The 11th Congress of the European Society for Surgical Research (formerly European Society for Experimental Surgery) will be held in Dublin from April 27 to 30, 1976. Further information can be obtained from The Irish Medical Association, Conference Center, 10, Fitzwilliam Place, Dublin 2 (Ireland).

WHO Foresees Conquest of Smallpox this Year

Messages received at WHO headquarters from the last strongholds of smallpox confirm the hope that eradication of smallpox will be achieved this year. With the solitary exception of Bangladesh, all countries are reporting a bright outlook in the final phases of the war against the disease.

As of 31 March, a total of 7,223 cases of smallpox had been reported to WHO during 1975. This represents a decrease of 87% below the total recorded at this time last year and the smallest number of cases ever reported to WHO during this period of the year.

The theme of World Health Day 1975, ‘Smallpox: point of no return’, reflects WHO’s confidence that by the end of this year, one of mankind’s worst afflictions will have been wiped out from the face of the earth.

This story of man’s conquest of a major disease is being told in a series of articles and photographs issued on the occasion of World Health Day, a special number of the magazine World Health, and through a number of radio programmes distributed worldwide, and a short film.

In 1967, when the smallpox eradication programme was intensified, the disease was endemic in 31 countries, and 13 others reported cases due to importation; by December 1974, endemicity was restricted to parts of only three countries – Bangladesh, Ethiopia and India. Pakistan was on the list early in 1974, but despite effective vigilance no cases have been recorded since October, and it is believed transmission of the disease has been interrupted in the country.

The global campaign to eradicate smallpox must be regarded as a signal triumph of international cooperation to fight disease. Coordinated by WHO and fully supported by the endemic countries as well as those free from the disease, the campaign began to pay dividends from the very beginning.