



Rat-Repelling Odor

KEEPING rats away from stored grain with a "skunky" smell that makes them afraid, is the feat accomplished by two chemists, Leonard A. Ford of the Minnesota State Teachers' College at Mankato, and Donald F. Clausen of the Hubbard Milling Company.

The two chemists were confronted with the problem of keeping rats away from stored grain in sacks. They knew that rats fear skunks and ferrets, and will leave the premises these predatory animals inhabit.

They knew also the chemical basis of the strong, musky odor of these two animals. It is a compound called n-butyl mercaptan. So they tried it out, first on the food of caged white rats. The rats refused the food, became restless and excited, and even fought each other. They would not touch the food until the odor had disappeared.

Then a search was made for a substance which would hold the odor for the longest possible time. Best out of a considerable list proved to be honey, which retained the scent up to six months, well in excess of the time usually spent in storage by grain and commercial feedstuffs.

The only rats with noses so tough that they were not consistently repelled by the n-butyl mercaptan were those on a city dump. The experimenters conjecture that these animals had become so used to the mercaptans produced by the natural fermentation of garbage that the synthetic scent had relatively little effect on them.

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Among Britain's evacuees, some *problem children* have cropped up, and for these experimental hostels have been established to provide special care.

PUBLIC HEALTH

Priorities in Physicians As Well As in Materials

Action Taken To Prevent the Draining of Medical Skill From Many Local Communities to Their Harm

THE likelihood that there will be priorities in physicians and dentists as well as in defense materials appears in the statement from Federal Security Administrator Paul V. McNutt that plans have been approved for mobilizing physicians and dentists.

"The major principle of the plans, which recognizes the need for a systematic approach to the mobilization of the medical resources of the country," Mr. McNutt stated, "has the full sanction of the American Medical Association, as well as that of the Health and Medical Committee of my office, and steps are being taken through appropriate channels to obtain necessary enabling legislation.

"Already," the Administrator said, "the demands for physicians and dentists imposed by the needs of the army and navy particularly, and to only a slightly lesser degree, by the major defense industries, have resulted in recruitment

policies which are seriously draining many communities of their medical personnel. In the event of full mobilization, the problem will inevitably become critical.

"Obviously the principal need is for a general recruitment program which takes into account such factors as the distribution of physicians and dentists in relation to the population of the communities in which they reside, their training and experience, and their availability for service in the defense program.

"To administer the mobilization of medical and dental personnel, a single recruitment and assignment agency would be set up in cooperation with the army, navy, and the Public Health Service," Mr. McNutt said.

"The plans for this service are designed to meet," the Administrator emphasized, "both military and civilian needs."

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PSYCHOLOGY

Advises Against Urging Immigrants to Stay Foreign

A WORD of caution to educators who go so far as to urge immigrant groups in America to keep alive the songs, languages and customs of foreign countries was sounded by Dr. Otto Klineberg, psychologist and anthropologist of Columbia University, before the Williamstown Institute of Human Relations.

Many second-generation immigrants much prefer to lose their old-country connections and become standard Americans, Dr. Klineberg stated, adding as "a word of caution":

"When this is the case, any interference, educational or otherwise, does not appear to be justified."

Discussing objections raised to cultural diversity, he advised that the dominant American group should respect, and even welcome, cultural diversity, since Ameri-

can life is built on contributions from many races and nations, but that once minority groups are acquainted with their cultural heritage they should be left to decide what to keep alive and build into America.

That cultural diversity works against national unity or national morale was discounted by Dr. Klineberg, who pointed out that there can be unity without uniformity. People with devotion to American ideals, he states, may wish to sing Italian folk songs, eat Japanese food, or speak German. Cultural diversity, he declared, should not be held responsible for the "small, though potentially dangerous, minority" who feel a greater bond with their country of origin than with the land they now live in.

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