

## THE TANZANIAN VETERINARY ASSOCIATION

### Letter from the Chairman

Dear Reader,

This is the first issue of the Tanzanian Veterinary Bulletin. And in launching this publication another milestone in the history of the Veterinary Profession in Tanzania has been reached. For it is hoped that this Bulletin will be the mouthpiece, the yardstick of, and also the publication representing, the Tanzanian Veterinary Association - a Professional Association with a long history of tradition and of service to this country.

Unfortunately our records are not complete enough but from all evidence available the Tanzanian Veterinary Association owes its origin to the Tanganyika Territory Division of the National Veterinary Medical Association of Great-Britain and Ireland. Exactly when the Tanganyika Territory Division of N.V.M.A. was formed will be of great interest to the Association since this will give us accurate records and authentic chronology. I am therefore appealing to those readers of our Bulletin who were associated with the formation of the Association to write and give us the correct information. I am sure that there will be many retired, former colonial veterinary officers who will remember these events. It does seem, however, that the Tanganyika Territory Division of the N.V.M.A was formed at a very early stage of the British Colonial era in this country.

The National Veterinary Medical Association gave birth to the British Veterinary Association and the Association in the then Tanganyika Territory became the Tanganyika Division of the British Veterinary Association. Once again our records are not complete but it would appear that this took place in the mid-fifties. May those who have the exact information please write to the Editor so that we can put our records right. It must be pointed out here that in those days members of the Tanganyika Division of the British Veterinary Association had to be full members of the British Veterinary Association in the first place.

With the advent of Uhuru at the end of 1961 the Tanganyika Division of the British Veterinary Association had to make a decision on its future relations with the parent body. The British Veterinary Association suggested two courses which the Tanganyika Association could follow. The first was to apply for affiliation and the second was to amend the Rules of the local Association so that all members who were not members of the British Veterinary Association would become Associate Members of the Tanganyika Veterinary Association without voting rights and without the right of participation in the affair of the parent body - the B.V.A.

The Tanganyika Division decided to apply for affiliation to the British Veterinary Association because at that time about one third of their members were not members of the parent Association and because it was contrary to the Association rules to have "a lower grade of membership". The name of the Association was changed to The Tanganyika Veterinary Association and in 1964 after the Union of Tanganyika and Zanzibar the word Tanganyika was replaced by the word Tanzania. Today the Tanzanian Veterinary Asso-

ciation is no longer an Association of "British" veterinarians but an Association of Veterinary Surgeons registered by the Tanzania Veterinary Board. Until recently the basis for registration by the Tanzania Veterinary Board was the possession of the veterinary degree of the University of East Africa (Nairobi) or its equivalent. The day is not too far off when our veterinary degree of the University of Dar es Salaam will be the basis for registration.

The history of the veterinary profession in the former colonial territories is much older than that of agriculture although this is not generally realised. The following extract from the "MEMORANDUM UPON THE COLONIAL VETERINARY SERVICE drawn up by the National Medical Association in 1938" will clearly illustrate this fact: "... we might dwell for a moment upon the utility of the veterinary officer to the colonial territories. The early demand for the appointment of veterinary officers arose from the needs of administrators and stockowners to check outbreaks of disease which threatened to ruin the territories concerned. The veterinary officer, after proving his capacity to deal with epizootics, became principally engaged in investigating and controlling the diseases which existed in the country in which he was employed. As the value of veterinary officers became better known larger numbers were appointed to apply the measures designed to prevent the spread of disease and from this arose the formation of veterinary departments. It should be clearly realised that in many colonial territories the veterinary departments were in existence for some considerable time before the agricultural departments were formed. In some colonies the veterinary departments were responsible for the initiation and organisation of the agricultural departments and actually controlled the agricultural services.....". The research and concern for human health have always been important objectives of the profession as also indicated in the following extracts from the same memorandum "... Later as the specialised functions of the disease control developed and proved their worth, the necessity for research became apparent.... Thus the primary function of a veterinary department in a new territory is research into, and control of, the contagions and other diseases of animals and their transmissibility to man..... At a later date it is necessary to add to these duties that of general livestock improvement..... the improvement of pasturage and the use of supplementary feedstuffs.... expert supervision so that the reactions of the stock to environmental conditions can be studied. This synchronisation of the improvement in environment and the improvement in breed potentialities is one of the important things in the development of animal industry....."

On internal and external trade this memorandum states "... With increasing development in the industry it becomes necessary for the veterinary officer to consider the introduction of measures to facilitate internal trade in livestock..... the maintenance of trade routes..... depends upon the organisation and maintenance of efficient veterinary control of animal disease....." "Finally the possible development of export trade in animal products generally must be considered.....".

At the University of Dar es Salaam the object of the degree course is "To train a graduate in Veterinary Science who will be able to initiate efficient animal disease control and curative measures, safeguard public health, build up the livestock industry and conduct research in animal diseases and production. Such a veterinarian, besides being a full fledged veterinary surgeon together with higher orientation in disease prevention and control in the national herd of flocks, must also have knowledge of animals production, statistics, farm economics, ecology, farming systems as well as veterinary extension and rural sociology".

It is quite obvious that the veterinary profession in Tanzania has been very consistent in its approach to its task. But with such a wide range of fields of activity it is to be hoped that contributions to the Bulletin will come from workers in various fields even if they are not veterinary surgeons.

I must express my grateful thanks to Professor Tucker, the Chief Editor for a lot of hard work and effort on his part which resulted in the production of the Bulletin. I must also commend Dr. Mrema, one of our Sub-Editors for his tireless efforts to publicise the Bulletin and to encourage people to send in articles. To Dr. Kikopa for carrying out the duties of the Secretary of the Editorial Committee, and to Mr. Mbwana for his energetic publicizing of the Bulletin, Dr. Shaka was an active member of the Committee.

The Tanzanian Veterinary Association and the Editorial Board of the Veterinary Bulletin wish to acknowledge gratefully the donation of Tshs. 500.00 by Trans Africa Industrial Consultants, P.O. Box 5120 Dar es Salaam, towards the cost of the publication of the Bulletin.

Yours sincerely,

C.L. Kombo

Chairman

Tanzania Veterinary Association