Testimony before the
Appropriations Subcommittee on
Commerce, Justice, State, the Judiciary
and Related Agencies
U.S. Senate

on the
FY 1988 Appropriations for the World Health Organization

Statement of
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on behalf of
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Medical Students Association
American Nurses Association
American Public Health Association
Association of Schools of Public Health
Commissioned Officers Association of U.S.P.H.S.
National Council on International Health
American Association for World Health

May 13, 1987
MR. CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE, GOOD MORNING. I AM DR. DONALD A. HENDERSON, DEAN OF THE JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF HYGIENE AND PUBLIC HEALTH, AND VICE PRESIDENT OF THE ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS OF PUBLIC HEALTH.

I APPRECIATE THE OPPORTUNITY TO PRESENT THIS STATEMENT TODAY ON BEHALF OF EIGHT NATIONAL HEALTH ORGANIZATIONS:

American Academy of Pediatrics
American Medical Students Association
American Nurses Association
American Public Health Association
Association of Schools of Public Health
Commissioned Officers Association of U.S.P.H.S.
National Council on International Health
American Association for World Health

THESE ORGANIZATIONS REPRESENT HEALTH PROFESSIONALS AND MEDICAL SPECIALISTS WHO HAVE FOLLOWED INTERNATIONAL HEALTH ISSUES THROUGHOUT THEIR PROFESSIONAL CAREERS. I BELIEVE THAT THEIR VIEWS AND OPINIONS ARE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE INTERNATIONAL HEALTH COMMUNITY IN THIS COUNTRY, AND CAN OFFER ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR THIS COMMITTEE AS IT GRAPPLING WITH QUESTIONS OF U.S. POLICY AND PRIORITIES IN RELATION TO MULTINATIONAL AGENCIES AND TO INTERNATIONAL HEALTH POLICY.

WITHOUT DIMINISHING THE IMPORTANCE OR VALUE OF OTHER ORGANIZATIONS OR QUESTIONING IN ANY WAY THEIR MANAGEMENT, WE BELIEVE THAT TWO INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN THE FIELD OF HEALTH, THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION AND THE PAN AMERICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION, DESERVE SPECIAL CONSIDERATION BY THE UNITED STATES.
FIRST, WHO AND PAHO HAVE DEMONSTRATED THEIR VALUE TO THE INTERNATIONAL POLICY OBJECTIVES OF THE UNITED STATES IN THE FIELD OF HEALTH FOR MANY DECADES. SECOND, THEY BOTH HAVE MAINTAINED THEIR FUNDAMENTALLY TECHNICAL FOCUS, AIMED AT HELPING THE NATIONS OF THE WORLD TO PURSUE THE HEALTH OF THEIR PEOPLES.

AT THIS TIME, WHEN THE WORLD IS FINDING ITSELF FORCED TO ADD AIDS TO THE LIST OF WORLD HEALTH THREATS TO INTERNATIONAL HEALTH, THE WORK OF THESE INTERNATIONAL HEALTH ORGANIZATIONS TAKES ON EVEN GREATER PRIORITY. FOR THESE ARE THE ONLY ORGANIZATIONS ABLE TO BRIDGE NATIONAL CONCERNS AND SUSPICIONS, TO COLLECT THE EPIDEMIOLOGICAL DATA NEEDED, TO ASSESS THE THREAT, AND TO COORDINATE ACTION WITH ALL NATIONS IN PLANNING WAYS FOR COPING WITH THIS GLOBAL THREAT.

THIRD, BOTH WHO AND PAHO HAVE CARVED OUT A RECORD OF PRUDENT, REALISTIC MANAGEMENT WITH SPECIAL SENSITIVITY TO THE CONCERNS OF THE UNITED STATES. THE CURRENT ADMINISTRATION AND ITS PREDECESSORS HAVE VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE BUDGETS OF BOTH ORGANIZATIONS. IN RECENT YEARS, BOTH ORGANIZATIONS RECOGNIZED THE INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC SITUATION AND SHOWED NO REAL GROWTH IN THEIR PROPOSED BUDGETS. OVER THE PAST DECADE, THEY HAVE HAD THE LOWEST LEVEL OF BUDGET GROWTH OF ANY INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION.

