

WHO.IC/Mal/3  
4 April, 1947.COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS ON MALARIANOTE ON COORDINATED EXPERIMENTSON SUPPRESSIVE PROPHYLAXIS FOR MALARIAWITH THE NEW SYNTHETIC DRUGS

1. - There is reason to believe that paldrine and chloroquine represent two new very powerful means of clinical or suppressive prophylaxis for malaria.

However, particularly with respect to paldrine, a small amount of literature has been published about prophylaxis in the field. The Committee of Experts on Malaria will certainly wish to take the available literature into consideration; its experts will then be able to decide whether the data collected are sufficient for the guidance of health administrations, which will obviously wish to be fully informed before adopting new methods of mass prophylaxis. To this effect, it is probable that the Committee will decide that other experiments will be necessary, more precisely, experiments made under different epidemiological conditions, but with the same methods and the same strict control everywhere; for by means of such experiments, comparable results may be attained and conclusions drawn which will be largely applicable to other countries.

If we may refer to what happened in the case of atabrin and plasmoquin, we would like to recall the experiments made by the Malaria Commission of the League of Nations. In 1935, literature on these two synthetic drugs was already very abundant and concerned not only laboratory experiments but also practical applications in the field. The Malaria Commission of the Health Organization of the League of Nations decided, however, to undertake experiments in Algeria, Italy, Rumania, Malaya and the USSR (1935-1936). Thanks to these coordinated experiments, the Malaria Committee was able to draft its Report on the "Treatment of Malaria", which has undoubtedly been extremely useful to antimalarial services and to physicians in all malarial countries.

2. - If the Committee of Experts on Malaria decides, with the approval of the Interim Commission, to undertake these experiments, the experiments will be carried out under the responsibility of highly qualified malariologists, who will have to adopt the exact methods and strict measures of control which will have been established by the Committee. It would thus seem fair for the Interim Commission to grant financial aid, if only to pay for the additional staff entrusted with the scientific control requested. It would be

precisely this assistance which would give those experiments an international value.

This is what happened with the coordinated experiments undertaken by the Malaria Commission in 1935-1936, and it seems that this assistance would be still more necessary now, for the countries where the experiments could be carried out have been severely affected by the war and by the increase of endemic malaria following it. The countries where the experiments are expected to take place are situated mostly in the Mediterranean zone and this choice has been made for reasons of expediency.

3. - The Secretariat has approached the public health authorities of France, Italy, Portugal and Yugoslavia in order to learn whether, eventually, such experiments could be carried out in their respective countries. Each of these countries has answered in the affirmative.
  4. - If the Interim Commission approves of the proposal regarding these experiments (the cost of which will amount to less than one per cent of the budget for 1947), it would seem advisable for them to be undertaken as soon as possible, i.e., in the course of the present year. We know that paludrine is being experimented on in many countries; it would thus be easy to convince carefully selected malariologists to adopt this year the methods decided on by the Malaria Committee, a procedure which would give an international value to their experiments. Malaria countries would probably not show a great deal of interest in the setting up of a Malaria Committee which would limit its activities to the collection of documentation, while they would surely appreciate work that it might undertake in organizing coordinated research in certain of these countries, research which could be undertaken only by an international organization such as the Interim Commission of to-day, or the World Health Organization of the future.
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