

GENERAL SCIENCE

World War Avoidable

Carnegie Institution president reports that for at least another generation world-wide conflagration may be avoided, but price is continual vigilance.

► ANOTHER WORLD war may well be avoided for at least a generation, Dr. Vannevar Bush, wartime head of the government's research and development, said in his presidential report to the trustees of the Carnegie Institution of Washington.

Observing that the avoidance of all-out war is a first condition of sound progress for our civilization, Dr. Bush stated that "the price of peace is to be continual vigilance and a heavy cost in maintaining sufficient defensive power among the free nations."

Discussing our economic system, Dr. Bush suggested that "perhaps we have learned to avoid periodic depressions and dislocations; at least we avoided a postwar slump."

Preservation of freedom and initiative which made this country great is no academic matter and touches science very directly, Dr. Bush declared. The trend toward centralization in government, facilitated by modern scientific techniques, could build a stifling bureaucracy in this democratic country as readily as in any other, he warned.

Government control of research, thus far, has not been onerous, Dr. Bush said, but there is danger under government subsidy and control that there may be an undue emphasis on the immediate and the applied and a lack of support for really fundamental science. Probably seven times as many dollars a year as before the war are now being channeled into research and development.

Industrial Research Boosts Production

Industrial research, Dr. Bush said, has aided more than is generally appreciated in boosting our productivity abruptly when we sorely needed it, and hence in carrying the burden of armament without sacrifice of the standard of living.

Among the Carnegie Institution's research activities in astronomy, terrestrial sciences, biological sciences, and archaeology, during the past year were:

The world's largest 200-inch telescope on Mt. Palomar has reached out and found a distant nebula that has an apparent speed of rushing away from our part of the universe of 61,000 kilometers per second (38,000 miles per second), over a fifth of the velocity of light. When still farther reaches of space are probed, and the recession velocities of nebulae reach a substantial fraction of light's velocity, astronomers hope to decide whether the red shift in this distant light really means that the outer

parts of the universe are flying apart explosively.

Studies suggest that two kinds of feldspar minerals in granite develop after complete solidification at the high temperatures at which this rock in the earth's crust was formed.

Grow Algae on Large Scale

Large-scale growing of the green alga *Chlorella* will shortly show whether or not it can be produced profitably and used as foodstuff or for other purposes.

First direct evidence was obtained that little bodies within bacteria are actually carriers of hereditary material and therefore are like the nuclei of cells of higher organisms.

The reproduction of minute invaders of bacteria, called bacteriophages, were studied and the phage particles were found to mate at least four times, on the average.

Isolation of a substance that holds the development of leukemic cells in check is

being attempted following discovery that heated leukemic cells do not produce cancer-like leukemia in mice.

The time at which, in the guinea pig, the rhythmic electrical changes in the brain, the so-called brain waves, first become detectable was discovered.

Small cavities appear in the heads of human embryos at about 27 to 29 days gestation age, it was discovered, although these transient evolutionary developments common to lower animals are not found in other mammals.

Exploration of the ruins of Mayapan, archaeological site in Yucatan, revealed houses and other evidence of everyday life, confirming Bishop Landa's early Spanish accounts of aboriginal Yucatan.

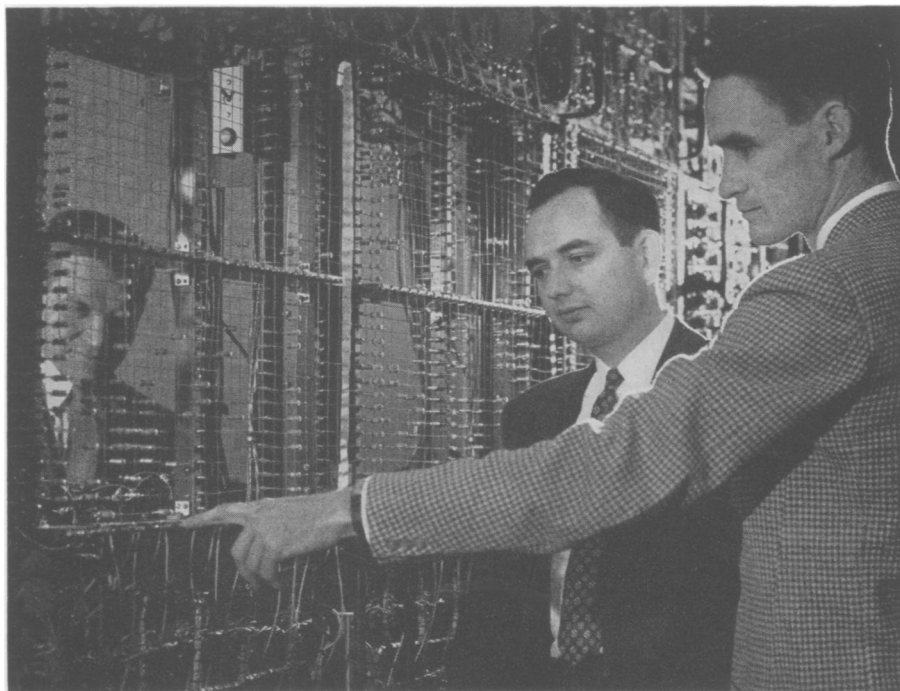
Science News Letter, December 22, 1951

ENGINEERING

Whirlwind, Ultra-Fast "Brain," Now Operating

► WHIRLWIND I, an ultra-high-speed digital computing machine, is now in operation at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

One of the features of this fast electronic machine, the only large-scale computer of its kind in full operation in this country, is its electrostatic "memory," which exists



"WHIRLWIND" OPERATION—With the ability to act upon and deliver information at a rate of 20,000 times a second, Whirlwind I, the high-speed electronic computer of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, is suitable for supplying instantaneous instructions such as needed for controlling aircraft traffic patterns. The operation center is shown here.

in the form of specially designed electronic storage tubes.

