

* * *

N. N. Daily Report
30 July 1957

WHO ASSISTS HUNGARY IN POLIO EPIDEMIC

In answer to an urgent request from the Minister of Health of Hungary, the World Health Organization has obtained an export license for Salk vaccine from the United States Government to help control a threatening epidemic of poliomyelitis in Hungary. The shipment, which was procured through WHO's Regional Office for the Americas, the Pan American Sanitary Bureau, was due to arrive in Budapest on Friday, 26 July. The quantity obtained is sufficient for 29,000 injections.

According to information communicated by the Hungarian Minister of Health, Dr. Doleschall Frigyes, there has been a three-fold increase in the number of cases recorded during the first half of this year, compared to preceding years. During the epidemic years of 1947, 1954 and 1956, polio cases in Hungary reached 1,000 to 1,200, while in non-epidemic years, the number of cases remained at a level of 100 to 300. The majority of cases occurred in children under five years of age.

The vaccination programme will be undertaken according to a plan established by the WHO Regional Office for Europe and WHO Headquarters following discussions with Hungarian experts. In order to obtain maximum benefit from the vaccine supplies immunization will be carried out in areas not yet heavily involved but where there are signs that the epidemic may spread.

* * *

More Salk Vaccine Arrives: A gift of Salk vaccine from WHO has arrived. It is enough for two vaccinations for 40,000 children using the skin method employed in Hungary. (Budapest 20.00, 20.7.57)