

PSYCHOLOGY

Franklin, Propagandist

► BENJAMIN FRANKLIN wrote propaganda literature and used psychological warfare in the Revolutionary War. This new view of the author of "Poor Richard's Almanac" was presented before the American Philosophical Society meeting in Philadelphia by Prof. Gilbert Chinard, professor emeritus of French literature, Princeton University. The Philosophical Society was itself founded by Franklin.

First clue to Franklin as a propagandist was discovered by Prof. Chinard in the Franklin papers of the Philosophical Society where he located correspondence between Franklin and the private secretary of the French foreign minister, Edmund Genet. In these letters, M. Genet requested Franklin to send news of the war from America in order to refute British propaganda. Franklin's "Letters of an American to someone in France" ran in a paper which purported to be published in Antwerp. It was actually, however, a semi-official pub-

lication of the French foreign office and came out in Paris.

Search of French libraries disclosed copies of this propaganda sheet which came out three times a month throughout the years from 1776 to 1780. Several pieces were identified by Prof. Chinard definitely as written by Benjamin Franklin. One was supposed to be written by a Hessian prisoner taken at the Battle of Princeton and was intended to persuade other German soldiers to desert from the British army. In it he told how well the prisoners were treated by the Americans and said that George Washington himself had made a speech to the prisoners promising that if they would not bear arms against America they would be treated well and allowed to live in America as free men.

This early propaganda paper was called "Affaires de l'Angleterre et Amerique" (Affairs of England and America).

Science News Letter, November 17, 1951

GENERAL SCIENCE

Industrial Atom Demand

► A LARGE-SCALE demand for exploding atoms, by-products of atom bomb production, exists in industry, but use of such fission products will depend primarily on the price at which they are available. They would give industry certain types of radiation at less cost or in more convenient forms than presently available sources.

This was the conclusion of a survey of industrial uses of radioactive fission products conducted for the U. S. Atomic Energy Commission by Stanford Research Institute. Although many technical and economic problems must be solved before the mil-

lions of curies of radioactive wastes now stored at AEC installations can be used, refinement and concentration would make them suitable for industrial purposes, the survey showed.

Present commercially possible uses for such products include the activation of phosphors for self-luminescent signs and markers and in process control instruments, such as measuring the thickness of materials by radiation penetration.

Possible future uses for fission products, where two to five years may be required for development, include cold sterilization

of drugs and food and portable low-level power sources.

The report states that "Food sterilization without heat offers many attractive potential markets for fission products, primarily because of the possibility of obtaining unique final products that cannot be obtained economically by known means. The largest market groups include meats, fresh fruits, fresh vegetables, beverages and miscellaneous perishable food products."

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