With its ability to remember, act upon, and deliver information at a rate of 20,000 times a second, Whirlwind I is the first machine suitable for supplying instantaneous instructions for such applications as controlling aircraft traffic patterns.

Whirlwind also has many other applications for the study of industrial process control, insurance handling, inventory, economic analysis, census problems, and scientific and engineering computations.

Completion of trial tests of Whirlwind was announced in a paper presented by Robert R. Everett and Norman H. Taylor of the Digital Computer Laboratory of M. I. T., at the joint American Institute of Electrical Engineers and Institute of Radio Engineers Computer Conference in Philadelphia.

During the next year Whirlwind will be devoted to a variety of engineering, scientific, and industrial applications as well as to military projects sponsored by the Office of Naval Research and the United States Air Force.

Science News Letter, December 22, 1951

BIOCHEMISTRY

Discover B Vitamin That Concerns Insects, Not Man

► DISCOVERY OF a new B vitamin was announced by Drs. G. S. Fraenkel, H. E. Carter and P. K. Bhattacharyya and Miss K. R. Weidman of the University of Illinois at an American Chemical Society meeting in Austin, Tex.

B T is the name of the new vitamin. It is essential for certain insects, among them the Tenebrio beetle which infests grain and flour in storage. It is the same as the chemical, carnitine, found in animal muscle. So far, there is no evidence that man or other higher animals require it the way they do other vitamins.

Science News Letter, December 22, 1951

GENETICS

More Milk for South

► COWS FOR the South that will give "considerably higher" milk production than native cattle can be expected within three or four years from crossbreeds being developed in Washington.

U. S. Department of Agriculture scientists report that crosses between India's Red Sindhi bulls and Jersey, Brown Swiss and Holstein cows give a high volume of milk and butterfat even in the warm humid climate of the South.

Although they have not yet found out the exact physiological reactions and, therefore, the reasons why a cow does give less milk in hot weather conditions, they do know that the animal's appetite is less and that it eats less. The animal devotes most of its energy to trying to keep comfortable, just as a person on a very hot day spends much of his energy non-productively—just fanning himself in an effort to keep cool.

The dairy scientists are trying to find out exactly why a cow gives less milk when exposed to continuous heat. When these reactions are known, they believe that they can then breed cows that will be able to stand up under steady hot weather.

Artificial breeding through crossbred bulls is expected to be the best method of getting the higher-producing cows to the farmers quickly. Some southern farmers are taking crossbred cows into their herds now, thus giving the Department additional information about the animal's performance under actual farm conditions.

Under carefully controlled experimental conditions at Beltsville, Md., the scientists found that ten cows, crosses between the Red Sindhi and Jersey, averaged 8,717 pounds of milk and 516 pounds of butterfat in a year. At the Louisiana station under continuous hot weather conditions, production figures for the crossbred animals were

less than at Beltsville, but still considerably above the average production level in the Gulf Coast area of 2,000 pounds of milk per year.

A progress report on the crossbreeding program is contained in the annual report of the chief of the Department's Bureau of Dairy Industry.

Science News Letter, December 22, 1951

SCIENCE NEWS LETTER

VOL. 60 DECEMBER 22, 1951 No. 25

The Weekly Summary of Current Science, published every Saturday by SCIENCE SERVICE, Inc. 1719 N St., N. W., Washington 6, D. C., NORTH 2255. Edited by WATSON DAVIS.

Subscription rates: 1 yr., \$5.50; 2 yrs., \$10.00; 3 yrs., \$14.50; single copy, 15 cents, more than six months old, 25 cents. No charge for foreign postage.

Change of address: Three weeks notice is required. When ordering a change please state exactly how magazine is now addressed. Your new address should include postal zone number if you have one.

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Printed in U. S. A. Entered as second class matter at the post office at Washington, D. C. under the act of March 3, 1879. Acceptance for mailing at the special rate of postage provided for by Sec. 34.40, P. L. and R., 1948 Edition, paragraph (d) (act of February 28, 1925; 39 U. S. Code 283), authorized February 28, 1950. Established in mimeographed form March 18, 1922. Title registered as trademark, U. S. and Canadian Patent Offices. Indexed in Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature, Abridged Guide, and the Engineering Index.

Member Audit Bureau of Circulation. Advertising Representatives: Howland and Howland, Inc., 393 7th Ave., N.Y.C., Pennsylvania 6-5566 and 360 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago. STA 2-4822.

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