

GENERAL SCIENCE

For Science Understanding

For the youth of America, a great national quest for knowledge in the sciences is needed. The existing groundwork presents an opportunity.

A statement by the Director of Science Service:

➤ AMERICA today needs a great national quest for knowledge and understanding of the sciences. Already a million and more boys and girls in the high schools of America are eager to do things in science, and many of them are doing so now. Almost as many more adults, people who may not have had a chance to study the sciences in college, would find satisfaction, inspiration and personal development in science as an avocation.

The benefits to America and to the world that would result from an accelerated development of this science program would be most effective and gratifying.

America needs such a great quest for knowledge and science understanding. Operating in the schools it would kindle the sparks of interest and genius latent in our youth. Extending into our communities as a hobby and educational opportunity for adults it will bring great personal satisfaction and explain the fundamentals of American material and spiritual development.

For the future of America—for peaceful living, for industrial progress, for a successful democracy, for a strong and prepared nation—this quest for science understanding must be accomplished.

The foundations of this great movement have been built in the youth activities of SCIENCE SERVICE'S Science Clubs of America. There are about 10,000 affiliated clubs in every state—and almost every county, city and town of the land. A third of a million members are on the rolls of these clubs.

State science academies, colleges, teacher associations, museums, newspapers, and other organizations are cooperating. In 32 of the 48 states, there are statewide movements as a part of the Science Clubs of America development. In some of the larger states there are regional organizations as well.

The National Science Talent Search for the Westinghouse Science Scholarships is now in its 11th year. This is a nationwide selection of the high school seniors who are most likely to be creative scientists of the future. The selections are made through a vigorous competition based upon results of science aptitude examinations, recommendations, evaluations and science project reports. In all, 3,000 boys and girls have been picked for honors, and the National Science Talent Search has been extended into the states through the utilization by state committees of the entries for further honors,

The Science Talent Search has pioneered the recognition by the educational and scientific world that those with talent can be picked successfully at the high school level.

The work of science clubs is culminated in science fairs and congresses held as part of the science movement in about 40 localities. Science fairs attracting up to 1,500 entries in some cases are held annually. Newspapers and educational institutions cooperate in sending winners from these affairs to the National Science Fair, the second of which was held in St. Louis in May, 1951.

The "grass-roots" of science understanding is the typical club or group in a high school in some town or big city. Science is the hobby as well as the study of each boy and girl among the 20 to 30 members. A teacher who likes science as he enjoys teaching youth, is the "sponsor." During noon hours, in class time, after school, on Saturdays, the science club members work on their projects—investigations of varying

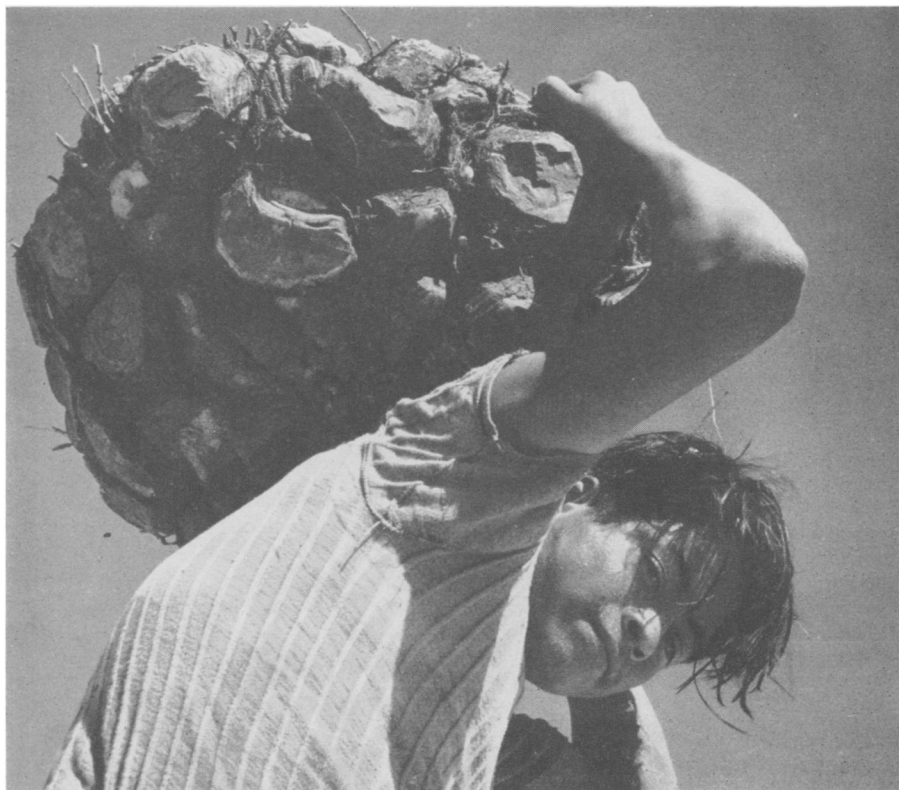
degrees of difficulty, originality and importance. The whole range of human interest and science is spanned—everything from astronomy to zoology—inventions, aids to health for the neighbors, insect collections, study of rocks, building of mechanical models, raising of animals, weather observations, food tests, chemical experiments, and thousands of other projects.

Some of these are scientists of tomorrow—and all are the citizens of tomorrow who will use and understand science.

This great structure of science for youth—primarily in our senior and junior public high schools and in our private and parochial secondary schools—has been built in the years since Pearl Harbor. (In 1941 there were only 700 clubs nationally organized.) The national network of clubs has been organized and each club has been supplied *free* with basic materials for fruitful activity. This is a minimum activity, nevertheless.

Now there should be much more service to these youthful scientists. The need is greater, for we realize more keenly the importance of the facts, the utility and the philosophy of the sciences.

Of equal importance to the youth movement would be the development and stimulation of adult hobby and avocational interest in science. A certain number of the clubs in Science Clubs of America do have adult membership.



SYNTHETIC CORTISONE—From the Mexican roots, "cabeza de negra"—meaning "black head"—carried on this boy's shoulder, come the substances used in the synthesis of cortisone. (See SNL, July 14.)