

GENERAL SCIENCE

Peaceful Atom's Impact

► THE IMPACT of the peaceful uses of atomic energy will in no way rival the immediate and shocking impact of the wartime uses of atomic energy.

It may well be another generation before the average citizen finds himself using atomic energy as an everyday commodity. Much will depend on the citizen himself, who must still accept atomic energy and feel comfortable in a world made better by its use.

This was evident in the conclusions of the first comprehensive study of the peaceful uses of atomic energy made by a non-partisan, nine-man panel and reported to the Joint Congressional Committee on Atomic Energy.

Much of the development of atomic energy for peaceful use, the panel found, is still in a transition stage between complete domination by the Government and a sharing of the development by private interests and Government.

In several areas, the report states, atomic energy will not be able to compete economically with other forms of energy now being used. In other areas, atomic energy will be just another tool for getting things done.

Atomic-powered cars, trucks and buses, for example, are not technically feasible. Atomic-powered planes, ships and locomotives, although possible, will not compete favorably economically for many years to come.

"Peaceful uses of atomic energy in the field of agriculture are significant additions to the many other modern methods of improving farm technology," the panel said.

"Radiation preservation of food does not appear likely to replace other methods of

food preservation to any substantial extent in the foreseeable future."

It is apparent from the report that everyday life will not be changed radically and overnight. Much research and development has to come, but there are two stumbling blocks that can seriously hamper the development of atomic energy: lack of manpower and lack of information.

Discussing the manpower shortage, the report notes that "regardless of how the Federal Government and its departments and agencies resolve all the factors for and against rapid development," manpower is the one factor that may very well determine the overall rate of peaceful atomic development.

An equally strong warning concerning an "informed public" was issued in the report.

"Until there is a better informed public opinion, until there is more balance in programming what lies ahead and until there is integrated policy to guide both our domestic development and our participation in international development of peaceful uses of atomic energy compatible with international atomic control, attitudes and climate alike are apt to shift from day to day and week to week."

Perhaps the most significant and immediate impact the peaceful use of atomic energy can have for Americans is its impact for peace.

The nine-man panel of experts strongly urged U. S. participation in the international development of atomic energy and stated, "atomic power may be the most tangible symbol of America's will to peace through the peaceful atom."

Science News Letter, February 11, 1956

pital, or it becomes impractical for them to come every day and return every evening.

When patients living at great distances are treated in day hospitals, they have to live in nearby hotels or boarding homes, which may give them too many situations to adjust to.

The day hospital at Allan Memorial Institute was shown to a group of science writers touring mental hospitals. (See p. 89 for related story.)

Science News Letter, February 11, 1956

SCIENCE NEWS LETTER

VOL. 69 FEBRUARY 11, 1956 NO. 6

The Weekly Summary of Current Science, published every Saturday by SCIENCE SERVICE, Inc., 1719 N. St., N. W., Washington 6, D. C., NORth 7-2255. 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.

Copyright, 1956, by Science Service, Inc. Reproduction of any portion of SCIENCE NEWS LETTER is strictly prohibited. Newspapers, magazines and other publications are invited to avail themselves of the numerous syndicate services issued by Science Service. Science Service also publishes CHEMISTRY (monthly) and THINGS of Science (monthly).

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 19, 1922. Title registered as trademark, U. S. and Canadian Patent Offices. Indexed in Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature, Abridged Guide, and the Engineering Index.

Member Audit Bureau of Circulation, Advertising Representatives: Howland and Howland, Inc., 1 E. 54th St., New York 22, ELdorado 5-5666, and 435 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago 11, SUperior 7-6048.

SCIENCE SERVICE

The Institution for the Popularization of Science organized 1921 as a non-profit corporation.

Board of Trustees — Nominated by the American Association for the Advancement of Science: Kirtley F. Mather, Harvard University; Paul B. Sears, Yale University; Karl Lark-Harowitz, Purdue University. Nominated by the National Academy of Sciences: Edward U. Condon, Berkeley, Calif.; Harlow Shapley, Harvard College Observatory; George W. Corner, Carnegie Institution of Washington. Nominated by the National Research Council: Ross G. Harrison, Yale University; Leonard Carmichael, Smithsonian Institution; Jerome Hunsaker, Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Nominated by the Journalistic Profession: Neil H. Swanson, Ruxton, Md.; O. W. Riegel, Washington and Lee University; Michael A. Gorman, Flint Journal. Nominated by the Scripps Estate: Edward J. Meeman, Memphis Press-Scimitar; John T. O'Rourke, Washington Daily News; Charles E. Scripps, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Officers — President: Leonard Carmichael; Vice President and Chairman of Executive Committee: Charles E. Scripps; Treasurer: O. W. Riegel; Secretary: Watson Davis.

Staff — Director: Watson Davis. Writers: Jane Stafford, Marjorie Van de Water, Ann Ewing, Howard Simons, Dorothy Schriver, Helen M. Davis. Science Clubs of America: Joseph H. Kraus, Margaret E. Patterson. Photography: Fremont Davis. Production: Priscilla Howe, Marcia Nelson. Interlingua Division in New York: Alexander Gode, 80 E. 11th St., GRameray 3-5410.

PSYCHIATRY

Day Mental Hospital

► A HOSPITAL for mental patients, which has no iron bars at the windows, no locks and keys and scarcely any beds, has been operating successfully in Montreal for almost 10 years. It is the day hospital of the Allan Memorial Institute of Psychiatry, Montreal.

Patients come to the hospital every morning, spend the day getting various kinds of treatment for their sick minds, and then return home to spend the night.

Returning home to the family at night is considered one important part of the treatment, since it keeps the patients in touch with the real life they must return to and be able to cope with if they are to recover fully from their illness.

The absence of locks and bars helps in the treatment, too. From early childhood, we are taught to conform to what our fam-

ilies and society expect of us. A person, especially a sick, confused, frightened person, who is put behind bars and locked up in a bare room may well think he is expected to be violent and destructive, so he will and often does come up to that expectation.

If, as in the day hospital, he is shown that people expect him to be neat and clean and careful of property, he will respond in that way.

Day hospitals for mentally sick patients have a great economic advantage, important in view of the increasing numbers of mentally sick. The savings come from elimination of two out of three shifts of nurses, elimination of two out of three meals, and better utilization of floor space.

A disadvantage is that patients must live no farther than one hour from the hos-