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FOURTEENTH SESSION OF THE GENERAL MEETING OF
THE ACADEMY OF MEDICAL SCIENCES USSR

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Yesterday, in Moscow, in the House of Scientists, the Fourteenth Session of the General Meeting of the Academy of Medical Sciences USSR opened.

Scientists from all the Soviet Republics arrived to take part in the proceedings of the Session. In addition to the active members and the corresponding members, the leaders of the public health organs, the directors of scientific research institutes and large medical prophylaxis institutions, as well as practising physicians, were also present in the conference hall. Among the participants in the Session were chairmen of scientific councils of the ministries of health of union republics, and representatives of party and trade union organizations.

The Session will last five days. The Academy presidium report for the years 1957-1959 and reports on the work of department bureaus will be discussed. Nine scientific reports which the session is to discuss are devoted to the problem of antibiotics and chemical therapy.

The session will elect 22 active members and 18 corresponding members of the Academy as well as directors of institutes. It will be necessary to elect a presidium and department bureaus and to confirm academicians-secretaries of departments.

In his introductory address the President of the Academy of Medical Sciences USSR, Academician A. N. Bakulev stated that since the last, Thirteenth, Session of the General Meeting, events of great historical importance had

taken place. Our people are successfully carrying out the decisions of the 21st Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, which defined the path of the extensive development of communism. Academician Bakulev spoke of the enormous labor success of the Soviet people, the future development of the national economy, and the constantly growing international prestige of the Soviet Union.

The energetic and consistent peace-loving foreign policy of the Soviet Union has led to a considerable relaxation of international tension. The decision of the recently adjourned session of the Supreme Soviet USSR concerning the new considerable reduction of armed forces was an act of greatest historical importance aimed at the strengthening of peace throughout the world.

"I unquestionably express our common opinion," declared A. N. Bakulev, "when I say that all medical science workers and all doctors accord heartfelt gratitude to the Soviet government for its consistent and steadfast realization of the Leninist policy of peace. Research scientists in all the nations of the world are more actively advocating the use of scientific achievements for peaceful purposes and for the welfare of peoples. The strengthening of international bonds among scientists will speed up the solution of many complicated problems of medical science."

Dwelling upon the results of the work of the scientists of the Academy of Medical Sciences USSR, A. N. Bakulev emphasized the practical significance of research in the creation of new drugs and antibiotics and new methods of treating cardiovascular diseases. He told of creative investigations in the fields of physiology, pathology, hygiene and many other branches of theoretical and practical medicine. New methods of surgical operations and effective means of prophylaxis, minimizing industrial and productional injury to prevent occupational diseases have been developed.

The Soviet people heard with vast satisfaction and joy of the new decree of the Central Committee CPSU and the Council of Ministers USSR "on measures designed to improve medical services and to protect the health of the people of the USSR." This decree, said A. N. Bakulev, placed many concrete problems before the Academy of Medical

Sciences USSR. One of the most important is the liquidation of diphtheria, poliomyelitis, tularemia, a sharp decrease in the incidence of typhoid fever, whooping cough, acute intestinal infections and brucellosis. It is also essential to expand research in such important fields as influenza, tonsillitis and severe childhood infections.

Then the President spoke on problems of oncology and cardiovascular pathology. He also noted the need for new preventive and therapeutic remedies, hormones, vaccines and serums for the effective therapy and prevention of infectious diseases. Efforts to work out hygienic norms for populated areas, air, water and soil, and research into problems of professional hygiene, child nutrition and others must be increased. Investigations into the basic problems of theoretical medicine should be extended and deepened.

"The Party and the government," said A. N. Bakulev, "contribute immensely to the development of medical science. In the past three years a number of new institutes has been founded. Appropriations for scientific research have been greatly increased. At the present time the Academy of Medical Sciences USSR establishes favorable conditions for creative and successful research into the most complicated problems of medical science with the help of qualified personnel and well-equipped scientific research institutions. Success depends mainly on the correct organization of research and the rational utilization of all the available forces and possibilities. It is necessary to concentrate our attention on the solution of the most important problems and to skillfully select the main sections of the scientific front. Special attention must be given to putting the achievements of science into practice.

