

## OBITUARY

### Dr. Celio de Paula Mota

6/12/1919 to 6/12/1997

Dr. Celio Mota was an outstanding Brazilian leprologist.

He was born in 1919 at village of Martinópolis, in Minas Gerais. He graduated at the University of Minas Gerais School of Medicine in 1942. In 1938, while making his course of medicine, he attended the Dermatological Clinic of the renowned professor Antonio Aleixo who with his enthusiasm for the study of leprosy has stimulated many of his students. In that time, he took also a course of leprology at the Santa Marta Colony in Belo Horizonte.

After a short experience as a general surgeon, he became an officer of the National Service of Leprosy and took part of the great Brazilian survey on leprosy, working from 1943 to 1947 at this survey in the Minas Gerais State. He participated also of the Candeias survey planned by the Epidemiological Service of the National Leprosy Service. Candeias was a city with a high prevalence rate of leprosy cases (7/1,000). After the survey, which took 3 years to be finished and with the examination of circa 3,200 inhabitants of the city, the prevalence rate increased to 14/1,000.

Dr. Celio came to Rio de Janeiro after finishing the general survey in Brazil and worked at the Jacarepagua Leprosy Dispensary during two years. Soon after, he was appointed Superintendent of the Leprosy Prophylaxis in the Para State and later on his duties included Amazon region.

It was him who ordered the construction of the "Alfredo da Mata" dispensary that nowadays is a renowned research institute.

As Prophylaxis Superintendant in Goiás State, Dr. Celio took part also in the National Leprosy Campaign launched in 1955. Later on

he became assistant to the director of the Campaign at national level.

In 1960 he went to Venezuela to work in the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and remained there during 21 years. In this position, he organized the leprosy control programs of all endemic countries in Latin America.

After his retirement from PAHO in 1981 Dr. Celio came back to Brazil and was invited by Dr. Vera Andrade, an expert in epidemiology, to work in the Leprosy Control in the state of Rio de Janeiro. During 10 more years he gave an enormous contribution to the fight against Hansen's disease at the Rio de Janeiro State and he took part in the elaboration of all technical norms used in the leprosy control in Brazil.

Dr. Celio worked hardly in surveys and campaigns for controlling leprosy in Brazil. He worked part of his time during the Second World War and due the lack of gasoline for cars, the transportation for examination of patients were made mainly by horses. He told us with humor on the difficulties of that times, traveling in boats and the numerous falls from the horses.

He was a good and amiable man and always friendly welcomed all people that needed his assistance. During his stay in Caracas he was a true ambassador for his compatriots that arrived in that country to study, in business, and no matter what.

Dr. Celio used to speak very low and no rare times it was very difficult to understand what he meant, but he devoted all his life to transmit in a loud and good sound honesty, sympathy, dedication to work, idealism and love.

We will ever miss you Dr. Celio!

D.V.A. Opromolla