

PUBLIC HEALTH

Army Alert for Influenza

The first sign of an outbreak will be the signal for vaccination of threatened units with the new vaccine, now prepared in large quantities.

► "INFLUENZA watches" have been established in Army units overseas and at home to detect the first signs of any outbreak that may threaten our troops, Maj. Aims C. McGuinness of the Office of the Surgeon General, U. S. Army, announced at the meeting of the American Public Health Association, held in New York.

If the flu watches do find the disease breaking out, their report will be the signal for vaccination of threatened units with the new anti-influenza vaccine now being prepared in large quantities for Army use.

With this vaccine, sulfadiazine prophylaxis for meningitis, oiling of floors and blankets to trap germs and other measures, the Army expects to be able this coming winter to control to a greater extent than ever before those diseases whose germs are spread through the air.

Glycol vapor sterilization of the air to check germ spread is being studied by the Army Epidemic Control Commission at the Lockheed airplane plant in Los Angeles, Maj. McGuinness stated.

The invisible, odorless, harmless glycol vapor is being loosed in one large room containing 1,000 workers, while another of the same size is being left unvaporized as a control.

The fact that the workroom in this plant is air conditioned makes it easy to control temperature and humidity. This is necessary for most efficient germ killing by the glycol vapor, Maj. McGuinness explained.

Although this method of air sterilization to check disease spread has shown great promise, the Army group, Maj. McGuinness said, does not think the method will be practical for Army barracks in this war because of technical difficulties. Manufacture of vaporizing machines and their maintenance and maintaining proper humidity and temperature are among the present practical difficulties. The Army group does feel the method has a real place in permanent buildings such as hospitals.

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Cancer Fight Intensified

► THE FIGHT against cancer will be greatly intensified in the near future, it appears from action and discussion at the meeting.

First, a new national association to further control of cancer, the Public Health Cancer Association of America, was organized. Its purposes are "to encourage the adoption and expansion of cancer control programs by city, county and state health departments, to facilitate the interchange of views regarding effective methods of cancer control and to promote cooperative research in the epidemiology of cancer and the application of control measures to human cancer."

Second, at the first meeting of the new society, a strongly worded plea for federal funds for cancer research was made by Dr. E. V. Cowdry, director of research at the Barnard Free Skin and Cancer Hospital, St. Louis.

The funds, he suggested, should be made in the form of "incentive payments" and with a "minimum of red tape." As recipients, he suggested mem-

bers of the Association of American Universities, acceptable medical schools, approved hospitals and such other organizations as may be recognized by the National Research Council as meriting this kind of assistance.

Organizers of the new Public Health Cancer Association are representatives of the departments of health of the following 11 states: Massachusetts, New York, Illinois, Georgia, Alabama, Connecticut, Vermont, Iowa, Missouri, West Virginia and Michigan. Members of the staff of the National Cancer Institute and of the American Cancer Society are understood also to have played a part in organizing the new association. Its officers are: President, Dr. Herbert L. Lombard of the Massachusetts Department of Health; vice-president, Dr. Raymond V. Brokaw, of the Illinois State Department of Health; secretary-treasurer, Dr. Morton L. Levin, of the New York State Department of Health.

Science News Letter, October 14, 1944

ZOOLOGY

First Hybrid Gibbon Born at Washington Zoo

► A HYBRID gibbon baby whose mother is a Siamese gibbon and whose father is a Sumatran gibbon was born on October 3 at the National Zoological Park, Dr. William Mann, director of the zoo announced.

As far as Dr. Mann can determine it is the first hybrid gibbon ever born. It is a cute but ugly little creature with long, thin arms and legs.

There are very few births of gibbons in zoos. The only other birth of a gibbon at the National Zoological Park was 13 years ago. But that was an ordinary gibbon, not a hybrid.

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INVENTION


Toast, Bacon and Eggs Cooked at Same Time

► A COMBINED toaster and cooker has been awarded patent 2,358,996, issued to Daniel Platkin of Los Angeles. Electricity is used for heating, and both toasting and cooking may be done at the same time.

The toasting part consists of two sloping surfaces with the heating element between them as in the ordinary electric toaster. In the base of the equipment is a sliding tray with heating elements under it, for cooking bacon, eggs and chops.

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