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## INVENTION

# Patents of the Week

A method of sensing through the fingers enables aircraft to be directed from within the plane or on the ground and helps the deaf to "hear" by vibrations.

➤ A METHOD for sensing through the fingers, called a "tactile communication system," was granted a patent by the U.S. Patent Office.

The patent was awarded for use in directing aircraft, either from within the plane or from the ground, including blind landings supervised from the ground.

The system has other applications, such as to help the deaf to "hear," for communications between space vehicles, and as a collision warning device either for aircraft or for ground-based vehicles, as well as for use by blind persons. Patents on such possible other uses are pending.

Prof. Joseph Hirsch of Santa Ana, Calif., earned patent 3,157,853 for the system. The possibilities of the method were tested for four years at the Israel Institute of Technology, Haifa, Israel.

The person receiving the coded messages feels each vibration with his fingertips. This information can be about the attitude of an airplane and how it is changing or letters of the alphabet making up words.

A previous patent, 2,972,140, describes how the vibrations providing the tactile stimuli are coded.

Prof. Hirsch, an aeronautical engineer, teaches thermodynamics and other courses at California State College at Los Angeles. He told SCIENCE SERVICE that the idea of coding vibratory stimulations occurred to him in 1947 and that he has been working on perfecting this idea since then.

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### Double-Barreled Ads

Consumers will have a tough time getting away from advertisements and labels on packages with a new invention that features a double-barreled selling message.

A method has been devised to put an inside label in a container so that when a buyer tears away the outside wrapper to open the package, an inner foil liner with yet another selling message appears.

This method for "canned commercials" was invented by Jack R. Culley, Minneapolis, Minn. The invention earned patent 3,154,237 and patent rights were assigned to Pillsbury Company, Minneapolis.

### Remote Meter Reader

A mechanical meter reader to help keep residents from being disturbed during the monthly visit of the meterman received a patent.

In many cases where the utility meter is located inside the house, reading the meter poses an inconvenience for both the residents and the meterman. This invention provides a reading station outside the home. When the meterman comes to take a reading of the gas, electric or water meter, he can merely plug a jack into an opening at the outside station and get his reading from the meter inside.

Edward L. Zaubi, Springfield, Ill., was awarded patent 3,153,780 for his invention. He assigned patent rights to Muntz TV, Inc., Wheeling, Ill.

### Other Patents Issued

A method for weakening a live rabies vaccine by growing it in tissue cultures taken from chicken embryos to which hydrolyzed gelatin or other collagen derivatives have been added. George Roberts Sharpless of Pearl River, N.Y., assigned rights to patent 3,156,620 to American Cyanamid Company, New York.

A device for obtaining under emergency conditions pure water from the sea using reverse osmosis. Jay W. Chapin of Oxnard, Calif., and John S. Williams of Newbury Park, Calif., were awarded patent 3,156,645 for their invention.

• Science News Letter, 86:366 December 5, 1964

## Do You Know?

Today there are more than 6,000 miles of plastic pipe in gas company installations throughout the country.

At least five million tons of meteoric dust falls on the earth every year.

• Science News Letter, 86:366 December 5, 1964