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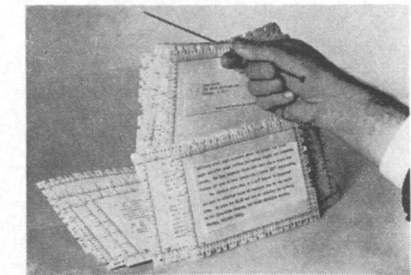
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INVENTION

Current U.S. Patents

➤ A COMPUTER that duplicates the behavior of living nerve cells received a patent from the U.S. Patent Office.

Inventor Frederick F. Hiltz of the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory in Silver Spring, Md., said his computer has in fact matched the activity of a group of animal nerve cells. Further research should provide an understanding of neuron behavior, he said.

With the computer, scientists will study how messages are transferred and utilized in the nervous system, hopefully clearing away some of the mystery surrounding neuron activity.

The device is an analogue computer, which does not use numbers and is thus more flexible than a digital computer in adjusting to a variety of directions. A series of electrical components duplicate individual neurons. An electrical impulse applied to the components simulates neuron excitation.

Mr. Hiltz, a senior engineer, assigned rights to his invention, patent 3,218,475, to the U.S. Government through the Secretary of the Navy.

Pneumatic Restraint System

Bladders to hold an astronaut in his seat during acceleration and deceleration are part of a pneumatic restraint system that received patent 3,218,103 for William C. Boyce of Dallas, Texas. When the "curtain" of bladders is inflated it wraps the astro-

naut tightly into his seat. Mr. Boyce assigned rights to the U.S. Government through the Secretary of the Air Force.

Acoustical Concrete

Acoustical concrete slabs won patent 3,217,375 for Clairborne H. Kinnard of Franklin, Tenn.

Already in extensive use in schools, office buildings and shopping centers, the slabs are finely pitted on one side to absorb sound. Across the bottom of the block is a layer of acoustical concrete. Mr. Kinnard assigned rights to Span-Deck, Inc.

Other Interesting Patents

Inflatable chambers designed to keep a water-launched missile in place before it is fired were assigned patent 3,217,599 for Delbert B. Meeker of Port Hueneme, Calif. Rights were assigned to the U.S. Government through the Secretary of the Navy.

An anti-resonant chamber designed to impart pipe organ tones to an electric organ earned patent 3,217,580 for Leonard W. Pavia of Florham Park, N.J.

A space radiator claimed to continue working though damaged by meteorites was given patent 3,217,796. Inventors La Verne G. Eklund of East Hartford and William H. Dunham of Wapping, Conn., assigned rights to United Aircraft Corporation.

A shishkabab skewer with detachable blades that enable the handle to be kept cool for serving earned patent 3,217,635 for Angelo C. Scavullo of Jamaica, N.Y.

• Science News Letter, 88:366 December 4, 1965

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