of the Red Cross.

We now give the translations of some of these opinions of which the texts were prominently displayed in the show-cases of the exhibition arranged by the Meaux Committee.