



## The Interaction of Parasitic Diseases and Nutrition



The Study Week on the *Interaction of Parasitic Diseases and Malnutrition* dealt with a very important global problem.

One may associate malnutrition and parasitic diseases with economic, social and cultural factors, and it is clear that a positive action can be taken in order to minimize or eradicate both.

It is easy to understand that malnutrition may cause a series of pathogenic states, due at least in part to the weakening of the immune system. Malnutrition is certainly one of the specters which haunts all of those who care for the welfare of humankind. So many studies have been carried out on this relationship in developing countries that it almost seemed unnecessary to organize the Study Week, which in a way was a continuation the one held in Bellagio six years ago.

Nevertheless, the wealth of knowledge in the papers presented proved that the meeting had its place. All the aspects of the question were addressed, including global food production and energy availability per capita.

The key takeaway from the meeting was that even when dietary intake meets the accepted standards, there may be a deterioration in the host cell as a response to the parasitic attack. This response is due to the release of interleukin and cachectin, small proteins that are well defined in their molecular constitution.

The meeting was organized and chaired by Professor Gerald T. Keusch, Chief of the Division of Geographic Medicine at Tufts University School of Medicine, Boston.

