

unhealthy atmosphere that has been created by the Un-American Activities Committee must be removed."

They urged President Truman "to in-

vestigate this situation, and then direct your powers in an attempt to secure a remedy."

Science News Letter, September 18, 1948

GENERAL SCIENCE

"No Brains, No Security"

The following editorial under the title "No Brains, No Security" from the New York Star for Sept. 10 is reprinted by permission:

➤ THERE is a nice touch of irony in the telegram eight outstanding scientists sent to President Truman and Governor Dewey to protest the smear tactics of the Thomas Committee. The Committee, having decked itself out in the garb of guardian of our national security and political mores, is inclined to answer each protest with the discovery of a new "spy ring." It defends its methods on the grounds that, though occasionally the innocent may suffer, roughshod tactics are necessary to protect the majority. But now in the crucible of the laboratory, where much of our security lies, the Committee has been weighed and found wanting.

The scientists said they had no real objection to a reasonable and competent inquiry for the sake of real security. But—and this was the determined, cold note in their telegrams—the hysterical outbursts of the Committee were causing many able scientists to avoid returning to or going into government service. Within memory of most of us, and presumably of the Thomas Committee, are the magnificent contributions to our atomic energy development by those scientists who, true to their creed of the rule of light and reason, fled the megalomaniacal hysteria of Nazism's late and unlamented leader. What better proof is there that security lies in access to the ablest talent, the brightest minds of our day? And conversely, what greater threat to our security than a group of investigators whose dimwitted tactics keep out of government service some of our finest brains?

Almost as the scientists were protesting, a prize example of what they were driving at came from the Thomas Committee. Even the usually respectful and careful Associated Press fell for the cheap attempt to discredit a solidly scientific project. An AP story on the Committee's hunt for a "third spy ring" led off this way: "The House Committee on Un-American Affairs is tracking down a report that an international group of scientists plans to star gaze from the middle of the Belgian Congo uranium fields." Note how "international group" is tossed in with "star gaze" to suggest something at once sinister and daffy about a project in a land of chattering Geiger counters—and monkeys.

On down in the story one learns on the authority of that eminent Republican

scientist from Pennsylvania—Rep. McDowell—that some \$9,000,000 is to be spent on an astronomical laboratory to be used by French, Dutch and Belgian, but NOT Russian scientists, in the midst of the Congo's most uranium-rich terrain. The Committee, McDowell proclaimed, is going to find out where the money comes from and what the hell is behind the scheme.

Well, we always like to help the Thomas Committee out. On best scientific authority we are able to advise it what the Congo project amounts to.

To show its gratitude for the financial support the Belgian government-in-exile got from the Congo during the war, Belgium decided to establish a laboratory and institute for study of tropical diseases and medicines in the Congo. The project is financed entirely by Belgium, on land under Belgian control, in an area rich in uranium belonging to the Belgians. In short, the project is an all Belgian affair and, like a lot of other things the Thomas Committee pokes its nose into, is none of its damn business.

[Facts about the Belgian Congo project are told in SNL, Sept. 11, p. 167.]

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GENERAL SCIENCE

House Committee Is Called "Inhumane"

➤ DR. LINUS PAULING, President-elect of the American Chemical Society, speaking at the St. Louis meeting, accused the House Un-American Activities Committee of "scorning humane and considerate treatment" in its inquiries.

He said witnesses, especially scientists, are "utterly without protection when the Thomas Committee takes hold." By way of contrast, Dr. Pauling said, the Atomic Energy Commission has handled the security problem "reasonably well."

Dr. Pauling, California Institute of Technology professor, said the commission has handled security cases which warranted dismissal without "unfair publicity" and with a chance for accused persons to defend themselves.

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Some natural gases used for fuel and lighting contain 10% or more of non-combustible *nitrogen*; scientists are now trying to find an economical way to take the nitrogen out before the gas is shipped to consumers by pipelines.

PSYCHOLOGY

You Inherit Old Age, Twin Study Reveals

➤ OLD AGE is inherited.

