

X/13/9 C/S - MEDICAL CONVENTION IN WARSAW CANCELLED

LONDON, SEPT. 9--(RFE SPECIAL/WELLS)--AN INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL CONGRESS WHICH WAS TO HAVE OPENED IN WARSAW TUESDAY HAS BEEN CANCELLED BECAUSE OF THE INVASION OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA, IT WAS CONFIRMED TODAY.

SIR JOHN RICHARDSON, PRESIDENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF INTERNAL MEDICINE, SAID THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE SOCIETY HAD DECIDED TO CANCEL THE CONGRESS IT HAD SCHEDULED FOR WARSAW BECAUSE OF "THE SITUATION WHICH EXISTS BETWEEN MEMBERS OF THE WARSAW PACT AND A MEMBER OF THE SOCIETY."

HE SAID THAT AFTER THE SOCIETY'S DECISION WAS MADE KNOWN, IT RECEIVED A TELEGRAM FROM WARSAW EXPRESSING REGRETS AND ASKING THAT THE CANCELLATION BE RECONSIDERED.

SIR JOHN SAID PROF. H. LUDWIG OF BASLE, SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE SOCIETY, REPLIED THAT THE DECISION WAS IRREVOCABLE.

MEANWHILE, IT WAS STATED AT ANOTHER MEDICAL MEETING IN LONDON TODAY THAT THE INDIGNATION AND EMOTION AROUSED BY "RECENT EVENTS IN EUROPE" WERE IRRELEVANT TO THE WORK OF THE WORLD FEDERATION OF SOCIETIES OF ANAESTHESIOLOGISTS.

OUTGOING PRESIDENT SIR GEOFFREY ORGANE TOLD THE FOURTH WORLD CONGRESS OF ANAESTHESIOLOGISTS HERE TODAY THAT "OUR NEXT EUROPEAN CONGRESS IS TO BE IN PRAGUE IN 1970. I HOPE THAT NOTHING WILL HAPPEN TO PREVENT THIS AND THAT THE CZECHS WILL WELCOME THEIR COLLEAGUES FROM THE SOVIET UNION, POLAND, EAST GERMANY, HUNGARY AND BULGARIA AS WELL AS THE REST OF US."

HE ADDED "THE WORLD FEDERATION IS STRICTLY NON-POLITICAL."

ONE OF ITS OBJECTS WAS TO PROMOTE FRIENDSHIP AND UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN ANAESTHETISTS OF DIFFERENT COUNTRIES.

THE ASSOCIATION OF ANAESTHETISTS OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND ARE THE HOSTS TO 3,500 SPECIALISTS FROM 60 COUNTRIES, INCLUDING 14 FROM THE SOVIET UNION.

BG/HE

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