

One Small Step for World Health... One Giant Leap for World Government By Ed Eubanks, Jr.

Even as the European Union flirted with the idea of adopting a constitution—an idea which now seems certain to fail—another effort at unifying all nations under one world governance slipped past the notice and attention of most of us. Unlike the EU constitution, however, that effort succeeded.

On May 25th, the World Health Assembly concluded, and with its close came the institution of an unprecedented new level of international law, giving legal power to the World Health Organization (WHO). Until now, WHO requested broad reporting of communicable diseases, but actually required the reporting of only a few of them. With the adoption of revisions to the International Health Regulations, however, WHO now has the authority to require all member nations to report many more outbreaks, and is also given substantial power to enforce these requirements.

Isn't this a good thing? Why would anyone oppose notification about communicable disease? Indeed, prior to the revisions, even large-scale epidemics such as the 2002 Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) illness that overtook China, even spreading to Canada and the U.S., would not have to be reported. Shouldn't outbreaks of Anthrax, Polio, or Yellow Fever, or the use of germ agents in terrorist attacks, be reported? The issue seems to be as much about an expectation as a requirement, and the passing of the revisions seemed inevitable.

Yet as inevitable as it was, it also set the stage for the advancement of a single world government—a prospect that many Christians fear.

WHO is quite possibly the largest of international agencies, with 192 member nations—every nation, in fact, except Taiwan (which, incidentally, is not recognized as a nation by the United States or the United Nations). By giving WHO the power to restrict travel, screen travelers, and even overrule uncooperative domestic authorities, the Revised International Health Regulations represent the first time that an international agency has been given such broad control over national governance. In fact, it is the first time such an agency has been given control over national governance at all, apart from wartime and peacekeeping efforts.

This is a “landmark in international law,” said Georgetown University Professor of Law Larry Gostin in a National Public Radio interview [Richard Knox, “Countries Ordered to Report Disease Outbreaks,” *All Things Considered*, May 27, 2005]. “It will make WHO relevant... for the first time ever in a legal sense. This is the first diminution of governmental sovereignty; it does set a precedent that governments can be circumvented.”

The circumvention of a national government, at any level, implies that it is no longer the final authority over its domestic affairs. This is precisely the premise of the Revised International Health Regulations. “If you won't control the spread of disease among your citizens,” WHO seems to be saying, “We will.” Apparently, domestic governments can no longer be left unto themselves for the oversight of health issues.

Enter world government, if even on a small—and honorable—scale. Though all may agree that reporting disease is for the best, the implications beyond disease can be frightening. Big Brother has a new name: WHO. And he's even bigger than ever.

Most interpretations of Revelation 13 include the idea of a singular world government united under the rule of the Antichrist: "And he was given authority over every tribe, people, language, and nation" (Rev. 13:7b, ESV). Many Christians become nervous and even afraid at any apparent efforts to establish any such government; this accounts for the frequent suspicion and dislike among Christians of the United Nations, of which WHO is an official agency.

Much of the attention for world-government development of late has centered on the European Union. But as many of us breathe a sigh of relief over the failure of the EU constitution, has a bigger threat flown in under the radar? As noble as WHO's intentions are, perhaps they are an even more ominous sign of difficulties ahead.