

GENERAL SCIENCE

Atoms for Peace Award

► THE first of the world's most valuable science awards will be bestowed within the next year by a committee of seven Americans. These awards will rival the famous Nobel prizes.

The Atoms for Peace Award will be the first of its kind presented internationally for contributions to peaceful uses of atomic energy.

The final details of the Atoms for Peace Awards, first announced at the Geneva atomic conference last August, were reported in Cambridge, Mass., by Dr. James R. Killian, Jr., president of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and chairman of Atoms for Peace Awards, Inc. The corporation and prize money are financed by the Ford Motor Company Fund.

The first Atoms for Peace Award, which includes a cash honorarium of up to \$75,000 and a medal, will go to the person or group of persons nominated as having contributed more toward peaceful uses of atomic energy than anyone else during the year.

Nominations will be made by individuals and organizations, including learned societies, in any part of the world. If the trustees are unable to decide on a candidate in

a given year, the award will be withheld during that year.

It is expected that scientists and engineers will usually be nominated, but the award is not restricted to members of these occupations.

Trustees and members of the awards jury are: Dr. Killian; Dr. Detlev W. Bronk, president, Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research; Dr. Ralph J. Bunche, Under Secretary of the United Nations; Dr. Arthur H. Compton, former chancellor, Washington University; Ex-President Mildred McAfee Horton of Wellesley College; Dr. Mervin J. Kelly, president, Bell Telephone Laboratories; and Dr. Alan T. Waterman, director, National Science Foundation.

Nominations will be screened by an advisory committee consisting of Dr. Robert F. Bacher, director, Norman Bridge Laboratory, California Institute of Technology; Dr. Robert F. Loeb, professor of medicine, Columbia University; Robert Lovett, former Secretary of Defense; Dr. I. I. Rabi, Columbia University, Nobelist in physics; and Dr. Charles A. Thomas, president, Monsanto Chemical Co.

Science News Letter, April 14, 1956

STATISTICS

G-2 for City Police

► A MODERN city police department should have an "intelligence unit."

This is the suggestion of Dr. John I. Griffin of the City College of New York and lecturer in the New York Police Department.

The basic function of such a unit, he explains in a report to the *Journal of Criminal Law, Criminology and Police Science* (March-April), would be to conduct surveys on a probability sample basis. This new statistical tool is now widely used by industry and business for their decision-making problems on such greatly different matters as consumer attitudes toward package design and control over the quality of manufactured products.

Statistics were given a big push in police administration with the development of uniform crime reporting, since 1930. But crime reports can be misunderstood by the public.

People may be worried by what is really a "statistical crime wave," when intensification of police activity results in an increased total of "crimes known to the police."

The relation between this figure and the total number of crimes committed is not known except that the total crime figure is necessarily larger.

More meaningful to the public than the

"number of offenses per hundred thousand population" would be information about the rise and fall of crime rate with changes in economic, social and political conditions and about the characteristics of neighborhoods where crimes take place.

Maps are available for most cities, Dr. Griffin pointed out, that show on a fairly large scale each city block with information on the characteristics of each building on the block. These maps were originally designed for use in the fire insurance business, but would be an important tool for the police "intelligence unit."

The new police unit should be manned, Dr. Griffin suggests, not by statisticians, but by experienced and practical police officers who are given special training in modern statistical methods.

Science News Letter, April 14, 1956

BIOCHEMISTRY

Leukemia Brain Extract Gives Mice Disease

► MATERIAL EXTRACTED from a leukemia patient's brain has caused leukemia in one strain of mice, Dr. Steven O. Schwartz of the Hektoen Institute for Medical Research at Cook County Hospital, Chicago, reports. The mice are of a strain

susceptible to leukemia.

This and other phases of his research suggest that a common agent is responsible for both mouse and human leukemia, an American Cancer Society announcement said.

The agent from human leukemic brain tissue was able to survive passing through many leukemia-resistant mice without causing leukemia in them and without losing its ability to cause leukemia in susceptible mice.

This suggests that resistant animals may be carriers of the agent without ever developing leukemia.

The research is still in the preliminary stages and offers no possibility for treatment of humans now sick with leukemia. If the results are confirmed, however, they may open a broad new approach to study of the disease.

Science News Letter, March 24, 1956

PHYSICS

Light Velocity Measured Over Known Path

► THE VELOCITY of light has been determined by clocking the time light takes to travel between two points whose distance is accurately known by measure, a scientist reports in *Nature* (March 31).

His value is very close to that found recently by other methods. Dr. R. C. A. Edge of the geodetic control division, Ordnance Survey Office, Surrey, England, reports a value of 299,792.4 kilometers per second.

His measurements were made at the request of the U. S. Army Map Service.

Knowing light's velocity exactly is of great importance in many scientific fields, but for most everyday purposes, the speed can still be considered 186,000 miles a second.

Science News Letter, April 14, 1956

PUBLIC HEALTH

Doctors Credit Press For Informing Public

► THE AVERAGE doctor "gives a large measure of credit" to newspapers, magazines and television for whatever correct knowledge the public has of health and medical matters.

This finding from a series of surveys by the National Opinion Research Center, Chicago, is reported in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* (March 31).

In the survey, 500 physicians named by individuals as "my doctor" were interviewed. The average one of these 500 thinks it very important that the public be better informed than it is about health and medical matters. He blames the public itself, rather than any particular group, for the ignorance and misconceptions.

He is "generally content" with the mass education campaigns of the voluntary health agencies.

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