THESE TWO ORGANIZATIONS HAVE BEEN ABLE TO EXTEND THE REACH OF THE U.S. EPIDEMIOLOGICAL SERVICE THROUGHOUT THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE AND ACROSS THE GLOBE.

FINALLY, THESE TWO ORGANIZATIONS OFFER UNIQUE OPPORTUNITIES FOR INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE AND CONTACT AMONG SCIENTISTS AND HEALTH SPECIALISTS OF THIS COUNTRY AND THOSE OF OTHER NATIONS.

I WANT TO EMPHASIZE THAT THESE ARE TREATY OBLIGATIONS OF THE UNITED STATES, AND FOR THE FIRST TIME, WE ARE BRINGING INTO QUESTION OUR COMMITMENT TO MEET INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS BY THE FAILURE TO PROVIDE THE U.S. ASSESSED CONTRIBUTIONS TO WHO.

PAHO ALSO FACES A DEFERRAL OF ONE-THIRD OF THE U.S. CONTRIBUTION AS A RESULT OF LAST YEAR'S CONTINUING RESOLUTION. THEREFORE, MR. CHAIRMAN, WE ARE SEEKING:

- THE REVERSAL OF THE DEFERRAL UNTIL OCTOBER 1, 1987 OF THE $36 MILLION IN FY87 APPROPRIATIONS FOR WHO AND $12 MILLION FOR PAHO AS REQUESTED IN THE ADMINISTRATION'S SUPPLEMENTAL FY87 APPROPRIATIONS REQUEST;

- AN ADDITIONAL $15.7 MILLION IN FY87 SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS TO MAKE UP FOR THE SHORTFALL IN THE PAYMENT OF THE U.S. ASSESSED CONTRIBUTION TO WHO;

- THE REPEAL (OR AT LEAST MODIFICATION) OF THE KASSEBAUM-SOLOMON AMENDMENT IN ORDER TO PERMIT FULL FUNDING FOR WHO IN FY87 AND FY88 (I.E., TO THE LEVEL OF U.S. TREATY OBLIGATIONS); AND,

- FULL FUNDING FOR PAHO IN FY88.

IT IS DIFFICULT FOR US TO UNDERSTAND WHY U.S. SUPPORT HAS BEEN WITHHELD FROM THE ORGANIZATION WHILE AT THE SAME TIME THE U.S. GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES AT WHO GOVERNING BODIES HAVE ALWAYS PRAISED WHO FOR ITS REALISTIC BUDGETS, ITS PRUDENT MANAGEMENT AND THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ITS WORLD HEALTH PROGRAMS.


"(THIS) DELEGATION WAS PLEASED THAT THE PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET DID NOT PROVIDE FOR ANY PROGRAMME GROWTH, A REALISTIC PROPOSAL IN TERMS OF EXISTING ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES...THE OVERALL PICTURE THAT HAD EMERGED OVER THE PAST TWO WEEKS OF DEBATE WAS THAT WHO WAS A VERY IMPRESSIVE ORGANIZATION WHICH WAS DOING HIGHLY USEFUL WORK TO COMPLEMENT THE EFFORTS OF NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS. (THIS) DELEGATION'S DECISION TO VOTE IN FAVOUR OF THE PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET SHOULD BE SEEN AS A REFLECTION OF SPECIFIC APPRECIATION OF THAT WORK, AND OF WHO'S SUCCESS IN PROPOSING A REALISTIC LEVEL OF PROGRAMME GROWTH..."

