

# THE ROLE OF THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC HEALTH IN THE FIELD OF INFECTIONS WITH NATURAL FOCALITY

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## SUMMARY

In the post-war period the National Institute of Public Health, later Institute of Epidemiology and Microbiology, headed by K. Raška, ranked among famous laboratories in the world due to its priority findings and original results. Research results of the Institute stimulated further research not only in Czechoslovakia but also abroad, in laboratories of Europe and America. The authors emphasize the significance of certain results in the epidemiology and ecology of infections characterized by natural focality. In the first place they discuss the isolation of TBE in 1948 and 1949 by Gallia et al., and the study of the role of birds and bats as hosts of TBE. Significant for the recognition of zoonotic influenza viruses are papers by Tůmová, and as regards rabies in rodents the studies of Sodja et al. The Institute paid attention to the introduction of *Coxiella burnetii* into the north-west of Bohemia. The Institute's activities in the study of tularaemia, leptospirosis, Lyme borreliosis, and toxoplasmosis are also described. Raška's concept of epidemiological surveillance in the prevention of zoonoses with natural focality was fully enforced by workers of the Institute. Many results of the Institute have been adopted by the WHO; it was demonstrated that it is possible by appropriate methods not only to detect human diseases in places where they are known but also to discover them in nature extensively altered by man.

*Key words:* diseases with natural focality, priorities of NIPH, history of discoveries

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