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### VITAL STATISTICS

# Female Death Rate Down

► THE DEATH RATE for women is dropping considerably but for men it is staying about the same.

These are some of the results of a study of mortality among the industrial policyholders of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company covering 1950 to 1955, reported by E. A. Lew and Mortimer Spiegelman, of the company, to the Society of Actuaries meeting in St. Louis, Mo.

The study covers millions of persons and the mortality among this group is, in most respects, very much like that of the general population, the statisticians reported.

The overall death rate in 1955 was down nine percent from 1950 but the decrease for white males was insignificant. The two groups benefiting most were white females and non-whites.

The top two killers are the cardiovascular diseases and cancer. Without a major advance in their control, women will continue to enjoy a lowering death rate while the men's death rate will go down only very slowly, at best, they predicted.

Heart disease outranked all other causes of death after age 25, with the exception of white females between 25 and 44. There, cancer was the number one killer.

For men, the cancer death rate has risen slightly, mainly because of increased mortality from lung cancer. In women, the reverse is true, with a sizable decrease in

the death rate due largely to better treatment of cancer of the female genital organs.

Accidents are the number one cause of death to all persons under 25, the statisticians reported. At ages one to four they account for one-fourth of all the deaths. From then on, up to age 25, they are responsible for almost half of all the white male deaths and one-fourth of all white female deaths.

Traffic deaths showed an increase, but there was a considerable reduction in the death rate when the number of miles traveled was computed. In industry, accidental deaths declined rapidly, being down one-third from 1950 for white males and one-half for non-white males.

With the lowered death rate, the average life span of the policyholder reached 70 years in 1955. This represented a gain of one and three-quarter years from 1950 and a gain of 10 years since 1935.

Science News Letter, July 6, 1957

### ELECTRONICS

## Radar May Bother Telephones and TV

► THE NEEDS of continental defense may interfere with telephone conversations and the quality of television reception.

Radar interference has been detected 60 miles away from the radar equipment, in one case. Unless means are taken to keep down these "leaks" outside the frequency range allotted to the radar, a serious problem might exist, S. Bonneville of the Bell Telephone Company of Canada, warned the American Institute of Electrical Engineers meeting in Montreal.

In some cases interference has been eliminated by changing the frequency of the radar or telephone systems. Where this does not work because of fully loaded telephone routes, the trouble has to be corrected at the source by eliminating or suppressing the leaks, a problem Bell Telephone Laboratories are working on at present with some success, he reported.

Science News Letter, July 6, 1957

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# Questions

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PHYSIOLOGY—How do tranquilizers affect body temperature? p. 8.

PUBLIC HEALTH—What are some of the suggested advantages of fluoridated salt in controlling dental decay? p. 6.

RADIO ASTRONOMY—Where will the world's largest radio telescope be located? p. 12.

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