You can shorten your life by what you do or what happens to you in life, or by failing to take advantage of your constitutional potentialities. But you can't add one year to your limit of vital capacity, Dr. Franz J. Kallman, of the New York State Psychiatric Institute, told the American Psychological Association, meeting in Boston.

This conclusion is based on a study of 2,000 twins over 60 years of age. Not only is long life inherited, but also the ability to stay in good mental and physical health during all the period of senescence.

The likenesses between identical twin children, both in looks and personality, that make it hard for even their own parents to tell them apart, persist through old age, it was observed. They continue even when the twins are separated.

Old people cannot see as well on a dark night as younger men, Dr. James E. Birren, of Baltimore City Hospitals, told the same meeting. Dr. Birren compared 66 men aged 43 to 80, living in the Baltimore Infirmary, with 25 Navy enlisted men aged 18 to 23.

Some of the older men had structural defects which might account for the lack of dark adaptation. But others had no such defects.

Individual differences in the loss of ability to see in the dark are, however, great. The range for the older men is more than twice as great as for the younger men.

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PSYCHOLOGY

Faith in Future Runs High in American Youth

➤ FAITH IN THE FUTURE runs high in American youth of both high and low economic levels, with particular confidence expressed in the opportunities open for young people and success in marriage.

This is disclosed in a study by Dr. H. E. Jones, professor of psychology at the University of California, who tested 659 high school seniors from the same urban school in 1938, 1942 and 1947.

The psychologist asked for comments on 15 items on social and economic conditions and future prospects. There were four possible answers, two giving differing degrees of optimism and two reflecting pessimism.

Paradoxically, the greatest optimism occurred in the spring of 1942, when the subjects were facing the draft and when American military fortunes were at their lowest ebb in World War II. Optimism is still high, though not so high, generally, as in 1942.

On the statement, "There are actually a great many more opportunities today than ever before," 1 in 5 were in agreement in

1938, 9 out of 10 in 1942, and 1 in 2 in 1947.

On the subject of marriage, the youths were as optimistic in 1947 as in 1942. The conviction that "If people really want to, they can always establish a home and family without any great sacrifice, even in bad times" increased from 1938 to 1942 and remained strong in 1947.

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PSYCHOLOGY

Home Babies Are Brighter Than Ones in Institution

► **EVEN** young babies in a good institution do not score as bright on mental tests as do babies in a private home.

Two hundred infants from six weeks to 12 weeks old were given infant intelligence tests in a study reported to the American Psychological Association in Boston by Dr. A. R. Gilliland of Northwestern University. Half the babies lived in a good institution. Half are in private homes.

The average IQ of the institution babies was 97.5; that for those in private homes 109.5.

Apparently whether the parents are rich or poor does not have any effect on the mental development of such young babies. Those in the finest homes did not score higher than those in the poorest families.

The oldest child in a family tends to think differently from his younger sisters and brothers, the same meeting learned from Dr. Joan Kalthorn, of Fels Research Institute, Antioch College.

The first child in the family is likely to excel on abstract thinking. The younger child is superior on more realistic tasks. The younger child also tends to have a higher total intelligence score than his older brother or sister.

A possible explanation offered by Dr. Kalthorn is that the older child received more intellectual stimulation and companionship from adults. The younger child is less protected and has more freedom to explore and develop his own capacities.

Dr. Kalthorn studied 39 pairs of first and second children. They ranged in age from 30 months to 12 years.