AT THE 1985 WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY, THE U.S. AGAIN VOTED IN
FAVOR OF THE FY1986-87 BUDGET AND STATED:

"MORE IMPORTANTLY, THE UNITED STATES
DELEGATION WAS PLEASED THAT THE DIRECTOR-
GENERAL HAD BEEN ABLE TO COPE EFFECTIVELY WITH
PRESSURE FROM OPPOSITE DIRECTIONS; BY HOLDING
THE OVERALL BUDGET TO ZERO REAL GROWTH AND BY
SHIFTING RESOURCES WITHIN THE BUDGET TO
PROVIDE ABOUT 4% GROWTH IN COUNTRY PROGRAMMES,
HE HAD BEEN ABLE TO PLEASE EVERYBODY... THE
UNITED STATES DELEGATION WAS PLEASED WITH THE
PROPOSAL PUT BEFORE THE COMMITTEE, AND MORE
PARTICULARLY SO WITH THE PHILOSOPHY EXPRESSED
IN THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL'S INTRODUCTION TO THE
PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET AND THE CONSERVATIVE
AND CAREFUL APPROACHES TO THE FINANCING. FOR
THOSE REASONS, (THIS) COUNTRY WOULD VOTE IN
FAVOUR OF ADOPTION OF THE APPROPRIATION
RESOLUTION AS PROPOSED, HOPING THAT THE
DECISION OF THE HEALTH ASSEMBLY WOULD BE
UNANIMOUS." (WHA/38/1985/REL/3, pp. 198).

I WANT TO EMPHASIZE THAT THE U.S. HAS ALWAYS VOTED FOR THE
WHO BUDGET. TO APPROVE A BUDGET AND A RATE OF ASSESSMENT, AS THE
U.S. HAD DONE IN THE CASE OF WHO, AND THEN TO FAIL TO MEET ITS
OBLIGATION EX POST FACTO DOES NOT BODE WELL FOR AMERICAN
CREDIBILITY IN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND UNDERMINES U.S.
INTERESTS WHICH ARE REFLECTED BY THE PROGRAM AND POLICIES OF WHO.

THE SEVERE SHORTFALL IN 1986 CONTRIBUTIONS NOW HAS HAD A
DEVASTATING EFFECT ON THE ORGANIZATION. EVEN PROGRAMS FUNDED FROM
EXTRA BUDGETARY GRANTS DEPEND ON WHO'S INFRASTRUCTURE WHICH IS
COMPLETELY FUNDED FROM ASSESSED CONTRIBUTIONS. THUS, WEAKENING
THE FRAMEWORK OF THE ORGANIZATION BY WITHHOLDING THE INCOME IT
NEEDS FOR ITS DAILY FUNCTIONING HAMPERS THE EFFECTIVENESS OF
EXTRA-BUDGETARY PROGRAMS WHICH FIGHT DISEASE -- AIDS, DIARRHEAL
DISEASE AND CHILDHOOD DISEASES COVERED BY THE UNIVERSAL CHILDHOOD
IMMUNIZATION CAMPAIGN -- AND MAKES WHO'S GOAL OF HEALTH FOR ALL
EVEN MORE DIFFICULT TO REACH.

PAHO ALSO OPERATES THE U.S.-MEXICAN BORDER HEALTH PROGRAM WHICH LINKS SOUTHWESTERN STATES IN THIS COUNTRY WITH THEIR COUNTERPART IN MEXICO. IN ADDITION TO ITS COUNTRY OFFICES THROUGHOUT THE HEMISPHERE, NINE RESEARCH AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION CENTERS WHICH SPECIALIZE IN DIFFERENT SUBJECTS SUCH AS THE NUTRITION INSTITUTE FOR CENTRAL AMERICA AND PANAMA, THE FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE CENTER IN RIO, AND THE EPIDEMIOLOGY CENTER IN TRINIDAD OFFER THE AMERICANS UNIQUE BENEFITS. LIKE WHO, PAHO HAS SHOWN RESPONSIVENESS TO U.S. CONCERNS BY MAINTAINING ZERO REAL GROWTH OVER RECENT BUDGETS AND HAS REDUCED ITS STAFF POSTS BY ONE-THIRD SINCE 1980. IN TESTIMONY, THE U.S. ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS VOTED THAT PAHO ALSO HAD ACHIEVED A NEARLY 20% REDUCTION IN HEADQUARTERS COSTS IN WASHINGTON OVER
RECENT YEARS WITH THOSE RESOURCES BEING TRANSFERRED TO THE COUNTRIES OF THE REGION. PAHO ALSO HAS ASSURED U.S. MEMBERSHIP IN ITS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE DURING BUDGET YEARS AND THE U.S. DELEGATION HAS VOTED FOR EACH PAHO BUDGET.


