



**FOR VETERANS**—Power crane swings roof section into place as one-story war dormitory nears completion at Federal Public Housing Authority's "War Housing Re-Use Demonstration." One section of building is being converted into family dwelling unit for temporary housing for veterans.

ENGINEERING

## War Houses Converted

Units can be cut, moved and converted into dwellings for families. Demonstration will be held January 12 through February 9.

► HOW HOUSING units built for temporary dormitories and Army barracks can be cut, moved and converted into dwelling units for families will be shown at Silver Spring, Md., in a public demonstration that opens Jan. 12, and continues through Feb. 9.

The demonstration is particularly for state, county and city officials from various sections of the United States where such emergency housing is now available for re-use. The techniques to be shown are those found satisfactory by tests and used to meet shifting war housing needs and are now employed to meet the veterans' housing problem.

"The immediate purpose of the demonstration is to show how all possible types of war housing structures, including dormitories and barracks, may be reconstructed to provide dwelling units for veterans and their families," the

Federal Public Housing Authority states. This government agency will conduct the demonstration.

Experiments in demolition for re-assembly of war housing, which had not been intended as demountable, were conducted at several sites by the government office. The structures were of wood or frame and composition construction. The experiments showed that they could be cut into panels and moved readily and successfully. They determined practical methods of panelizing walls and roofs with a minimum loss of materials.

During the war some 10,000 units were moved, following the techniques developed, with some of the moves ranging up to 1,100 miles. Since V-J day, more than 5,000 units have been moved, or scheduled for moving, to provide emergency housing for returning veterans.

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MEDICINE

## Spider Bite Cure May Come from Drug

► A DRUG that may turn out to be a cure for poisonous black widow spider bite has apparently been found. The drug is the synthetic chemical, neostigmine methyl sulfate, sometimes also called prostigmine.

"Dramatic and complete relief of muscle spasm and pain" came within one hour after a single dose of this chemical in a case reported by Dr. James E. Bell, Jr., intern at Roper Hospital, Charleston, S. C., and Dr. John A. Boone, assistant professor of medicine at the Medical College of the State of South Carolina (*Journal, American Medical Association*, Dec. 8).

The patient had previously suffered for five and one-half hours although the usual treatment for black widow spider bite, calcium gluconate and sedatives, had been given.

The idea of trying neostigmine occurred to Dr. Bell because this chemical is reported to have given good results in treatment of muscle spasm in infantile paralysis and rheumatoid arthritis. Muscle spasm, particularly of the abdomen but also affecting arms and legs, is the most prominent physical finding in black widow spider bite poisoning.

One recovery, the Charleston physicians point out, does not constitute proof that the treatment is a cure, but since black widow spider bites are infrequent in Charleston, they are reporting their experience for other physicians who may be called on to treat this bite oftener.

*Science News Letter, January 5, 1946*

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