



**ATOMIC "IRON CURTAIN"**—This 15-inch-thick metal barrier is part of a cell built at the Hanford plutonium plant, Richland, Wash., by General Electric scientists to prevent escape of radiation during examination of samples of radioactive metals.

## NUTRITION

## Cheap Diet Outlined

► FOR ABOUT 60 cents a day you can be adequately nourished if you eat the following: a loaf of bread, one-quarter of a pound of butter or margarine, one quart of vitamin D milk and six ounces of orange juice.

This diet was presented by Dr. Robert S. Harris of Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Mass., at the meeting of the National Association of Margarine Manufacturers in White Sulphur Springs, W. Va.

In hot weather, Dr. Harris said, you need not stop eating fats. Contrary to popular opinion, experiments cited by Dr. Harris show that a person is hotter, not cooler, on a diet high in sugars and starches. Fats, he declared, counteract this.

Dr. Harris does not suggest that, "good as it is," anyone try to live on the bread, spread, milk and citrus diet.

"For psychological and physiological reasons it is desirable to eat a variety of foods," he said. "I wish only to demonstrate that an excellent inexpensive diet in these United States can be based on bread and spread, milk and citrus. This is the basic diet, from which departures may be made."

For the future, Dr. Harris predicted a new spread, acetin margarine, which will not go rancid, will spread easily when cold and will not become fluid when warm. Yellow color for margarine and other foods, he thinks, should come from a natural pigment, preferably beta carotene

which adds vitamin A activity. All synthetic yellow dyes, he said, are now suspect and might in the future be banned as too dangerous to health.

Debunking some popular fallacies about fats, including the one about it being a poor hot-weather food, Dr. Harris gave the following facts:

1. Fats are easily and completely digested.
2. On a calorie basis, fats are no more fattening than carbohydrates or proteins.
3. There is no proof that fats cause atherosclerosis (artery disease), though they may later be found to be secondary factors.
4. Hydrogenated fats are nutritionally equal to other food fats.
5. Margarine is nutritionally equal to butter.

The American public is now oversold on the virtues of vegetables, stone-ground flour, whole wheat, rye and pumpernickel breads, Dr. Harris thinks.

During the "roller mill era" between 1880 and 1941, our white flour and bread had become "emaciated," and people who depended largely on bread and flour for food were badly nourished. In 1941 when we entered the "enriched bread era," the urgent need for green and yellow vegetables disappeared from the diet. Our enriched white bread is better than standard dark breads today.

Science News Letter, July 2, 1955

## GENERAL SCIENCE

## AAAS Confirms Atlanta For December Meeting

► ALTHOUGH URGED by several individuals and organizations not to meet in Atlanta, Ga., because of the policy of segregation there, the American Association for the Advancement of Science has decided to go ahead with plans for Christmas week meetings in that southern city. (See SNL, May 21, p. 328.)

Decision was made at a special meeting of the board of directors in Washington.

In order to advance science and its public understanding, it is desirable for the AAAS to hold meetings in every part of the country, the directors decided.

Because the Association recognizes no distinction on the grounds of color, the situation in Atlanta was given careful consideration. The directors assured themselves that all scientific sessions, the exhibits, the Science Theater, and such special social functions as the presidential reception and the biologists' smoker could be held on a non-segregated basis.

Segregation of Negroes would, however, be enforced in hotel living accommodations, restaurants and transportation facilities.

The board of directors decided to go ahead with plans for the meeting in Atlanta because they believe that meeting there "will serve to improve the effectiveness of science in the promotion of human welfare," according to a formal statement issued by them.

They believe, the statement said, that "scientists of all races will benefit from participation in this meeting, and that the advantages outweigh the disadvantages." The full text was reported in *Science* (June 24).

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## AGRICULTURE

## Southeast U. S. to Get Superior Lawn Grass

► A HARDIER, darker green lawn grass that has a fast rate of spread has been released to nurserymen.

Named Emerald Zoysia, the new wide-cross hybrid is described as superior to either of its Far-Eastern parents, *Zoysia japonica* and *Zoysia tenuifolia*. Developed by Ian Forbes of the U. S. Department of Agriculture's plant industry station in Beltsville, Md., the hybrid is well adapted for the southeastern United States. Agronomists also believe that it may fare well in some areas farther north.

Emerald Zoysia is winter hardy, has fine leaves and produces a dense turf. An added attraction is the ability of the grass to produce leaves on short stems that do not "brown off" when the grass is closely clipped.

Plugs and sprigs of the hybrid will be generally available by the spring of 1957.

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