

PUBLIC HEALTH

America's Defense Plans Include Civilian Welfare

Commission to Study War's Effects in Europe Will Give Attention to Bomb Shelters and Water Supplies

AMERICA'S defense preparations now spread out to include protection of little children and their mothers and others of the civilian population against war wounds, war epidemics and other hardships modern warfare brings to civilians as well as the fighting forces.

Evidence of America's determination to safeguard the health and welfare as well as the lives of her women and children in the event of war appears in the make-up of the commission which sailed for Europe on Jan. 18 to study war's effects on civilians.

Simultaneously with the announcement of this commission, the War Department revealed that since last July a committee of distinguished scientists have been cooperating with army engineers who have now built a number of different kinds of bomb shelters which will be tested to determine the types that give best protection.

Providing safe drinking water and milk to civilians when war is in their midst is a very different problem from providing these during peace or even from providing these to an army in the field. English experience with this problem is just one of the many health and medical problems of home defense on which America will get first hand, expert knowledge through Dr. Thomas Parran, Surgeon General of the U. S. Public Health Service. Dr. Parran is one of the four distinguished civilians accompanying Major Eugene W. Ridings in London.

Dr. Martha Eliot, assistant chief of the U. S. Children's Bureau, is going, in place of Miss Katherine Lenroot, as previously announced, to learn how children and their families can best be cared for when war or threat of war forces them to leave their homes for safer shelter. Dr. Eliot has been studying and collecting information on this problem since the days of the civil war in Spain and the early stages of the conflict in China.

Evacuation of civil populations from war-imperilled areas brings problems to agencies such as the Social Security Board. How to make social security ef-

fective even in war will be studied by another member of Major Ridings' commission, Geoffrey May, assistant director of public assistance of the Social Security Board.

The protection and use of transportation and other facilities during war will be studied by Frederick C. Horner, assistant to the chairman of the General Motors Corporation.

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PHARMACY

Drug Manufacturing Called The Offspring of Wars

THE SPREAD of war around most of the world has caused many American scientists much worry over possible shortage of important medicines. Efforts to produce in this country a satisfactory malaria prophylactic, for example, have been intensified because of the danger that the quinine supply from the Dutch East Indies might be cut off. The digitalis used in certain kinds of heart disease is imported, and so is the cod liver oil which saves large numbers of American babies and children from rickets. The situation is not acute so far, and historical precedent suggests that the men and women who make drugs in America will find a way to keep us independent of foreign sources.

"Manufacturing pharmacy in America has been the child of wars," is the timely reminder found in a new *History of Pharmacy* by Dr. Edward Kremers, former professor of pharmaceutical chemistry at the University of Wisconsin, and Dr. George Urdang, honorary member of the American Pharmaceutical Association. (*Reviewed SNL, this issue*).

American manufacturing pharmacy, they state, "was born during the Revolutionary War. It took the decisive step from childhood to manhood after and in consequence of the Civil War, and it became independent from Europe and dominant on the world market after the First World War."

America's first wholesale druggist in the modern sense, apparently, was An-



VITAMIN K DISCOVERER

Tiny babies in danger of bleeding to death in their first short week of life and older persons threatened with fatal bleeding in obstructive jaundice have been dramatically rescued by doses of vitamin K. Here is the man who discovered this anti-bleeding vitamin, Dr. Henrik Dam, associate professor at the University of Copenhagen's Biochemical Institute. Dr. Dam is in the United States visiting colleagues who have done much to bring his discovery to practical, life-saving application.

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drew Craigie, army apothecary during the Revolutionary War, who managed a laboratory in which medicines for military hospitals and the army were prepared. After the war, Craigie entered the wholesale drug business "a century ahead of his time."

After this war also, in 1786, the firm of Christopher, Jr., and Charles Marshall, wholesale and retail druggists in Philadelphia started making ammonium chloride and Glauber's salts on an extensive scale, "being probably the first to produce pharmaceutical chemicals on a large scale in this country."

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Influenza Epidemic May Reach 1929 High Level

THE increased number of influenza cases reported to the U. S. Public Health Service now suggests that the present epidemic may be as big as that of 1929, when 195,939 cases were reported in one week (Jan. 5) at the peak of the epidemic. The 1929 epidemic was the biggest since 1918.

The peak of the present epidemic has not yet been reached but the latest weekly