

New Devices Help Disabled To Work For Selves

Washington (Science Service)—New devices that enable disabled persons to work and care for themselves better were reported at the Third International Congress of Physical Medicine here.

Dr. Leonard F. Bender, associate professor of physical medicine and rehabilitation at the University of Michigan Medical School, told delegates to the congress from 40 countries that a modified shoulder saddle "harness" is gradually replacing the old "figure eight" type among patients at the university's amputee clinic.

This new type of harness makes it easier for persons with amputated arms to do heavy work such as lifting weights. A new cable suspension device on the harness permits much freer motion at the shoulder and eliminates the former difficulty of the harness slipping around the chest because of the lack of free motion between the leather suspension straps and the rings.

Dr. Bender said. Describes Arm Brace
Dr. Roy H. Nyquist, chief of the physical medicine and rehabilitation section of the veterans Administration hospital in Long Beach, Calif., described an arm brace, now in use at his hospital, that has special attachments for writing, shaving, and brushing teeth. The brace's feeding spoon is fashioned on the principle of a scoop spoon and is fastened to the brace with a swivel joint that allows gravity to keep the spoon level on the way from the plate to the mouth. A stop-bar is arranged so that pressure can be brought against the bar, thus holding the spoon as it is more rigid when food is scooped from the plate.

A sliding bar and pencil holder are also provided on the same brace for writing, and a metal holder is incorporated for an electric razor. The holder can be swiveled to allow for good positioning of the razor.

Col. H. F. Pierce, an experimental psychologist from Toronto, Canada, demonstrated plastic splints he has invented and patented. These splints are molded to fit about weakened parts of the body and support them. Photographs on exhibit showed how these splints, used on the hands of a crippled person, had given him support as he could type again.

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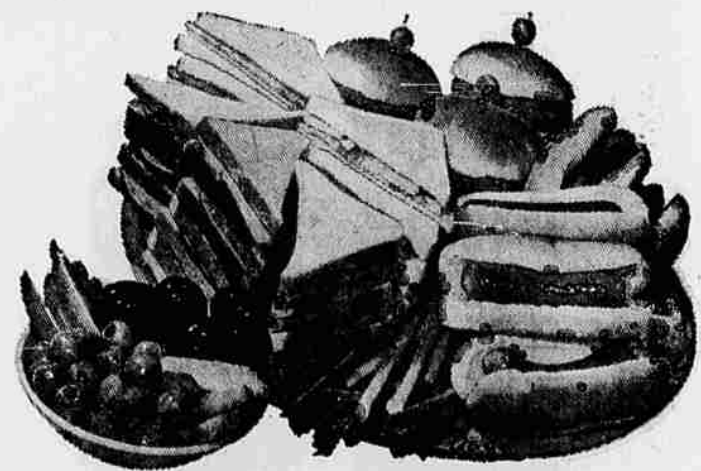
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Science Aids Laggng Maritime Industry In U.S.

Washington (Science Service)—The lagging U.S. maritime industry will require a big research program to compete successfully with foreign ships, the Maritime Research Advisory committee of the National Academy of Sciences-National Research Council has reported.

U.S. flag ships now carry only one-tenth of our seaborne commerce. This means that at a time when the cold war is expanding, the country is in the vulnerable position of having to rely on foreign fleets for most of its ocean shipping needs.

Concern over this prompted the U.S. Maritime Administration to ask for a study and recommendations from the Academy's Maritime Research Advisory committee of 55 senior scientists and engineers, headed by Louis H. Riddis Jr., president of the Pennsylvania Electric Company.

Automation is the principal means of achieving the goal of a U.S. merchant fleet of such technological superiority that it could compete independently in international trade without requiring government support by subsidies, the committee reported.

It recommends that the maritime administration request appropriations of \$10 to \$12 million annually during the next decade for research conducted to promote maritime-related education. The maritime administration is urged to encourage the recommendations ranging from a suggestion to study bridge-to-bridge radiotelephones to establishing a multi-emtional model for the prediction of future world shipping requirements.

Other major conclusions and recommendations by the committee include:

One of the most serious problems of the U.S. merchant marine is the high cost of U.S. shipbuilding. Savings can be made through simplification and standardization in design. Government policies leading to more efficient shipyards should also be fostered.

2. The maritime administration should frequently sponsor the construction and operation of advanced concept ships that can demonstrate the feasibility of new developments. Such ships built within the near future should incorporate automation of most shipboard operations, utilize cargo operation, and more economic machinery.

Prof. Harry Benford of the Academy's Research council staff served as executive director of the committee study.

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