GENERAL SCIENCE

College for Rich and Poor

National program to allow capable students to go to college proposed in 1953 budget. $15,000,000 requested for National Science Foundation.

➤ A NATIONAL program allowing capable students to go to college regardless of whether their parents are rich or poor will be inaugurated upon Congressional approval of a rather insignificant $30,000,000 item in President Truman's budget transmitted to Congress.

It would provide critically needed manpower to defense and industries by making sure that a limited number of students financially unable to go to college get scholarship aid or loans.

President Truman cited the draft deferment program for college students which has met general approval. This temporarily postpones the induction of test-selected students into the armed forces to assure that each man receives the training that will enable him to serve the national needs most effectively.

The scholarship program proposed would be an extension of this general policy by making it apply to those capable students whose parents do not have enough money to send them to college. The scholarships or loans would be available not alone to students in medicine, science and technology but to all fields of study.

The national program if enacted would be administered by the Office of Education. In preliminary discussions, much larger amounts, up to $150,000,000, were suggested for this purpose. The limited program would send to college possibly 30,000 or more students who otherwise would not go.

In a sense, the new program would be a substitute for the successful GI education program that gave thousands a college education after war service. Giving capable high school graduates the chance at a college education before armed service would be an even greater national benefit from the standpoint of manpower.

The President's budget asks for $15,000,000 for the National Science Foundation instead of the $3,500,000 to which the budget estimate was cut by Congress for the current fiscal year.

Emphasizing the function of the National Science Foundation, President Truman said:

"During the last decade we have seen how basic scientific research can alter the foundations of world power. We have seen that this research yields a stream of new knowledge which fortifies our economic welfare as well as our national strength. We have learned that a strong, steady and wide-ranging effort in science is as essential to our sustained national security as the production of weapons and the training of military personnel."

Science News Letter, February 2, 1952

CHEMISTRY

New Organic Chemicals Fight Fungi on Crops

➤ TO FIGHT fungi that destroy crops, research has produced a new class of organic chemicals expected to be of economic importance.

Synthesized at the Esso Laboratories of the Standard Oil Development Co., Linden, N. J., by Dr. A. R. Kittleson, one of 16 compounds, named SR-406, has now been extensively field tested at agricultural experiment stations in the United States, Canada, England, Denmark, France and Latin America.

The new compounds are colorless, crystalline and odorless.

They are synthesized by the reaction of perchloromethyl mercaptan with alkali metal salts of imides and amides. SR-406 is N-trichloromethylthio-tetrahydrophthalimide.

Science News Letter, February 2, 1952

MEDICINE

Find First Antibiotic That Stops Trypanosomes

➤ DISCOVERY OF the first antibiotic chemical capable of stopping trypanosomes, germ family whose members cause deadly African sleeping sickness among other diseases, was announced by Dr. Robert J. Schnitzer of Hoffman-La Roche laboratories, Nutley, N. J., at the New York Academy of Sciences meeting.

The new antibiotic has as yet no name except its laboratory number, X 948. It was obtained from two unidentified strains of Streptomyces, organisms of the same general family that produced streptomycin, by Drs. J. Berger, W. E. Scott, and M. W. Goldberg of Hoffman-La Roche.

Dr. Schnitzer's tests were made on mice infected with trypanosomes that cause nagana, a kind of sleeping sickness of horses and cattle in Africa, and dourine, another horse disease. X 948 proved both a cure and a preventive of these infections in mice.

Unfortunately, the mice tests showed that it is too toxic to be of practical value as a remedy, so no trials with human sleeping sickness trypanosomes were made. Dr. Schnitzer thinks, however, that other antibiotics can be found which will be non-toxic and yet capable of stopping the sleeping sickness trypanosomes.

Science News Letter, February 2, 1952

ALUMINUM EXPLOSION—Three pounds of ordinary aluminum powder were used by the U. S. Bureau of Mines to create this violent, cloud-like explosion at its testing grounds near Pittsburgh where research to develop safer methods for handling and controlling industrial dusts is conducted.