

MEDICINE

Cancer Cure Search

"Crash" program to win fight against cancer inaugurated under direction of a committee combining Government, public and industry representatives.

► **SCIENTIFIC BRAINS** and money from Government, the public and industry are being pooled in a new drive to find a drug or drugs to cure cancer.

Except that this will be a voluntary cooperative effort, with no secrecy and no military regulations, the program will be like the wartime researches that gave us radar, the atom bomb and other winning developments.

For the first time public, private and industrial research in the field of cancer chemotherapy will be brought under the guidance of one organization, the Cancer Chemotherapy National Committee.

Chairman of this top policy-making body is Dr. Sidney Farber, scientific director of the Children's Cancer Research Foundation in Boston.

Sponsoring organizations are the American Cancer Society, Atomic Energy Commission, Damon Runyon Memorial Fund for Cancer Research, the Food and Drug Administration, the National Cancer Institute of the U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare and the Veterans Administration.

Drug and chemical industries are brought into the program through an advisory liaison group with members from Vick Chemical Company, Burroughs-Wellcome and Company, Merck and Company, American Cyanamid Company, Dow Chemical Company, E. R. Squibb and Sons and Parke, Davis and Company.

Spark for the program came during Senate Appropriations Committee hearings two years ago. At that time the National Cancer Institute was asked to explore the desirability of "an engineered and directed program in the field of cancer chemotherapy."

After meetings with representatives of various groups, the voluntary cooperative program was decided on.

"While no chemical cure for cancer yet exists, there are enough promising leads now to justify very intensive research," Dr. K. M. Endicott of the National Cancer Institute told **SCIENCE SERVICE**.

Dr. Endicott is executive secretary of the new committee.

Synthetic chemical compounds, chemicals from plants, hormones and viruses are among the materials the new committee considers worth investigating as potential cancer remedies.

The committee will make it possible for scientists working on a particular aspect of the problem to get together and exchange ideas and suggest new lines of approach. It will try to get for the scientists the particular chemical compounds they want to

study as possible cancer drugs. It will keep an "intelligence file" showing where to get a compound or where to have a new one tested.

Altogether, Government and private agencies and industries are spending some twelve to fifteen million dollars on the search for chemicals to stop cancer. The new committee will, it is hoped, give the direction needed to make this investment more profitable in terms of lives saved from cancer.

Science News Letter, June 11, 1955

GEOPHYSICS

Martian Atmosphere Is Relatively Motionless

► **THE MARTIAN** atmosphere is relatively motionless, Dr. Jean I. F. King of the Air Force Cambridge Research Center, Cambridge, Mass., believes.

Venus, according to his theory, has a surface temperature of several hundred degrees, leading to the extreme atmospheric

turbulence and dust storms that permanently obscure the planet's surface.

Dr. King outlined his method for predicting temperatures on earth's nearest planet neighbors at the first annual Gunter Loeser Memorial Lecture in Boston. His theory is based on studies of the degree to which each planet's atmosphere cuts down the sun's light.

Science News Letter, June 11, 1955

ELECTRONICS

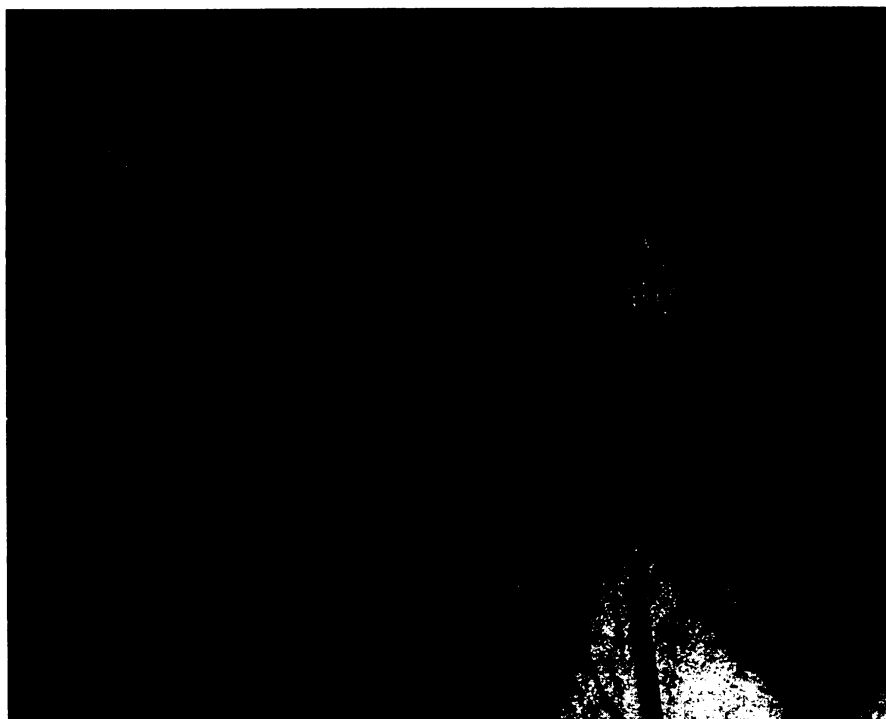
Better Transistors Made by New Process

► **BETTER TRANSISTORS** to replace vacuum tubes in such high frequency uses as television, shortwave radio and radar have been developed.

Dr. C. G. Suits, research director for General Electric Company, dedicating a new microwave laboratory at Palo Alto, Calif., said that the new, improved transistors can operate efficiently at frequencies five times higher than ordinary transistors. At these high frequencies, they amplify current several hundred times, compared to gains of about 50 times for ordinary ones.

Dr. Robert N. Hall developed the "melt-back" process for making the better transistors. Using it, thin wire-like crystals are quickly cooled to give tiny crystals in less than a second. Present commercial methods for making transistors involve cutting larger crystals into smaller ones.

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IMPROVED TRANSISTOR—Dr. Robert N. Hall, scientist at the General Electric Research Laboratory, Schenectady, N. Y., developed the new "melt-back" process to grow silicon crystals for improved transistors. The greater frequency range of the new transistors is indicated on the blackboard in the background.