

Do You Know?

The temperature inside electric steel-making furnaces is about 3,500 degrees Fahrenheit.

Some 45 different kinds of *termites* have been identified on Barro Colorado island in the Panama Canal Zone.

The insecticide DDT, on a pound-for-pound basis, is claimed to be 100 times more toxic on the *Japanese beetle* larvae than lead arsenate.

Radio sets with clear reception on the ground go berserk at high altitudes in planes; in recent tests it was found that radios and radar are affected by unknown radiations when kept at high altitudes for more than a few hours.

A 5,000,000-ton deposit of *lignite* in Washington state has been proved by the U. S. Bureau of Mines; this low-grade coal-like fuel deposit can be removed by low-cost strip-mining methods and is suitable for use in special furnaces.

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GENERAL SCIENCE

Scientists' Aid Urged

British report proposes that England use her scientists to battle the present economic crisis the way she used them to help win victories during the war.

➤ ENGLAND should use her scientists to battle economic difficulties the way she used them to help win victories during the war, the executive committee of the Association of Scientific Workers of London declared in a report on science and the economic crisis.

Greater efficiency in coal and steel production and major gains in other industries are predicted if Britain turns her scientists to the present crisis.

Turning at least one-third of the scientific manpower, laboratories and equipment of Great Britain's armed forces to civilian production is one step proposed by the committee.

Other urgent proposals for British science in the economic crisis are:

The addition of three scientific and three technical members to the advisory Planning Board to the Cabinet.

Drafting of a plan for utilization of science and technology in British industry and agriculture.

Even more extensive pooling of scientific research and development in essential industries than was done during the war.

Formation of regional research councils.

Representation of scientific and technical workers on existing production committees.

Here is the way the committee believes science can help England close the critical gap between exports and imports:

More efficient use of coal would mean more coal. Raising the average efficiency of coal utilization from 20% to 25% would add 50 million more tons of coal each year.

Oxygen used instead of air speeds steel production. Work on this has been done in both Russia and the U.S. Other savings in steel could come from more careful calculations of stresses, from standardization and from closer contact between producers and users.

Waste products in the chemical, metal, brick and cement industries should be turned back into raw materials. Timber, bricks and cement could be saved by developing the pre-stressed reinforced and cellular concrete used on a large

scale in Sweden's industries.

New mass production methods should be developed.

"There is no reason why we should not use mass production methods of our own just because our markets are too small to use those of the U.S.A.," the statement says.

Research in transportation operation is needed. And science in agriculture can go far toward making Britain self-supporting in food, the committee states.

Charging that science has been neglected in the economic crisis in England, the group urges a new effort to muster science for the war of dollars.

Science News Letter, October 4, 1947

Although 15 species of *timber* are cut in Maine sawmills, nearly 92% of that cut for lumber is white pine, spruce and hemlock.

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