

National Commission on VD Set

Creation of a National Commission on VD (Venereal Disease) to combat the diseases of gonorrhea and syphilis was announced by Dr. Roger O. Egeberg, HEW Assistant Secretary for Health and Scientific Affairs.

Dr. Bruce Webster, New York City, president of the American Social Health Association, has accepted chairmanship of the Commission. The Association which Dr. Webster heads has waged continuing campaigns against the venereal diseases since World War I.

Dr. Egeberg designated the Center for Disease Control, Atlanta, to provide staff support for the Commission.

Representatives of a number of professional groups and selected officials of the Armed Forces and the Surgeon General of the Public Health Service have been asked to serve on the Commission.

"The Commission will consider the problems of syphilis and gonorrhea from a national standpoint, study ways of bringing public health and private medicine into a closer working relationship, and make recommendations for bringing these diseases under control," Dr. Egeberg said.

The Commission will make recommendations to the government and to the professional groups which the Commission represents, he added.

Dr. Webster, accepting the chairmanship, said the Commission would seek to define a national strategy "for the better control of syphilis and gonorrhea.

"In 1968, a national incidence survey conducted by the American Social Health Association for the Public Health Service found that although private physicians treat about 80 per cent of the venereal disease cases, they report only one in nine to public health officials," he said.

"We believe that this Commission will serve as the long-needed link between public

health and private medicine."

Dr. Webster said that ASHA estimates that last year there were approximately 2,000,000 cases of gonorrhea in the U.S. and 75,000 cases of infectious syphilis.

Early in 1969, ASHA was asked by the American Medical Association, National Medical Association, and American Osteopathic Association to convene 23 health and medical organizations for the purpose of discussing a national VD prevention and control policy. Out of the meeting which followed came the plan for national commission.

The following professional organizations are represented on the National Commission on VD: American Academy of Dermatology, American Academy of Neurology, American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists,

American Medical Association, American Public Health Association, American Urological Association, Association of American Medical Colleges,

American Academy of General Practice, American Academy of Pediatrics, the American College of Physicians, American Social Health Association, American Osteopathic Association, American Venereal Disease Association and the National Medical Association.