A. N. Bakulev stressed that our main goal is helping the practical work of safeguarding health. Scientific attainments must be made common property as quickly as possible.

In opening the Session, the President of the Academy invited all the participants to take an active part in discussing the report of the Presidium and all the items on the agenda.

The Presidium of the Central Committee CPSU was elected unanimously in a body as the honorary Presidium of the Session.

Prof. V. V. Parin, Academician and Secretary of the Academy read the accounting report of the activities of the Academy of Sciences USSR for the period between 1957 and 1959.

The speaker told of the successes of the Soviet people, and of the constant concern of the Party and the government for the well-being and health of the working class. One of the latest examples of this concern is the decree of the CC CPSU and the Council of Ministers USSR on measures to improve medical services and safeguard the health of the people of the USSR.

Soviet medical scientists are working on the formulation of new methods of diagnosis and treatment, the effective preparation of vaccines and serums, and on preventive medicine. The success of medical science depends also on productive work on the most important theoretical problems, on the development of general biology, biochemistry, immunology, morphology, and the other disciplines on which medicine is based.

During the period under discussion, medical research in our country has led to notable results. We have obtained new data on the most important aspects of transitional pre-neurotic conditions of clinical importance. There have been successful studies of the problems of regeneration and tissue incompatibility, of immunology and many others. For the future development of investigations, including those in the fields of physiology and pathophysiology, we must enhance the working out of theoretical problems that are especially important for clinical practice.

After informing the participants of the Session of the basic scientific achievements in the various areas of theoretical and clinical disciplines, Prof. Parin summed up the research activities of the institutes.

In the last few years the Presidium of the Academy of Medical Sciences USSR and the department bureaus have improved organizational and methodological guidance in the field of scientific research, directing the attention of the scientists to the most important health problems. During the period under discussion the Academy was charged with the task of planning all the scientific research, as well as coordinating it with work done in the peoples' democracies.

In this connection, it was necessary to carry out many organizational measures. About fifty problem commissions were established and with their aid a seven year plan of scientific research was drawn up. A scientific coordinating council was also established.

However, the speaker said that all this did not bring about all the expected results. The weakest link in the activities of the Academy of Medical Sciences USSR is insufficient control over the course of scientific research, and insufficient knowledge of the results. The material on scientific investigation in the medical field coming out of the republics is not analyzed or generalized thoroughly enough. The evaluation of the research is given only at the end of the year, and not always even then. This makes simultaneous interaction in the working out of various scientific tasks impossible.

Speaking of deficiencies and omissions in the activities of the Academy, Prof. Parin noted that its bonds with medical institutions of higher education were weak.

The last few years have seen a strengthening of ties between medical scientists and researchers working in the institutions of the Academy of Sciences USSR. The basic trends of cooperation in the fields of malignant neoplasms, radiological and physicochemical biology and in the study of protein and its biological functions have been defined. The speaker proposed the establishment of closer bonds between the Academy of Medical Sciences USSR and the scientific societies as well as the editorial staffs of magazines. It is essential to strengthen the influence of the Presidium of the Academy and its Department Bureau over their activities.

The medical scientific societies must in turn become important links between the Academy and practical and scientific public health officials. The medical journals have a great role in developing individual scientific research and in putting the achievements of science to practical use. In the speaker's opinion the medical journals should become the official organs of the scientific societies.

A large portion of the speech was devoted to the struggle against communicable diseases. This highly important problem was particularly stressed in the decree of the

CC CPSU on improving health services to the Soviet people.

The head institutes of the Academy are now in charge of the program to reduce the incidence of some communicable diseases and to completely liquidate others. They have already done a great deal of work in this direction. Some expeditions have been organized; problems in the struggle against infectious diseases have been discussed at visiting Sessions of the Academy at Yerevan' and Astrakhan. However, the scientific, organizational and practical measures undertaken by the Academy are not yet comprehensive enough. Organizational clarity and unity of action in the struggle against infection have not yet been achieved. What has been done must be viewed only as the initial stage of this great task. The public must participate in this; the liquidation of infection must become the business of the entire nation. Not only are epidemiologists, microbiologists and clinicians obligated to take part in the offensive against communicable diseases but also representatives of the theoretical disciplines such as pharmacology, chemistry, immunology, and biology. Only the multiple action, the active unified labors of scientists and public health organizers, practicing physicians and community organizations can bring about victory in this matter.

