

GENERAL SCIENCE

# Britain's Defense Aided By "Central Register"

## Listing of 200,000 Scientists and Technical Men Facilitates War Research; Even Aliens Are Listed

BRITAIN'S all-out defense is being aided by specially developed machinery for immediate placing of technically trained men where their services are of the greatest value to the nation. Details of the plan are made public in *Nature*. (Dec. 14, 1940)

When a Government department or other defense agency needs men, a call goes to the Central Register, which is a listing of scientific men and their talents similar to the National Roster of Scientific and Specialized Personnel in the United States. Within a few hours or at most a few days, men with the required technical training and experience are located. It is discovered whether they are available and willing to undertake the particular job in question. Their present employers are questioned and permitted to offer objection to having the worker taken away. And the list of those available and qualified is furnished to the agency in need of the special services.

In the year in which it has been in operation, the Central Register has placed 9,016 persons in Government and war work, including 1,469 scientists. The Register now contains the names of 200,000 persons—stepped up from 97,000

after the Government required the compulsory registration of all engineers, engineering scientists, chemists and physicists.

The function of the Register, it is pointed out in *Nature*, is not to find jobs for men but to find men for jobs.

In order to make it easier for the Register officials to understand and anticipate the personnel needs of the Government and war industries, the Register was divided into two non-technical and five technical sections. Each of the technical sections was placed under the direction of a qualified scientist or engineer.

The Central Register keeps in close touch with the Scientific Advisory Committee, which is charged with the responsibility of making applications of science to the war effort and planning scientific research which might aid the Government in the emergency.

All but one of the members of this Scientific Advisory Committee, which parallels America's National Defense Research Committee, serve also in an advisory capacity to the Central Register. This makes it possible in planning new scientific research, or new applications of science, to think at the same time in

terms of men qualified to undertake the program.

Even aliens are registered so that their services will be available in the war effort. At present the names of 3,400 qualified professional men are ready as soon as the Government takes steps so that "friendly disposed aliens" can be permitted to help in the war.

*Science News Letter, February 1, 1941*

ARCHAEOLOGY

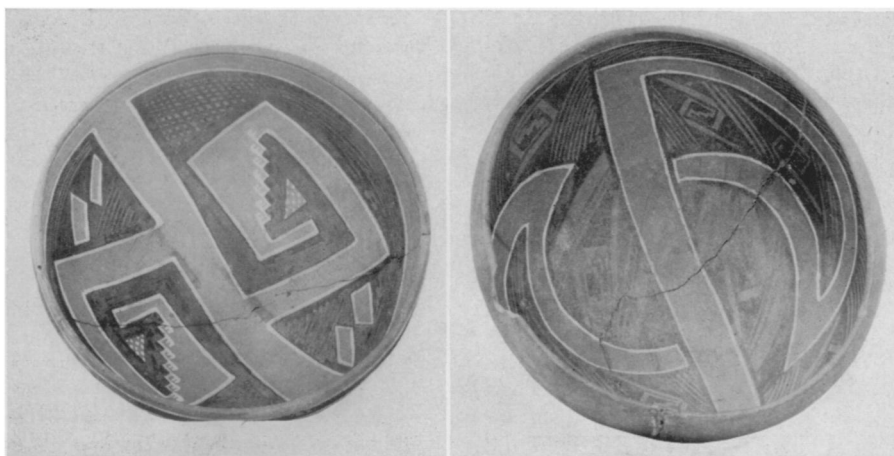
## Indian Pottery Shows Evolution of Swastika

NEW LIGHT on evolution of the swastika in prehistoric America, centuries before German Nazis adopted the symbol, is revealed on little-known Indian pottery at the Field Museum of Natural History.

That the swastika was popular in the ancient Southwest is plain from its persistent frequency in an array of 900 objects which the museum has selected to picture in an illustrated report on painted pottery of Anasazi Indians. Much of this pottery, unearthed 50 years ago, has never been seen by the public or even by students.

Indians preferred the hooked arms turning left, just the opposite of the Nazi pattern, is the verdict of Dr. Paul S. Martin and Mrs. Elizabeth S. Willis.

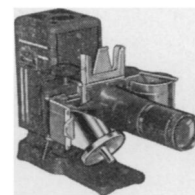
Study of the art shows that in some



INDIAN SWASTIKA DESIGNS

Turning it the wrong way and making it curved were variations of the fundamental swastika design incorporated by Anasazi Indians of America's prehistoric southwest.

