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AID-5-40 (9-60) W/O HECTO

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END OF TOUR REPORT

Arthur M. Lowrie, Malaria Specialist

U.S.A.I.D./Liberia

General Objectives:

The basic objectives of the project were to reduce the malaria rate in Montserrado County to the lowest possible level and to prepare a long range program for the eradication of malaria in Liberia.

Specific Goals:

The goal was to develop a nucleus of local personnel trained in all phases of malaria eradication. This trained force was to actively participate in the present program and to form a cadre for any future eradication program.

The assigned duties of the writer were directly related to these objectives and goals.

Activities:

A. Advise and assist the Malaria Advisor regarding field and laboratory procedures relative to the malaria program in Liberia.

B. Supervise, instruct and train GOL malaria personnel in:

1. Spray procedures and techniques
2. Repair and maintenance of equipment
3. Haematological laboratory functions including:
   a. Taking blood slides
   b. Blood slide staining procedure

c. Reading, recording and reporting of results

d. Use and care of microscopes and other equipment

4. Entomological laboratory and other entomological functions including:

a. Detection, collection and identification procedures

b. Dissections

c. Resistance or susceptibility tests

5. Geographical reconnaissance including:

a. House numbering system

b. Proper procedures--public relations, etc.

c. Coordination of house numbering and "notifier" procedures with residual spray operation.

Favorable Factors:

A. The WHO Malaria Eradication Pilot Project at Kpain (1958-61) demonstrated that transmission could be broken by the proper application of residual spray techniques.

B. The malaria rate in the greater Monrovia area was reduced to below ten per cent and at least partial protection against the disease was afforded to many thousands of people in Montserrado County.

C. A group of GOL malaria employees, fairly will trained in most phases of malaria eradication operations exists. However, they required very close supervision by A.I.D. technicians.

Unfavorable Factors:

A. The GOL malaria program did not meet any of the criteria set forth in "Minimum Conditions Required by A.I.D. for Initiation or Continuation of

Assistance to Malaria Eradication Programs" (AIDTO XA-643, June 1962).

B. There was no provision made in the CY 1963 GOL budget for contribution to the A.I.D. sponsored malaria program.

C. A.I.D. support for the former GOL malaria program is in the process of "phasing out" see AIDTO-A320, November 1962 and TOAID A-503, December, 1962.

D. Some of the most important factors contributing to "A and C," above, are:

1. Lack of sufficient GOL budgetary funding to meet even the minimum requirements of an adequate malaria program.
2. Lack of GOL legislation in regard to any part (organization or enforcement) of the malaria program.
3. Lack of trained local administrative personnel.
4. The use, by the National Public Health Service, of malaria funds and vehicles for purposes totally unrelated to the malaria project.
5. The reorganization of the National Public Health Service (recommended by the Special Committee on Government Organization) resulted in the malaria project being included, as one of five sub-divisions, in the Division of Enviromental Health. This is in direct contrast to the near autonomy which a malaria program should have in order to succeed.

Evaluation:

For several months after the arrival of the writer in Liberia the malaria residual spray program continued to show a marked improvement. This improvement was probably due to:

1. Inclusion of a "Notifier" crew which resulted in improved public relations and reduced loss of time for the spray crews.

2. Institution of "refresher courses" and "on the job training" sessions for malaria personnel.

3. Addition of several vehicles to the malaria motor pool.

4. Increased effectiveness of three participants after completion of training. Two of the participants attended the Malaria Eradication Training Center at Kingston, Jamaica. All received special training in entomology in the United States.

5. The fact that three A.I.D. technicians were present at the same time.

However, after the reorganization of the National Public Health Service the malaria project became a part of the Division of Environmental Health. From that date, January, 1962, the effectiveness of the program declined. Some reasons for this were:

1. Interference in the operation of the malaria program by the Division of Environmental Health. This included the use of malaria personnel, funds, equipment, and vehicles for other departments of the National Public Health Service.

2. Withholding of authority to direct the operation of the program from the new chief of the malaria section. He was, at all times, completely subservient to the director of the Division of Environmental Health.

3. Attempted operation of the project from three different "headquarters" This resulted in poor liaison and much confusion in the different sections of the operation.

Recommendations:

Recommendations, as such, for a project which no longer exists are hardly

relevant. However, a few remarks may be apropos at this point.

First, let it be stated that there is no quarrel, on the part of the writer, with the "phasing out" of the malaria project. According to present A.I.D. policy, as set forth in AIDTO XA-643, June 1962, the G.O.L. definitely does not qualify for A.I.D. malaria support.

Regardless of the foregoing the feeling persists that the G.O.L. should be strongly encouraged to resume some type of malaria program (in addition to the W.H.O. Pre-eradication program), if only in the greater Monrovia area which is the most densely populated area in Liberia.

Since the early 1940's (World War II) some sort of malaria program has been in operation. During the twenty years in which spraying took place it is possible that the population has lost some, if not all, of the immunity formerly possessed.

If this proves to be the case the cessation of residual spraying will probably result in, not only, the complete negation of previous gains, but may have even more serious consequences.

RHETTS