PAHO AND WHO TOGETHER REPRESENT THE BEST OF INTERNATIONAL SPECIALIZED AGENCIES. LOOKING IN MORE DETAIL AT THE WORK OF WHO, ONE FINDS, MR. CHAIRMAN, THAT THIS ORGANIZATION PLAYS A PIVOTAL ROLE IN COMMUNICATING AND ENERGIZING THE WORLD TO ACT ON HEALTH CONCERNS. THE WORK OF THE ORGANIZATION HAS BEEN OF DIRECT BENEFIT TO THE U.S. AND THE WORLD.

WHO'S ERADICATION OF SMALLPOX SAVES THE U.S. $300 MILLION (IN CURRENT DOLLARS) ANNUALLY BY OBVIATING THE NEED FOR SMALLPOX VACCINATIONS.


WHO HAS SUCCESSFULLY INTRODUCED ORAL REHYDRATION THERAPY -- AN INEXPENSIVE AND VERY EFFECTIVE WAY TO PREVENT DEATH IN CHILDREN FROM DIARRHEAL DISEASES.
WHO HAS BEGUN A MAJOR PROGRAM IN AIDS SURVEILLANCE, RESEARCH, EDUCATION AND PREVENTION. ONLY WHO CAN OVERCOME POLITICAL DIFFERENCES AND SUSPICIONS AND SERVE AS AN INTERNATIONAL CLEARINGHOUSE FOR THE FACTS ON AIDS.

WHO SUPPORTS RESEARCH TO DEVELOP NEW VACCINES.

INFLUENZA SURVEILLANCE BY THE WHO NETWORK HELPS DEVELOP VACCINES AGAINST EACH NEW STRAIN THAT EMERGES.

WHO'S DISEASE SURVEILLANCE PROGRAM PROVIDES INFORMATION FOR TRAVELERS AND CONTRIBUTES TO THE U.S.'S ABILITY TO PROTECT U.S. CITIZENS AROUND THE WORLD.

WHO SURVEILLANCE FOLLOWING THE CHERNOBYL NUCLEAR DISASTER HELPED PROTECT EUROPE, AND CONTRIBUTED INFORMATION ON HOW TO DEAL WITH FUTURE ACCIDENTS.

WHO SUPPORTS THE DEVELOPMENT OF COST-EFFECTIVE MEDICAL TECHNOLOGY. THE AVAILABILITY OF A $35,000 BASIC RADIOLOGIC SYSTEM DEVELOPED BY WHO HAS MADE GOOD X-RAY SERVICES POSSIBLE AT A REASONABLE PRICE.

WHO HELPS MEMBER COUNTRIES WITH A WIDE RANGE OF HEALTH PROGRAMS, INCLUDING: ALCOHOL AND DRUG ABUSE PREVENTION; DRINKING WATER AND SANITATION; CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE PREVENTION; CANCER RESEARCH, PREVENTION AND TREATMENT; AND FAMILY PLANNING.

ONCE AGAIN, MR. CHAIRMAN, LET ME REPEAT THAT WE HOPE THIS COMMITTEE AND THE CONGRESS THIS YEAR CAN ACHIEVE:
• The reversal of the deferral until October 1, 1987 of the $36 million in FY87 appropriations for WHO and $12 million for PAHO as requested in the Administration's supplemental FY87 appropriations request;

• An additional $15.7 million in FY87 supplemental appropriations to make up for the shortfall in the payment of the U.S. assessed contribution to WHO;

• The repeal (or at least modification) of the Kassebaum-Solomon amendment in order to permit full funding for WHO FY87 and FY88, to the level of U.S. treaty obligations; and,

• Full funding for PAHO in FY88.

Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to testify. I will be pleased to answer any questions.