International Committee on Nomenclature of Bacteria

Subcommittee on the Taxonomy of *Mycobacterium*

Minutes of the Meeting, 7 August 1970

Mexico City, Mexico

The Subcommittee on the Taxonomy of *Mycobacterium* met on 7 August 1970 in Mexico City prior to the Xth International Congress for Microbiology. Members present were: Gina Castelnuevo, H. C. Engbaek, G. P. Kubica, Gertrud Meissner, E. H. Runyon, K. Takeya, and L. G. Wayne. Absent were C. Gernez-Rieux, P. G. Janssens, G. Penso, M. P. Zykov, J. Marks, W. B. Schaefer, L. Šula, and R. Bönicke. New members elected at Mexico City were A. Lind, M. Magnusson, S. Pattyn, J. S. Stanford, and A. Tacquet.

In memorium. It is with the deepest sorrow that we record the death on 11 September 1970 of a great and beloved leader in fundamental mycobacterial research, R. Bönicke.

G. Penso retired as Secretary, and G. P. Kubica was elected as the new Secretary of the Subcommittee.

A decision was made to invite all active members of the International Working Group on Mycobacterial Taxonomy (IWGMT) (*see below*) to be corresponding members of the Subcommittee. After discussion of proposed revisions of the Code, the Subcommittee concluded that it would be desirable to indicate the responsibility of the proposer of a new species to *send a reprint of his published proposal to the Chairman of the ICSB* for transmittal to the appropriate subcommittee if such exists.

The Subcommittee also held a meeting open to members of the IWGMT during which the major problems of mycobacterial taxonomy and programs known to be underway relating to these problems were discussed.

During the Congress week (13 August) a Subcommittee-sponsored 3-hour symposium on mycobacterial taxonomy included excellent presentations by eight authorities. Since the Moscow Congress, most of the work of the Subcommittee has been by correspondence. The Subcommittee has attained a provisional genus description based in part on acid-fastness, morphology, biochemical activity, and chemical constitution (DNA molar base ratio, 62 to 70%; high lipid content including 80-carbon mycolic acids; meso-DAP in cell-wall mucopeptide).

To facilitate acquisition of descriptive data needed for speciation of commonly encountered anonymous mycobacteria, the IWGMT has (i) sought and attained assembly of the type strain of each mycobacterial species and other strains, the latter representing poorly known portions of the genus; (ii) attained distribution of these strains by the American Type Culture Collection to worthy investigators; and (iii) stimulated cooperative research programs.

More than 50 workers of 14 different countries have contributed data relating to one or more of these collaborative projects. These workers are very loosely organized as the International Working Group on Mycobacterial Taxonomy. It was because they are so important in acquisition of needed information that the Subcommittee voted to extend to each of them corresponding membership. IWGMT communication is by independent, individual publications and by an informal newsletter, *The Forum Mycobacteriorum*, edited by L. G. Wayne. It is anticipated that corresponding members will be invited to attend and participate in one or more of the Subcommittee meetings at each Congress, as occurred at Mexico City. Computer analysis of some of the study data has resulted in the emergence as distinct species of several previously putative taxa (*to be published*).

The Subcommittee has made recommendation to the Judicial Commission of: (i) Conservation of *M. scrofulaceum* Prissick and Masson, and rejection of *M. marianum* Penso on the basis of frequently recurring confusion due to the similarity of *M. marinum* and *M. marianum* (*see* Wayne and Lessel, *Int. J. Syst. Bacteriol.* 19:257–261). (ii) Acceptance of the designation *M. bovis* Karlson and Lessel for the taxon long recognized as bovine tubercle bacilli (Karlson and Lessel, *Int. J. Syst. Bacteriol.* 20:273–282).

The present membership of the Subcommittee is as follows: E. H. Runyon (Chairman), Salt Lake City, Utah, USA; G. P. Kubica (Secretary), Saranac Lake, New York, USA;

Gina Castelnuovo, Rome, Italy; H. C. Engback, England; L. Sula, Prague, Czechoslovakia; A. Copenhagen, Denmark; C. Gernex-Rieux, Lille, Tacquet, Lille, France; K. Takaya, Fukuoka, France; A. Lind, Göteborg, Sweden; J. Marks, Japan; L. G. Wayne, San Fernando, California, Cardiff, S. Wales, Great Britian; Gertrud Meissner, Borstel, Germany; S. R. Pattyn, USA; M. P. Zykov, Leningrad, USSR.

Antwerp, Belgium; W. B. Schaefer, Denver, E. H. Runyon
Colorado, USA; J. L. Stanford, London, Chairman