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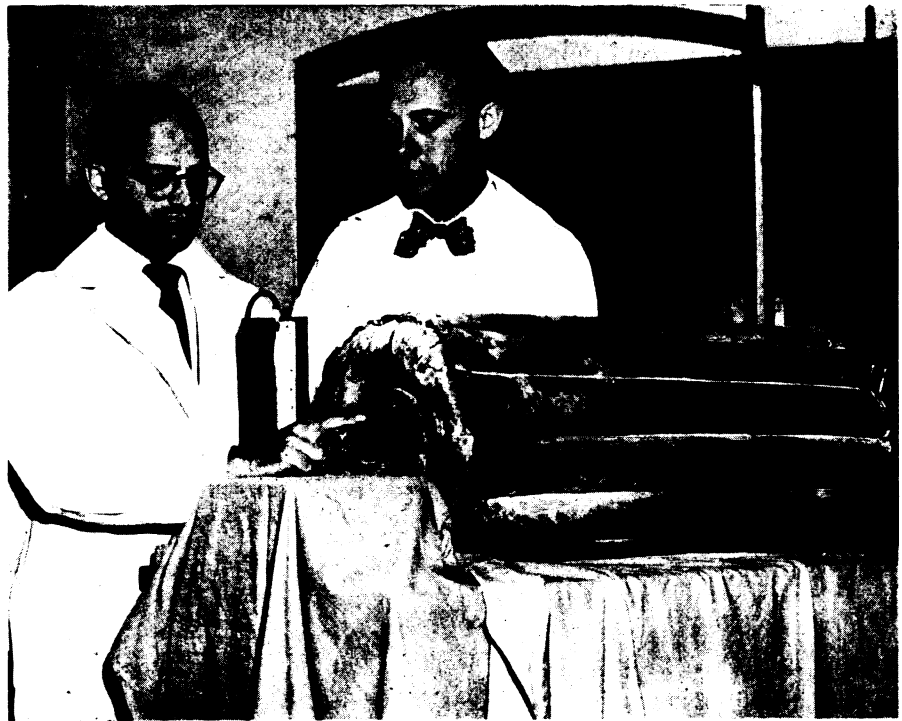
MEDICINE

Refuge from Hay Fever Possible in Park Areas

► **IF YOU ARE** seeking a refuge from your sniffles and sneezes during the hay fever season, go to the national parks of the Rocky Mountain, Cascade, Olympic, and Sierra regions.

Thirteen years of pollen testing have shown that these regions are excellent ragweed refuges, Dr. O. C. Durham of the Abbott Laboratories said in the *JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION* (Sept. 11).

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NEW LIGHT-WEIGHT "IRON LUNG"—This cat is breathing artificially in the new Yale cloth respirator. It was developed by Dr. Harold Lamport, left, and Dr. Ralph D. Eichhorn, right.

MEDICINE

Collapsible Cloth "Lung"

Polio patients would benefit from this inexpensive, light-weight respirator, if it can be produced commercially. Successful tests were made with a cat.

► **PARALYZED** polio victims may soon have available a cloth type of "iron lung" that is inexpensive and can be folded to fit into a suitcase.

This rubberized cloth respirator was tested successfully at Yale University on an experimental animal, its designers, Drs. Harold Lamport and Ralph D. Eichhorn, reported in the journal, *SCIENCE* (Sept. 10).

An experimental man-size model has been made for commercial use but several technical problems exist which the manufacturer must still solve. These are: how to provide proper portholes for patient care; how best to get a person in and out of the respirator; and whether to use it with a standard hospital bed or as a self-contained unit.

This new model uses the same principle as the "iron lung." It subjects the paralyzed patient to rhythmic negative pressure to help him breathe. It is cylindrical in shape and weighs less than two pounds when fully inflated.

Comparing its structure to a thermos flask, the doctors said it has air-tight inner

and outer walls with sustained air pressure between. Partitions extend the length of the cylinder but are not attached at the ends so that air under pressure can be introduced from a single inlet.

The end where the head protrudes is sealed off by a plywood disk with a sponge-rubber neck piece. This contains tubes to measure the pressure and to permit evacuating the chamber. To induce the rhythmic respiration, standard methods such as bellows, diaphragm, or vacuum pump with a flexible hose, can be used.

They also designed another model made of plastic sheeting which has so far proved unsatisfactory. However, they feel that this one has considerable promise because of the possibility it offers of having a completely transparent respirator which would aid in nursing and medical care.

The idea for the respirator was conceived by Dr. Lamport when he was working at Yale during World War II on the pneumatic lever suit which prevents blackout of pilots maneuvering at high speeds.

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