

RADIO

Gadgets Would Aid Enemy

Your TV antenna, electric razor, and other electric gadgets would serve as homing device for guided missiles or enemy bombers in case of attack.

► TO KEEP enemy bombers or guided missiles from help in finding their target, electromagnetic radiations sent out by such devices as electric razors and garage door openers should be controlled or shut down, if necessary.

This is the position of the Defense Department in asking Congress to give the President control over a large chunk of the possible radiation frequencies that could be used for homing, or for long-range navigation. Hearings on an amendment to the Communications Act of 1934, giving this authority, will be held within the next few weeks. Two days of hearings were held recently.

Present law gives the President control over radio broadcasting stations, a most effective means of pinpointing a city's location. Many devices in common use send out electromagnetic radiations, so the U. S. is peppered with "radio stations." The antenna for a TV set, for instance, sends out radiations as well as receiving it to give a television picture.

When a diathermy, or heat treatment, machine is turned on, the radiations sent out can be detected around the world. You can "hear" this type of radiation as static on your radio, especially on older models, or you can "see" it when your television picture is not clear.

From 10 kilocycles to 100,000 megacycles is the range over which control is requested. Commercial radio stations use frequencies between 550 and 1500 kilocycles. Short wave broadcasts use slightly higher frequencies, while television, two-way police

radios and other short-distance communications devices use very high frequencies, above 30,000 kilocycles.

A kilocycle is a measurement of radio frequency denoting 1000 electrical impulses per second, and a megacycle is 1000 kilocycles.

Science News Letter, March 3, 1951

ARCHAEOLOGY

Oldest Farmers' Bulletin Unearthed in Iraq

► THE WORLD'S FIRST known farmers' bulletin has just been found by an archaeological expedition of the University of Chicago Oriental Institute and the University Museum of Philadelphia.

Written in cuneiform script in the Sumerian language on a clay tablet, the instructions to farmers are believed to be 3,700 years old, Dr. Donald E. McCown, field director of the expedition, announced. The find was made in Nippur, Iraq.

Authority for the instructions was ascribed to the god of the farmers, Ninurta, who gave specific instructions for obtaining the best crop all the way from plowing the furrows and planting the seed "two fingers deep," to scaring away the birds and field mice and cutting the grain at the right moment before it should bend under its own weight.

Irrigating a fourth time, the farmer was told, would net an extra yield of one "cup" in every ten.

Science News Letter, March 3, 1951

● RADIO

Saturday, March 10, 1951. 3:15-3:30 p.m., EST.

"Adventures in Science," with Watson Davis, director of Science Service, over Columbia Broadcasting System.

D. W. Nyrop, Administrator, Civil Aeronautics Administration, will discuss "Aviation's Place in National Defense."

Tooth decay is said to be civilized mankind's most common disease.

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