

BACTERIOLOGY

Germ Warfare Set-Up

Still partly hush-hush set-up for defense against BW outlined. "Twelve outstanding investigators in various parts of country" will work on problem.

➤ **FIRST NEWS** of a relatively new and still partly hush-hush set-up for defense against BW, or germ warfare, was given by Dr. Dorland J. Davis, of the National Microbiological Institute, U. S. Public Health Service, at the meeting of the American Public Health Association in San Francisco.

The new set-up has the title, Sectional Research Program in Microbiology. For this program, "12 outstanding investigators in various parts of the country" have been asked to work with other scientists in their vicinity and with five to 10 laboratories in nearby universities, state health departments, hospitals or research institutions.

Names and locations of the 12 scientists were not given by Dr. Dorland because they are still classified as secret by civil defense authorities.

The 12 scientists and collaborating laboratories are expected to speed research, some of it already going on, which will strengthen our defenses against BW. Specifically, it is hoped that through this pro-

gram there will be developed better, faster tests for identifying disease agents; simpler methods for detecting antibodies in the blood to such agents; methods for vaccinating against the disease agents after a person or population has been exposed to them; methods for treatment after such exposure; treatments for virus diseases for which no treatment now exists; better general immunizations, or vaccinations, with more effective and lasting effects; and better methods of investigating epidemics.

The laboratories in this new BW defense program will not be asked to do routine diagnostic work nor take part in regular public health work. Only in unusual circumstances, presumably such as a suspected BW attack, will they be called on by official agencies for expert aid.

Financial support for the research under this program will be given through the regular U. S. Public Health Service mechanism of grants-in-aid, given to applicants upon approval of the National Advisory Health Councils.

Although national defense is the primary concern behind establishment of this program, results from it are expected to benefit national health in general, Dr. Davis pointed out.

Science News Letter, November 10, 1951

PUBLIC HEALTH

Method Predicts Polio Epidemic and Cases

➤ **A METHOD** of predicting the total number of cases of infantile paralysis to be expected within a given year and of forecasting when an epidemic is brewing was reported by Dr. F. M. Hemphill of the University of Michigan School of Public Health at the meeting of the American Public Health Association in San Francisco.

Dr. Hemphill in the middle of last July predicted that the total number of polio cases for the year 1951 would be 27,000. The total number of cases reported to the U. S. Public Health Service from the first of the year through Oct. 20 was 23,853 and federal health authorities that week stated some 30,000 cases may be the total for the calendar year.

In his report Dr. Hemphill did not give any evaluation of the results of his methods but only the technical statistical procedures.

Science News Letter, November 10, 1951

ANTHROPOLOGY

Government Officials Lean and Unmuscular

➤ **A DEFINITE** relationship between the build of men and what they do is reported by two Harvard anthropologists, Frederick Stagg and Prof. Earnest A. Hooton.

Studying careers and body-measurements of 2,631 Harvard graduates before World War I, they have made such observations as:

Government officials in the group are usually lean and unmuscular.

Scientists tend to be moderately thin with a better than average supply of muscles.

Theology attracted the lean, unmuscular, lightly built men, but there was a significant minority of the muscular, "fighting parson" type.

Solidly built, muscular men of European ancestry usually came from southern, not northern, Europe.

Men whose forebears traced back to the time of the American colonies were apt to be more muscular than those with British or British-American parents.

Because a Harvard physical director compiled body-measurement photographs of men of Harvard classes of 1876 to 1912, the material existed that allowed the study.

A similar confidential study of 45,000 World War II soldiers demonstrated to Mr. Stagg that men of certain body types are best fitted to particular jobs.

Science News Letter, November 10, 1951



BETTER PLANTS—In the hands of the scientists, the flower of a tomato plant, the vial containing a plant hormone solution and the glass applicator are necessary tools to bring us better food through research.