

The fourth conference on problems of medical geography in Leningrad

The conference on problems of medical geography in Leningrad, held in November 28-30, 1973 was already the fourth conference on these problems and succeeded to the conferences in 1962, 1965 and 1968. The sessions were attended by 205 participants from 63 towns of all union republics of the U.S.S.R., as well as from Bulgaria, German Democratic Republic, Poland and Czechoslovakia. The first and the third day were devoted to plenary sessions, the second day to particular sections. The first section dealt with the problems, methods and organization of work concerning the elaboration of medical-geographic cadaster; the second section covered medical-geographic subdivision and prognosis; the third section discussed the influence of environmental factors upon the origin and geography of infectious and parasitic diseases of man; the fourth section concerned the influence of environmental factors upon origin and geography of non-infectious diseases.

The main task of the conference was to set a judgement upon the methodologic basis, programme and organization of the elaboration of medical-geographic cadaster of the U.S.S.R., which is designed for planning and public health authorities and which includes all necessary data on the influence of the natural, economic-geographical and sanitary conditions in particular territories of the Soviet Union upon the health of their population. These data would help a scientific planning of sanitary-hygienic, antiepidemic and prophylactic measures taken by public health service.

The presented papers, especially in the plenary sessions, dealt with some general methodic and organizational problems of medical-geographic investigations, subdivision, mapping and with preparation of regional atlases as well as with the concrete results of

investigations in distribution of some diseases and in epidemiologic characteristics of some regions. Parasitological problems were discussed in papers on the research of toxoplasmosis in children of Kazakhstan, on characteristics of the geographical distribution of principal helminoses in Azerbaijan and geo-helminoses in Uzbekistan; on ecology of the tick *Ixodes persulcatus* in Karelia and on the status of anophelism in the U.S.S.R. 10 years after the control of mosquitoes was interrupted. To the field of natural foci of diseases were devoted papers on epizootiology and epidemiology of ornithosis in southern Ukraine, on the occurrence of natural foci of infections in the far north of the U.S.S.R., on nosogeography and epidemiology of arboviroses in Ukraine, on natural and anthropuric foci of tick-borne encephalitis in Karelia and on the geographic distribution of tick-borne encephalitis and leptospirosis in the Mogilev region.

The conference recapitulated the actual state of the research in medical geography in the U.S.S.R. and stressed the importance ascribed to the development of this branch of science in that country, according to the needs of public health service. The conference proved, that in the course of 11 years a great step forward has been made since the first conference in 1962, which evaluated the status of medical geography and outlined the prospects of its further development. Nowadays a large number of research centres in particular union republics are engaged in these problems and a great attention is being paid to their solution.

This very successful conference was held in a cordial atmosphere and contributed to further international contacts in this field.

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