

CHEMISTRY

More DDT Victories

Malaria and fly-borne diseases are controlled by spraying a 5% solution in kerosene in mess halls, kitchens, and military sleeping quarters.

► DDT, already acclaimed for success in aborting the typhus epidemic in Naples, now is helping to control malaria and fly-borne diseases, reports Maj. George C. Brother of the Medical Corps, attached to the 15th Air Force. Units of enlisted airmen directed the killing of adult mosquitoes and flies in the area, using a 5% DDT solution in kerosene, and applying it with power paint sprayers, hand spray guns and paintbrushes to prevent the spread of malaria and diseases carried by flies. The mixture is applied by two-man teams to military mess halls, kitchens, latrines, and civilian as well as military sleeping quarters.

DDT arrives in Italy in hard, waxy lumps, which are pulverized in a meat grinder. The solution is made up by

adding the pulverized DDT to kerosene and pouring it into five-gallon oil cans. Cans of this mixture are stacked in the sun to hasten solution and are rolled around on the ground every 24 hours. A good solution is obtained in about four days.

Spraying teams, after a half-day of schooling in malaria control, begin applying the poisonous solution to walls, doors and screens of buildings. The men wear protective masks. These teams also seek out nearby breeding places of flies and of mosquitoes which might infect soldiers with malaria.

Some reports indicate that the insecticide did not have immediate results. However, after several days medical officers were convinced of its effectiveness. Observations show that areas have

to be re-sprayed about every month or six weeks.

According to Maj. Brother, the results have been spectacular from the standpoint of pest control, and DDT can be considered valuable to the prevention of both malaria and enteric diseases.

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GENETICS

Children Do Not Inherit Weakness for Strong Drink

► CHILDREN of alcoholic fathers or mothers do not inherit their parents' weakness for strong drink, a study of 36 such children who had been raised in foster homes revealed to Dr. Anna Roe, of Yale's Section on Alcohol Studies of the Laboratory of Applied Physiology (*Quarterly Journal of Studies on Alcohol*, December).

The children were studied after they were grown; they averaged 32 years of age at the time of the study. And they were compared with a control group, also raised in foster homes, who were the children of non-alcoholic parents.

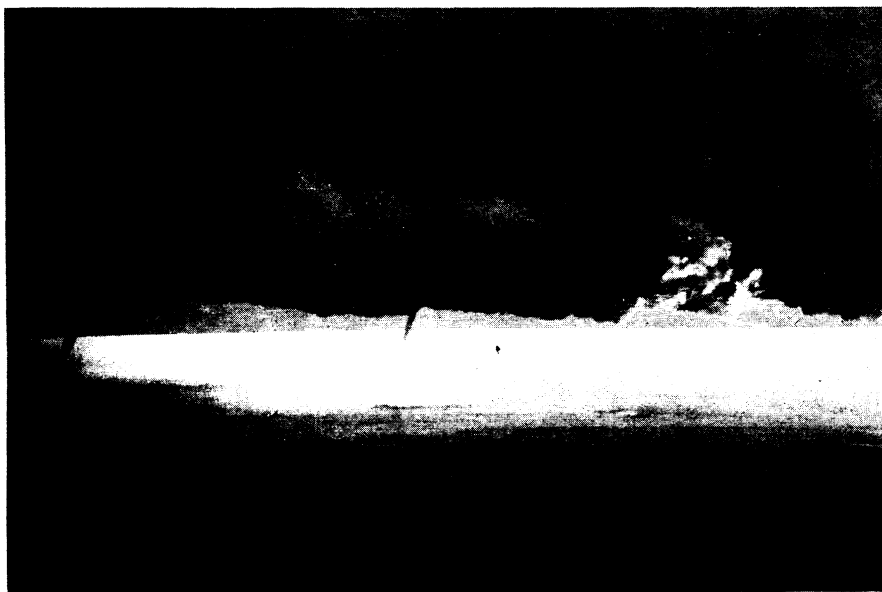
No drunkards were found among either of the groups. Of the alcoholic-parentage group, 7% use alcohol regularly, 63% occasionally and 30% do not touch it at all. The figures were not very different for those whose parents were not alcoholics. Of these, 9% use alcohol regularly, 55% use it occasionally and 36% are teetotalers.

Of children of alcoholic parents brought up by their own parents 20% to 30% become alcoholics, it has previously been found.

Although alcoholism is a disease chiefly of later life, the good adjustment of the group studied by Dr. Roe and the absence of heavy drinking at the age of 32 would seem to indicate that they are no more likely to become alcoholics later than are the rest of the general population, Dr. Roe concludes.

The children of the alcoholic parents were not placed in their foster homes until they were between five and six years old, as compared with two and a half years for the other group. Many were abused by their own parents and the foster homes were not quite so good as those of the children of normal parentage.

Dr. Roe expresses surprise that they turned out so well in spite of this early handicap, becoming not only useful citizens but reasonably contented persons, working adequately, with pleasant family lives and sufficient friends.



WATERSPOUTS—This picture, and the one on the front cover of this *SCIENCE NEWS LETTER*, help dispel the belief that waterspouts are "solid" columns of water. Actually they are rotating columns of cloud. The ones seen in these rare photographs taken by Lt. R. W. Field, Jr., of the Mediterranean Allied Air Forces, are 200 feet in diameter and 2,000 feet high. They are the result of convective activity that occurs when cold air moves over a warm sea area, and can be best likened to a tornado over water. The spray at the base of the waterspout obscures the point where it touches the water and indicates an area of destructive winds about 500 feet in diameter. Beyond that area the water is scarcely disturbed.