

Post 1-7-69

# Peril of Epidemics Is Seen in Jet Link To Poorer Nations

LONDON (UPI) — Dr. Pierre-Marie Dorolle has offered science another reason why rich countries should aid the underdeveloped: poor nations are the reservoirs of disease from which epidemics may spread to prosperous lands far away.

Dorolle, deputy director-general of the World Health Organization, warned in a lecture here that the jet age had added new dangers to old plagues. A passenger infected in, say, Africa can be in Asia or Europe in a few hours.

In two years or so epidemic disease will be able to spread at the speed of supersonic planes, or 1450 miles or more an hour.

And, although he argued for an international approach to the problem of detecting disease before it enters a country, and of keeping track of travelers in case they develop symptoms, he said the most rewarding method would be to attack the dread diseases at their source.

Reminding his audience of the dangers of cholera, smallpox, plague, yellow fever and malaria, Dorolle went on:

"Allow me to conclude that in this age of jet planes and soon of supersonic transport the only way of preventing the old plagues, and some new ones, from spreading from continent to continent and from country to country is to help the poorest nations in the world to reach such a level of

economic and technical development that it will be possible for them to combat the evil at its source."

He said that in the past 22 years some 80 cases of smallpox in Western countries have been traced from Africa, South America and Asia. A single case entering the United States in 1947 led to 12 secondary cases with two deaths and an expenditure of thousands of dollars to vaccinate 6 million New Yorkers. He called this one a "classic case": In 1963 a Swedish sailor whose vaccination certificate was about to expire left his ship in Australia and flew home through Indonesia, India, Pakistan and other countries. At home he lived with his grandmother, visited his girl friend, neighbors and friends.

From his single mild case of smallpox, 26 people caught the disease and five of them died.

"Yellow fever could also present a formidable problem," Dorolle said. "With the speed of travel at present, and even more with the speed of travel of tomorrow, a traveler infected in the forests of Brazil, for instance, could reach a Southeast Asia town well within the incubation period. There, theoretically, the virus would find ideal climatic conditions, an unvaccinated human population and its favorite vector (carrier) — a mosquito.