An example of the battle against communicable diseases is the scientific activity of the staffs headed by professors M. P. Chumakov and A. A. Smorodintsev. The work of these staffs has made possible, in a short time, the preparation and testing of new effective vaccines. But a number of tasks have not fared so well. Very little has been done, for example, to equip practicing physicians with means for the prevention and rapid cure of influenza. Although this problem has occupied many institutions and hundreds of researchers, the results have been negligible.

The Presidium of the Academy has discussed the ideological training of the scientific personnel and the ideological work of the institutes. In the majority of these, methodological seminars on philosophical questions of natural science have been established and are currently in operation. They aid in the theoretical preparation of the scientists and provide them with ideological-methodological weapons. A methodological council, called by the Presidium

of the Academy, at which the morally corrupt concepts of modern Freudianism were analyzed, turned out well. Interesting papers were prepared by the scientists for the theoretical conference devoted to the 50th anniversary of the publication of Lenin's work Materialism and Empirical Criticism. The speaker noted a series of shortcomings in the organization of ideological operations. Very few scientific articles in which the idealistic outlook of individual foreign scientists is evaluated from Marxist positions have been published. Medical scientists contribute little to scientific atheistic propaganda.

The disagreements which have appeared recently on questions of social hygiene, virusology, immunology and medical genetics have not been widely discussed.

The institutes of the Academy of Medical Sciences USSR are staffed by highly qualified scientists. The Academy is composed of 84 active members and 132 corresponding members. New members are to be enlisted. Unfortunately, thus far, the scientists of the republics of the Union are poorly represented. The Ukraine alone is a happy exception. This republic is represented in the Academy by eight active members and twelve corresponding members. Belorussia is represented by only one member. There are no scientists in the Academy from the Kazakh, Turkmen, Estonian, Moldavian, and Latvian Republics.

There are many shortcomings in the distribution of the personnel. The scientific forces are not always put to the best use. This is related to the unsatisfactory planning and coordination of research. For example, so important a problem as the search for remedies to check the growth of malignant neoplasms is worked on throughout the entire nation by only 73 researchers, of whom 50 work in academy institutes. Only nine people are working towards a solution of the problem, "A Search for Chemico-therapeutic Remedies to Control Virus Infections." Not one of the scientists of the institutions in remote areas is engaged in the study of the general theoretical principles of virusology.

After analyzing the work of the staff in the Institutes of the Academy, Prof. Barin pointed out the necessity of improving the training of the rising generation of scientists. He then indicated a group of the most important problems

that scientists must resolve. Among them are a sharp reduction in some communicable diseases and the liquidation of a number of others, a search for remedies against malignant neoplasms, and the ultimate solution of pediatric problems.

For the prevention and cure of cardiovascular diseases, it is essential to continue the study of the pathogenesis of hypertension, atherosclerosis, and coronary deficiencies, to search for new therapeutic and prophylactic remedies. One of the tasks is to study the incidence of atherosclerosis in various regions of the country in relation to diet, climate and occupation, to discover the various contributing factors in myocardial infarct by doing clinical experiments, and to work out diagnostic methods and clinical remedies for various forms of this disease.

One of the most important problems still facing the Academy is the drawing up of a fifteen year plan of scientific research. In preparing and carrying out this plan, the needs and activities of the scientific research institutions of the nation are to be studied more deeply and supplied with the personnel and equipment needed. It is planned to organize affiliates of the Academy in Siberia and several capitals of the republics of the Union. Another important aim is the improvement of the publication activities of the Academy.

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A discussion of the report by Session participants followed. The speakers were Professors P. A. Babayants, P. I. Yegorov, B. S. Preobrazhenskiy, I. N. Mayskiy, D. Yu. Guseynov, I. K. Akhunbayev, O. P. Molchanova, P. A. Petrishcheva, et al.

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