They'll Count Noses by Push-Button In Nation's 17th Cenus Next Year

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MAPPING THE U. S. for the 1950 census is a big advance job for these workers at Census Bureau headquarters in Suitland, Md. Maps divide the country up for the census takers.

WASHINGTON — (NEA) — They've cooked up a real push-button nose count for the big decennial census next year.

When Congress ordered the first one in 1790 and then decreed that it should be made every 10 years thereafter, nobody dreamed it would come to this. In 1950, it'll be done with electrical brains, machines, card machines, automatic counters, calculators with memories and magnetic error checkers. And the farmers are going to count themselves.

The only time it will be touched by human hands is when the census taker knocks on your door and writes down your answers. Other than that it's practically all electric.

Airplanes are already in on the act. They're being used to photograph every city in the U. S., plus a big share of the farmland. As many as possible of the census takers will be handed aerial photographs of their territory. This is to prevent mooching on a fellow taker's clients and to ensure that none of the small postwar homes or farm houses off the road, are missed in the count.

They will also be given a brand new detailed map of their district. This has the bureau up to its ears in map-making. New towns, new local boundaries, changed courses of rivers and new roads have to be shown so there will be a minimum chance of overlapping counts or of skipping everybody.

Preparing the maps and photographs is the biggest and costliest pre-census job. Next to that is the task of hiring and training 150,000 enumerators—the number of districts into which the country will be divided. Even part of the training will be push-button. Special films are being prepared by Census Bureau to speed that job.

The census of cities of over 2500 population will start April 1, 1950 and is supposed to take only two weeks. The farm head-count will start the same day but a month is being alloted for it. It will be bureau policy to hire as many school teachers as possible.

There will be no fixed rate of pay for the enumerators. Different scales will be used in various parts of the country. The average census taker will make about $10 a day, and it is hoped the unit cost can be kept down to about 10 cents per person counted. The whole job is expected to cost about $70,000,000.

A half-dozen test censuses trying out new wrinkles have been run in various counties around the U. S. recently. One of the best ideas these trials have produced is the self-enumeration by farmers. Instead of the census taker catching the farmer in the field some afternoon and getting his information on the spot, a form is first mailed to the farmer. He is given a few days to fill it out and then the enumerator calls for the form.

If it's all filled out when he calls it saves a lot of time. If it isn't, no time has been lost. It has been found that this method gives the farmers' wives a chance to help answer the questions and they probably know more about egg and butter sales and such things than the farmer himself does.

Census Bureau officials will divide the nation into 14 regions with between 800 and 900 field offices for administration purposes. A capacity of 90 mail cars will be needed to move the paper and supplies to these offices. The completed forms will be returned to Washington by registered mail in an estimated 60,000 boxes.

Then the button is pushed and electricity begins its work. Approximately 1500 electric key punch machines will go into action with each operator turning out 1000 cards a day. The cards next go to sorters, which put them in proper piles at the rate of 450 a minute.

After that there's a counter for tabulating, which can handle 60 different classifications of information at one time. This machine has a running speed of 400 cards per minute and at the same time reads the cards for any inconsistencies, rejecting those incorrectly punched. Still another machine combines card sorting and tabulation at the same time so that as soon as one tabulation is finished the cards are already sorted for the next operation.

In spite of all the machines, the job of getting final results takes two years. The machines will make approximately 14 billion card passes. A card pass means running a card through a machine once.

The final step is to put all the statistical tables in the hands of editors, who arrange them in proper relation for publication. The 1940 census took up 40 volumes with a total of 37,000 pages. There's no telling how many pages it will take to print the results of the 1950 census.

Police Stone Newsmen Following Churchill

MILAN, Italy— (AP) —Photographers cruised out to take pictures of Winston Churchill swimming, but they were stoned by police. Several rocks nearly hit their speedboat.

Churchill is vacationing at Garda on Lake Garda in northern Italy. He has requested privacy from newsmen and photographers.

Gabriele Mundo, assistant Milan police chief has ordered confiscated any pictures of Churchill in swimming togs.

Guardsmen, Keep Those Jailbirds Quiet

SALT LAKE CITY — (U.P.) — Utah State Prison officials took a tongue lashing from some sleepy-eyed neighbors on the heels of 12 prison breaks since May 18.

Utah Gov. J. Bracken Lee got a letter from the owner of an apartment located in a heavily populated residential district across the street from the prison.

The owner complained his tenants couldn't sleep because the prison guards made so much noise looking for escapees in recent weeks.

New Hormone Proves Valuable

CHICAGO — (U.P.) — The hormone known as acth offers the possibility of controlling a number of largely hopeless diseases and may be one of the most important medical discoveries ever made, it was announced this week.

A statement prepared under the supervision of Armour and Company research laboratory chemists said the material already has shown "dramatic relief" in the treatment of arthritis. It may make possible the control of rheumatic fever, mysasthenia gravis, gout, and other diseases, the statement said.

Believed Important

"Those who have worked with acth believe that it will be to medicine what the discovery of anethesia was to surgery," the statement added. Disclosure of acth in treatment of arthritis was made known some time ago.

The company said the broader problems are to obtain sufficient production of the hormone and to determine all the things it will do. Armour and Company is the only current source.

