

CORRESPONDENCE

Strongly favorable to "Hanseniasis": "I certainly will not be guided by money-raising considerations and would strongly favour the change over to 'Hanseniasis' in text books of Medicine, and other medical literature. But you will realise the futility of this exercise in the Indian context: we have a population that is equivalent to the sum of the populations of North & South America and Eastern Europe, and a third of the leprosy population of the world, and the word 'leprosy' has no relevance here. Even 'Leucoderma' is called 'Dhabal Kushtha' (white leprosy), and indeed many educated people think it is a form of 'leprosy'. But that does not mean I will oppose the change in terminology that will benefit non-Indians, particularly in South America. I do vote strongly in favour of 'Hanseniasis' internationally, even if it does not help things much in India."

B. R. CHATTERJEE
Purulia, W. Bengal, India

Less lepro stigma, more funds. "I read with interest reports of your efforts. Unfortunately in Canada the terminology Hansen's disease is still not understood."

"However, I am happy to tell you that during the last 3 years there has been a marked change towards a rational fund raising approach by the leading charity fund raiser, as opposed to their previous emotional efforts, and it is a fact that this change factually has resulted in increased donations."

C. A. HANSEN
Delta, B.C. Canada

The "Festival of Leprotic Nonsense" — "I present you with a new contribution to the "Festival of Leprotic Nonsense" — a series of obsolete and stigmatizing notions published in 'Time' Magazine (July 7, 1980) under the caption 'Herpes simplex: the new sexual leprosy' (*Vide "News"*).

WALTER BELDA S.
Paulo, Brazil

Abolishing the "stigma of infamy" — "The stay of Father Umberto Guidotti in Pistoia was really a marvellous beginning of cooperation and support in the important fight against 'leprostigma'. He managed to attract many people of good will, who promptly realized the necessity of spreading ideas that will liberate the patients from the marginalization in which they live. The most responsive to the appeals were the young, the teachers, the women; the least were the medical doctors, unable, perhaps, to understand the importance of abolishing the 'stigma of infamy' which hurts guiltless people."

"This fight is extremely necessary in Italy, where the terrorizing and opprobrious connotations of the word 'lebbra' are getting more and more dangerous, in spite of the fact that the Italian government has decreed its banishing from official documents, since 1974."

PAOLA BELLANDI
Pistoia, Italy