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FROM DENMARK

# Transplants Suspended

Nurses refuse assistance in kidney operations.

Protests from nurses at Aarhus Hospital brought a stop to kidney transplant operations last year. The nurses considered that they were a party to breaking a 19th century law which stated that a body must not be moved until six hours after death. Secondly they feared transplant operations involved interference with bodies before they could be considered dead according to internationally accepted criteria.

A group of nurses refused to take part in transplant operations, and under these circumstances the doctors decided to cease transplant operations until the situation could be clarified. The hospital at Aarhus is the only one in Denmark where kidney transplant operations were being performed.

Before the Danish Parliament broke up for the summer holiday it rushed a new law through to enable transplant operations to begin again, but the doctors are still not satisfied that they have got the law they need.

As originally formulated the law would permit the removal of an organ from a body if the donor or his nearest relatives had not spoken against such an action. But at the suggestion of the Danish Nurses Council this was altered to read, "The dead person's relatives shall, so far as circumstances permit, be informed that death has occurred before the planned operation is undertaken."

A protest from the Aarhus medical team, consisting of Dr. P. A. Ottosen, Profs. Ole Fjeldborg, Porsborg Petersen and Thyge Sondergaard, that this regulation would be exceedingly difficult to carry out in practice if organs were to be removed in time for a successful transplant to take place, was not accepted.

However, Minister of Justice K. Aksel Nielsen conceded that the official committee which has been responsible for drafting the law would, against usual practice, continue to sit through the autumn in case it was necessary to revise the law when Parliament reconvenes in October.

British, French and many U.S. state laws forbid the donation on the grounds that it is selfmaiming and does the donor no good physically.

U.S. and British restrictions are a holdover from laws against grave robbing.

H. J. Barnes

# Films of The Week

Listing for readers' information of new 16mm and 8mm films on science, engineering, medicine and agriculture for professional, student and general audiences. For further information on purchase, rental or free loan, write to distributor.

**EVOLUTION OF MAN.** 16mm, color or b&w, sound, 13½ min. Traces Darwin's theory and the discovery and reconstruction of pre-human fossils, including those at Olduvai Gorge in East Africa. Audience: Grades 10-12. Purchase \$150 color or \$75 b&w from Coronet Films, 65 E. South Water St., Chicago, Ill. 60601.

**THE NATURE OF FIRE.** 16mm, color, sound, 19 min. Characteristics of fire, methods of extinguishing small fires, and the basics of fire prevention. Audience: industry, schools (upper elementary through college), clubs and trade associations, or in connection with Fire Prevention Week. Purchase \$140 from National Fire Protection Association, 60 Battery March St., Boston, Mass. 02110.

**THE POISONED AIR (M-1418-X).** 16mm, color, sound, 50 min. Scenes of air pollution disasters, interviews with representatives of automobile manufacturers, and stories of how smog is being attacked. Importance of citizen-action is demonstrated as a vital element in community control efforts. Audience: general. Free loan from Public Health Service Audiovisual Facility, Atlanta, Ga. 30333. (Produced by CBS Television).

**PURSUIT OF CLEANLINESS.** 16mm, color, sound, 14½ min. Chronicles the early use of soap for personal cleanliness, the decline and fall of bathing that paralleled the Roman empire, the re-emergence of bathing for sanitary reasons in the Age of Enlightenment, and the gradual acceptance of regular bathing as basic to personal cleanliness. Audience: home economists, women's groups, civic and community organizations, students. Free loan from Association Films, 600 Grand Ave., Ridgefield, N.J. 07657 or other local offices of Association Films. (Produced for Soap and Detergent Association).



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**Watch out for the other guy!**

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