From Hogs

The hormone is obtained from the pituitary glands of hogs slaughtered in the various stockyards. It takes 400,000 hog pituitaries to make a pound of acth, Armour said. The company estimates that if all possible hog pituitaries were saved and extracted, about 2,800,000 ten-milligram dose units of acth, or about 60 pounds, could be provided each year.

This would be sufficient to treat only an insignificant fraction of the 7,000,000 known cases of arthritis alone. Presently, the company said, it is impossible to meet thousands of requests for acth.

Iron door keys, locks, bolts, hinges and nails, steel knives, scissors and hunting weapons have been found in the ruins of Roman dwellings in Britain.

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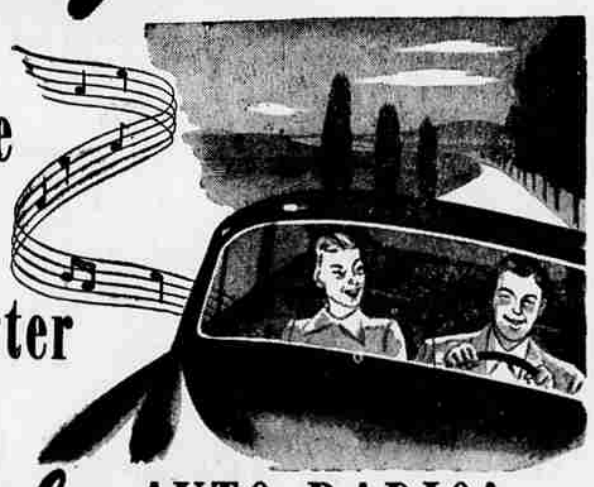

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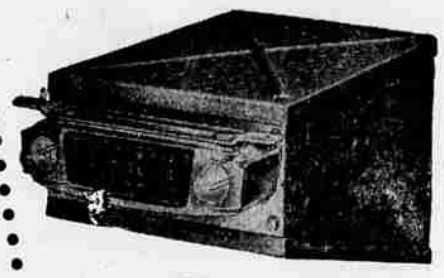

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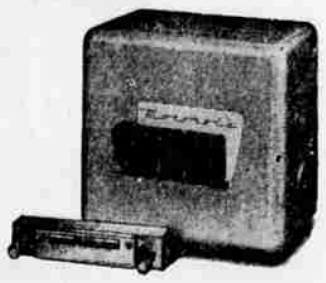

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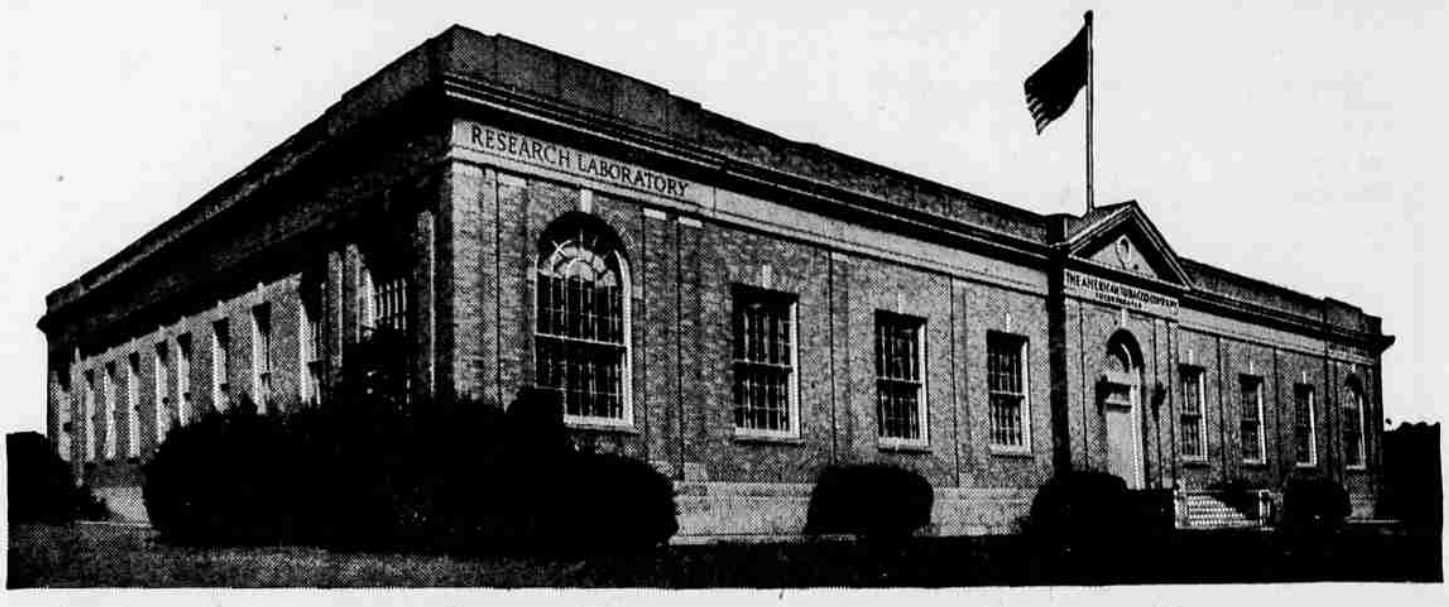

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