

PUBLIC HEALTH

'Flu Epidemic Expected

Troops going to both Korea and Europe now receiving a one-shot vaccine to protect them from influenza outbreaks. 'Flu is no longer on list of reportable diseases.

► AN INFLUENZA epidemic is attacking the Army all over the world. It is expected to hit the civilian population in the United States shortly, possibly about the time of Inauguration Day.

Outbreaks have been reported to the Surgeon General of the Army in Washington from the Far East, Europe and Army stations in Missouri, California, Virginia and Maryland.

A one-shot vaccine effective against influenza viruses A, A prime and B will be given to all men at ports of embarkation, and probably to all troops in Europe as well as to all in Korea, the Acting Surgeon General, Maj. Gen. Silas B. Hays, announced in Washington. Troops in camps in the United States will not be vaccinated except in special circumstances because the vaccine takes two weeks to become effective and by that time most will have had 'flu or been exposed to it.

Starting with an outbreak at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., the end of November, influenza in the Army in the United States climbed rapidly. Cases for December, 1952, occurred at twice the rate of December, 1951. In Korea it has also spurted up much faster than in 1951 and in Europe it has taken a spurt among U. S. troops within the past two weeks.

Where laboratory tests have confirmed the diagnosis, the 'flu in the Army is due to A prime virus. Cases have been mild and there have been no deaths to date and very few complications. Most patients are in the hospital only a week or 10 days and then are able to return to full duty.

Here and in Europe there has so far been very little influenza among civilians, according to U. S. Public Health Service and World Health Organization reports. According to Japanese statistics, however, half the population of Tokyo has had or now has influenza.

Although the current epidemic in the Army is almost global, it is not considered like that of 1917 and 1918 because of the mild form of the disease, the vaccine, and the fact that pneumonia and other complications that killed then can be checked now by penicillin and other antibiotics.

'Flu Outbreaks Not Reported

Influenza is no longer on the list of reportable diseases. Instead, state health officers report outbreaks of acute respiratory infections and the Public Health Service asks for laboratory confirmation of the diagnosis and school and employment absenteeism. Such information is considered

more reliable as a gage of whether there is 'flu around and how much.

So far this winter there have been two outbreaks confirmed by laboratory diagnosis, one in Colorado and one in Missouri. The third, in a county in North Carolina, was reported as an outbreak of an influenza-like disease affecting half the families in the county. Tests to confirm the diagnosis, however, have not yet been completed.

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TECHNOLOGY

Sugar Plantations To See Cane Flow on TV

► TWO OF Hawaii's sugar plantations are preparing to install their own "closed circuit" television systems so technicians in the mill may have a continuous view of the

cane as it moves from the cleaning plant to the grinding machinery.

On each plantation, the television camera will be mounted at a strategic point above the conveyor, its lens shielded from dirt and spray. A coaxial cable will carry the picture to a receiver at the control center.

The plans are announced by the Waialua Agricultural Co. and the Ewa Plantation Co., both on Oahu Island.

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BIOLOGY

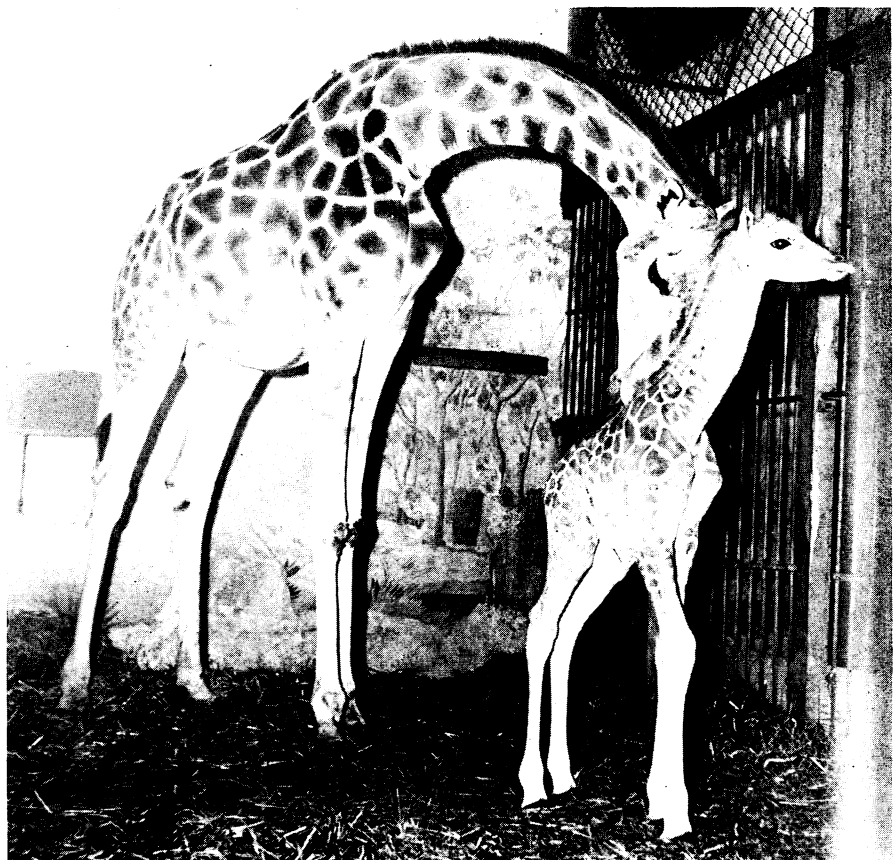
Seven Giraffe Births In Captivity Is Record

► WITH THE birth of 150-pound, five-foot—mostly neck—Harriet, her seventh child, Kitty, a Nubian giraffe, and her mate Bob have established a record for the number of giraffes born in captivity, authorities at the National Zoological Park in Washington believe.

Kitty arrived in this country in 1937 as the result of an expedition to Africa. Her experience as a mother convinces zoo experts that the period of gestation of the giraffe, listed in books as 13 months, is actually closer to 15 months.

Baby Harriet was extremely active and inquisitive when only a few hours old.

Science News Letter, January 17, 1953



SEVENTH BABY GIRAFFE—Kitty stretches her neck to caress her seventh baby, Harriet, a new year-end addition to the giraffe section at the National Zoological Park in Washington.