

REVIEW

ASIA-OCEANIA REGIONAL CONFERENCE OF 4TH WORLD CONFERENCE ON MEDICAL EDUCATION

The Asian First Regional Conference of 4th World Conference on Medical Education was held in Tokyo, Japan, 2-4 June, 1970. This Conference was sponsored by the Japan Medical Association. The representatives of the National Medical Association of 15 countries in the Asia-Oceania Region participated, including Singapore, with observers from Iran and Japan. The World Medical Association was represented by its Secretary-General. Over the period of 3 days, the Conference centred on 3 aspects, viz.:—

1. Educating Tomorrow's Doctors.
2. Asian Medical Co-operation.
3. Exchange of information on approved medical drugs sold in each country.

1. Educating Tomorrow's Doctors

This constitutes the largest proportion of time devoted to the Conference and is the main theme for the forthcoming 4th World Conference on Medical Education, which will be held in 1972 in Copenhagen, Denmark. The specific objective is to reorientate the medical curriculum so as to be responsive to the needs of the communities in individual countries. The views of the various delegates were given on the determinants of each community health needs, the problems of collecting data, the accuracy that can be attested to these data, and these were discussed at length, together with the means of amending and developing current systems to suit the proposed changes. Each delegate submitted a paper prior to the start of the Conference. Hence when it came to discussion, there tended to be repetitions found in these 2 different sections of the Proceedings.

2. Asian Medical Co-operation

One of the most important purposes, if not the most important, of the Conference was enunciated in only one, out of a total of six sessions held. The Japanese delegate explained about the Asian Medical Organisation (AMO), which will probably be established initially with 8 member-countries participating since the idea was proposed at the Ministerial Conference for Economic Develop-

ment in South-east Asia. Medical Co-operation, he went on to explain, in the past was done on a bilateral basis resulting in many problems. The main object of AMO is to produce more good doctors at the postgraduate level, together with para-medical staff was first proposed to have an International Medical School with attached hospitals and later a similar school could be established in the other countries of the Region. Personnel will be provided by the Central Organisation. The all-important question on financing such an organisation was not discussed though it was stated that the Japan Medical Organisation is prepared to undertake the initial secretarial work in the establishment of the Secretariat and the expenses will be borne by Japan. Lively discussions ensued concerning the possible duplication of work with WHO and SEAMEO. A lot of ground work has still to be laid before the AMO could be accepted in principle and a workable plan be evolved.

3. Exchange of Information on Approved Medical Drugs Sold in Each Country

This centred mostly on the procedure adopted in Japan for the approval of new drugs with safeguards against abuse. The delegates from the various countries then proceeded to give an outline of what is being practised in their respective countries.

In conclusion, the Proceedings provided useful information regarding the views on Educating Tomorrow's Doctors held by various countries. Japan hopes to contribute to the Region by the formation of AMO. The Proceedings tend to have tiresome repetitions in view of the printing of the reference papers submitted by the various delegates prior to the Conference and these same views were expressed again in the Conference itself and these are repeated in the Summary of the Minutes.

Reading of this Book is likely to be confined to only those who are keen to discover the views held by the Regional delegates on the changing concepts of educating doctors.