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cases, however, the Indians reversed the arms to turn right, and in some cases they used curved rather than straight lines. Also, they drew separate Z-like forms which would form swastikas if moved together to cross. These variations, it is believed, may show how the Indian artists experimentally hit upon

their left-hook swastika form.

The swastika has been called one of man's earliest ideas in design, when he began to draw circles, squares, crosses and other symbols. It is found on pottery in Mesopotamia made before 3000 B.C.

*Science News Letter, February 1, 1941*

ascribed by the astrologers before preliminary observational tests of the influences could have been made, and even before accurate orbits could be assigned to the planets."

The committee quotes a statement prepared by the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues. In this, it is said, "Faith in astrology or in any other

PSYCHOLOGY—PSEUDOSCIENCE

# Astrology Lacks Every Scientific Foundation

## It Is Also Declared To Be Psychologically Harmful Because It Encourages Flight From Real Life Problems

**A**STROLOGY, the tenets of which hold that the stars and planets exert an influence on human events by which predictions may be made in advance, is denounced as lacking every conceivable scientific foundation as well as being psychologically harmful, in a report issued by the Boston and Cambridge Branch of the American Association of Scientific Workers.

It was prepared by a committee of which Dr. Bart J. Bok, associate professor of astronomy, Harvard University, is chairman, and Mrs. Margaret W. Mayall, research associate of the Harvard Observatory, is secretary. Methods and claims of the astrologers are briefly summarized, and reasons given why they are not accepted by scientists. The complete report will be published in the *Scientific Monthly*, organ of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

"An interpretation of the rules laid down by astrologers demands the existence of an unimaginable mechanism of action," it is stated. "Astrologers have not provided us with as much as a sound

hypothesis that might serve as a basis for their speculations. Astrologers attempt to offset this lack of a sound working hypothesis by the introduction of terms and concepts that are unknown to physicists and astronomers. No one, with a high school training in physics, should be fooled into accepting an explanation of the laws of astrology in which the term 'cosmic vibration' figures prominently.

"Scientists would feel justified in considering astrology as a legitimate field of scientific inquiry if astrologers could claim that its basic rules had been established through a rigorous study of correlations. This is not the case. The rules by which astrologers interpret their horoscopes have not been derived from any known experiments or observations. Astrologers frequently claim the observational basis to be in the experience of forgotten generations far back in antiquity, but pure superstition can claim as sound a basis. In the cases of planets discovered in our times (Uranus, Neptune and Pluto) the evidence is conclusive that their influences on men were

## Science on the Radio

SUNDAY

"March of Health," dramatized presentation dealing with public health, MBS, 1:00-1:15 p.m.

WEDNESDAY

"Doctors at Work," dramatic survey of many facets of medical practice, produced in cooperation with the American Medical Association, NBC Blue, 10:30-11 p.m.

THURSDAY

"Adventures in Science," science news of week surveyed by Watson Davis, director of Science Service, and presenting a guest scientist, CBS, 3:45-3:55 p.m.

FRIDAY

"Medical Information Bureau of N. Y. Academy of Medicine," talks by notable figures in medical world, MBS, 10:00-10:15 a.m.

"Radio Magic," dramatization, and commentary on radio phenomena by Dr. O. H. Caldwell, NBC Blue, 7:15-7:30 p.m.

"Unlimited Horizons," dramas and discussions of physical sciences produced in cooperation with the University of California, Stanford University and the California Institute of Technology, NBC Blue, 11:30-12:00 p.m.

SATURDAY

"This Wonderful World," natural history quiz among school children visiting Hayden Planetarium in New York, MBS, 1:00-1:15 p.m.

"Highways to Health," talks arranged by Dr. Iago Galdston, N. Y. Academy of Medicine, CBS, 1:15-1:30 p.m.

"The World is Yours," dramas of world of science, based on Smithsonian Institution exhibits and expeditions; produced in cooperation with U. S. Office of Education, NBC Red, 5:00-5:30 p.m.

"Man and the World," dramatic panorama of scientific exploration, discovery and research; produced in cooperation with the Chicago Museum of Science and Industry and the American Museum of Natural History in New York, NBC Blue, 8:15-8:30 p.m.

Eastern standard time throughout.

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